QAA

Capital School of Business & Management CIC

Review for Educational Oversight
by the Quality Assurance Agency
for Higher Education

October 2014

Key findings about the Capital School of Business & Management CIC

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in October 2014, the QAA review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the standards of the programmes it offers on behalf of the Association of Business Executives, the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, the Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality, Pearson and Qualifi Ltd.

The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the quality and enhancement of the learning opportunities it offers on behalf of these awarding organisations.

The team considers that reliance **can** be placed on the information that the provider produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers.

Good practice

No features of **good practice** were highlighted in the review report.

Recommendations

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

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

- implement the Pearson action plan by 31 December 2014 (paragraph 1.5)
- implement its action plan for the 38 Qualifi Ltd students as soon as possible and no later than 15 December 2014 to ensure that their situation is resolved and that they are advised of all their options, including refunds (paragraph 1.6)
- formalise its staff development policy (paragraph 2.14)
- implement in full its new system for checking all information (paragraph 3.3).

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

- review and evaluate the effectiveness of its new committee structures after one year of operation (paragraph 1.2)
- complete mapping its policies and procedures to the Quality Code (paragraphs 1.3 and 2.2)
- design, implement and audit a VLE policy (paragraph 2.16).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)[1] (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at Capital School of Business & Management CIC (the School), which is a privately funded provider of higher education. The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the provider discharges its stated responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes of study that the provider delivers on behalf of the Association of Business Executives, the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, the Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality, Pearson, and Qualifi Ltd. The review was carried out by Ms A Michelle Callanan, Prof Christopher Gale, Dr Hayley Randle (reviewers) and Prof Edward J Esche (Coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the [*Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook*](#).[2] Evidence in support of the review included documentation supplied by the School, its awarding organisations, meetings with staff and students, and three previous QAA reports: REO February 2012, REO October 2013 and REO monitoring visit February 2013.

The review team also considered the provider's use of the relevant external reference points:

- the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code)
- *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ)
- regulatory and guidance documents published by the awarding organisations
- professional practice standards and other teaching institutional guidelines.

Please note that if you are unfamiliar with any of the terms used in this report you can find them in the [Glossary](#).

Capital School of Business & Management CIC, Heathrow, was incorporated in October 2010. It took ownership of Cardinal Point, at Heathrow in March 2011. In 2012 it relocated to its current position in Wembley. This 2014 full review was triggered when the School received the following judgement in its October 2013 REO: reliance cannot be placed on the information that it produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers.

At the time of the current review 311 students were enrolled on 13 higher education programmes with five awarding organisations. This changed during the review to 273 students enrolled on 12 higher education programmes with four awarding bodies, although the School still retains responsibility for 38 students formerly registered on the Qualifi Strategic Management level 8 programme. The School employs nine academic staff, two full-time and seven part-time, and six managerial and administrative staff.

At the time of the review, the provider offered the following higher education programmes, listed beneath their awarding organisations with student numbers in brackets:

Association of Business Executives
- Business Management level 6 (39)
- Health Care level 7 (23)

Chartered Institute of Management Accountants

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[1] www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Pages/Educational-Oversight-.aspx
[2] www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=2669

- Chartered Management Accountant Certificate level 7 (39)
- Chartered Management Accountant Operational level 7 (12)
- Chartered Management Accountant Managerial level 7 (10)

Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality
- Diploma of Hospitality and Tourism Management level 6 (13)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Hospitality and Tourism Management level 7 (6)

Pearson
- Higher National Diploma Business Studies level 5 (25)
- Higher National Diploma Hospitality Management level 5 (4)
- Higher National Diploma Health and Social Care level 5 (9)
- Higher National Diploma Computing and System Development level 5 (12)
- Extended Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership BTEC level 7 (81)

Qualifi Ltd
- Strategic Management level 8 (38)

The provider's stated responsibilities

The School is responsible for the recruitment and admission of students; programme delivery, elements of assessment and internal moderation; the quality of teaching and learning; the provision of appropriate staffing and physical resources; application of the awarding organisations' standards; regular internal monitoring of quality; and compliance with the awarding organisations' requirements for annual evaluation and review.

