Adapted Review for Specific Course Designation by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

City College Nottingham

October 2014

Contents

Key findings about City College Nottingham

As a result of its adapted Review for Specific Course Designation 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 Chartered Management Institute, the Association of Business Executives, and ATHE 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

The team has identified the following **good practice**:

- using policies and processes to ensure that teaching and learning observations take place (paragraph 2.1)
- students' access to tutorial support and Individual Learning Plans that help them achieve their intended learning outcomes (paragraph 2.5).

Recommendations

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

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

- embed the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code) more fully within the College's academic policies and take the expectations that providers are required to meet firmly into account in developing higher education academic policies and procedures (paragraph 1.8).

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

- formalise its processes for agreeing, implementing and reviewing College policies (paragraph 1.3)
- review external verifier reports and implement action plans through a formal process at all levels of the College (paragraph 1.11)
- continue to develop its teaching and learning observation processes (paragraph 2.2)
- provide wider access to relevant electronic journals (paragraph 2.8)
- provide more guest lecturers and visits to businesses to improve students' contextual learning (paragraph 2.10)
- produce a formal process for approving published information (paragraph 3.4).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the adapted [Review for Specific Course Designation](#)[1] conducted by [QAA](#) at City College Nottingham (the College), 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 Chartered Management Institute, the Association of Business Practitioners and ATHE Ltd. The review was carried out by Mr Mark Cooper and Dr Tommie Anderson-Jaquest (reviewers) and Professor Patricia Higham (coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the [*Review for Specific Course Designation: Handbook, May 2014*](#).[2] Evidence in support of the review included documentation on policies and processes of academic standards, learning opportunities, and information about learning opportunities supplied by the College and its awarding organisations, meetings with staff and students, reports of reviews by the Independent Schools Inspectorate, a PowerPoint presentation, demonstration of the virtual learning environment, and examples of assessed student work.

QAA carries out an adapted review for providers who are also reviewed by another approved body. The *Review for Specific Course Designation: Handbook, May 2014* provides further details.

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

- the Quality Code
- awarding organisations' requirements
- Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) indicators
- the matrix Standard on advice and information services
- International Organisation for Standardisation ISO 9001 quality management
- British Council reports.

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

The College, which was established in 1992, is a private community-based social enterprise provider of nationally accredited skills for life, and vocational and academic programmes across a range of occupational areas from entry level 1 to level 7. It operates in the East and West Midlands through a network of established community-based outreach venues and employers. The College's main business and core income is with the post-16 adult and further education sector, delivering provision through partnerships with further education colleges, through the Skills Funding Agency Adult Skills Budget.

The Higher Education Department is the most recent addition to the College's operations, following accreditation by the British Accreditation Council in 2011. All higher education programmes are currently delivered at the College's main site on Carlton Road. The ISI awarded a Grade 2 (meeting expectations) in all three areas of oversight in May 2012, and awarded a Grade 2 again at the ISI monitoring visit in 2013, with a Grade 1 (the highest grade, which denotes excellence) for the health, safety and welfare of learners. These Grades were maintained following the most recent ISI monitoring visit in May 2014.

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[1] www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Pages/RSCD.aspx
[2] www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=2707

At the time of the review, the provider offered the following higher education programmes with student numbers in brackets:

Chartered Management Institute (CMI)
- Level 5 Certificate in Management and Leadership (4)

Association of Business Practitioners (ABP)
- Level 7 Diploma in International Human Resource Management (7)

ATHE Ltd
- Level 6 Business and Administrative Management (17)

Please note that the Association of Business Practitioners is now part of the Association of British Executives (ABE).

The provider's stated responsibilities

For ATHE Ltd, the College is responsible for first marking of student assignments, moderation or second marking of assignments, giving feedback to students on their assignments, academic tutorial/review and monitoring/academic guidance, library and learning resources available to students, and the student appeal system. For ABE awards, the College is responsible for setting assessments, first marking of student assignments, giving feedback to students on their assignments, and the student appeal system.

For CMI, ATHE Ltd and ABE Awards, the College is responsible for identifying curriculum needs, strategic development of higher education, curriculum development, student recruitment and selection, monitoring student admission, retention and completion, reviewing and responding to annual monitoring reviews and module evaluations, provision for developing staff teaching and assessing skills at higher education level, staff higher education subject updating and scholarship, monitoring the quality of higher education teaching and learning, student admission guidance and induction, guidance for progression, liaison with and involvement of employers, collecting and acting upon student feedback/ opinion, information about learning opportunities, for example, on the web or in the prospectus, and procedures for ensuring that information about learning opportunities is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy.

