



Promoting higher quality

**The Quality Assurance Agency
for Higher Education**

Overseas Quality Audit Report

**Coventry University and
INTI College Malaysia**

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW DIRECTORATE

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Introduction

1 The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is a UK organisation which aims to promote public confidence that the quality of provision and standards of awards in higher education are being safeguarded and enhanced. It provides public information about quality and standards in higher education to meet the needs of students, employers and those funding higher education. One of QAA's activities is to carry out quality audits of collaborative links between UK higher education institutions and some of their partner organisations in other countries. In the spring and early summer of 2002, QAA audited selected collaborative links between UK higher education institutions and institutions in Malaysia. The purpose of the audits was to provide information on the way in which the UK institutions were maintaining academic standards and quality of education in their partnerships with institutions in Malaysia.

The process of audit of overseas collaborative links

2 In February 2001, QAA invited all UK higher education institutions to provide information on their collaborative partnerships. Using this information, QAA approached a number of institutions which had indicated that they had established collaborative links with partners in Malaysia. Following discussion, a range of collaborative partnerships was selected for scrutiny. Each of the UK institutions participating in the audit provided a *Commentary* describing the way the partnership operated, and commenting on the effectiveness of the means it employs to assure the quality of provision and safeguard the academic standards of awards associated with the link. In addition, each institution was asked, as part of its *Commentary*, to make reference to the extent to which the link was representative of its procedures and practice in all its overseas collaborative activity. It was also invited to make reference to the ways in which its arrangements adhered to QAA's *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education, Section 2: Collaborative provision* (QAA's Code).

3 QAA's Code contains precepts and guidance about the assurance of quality and standards in collaborative activity. In the context of these audits, it was used as a reference point by the audit team, and its contents are reflected in the observations in this report. Some institutions also made reference, in their *Commentaries*, to the former Higher Education Quality Council's *Code of Practice for Overseas Collaborative Provision in Higher Education* (1996) (HEQC's Code), which has now been replaced by QAA's Code. In addition to these documents, the team made use of other information in

the public domain, including previous HEQC and QAA audit reports on the UK institutions and the information made available on the web sites of their Malaysian partners.

4 The five UK institutions selected for audit were visited by members of the audit team to discuss the arrangements they had made for assuring quality and standards in their links with their partner in Malaysia. During the visit, each UK institution made available to the team the evidence it used to satisfy itself of the effectiveness of its arrangements. The team then visited the Malaysian institutions to gain further insight into the experience of students and staff, and to supplement the view formed by the team from the institution's *Commentary* and from the UK visit.

5 Coventry University's (the University) *Commentary* was scholarly, full and frank, and in many areas genuinely evaluative. The information cited by the University in the *Commentary* was provided for the audit team in a well-organised base room at the University. During the visit in Malaysia further documentation about the link was made available to the team and discussions were conducted with key members of staff, lecturers and students. QAA is grateful to the University and its partner in Malaysia for the willing cooperation provided to the team.

6 The audit team members who visited the University in the UK were Mr D C Attwood (audit secretary), Mr A J Buchanan and Professor A Gale (auditors). Dr S E Taylor observed the audit and Dr D W Cairns accompanied the team for QAA. The members of the team who visited the University's partner, INTI College Malaysia (INTI), were Mr D C Attwood (audit secretary), Mrs P J Lowrie, Professor J C P Raban and Dr S E Taylor (auditors). Dr D W Cairns again accompanied the team and coordinated the audit for QAA.

The context for UK/Malaysia partnership provision

7 Since the 1980s, Malaysia has possessed one of the most rapidly growing economies in Southeast Asia, with much of its investment and economic activity centred around high technology industries requiring large numbers of highly qualified staff. Malaysia's current economic strategy is described in its 'Vision 2020' statement and sets ambitious targets for further economic development.

8 Economic expansion in Malaysia has been accompanied and supported by the expansion of higher education in the state and private sectors. Throughout the 1990s private sector higher education

expanded rapidly in Malaysia, frequently taking the form of partnerships between local private higher education institutions (PHEIs) and awarding bodies in Australia, New Zealand, the United States (US) and the UK. During the early and middle 1990s many partnerships took the form of articulation links, with two or more years study in Malaysia and the final year of study completed with the overseas awarding body. Such arrangements are referred to in Malaysia as '2+1' schemes or programmes.

9 Since the economic crisis of 1997-98 in Southeast Asia, many students and their families have not been in a position to finance one or more years of study abroad. This generated a demand (with the approval of the Malaysian government) for students to be able to complete their studies in Malaysia. One response from overseas awarding bodies was the development of a number of 'top-up' schemes where the final years of degree programmes were franchised for delivery by a PHEI in Malaysia. An alternative was for the overseas awarding body to support a Malaysian partner in the development of programmes of studies, which the awarding body could then validate and approve as fit to lead to its award. Whether franchises or validated programmes, arrangements where the final year of a programme of studies is completed in Malaysia and leads to the award of an overseas institution are referred to in Malaysia as '3+0' courses or programmes, regardless of their actual duration.

10 In the late 1990s, the Malaysian government introduced measures for the better regulation of PHEIs and the provision they offer, often (but not always) in association with overseas awarding bodies. In 1996-97, the Malaysian Ministry of Education established a special section, Jabatan Pendidikan Swasta (JPS). As the *QAA Overview Report, Malaysia*, (1999) noted, the mission of the JPS is to 'ensure the development of world class private education through legislation, facilitation and excellent service towards developing knowledge and competent individuals with high moral values' and to ensure that the education provided by the private sector is 'relevant to the manpower needs of the country'. At about the same time (1996), the National Accreditation Board Act established a National Accreditation Board, Lembaga Akreditasi Negara (LAN), to ensure that governmental regulations for private higher education providers on the nature of the curriculum, the suitability of staff to deliver the curriculum, and the duration of studies were adhered to.

11 The Malaysian Ministry of Education, JPS and LAN continue to develop the regulatory framework that applies to PHEIs.

The background to the collaborative link

12 This report considers the partnership arrangement between the University and INTI College Malaysia, Bandar Baru, Nilai, (INTI Nilai). At the time of the audit the University had approved a wide range of collaborative programmes with INTI. These involve, or have involved, three Schools (Business, Mathematical and Information Sciences (MIS), and Law), four INTI colleges and six campuses. They include two foundation programmes and programmes leading to 11 different diplomas; six BA (Hons) and two BSc (Hons) awards, and three awards at masters level. A number of additional programmes are awaiting approval by the relevant authorities in Malaysia.

13 In discussions with QAA, and in the *Commentary* it prepared to support the audit, the University identified its partnership with INTI Nilai to deliver a validated programme of studies leading to a BSc (Hons) award in Computer Science as representative of its overall portfolio of collaborations with INTI. This programme provided the focus for the audit. A list of the programmes of study offered through its partnership links with INTI, prepared by the University, is appended to this report.