Recent developments

The School's mission statement 'to be the college of choice by putting skills and learning at the heart of everything we do' remains the same, but there has been considerable disruption to its management over the past year. The School's Principal left in July 2014, after which the management structure changed substantially. The changes included two external appointments in July 2014, a Principal and an Academic Director.

There has also been significant curriculum change during the time since the October 2013 REO. The School no longer offers provision from the Association of Business Practitioners, the Chartered Management Institute, City and Guilds, the London Centre of Marketing and Qualifi Ltd. The School is making continuing efforts to move students onto appropriate alternative awards, but not all students are currently relocated. Thirty-eight students with CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies) certification recruited for a level 8 Qualifi award are currently not being taught (see paragraph 1.6).

Pearson blocked awards taught at the School on its behalf in April 2014. The School took steps to redress this situation by employing a part-time external quality assurance consultant to deliver staff development, but she resigned immediately after the School received the Pearson external verifier report in September 2014 confirming that the block had not been lifted. The position of these students is that they are being taught, assessed and verified internally without the external authority for the awards to be made. The School continues to work to lift the Pearson blockage (see paragraph 1.5).

Many of the international students at the School provided evidence of English competency with an English Testing Service (ETS) Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) certificate. After the Home Office suspended acceptance of all ETS English exams early in 2014, the School reviewed its student base and suspended all 93 students who

initially provided ETS TOEIC English competency certification. The School helped these students to be retested by other UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) accredited English examining organisations, after which many were re-admitted to their programmes. When the team enquired as to exactly how many students had been re-admitted, the School did not give a precise number.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes at the provider were invited to present a submission to the review team. The School presented a video recording of six students individually answering six questions asked by a member of the teaching staff off screen. The questions focused on the students' satisfaction with their application, induction, lecturers, teaching methods, and experiences so far. A final question invited general comment. The video provided useful evidence for the team. Three students met the Coordinator at the preparatory meeting and 13 met the review team at the visit. Their contributions informed the review and helped the team gain a clear picture of the student learning experience.

Detailed findings about Capital School of Business & Management CIC

1   Academic standards

How effectively does the School fulfil its responsibilities for the management of academic standards?

1.1   The School effectively fulfils its responsibilities for the management of academic standards. It has recently adopted a clear management structure in which the Senior Management Team takes ultimate responsibility for the management of academic standards and oversees all quality matters. Team members maintain regular communication with the awarding organisations and disseminate essential information to relevant staff through meetings and informal discussions. They also coordinate management, academic and administrative teams to construct and implement the academic calendar, with assistance from programme managers. The Senior Management Team operates within the guidelines of a number of policies and procedures that the School has put in place to fulfil its own requirements and those expected by its awarding organisations. The School reviewed its policies in September 2013 and plans to revisit them again with a view to putting an annual review in place and developing the existing annual academic calendar further.

1.2   The School has a new and effective committee structure to support the management of academic standards. It reduced the number of its main committees in July from 13 to three. The committees include the Senior Management Team, which has responsibility for the strategic direction of the School, resource provision and external relationships; Academic Board, which is responsible for programme provision**,** operational liaison with awarding organisations, review of student progression and staff continuing professional development; and the Operations Committee, which is responsible for all other aspects of the School including admissions liaison with UKVI, control of public information and system support. The Academic Board and the Operations Committee report to the Senior Management Team, on which sit the Academic Director and the School owners. Subcommittees, namely the Assessment Panel, Admissions Committee and Public Interest Subcommittee, support the main committees. Students are represented on Academic Board and the Operations Committee. It would be **desirable** for the School to review and evaluate the effectiveness of its new committee structure after one year of operation.

How effectively does the School make use of external reference points to manage academic standards?