CMI, ATHE Ltd, and ABE are responsible for programme specifications for their awards. CMI is responsible for setting assignments, first marking of student assignments, moderating or second marking of assignments, giving feedback to students on their assignments, and managing the student appeal system for their awards. ATHE Ltd is responsible for setting assessments. The College shares responsibility with the CMI and the ABE for academic tutorial/review, monitoring and academic guidance, and library and learning resources available to students. The College shares responsibility with all these awarding organisations for the quality review of higher education, and monitoring the reliability of programme and module information available to students.

Recent developments

The College has appointed a new Systems and Performance Coordinator to lead on improving data management and reporting for funding and contracts, supporting online 24+ Advanced Learning Loan applications, and improving learner tracking and on-programme progress management. New message boxes were placed in reception areas to increase the range and reach of learner and stakeholder feedback. The College has secured scheme accreditation by Pearson and Ascentis (for HNC/D Fashion and Access to Higher

Education respectively), and plans to offer their awards in 2014-15, subject to recruitment of learners and appointment of staff. The Curriculum Development Committee will oversee the introduction of new qualifications to replace qualifications that have expired or are about to expire. In July 2014, the College secured a contract from the Skills Funding Agency for 24+ Advanced Learning Loans for level 3 and above provision for access by UK and European Union learners. In addition, EMQC Ltd conducted a review in 2014 in respect of the College's achievement of the matrix Standard. The ISI conducted a monitoring review in 2014 and will undertake a full inspection in 2015.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes at the College presented a written submission prepared by the Student Council. The review coordinator met a small group of students during the preparatory visit. A group of students, including members of the Student Council, met reviewers during the review visit.

Detailed findings about City College Nottingham

1   Academic standards

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

1.1   The College manages academic standards effectively, in accordance with the responsibilities delegated by its awarding and accrediting organisations. At College level, a Quality Policy underpins the College's commitments to continuous quality improvement. Senior managers have developed systems and internal procedures to assure that standards of accredited qualifications are maintained. At programme level, qualified Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs) put into action the Internal Quality Assurance Strategy, ensuring compliance with the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) and awarding organisation requirements.

1.2   Robust internal mechanisms operate at College and programme levels to ensure that academic standards are managed consistently. For example, the Quality Team, whose members include the Quality Assurance, Curriculum and Accreditations Manager and other managers, ensures that staff members have access to quality timetables, College tutor handbooks, and the qualification standards (programme/scheme handbooks) prepared by awarding organisations. Heads of departments and team leaders in each curriculum area undertake annual internal quality reviews, taking observations of teaching and learning into account. The Quality Team prepares a cross-college annual Self-Assessment Report (SAR) at the end of each academic year. The findings, in turn, generate the overarching Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for the year ahead.

1.3   Quality Team members meet regularly to discuss quality developments, as do higher education team members. The Principal meets frequently with the Quality Team and higher education team leaders, together and separately, to coordinate and strengthen the College's internal systems for managing academic standards. Although the Quality Team, department heads and team leaders undertake annual reviews of College policies to ensure they remain fit for purpose, processes for agreeing, reviewing and formalising policies need to be strengthened and standardised. It would be **desirable** for the College to formalise its processes for agreeing, implementing and reviewing College policies.

1.4   The College also ensures that records are maintained for noting student progression on higher education programmes. For example, team leaders maintain useful tracking sheets and checklists on each student's performance.

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

1.5   The College uses external reference points of its awarding organisations to manage academic standards, and considers standards set by the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code), the matrix Standard, ISO9001, and feedback from regulatory bodies to be particularly important. Senior managers confirm that priority will be placed upon embedding a wider range of external reference points, including the Quality Code, into the College's internal processes for undertaking self-assessment and implementing quality improvements in 2014-15.

1.6   Each year, the Quality Team maps the College's current position against the expectations of the awarding and regulatory organisations, and develops action plans to address issues for managing standards. The College's response to recommendations previously proposed by the ISI and matrix demonstrate the College's capability to learn from

the standards set by others and to use the knowledge gained to improve internal systems and structures.

