



Educational Programmes Abroad

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

May 2016

About this report

This is a report of a review under the Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at Educational Programmes Abroad, London. The review took place on 4 May 2016 and was conducted by a panel, as follows:

- Dr Helen Corkill
- Dr Terence Clifford-Amos
- M Lee Smith

The main purpose of the review was to:

- make judgements about the provider's delegated responsibilities for the management of quality and improvement of learning opportunities
- draw a conclusion about whether the provider's public information is reliable
- produce a commentary on how effectively the provider discharges its responsibilities for academic standards
- report on any features of good practice
- make recommendations for action.

A summary of the [key findings](#) can be found in the section starting on page 2. The [context](#) in which these findings should be interpreted is explained on page 3. [Explanations](#) of the findings are given in numbered paragraphs in the section starting on page 4.

The QAA website gives more information [about QAA](#) and its mission.¹ More information about this review method can be found in the [published handbook](#).²

¹ www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us

² www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication/?PubID=202

Key findings

The QAA panel considered evidence relating to the educational provision at Educational Programmes Abroad (EPA), both information supplied in advance and evidence gathered during the review visit itself. The review has resulted in the key findings stated in this section.

Judgements

The QAA panel formed the following judgement about EPA:

- **confidence** can be placed in Educational Programmes Abroad's management of its responsibilities for the quality of learning opportunities.

The QAA review panel also concluded that Educational Programmes Abroad **satisfactorily** manages its responsibilities for academic standards in accordance with the requirements of its awarding partners.

Conclusion about public information

The QAA panel concluded that:

- **reliance can** be placed on the information that Educational Programmes Abroad produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers.

Good practice

The QAA panel identified the following **features of good practice** at Educational Programmes Abroad:

- the effective selection and engagement of subject experts to enrich the student learning experience on the summer programmes (paragraph 2.6)
- the effective and proactive support provided to students from before application to completion of the programme (paragraph 2.8)
- the care taken to place, support and monitor students in internships relevant to their career aspirations (paragraph 2.9).

Recommendations

The QAA panel makes the following recommendations to Educational Programmes Abroad.

The panel considers that it is **advisable** for EPA to:

- consider ways of recording formally the monitoring of programmes to create a cycle of quality improvement (paragraph 1.6)
- use second marking on the summer programmes to align with the assessment practices on the fall/spring programmes (paragraph 1.11).

The panel considers that it would be **desirable** for EPA to:

- provide information and guidance to workplace supervisors on assessing internships (paragraph 1.5)
- ensure that terminology is accurate and used consistently throughout all documentation (paragraph 1.10)
- review and update social media guidelines on an annual basis (paragraph 3.3).

Context

Educational Programmes Abroad Ltd (EPA) is a study abroad provider operating in both London and Edinburgh. EPA is also registered in the USA as EPA Incorporated (EPA Inc). EPA's mission is to 'promote the academic, professional and personal development of students by fostering new and interesting national and international perspectives on wide-ranging issues within and beyond each student's academic speciality'. EPA and EPA Inc are staffed by two Executive Directors, two Programme Directors and a Programme Assistant (London).

EPA provides study abroad programmes and internship opportunities for undergraduate students recruited from US Liberal Arts Colleges. The Liberal Arts Colleges are all quality assured by the relevant authorities in the US, normally through at least one US accreditation body.

EPA's key providers of study programmes in London and Edinburgh during the fall and spring semesters are the University of Westminster (UW) and Edinburgh Napier University (NU) respectively. Students take two courses at the relevant University and undertake an internship of 20 hours per week. For the summer programmes, students are taught by professors hired by EPA. The summer programme has not operated in Edinburgh since 2014 due to insufficient student numbers. Overall, 55 students were recruited in the fall, spring and summer programmes in 2015.

Internships are integral to the student experience and EPA strives to negotiate the most appropriate placement for students. Students attend internships for 20 hours per week. While EPA cannot guarantee placements with particular companies, every effort is made to match students with their chosen field through its strong network of employers. The internships and compulsory courses all accrue credits which contribute to the students' awards in the US.

