

## **Integrated quality and enhancement review**

### **Summative review**

June 2009

Calderdale College

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## **Preface**

The mission of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is to safeguard the public interest in sound standards of higher education qualifications and to inform and encourage continual improvement in the management of the quality of higher education.

As part of this mission, QAA undertakes reviews of higher education provision delivered in further education colleges. This process is known as Integrated quality and enhancement review (IQER).

## **Purpose of IQER**

Higher education programmes delivered by further education colleges (colleges) lead to awards made by higher education institutions or Edexcel. The awarding bodies retain ultimate responsibility for maintaining the academic standards of their awards and assuring the quality of the students' learning opportunities. The purpose of IQER is, therefore, to safeguard the public interest in the academic standards and quality of higher education delivered in colleges. It achieves this by providing objective and independent information about the way in which colleges discharge their responsibilities within the context of their partnership agreements with awarding bodies. IQER focuses on three core themes: academic standards, quality of learning opportunities and public information.

## **The IQER process**

IQER is a peer review process. It is divided into two complementary stages: Developmental engagement and Summative review. In accordance with the published method, colleges with less than 100 full-time equivalent students funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) may elect not to take part in Developmental engagements, but all HEFCE-funded colleges will take part in Summative review.

## **Developmental engagement**

Developmental engagements explore in an open and collegial way the challenges colleges face in specific areas of higher education provision. Each college's first, and often their only, Developmental engagement focuses on student assessment.

The main elements of a Developmental engagement are:

- a self-evaluation by the college
- an optional written submission by the student body
- a preparatory meeting between the college and the IQER coordinator several weeks before the Developmental engagement visit
- the Developmental engagement visit, which normally lasts two days
- the evaluation of the extent to which the college manages effectively its responsibilities for the delivery of academic standards and the quality of its higher education provision, plus the arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of public information it is responsible for publishing about its higher education
- the production of a written report of the team's findings.

To promote a collegial approach, Developmental engagement teams include up to two members of staff from the further education college under review. They are known as nominees for this process.

## Summative review

Summative review addresses all aspects of a college's HEFCE-funded higher education provision and provides judgements on the management and delivery of this provision against core themes one and two, and a conclusion against core theme three.

Summative review shares the main elements of Developmental engagement described above. Summative review teams, however, are composed of the IQER coordinator and QAA reviewers. They do not include nominees.

## Evidence

In order to obtain evidence for the review, IQER teams carry out a number of activities, including:

- reviewing the college's self-evaluation and its internal procedures and documents
- reviewing the optional written submission from students
- asking questions of relevant staff
- talking to students about their experiences.

IQER teams' expectations of colleges are guided by a nationally agreed set of reference points, known as the Academic Infrastructure. These are published by QAA and consist of:

- *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*, which includes descriptions of different higher education qualifications
- the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*
- subject benchmark statements, which describe the characteristics of degrees in different subjects
- *Guidelines for preparing programme specifications*, which are descriptions of what is on offer to students in individual programmes of study
- award benchmark statements, which describe the generic characteristics of an award, for example Foundation Degrees.

In addition, Developmental engagement teams gather evidence by focusing on particular aspects of the theme under review. These are known as 'lines of enquiry'.

## Outcomes of IQER

Each Developmental engagement and Summative review results in a written report:

- Developmental engagement reports set out good practice and recommendations and implications for the college and its awarding bodies, but do not contain judgements. Recommendations will be at one of three levels - **essential**, **advisable** and **desirable**. To promote an open and collegial approach to Developmental engagements, the reports are not published.
- Summative review reports identify good practice and contain judgements about whether the college is discharging its responsibilities effectively against core themes one and two above. The judgements are **confidence**, **limited confidence** or **no confidence**. There is no judgement for the third core theme, instead the report will provide evaluation and a conclusion. Summative review reports are published.

Differentiated judgements can be made where a team judges a college's management of the standards and/or quality of the awards made by one awarding body to be different from those made by another.

Colleges are required to develop an action plan to address any recommendations arising from IQER. Progress against these action plans is monitored by QAA in conjunction with HEFCE and/or the college's awarding body(ies) as appropriate. The college's action plan in response to the conclusions of the Summative review will be published as part of the report.

## Executive summary

### The Summative review of Calderdale College carried out in June 2009

As a result of its investigations, the Summative review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreements, for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreements, for the quality of learning opportunities it offers. The team considers that reliance **can** be placed on the accuracy and/or completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

### Good practice

The team has identified the following good practice for dissemination:

- the course review and evaluation reports for the FdA Early Years and HND Business are highly evaluative, comprehensive and contribute to the effective management of the provision
- the programme specifications for the FdA Early Years and the FdSc Networking and Business Support are detailed, informative and useful guides for students, especially in relation to subject knowledge and intended learning outcomes
- the internal validation process for the Foundation Degree proposals is rigorous and carefully documented and makes use of a list of well-considered prompts to test out the strength of proposals, external advisers and employers
- there are robust procedures and detailed documentation accompanying the receipt of external examiners' reports that involves the grading of risks, the monitoring of progress in addressing concerns and signing off completed action plans
- the HE Forum is used effectively to make staff aware of the higher education policy and practices, the Academic Infrastructure and good practice in the College
- the student handbooks for the FdA Early Years and the FdSc Health and Social Care are accessible, well organised and contain appropriately relevant and focused information for students.

### Recommendations

The team has also identified a number of recommendations for the enhancement of the higher education provision.

The team considers that it would be **advisable** for the College to:

- complete the production of its handbook for the management of work-based/related learning and include information on the responsibilities of the work-based mentor
- include information in the higher education prospectus on how students can progress to articulated awards, in line with the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark*.

