

## Embedded College Review for Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of Bellerbys Educational Services Ltd (Study Group UK), May 2014

### Annex 6: University of Leicester 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 Bellerbys Educational Services Ltd (BES) University of Leicester International Study Centre (ULISC) has made commendable progress with continuing to monitor, review and enhance its higher education provision since the June 2013 [monitoring visit](#).

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

2 Total student numbers have returned to their 2012 level, of 256 students across the four International Foundation Year programmes, following a decline to 213 students in 2013. There have been no changes to the provision since 2012 but ULISC plans to move into new teaching premises in September 2014, and at the time of the monitoring visit there were discussions with University of Leicester (the University) about the development of new programmes.

#### Section 3: Findings from the monitoring visit

3 Areas of good practice identified across the network of International Study Centres (ISCs) in 2012 are still strongly in evidence at ULISC. It has further enhanced its support for students since 2013. This includes the appointment of a Student Welfare Officer and, following a review of induction arrangements, a greater focus on meeting the needs of students when they first arrive. In partnership with the University, ULISC now appoints students who have recently progressed as link students who provide further support to students and their transition to the University.

4 There is evidence of a strong commitment to enhancement. ULISC has developed a more consistent approach to its use of the virtual learning environment across different modules. There is now a formal policy specifying that assessments should be returned within seven days of submission, and students reported that this target is consistently achieved. Good practice is disseminated through staff meetings and ISC network events.

5 The quality of staff development remains a strength. Staff attend conferences and cascade their learning to colleagues, and staff were twice awarded the provider's Learning and Innovation Award. Staff are able to participate in the University's staff development programme, and there is now a formal process of peer observation of teaching designed to disseminate good practice.

6 External examiners are in place for all programmes, and they now approve all examination papers prior to use. External examiners are also invited to meet students and attend learning and teaching sessions. Their reports are made available to students on the virtual learning environment and students confirmed that these are considered at Staff-

Student meetings. Assessment regulations are set out in the Student Handbook and ULISC has developed the use of innovative storyboard messages to convey information to students about certain aspects of these regulations. The Student Handbook sets out the policy on the penalties to be imposed for late submission of an assessment. Students said that they knew about this policy, but it was not uniformly understood by all staff and senior staff agreed that it should be further clarified.

7 Students provide feedback on their learning experience through Staff-Student Liaison Groups, Student Council meetings, and various questionnaires. ULISC is currently considering introducing student representation on its Quality Assurance and Enhancement Group. Students described effective responses to their feedback. Since the previous monitoring visit students are now invited to complete the Global Survey to provide feedback to the provider on issues such as the quality of pre-arrival information and the admissions process.

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

8 The Head of Centre briefs staff about the UK Quality Code for Higher Education at staff meetings. ULISC operations are now mapped to all relevant sections of the Quality Code, a process which has involved subject heads and teaching teams.

9 ULISC recognises that further work is needed on identifying and progressing actions arising from this exercise and the Head of Academic Subjects is tasked with taking this forward.

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

10 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 monitoring visit. 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 full review.

11 The monitoring visit was carried out by Mr Alan Hunt (QAA Officer) and Professor Graham Romp (Reviewer) on 29 May 2014.

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