Detailed findings

1 Academic standards

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

1.1 EPA's responsibilities for the management of academic standards are set out in various agreements with stakeholders. These responsibilities include screening and admission, and provision of appropriate academic courses and internships. EPA does not have responsibility for setting academic standards, but it ensures that all requirements of the relevant awarding partners, whether in the US or the UK, are fully met. EPA chooses deliberately to partner only US colleges which are fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. EPA has been working with the same group of US client institutions for a number of years, all of whom are subject to regular accreditation and quality inspections. In terms of academic standards, staff met by the review panel were very clear about their key responsibilities being to the client institutions who act as their credit-awarding partners.

1.2 EPA manages effectively the contracting process with its client and partner universities, ensuring that operational and academic matters are included. The overall responsibility for agreements with client and partner institutions lies with the Executive Director, while the currency of contracts is checked by the Executive Director of EPA Inc. Memoranda of Understanding with all credit-awarding partners are drawn up and held by EPA Inc, based at the University of Rochester, New York, and are checked by lawyers from each party.

1.3 EPA sets out clearly the requirements for the programmes it offers in a course outline/syllabus guide which is distributed to students during the application process. Students attend two classes per week at UW and NU for the fall and spring programmes. The provision at UW and NU is set at a level which meets both UK threshold standards and at which students can receive US credit transfer. The academic provision of both UK universities are approved by the relevant US credit-awarding bodies to ensure that the credits and grades students receive are transferable. The academic components within the study abroad programmes take full account of home institution requirements or career development opportunities. Students met by the review panel confirmed that they were happy with their academic choices.

1.4 Students may receive credits from their own universities, or directly through the University of Rochester. Credit is approved by the University of Rochester for the summer programmes. The arrangements for these programmes, although different from those of the fall and spring programmes, are tightly managed by EPA in conjunction with the awarding partner, the University of Rochester. The academic content of the programmes is subject to approval by the University, which also facilitates credit transfer irrespective of the students' home institution. These credits do not count towards final grades, unlike those of the fall and spring programmes, and different home institutions may elect to award different amounts of credit for the summer programme. EPA is careful to explain the complexities of the credit transfer system to prospective students. Students met by the panel confirmed that they had a clear understanding of how academic work was assessed, grades awarded and translated, and credit transferred from the UK universities to their home institutions.

1.5 Students were less clear overall about how internships were assessed and graded. This was in part due to different home institutions awarding different amounts of credit for the internships. Students were clear that the workplace supervisor was involved in assessment, and that each supervisor had to complete an evaluation form, although they do not have sight of the forms. However, they were clear that the assigned grade from the supervisor

was either a pass or fail. While students are given a self-assessment guide for their internships, EPA does not provide training or formal guidance to workplace supervisors on how to make the assessments, and it was not clear to the panel how the supervisors arrived at their conclusions. Therefore, it would be **desirable** for EPA to provide information and guidance to workplace supervisors on assessing internships.

1.6 EPA states that it reviews, monitors and improves programmes, and the review panel noted that the Programme Directors in London and Edinburgh were conscious of the need to review and reflect on the programmes on a regular basis. The Directors were highly aware that they were part of a very small team, and geographically far apart. As a result, informal telephone conversations take place, on average, three times per week. However, the panel saw no evidence of any formal processes for, or recorded actions of, the monitoring and review of the programmes. Although student feedback is collected during mid-term internship visits and during the final activity of each programme and discussed by the Programme Directors, these discussions do not usually happen until students have left the programme. In addition, the outcomes and actions from these discussions are not recorded. Therefore, the review panel concludes that it would be **advisable** for EPA to consider ways of recording formally the monitoring of programmes to create a cycle of quality improvement.

How effectively are external reference points used in the management of academic standards?

1.7 EPA uses external reference points appropriately, as relevant to its stakeholders. As a study abroad provider, EPA's primary responsibility is to relevant US reference points. These include the approval regulations and the credit transfer frameworks of the University of Rochester and of its US client institutions. The academic provision at UW and NU is set at a level which both meets UK threshold standards and allows students to receive US credit transfer. This academic provision has to be approved by the relevant US credit-awarding bodies to ensure that the credits and grades students receive are transferable.