The team considers that it would be **desirable** for the College to:

- expedite the completion of the HE Quality Manual and the process of transferring higher education quality assurance documentation to a dedicated place on its website
- formalise the receipt and approval of course evaluation reports through, for example, providing minutes of decisions taken in the HE Management Meeting
- correct the misleading information on 'Student Complaints', in the HE Diary.

## A Introduction and context

1 This report presents the findings of the Summative review of higher education, funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), conducted at Calderdale College (the College). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the College discharges its responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes that the College delivers on behalf of the University of Bradford, the University of Huddersfield, Leeds Metropolitan University and Edexcel. The review was carried out by Ms Catherine Fairhurst, Ms Susan Miller, Mr Bob Millington (reviewers) and Mr Philip Markey (coordinator).

2 The Summative review team (the team) conducted the review in agreement with the College and in accordance with *The handbook for Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review* (the handbook), published by QAA. Evidence in support of the Summative review included the College's higher education strategy, development plan, the partnership agreements, the HE Student Survey, HE Forum minutes, the College management structure, student handbooks, staff development records, higher education quality cycle, external examiner reports, examination board minutes, employer engagement documents, marketing documents and publishing policy and resource information. In particular, the team drew on the findings and recommendations of the Developmental engagement in assessment. A summary of findings from this Developmental engagement is provided in Section C of this report. The review also considered the College's use of the Academic Infrastructure, developed by QAA on behalf of higher education providers, with reference to the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (*Code of practice*), subject and award benchmark statements, *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and programme specifications.

3 In order to assist HEFCE to gain information to assist with the assessment of the impact of Foundation Degree (FD) awards, Section D of this report summarises details of the FD programmes delivered at the College.

4 Calderdale College is a medium-sized further education college within the Metropolitan Borough of Calderdale offering a wide range of provision for 14-19 year-old students and for adults. There are 228 full-time students and 131 part-time students, a full-time equivalent of 300 students on higher education programmes. Of these, 157 full-time equivalents are directly funded by HEFCE. The programmes are delivered by the Faculty of Art, Design and Construction and the Faculty of Health, Care, Education and Business on the main campus in Halifax and, for the art and design programmes, at the campus in Todmorden.

5 Higher education at the College has developed from the long-standing BTEC Higher National and Teacher Training provision to Foundation Degrees and 'top-up' awards. The College's aim is 'Inspiring Students to Succeed in Life and Work' and it has realigned its higher education strategy to develop higher skills for customer service, technology, health, creative industries and business and public service among the local population. The College is a member of the West Yorkshire Life Learning Network (the Network) formed in 2007. The College has the following higher education provision.

### **Validated by the University of Bradford**

FdSc Health and Social Care

### **Validated by Edexcel**

- HNC Business
- HNC Construction
- HNC Graphic Design
- HND 3D Design
- HND Business
- HND Fine Art
- HND Graphics
- HND Performing Arts
- HND Photography

### **Validated by the University of Huddersfield**

- Cert Ed/Postgraduate Certificate in Education

### **Validated by Leeds Metropolitan University**

- BA (Hons) Applied Counselling Practice (top-up)
- BA (Hons) Graphic Design (top-up)
- BA (Hons) Visual Arts (top-up)
- BA (Hons) Performance Arts (top-up)
- FdA Early Years
- FdSc Sports Coaching and Performance Management
- FdA Sound and Music for New Media
- FdSc Networking and Business Support.

### **Partnership agreements with the awarding bodies**

6 The College has agreements with Leeds Metropolitan University for both direct and indirect funding and indirect funding through partnerships with the University of Bradford and the University of Huddersfield. There are nine Higher National programmes approved by Edexcel. Agreements with Leeds Metropolitan University include recently validated Foundation Degree programmes. These programmes provide a route for local students to proceed to articulated awards. Teacher training for the lifelong learning sector awards of the University of Huddersfield is delivered through the Consortium for Post-Compulsory Education and Training (the Consortium). Written partnership agreements with all awarding bodies clearly identify the College's responsibilities for the management of its provision.

## **Recent developments in higher education at the College**

7 The College continues to develop its higher education provision based on its strategy to make it more accessible to the Calderdale community and to respond to labour market needs. The development of a University Centre is ongoing and supported by a potential new university challenge bid and an alliance between the College, Leeds Metropolitan University and the local authority. There are longer-term plans to develop the higher education provision. To this end, the College has produced its higher education strategy. The development of Foundation Degree programmes is central to this strategy. There are plans for new accommodation that will enhance the learning environment by, for example, providing more quiet study places and more specialised teaching and learning areas, for students. Responsibility for the management of the higher education provision has been extensively reviewed.

## **Students' contribution to the review, including the written submission**

8 Students enrolled on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the Summative review team. The submission was produced following discussions in higher education focus groups facilitated by student services staff. There were 15 students from across the programmes who attended these sessions. The QAA Integrated quality and enhancement review: a guide for students, was used as a key tool to facilitate discussion. The key matters addressed in the submission include published information about the College, students' experiences as learners and the support they receive, feedback from tutors, the quality of resources and the opportunities for students to take part in the management of quality and standards. The team was able to discuss these and other matters with students at meetings during the visit to the College.

## **B Evaluation of the management of HEFCE-funded higher education**

### **Core theme 1: Academic standards**

**How are responsibilities for managing and delivering higher education standards delegated within the management structure and what reporting arrangements are in place?**

9 There are clear responsibilities and reporting arrangements for managing and delivering higher education standards. The Vice-Principal (Learning, Achievement and Standards) has overall responsibility for the strategic management of the College's higher education programmes, and for ensuring that the policies and procedures of the partner universities and Edexcel are implemented. Two faculty directors are responsible for delivering programmes, with their programme managers responsible for the subject areas. At the point of delivery, award leaders are responsible for the everyday management of the programmes.

