

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

Annex 7: University of Lincoln 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 University of Lincoln International Study Centre (ULISC) is making acceptable progress following the May 2012 [Embedded College Review for Educational Oversight](#).

Section 2: Changes since the last QAA review

2 Total student numbers have grown from 168 in 2012 to 265 in 2013. Staff numbers have also increased significantly: permanent teaching staff have increased from one to four and part-time staff have increased from nine to 15. A new International Year One Journalism programme under-recruited and is being discontinued, but two new International Year One progression routes were being introduced, subject to University approval.

Section 3: Findings from the monitoring visit

3 ULISC continues to demonstrate most aspects of good practice identified across the Bellerbys Educational Services (BES) network in the 2012 review report, but there is little evidence that good practice was being extended. Academic and pastoral support is viewed positively by students, but it is largely reactive rather than proactive. Induction appears to have made little impact on students. The virtual learning environment is well regarded by students, though its use is variable at module level. Staff attended conferences and cascaded what they have learned to colleagues. Peer observation of teaching is being developed. Staff teaching English continue to participate in the BES network for this subject; they have developed assessments and shared teaching materials with staff in other ISCs. ULISC managers are seeking to make use of data about the performance of students after they progress to the University, and a working group is investigating how to obtain more systematic information of this kind.

4 An essential recommendation in the 2012 report annex for ULISC, relating to the management of standards, has been addressed sufficiently to allow the initial judgement of limited confidence to be changed to confidence in December 2012. The improvements made in 2012 are generally being maintained. External examiners see and approve all assessment instruments in advance. Their reports are considered at the Academic Management Board. The Head of Centre produces an action plan, responding to external examiners' comments, which is incorporated in the annual monitoring report. The action plan arising from these reports was said to have gone to the Staff-Student Committee, but the reviewers did not see evidence of this and students confirmed they had not seen external examiners' reports or comments. ULISC has introduced 'control sheets' for assessment management, but staff seemed unaware of these and it was acknowledged that work is needed to improve this system. There is also an acknowledged problem of assessment bunching towards the end of modules, but it was not clear what action was planned to mitigate this. Assessment

regulations are printed in staff and student handbooks, and ULISC has clarified its rules on late submission of coursework in both the staff and student handbooks. Programme Assessment Boards are now being chaired by University link tutors.

5 Responding to the 2012 report's recommendations to the provider, ULISC has signed a Variation of Agreement with the University confirming responsibility for academic standards, and has introduced a ULISC Glossary of Academic Terms.

6 BES procedures for checking information before it is sent to the University for sign-off are 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 The Heads of Centre Conference had provided training and dissemination materials in connection with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code), and information about the Quality Code was passed on to staff at a staff meeting and through emails. However, there is no evidence of the use of the Quality Code for development purposes.

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 Professor Brian Anderton, Reviewer, on 3 June 2013.