14 The University has participated in a number of HEQC and QAA institutional, collaborative and overseas audits. In 1998, it participated in a QAA overseas audit of its partnership with a PHEI in Israel, the report of which was published in 1999 (the 1999 report) and, in 1999-2000, it participated in a QAA continuation audit, the report of which was published in June 2000 (the 2000 report). The *Commentary* provided by the University to support the audit outlined the University's response to the audit reports and further information was provided in papers in the base room which the University established to support the audit. From these papers and from its discussions with members of the University, the present audit team was able to confirm that the findings set out in earlier QAA reports had been widely discussed and carefully considered, and that recommendations had generally been implemented.

INTI College Malaysia, and the Nilai Campus

15 INTI was founded in 1986 and has become a significant provider of private education in the region, with a presence in China, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam as well as Malaysia, where it has five campuses. These include its main campus at Bandar Baru, Nilai (INTI Nilai, which was visited by the audit team) and branch campuses in Malaysia at Subang Jaya, Sarawak, Sabah and Penang. INTI offers programmes at GCE A-level, foundation, certificate and diploma levels, programmes to prepare students for

entry to UK, US and Australasian universities with advanced standing, and a range of 3+0 programmes of study with a number of overseas partners. It has collaborative links with 11 UK universities; it also has links with partners in Australia and New Zealand.

16 A link between INTI and the University of Hertfordshire was also included in the present audit of UK partnership arrangements in Malaysia. A report of the audit of that link has been published separately by QAA. Further information on the INTI International Group of Colleges can be found in QAA's Overseas Quality Audit Report on the partnership between the University of Hertfordshire and INTI College Malaysia (April 2003).

The University's approach to collaborative provision

17 The University's international objectives include:

- building a high international reputation for teaching and research;
- broadening the knowledge and appreciation of the world of its home and overseas students;
- generating income from inward recruitment and high-quality joint ventures abroad;
- being a first choice partner for international academic and training joint ventures; and
- being recognised for the high quality of academic provision and student care at home and abroad.

18 The University's strategy for meeting these objectives is set out in its annually updated *Corporate Plan*, which is subject to approval by the Academic Board and the Board of Governors. One of the five strategic aims of its current *Corporate Plan*, which was highlighted by the University in its *Commentary*, is to 'establish effective international activities which support the University's objectives and characteristics'. This aim is underpinned by key tasks and performance indicators, which are reflected in planning at school and departmental level.

19 The University carries out its strategy and its *Corporate Plan* through its operational units, chiefly its schools, within the devolved arrangements described in the 2000 report (paragraphs 16-17). In the case of overseas collaborative provision, it maintains close central control over its processes for approving overseas institutions as suitable partners and for approving and reviewing overseas partnership programmes and courses. Review and annual monitoring and the routine development of each partnership link are the responsibility of the relevant school, supervised by the Standing Advisory Group on Overseas Provision

(SAGOP) and the University's Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), a subcommittee of the Academic Board (see below, paragraph 34 *et seq*).

Types of collaboration

20 The University has a classification system or taxonomy for provision delivered through partnership arrangements, each of which has a description which specifies the associated division of responsibilities and obligations. The list of types includes franchises, hybrid franchises, validated courses, recognised courses and credit-rated courses.

21 The arrangement for the BSc (Hons) in Computer Science is regarded by the University as a 'supported validation', which at the time of the audit did not appear as a recognised classification in the University's formal taxonomy but which had been developed relatively recently by MIS. Members of the University told the audit team that the outcomes of the QAA audit of its partnership arrangements for a link with an Israeli higher education institution had informed its view that arrangements based around a franchise restricted the developmental scope of partnerships, and did not encourage partner institutions to take responsibility for maintaining the quality of provision and safeguarding the academic standards of the University's awards.

22 The University's concept of supported validation (which had been developed after the approval of the programmes which were the focus of the audit) provides for a sequence of phased developmental stages through which a partner can progress. These allow the partner to work through a period of University support and monitoring to a more independent status, developing its own curriculum, delivery and assessment methods until the University is fully satisfied that the quality management and academic standards which apply are fully equivalent to the University's on-campus provision and awards. In the case of its collaboration with INTI (including its collaboration through MIS), the University informed the audit team it was satisfied that INTI was able to operate at the phase 3 level, corresponding to the highest level of devolved responsibility.

23 In June 2001, the Academic Board received a proposal for 'supported validation' to be offered across the University, including MIS. It includes a detailed table listing the varying responsibilities of the home school and the partner as the relationship develops and matures to full validation. The University is to be commended for its careful development and deployment of this model of partnership collaboration, which appeared to the audit team to be worthy of wider notice.

Locus of responsibility for quality and standards

24 In its *Commentary*, the University made it clear that ultimate responsibility for the standards of awards and for the quality of provision lay with its Academic Board. As noted above, Academic Board has delegated authority to QAC which controls the processes of institutional approval, Annual Quality Monitoring (AQM), interim reviews, periodic reviews and reporting by external examiners through its subcommittees and appointed panels.

25 In the case of the University's partnership links in Computer Science with INTI Nilai, the audit team noted that front line responsibility for monitoring the quality of educational provision and the security of the academic standards of the University's awards rested with the School and its Subject Groups, with the School Board playing a key role in maintaining standards and assuring quality through AQM and through the consideration of reports by external examiners.

26 With regard to QAA's *Code*, the University prepared a detailed document for the audit team on the extent of its adherence to the precepts. The document identified which person or body across the University was responsible, commented upon the relevant policies and procedures of the University, and indicated whether the precept had been met, and whether the University's arrangements were under review, or required action. Matters under review included a new cost model for overseas arrangements and resolving problems of confidentiality in consulting other awarding institutions (or being consulted by them) over a prospective partner. Matters for action related to ensuring that some partners were clear about the need to submit publicity for authorisation and informing professional regulatory and/or statutory bodies when a programme it accredits may be approved for a partnership arrangement.

27 The audit team considered the University's analysis of its position with respect to the precepts of QAA's *Code* to be an exceptionally useful document which assisted it in understanding the procedures that the University has in place to secure the quality of its provision and the academic standards of its awards. In addition, the University's analysis demonstrated its willingness to adhere to the precepts of QAA's *Code* and indicated that it was aware of matters requiring attention and, in outstanding areas, was taking action to address them.

28 The University was asked to indicate in its *Commentary* the degree to which it considered the quality management and academic standards arrangements underpinning the partnership link being audited typical of those it has adopted for other links.

The *Commentary* offered the view that the programme which was the focus of the audit was representative of its collaborative provision overseas more generally and also offered the view that it (and those closely associated with it) constituted a model of good practice that was being drawn on across the University.

