



Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of ESCP Europe-Business School, November 2017

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 ESCP Europe-Business School (the School) has made acceptable progress with implementing the action plan from the November 2016 [Higher Education Review \(Alternative Providers\)](#).

Section 2: Changes since the last QAA review

2 The current number of students studying on the London campus is 405, a slight increase of 14 students (four per cent) from the previous review. Of these, 183 are studying for the Master in Management (MIM) validated by City, University of London (the University) - a decrease of 21 students (10 per cent) from the previous review. The MSc in Marketing and Creativity and the Executive MBA programmes have recommenced since the last review, although students are not currently studying at the London campus. The Master in European Business has been transformed into a full-time MBA, which started in September 2017 with a recruitment of 28. The MIM programme underwent revalidation in 2016 by the University, although the Revalidation Agreement was not received until October 2017 due to a delay in incorporating a teaching programme in Turin.

Section 3: Findings from the monitoring visit

3 The overall outcome of the monitoring visit has been informed by the following findings. The School has built on all points of good practice in its QAA Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers) action plan by continuing to develop its strategic approach to programme design, its multilingual learning experience, and its use of live projects and internships. It has addressed the one recommendation from the previous review - to apply a consistent campus-wide approach to determining penalties for late submission of coursework - although this was not approved nor implemented by the target date of September 2017. The new policy was approved in October 2017 and is due to be implemented in January 2018. The School has taken forward all five affirmations from the review. Three have been completed on target: the further engagement of students in the quality assurance process, improved assessment, and routinely including assessment briefs in moderation. Two were completed shortly after their target dates: further embedding action plans and approving a new Examiner Board Policy.

4 The strategic approach to designing the MIM programme has been developed by extending the range of potential internships from the finance sector and by including members of the corporate world in future annual course boards to inform curriculum development.

5 The School has extended its multinational learning experience, which develops students' cultural adaptability and employability. It has introduced a new online language learning platform, which students find helpful and easy to navigate, and has appointed a new Academic Coordinator for Languages, who is responsible for coordinating support for development of language skills across programmes. The School also monitors nationality

and gender balance at admissions level and subsequently monitors each semester when programme coordinators organise student workgroups. These developments are intended to promote student opportunities for mobility and participation in exchange programmes.

6 The School has extended its use of live projects and range of internships to enhance students' employability. Credits are awarded for company projects undertaken by small student groups as part of their programme, and for compulsory internships in years two and three. Further corporate partners from the financial sector have been added to an already extensive and notable list of active partnerships to increase the range of opportunities for MIM students. The Careers Office, which organises workshops and lectures developing employability skills, has produced a new calendar of career-related events for all students. Students studying for the MIM appreciate the teaching quality, the academic and pastoral support, and the multinational diversity of the programme.

7 The single recommendation to apply a consistent campus-wide approach to determining penalties for late submission of course work has not been completed to the timescales outlined in the action plan. The School approved an appropriate new policy on late submissions in October 2017 for implementation in January 2018 and there is every indication that the recommendation will be fully completed at that point. The Teaching Handbook has been updated to include the policy on penalties that will be incorporated into the current revision of the Academic Staff Quality Handbook 2017-18. Some students showed awareness of the policy and faculty staff confirmed that it will be implemented fully from January 2018. The School has also recently approved a clear policy on mitigating circumstances applicable to all assessment modes, which students confirmed they understand.

8 The School has further engaged students as partners in quality assurance and enhancement through regular meetings between the federal student body (Agora) and the Dean of Academic Affairs to review student feedback and monitor student satisfaction. The School includes student Agora members in all programme boards of studies and meetings of the Europe Teaching and Learning Committee (ETLC). Each programme also has elected student representatives, who attend programme boards of studies and regular local meetings with programme directors to review detailed module feedback. Student programme representatives may also be Agora members, as there is no restriction on either type of representation. Student representative reports, which are presented at boards of studies, discuss feedback on teaching quality from end-of-module surveys.