1.3   The School effectively engages with its awarding organisations' guidelines and external verifiers, but there is limited engagement with other external reference points such as the FHEQ and the Quality Code. Staff understand different level standards, but do not demonstrate a familiarity with the FHEQ. The School has begun to develop the use of the Quality Code through a staff workshop and the mapping of its admissions process to the Quality Code. Explicit use of the Quality Code is not evident in other School documentation, such as the most recent version of its Quality Manual (autumn 2014). It would be **desirable** for the School to complete mapping its policies and procedures to the Quality Code.

How does the School use external moderation, verification or examining to assure academic standards?

1.4   After a period of some difficulty, the School is making variable progress towards applying internal and external verification to assure academic standards. The School

understands its responsibilities for setting and marking assignments for its awarding organisations and staff are fully conversant with the requirements.

1.5   The School has taken coherent steps to rectify the Pearson block relating, in the first instance, to its Higher National Diploma Business Studies level 5 programme. It has developed a comprehensive handbook articulating a robust internal verification process. The handbook contains all relevant information such as the scheduling of internal verification activities, production and internal verification of assessment briefs, feedback on student work, and templates of all forms. Tutors for each unit develop assignment briefs according to the assessment criteria provided by the awarding organisation for each learning outcome and they also assess student work. The Academic Director, who has attended internal verification courses run by Pearson, internally verifies assessment scripts and student work. An external verifier moderates the assignments and grades awarded on behalf of the awarding organisation. The verifier has not been able to confirm the grades claimed because of marking irregularities. The Pearson Area Manager met with the School immediately after the visit and an action plan is currently being written which, once implemented, will allow students on Pearson courses to be put forward for their awards. The School is clearly engaging actively with Pearson to resolve the situation. It is **advisable** for the School to implement the Pearson action plan by 31 December 2014.

1.6   The School recruited 38 international students from December 2013 onto a Chartered Management Institute level 8 programme in Business Management and Strategy. It subcontracted the teaching to a third party, notwithstanding the restrictions of Highly Trusted Status, and then the awarding organisation withdrew its agreement with the School in April 2014. The School subsequently transferred the students to a level 8 Qualifi Strategic Management programme, which was withdrawn in July 2014. At the time of the visit, the School was attempting to place the students in alternative level 8 provision, although this had yet to be achieved. None of the students has requested a refund of fees, although the School indicated to them that a refund would be available if need be, subject to resources being available. It is **advisable** for the School to implement its action plan for the 38 Qualifi students as soon as possible and no later than 15 December 2014 to ensure that their situation is resolved and that they are advised of all their options, including refunds.

1.7   In summary, the School's procedures for the management of its responsibilities for the standards of programmes are adequate for all programmes except those of Pearson and Qualifi Ltd. The School's ability to make full use of external verifier and centre quality assurance reports has been inhibited by the absence of related strategic and operational policies in the past. The weaknesses that currently exist are of a historic nature and the senior managers have made many attempts to improve and rectify matters. There is evidence that the School has taken account of the Quality Code in developing its new policies and committee structure, which needs to be kept under review to ensure maximum success.

The review team has **confidence** in the provider's management of its responsibilities for the standards of the programmes it offers on behalf of its awarding organisations.

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2   Quality of learning opportunities

How effectively does the School fulfil its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities?

2.1   The arrangements for managing the quality of learning opportunities are clear, as described in paragraphs 1.1 to 1.2. The Academic Director and Registrar provide effective

day-to-day management of the higher education provision, working alongside programme managers and tutors.

How effectively does the School make use of external reference points to manage and enhance learning opportunities?

2.2   The School currently uses external reference points in a limited and underdeveloped way to manage and enhance learning opportunities, as described in paragraph 1.3.

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

2.3   The School adequately maintains and enhances the quality of the teaching and learning through its handbooks, policies and practice. Teachers use work schemes and lesson plans for the teaching of classes. Students maintain comprehensive individual learning folders, which contain assessment briefs, marked work and other academic materials.

2.4   The School effectively follows assessment verification procedures stipulated by their awarding organisations. Assessment briefs are verified before issue and assessed work is internally verified at the School before being submitted to the awarding organisation for external review. The quality assurance of the School's provision benefits from the input of external verifiers. The School put in place staff development around assessment following the blocking of the Pearson provision and staff have fully engaged with it. Students have a clear understanding of the assessment procedures and the verification processes.