29 While the information available to the audit team broadly supported the University's view that the quality management and academic standards measures it deploys in its partnership with INTI Nilai are representative of those it uses more widely, it should also be noted that this is so far the only overseas partner institution designated as an 'Associate College' (see below, paragraph 39). Conferment of this status is indicative of the University's positive view of the standing, capacity and management of its partner and, as such, appeared to the team to be soundly based. That no other overseas partner has been designated an Associate College might mean, however, that the findings of this particular audit can only be extended with caution to the University's overseas collaborative provision overall.

Establishment and management of the link

Initiation of a partnership

30 Proposals for the development of collaborative arrangements normally arise from the activities of the University's International Office or individual schools. Once a proposal has been developed by a school or the International Office to a point at which the University's commitment is required, the International Office is expected to make enquiries about the standing of the proposed partner, and to seek information from bodies such as the British Council. If necessary, further clarification may be sought by the Academic Registry.

31 If preliminary enquiries reveal no potential or actual difficulties the proposal is submitted for the consideration of the International Development Committee (IDC). The membership of IDC includes the Pro Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for International Affairs - who is also responsible for Research, the Director of International Affairs, and a member of academic staff from each school with relevant experience in overseas collaboration. It is chaired by a nominee of the Vice-Chancellor. IDC is essentially concerned with the strategic and commercial soundness of proposals, and reports on these matters to the Vice-Chancellor's Group (VCG), the membership of which includes the Vice-Chancellor, the Pro Vice-Chancellors and the Group Finance Director. VCG decides whether the proposal should be developed further.

32 Where IDC and the VCG consider a proposal to be strategically sound, a Memorandum of Intent is prepared and signed by a Pro Vice-Chancellor and a senior representative of the proposed partner institution. A sample of a current Memorandum which was provided for the audit team indicated the areas within which collaboration was to be considered, stated that any approvals were subject to the University's procedures for approving collaborative programmes and degrees leading to its awards, and noted that the partner was to be responsible for satisfying any local regulatory requirements.

33 The University's contacts with INTI College Malaysia date from 1990, before its designation as a University. At that time it agreed to consider applications from INTI students who had completed the latter's 'American University Programme' for admission to the second year of a number of programmes at Coventry with advanced standing. Subsequently, the link was developed to include further advanced standing arrangements for students who had completed INTI Higher Diplomas to proceed to the second year of study in designated programmes at Coventry. These arrangements proved successful and, in 1996, INTI was approved by the University as an appropriate partner institution (see below).

Institutional approval

34 Once a Memorandum of Intent has been signed, the prospective partner is subject to an institutional approval procedure. This is initiated by QAC, which is required to establish an Institutional Approval Panel (IAP). The latter must, as a minimum, include a member capable of assessing learning resources (normally the University Librarian or the Deputy Librarian), at least one member with previous experience of overseas approvals, and one or more appropriate external members with experience of the University's approval procedures. The remit of the IAP is to establish whether the mission, objectives, policies and procedures of the proposed partner are compatible with those of the University, to assess the capability of the partner to provide an appropriate educational experience for students, and to confirm that mechanisms for monitoring academic standards and the quality of the student experience are appropriate.

35 Having established an IAP, the prospective partner institution is invited by the University to provide documentation in accordance with its *Guidelines*, copies of which were provided for the audit team. The *Guidelines* are wide ranging and include information under indicative headings such as background and context; quality assurance and enhancement; the student experience; administration; staffing and staff development; and supporting

materials. In compiling these materials, prospective partners are advised by experienced IAP secretaries drawn from the Programmes and Quality Support section of the Academic Registry (PaQS). In its *Commentary* the University cited an example in which the IAP secretary had travelled to the prospective partner institution prior to an accreditation event to clarify the process and the requirements. Documentation to support the request for institutional approval is sent by the partner to the University in advance of the visit, which enables omissions to be rectified. IAPs meet in the UK prior to departure to establish themes and trails to be followed.

36 IAPs report to SAGOP, which may recommend that the partner is approved or not approved, and has a remit to consider the implications of any particular event in terms of good or bad practice, or policy and procedures. The decision to recommend approval to the Academic Board is taken by QAC, which may be taken through Chair's action. The University's current arrangements for institutional approval appeared to the audit team to be sound overall.

37 The institutional approval process followed by the University in 1996 included scrutiny visits to the partner by Academic Registry staff and the Librarian, and consultations by the International Office with the British Council, and JPS and LAN as the local regulatory authorities. The information gathered from these sources enabled the University to compile a profile of the integrity, financial stability and local reputation of INTI. The IAP made a positive report, recommending that INTI should receive institutional approval. Subsequent institutional approvals for INTI campuses have involved scrutiny by IDC.

38 The institutional approval process followed by the University in 1996 predated the HEQC *Code* and QAA's *Code*. Commenting on the consistency of the 1996 institutional approval process with the relevant precepts of QAA's *Code*, the *Commentary* noted that the University had then required less detail about staffing levels, the balance of full and part-time tutors, staff development and student numbers than would be the case with an approval under its present procedures. Nonetheless, it appeared to the audit team that in 1996 the University had conscientiously sought to satisfy itself as to the soundness of its partner.

Associate College status

39 In 1999, the relationship between the University and INTI was further cemented when the latter became an Associate College of the University. The audit team discussed the significance for this particular partnership of the University's decision to designate INTI as an Associate College. It was told

that the decision made visible the University's view of the standing of INTI and signified its intention to develop the relationship over time (see above, paragraph 29).

Formal arrangements

40 The University requires all partnership arrangements to be set out formally in agreements, examples of which were made available to the audit team. The formal agreements seen by the team covered institutional responsibilities for quality assurance, course and programme delivery, annual monitoring and reporting, publicity and advertising, assessment and examination (including external examining), certification of awards, intellectual property rights, applicable law, termination arrangements, and matters relating to the rights and status of students. In its *Commentary*, the University noted that it was moving towards a standard form of written agreement to cover all collaborative links, with supplementary agreements for course specific arrangements.

41 Although the *Commentary* stated that agreements governing the operation of the link with INTI require the partner to refrain from stating or implying that students on the programmes are students of the University, an examination of the Agreements between the University and INTI provided for the audit team did not entirely support such a view, although the Agreements did state that students 'shall be bound by the disciplinary and appeals procedures of INTI College, Malaysia'.

42 The *Commentary* noted that since 2000-01 the University has ensured that all formal agreements incorporate advice on the complaints and appeals procedures to be followed as they apply to the particular link. In the case of INTI, procedures for both complaints and appeals against the decisions of awards and assessment boards are set out in the relevant handbook, which provides students with no information on their access to the University's complaints and appeals procedures. The University's view on this matter is that, in line with its regulations, students on 3+0 programmes are INTI students 'but that they are recorded by the University for administrative purposes e.g. financial arrangements, production of certificates and transcripts'. The audit team discussed this matter with students at INTI who stated that they registered with the University (and paid fees to it in this connection) at the beginning of semester 5. It appeared to the team to be the case that the University could not set aside its responsibilities for students registered for its awards (see below, paragraph 94).