10 Following the decisions to join the Network and to expand its programmes, the College is developing a separate quality assurance framework for higher education and has appointed an HE Manager to coordinate the provision. The HE Manager reports to the Vice-Principal and is responsible for the implementation of the quality assurance process and acts as a focal point of communication between the College and its awarding bodies. The HE Forum and the HE Management Meeting have clear procedures and membership and are the key groups for quality assurance. The HE Forum, which is open to all higher education tutors, is used for communication and consultation on policy and practice and

keeping staff abreast of developments. The process of referring information between tutors, the faculty directors and the HE Management Meeting is facilitated by the overlapping membership of the two committees. Major decisions affecting the provision are referred to the Quality Management Meeting and forwarded to the College Leadership and Management Team meeting, chaired by the Principal.

11 Quality management procedures are underpinned by the College's Higher Education Quality Framework and associated manual. The College's intention to produce a dedicated HE Quality Manual, drawing together the various documents considered during the Developmental engagement has yet to be realised. A draft version of the document is available. To be more readily accessible to staff, the intention is to publish the document on the intranet. Given the expansion of the Foundation Degree provision and the need to fully assure the reliability of its higher education quality procedures, the team considers that it is desirable for the College to expedite the completion of the HE Quality Manual and the process of transferring quality assurance documentation to a format that can support a higher education dedicated place on the website.

12 Changes have recently been made to the format and requirements of the course review and evaluation reports. However, the College acknowledges that the quality of the reports is variable and a staff development day has been set aside to support the development of more evaluative report writing. The team agrees that reports need to be more detailed and analytical, but considers that the reports produced for the FdA Early Years and the HND Business are highly evaluative, comprehensive and contribute to the effective management of the provision, and are examples of good practice. The College claims that the HE Management Meeting monitors all reports, but the lack of minutes did not support this. The team recommends that it is desirable that the HE Management Meeting should formalise the receipt and approval of course review and evaluation reports through, for example, providing minutes of decisions.

13 Overall, there is an effective reporting and communication mechanism and clear lines of responsibility for managing the higher education provision. Considerable thought and effort have gone into the development of the management system. This process also ensures that senior management should be able to have a clear overview of the College's provision.

### **What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?**

14 The team can confirm the College's claim in its self-evaluation that the Academic Infrastructure is embedded in the design, approval and delivery of programmes, in programme specifications, in its assessment strategy and in the conduct of examination boards. In their discussions with the team, college staff said that they found the Academic Infrastructure very useful in the development of the College's higher education. Staff showed their familiarity with the *Code of practice* in their meetings with the team and in the documentation presented. For example, in two recent programme validations, use was made of all aspects of the Academic Infrastructure and, in particular, the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark*.

15 Programme specifications are included in student handbooks. Issues were raised in the Developmental engagement regarding the non-availability of programme specifications on the Edexcel programmes and the lack of subject-specific information on a number of the programmes validated by Leeds Metropolitan University. The College has made a partial response to the recommendation and the missing programme specifications have now been

drawn up, but the process of revising the extant specifications has been postponed until later in the summer. The team considers that the FdA Early Years and FdSc Networking and Business Support programme specifications are useful guides for students, being particularly detailed and informative, and are an example of good practice. The intended learning outcomes are carefully matched to subject benchmark statements and to the level of study, with subject knowledge and skills, assessments and learning and teaching clearly explained.

**How does the College assure itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to ensure that the standards of higher education provision meet the requirements of validating partners and awarding bodies?**

16 Joining the partnership with the Network has facilitated the College in achieving its aim of making higher education more accessible to the Calderdale community and in refining its quality assurance systems. Since 2005, the College has developed Foundation Degree programmes and associated top-up degrees. All new programmes have been exposed to rigorous scrutiny through the University's validation procedures. Preparation for these events has been supported by robust internal validations, with documentation showing careful scrutiny of the proposals. The team noted good practice in the internal validation process for the Foundation Degree proposals, which is rigorous and carefully documented, and makes use of a list of well-considered prompts to test out the strength of proposals, external advisers and employers.

17 The College assures itself that it is meeting the requirements of its validating partners and awarding bodies through the annual reports, and through the universities' own and Edexcel's reviews. Leeds Metropolitan University's recent three-year review demonstrates the confidence the University has in the College's quality processes. Similar judgements are demonstrated in Edexcel's review of programmes overseen by the annual centre risk assessment. The outcomes of the last Edexcel review were highly favourable with all College procedures approved and no actions identified or recommendations made. As noted in the Developmental engagement, the College's reviews of the programmes validated by the University of Huddersfield, through the Consortium, and the University of Bradford's reviews also demonstrate close working partnerships and confidence in the management of the provision.

18 External examiners appointed by the universities and Edexcel confirm that the standards and quality of the provision are sound and that students are achieving the intended learning outcomes. The College makes full use of these reports to enhance the quality of the programmes. The team concurs with the Developmental engagement's conclusion that there are robust procedures and detailed documentation accompanying the receipt of external examiner reports, which involves the grading of risks, the monitoring of progress in addressing concerns and signing-off the completed action plans, and confirms the good practice. The team is satisfied that the problems identified in the self-evaluation regarding the late appointment of external examiners on some newly validated Foundation Degree programmes have now been satisfactorily resolved. This has been achieved by ensuring that the names of external examiners are available at the time of validation.

**What are the College's arrangements for staff development to support the achievement of appropriate academic standard(s)?**

19 The self-evaluation indicates that staff have benefited from the regular programme of events at the universities, attending the twice-termly meetings of the College's HE Forum and the three associated staff development days. The staff development programme is planned and coordinated by the College's staff development officer, working in conjunction with the HE Manager, the Vice-Principal and faculty directors. The development days are normally led by the College's advanced-skills tutors, two of whom are responsible for the development of higher education skills, and involve visiting speakers to ensure currency. The College schedules higher education staff development on different days from those for further education to permit staff who teach in both to benefit from the two sets of events. Staff provided good examples of the way events hosted by each of the partner universities are being used to update knowledge and increase awareness of academic standards. The team concurs with the Developmental engagement that there is good practice in the use of the HE Forum to discuss and develop awareness of the College's higher education policy, to align procedures with the Academic Infrastructure and to share good practice across the provision.