2.5   The School is implementing a regular quality review system in order to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning of its programmes is maintained. It conducts programme monitoring on a termly basis with the intention of developing an annual review process. The recent initial review of the School's programmes, which is being progressed, identified actions needed to ensure that the appropriate academic standards and learning opportunities were being met. A Quality Assurance Calendar has been produced in order to facilitate consistent quality assurance activity throughout the academic year.

2.6   The School operates an adequate appraisal system to assure the quality of teaching and learning. Appraisals are informed by outcomes of teaching observation and peer observations are conducted in accordance with criteria laid out in various quality related documents. Action plans are produced following observations and include identified staff development needs.

2.7   The Senior Management Team is in the process of reconfiguring the academic structure in order to strengthen the current academic delivery team. It realises that the current team relies too heavily on part-time staff. The intention is to expand from two to five or six full-time lecturers in the near future.

How does the School assure itself that students are supported effectively?

2.8   The School has initiated a new, carefully developed admissions procedure which includes a rigorous assessment of prior learning. The new procedure will be implemented for the next intake of students by the Admissions Committee, which will comprise the Academic Director, the Registrar, and, when they are appointed, Admissions Officers. The new admissions procedure will also strengthen the assessment of candidate suitability to undertake the appropriate level of study. All students must demonstrate proficiency in English language through UKVI approved certification before enrolment. The School also provides additional English testing and support where needed.

2.9   A comprehensive induction programme ensures that all students gain a full understanding of the expectations placed upon them. The induction period includes a range of academic proficiency tests depending upon the chosen programme, such as verbal and non-verbal reasoning, English and mathematics. Students receive a generic School handbook and a programme handbook. They are briefed on the policies and procedures that underpin their programme of study, particularly in relation to assessment. The School has reduced the time spent on proficiency testing at induction from 3 hours to 1.5 hours in response to previous student feedback.

2.10   The School ensures that all staff and students are treated and supported equitably. Its disability policy states that it will work to develop and improve its access to facilities and implement reasonable adjustments where required, to ensure that disabled individuals are not disadvantaged. It is extending disability support in two ways, by addressing unseen disabilities, such as dyslexia, and offering additional learning skills assistance outside of timetabled programme delivery.

2.11   The School operates a robust tutorial system. Students receive a high level of academic and pastoral support, largely from their programme manager and tutor. The tutorial system includes study support, enrichment and careers guidance. A carefully planned student academic performance review process underpins the tutorial system and provides information recorded in individual student progress review files. A student welfare officer post is defined but currently not filled.

2.12   The School operates effective assessment submission and feedback processes. Students confirm that assessments are clearly explained by staff, particularly the grading criteria, and that supplementary information is often provided on the virtual learning environment (VLE). Students understand how to submit formative work and receive feedback on summative work within three to four weeks. Students find formative and summative feedback helpful for preparation of future assessments. The School is currently investigating the use of originality checking software to assist students with the development of their critical writing skills.

2.13   The School ensures that the student voice is heard. It has an emergent student representative system. Student representatives are elected by peers to voice student concerns. One or two student representatives are nominated from this pool, depending upon individual availability, to attend management meetings. Students can also submit complaints or suggestions via hard copy form or a dedicated email address.

How effectively does the School develop its staff in order to improve student learning opportunities?

2.14   The School inadequately develops its staff. A good staff recruitment strategy is in place, which requires applicants to have a minimum level 7 qualification in their specialist area and preferably a teaching qualification, such as Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector or above. Academic staff individually maintain sector and occupational credit through engaging with their own professional practice, attending training courses, completing continuing professional development, monitoring industry updates when new curriculum is issued by the awarding organisations, and teaching in other higher education institutions. There is, however, no formal staff development programme with respect to external reference points and the School does not ensure staff engage with subject specific or scholarly development. It is **advisable** for the provider to formalise its staff development policy.

How effectively does the School ensure that learning resources are accessible to students and sufficient to enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes?