9 The School has taken steps to improve the quality and consistency of assessment feedback. Suggestions for improvements and standardisation of the student feedback process have been discussed and approved for implementation. The recently updated policy for feedback on examinations is included in the Teaching Handbook and in the MIM programme handbook. Students commented that both oral and written feedback by faculty is comprehensive and enables them to improve their work.

10 The School has reviewed the enhancement of its moderation processes and the new policy has been implemented. Assessment samples sent to external examiners and the internal MIM moderation reports now routinely contain all relevant assessment briefs.

11 The School has approved a new board of studies policy and guidelines for programme directors on the use of action plans. Action planning is a key responsibility of the programme boards of studies, with progress and outcomes monitored at Academic Directors Group meetings, at the ETLC and in reports to the University.

12 The School has introduced new policies to develop more rigorous reporting and standardisation of examination board practices. New policies articulate responsibilities

and requirements for the board of studies, the interim board, awards boards and progression boards.

13 The School has a robust recruitment, selection and admissions policy, and formal procedures for all students. Student admissions policies and procedures are comprehensive and ensure that all applicants are given fair consideration, and recognise equality and diversity for all nationalities. English language competence is assessed either by verifying at interview whether an applicant has either completed a degree at an English-speaking university or has an approved English language certificate (TOEFL, IELTS and Cambridge) at the required level. In a small number of cases, English language competence is assessed through the in-house English proficiency test. Samples of the in-house proficiency test devised by the School demonstrate good competence levels. The grading equivalence with approved language tests is confirmed by a competent professor of language in Paris after examination of the in-house tests. Individual applicants are required to provide full transcripts of university studies and modules completed, which is thoroughly checked. Further proof of prior degree or diploma qualifications requires a letter of confirmation from the awarding body. Applicants for master's programmes must have completed a three-year bachelor's award with 180 ECTS credits or recognised equivalent, together with a supporting academic reference. The detailed interview process is designed to determine suitability of the applicant, motivation to study the programme and career intentions. Students confirmed that the admissions process is clear, and that pre-admissions programme information was available from faculty staff.

14 The School monitors all of its programmes throughout the year at regular programme meetings to produce up-to-date course reports and action plans. Annual monitoring of the MIM programme follows the requirements of the University's Validation and Institutional Partnership Handbook. Programme teams review progress from the previous year by examining the curriculum; learning outcomes; teaching and assessment information; external examiners' reports; feedback from students, staff and employers; and graduate destinations. Continuous monitoring culminates in discussions at the boards of studies, which include consideration of curriculum delivery and ensures that all module assessments are completed in line with assessment regulations. The Academic Directors Group and the ETLC are responsible for monitoring the health of programmes. The School responds to all external examiners' reports and updates action plans for curriculum or module amendments, with proposed major changes referred to the ETLC. Major changes to the MIM programme require the approval of the Validation and Institutional Partnership Committee.

15 The data for students studying for the University MIM award with a start date of September 2016 indicate retention rates of 99 per cent of a cohort of 92. The pass rate for students with a start date of September 2015 (due to complete within the last year) is 77 per cent of a cohort of 88. Of those, 67 received their award, one dropped out, 12 are still completing final year exams, six deferred and two completed their credits after the deadline and will receive their degrees at the next award board.

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

16 Because of the School's international character it continues to work with all appropriate external agencies to meet UK expectations for higher education, including those that apply in France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK. This includes the external reference points of various quality assurance bodies, including those of QAA, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS), the Association of MBAs, and the European Quality Link. The School is aware of the differences for UK provision, notably in the UK Quality Code for Higher

Education, *Chapter B6: Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning*, *Chapter B7: External Examining* and *Chapter B9: Academic Appeals and Student Complaints*. Since the previous QAA review the School has implemented the AACSB Assurance of Learning Requirements across all of its programmes.

Section 5: Background to the monitoring visit

17 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.

18 The monitoring visit was carried out by Dr Elizabeth Briggs, Reviewer, and Professor Edward J Esche, Coordinator, on 9 November 2017.

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