1.7   Until recently the College has focused upon further education provision. The Quality Team has ensured that academic standards are maintained by benchmarking against external reference points particularly suited to further education awards. Over the years, the Team has developed effective mapping systems for carrying out tasks that are set.

1.8   Senior managers and Quality Team members have endorsed the Quality Code, but benchmarking against the Quality Code has yet to be embedded within the College's systems for review to the same extent as the ISI, matrix and other accrediting and awarding bodies. Senior managers have confirmed intentions to expand the higher education provision substantially in 2014-15. To ensure academic standards are maintained at the appropriate level, the College needs to embed the Quality Code more fully within the College's quality culture and take expectations into account in developing higher education academic policies and procedures. Widening and deepening the range of external reference points specifically relevant to higher education will help the College to ensure that the management of academic standards remains robust and will facilitate senior management's objective of implementing internal quality auditing more fully. It is **advisable** that the College embeds the Quality Code more fully within the College's academic policies and takes the expectations that providers are required to meet firmly into account in developing higher education academic policies and procedures.

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

1.9   Senior managers and staff members use the feedback obtained from external moderation and verification to inform and improve assessment processes and resolve issues likely to impact adversely upon the management of academic standards. The Quality Team, in consultation with department heads and team leaders, generates action plans to improve the quality of assessment briefs, the process of submission, the level of marking, and internal verification procedures.

1.10   The Quality Team, module team leaders and heads of department review all external verifier reports and develop action plans to improve weaknesses identified by the verifiers. They also distribute external quality reports and action plans to all lecturers delivering on the relevant programme. If serious issues arise, then the Quality Team assumes management of the review process. Students also have access to external verifier and examiner reports.

1.11   The College has established procedures for ensuring actions take place, but the link between central and programme processes could be strengthened. At programme level, lecturers respond to actions proposed by external verifiers for particular modules: for example, the lecturer's response to the external verifier representing the Association of Business Practitioners in January 2014. The Quality Team works to ensure that progress is made, loops are closed, and actions are completed in standardisation meetings. It would be **desirable** for the College to review external verifier reports and implement action plans through a formal process at all levels of the College.

1.12   In summary, the College manages academic standards in accordance with the responsibilities delegated by its awarding and accrediting bodies. Internal systems for quality review are effective. Staff members use feedback from external moderation and verification to improve the assessment process and ensure academic standards are maintained. The College uses external reference points effectively to manage academic standards. It would be **desirable** for the College to formalise its internal processes for agreeing,

implementing and reviewing College policies, reviewing external verifier reports, and implementing action plans. Given the intention to increase higher education provision, the College needs to widen and deepen the use of external reference points that relate specifically to higher education. It is **advisable** that College embeds the Quality Code more fully within its academic policies.

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.

2   Quality of learning opportunities

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

2.1   The Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment policy is a comprehensive scheme with clear outcomes that management and staff respect and value. The Observation Policy is supported by the Internal Quality Assurance Strategy which makes specific reference to the observation process and outlines the process for all quality assurance measures that the College uses to assure standards in line with expectations of the awarding organisations. Using policies and processes to ensure that teaching and learning observations take place is **good practice**.

2.2   At the time of the review, the Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment policy was being revised in line with College timescales. As part of the revision, the College plans to further improve the quality of teaching and learning by including peer observations and learning walks in its observation policy and processes. It would be **desirable** for the College to continue to develop its teaching and learning observation processes.

2.3   Students comment that they find the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to be of high quality. They engage in a range of learning activities, for example presentation giving, scenario-based (action research) assignments, written work, practical and theory sessions. They find this mix of delivery broadens their experience and helps to make them work-ready.

2.4   The review team sampled student work and associated feedback and determined that the written feedback offered is mostly helpful and constructive with clear pointers for improvement. Students are happy with the formative and summative feedback they receive and act positively on recommendations to improve their work.

2.5   Students are inducted appropriately onto their programmes of study. Induction covers a range of topics, including access to facilities and resources, research skills, tutorial arrangements, and assessment practice together with avoiding plagiarism and assessment malpractice. Students found the process of induction helpful and identified from it that they can easily access key policies and procedures on the College's virtual learning environment site (VLE).