Certificates and transcripts

43 Degree certificates and transcripts are issued by the University and, for each award ceremony, are carried to INTI by one of the University participants to ensure their security. Approaches to certification are defined as part of the institutional approval process and embodied in the formal Agreement between the partners. In the case of INTI, the Agreement states that the certificate should be accompanied by a transcript, which makes reference to the location of study. The audit team had access to certificates, and was able to confirm that their content and presentation were as required by the formal Agreements and consistent with the terms of the relevant precept of QAA's *Code*.

Publicity and marketing materials

44 The responsibilities of partners to the University in respect of publicity and marketing materials are set out in institutional agreements, to which the University appends promotional and advertising guidelines. All materials making reference to the University have to be submitted to, and approved by, its Corporate Affairs Unit, which guarantees a response within five working days. In its *Commentary* the University noted that its review of adherence to the relevant precepts of QAA's *Code* had enabled it to identify that not all materials had been submitted in the required manner by partner colleges, and noted that link tutors must remind partner institutions of this requirement as appropriate. Members of INTI with whom the audit team discussed this matter were fully aware of the need to obtain prior approval of publicity and marketing materials. The team was shown a sample of such materials and was able to confirm that they contained accurate information about the partners and the programme.

The use of agents

45 The University retains agents overseas to publicise its UK provision and to assist with the recruitment of students to its taught undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, and research students. Responsibility for selection and recruitment of agents and their monitoring and support lies with the International Office, which reports to the Pro Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for international affairs. The University's selection process for agents is in accordance with British Council guidelines and is monitored periodically by the University's internal auditors. Agents are issued with a certificate of endorsement. Agreements with agents are reviewed annually and commission is paid once the students have enrolled at the University. The International Office supplies information about the University's programmes of study to approved agents; all advertising which makes

reference to the University is screened by the Office before publication, for which its express authorisation is required.

46 The audit team discussed with students the sources of advice and information open to them at INTI when choosing between completing their studies for the University's award at INTI or in Coventry. It was told that, in addition to advice from the University's appointed Agent in Malaysia, students were also advised about the merits of the final year in Coventry by members of staff at INTI, who in this respect perform a role similar to that of an agent.

47 The audit team discussed with members of INTI the provision of advice to students who wished to undertake their final year of studies at Coventry. The team was told that this function was undertaken by staff from INTI's Placements Office, who saw their role primarily as one of providing information to students interested in transferring to Coventry and not as recruitment agents. No doubt it would be helpful to these staff and to the University for there to be clarification whether they indeed act in the role of agents, within the terms of QAA's *Code*.

Approval of partnership programmes

48 Within the University's quality arrangements a Course Approval and Review Panel (CARP) is normally constituted to assess the academic validity of recognition arrangements (for example, in the case of 2+1 schemes), validated courses, and the programme of studies for franchises without an immediately identifiable parent programme in the University. A CARP normally comprises between six and 10 members, with a chair independent from that of the participant school or schools involved in the programme, a member of QAC, internal subject experts, and at least two external members. A Partnership Approval and Review Panel (PARP) rather than CARP is convened by QAC when it is necessary to consider franchise arrangements for programmes which operate at the University. The membership of a PARP differs from that of a CARP only in that the latter has one more external member than a PARP.

49 Both CARPs and PARPs have authority delegated from QAC to approve programmes. Reports by CARPs and PARPs are received by SAGOP, which confirms consistency of approach and identifies any issues which need further consideration. Once the prospective partner and the programme(s) have been approved, a formal agreement is signed by the Vice-Chancellor or a designated alternate.

50 Following institutional approval, programme validation and approval processes were conducted in 1998 for the BSc (Hons) programmes in Computing

and Information Technology (major in Computer Science), which was subsequently retitled the BSc (Hons) Computer Science, and the BSc (Hons) programmes in Computing and Information Technology (major in Business Information Technology), which was subsequently retitled the BA (Hons) Business Information Technology. QAC appointed a CARP, which was chaired by the dean of a faculty other than the one in which the programmes were located, and including in its membership a representative of MIS, a representative of another school, and two external consultants. The panel visited INTI College Malaysia in early 1998 and on behalf of QAC approved the programmes subject to a range of conditions designed to ensure the equivalence of academic standards and of the quality of the student learning experience with comparable programmes delivered by the University.

51 A further approval event, again involving a panel and a visit, took place in November 1998, following which the programmes were approved, with delivery restricted to INTI's Subang Jaya and Bandar Baru, Nilai campuses. In each case, the papers which the University and its partner had provided for the panels charged with validating programmes at INTI were provided for the audit team in the base room. The team was therefore able to confirm that these processes were undertaken in line with the University's requirements and, that where conditions and/or recommendations had been attached to approval, that INTI's fulfilment and responses respectively had been carefully monitored (see below, paragraph 56). Based on this evidence, the University's arrangements to approve and review programmes in partner institutions appeared to the team to be sound.

52 Subsequently, the University and INTI have sought to make significant extensions to the portfolio of the former's programmes approved to be offered by the latter, and the range of campuses upon which they could be offered, subject to local regulatory requirements. At the time of the audit a number of such planned programmes were either in abeyance or awaiting approval by the Malaysian authorities.

Review of partnership programmes

53 The University has a formal procedure for approving changes in the curriculum. Within MIS, proposals are submitted by the course team on a standard University form to a subcommittee of the MIS School Board, the International Programme Steering Committee (IPSC) (see below, paragraph 63). If IPSC supports the proposal, it is then forwarded to the Registrar, who determines whether the proposed change is major or minor. In the former case, it is then considered necessary to constitute a panel and

visit the partner to scrutinise the proposal before it can be approved; in the case of a minor amendment, it can be signed off by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor who chairs QAC.

Interim review

54 The University conducts interim reviews of validated programmes offered through partnerships after two years. In February 2001, it conducted such a review of the validated programmes at INTI using as an analytical framework the six aspects of provision developed for the former QAA process of subject review. The interim review was conducted for QAC by a panel chaired by a dean of faculty other than MIS, and its membership included the Academic Registrar (a member of QAC), and an independent consultant. A senior member of PaQS acted as the panel's secretary. Three members of MIS, including the Dean, attended as advisers to INTI Nilai.

55 In line with standard University practice, the panel met in the UK prior to the visit to identify matters for discussion; members of the panel also held a meeting with INTI students who had progressed to the third stage of their studies at the University or who were visiting MIS. In Malaysia the panel visited the two INTI campuses where the programmes were being delivered, and held meetings with teaching and support staff and students.

56 In the course of validation, approvals and interim reviews there are provisions for meetings between members of the relevant panels and students without the presence of staff from the partner. The *Commentary* noted that this procedure had allowed the University to identify inconsistencies in practice which it had been able to discuss with INTI. One outcome of the interim review was that it brought to the University's attention that its partner had modified the curriculum approved in 1998 by the introduction of a double project module in the final year, and that this had been undertaken without securing prior formal approval by the University. Subsequently, SAGOP modified the procedures followed within the link to ensure that, in future, formal approval would be sought for changes.

