

## Review for Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of Brit College Ltd, October 2013

### Section 1: Outcome of the monitoring visit

1 From the evidence provided in the annual return and at the monitoring visit, the review team concludes that the Brit College Ltd is making progress but further improvement is needed with implementing the action plan from the October 2012 [Review for Educational Oversight](#).

### Section 2: Changes since the last QAA review visit

2 The College has increased its student intake since the 2012 review and the current number of higher education students is 818. The College continues to work with its awarding body (University of London) and five awarding organisations (Association of Business Executives; Association of Chartered Certified Accountants; BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT; Pearson; Institute of Administrative Management; and The Organisation for Tourism and Hospitality Management). Seventy-one per cent of higher education students are on the Pearson Higher National Diploma in Business.

3 In 2013 the College relocated its provision to a single campus at Limehouse. All teaching takes place at the campus together with housing its student support and administration services. Staff and students spoke well of the benefits provided by the new campus.

### Section 3: Findings from the monitoring visit

4 The College has built on the good practice identified in the 2012 review report. The Short Message System (SMS) has been developed to cover both academic and pastoral alerts. Staff spoke of the usefulness of the system in managing and supporting students. Staff and students consider the system useful and SMS is the students' preferred method of communication.

5 The College has made progress on all recommendations contained in the action plan in the 2012 review report, although the level of progress is variable. Progress has been made in clarifying the entitlements and support needs of students. The comprehensive Student Handbook provides a useful reference of the academic and pastoral support available to students. Students spoke highly of the support provided by the College and in particular the helpfulness of staff.

6 Publishing of information is now overseen and managed by the Director of Communications and Marketing through a process that involves the final approval for publication by the Chief Executive. An electronic monitoring system is in place to ensure procedures are followed.

7 Actions to improve the response rates from student feedback mechanisms include SMS, emails and face-to-face reminders in class. The impact of these approaches have not been evaluated. Students identified that there are both informal and formal opportunities to feed back on their experience.

8 The process for resource development and monitoring is understood by staff and the College is responsive to identified needs such as obtaining awarding organisation recommended textbooks. Students feel appropriate resources are available.

- 9 The virtual learning environment (VLE) is used across all courses to provide both course information and materials to support teaching and assessment. The VLE is linked to the College's information system and the student portal. Students value the VLE.
- 10 Checklists have been updated to clarify responsibilities for determining assessment criteria and providing assignment briefs although staff seem unaware of these.
- 11 The development of the quality framework and the systematic review of quality policies, processes and procedures, have not been progressed as expected. The appointment of the Vice Principal (now Acting Principal) in June 2013 was intended to address this and some relevant policies have been reviewed and introduced. There is still no formal quality assurance framework to underpin the management of academic standards and the student learning experience.
- 12 The teaching observation and appraisal systems have been introduced although neither process is fully developed. There is no apparent oversight, management or analysis of the processes. For example, teaching observation feedback forms have been completed yet lack evidence of the professional discussion resulting from the observer and teacher meeting and also lack relevant action plans and follow-up.
- 13 Formal recording of staff development and sharing good practice is not yet fully developed. Recording forms have been developed but have not been implemented. There is no systematic analysis of the impact of staff development activities leading to quality improvement. There is no evidence or information relating to the basis on which staff development activities are decided.

#### **Section 4: Progress in working with the external reference points to meet UK expectations for higher education**

- 14 The College has been proactive in working with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code). Policies and procedures reference the appropriate chapters in the Quality Code. Staff development has been provided to raise awareness of the Quality Code, in particular *Chapter B3: Learning and teaching* and *Chapter B6: Assessment of students and accreditation of prior learning*. The College makes staff aware of the requirements of its awarding organisations and staff attend external training events. The newly appointed HND Course Co-ordinator for the Pearson Higher National Diploma in Business made reference to *Chapter B6: Assessment of students and accreditation of prior learning* and the awarding organisation requirements in developing the Assessment Guidelines for the course, although these are not yet fully operational.

#### **Section 5: Background to the monitoring visit**

- 15 The monitoring visit serves as a short check on the provider's continuing management of academic standards and quality of provision. It focuses on progress since the previous review. In addition, it provides an opportunity for QAA to advise the provider of any matters that have the potential to be of particular interest in the next monitoring visit or review.
- 16 The monitoring visit was carried out by Mr Mike Ridout (Coordinator) and Dr Ana-Maria Pascal (Reviewer) on 10 and 11 October 2013.