2.6   The support that the College offers for students is of high quality and easily accessible. Students are able to access tutors at the end of each day for up to an hour for group or individual tutorials, as required, and can book further tutorials and discuss support opportunities via email or through the well embedded Individual Learning Plan process. The tutorial process covers both academic and pastoral aspects of students' study. The Individual Learning Plans are a key feature in identifying academic targets and individualised support needs. The students praised their use in focusing their studies through

to achievement. Associated tutor and student handbooks support lecturers and learners in engaging effectively with this process. Students' access to tutorial support and Individual Learning Plans that help them achieve their intended learning outcomes is **good practice**.

2.7   Facilities and resources provided by the College are adequate in allowing students to meet the learning outcomes of their programmes. The College has taken steps to improve the quality of information technology resources by purchasing new computers and integrating materials on the VLE to support teaching and learning.

2.8   The College also has an on-site library that students confirm contains sufficient texts and written materials: however, they expressed a need for more access to journals and learning materials to which they currently have limited access. The College recognises this gap and is exploring ways to provide this facility for students. It would be **desirable** for the College to provide wider access to relevant electronic journals.

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

2.9   The College is developing links and potential placements with employers to enable their students to develop independent learning skills by studying their chosen subject, and contextualising it in the workplace. In turn this strategy will enhance students' capacity for analytical, critical and creative thinking and will meet Indicator 2 in the Quality Code, *Chapter B3: Learning and Teachin*g. The support package offered to employers is collectively informative and robust and is aligned to the College's intention to develop new placement opportunities for students. The College Employer Engagement Strategy contains clear objectives, monitoring and review aspects, and is supported by a thorough Employer Reference File that effectively acts as a handbook for employers working with the College in the placement of students. The associated Employer Equality and Diversity pack includes detailed expectations and legal responsibilities with regard to student placements.

2.10   Students expressed a desire for more access to guest lecturers from industry and visits to business so that they can place more of their learning into context. The College confirmed its plans to support this development and stated that it intends to devise a programme in this respect. It would be **desirable** for the College to provide more guest lecturers and visits to businesses to improve students' contextual learning.

How does the College engage students in its quality assurance processes?

2.10   Student representatives effectively solicit the views and opinions of their peers and feed back accordingly to College management with their concerns and recommendations both formally and informally. The Student Council acts as the formal body to raise and discuss issues and then present them to the College Management Team. Members of the College Management Team are invited to attend Student Council meetings and because of this, issues often get resolved promptly. The Student Council and the Student Representative Body are also responsible for disseminating formal College responses to the students. In addition, the College also receives formal feedback through student surveys, the student submission, assignments, and module and unit feedback reports. Informally, students commented that the open door policy the College operates also acts as a successful mechanism for sharing their views and bringing about change.

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

2.11   The College is fully committed to the professional development of its staff. To support this aim, it has a comprehensive Staff Training and Continuous Professional

Development policy. The aim of the policy is to develop and maximise individual potential, and provide employees with the skills and knowledge necessary for the College to achieve its aims and objectives in delivering high quality teaching and learning delivery.

2.12 Training and development needs are determined from the outcomes of staff induction, annual appraisals, the observation of teaching and learning scheme, and from direct requests from individual members of staff. Opportunities have included college-specific training, quality assurance, information, advice, and guidance and initial teaching training. The College is also able to access staff development opportunities provided by its local partner further education colleges. Staff commented favourably on the support they are given to update and expand their skill sets and how the College supports them in achieving this with regard to time and cost. They also spoke positively about the staff support intranet system that contains staff development materials.

2.13 In summary, the College operates a scheme for observing teaching, learning and assessment that management and staff respect and value. Using policies and processes to ensure that teaching and learning observations take place is **good practice**. Because of planned changes, it is **desirable** that the College continues to develop its teaching and learning observation processes. Students are happy with the quality of induction, teaching, learning, assessment, and formative and summative feedback they receive. Students' access to tutorial support and Individual Learning Plans that help them achieve their intended learning outcomes is identified as **good practice**. It is **desirable** that the College provides wider access to relevant electronic journals. The College is developing links and potential placements with employers. It is **desirable** that the College provides more guest lecturers and visits to businesses to improve students' contextual learning. Student representatives effectively solicit the views and opinions of their peers. The College has a comprehensive Staff Training and Continuous Professional Development Policy.

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

3.1 The expansion of higher education at the College has increased the flow of information it produces. The College is aware that more formal systems need to be put in place to ensure the accuracy and accessibility of the information it produces.