57 The report of the interim review, organised under the six QAA subject review aspects, concluded that, overall, the educational experience provided for students following the University validated programmes at INTI was comparable to that of similar programmes in the University. The report found a considerable number of strengths and also identified a number of areas for improvement. The latter included improving the links between INTI campuses; mechanisms for the approval of programme changes; the provision of guidelines on academic dishonesty;

advice to students progressing to the UK on the standard of English required; greater consistency in formal responses to external examiner reports; better feedback to INTI staff upon their performance; and improvements in library resources. The audit team considered that the report produced by the University following the interim review was thorough, helpful and could serve as a model of its kind.

58 INTI's formal response to the interim review appeared to the audit team to have addressed the matters raised by the review report and included an action plan. The team discussed the outcomes of the interim review and the implementation of its action plan with members of INTI and was able to confirm that the findings of the report were fully understood as were the changes that the University had initiated to administrative and quality procedures following the review.

Annual monitoring

59 Programmes are normally approved for six years, but are subject to AQM. The University operates generic AQM procedures for all its programmes, essentially involving school boards reporting on programmes for which they are responsible to QAC; the latter then produces an *Annual Report on Academic Work*, which goes to Academic Board. All of the University's collaborative programmes are considered as part of this exercise; the precise form of monitoring may vary, however, provided that arrangements are comparable in approach and standard, and have been approved by the initial CARP.

60 All forms of AQM operated by the University for collaborative provision involve reports by partner institutions which are considered by school boards in their input to AQM. Schools produce statements on the standing of each link, and these and the original reports are considered by SAGOP on behalf of QAC, to which the former makes an annual overall report identifying good practice and areas for improvement. On the basis of the records of AQM available in the base room, and its discussions with members of the University and INTI, the audit team commends the University for the design of its annual monitoring arrangements for overseas collaborative provision.

61 In the case of the INTI link, it is specified in the formal Institutional Agreement that, for each programme, INTI should produce an Annual Report by 30 September. The topics to be covered include staffing and physical resources; staff development activity; the operation of procedures to accredit prior learning and examples of equivalence of entry qualifications; recruitment; operation of the programme; and results and awards. Annual reports also comment on student feedback; in addition, those seen by the audit team

contained summaries of issues raised in 'Programme Consultative Assemblies' convened for students at INTI. INTI has introduced an interesting enhancement to the University's standard AQM arrangements whereby it now provides a draft Annual Report to the University by the end of August, for feedback before writing the final report. Annual reports produced by INTI for transmission to the University are used in INTI's own internal quality procedures and are submitted to its Academic Board for approval.

62 The *Commentary* noted that the University had commended the Annual Reports from INTI for their self-critical accounts of the programmes of study. Copies of several such reports were placed in the base room the University provided to support the audit. The audit team took careful note of their contents and was able to confirm that they were substantial, comprehensive and thorough reviews and evaluations of the previous session.

63 When received by the University, the Annual Report produced by INTI is considered first by the IPSC within MIS, which makes an annual monitoring report to the School Board (see below, paragraph 83). Each year MIS provides a commentary on the operation of the scheme detailing visits and their outcomes, and the Annual Report from INTI and the School's Commentary feed into summary reports by school boards which are considered by QAC and, in overall form, Academic Board (see above, paragraph 59). Annual Reports and School Commentaries are also sent to SAGOP, where they are considered and where items of good practice and areas for improvement are identified for comment in its overall report to QAC.

64 As noted in paragraph 56 above, unmediated feedback from students studying with the partner is gathered by the University in the course of validation and approval. Other than through interim reviews and reapprovals, however, access on the part of BSc (Hons) Computer Science students to members of the University, unmediated by members of INTI, seemed to be restricted to the International Programme Manager (IPM). Additional student feedback is provided through summaries in Annual Reports to the University of discussions at 'Programme Consultative Assemblies' convened by INTI. Students at INTI were nonetheless confident that they could bring their comments to the attention of the University and INTI and that any concerns would be addressed.

65 The audit team reviewed the University's AQM arrangements for its collaborative provision and came to the view that they were sound and effective and that the University should be commended for their overall robustness.

Assurance of the standards of awards

66 As noted in paragraph 24, although 'operational aspects of individual links are delegated to schools, the University is responsible for the standards of awards made in its name'. The University identified the following as contributing to the assurance of the standards of its awards in partnership provision:

- clear statements of the aims and learning objectives of programmes of study which are checked and confirmed by validation and review panels;
- progressive implementation of programme specifications and module descriptors in partnership provision;
- use of subject benchmark statements where relevant;
- careful monitoring of student performance;
- monitoring of student admissions and associated procedures, including recognition of qualifications and the accreditation of prior learning;
- adoption of standard University procedures for the nomination and appointment of external examiners;
- scrutiny of reports from external examiners by the School and the University's Academic Registrar independent of scrutiny by INTI;
- an Annual Report to QAC by the Academic Registrar on the external examiners' reports for the previous session, which from 2002 will make explicit reference to reports from external examiners relating to overseas partnership programmes.

67 Overall admissions policy and procedures at partner institutions (including the security of the examinations process) are considered as part of the process of institutional approval, while entry requirements for programmes are considered by CARPs and PARPs in the course of their scrutinies. The audit team was able to confirm that in the case of the BSc (Hons) Computer Science at INTI the University's entry requirements had been embodied in the relevant formal agreements.

68 Initially, the standard entry qualification agreed by the approval panel for the BSc (Hons) Computer Science was the INTI Diploma, normally awarded to students after four semesters of study. The University's confidence in the reliability and level of this award was underpinned by INTI's practice of appointing external examiners for its Diploma who have customarily been drawn from UK universities, chiefly (but not limited to) Coventry University and the University of Hertfordshire.

69 In the case of the 3+0 programmes it has validated to operate at INTI, the University has agreed with its partner required levels of attainment at STPM (Malaysian state examinations roughly equivalent to GCE A-Level), the Malaysian Unified Examination Certificate, the South Australian Matriculation, and in the internationally recognised Test of English as a Foreign Language and the International English Language Testing System. INTI has also asked MIS to advise upon the acceptability of qualifications from other providers (including other UK awarding bodies) for entry to Coventry University programmes and has agreed those qualifications which may be accepted without further reference to the University. A common list of such qualifications is held by the University and INTI and updated annually. INTI is required to list the entry qualifications of all new entrants to the BSc (Hons) Computer Science in its Annual Report to the University. These figures are monitored by MIS.

