



Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of Cromwell College of IT & Management Ltd, March 2015

Section 1: Outcome of the monitoring visit

1 From the evidence provided in the annual return and at the monitoring visit, the review team concludes that the Cromwell College of IT & Management Ltd (the College) has made acceptable progress with continuing to monitor, review and enhance its higher education provision since the previous [monitoring visit](#) in March 2014.

Section 2: Changes since the last QAA monitoring visit

2 The College is awaiting the outcome of a new Tier 4 Sponsorship Licence application following its revocation in April 2014. After this revocation, the College supported those students who wished to find alternative places to continue their education. The College was sold in October 2014 to new owners, but this has had no operational effect on the staff, and the management team remained the same. At the time of the monitoring visit there were no students enrolled at the College.

3 The Association of Business Executives reviewed the College on 12 June 2014 and granted accreditation for its programmes for one year beginning on 24 June 2014. The College was also approved as a registered centre for English Speaking Board (International) Ltd on 4 December 2014.

Section 3: Findings from the monitoring visit

4 The College conducts its own internal monitoring procedures each year through its Interim Self-Assessment Report and its Annual Monitoring Report. These reports include information on recent developments, cohort data, student performance, assessment procedures, the use of external reference points, the virtual learning environment, student support, staffing, and learning resources. Both reports contain future planning points but neither contains a robust action plan, although there is a well-maintained action plan for Chartered Management Institute programmes.

5 The College provides regular staff development, tailored to institutional and individual needs. Staff are required to attend general training, and each member of staff has a personal development plan, including peer observation that feeds into their yearly appraisals. Three teaching staff have recently completed a Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector.

6 The College recently updated its public information processes. Changes to public information are made in two ways: either a written request from a member of staff goes to the Public Information Manager for consideration, or a change comes out of a bimonthly audit carried out by the Head of Academics and Quality Manager. In either instance, the request for change goes to the Council Meeting, where it is considered for approval. The Principal can take Chair's action if no meeting of the Council is imminent.

7 The College ensures that students have sufficient English language competence to complete their programme of study by checking that they provide a valid secured English

language test, approved by UK Visas and Immigration, with the minimum level requirement of Common European Framework of Reference for Languages for their chosen programme. Every English qualification is verified with its awarding organisation either by email, by telephone or online. The College also interviews each student in English, either in person, if in the UK, or through video over internet with photo identification if overseas.

8 The College considers applicants' prior qualifications and their suitability to study the subject at the academic level for which they are applying by assessing whether applicants meet the awarding organisation's entry requirements. For example, if applying for a level 5 programme, the applicant must produce an appropriate level 4 certificate or comparable level overseas certificate as recognised by the UK National Recognition Information Centre. The originals of all certificates are checked at enrolment. The College checks authenticity of documentation by phone or email, or both, whenever doubt exists.

9 The College has a robust procedure to ensure that applicants have a genuine intention to study by checking that: documents provided are genuine; that applicants do not make false claims; that applicants provide reasonable justification for their chosen programme of study; and that applicants' previous experience and qualifications are relevant to the programme applied for. The College uses an Interview Sheet and a Qualification Authentication Checklist to record this information.

10 The College follows its Assessment Policy and Strategy to assure that assessment is carried out with rigour and integrity, according to the requirements of its awarding organisations. An Assessment Flow Chart describes the assessment process from a student's perspective, and covers submission rules, possible referral outcomes and penalties for non-submission. The College follows assessment briefs prepared by its awarding organisations. Once marked, the internal verifier chooses and moderates a random sample of assessments, unless the tutor is new to the College or subject, in which case the internal verifier moderates 100 per cent of the assignments and keeps records. The awarding organisations carry out external verification, usually during a visit to the College. The College provides staff training to ensure that the assessment procedure is thorough, complies with awarding organisation requirements and meets the expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

11 The College has a policy on maladministration and malpractice, which provides staff and students with clear guidance. It briefs students on malpractice at induction and requires students to use plagiarism-detection software when submitting assessments. Students are also referred to the individual awarding organisation's academic dishonesty procedures. The College's own procedures have been recently implemented successfully to resolve a case of collusion leading to the termination of the academic studies of two students.

12 Staff provide both formative and summative feedback on assessments, with an expected return of the final grade awarded within one month. Assessments are usually marked by College staff within two weeks and moderated internally before being sent off to the appropriate awarding body for final approval within a further two weeks.

13 Staff at the College confirm that students are exposed to work-related opportunities during the course of their studies wherever possible, in order to support teaching, learning and assessment. Students are not, however, placed in paid work-based learning.

Section 4: Progress in working with the external reference points to meet UK expectations for higher education

14 The College continues to use the Qualifications Credit Framework and the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. It also uses external reference points associated with its

awarding organisations and has delivered staff training on these. Three members of the teaching staff attended a QAA training event in November 2014.

Section 5: Background to the monitoring visit

15 The monitoring visit serves as a short check on the provider's continuing management of academic standards and quality of provision. It focuses on progress since the previous review. In addition, it provides an opportunity for QAA to advise the provider of any matters that have the potential to be of particular interest in the next monitoring visit or review.

16 The monitoring visit was carried out by Professor Edward J Esche, Coordinator, and Dr Hayley Randle, Reviewer, on 19 March 2015.

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