**The team concludes that it has confidence in the College's management of its responsibilities as set out in its partnership agreements, for the management and delivery of the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies.**

**Core theme 2: Quality of learning opportunities**

**How are responsibilities for managing and delivering higher education standards delegated within the management structure and what reporting arrangements are in place?**

20 The College's management structure is outlined in paragraphs 9 and 10. With reference to the management of the quality of learning opportunities, clear responsibilities and reporting mechanisms are in place and are effective. The College's Quality Unit, managed by the Quality Systems Manager, provides high-quality support, especially progression data, resource information and, recently, a rigorous analysis of the National Student Survey, 2008. The HE Quality Cycle diagram provides a clear guide on the monitoring of learning opportunities, including gathering student opinion on learning resources through, for example, focus groups. As noted in paragraph 11, the HE Quality Manual remains in draft form.

21 The College identifies the development of Foundation Degrees, with their focus on work experience, as crucial to serving the needs of local and regional employers. While the College has experience of managing work-related learning, these are ambitious developments, that will require careful management and monitoring through the College's quality management process. The Developmental engagement recommended that it was advisable that the College provides guidelines for the management of work-based learning. The team regards it as advisable that the College should complete the production of its handbook for the management of work-based/related learning and include information on the responsibilities of the work-based mentor.

### **How does the College assure itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to its awarding bodies to ensure that students receive appropriate learning opportunities?**

22 The College's agreements with the universities include references to the provision of learning opportunities. University staff visit the College to assess learning resources and discuss annual reviews and validations. All reports from the awarding bodies express confidence in the way the College ensures that students receive appropriate learning opportunities. The College's links with the Network and Consortium facilitate the thorough review of learning opportunities. The links also assist the College to meet the particular local need of supporting students in progressing to higher education. The College's links with industry are impressive and add to students' learning opportunities. The Calderdale District Integrated Regeneration Strategy identifies relatively lower take-up of higher education in contrast to neighbouring districts, as well as the need for occupations that require higher-level skills. The College, with the universities, is responding to this by managing learning opportunities, to develop initiatives, that will increase the knowledge and transferable skills of the community and in particular to develop higher skills, individual creativity and enterprise.

### **What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?**

23 The Academic Infrastructure is clearly integrated into the College's management of learning opportunities and in documentation. The HE Forum regularly includes the Academic Infrastructure as an agenda item and ensures that staff are provided with updates, for example, with the current *Code of practice*. Notable examples are the ways the College deals with admissions, students with disabilities, addresses complaints and offers career education. All programme specifications include references to the Academic Infrastructure.

### **How does the College assure itself that the quality of teaching and learning is being maintained and enhanced?**

24 The College ensures staff are aware of its learning and assessment strategy through route and scheme committees, the HE Forum, the HE Management Meeting and planning days. The College has effective mechanisms to report on the quality of teaching and learning, including formal staff appraisal and observation of teaching, course reviews and student feedback. Course review and evaluation reports include a section on learning and teaching and an action plan to identify areas for development and review progress.

25 There are 29 staff contributing to the higher education programmes, a total of 14 FTEs. Annual College lesson observation profiles show high standards of teaching, with 89 per cent 'good or better' in 2007-08. The current profile is shows 96 per cent 'good or better' with no unsatisfactory results. The procedure for observing the higher education staff includes higher-level criteria, such as encouraging critical and evaluative skills.

### **How does the College assure itself that students are supported effectively?**

26 The induction of new students is well managed and appreciated by students. It includes an introduction to College-wide support from student services and learning resources. The College and universities work closely to enable students to attend induction sessions at the universities. The students appreciate the support that is available to enhance their learning opportunities, in particular they were highly positive about the support received from librarians. The College notes that tutorial support is improving following its own review of the provision and responses to student surveys. The inclusion of personal development

profiles supports students in the development of their transferable skills. The handbooks provided by the FdA Early Years and FdSc Health and Social Care, are well organised and contain appropriately relevant and focused information for students, including a work-based learning guide. These represent good practice.

27 The College seeks to ensure that assessments are designed to support student learning, and that constructive and consistent feedback on marked assignments is given and is received in a timely manner. Students are also expected to receive assessment in a variety of formats, including oral feedback on an individual and group basis. Internal verification procedures are used to ensure that assessment design is appropriate and that feedback is provided. Examiners' reports indicate that feedback to students is detailed and supports student learning. The College is monitoring the timing of the return of student work.

28 The learner involvement strategy provides a framework for the involvement of students in the quality process, through questionnaires, focus groups and student representatives. Student representatives are identified for each programme, offered training and encouraged to participate in the quality processes. The learner voice is a standing agenda item on the Quality and Performance Committee of the governing body to which the Students' Union submit a report that includes reference to higher education.

#### **What are the College's arrangements for staff development to maintain and/or enhance the quality of learning opportunities?**

29 Staff development arrangements are outlined in paragraph 19. The College regards staff development as 'crucial to enhance teaching and learning' and integrates opportunities for staff to engage in professional updating, in both curriculum aspects and teaching and learning skills. Recent topics have included: plagiarism, assessment criteria, marking and moderation, personal development profiles and employer-based accreditation. Staff development days appear in the annual calendar, to ensure that staff are able to take part in courses. The College maintains extensive staff development records, which demonstrates a high level of staff participation.

30 The awarding bodies provide opportunities for staff development through invitations to their own events. The Network operates a forum to share good practice and the Consortium offers programmes for tutors, librarians, resource managers and finance and administrative officers. College staff have taken up several of these opportunities. The staff are very positive about their staff development opportunities and the College recognises the need to provide more opportunities for subject updating through, for example, building on the progress made to enable more staff to achieve higher degrees.