2.15   The School is adequately equipped to deliver its higher education provision for the number of students currently enrolled. It determines physical teaching resource needs, such as tables, chairs and IT facilities, on a room-by-room basis subject to availability of funds. Requests for resources are emailed to the Academic Director. Students are encouraged to purchase e-books and the School subscribes to the Southampton Online library. Students are satisfied with current resources, but think that a larger book stock and more computers would enhance their experience. None of the external reports indicates concern over the resourcing of programmes.

2.16   The School's VLE is a useful, but underdeveloped, resource. There are no guidelines for staff regarding what materials should be available on the VLE to support teaching, learning and assessment. VLE use operates on a unit by unit rather than programme basis and is not subject to audit for quality assurance purposes. Students consider the VLE a valuable resource and use it to access lecture notes and other support materials. It would be **desirable** for the School to design, implement and audit a VLE policy.

2.17   The School supports students who are eligible to undertake work experience as part of their programme by helping them to find placements and liaising with external employers to manage and assess the experience. It provides alternative modules for its majority of international students who are not permitted to undertake work placements.

2.18   The School demonstrates a responsible approach to the management of the quality of the learning opportunities in its higher education provision. Maintenance of the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and effective student support processes exist. Although a staff appraisal process has been implemented, the School needs to formalise its staff development policy in order to further support student learning and enhance the teaching.

> The review team has **confidence** that the provider is fulfilling its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of the intended learning opportunities it provides for students.

3   Information about learning opportunities

How effectively does the School communicate information about learning opportunities to students and other stakeholders?

3.1   The School provides adequate information about learning opportunities to students and other stakeholders. Under its agreement with its awarding organisations, it is responsible for developing its own publicity materials. The School's website is the primary medium for prospective students to access information about the School. It is easily navigable and factually accurate. It includes sufficient information about the School, the range of programmes on offer, the School's policies, fees, living in London, visa and immigration details and admissions procedures. The students are provided with an informative general School handbook and programme handbook at induction. Programme handbooks provide clear and detailed information about the relevant programme of study, the assessment and delivery strategy and the School's academic policies; however, some general information about the School and its personnel is outdated. Current students have access to sufficient information about learning opportunities and consider the information they receive helpful.

3.2   The School effectively communicates information about modules, study support and library resources through its VLE. Students find the information on the VLE useful and easily accessible. The School requires teaching staff to develop and upload their own teaching and assessment materials to the VLE without any School guidance. The School has not conducted any checks of the information on the VLE to date, but this is planned (see paragraph 3.3).

How effective are the School's arrangements for assuring that information about learning opportunities is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy?

3.3   The School has recently developed a new and clear structure for reviewing information on learning opportunities, but has not fully implemented the recommendations of the Internal Review on Public Information, which identified gaps in the previous system. The responsibility for reviewing all information now lies with the Operations Committee, which reports to the Senior Management Team. The Public Information Committee, a subcommittee of the Operations Committee, has been tasked with updating all information within a clear timeframe. The School demonstrated that their new system is adequate for checking all information. At the time of the review, information on the website had been checked and updated and is now accurate and consistent. However, programme handbooks, the VLE and School policies have not yet been checked. It is **advisable** for the School to implement in full its new system for checking all information.

3.4   The School provides sufficient information about learning opportunities for applicants and students. It has made adequate progress in the articulation of a new system for providing and checking the information it publishes about itself. As the implementation of the system is still at an early stage, only the website has been checked to date. Programme handbooks, the VLE and School policies have not yet been checked, which could potentially put information about learning opportunities at risk.

The team concludes that reliance **can** be placed on the information that the provider produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers.

