



Review for Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of Docklands College Ltd, February 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 Docklands College Ltd (the College) is not making acceptable progress with implementing the action plan from the [March 2014 Review for Educational Oversight](#) (REO).

Section 2: Changes since the last QAA review

2 There are three full-time staff at the College, and a number of part-time staff. At the time of the visit, 40 students were enrolled at the College, a substantial decline from the figure of approximately 700 at the time of the March 2014 review visit. All teaching had been completed and the students were either completing their final assignments or waiting for results. The College has not been in a position to recruit new international students for some time owing to the revocation of its Highly Trusted Sponsor status. It plans to rebuild its student base by expanding its recruitment of domestic students.

Section 3: Findings from the monitoring visit

3 The College has made efforts to ensure the authenticity of applicants' qualifications by checking them against the UK NARIC database, engaging authorised agents to check ownership and by interviewing all applicants in person or by video. Applicants are now required to hold the appropriate IELTS English language qualification, and additional checks are made at the time of the admission interview.

4 Few actions have been taken to maintain the areas of good practice identified in the REO report. Information is regularly posted on the virtual learning environment, which students find very useful. There is no evidence to indicate that the College Quality Manual has been reviewed recently. Meeting notes indicate some discussion in the middle of 2014 but do not record further action. Annual Monitoring Reports are dated 2013 and do not provide comparison with previous years. The team saw a detailed statistical analysis of student feedback, but there was no evidence that the feedback had been discussed and an action plan developed.

5 Few actions have been taken to address the recommendations of the REO report. The programme specification for the Pearson level 7 Extended Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership is detailed but does not map units against learning outcomes. The specification for the HND in Business is minimal, with no unit details or indication of how learning outcomes are to be achieved. Staff indicated that several HND students would be completing with a HNC award but no provision is made for this in the specification.

6 No additional opportunities for external input relating to employability have been provided. Staff have discussed their previous industrial experience with students informally, and provided guidance on preparing curricula vitae, but there has been no input from current employers or practitioners.

7 There has been no further promotion of scholarly activity. Some members of staff already hold, or are currently studying for, teaching qualifications and doctorates but there is no other activity and no monitoring of the impact of this on teaching. The actions identified in the action plan have not been fully completed.

8 Staff were asked if they now hold assessment boards for their HND Business and level 7 Extended Diploma programmes as this is now a requirement of Pearson. The team was informed that boards had taken place and that external examiners had attended. No reports of these boards could be provided when requested. The team was later informed that marks for the level 7 Extended Diploma were available and a transcript was provided, but boards for the HND had not taken place either to consider and agree progression or awards. There is no record of board approval for HND students to complete with the HNC award.

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

9 College policies indicate that they should have been reviewed in December 2014. There is no evidence of review or revision being considered by appropriate committees. More generally, the College's policies make little specific reference to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code), and staff seemed to be only very generally aware of its requirements. The Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Manual, which in fact refers only to admissions policies, make no reference to specific chapters of the Quality Code.

Section 5: Background to the monitoring visit

10 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.

11 The monitoring visit was carried out by David Taylor (Coordinator) and Millard Parkinson (Reviewer) on 25 February 2015.

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