#### **How does the College ensure the sufficiency and accessibility of the learning resources the students need to achieve the intended learning outcomes for their programmes?**

31 The College is diligent in ensuring that resources enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes and it works with its awarding bodies to achieve this. In all validations, learning resources are discussed, with resource needs identified in the internal verification costing sheet. There have been successful resource bids, approved as part of the validation process and additional resources provided in response to external examiners' comments. The College has been successful in attracting external funding for the support of non-traditional students progressing to higher education through the Network funding to enhance student guidance in the workplace. The library is well stocked with the required books and journals. Computing facilities are satisfactory and regularly updated.

Students have the opportunity to use the learning resources of the universities. A recent student survey showed that students are satisfied with their learning resources. The College has plans, as yet in early development stages, for a new University Centre with dedicated higher education accommodation.

**The team concludes that it has confidence in the College's management of its responsibilities for the quality of the learning opportunities, as required by the awarding bodies to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.**

### **Core theme 3: Public information**

#### **What information is the College responsible for publishing about its HEFCE-funded higher education?**

32 The College is responsible for marketing and recruitment information, the higher education prospectus, its website and pamphlets on student services and learning resources. The College website has recently been updated and includes a dedicated area for higher education, where accurate general information is provided about the College. There are search links to basic programme information and admissions. The new higher education-specific prospectus is one of the key sources of information for potential students. The new prospectus is attractively produced and generally informative, but the team recommends that it is advisable that information in the higher education prospectus on how students can progress to articulated awards is included for each programme. Currently, the majority of programmes do not indicate these arrangements, which is not in line with the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark*. Progression information is included in programme specifications and handbooks. The College intends to provide supplementary information in the higher education prospectus on articulated awards.

33 The marketing team attends a range of recruitment events, at which they use the prospectus and a range of posters with information on specific programmes and general opportunities. At open evenings, presentations are developed using a standard template. The production of marketing information used in recruitment events is tightly regulated.

34 The higher education calendar is a useful document to enable students and staff to plan their work. Student services and learning resources also provide information leaflets to students, some of which are issued at induction or are readily available in accessible locations. Students informed the team that they found information on student support, careers and learning resources accurate and informative. Students are provided with the HE Diary and, while this is useful for students, there is inaccurate information on student complaints. It is desirable that the College corrects the information on 'Student Complaints' in the HE Diary.

#### **What arrangements does the College have in place to assure the accuracy and completeness of information the College has responsibility for publishing? How does the College know that these arrangements are effective?**

35 The College recently appointed a marketing manager with higher education experience. The prospectus and online course information pages are compiled by award leaders according to a format provided by the Marketing Department. Collation and initial quality assurance of these is carried out by the Marketing Manager and HE Manager with any amendments checked again by award leaders before submission for publication. Amendments to website information are controlled by the Marketing Department and a formal process is in place to record and manage amendments.

36 Responsibility for compilation and publication of public information rests with the Marketing Department, which liaises with the universities and other partners on the use of logos. University marketing departments are given the opportunity to comment on documents relating to programmes validated by them before publication. Award teams produce handbooks and programme specifications, using a template to ensure inclusion of all relevant information. These are reviewed annually to ensure compliance and accuracy.

**The team considers that reliance can be placed on the accuracy and/or completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.**

## **C Summary of findings from the Developmental engagement in assessment**

37 The Developmental engagement in assessment took place in April 2008 and addressed three lines of enquiry, agreed in advance with the College. The lines of enquiry were:

- how is the College assured that its assessment policy, strategy and design reflect the appropriate professional practice and academic standards indicated by the intended learning outcomes?
- does the assessment framework, including the tutorial process, personal development profiles and feedback systems, facilitate effective support of the learning opportunities and enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes?
- is there a match between the information on student assessment published in the publicity and promotional material, in the programme specification and in assessments set?

38 The Developmental engagement team found a wide range of good practice across the provision, including the effectiveness of the HE Forum as a means of developing awareness of assessment policy and ensuring alignment with the Academic Infrastructure. There is clear documentation supporting the claim that the internal verification process and procedures for dealing with external examiner reports are robust. This is exemplified in the grading of risks and the signing-off of action plans. The College's full engagement with the University of Huddersfield, (for the Certificate in Education/Professional Graduate Certificate in Education programmes for trainee teachers in the post-compulsory sector), and with the University of Bradford, (for the Foundation Degree in Health and Social Care), helps ensure parity of grading and the dissemination of good practice within the Consortium. There is a well-organised tutorial process and students receive comprehensive and constructive written and oral feedback on assignments. Student peer review, personal development profiling and student self-assessment methods enhance student learning. The variety of assessment methods in all programmes, some innovative, is designed to develop students' work-related skills. The monitoring and review process ensures continuous improvement in assessment practices. The Course Information Review demonstrates the College's commitment to ensuring the consistency and accuracy of its published information, including information on assessment.

39 The Developmental engagement report also includes two advisable recommendations. Firstly, the College needs to develop and publish programme specifications for the Edexcel programmes and to review the content of the Leeds Metropolitan University programme specifications in line with the QAA guidelines. Secondly, in view of the expansion of

Foundation Degrees, a review is needed of the management of, and the guidelines for, work-based learning. This includes the development of public documents in the form of a handbook and information on the website for the management of work-based learning, including information on assessment. The desirable recommendation asking the College to ensure that students fully understand the determination of grades and final award classifications has been achieved.

