



Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of Anglo American Educational Services Ltd, March 2017

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 Anglo American Educational Services Ltd (AES) has made commendable progress with implementing the action plan from the March 2016 [Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight](#).

Section 2: Changes since the last QAA review

2 Student numbers have increased by approximately 30 students, with an annual enrolment of 300-350. Enrolments are staggered throughout the year.

3 AES has further developed its partnership with London South Bank University (LSBU), with the first students enrolled on LSBU courses in autumn 2016. In addition, during 2016, agreements were signed with the University of Connecticut (UConn) and the University of New Haven (UNH) to offer semester-length programmes in autumn and spring. The agreements with UConn and UNH confirm that AES responsibilities include UK Visas and Immigration Tier 4 sponsorship and housing provision - and the provision of classroom space and full pastoral support for students on the London programme. AES is equally responsible for managing academic operations, including recruitment of all teaching staff, providing suitable syllabuses to the home campus for approval, and timetabling classes. As a result of these new partnerships, and a large new summer 2016 group from the University of California, Berkeley, AES has expanded the number of adjunct faculty under its primary or joint supervision, and has developed a number of new course offers.

Section 3: Findings from the monitoring visit

4 All the actions from the original Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight (RSEO) report of 2012 have been completed and embedded within AES processes. No recommendations for action were identified in the 2016 RSEO report. The two areas of good practice have been further developed and embedded.

5 Building on good practice, AES has recently introduced a range of staff handbooks for visiting US faculty and adjunct faculty. These provide contextual and operational information for academic staff visiting from the US, and clarify adjunct faculty responsibilities, and internal and external regulatory matters. AES has built on its work with adjunct lecturers, who are well briefed on the requirements of the US educational system, and further interaction has taken place, with US visiting faculty. Adjunct faculty staff receive a comprehensive guide to their responsibilities and to what they might expect from AES. Further work has taken place in developing AES adviser handbooks for internships and for the LSBU and Birkbeck College partnerships. These have clarified the responsibilities for the AES coordinator, site supervisor and students.

6 US partner universities usually arrange a meeting on campus for all students planning to undertake the London programme. US universities determine the selection criteria for their own study abroad programmes. In addition, AES requires that students have a minimum grade point average of 2.75 (out of four). Students not studying at a US university are also required to have an IELTS score of 6.0 if English is not their first language.

7 Receiving transcripts of student achievement from home universities has supported AES in assessing the appropriate level of study, and the appropriate allocation of courses for students. A standard grading report now supports the interim reviews of students' progress, additional to other course reports, which primarily use home universities' models.

8 Further work has been undertaken to brief students prior to their enrolment. Online briefings have also been held to support the visa application process. Students confirmed this to be a positive development. They consider AES to be highly organised: study is well-planned, responsive and friendly, and academic and support staff are helpful.

9 The AES internship coordinator has been developing new placements in STEM areas, and notably in construction science. AES endeavours to visit all companies that have not previously hosted interns. This helps to ensure that providers have a suitable working environment for students, and that the on-site supervisor fully understands what is involved in hosting an intern. This process ensures that students are matched to the right company and can fulfil their academic objectives and personal goals.

10 Students find the induction and orientation process in London effective, and are very positive about the experience provided through a wide range of relevant internships. Newly introduced online application interviews have allowed AES staff to match students to internships. Students submit a CV and letter of intent to support their application, which allows both student and provider to make appropriate choices. This model has resulted in a reduced internship dropout rate. Some students do not currently have advance contact with placement providers, although previous students' internship blogs provide a useful insight into the experience they can expect.

11 Students particularly appreciate the wide range of courses offered by LSBU, restricted only by timetabling and course prerequisites. However, some students raised concerns about changes at short notice, and the reduction in courses available through Birkbeck College, in some cases after students had committed to undertake the London programme.

12 Staff development activity has been further extended. Adjunct faculty staff receive induction and training and have access to professional development funds, and are encouraged to access staff development through their main employer. The Student Services Manager is currently being supported on a Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship. AES staff have attended various workshops and conferences on study and experiential learning abroad. These activities include seminars on the academic, cultural and practitioner aspects of overseas study and the internship experience. The Internship Coordinator attended the British Universities Transatlantic Exchange Association workshop.

13 The well-established AES deliberative structure works effectively and the internal quality monitoring and review processes continue to enhance provision. The steering groups overseeing the partnerships with Birkbeck College and, more recently, with LSBU provide a valuable forum for reviewing their effectiveness, and improving the student learning experience.

14 Students confirm that comprehensive information is provided by AES, including information related to visa application. Some partner universities hold an information day in the US, which includes briefings for parents and for prospective students, and supports the decision to study at AES.

15 Student feedback is received through evaluations for each course. Regular student representative meetings allow students to communicate any feedback they have through their peers, although not all students are fully aware of the formal representation process

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

16 AES continues to work with a wide range of partners and with relevant external reference points to which US home universities are subject, as well as the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code). Other mechanisms, such as the regular presence of US faculty in London, ensure that full consideration is taken of relevant reference points. All home universities are accredited by appropriate bodies and agencies in the US. Regional US accreditation and professional body requirements ensure alignment with student learning outcomes as required.

17 The London programme partners, Birkbeck College and LSBU fall under the remit of the QAA review process. Written partnership agreements between AES and its partners set out clear responsibilities that are well-understood and effectively managed. AES has explicitly developed its partnerships with reference to expectations of the Quality Code, particularly *Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others*. Other Chapters of the Quality Code are also considered formally by the Academic Committee.

Section 5: Background to the monitoring visit

18 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.

19 The monitoring visit was carried out by Simon Ives, QAA Officer, and Dr Jenny Gilbert, review panel member, on 7 March 2017.

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