



Embedded College Review for Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of Bellerbys Educational Services Ltd, June 2013

Annex 8: Liverpool John Moores University International Study Centre

Section 1: Outcome of the monitoring visit

1 From the evidence provided in the annual return and at the monitoring visit, the monitoring team concludes that Liverpool John Moores University International Study Centre (LJMUISC) has made commendable progress following the May 2012 [Embedded College Review for Educational Oversight](#).

Section 2: Changes since the last QAA review

2 A new programme, the CertHE International Year 1 Business, was validated by the University in November 2012 for five years, with an expected start date of September 2013.

Section 3: Findings from the monitoring visit

3 LJMUISC continues to provide a high level of academic and pastoral support for students. Since the QAA review in 2012, student support systems have been further developed through the introduction of mid-term review meetings, allowing teaching staff to gain an overview of individual students' continuing progress across all modules. Staff are actively encouraged to undertake further study: in 2012-13 the ISC contributed to the fees for two members of staff taking postgraduate programmes, and two other members of staff are completing master's qualifications. Bellerbys Education Services Ltd (BES) has also financed a management qualification for the Head of Centre. This year's staff development sessions covered matters such as plagiarism and the use of the virtual learning environment. Staff are encouraged and sponsored to attend the BES Teachers' Conference and all teaching staff met by the team had either attended previous conferences or would be attending the next. All staff are invited and encouraged to attend the LJMU Learning and Teaching Conference and other University staff development programmes. Staff have continued to network very productively with colleagues from other ISCs.

4 A variation to the original inter-institutional agreement makes clear that the University is responsible for the academic standards of the International Foundation Year, Pre-Masters and English Pre-sessional programmes. The agreement also, less clearly, indicates that the University is responsible for the academic standards of the International Year 1, and the review team considered that this should be made explicit as for the other programmes. A glossary of LJMUISC academic standards-related terminology has been produced, and is appropriately applied in different contexts including Boards of Study and validation/revalidation processes.

5 The University's assessment regulations apply to the university-validated programmes, subject to two variances (regarding referral attempts and the capping of referred marks) which were to be discontinued with effect from 2013-14. A variation allowing students to retake passed modules to improve their mark was withdrawn before the start of

2012-13. Students are informed of the regulations through handbooks with hyperlinks to the LJMU regulations, at induction and in classes throughout the programme. The Centre Handbook provides staff with links to the LJMU regulations. Examination boards apply the regulations clearly and consistently.

6 BES procedures for checking information before it was sent to the University for sign-off were being used effectively. Students confirmed that information given to them before and at entry was accurate and helpful.

Section 4: The embedded colleges' use of external reference points to meet UK expectations for higher education

7 LJMUISC staff have worked with external reference points, including the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, throughout preparations for the 2012-13 revalidation and validation of programmes. They have clearly engaged closely with the processes and with programme design.

Section 5: Background to the monitoring visit

8 The monitoring visit serves as a short check on the provider's and its embedded colleges' continuing management of academic standards and quality of provision. It focuses on progress with the action plan since the previous review. In addition, it provides an opportunity for QAA to advise the provider and its embedded colleges of any matters that have the potential to be of particular interest in the next monitoring visit or review.

9 The monitoring visit was carried out by Alan Hunt, QAA Officer, and Dr Sylvia Hargreaves, Reviewer, on 18 June 2013.