## D Foundation Degrees

40 The College currently offers four Foundation Degrees, in Early Years, Sports Coaching and Performance Management, Sound and Music for New Media and Networking and Business Support. A further seven are due to commence in September 2009, and an additional nine programmes in September 2010-11. Among the new awards will be Business, Community Substance Misuse, Retail, International Business and Design Practice. Some Foundation Degrees will replace HND programmes. All the good practice and recommendations are applicable to Foundation Degrees. More specific good practice and recommendations are noted in the rest of this section. The programme specifications for the FdA Early Years and FdSc Networking and Business Support are detailed, informative and useful guides for students, especially in relation to subject knowledge, and intended learning outcomes are regarded as good practice. In 2007-08, there were 59 enrolments on the FdA Early Years and 17 on the FdSc Health and Social Care. The three new Foundation Degree programmes enrolled 20 full-time students in 2008-09. The nine programmes for 2009-10 have a total projected intake of 105 students. The team regarded as advisable that the College should include information in the higher education prospectus on how students can progress to articulated awards in line with the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark*.

41 Employers are involved in the design and validation of programmes. The team regards as good practice, the internal validation process for the Foundation Degree proposals, which is rigorous, well documented and makes use of a list of well-considered prompts to test out the strength of proposals, external advisers and employers. Also regarded as good practice are the course review and evaluation reports for the FdA Early Years, which are highly evaluative, comprehensive and contribute to the effective management of the provision.

42 The student handbooks for the FdA Early Years and the FdSc Health and Social Care are accessible, well organised and contain appropriately relevant and focused information for students, and are an example of good practice. Where students are not in employment, arrangements for the work-related learning content of the provision vary, with short-term and project-based placements. Case studies and live projects are included where students are not currently employed in the relevant industry. The College is aware of the implications of delivering the work-related aspects of Foundation Degrees, including the need to secure placements with employers. The team advises the College to complete the production of its handbook for the management of work-based/related learning and include information on the responsibilities of the work-based mentor.

43 In the course of the review, the team identified the following areas of **good practice**:

- the course review and evaluation reports for the FdA Early Years and HND Business are highly evaluative, comprehensive and contribute to the effective management of the provision (paragraphs 12, 41)
- the programme specifications for the FdA Early Years and the FdSc Networking and Business Support are detailed, informative and useful guides for students especially in relation to subject knowledge and intended learning outcomes (paragraphs 15, 40)

- the internal validation process for the Foundation Degree proposals is rigorous and carefully documented, and makes use of a list of well-considered prompts to test out the strength of proposals, external advisers and employers (paragraphs 16, 41)
- there are robust procedures and detailed documentation accompanying the receipt of external examiners' reports, involves the grading of risks, the monitoring of progress in addressing concerns and signing-off completed action plans (paragraph 18, 38)
- the HE Forum is used effectively to make staff aware of the higher education policy and practices, the Academic Infrastructure and good practice in the College (paragraph 19)
- the student handbooks for the FdA Early Years and the FdSc Health and Social Care are accessible, well-organised and contain appropriately relevant and focused information for students, including work-based learning guides (paragraphs 26, 42).

44 The team also makes some recommendations for consideration by the College and its awarding bodies.

The team considers that it is **advisable** for the College to:

- complete the production of its handbook for the management of work-based/related learning and include information on the responsibilities of the work-based mentor (paragraphs 21, 42)
- include information in the higher education prospectus on how students can progress to articulated awards for each programme, in line with the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark* (paragraphs 32, 40).

The team also agreed the following areas where it would be **desirable** for the College to take action:

- to expedite the completion of the HE Quality Manual and the process of transferring higher education quality assurance documentation to a dedicated place on its website (paragraph 11)
- to formalise the receipt and approval of course evaluation reports through, for example, providing minutes of decisions in the HE Management Meeting (paragraph 12)
- to correct the misleading information on 'Student Complaints' in the HE Diary (paragraph 34).

## **E Conclusions and summary of judgements**

45 The Summative review team has identified a number of features of good practice in Calderdale College's management of its responsibilities for academic standards and for the quality of learning opportunities of the awards the College offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. This was based upon discussion with staff and students and scrutiny of evidence provided by the College and its awarding bodies, the University of Bradford, the University of Huddersfield, Leeds Metropolitan University and Edexcel.

46 In the course of the review, the team identified the following areas of **good practice**:

- the course review and evaluation reports for the FdA Early Years and HND Business are highly evaluative, comprehensive and contribute to the effective management of the provision (paragraphs 12, 41)

- the programme specifications for the FdA Early Years and the FdSc Networking and Business Support are detailed, informative and useful guides for students especially in relation to subject knowledge and intended learning outcomes (paragraphs 15, 40)
- the internal validation process for the Foundation Degree proposals is rigorous and carefully documented, and makes use of a list of well-considered prompts to test out the strength of proposals, external advisers and employers (paragraphs 16, 41)
- there are robust procedures and detailed documentation accompanying the receipt of external examiners' reports, involves the grading of risks, the monitoring of progress in addressing concerns and signing-off completed action plans (paragraph 18, 38)
- the HE Forum is used effectively to make staff aware of the higher education policy and practices, the Academic Infrastructure and good practice in the College (paragraph 19)
- the student handbooks for the FdA Early Years and the FdSc Health and Social Care are accessible, well-organised and contain appropriately relevant and focused information for students, including work-based learning guides (paragraphs 26, 42).

47 The team also makes some recommendations for consideration by the College and its awarding bodies.

The team considers that it is **advisable** for the College to:

- complete the production of its handbook for the management of work-based/related learning and include information on the responsibilities of the work-based mentor (paragraphs 21, 42)
- include information in the higher education prospectus on how students can progress to articulated awards for each programme, in line with the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark* (paragraphs 32, 40).

The team also agreed the following areas where it would be **desirable** for the College to take action:

- to expedite the completion of the HE Quality Manual and the process of transferring higher education quality assurance documentation to a dedicated place on its website (paragraph 11)
- to formalise the receipt and approval of course evaluation reports through, for example, providing minutes of decisions in the HE Management Meeting (paragraph 12)
- to correct the misleading information on 'Student Complaints' in the HE Diary (paragraph 34).