70 At the time of the audit INTI operated three semesters in each session, with three intakes per session. Students at INTI have, therefore, been able to complete a six-semester programme of studies in two calendar years in Malaysia, rather than the three calendar years required for an equivalent programme of studies in Coventry. In September 2001, following advice from the Malaysian Higher Education Authority, LAN required PHEIs to begin to move to a 2.5 semester academic session for newly registered students. Members of INTI told the audit team that arrangements to give effect to this requirement were being finalised at the time of the visit.

Familiarising staff and students at the partner with UK academic standards

71 It is University policy that English is the language of delivery and assessment for all of its educational provision. INTI is a totally English-speaking environment; students are therefore taught and assessed in English. In comparison with other aspects of its partnership with INTI, the *Commentary* provided little information on how the University had assisted staff and students there to adjust to the University's expectations for final-year honours level work and assessments, including examinations. It did, however, note that in its most recent Annual Reports INTI had described staff development activities with 'an appropriate focus on support for degree teaching' (see below, paragraph 90).

72 Discussions with members of the University and INTI enabled the audit team to establish that the *Commentary* might have understated the work the University had done with its partner to develop the understanding of its staff of the level and demands of final-year honours study for a UK award. For example,

INTI teaching staff told the team that their work with University subject advisers and external examiners in setting, approving and assessing assignments, final-year projects and unseen examinations, had given them a clear understanding of the level of attainment required, which they had been able to communicate to students (see below, paragraph 91).

73 INTI is a multi-campus organisation and several of the University's programmes have been validated for operation on more than one INTI campus. This has created a need for arrangements to calibrate and maintain the academic standards of awards, not only between INTI and the University but also throughout INTI. The *Commentary* described arrangements developed by INTI to maintain identical academic standards for awards offered by more than one campus which has involved the creation of cross-campus teams to supervise the production of examination papers and the internal (INTI) moderation of marking. The introduction of these arrangements appeared to the audit team to be have been an important and helpful development, likely to assist INTI staff to understand the level of a UK honours degree award. This is an arrangement which the University will no doubt wish to continue to support.

The assessment of students

74 Coursework and project work are set by staff at INTI and the University has provided development and training for those of its partner's staff involved in setting such assessments. Members of MIS have provided their colleagues at INTI with sample specifications for coursework and guidelines for projects, and the latter told members of the audit team that they considered themselves to have been well briefed on the University's expectations.

75 Draft examination papers are set at INTI and forwarded to MIS at the University. Papers are moderated by subject team leaders who are responsible for commenting upon the content and approach in comparison with papers set at the University, in order to maintain the same academic standards. Draft examination papers are also sent to the external examiners for their comments. Comments from University staff and the external examiners are returned to INTI for consideration and action, and a response is recorded as part of the internal procedures at INTI. An internal University report has noted that the Malaysian practice of operating on the basis of three semesters per session had occasionally led to difficulties in contacting University staff who were required to moderate draft examination papers during vacations. The University will wish to consider the desirability of measures to ensure that relevant University staff are available for such purposes.

76 Responsibility for the conduct of examinations at INTI lies with its Examinations Office. Arrangements for the security of examination papers and scripts and for the conduct of examinations were agreed by the University and INTI in 1998, and were reviewed as part of the interim review in 2001 (see above, paragraph 54). The audit team discussed examination and assessment arrangements with members of the Examinations Office and other INTI staff. Although members of INTI were unsure that the University had undertaken a formal check of the College's examination arrangements (including the security of papers and scripts), they described the frequent visits made by University staff to those parts of INTI Nilai which handled such matters. The team was satisfied that support and teaching staff at INTI Nilai had a clear understanding of the University's and INTI's requirements in these matters.

77 Examination scripts, coursework and projects are internally marked and moderated by INTI staff, and presented to an internal meeting prior to the formal Examination Board at which examination scripts, coursework and projects are scrutinised by the external examiner and by University subject advisers from MIS. The latter moderate a sample to check the comparability of student achievement and marking across the programme. They also analyse the performance of different teaching groups and check for anomalies that, if found, are addressed through a range of measures which might include mark adjustments, rescaling or remarking subject to the approval of the external examiner.

78 Following moderation, analysis and any necessary adjustments, the examination board, chaired by INTI's Vice-President (Academic), is held at INTI in the presence of an external examiner. The latter confirms the final record of grades, marks and awards, and submits a report both to INTI and to the University. In addition, the University's subject advisers produce a report which is submitted to IPSC in MIS and copied to INTI.

79 In its *Commentary* the University noted that the Interim Review of 2001 had explored the approach taken by INTI to the consideration of reports from external examiners. The review panel found that reports were read by INTI's Vice-President for Academic Affairs and that matters requiring attention were dealt with by the Dean and Assistant Dean of the School, reporting to him. The panel suggested that a more systematic approach was necessary to ensure that the contents of external examiners' reports were more widely known among INTI staff. The audit team discussed subsequent developments with members of INTI and learned that INTI's arrangements for considering reports from external examiners continued to be as described in the report of the interim review.

The University will wish to consider how it might encourage the wider discussion of external examiners' reports within its partner.

Nomination, appointment and induction of external examiners

80 Arrangements for the nomination and appointment of external examiners are set out in the formal Agreements governing the partnership, and follow standard University procedures. In the case of the 3+0 programmes validated by the University, INTI nominates the external examiners who are then subject to approval and appointment by the University. Before appointment, nominated external examiners are given a preliminary briefing by MIS staff outlining the nature of their duties and they are also encouraged to contact existing or previous examiners for information about their experience of the link. Once appointed, external examiners are sent an *External Examiners' Handbook*, and offered briefing workshops on central University procedures, local requirements and regulatory frameworks. At least one external examiner is required to attend each examination board convened at INTI.

81 The *Commentary* noted that the programme currently has three external examiners who are all senior members of staff at UK universities. They are all either current or recent examiners at the University and, as such, are familiar with requirements for its own provision which enables calibration with UK standards. One external examiner visits INTI each semester, the present team sharing this responsibility in rotation. Each member of the external examining team receives the reports of their colleagues. As noted above, following the meeting of the Examination Board at INTI, the report of the relevant external examiner is sent to the School and the University's Academic Registrar. These arrangements appeared to the audit team to have been soundly designed, carefully administered and to be commendable overall.

82 Within the University, reports from external examiners are received by the relevant School Board and by the Academic Registrar, who presents a University-wide overview report to QAC. In addition, for collaborative provision, external examiners' reports are submitted to SAGOP as part of the AQM exercise (see paragraph 59 above). Administrative support for all approval and review events is supplied by PaQS. These arrangements appeared to the audit team to be working satisfactorily and to be secure.

Quality of learning opportunities and student support

Liaison and administration

83 Within the University's devolved quality arrangements, subject and discipline level administration and liaison for the link are primarily undertaken at school level by MIS, while institution level liaison is supported by PaQS. The link is monitored within MIS by IPSC, the membership of which includes representatives of all subject groups within MIS and a representative of QAC. At the time of the audit the Chair of SAGOP was also a member of IPSC. IPSC is responsible for the development and implementation of MIS policy for international activities and for advising the School Board or the Dean, as appropriate, about these matters. In addition, IPSC has responsibility for the welfare of international students within the School and the provision of a link tutor for each overseas collaborative programme.