Action plan[3]

Capital School of Business & Management CIC action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight of October 2014						
Advisable	Intended outcomes	Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes	Target date(s)	Action by	Reported to	Evaluation (process or evidence)
The team considers that it is **advisable** for the School to:						
• implement the Pearson action plan by 31 December 2014 (paragraph 1.5)	Ensure all internal verification is in place and that academic staff fully implement the systems and procedures set down by the awarding organisation	Agree action plan with Pearson area manager. Re-assess all student work. Complete internal verification of all feedback to students Progress report, with suppporting evidence, to QAA	31 December 2014 23 January 2015	All academic staff under the direction of the Academic Director	Senior Management Team QAA	Pearson approval for self certification Documentation supporting stated outcomes achieved by 31 December 2014
• implement its action plan for the 38 Qualifi students as soon as possible and no later than 15 December 2014 to ensure that their situation is	Provide level 8 progression for current students registered on the CMI level 8 programme	Create level 8 path acceptable to students or alternatively agree termination from the College on mutually agreeable terms Progress report, with supporting evidence, to QAA	15 December 2014 23 January 2015	Academic Director	Senior Management Team QAA	Satisfaction document signed off by all level 8 students Documentation supporting stated outcomes achieved

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[3] The School has been required to develop this action plan to follow up on good practice and address any recommendations arising from the review. QAA monitors progress against the action plan, in conjunction with the School's awarding organisations.

resolved and that they are advised of all their options, including refunds (paragraph 1.6)						by 15 December 2014
• formalise its staff development policy (paragraph 2.14)	All (academic) staff have a structured and progressive continuous development plan (CPD) which is in line with the academic objectives of the College	Carry out annual appraisals for all staff

Carry out lesson observations on all staff every term

Document the training needs and agree individual timetables for CPD | 31 March 2015 | Academic Director. | Senior Management Team | Published a staff development policy document and CPD schedule for all academic staff |
| • implement in full its new system for checking all information (paragraph 3.3). | Complete documented control of all information relating to higher education within the College | Formalise the functions of the Public Information Panel

Set out a timetabled agenda for the year

Carry out action plan in a systematic and orderly manner

Report progress through committee structure on a regular basis | 31 March 2015 | Academic Director | The Public Information Panel under supervision of the Academic Boards | Minutes of the PiP and agreed ratification of actions by the Senior Management Team |

Desirable	Intended outcomes	Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes	Target date/s	Action by	Reported to	Evaluation (process or evidence)
The team considers that it would be **desirable** for the College to:						
• review and evaluate the effectiveness of its new committee structures after one year of operation (paragraph 1.2)	To ensure the College committees are providing effective, efficient and economic guidance on the progression of the College and its stakeholders	Review the roles and responsibilities of each committee Ensure all stakeholders are represented on their appropriate committee Produce a report on the effectiveness of all committees as part of the Annual Review Amend (where appropriate) roles and responsibilities to improve the governance of the College	31 August 2015	All academic staff under the supervision of the Academic Director	Senior Management Team	Committee Audit report as part of the Annual Review
• complete mapping its policies and procedures to the Quality Code (paragraphs 1.3 and 2.2)	To ensure the Quality Code is adopted as best practice in the operations of the College	Review the Quality Code to ensure all stakeholders are aware of their responsibilities Review existing practices and documentation (policies and procedures) to articulate aspects of the Quality Code	Final report in the Annual Academic Review dated 31 August 2015 Interim progress reports at the end of each quarter	All academic staff under the direction of the Academic Director	Monitored through the Academic Board	Annual Review document Updated policies and procedures Recorded in the minutes of the SMT

		Review improvements and document these in the Annual Review				
• design, implement and audit a VLE policy (paragraph 2.16).	Establish a plan to ensure the VLE is providing optimum support for both staff and students within the College	Audit the current VLE functionality and document shortcomings in the current provision

Establish a plan to improve the provision of the VLE functionality

Build additional functionality

Establish a time boxed rolling plan (say 12 week window) to establish goals, objectives and measureable progress | Final report in the Annual Academic Review dated 31 August 2015

Interim progress reports at the end of each quarter | All academic staff under the direction of the Academic Director | Monitored through the Academic Board | VLE audit notes and planned progression timetable and actions

Measurable evidence such as written VLE policy and actions agreed through Operations Committee and the SMT

Actions to be in minutes of both |

About QAA

QAA is the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. QAA's mission is to safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK higher education.