48 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation and other documentary evidence, and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that it has **confidence** that, in the context of this Summative review, the College discharges its responsibilities effectively, as set out in the relevant partnership agreement for the management of the standards of the awards of its awarding bodies.

49 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation and other documentary evidence, and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that it has **confidence** that, in the context of this Summative review, the College discharges its responsibilities effectively, as set out in the relevant partnership agreement for the management of the quality of learning opportunities to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

50 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation and other documentary evidence, and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that, in the context of this Summative review, reliance **can** be placed on the accuracy and/or completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

| Calderdale College action plan relating to the Summative review: June 2009  |   |   |  |   |   |                              |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|------------------------------|
| Good practice   | Action to be taken  | Target date                                   | Action by  | Success indicators  | Reported to   | Evaluation                   |
| In the course of the Summative review the team identified the following areas of <b>good practice</b> that are worthy of wider dissemination within the College:  |   |   |  |   |   |                              |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Course Evaluation Reports for the FdA Early Years and HND Business are highly evaluative, comprehensive and contribute to the effective management of the provision (paragraphs 12, 41)</li> </ul> | <p>Course evaluation good practice staff development session to be focus of Jan 2010 HE Forum.</p> <p>Validation of course reviews at end of each semester.</p> | <p>Jan 2010</p> <p>Feb 2010<br/>July 2010</p> | <p>HE Manager<br/>Programme Managers<br/>Award Leaders</p> <p>Faculty<br/>Directors<br/>Programme Managers</p> | <p>Good practice to be identified and evidenced at the 2010 HE Forum</p> <p>Review Schedule produced &amp; implemented.<br/>Review outcomes to be presented to Quality Management Group</p> | <p>HE Mgt Group</p> <p>Quality Management Group</p> | <p>Through SE validation</p> |

| Calderdale College action plan relating to the Summative review: June 2009  |  |                 |                                  |   |              |                       |
|---|--|-----------------|----------------------------------|---|--------------|-----------------------|
| Good practice   | Action to be taken   | Target date     | Action by                        | Success indicators                              | Reported to  | Evaluation            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the programme specifications for the FdA Early Years and FdSc Network Business and Support Technology are detailed, informative and useful guides for students especially in relation to subject knowledge and intended learning outcomes (paragraphs 15, 40)</li> </ul> | Establish 12 month schedule for review of all programme specifications   | End July 2009   | HE Manager                       | 12 month Review schedule produced and approved. | HE Mgt Group | Through SE Validation |
|   | Refine the guidance on writing programme specifications                  | End Oct 2009    | HE Manager                       | Guidance produced and approved.                 | HE Mgt Group |                       |
|   | Share good practice through HE Forum                                     | On-going        |                                  | EGs of good practice presented to HE forum      | HE Forum     |                       |
|   | Review and update all existing Programme Specifications within 12 months | End August 2010 | Award Leaders Programme Managers | HE Mgmt Group to monitor and record progress    | HE Mgt Group |                       |

| Calderdale College action plan relating to the Summative review: June 2009  |  |                                     |  |  |   |  |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Good practice   | Action to be taken   | Target date                         | Action by  | Success indicators   | Reported to   | Evaluation   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the internal validation process for the Foundation Degree proposals is rigorous and well-documented and makes use of a list of well-considered prompts to test out the strength of proposals and of external advisors and employer (paragraph 16, 41)</li> </ul>             | <p>Continue to use and develop current internal and external validation processes.</p> <p>Conduct staff development with all Award Leaders who are developing new awards for 2010 starts</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>November 2009</p> | <p>Quality Systems Manager</p> <p>HE Manager<br/>Quality Systems Manager</p> | <p>Evidence within validation documentation</p> <p>HE QDM to agree appropriate Staff Dev session with Staff Dev Manager.</p> | <p>Quality Management Group</p> <p>HE Mgt Group</p> | <p>Scheme Approval Boards</p> <p>Annual Reports</p> <p>Through SE validation</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>there are robust procedures and detailed documentation accompanying the receipt of external examiners' reports that involves the grading of risks, the monitoring of progress in addressing concerns and the signing off of completed action plans (paragraph 18)</li> </ul> | <p>Continue to use and develop current external examiner procedures</p> <p>Conduct staff development and refreshers with all Award Leaders who are delivering</p>                            | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>November 2009</p> | <p>Quality Systems Manager</p> <p>HE Manager<br/>Quality Systems Manager</p> | <p>Maintain and develop current systems</p> <p>HE QDM to agree appropriate Staff Dev session with Staff Dev</p>              | <p>Examination Boards</p> <p>HE Mgt Group</p>       | <p>EV Grading Profile</p> <p>Annual Reports</p> <p>Through SE validation</p>     |

| Calderdale College action plan relating to the Summative review: June 2009   |   |                       |                            |  |                          |  |
|--|---|-----------------------|----------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|
| Good practice  | Action to be taken  | Target date           | Action by                  | Success indicators   | Reported to              | Evaluation   |
|  | awards during 2009<br>Collate & disseminate common themes from ExEx feedback through HE Forums.         | Feb 2010<br>July 2010 | HE Manager                 | Manager.<br>Report presented to HE Mgt Group April & August 2010 | Quality Management Group |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the HE Forum is used effectively to make staff aware of the HE policy and practices, the Academic Infrastructure and good practice in the College (paragraph 19)</li> </ul> | Establish calendar for events/themes for HE Forum meetings.   | Sept 2009             | HE Manager                 | Calendar submitted to HE Mgt Group Oct 2009                      | HE Mgt Group             | High levels of attendance at HE Forum<br>Staff satisfaction surveys<br>SE validation |
|  | Continue to promote the importance of the HE Forum  | On-going              | HE Manager<br>HE Mgt Group | All staff aware of HE policy and practices                       |                          |  |
|  | Increase the guidance on HE policy and practice on the new on-line HE Quality Manual material on Moodle | On-going              | Quality Systems Manager    | Increased guidance evident on Moodle and monitor usage           |                          |  |