84 Day-to-day liaison between MIS and INTI is the responsibility of designated link tutors, subject advisers and the School's IPM. Subject advisers play a key role in advising on examinations and moderating the marking of assignments and examination scripts (see above, paragraph 72). Within the School the link is administered through the IPM who, in practice, is the key link person. She receives proposals for curriculum change, reports from external examiners, and marks, handbooks and other documents from INTI, and is responsible for ensuring that comments by MIS staff on marks and marking are given appropriate circulation within the School. Comments from staff and students at INTI reinforced the audit team's understanding of the central part played by the IPM in the effective monitoring and administration of the link from the University.

85 On the basis of its experience in developing the link with INTI, MIS has produced an 'Operating Manual' which is used as a basic point of reference by all collaborative ventures operated by the School on behalf of the University. The Operating Manual has been identified by the University as a model of good practice to be commended and disseminated to others responsible for the stewardship of 3+0 programmes in Malaysia. The audit team found the Operating Manual assisted it to understand how the School discharged its responsibilities to the University for the management of the link, particularly since the University does not normally issue staff with a consolidated quality manual/quality assurance handbook for partnerships: senior officers, members of the QAC and heads of schools receive an updated copy each year, while staff involved in particular quality assurance procedures are

provided with those sections which are relevant to the task in hand (for example, an institutional approval panel) when needed.

86 In adopting the approach outlined above, the University's intention has been to ensure that committee members and office holders who need to refer to procedural information work only with current versions. The audit team was told that a full version of the current handbook was always available to staff on the University's intranet (although the team was unable to confirm this). It seemed to the team that for overseas partners, where internet links might be more intermittent or slower than those within the UK, the lack of a regularly updated and complete paper version of the University's regulatory and operational documents for partnership links is disadvantageous. The University may wish to keep this approach under review.

87 In addition to contacts through the IPM, the link tutor and subject advisers, the *Commentary* described a range of other contacts between MIS and INTI, including frequent (sometimes daily) contact between the course management team at INTI and their counterparts at MIS by email, fax and telephone; a structured programme of visits by MIS staff to INTI and vice versa; and active discussions about research links at the two institutions. In 2000, there had been seven visits by University staff to INTI for purposes including development work, external examining, graduation ceremonies and a more limited number of visits to the University from INTI staff, although the audit team was interested to learn that one member of INTI staff had been seconded to the University at the time of the audit to undertake a research project intended to lead to a PhD. From its meetings with members of the University and at INTI, the team is in a position to confirm the regularity and nature of the contacts between the partners were as described in the *Commentary*.

Staffing and staff development

88 The University considers that staff appointment and staff development are the responsibility of INTI and confines its own responsibilities to receiving information annually from its partner on the nature of the staff INTI assigns to teach on the validated programme. Senior members of INTI told the audit team that in the early days of its partnership with the University, curricula vitae of potential members of staff had been sent to Coventry, and that INTI had been given feedback which had enabled it to refine its understanding of the University's requirements in such matters. The University has also encouraged its partner to support those of its staff wishing to take up training and development opportunities offered by the University of Hertfordshire at INTI.

89 The audit team discussed INTI's approach to staffing and staff development with members of its senior management who described its internal procedures, which included consideration of qualifications, teaching experience and a demonstration lecture to members of the College. Reflecting on changes in the University's arrangements to support staff development at INTI, the team considered they provided a good example of how the University had adapted its approach to quality management within the link in response to its partner's increasing maturity.

90 The level of staff development and training provided by INTI to support the validated programme is generally considered through the annual monitoring process and in review events. Annual reports from INTI to the University give detailed returns of staff development and training undertaken by INTI staff and have shown a significant increase in the volume of staff development activity, with a change in the focus from skills-based to academic training, with the intention of enhancing the support available to students studying at final-year honours level and, in particular, the support available for the supervision of final-year projects.

91 The audit team discussed staff development in support of the validated programme with members of the University in the UK and members of staff at INTI. The team noted that when members of the University visit INTI to support progression and assessment boards, or for other purposes, such opportunities are taken to provide programme-specific and more general development, for example, in assessment and marking. Members of INTI who discussed the University's support for staff development in Malaysia were appreciative of its contribution to their professional development, and welcomed the University's proposal to offer its Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning to INTI staff as part of a development package.

Provision of information and advice to students

92 In each formal Agreement with a partner institution the University sets out an overall framework for the academic advice to be given to students. Partner institutions are required to produce handbooks which conform to this framework, and to submit them as part of the initial programme approval process. Subsequently, the production of handbooks is the responsibility of the partner institution, and their contents are monitored through interim reviews and programme reapprovals.

93 The contents of the *Handbook* used by BSc (Hons) Computer Science students at INTI were considered as part of the interim review conducted by the University in February 2001, which suggested that students

needed to be given clearer advice on plagiarism. A copy of the current *Handbook* was provided for the audit team, which was able to confirm its alignment with the overall framework set out in the formal Agreement for the programme. The team was also able to confirm that the advice of the interim review had been acted on and that a brief section on plagiarism had been added to the current text, which might benefit from further development.

94 Students at INTI who met the audit team were aware of the contents of the *Handbook* and considered that it offered a comprehensive and useful introduction to the programme. Students registered for the University's award who are based at INTI are provided with advice on the complaints and appeals procedures operated by INTI Nilai. This refers students who wish to complain to the Head of the Programme; if not satisfied they may complain to INTI's Quality Assurance Office and then to the Dean and the School authorities. A similar process applies to the case of appeals against the decision of an assessment or examination board. The *Handbook* does not indicate that students registered for the University's award have access to its complaints and appeals procedures. This is a deficiency which it would be advisable for the University to address at the earliest opportunity.

95 The provision of pastoral care for BSc (Hons) Computer Science students at INTI is the responsibility of the latter which has introduced student mentoring, peer tutoring and provides a counselling centre. Students with whom the audit team discussed these arrangements considered them to be appropriate and effective.

Student progression to the UK

96 In order to ensure that students can transfer successfully from INTI to study at Coventry, the University relies on three quality arrangements. First, the relevant CARP and/or PARP panels are required to consider articulation between the partner's provision and the University's before recommending approval; second, it is reconsidered in interim reviews. Lastly, and before the validation of the present 3+0 programmes, arrangements for the appointment of external examiners from the UK for the INTI Diploma had given the University reason for confidence that the levels of attainment of students at the end of their fourth semester of study at INTI would satisfactorily prepare them to begin studies on semester 5 of the BSc (Hons) Computer Science.

