



# Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight: Report of the monitoring visit to the Foundation for International Education, June 2013

## Section 1: Outcome of the monitoring visit

1 From the evidence provided in the annual return and at the monitoring visit, the review panel concludes that the Foundation for International Education (FIE) is making commendable progress with implementing the action plan from the March 2012 [Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight](#).

## Section 2: Changes since the last QAA review

2 There have been no significant changes in personnel or the portfolio of programmes since the 2012 review, with 1,114 students enrolled this year.

3 FIE has undertaken a validation event with Kingston University with a view to offering UK academic credit to some students following programmes at FIE. The commencement date depends on ongoing negotiations.

## Section 3: Findings from the monitoring visit

4 FIE has built on the good practice in its 2012 review report. In relation to implementing grading criteria, it has established a system of cross-marking carried out by course convenors, using an in-house form to aid consistency. This approach also offers developmental guidance to its faculty on good practice in feedback and the use of assessment criteria. Following FIE's review of its International Internship Course, the new provision offers a more focused and research-based learning experience to students alongside their work experience. The uptake of the Writing Support Tutor programme by students has increased following efforts to promote and advertise it more strongly and to offer referrals to it from taught courses.

5 Managers continue to annually review the content of the Faculty Handbook to ensure currency and accuracy. Because the handbook is provided online, FIE have been able to make any necessary updates between the annual reviews. The virtual faculty lounge has seen further enhancements to appearance and content during 2012-13 with the continued aim of establishing it as an electronic repository for resources available to staff as well as a medium for communication with, and between, staff. In addition to the use of periodic emails to promote awareness, it will be promoted to teaching staff at a developmental meeting of faculty later in 2013.

6 FIE has made commendable progress on both of the recommendations contained in the action plan. It has created the role of Course Convenor and has appointed three people to these posts. With a view to promoting best practice across FIE's provision, course convenors have taken responsibility for processes including peer observation of teaching and cross-marking of assessed work, as well as offering guidance to teaching staff on the outcomes of these processes for individuals. Course Convenors are also responsible for faculty mentoring and for organising staff training events, and are members of FIE's Teaching & Learning Committee.

7 In relation to student feedback, FIE has established a new system for electronically compiling the results of feedback surveys and for communicating them to the relevant faculty. Student response rates remain high and the new analysis and feedback approach has been well received by faculty. FIE may wish to further strengthen its response to the recommendation of the 2012 review by formalising the consideration of the outcomes of student feedback with a view to gaining broader oversight of student views.

8 The views offered by students on their experience at FIE are positive, particularly in relation to the quality of the orientation programme offered on arrival and the accessibility of staff to offer support and advice in response to requests. Students did, however, express the view that more and better information about internships prior to departure from the USA would have made the transition to the workplace easier for some of them.

#### **Section 4: Progress in working with the relevant external reference points relating to academic standards and quality for higher education**

9 Programme design continues to be driven by FIE's partner universities, with courses being designed to meet the academic requirements of these partners. Courses are subject to a rolling programme of periodic review by FIE's Schools of Record, these being Drexel University and St Norbert College. FIE has engaged with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code) in relation to provision planned to be delivered through Kingston University, and intends to ensure alignment of its provision with the Quality Code as programmes are delivered.

#### **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 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.

11 The monitoring visit was undertaken by Dr S Ryrie, Reviewer, and Professor P Hodson, Coordinator, on 4 June 2013.