| Calderdale College action plan relating to the Summative review: June 2009  |  |  |  |   |              |  |
|---|--|--|--|---|--------------|--|
| Good practice   | Action to be taken   | Target date                                | Action by  | Success indicators  | Reported to  | Evaluation   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the student handbooks for the FdA Early Years and the FdA Health and Social Care are accessible, well-organised and contain appropriately relevant and focused information for students (paragraphs 26, 42)</li> </ul> | <p>Review, update and publish College template for Foundation Degree course handbook.</p> <p>All Foundation Degrees adopt College template for FdA course handbook</p> | <p>End of August 2009</p> <p>Sept 2009</p> | <p>HE Manager<br/>Quality Systems Manager</p> <p>Award Leaders</p> | <p>A HE handbook reviewed and updated</p> <p>Monitoring of FdA handbook to ensure all FdAs adopt template</p> | HE Mgt Group | <p>Through Student Satisfaction Surveys</p> <p>Through SE validation</p> |

| Calderdale College action plan relating to the Summative review: June 2009   |  |  |   |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| Advisable  | Action to be taken   | Target date  | Action by   | Success indicators   | Reported to  | Evaluation   |
| The team agreed a number of areas where the College should be <b>advised</b> to take action:   |  |  |   |  |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complete the production of its handbook for the management of work-based/related learning and include information on the responsibilities of the work-based mentor (paragraphs 21, 42)</li> </ul> | <p>Review membership of Task Group leading development of WRL Handbook</p> <p>Consultation with HEIs, employers and Peer Review Group</p> <p>Report to HE Forum</p> <p>Approval of WRL Handbook by HE Management Team</p> <p>Publication</p> | <p>End July 2009</p> <p>End December 2009</p> <p>End January 2010</p> <p>End February 2010</p> <p>End March 2010</p> | <p>HE Manager</p> <p>Task Group</p> <p>HE Manager</p> <p>HE Mgt Group</p> <p>HE Manager Marketing Manager</p> | <p>Membership of Task Group reviewed and reported to HE Mgt Group.</p> <p>Report produced re consultation with employers.</p> <p>Minuted approval of WRL HE Handbook by QMG</p> <p>Evidence of published HE handbook</p> | <p>HE Mgt Group</p> <p>HE Mgt Group</p> <p>HE Mgt Group</p> <p>Quality Management Group</p> <p>HE Mgt Group Quality Management Group</p> | <p>Through SE validation</p> <p>Student satisfaction survey</p> <p>Employer feedback</p> |

| Calderdale College action plan relating to the Summative review: June 2009  |  |  |  |   |   |  |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|--|
| Advisable   | Action to be taken   | Target date  | Action by  | Success indicators  | Reported to   | Evaluation   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>include information in the HE Prospectus on how students can progress to articulated awards, in line with the Foundation Degree qualification benchmark (paragraphs 32, 40)</li> </ul> | <p>Update printed prospectus and web-based course entries to show progression routes in line with standard College wording.</p> <p>Re-print prospectus</p> | <p>Web-based entries by end July 2009</p> <p>August 2009</p> | <p>HE Manager Marketing Manager</p> <p>Marketing Manager</p> | <p>Prospectus and website shows progression routes</p> <p>Reprinted prospectus is evidenced</p> | <p>HE Management Group</p> <p>HE Management Group</p> | <p>Student Satisfaction Surveys</p> <p>Through SE validation</p> |

| Calderdale College action plan relating to the Summative review: June 2009   |   |                       |   |                            |  |                       |  |
|--|---|-----------------------|---|----------------------------|--|-----------------------|--|
| Desirable  | Action to be taken  | Target date           | Action by   | Success indicators         | Reported to                              | Evaluation            |  |
| The team agreed the following areas where it would be <b>desired</b> to take action:   |   |                       |   |                            |  |                       |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>expedite the completion of the HE Quality Manual and the process of transferring higher education quality assurance documentation to a dedicated place on its website (paragraph 11)</li> </ul> | Review, update and transfer existing HE material to Staff Information System on Moodle (VLE)                          | End Sept 2009         | Quality Systems Manager                               | Evidenced on website       | HE Mgt Group                             | SE validation         |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>formalise the receipt and approval of Course Evaluation Reports, through, for example, providing minutes of decisions in the HE Management meetings (paragraph 12)</li> </ul>                   | Schedule formalised events for the validation/approval of course reviews at end of each semester by the HE Mgt Group. | Feb 2010<br>July 2010 | HE Manager<br>Faculty Directors<br>Programme Managers | Minutes of HE Mgt Meetings | HE Mgt Group<br>Quality Management Group | Through SE validation |  |

| Calderdale College action plan relating to the Summative review: June 2009   |  |   |   |   |  |                      |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|----------------------|
| Desirable  | Action to be taken   | Target date   | Action by   | Success indicators  | Reported to  | Evaluation           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>correct the misleading information on 'Student Complaints' in the HE Diary (paragraph 34).</li> </ul> | <p>Amend the existing information in the Student Complaints section of the HE Student Diary</p> <p>Review and implement improved procedures for checking published material</p> <p>*Publish new Diary for September 2010</p> | <p>End June 2009*</p> <p>July 2009</p> <p>End August 2010</p> | <p>Head of Learner Services/Marketing Manager</p> <p>HE Manager Marketing Manager</p> <p>Head of Learner Services</p> | <p>Amended Complaints section in Diary</p> <p>Present the improved procedures to HE Mgt Group</p> <p>Diary produced</p> | <p>HE Management Group</p> <p>HE Mgt Group</p> <p>HE Mgt Group</p> | <p>SE validation</p> |

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