QAA's aims are to:

- meet students' needs and be valued by them
- safeguard standards in an increasingly diverse UK and international context
- drive improvements in UK higher education
- improve public understanding of higher education standards and quality.

QAA conducts reviews of higher education institutions and publishes reports on the findings. QAA also publishes a range of guidance documents to help safeguard standards and improve quality.

More information about the work of QAA is available at: www.qaa.ac.uk.

More detail about Review for Educational Oversight can be found at: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Educational-Oversight.

Glossary

This glossary explains terms used in this report. You can find a fuller glossary at:
www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us/glossary. Formal definitions of key terms can be found in the
Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook.[4]

academic quality A comprehensive term referring to how, and how well, higher education providers manage teaching and learning opportunities to help students progress and succeed.

academic standards The standards set and maintained by degree-awarding bodies for their courses (programmes and modules) and expected for their awards. See also **threshold academic standards**.

awarding body A UK higher education provider (typically a university) with the power to award degrees, conferred by Royal Charter, or under Section 76 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, or under Section 48 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992, or by Papal Bull, or, since 1999, granted by the Privy Council on advice from QAA.

awarding organisation An organisation authorised to award a particular qualification; an organisation recognised by Ofqual to award Ofqual-regulated qualifications.

designated body An organisation that has been formally appointed or recognised to perform a particular function. QAA has been recognised by UK Visas and Immigration as a designated body for the purpose of providing educational oversight.

differentiated judgements In a Review for Educational Oversight, separate judgements respectively for the provision validated by separate awarding bodies.

enhancement The process by which higher education providers systematically improve the quality of provision and the ways in which students' learning is supported. It is used as a technical term in QAA's review processes.

external examiner An independent expert appointed by an institution to comment on student achievement in relation to established academic standards and to look at approaches to assessment.

framework for higher education qualifications A published formal structure that identifies a hierarchy of national qualification levels and describes the general achievement expected of holders of the main qualification types at each level, thus assisting higher education providers in maintaining academic standards. QAA publishes the following frameworks: *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and *The Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland*.

good practice A process or way of working that, in the view of a QAA review team, makes a particularly positive contribution to a higher education provider's management of academic standards and the quality of its educational provision. It is used as a technical term in QAA's review processes.

highly trusted sponsor An organisation that the UK Government trusts to admit migrant students from overseas, according to Tier 4 of UK Visas and Immigration points-based immigration system. Higher education providers wishing to obtain this status must undergo a successful review by QAA.

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[4] www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=2669

learning opportunities The provision made for students' learning, including planned study, teaching, assessment, academic and personal support, and resources (such as libraries and information systems, laboratories or studios).

learning outcomes What a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completing a process of learning.

programme (of study) An approved course of study that provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification.

programme specifications Published statements about the intended **learning outcomes** of **programmes** of study, containing information about teaching and learning methods, support and assessment methods, and how individual units relate to levels of achievement.

provider (s) (of higher education) Organisations that deliver higher education. In the UK they may be a degree-awarding body or another organisation that offers programmes of higher education on behalf of degree-**awarding bodies** or **awarding organisations**. In the context of Review for Educational Oversight the term means an independent college.

public information Information that is freely available to the public (sometimes referred to as being 'in the public domain').

quality See **academic quality**.

Quality Code Short term for the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, which is the UK-wide set of reference points for higher education providers (agreed through consultation with the higher education community, and published by QAA), which states the Expectations that all providers are required to meet.

reference points Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured. Internal reference points may be used by providers for purposes of self-regulation; external ones are used and accepted throughout the higher education community for the checking of standards and quality.

Subject Benchmark Statement A published statement that sets out what knowledge, understanding, abilities and skills are expected of those graduating in each of the main subject areas (mostly applying to bachelor's degrees), and explains what gives that particular discipline its coherence and identity.

threshold academic standards The minimum acceptable level of achievement that a student has to demonstrate to be eligible for an academic award. Threshold academic standards are set out in the national F**rameworks for Higher Education Qualifications** and S**ubject Benchmark Statements**. See also **academic standards**.