3.2 Currently, team leaders act as the guardians of accuracy for course-related information. They work with their teams to produce a range of information for students and a wider public audience. Information that is produced includes, but is not limited to, helpful course information sheets, a range of staff, student and employer handbooks and information produced for the College website. As stated, the College recognises the need to confirm the accuracy of information following a few errors recently identified on the website that have since been corrected. The Principal has assigned the Work-Based Learning and Operations Manager as the designated person responsible for overseeing and monitoring information in this respect and for drawing up the necessary protocols. The Manager will review all information on a weekly basis and instruct amendments as necessary.

3.3   Staff members make good use of the VLE, using it mainly as a repository for course information and associated resources, such as e-books, help guides and videos to assist students in their studies and independent learning practice. The platform is available from a link on the College website and is, therefore, widely accessible. Students commented that they are satisfied with, and make good use of, the VLE and that the information provided on it allows them to further their learning.

3.4   Although the College provides information to current students that is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy, procedures for checking accuracy and ensuring relevance are unclear. It would be desirable for the College to produce a formal process for approving published information that is understood and shared with all staff.

3.5   The College operates an on-site job-shop service that aims to provide learners with employment support and advice needs. Students are provided with university prospectuses. As discussed in paragraphs 2.8 and 2.9, the College's plans to develop placements in industry, arrange visits to businesses, and increase the use of guest lecturers will also enhance the information available to students about future career choices.

3.6   In summary, the College's expansion of higher education increased the information the College produces. The College is aware that more formal systems need to be put in place to ensure the accuracy and accessibility of information. The Principal has assigned a manager to be responsible for overseeing and monitoring information and drawing up the necessary protocols. Staff members make good use of the VLE. Students have access to university prospectuses. The College operates an on-site job-shop service that aims to provide learners with employment support and advice needs. It would be **desirable** for the College to produce a formal process for approving published information that is understood and shared with all staff.

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]

City College Nottingham action plan relating to the Review of Specific Course Designation October 2014						
Good practice	**Intended outcomes**	**Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes**	**Target date(s)**	**Action by**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation (process or evidence)**
The review team identified the following areas of **good practice** that are worthy of wider dissemination within the College:						
• using policies and processes to ensure that teaching and learning observations take place (paragraph 2.1)	Successful embedding of the Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy and procedure into the culture of the organisation, which is inclusive across all departments and teaching staff	Publish the Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy and Procedures document on the College's virtual learning environment (Staff Room), to enable staff access and improve awareness of processes	19 Dec 2014	Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Lead	Quality Team	Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy and Procedures awaiting proof-reading and validation prior to formal publication
		Agree and publish the names of the Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment team, as above	19 Dec 2014	Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Lead	Quality Team	Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment team agreed at Quality Team Meeting on 12 Dec 2014
		Prepare a schedule of planned Observation of Teaching, Learning and	19 Dec 2014	Observation of Teaching, Learning and	Quality Team	

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[3] The College 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 provider's awarding organisations.

		Assessment activity across the provision

Conduct a representative sample dual observations, where possible, to moderate grading decisions | In line with planned Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment schedule | Assessment Lead

Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Team | Quality Team | Draft Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment plan published 28 Nov 2014 by the Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Lead

Ongoing activity, to be reviewed in Jul 2015 |
| • students' access to tutorial support and Individual Learning Plans that help them achieve their intended learning outcomes (paragraph 2.5). | Consistent and inclusive application of tutorial reviews and Individual Learning Plans across all departments and programmes, to ensure learners are supported equally and effectively | Monitor Tutorial Progress Review and Individual Learning Plan content via Internal Quality Auditing and random sampling

Ensure target setting is SMART for greater impact | Once every term, in line with planned review dates | Quality Audit Team/ Departmental managers | Quality Team | First term progress reviews due for completion

First internal quality audits planned for early Jan 2015 |
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 College to:						
• embed the UK Quality Code for	Successful embedding of the Quality Code within	Review Self-Assessment Report 2013-14 and	14 Nov 2014	Quality Manager	Quality Team	Self-Assessment Review/Quality