97 According to the *Commentary*, University-wide arrangements for student transfer were reviewed as part of its system for quinquennial institutional internal audit, which had concluded that they were appropriate. The *Commentary* also stated that 'the performance of

students who have transferred to Coventry is testimony both to their assiduity and to the systems for support and academic preparedness'. Members of staff at INTI with whom the audit team discussed this matter confirmed that they monitored the progress of former INTI students who have transferred to the University to complete their studies and were confident that there was no cause for concern.

98 Since the introduction of 3+0 programmes at INTI, fewer students have chosen to finish their studies at the University in the UK, but a small number continues to do so. According to the *Commentary*, while students intending to transfer are still in Malaysia, every effort is made to enable them to meet the IPM for a briefing on the University and on the academic aspects of their studies. At INTI the audit team met students who were intending to transfer to the UK. They appeared to have had limited contact with University staff, but staff in the INTI Placements Office had offered them information and opportunities for a short visit to the University before coming to a decision. Once a student has decided to study at Coventry, the University's International Office provides assistance with applications, transfers and accommodation.

99 The University provides an induction programme for international students which the International Office supplements with additional events to familiarise newly arrived students with life and study in the UK. Newly arrived international students are also invited to a School induction programme run by MIS, and the IPM acts as personal tutor to all students from overseas who enter the School with advanced standing. In those cases where the English language competence of international students is felt to need development, students may be required or advised to undertake a pre-session English course delivered before the start of the semester. English as a Foreign Language tuition is available to all overseas students.

Conclusions

100 The link between Coventry University (the University) and the INTI International Group of Colleges (INTI) was first made in 1990. Subsequently, it has developed from an articulation arrangement in individual cases, to a general articulation arrangement, to the delivery of validated 3+0 programmes of which the BSc (Hons) Computer Science is one, and to the designation of INTI College Malaysia, Bandar Baru, Nilai as an Associate College of the University.

101 The evidence made available in the UK and Malaysia by the partners to support the audit confirmed, in general, the accuracy, reliability and currency of the information upon which the University

relies to monitor the performance of the link. The same information was cited in the *Commentary* that the University produced for the audit, which was itself frank, full and, in many parts, genuinely evaluative. Members of the University and its partner who contributed to the audit were similarly open and evaluative in discussing the past, present and future development of the link. These are the characteristics of a mature and mutually complementary partnership.

102 In addition to the *Commentary*, many other internal documents provided for the audit displayed the University's capacity for self-evaluation, including an analysis of the extent to which its quality and academic standards arrangements in partnership links were consistent with the precepts of *Section 2* of QAA's *Code of practice*. The findings of this internal analysis showed that in all but a few areas the University's arrangements were consistent with the precepts of QAA's *Code*; other documents showed how areas identified for development were being tackled. There can be general confidence that the University's quality and academic standards arrangements are in alignment with the precepts of QAA's *Code*, although additional work to confirm students' rights of access to the University's complaints and appeals processes would be advisable.

103 Since commencing the active development of this particular link in 1996, the University's general arrangements for quality management, including the approval of partner institutions, the validation, approval and review of programmes offered through partnerships, and their annual scrutiny, have been progressively enhanced. There can be confidence in these centrally operated procedures.

104 Much of the routine of quality management for the BSc (Hons) Computer Science at INTI is handled by the School of Mathematical and Information Sciences, under the University's established procedures for the delegation of authority. As evidenced by this link, School-level quality management arrangements for partnership links are robust and carefully monitored by central University committees, on behalf of the Quality Assurance Committee and Academic Board. At both University and School level, dedicated support units such as the Programmes and Quality Support section of the Academic Registry and individual officers, such as the International Programme Manager in the School, make substantial contributions to the successful operation of the link. There can be confidence in these arrangements.

105 Since 1998-99, the University has worked to develop a new form of partnership collaboration: 'supported validation'. The introduction of this hybrid framework has assisted INTI to extend its experience

with curriculum development to honours level provision, and to enhance its assessment and progression arrangements for honours level awards within a sound framework which, at the same time, has safeguarded the academic standards of the University's awards and assured the quality of the students' learning opportunities. This represents a notable innovation in the University's management of its partnership links which is worthy of wider notice.

Appendix A

Developments since the audit

- The University has reviewed its documentation relating to the approval and review processes and is working on the following:
 - Course Developers' Guide;
 - Quality Assurance Handbook;
 - Handbook for Overseas Collaborative Arrangements;
 - Handbook for UK Partnerships.

These will be available both as hard copy and electronically.

- The University will ensure that information on students' rights in respect of complaints and appeals under the different types of collaborative arrangement is communicated clearly to the students.
- Work continues to maintain the University's adherence to the precepts of QAA's *Code*; in particular, determination of a costing model for overseas collaborative arrangements and the approach to consultation of institutions and response to enquiries about potential collaborative institutions.
- Since the audit visit, the Schools of International Studies and Law and Business have merged to form the Coventry Business School.

Appendix B**INTI College validated degrees enrolment numbers**

	Semester 5	ICM	ICSJ	Total
Apr-98	BA BIT		20	20
	BSc CS		36	36
	All courses	0	56	56
1997-98	Annual total	0	56	56
Aug-98	BA BIT	13	25	38
	BSc CS	20	20	40
	All courses	33	45	78
Dec-98	BA BIT	24	17	41
	BSc CS	22	40	62
	All courses	46	57	103
Apr-99	BA BIT	67	53	120
	BSc CS	58	86	144
	All courses	125	139	264
1998-99	Annual total	204	241	445
Aug-99	BA BIT	49	24	73
	BSc CS	47	63	110
	All courses	96	87	183
Dec -99	BA BIT	37	74	111
	BSc CS	59	75	134
	All courses	96	149	245
Apr-2000	BA BIT	57	80	137
	BSc CS	40	64	104
	All courses	97	144	241
1999-2000	Annual total	289	380	669
Aug-2000	BA BIT	51	47	98
	BSc CS	44	47	91
	All courses	95	94	189
Dec-2000	BA BIT	58	66	124
	BSc CS	58	51	109
	All courses	116	117	233
Apr-01	BA BIT	47	64	111
	BSc CS	68	57	125
	BSc SE	7		7
	All courses	122	121	243
2000-01	Annual total	333	332	665

	Semester 5	ICM	ICSJ	Total
Aug-01	BA BIT	47	37	84
	BSc CS	64	38	102
	BSc SE	5		5
	BSc CSN	13		13
	BA MC	5		5
	All courses	134	75	209
Dec-01	BA BIT	71	37	108
	BSc CS	60	45	105
	BSc SE	17		17
	BSc CSN	22		22
	BA MC	16		16
	All courses	186	82	268
Apr-02	BA BIT			0
	BSc CS			0
	BSc SE			0
	BSc CSN			0
	BA MC			0
	All courses	0	0	0
2001-02	Annual total	320	157	477
1997-02	Overall total	1146	1166	2312