Higher Education more fully within the College's academic policies and take the expectations that providers are required to meet firmly into account in developing higher education academic policies and procedures (paragraph 1.8).	existing policies and procedures, and consolidation of processes Greater awareness and buy-in by staff New policies and procedures incorporate the Quality Code as part of a standardised structure	Quality Improvement Plan 2014-15, to ensure that the Quality Code is effectively documented, and QAA Review for Specific Course Designation outcomes are included Consolidate all existing College policies and procedures to ensure compliance, identify gaps, and ensure all College operational activities are effectively documented and publicised Publish updated policies and procedures onto the College's virtual learning environment, following internal validation	In line with current review dates, or before if possible As above	Quality Manager Moodle Working Party Manager	Quality Team/Board of Directors Quality Team	Improvement Plan updated 31 Oct 2014 In progress Progress to be monitored through end of month Position Statement updates As above
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:						
• formalise its processes for agreeing, implementing and reviewing	All College policies and procedures are agreed, implemented and reviewed following a formal approval process	Review and update the College's Quality Assurance policies and procedures to include the process and procedure by	19 December 2014	Quality Manager	Quality Team, Board of Directors	Reviewed and awaiting approval

		which policies and procedures are agreed, implemented and reviewed				
College policies (paragraph 1.3)						
• review external verifier reports and implement action plans through a formal process at all levels of the College (paragraph 1.11)	The College's management of external verification reports is standardised and systematic across the curriculum, to ensure that action plans are recorded, implemented, and monitored for impact and provision is risk managed effectively	Review current Quality Assurance Policy and Procedures to ensure that external quality assurance management is effectively incorporated	19 Dec 2014	Quality Manager	Quality Team, Board of Directors	Updated policies and procedures awaiting approval for publication
		Record all planned external quality assurance visits and centralise report storage for central records	Ongoing activity	Quality Manager	Quality Team	Recorded through minutes of Quality Team meetings
		Devise standard template for action plan implementation	19 Dec 2014	Quality Manager	Quality Team	Draft in place and waiting approval for publication
		Monitor action plan implementation for completion of required outcomes	Ongoing activity	Quality Team	Quality Team	Ongoing activity-review for compliance and impact Jul 2015
• continue to develop its teaching and learning observation processes (paragraph 2.2)	Improvement of teaching, learning and assessment practice across delivery staff, through a transparent and systematic process which supports and enhances performance and best practice	Monitor and review procedures for impact during the year	Ongoing activity	Quality Team	Principal	Ongoing activity-review for compliance and impact Jul 2015
		Obtain, collate and analyse feedback from staff which reflects pre, actual, and post-observation processes and experience	Ongoing activity	Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Lead	Quality Team	

• provide wider access to relevant electronic journals (paragraph 2.8)	Improvement to the existing resource base for teachers and learners, through the purchase of subscriptions to electronic, professional journals for selected academic areas as needed	Identify suitable electronic journals for purchase and submit proposals for authorisation	19 Dec 2014	Higher Education Team	Principal	Work in progress Subscription to Global Finance magazine (printed) set up 17 Oct 2014
• provide more guest lecturers and visits to businesses to improve students' contextual learning (paragraph 2.10)	Improvement to the learner experience as a result of exposure to wider expertise through guest speakers and hands on experience through employer placements	Identify and engage employers through Work-Based Learning team and community networks, for the provision of speakers and placement opportunities	16 Jan 2015	Work-Based Learning and Operations Manager Higher Education Tutor team	Quality Team	Work in progress
		Plan and conduct marketing/recruitment campaign as needed	As above	Employer Engagement and Recruitment Officer	Work-Based Learning and Operations Manager	As/if needed
		Compile a database of participating employers/speakers	16 Jan 2015	As above	As above	Review progress in Jan 2015
		Plan a programme of activity from available bank	30 Jan 2015	Higher Education Tutor team	Quality Team	Review progress in Jan 2015
• produce a formal process for approving	To ensure that all published information is up to date, accurate, and	Introduce a formal documented procedure through which all	14 Jan 2015	Quality Manager	Principal	Draft in process

published information (paragraph 3.4).	fit for purpose with the correct spelling and grammar, and standardised for presentation and form	documents are proofread and validated before issue and publication				

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 of Specific Course Designation can be found at: www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Pages/RSCD.aspx.

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 Specific Course Designation: Handbook, May 2014*.[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 (in response to applications for taught degree-awarding powers, research degree-awarding powers or university title).

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

differentiated judgements In a Review for Specific Course Designation, 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.

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.

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[4] www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=2707

operational definition A formal definition of a term, which establishes exactly what QAA means when using it in reviews and reports.

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 Specific Course Designation 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 **frameworks for higher education qualifications** and **Subject Benchmark Statements**. See also **academic standards**.

widening participation Increasing the involvement in higher education of people from a wider range of backgrounds.