1.8 The academic standards of the summer programmes have to be approved through the University of Rochester. The University also acts as the lead institution and facilitating partner for all applicants. Programme approval, or major modifications to programmes, is the responsibility of the curriculum committee at the University of Rochester, with outcomes being notified formally to EPA Inc.

1.9 EPA understands that its partner universities in the UK undergo comprehensive quality reviews by QAA. EPA is conversant with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code) and has carried out a mapping exercise of its processes against relevant sections, including Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards, *Chapter B2: Recruitment, Selection and Admission to Higher Education* and *Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others*. For example, EPA has made use of *Chapter B2* to inform and revise the arrangements for recruitment, admission, and selection of students. However, EPA is not familiar with levels being described in *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and instead described programmes as being at NVQ Level 6, relating to terminology in use on UK Visas and Immigration applications. These findings support the recommendation in paragraph 1.10 regarding the accurate and consistent use of terminology.

How effectively does EPA use external scrutiny of assessment processes to assure academic standards (where applicable)?

1.10 Courses at UW and NU are subject to their own quality assurance arrangements, which involve second marking and external examining according to their own regulations

and procedures, and which are themselves subject to regular scrutiny by QAA. The academic provision at both universities also has to be approved by the relevant US credit-awarding bodies to ensure that the credits and grades students receive are transferable. Students met by the panel were aware of their assessments being second marked, but expressed some uncertainty as to how the processes worked. The panel also saw evidence of mixed terminology in references to second marking and external examination in the information provided by EPA. Therefore, it would be **desirable** for EPA to ensure that terminology is accurate and used consistently throughout all documentation (see also paragraph 1.9).

1.11 The academic content of the summer programmes is taught by experts in cultural studies, employed directly by EPA. The academic standards of the summer programmes are approved by the University of Rochester and by students' US credit-awarding bodies. Unlike the fall and spring programmes, there is no formal requirement on the summer programmes for second marking or external examination. Therefore, summer programmes do not have parity in this respect with the fall and spring programmes which means that the grading and subsequent transfer of credit is not undertaken on the same basis. Therefore, the review panel concludes that it would be **advisable** for EPA to use second marking on the summer programmes to align with the assessment practices on the fall and spring programmes.

The panel concludes that Educational Programmes Abroad **satisfactorily** manages its responsibilities for academic standards in accordance with the requirements of its awarding partners.

2 Quality of learning opportunities

How effectively does EPA fulfil its responsibilities for managing the quality of learning opportunities?

2.1 EPA is responsible for the selection and administration of internships and for maintaining the quality of the placement provision. Programme Directors in Edinburgh and London work closely with internship providers and students to ensure that placements are appropriate and are matched as closely as possible to the needs of individual students.

2.2 UW and NU manage the academic courses in fall and spring. EPA has an auxiliary role in relation to the academic progress of students, for example in advising on attendance at lectures and in their recommendations to students to be proactive in seeking out academic assistance at the universities where necessary. EPA does not provide academic assistance to students on UW and NU courses, but can liaise with the universities, where appropriate, to resolve any problems, for example through the Study Abroad Office and Exchanges' Team at UW and NU respectively. In all academic matters, students must comply with the procedures and regulations set out in the UW and NU student handbooks. Course syllabi are made available to students during the application process and example programme outlines are sent to students before they commence their studies.

2.3 As well as eliciting feedback from students on a formal and informal basis, the Programme Directors in Edinburgh and London engage in regular communications via email and internet calls. In addition, the London Programme Director now travels to the US once a year to meet college representatives and prospective students. EPA relies also on feedback from client institutions who interview students on their return home. Programme Directors conduct formative evaluations throughout the programme and enter details on student files. Students can talk informally to EPA via email or in person. In addition to the universities' complaints procedures, EPA also has its own procedure.

How effectively are external reference points used in monitoring and evaluation processes?

2.4 EPA uses external reference points appropriately, as relevant to its stakeholders (see paragraphs 1.7 to 1.9). EPA has also carried out a mapping exercise of its processes against relevant sections of the Quality Code, including its management of internships (*Chapter B10*) (see also paragraph 1.9).

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

2.5 UW and NU operate according to their own internal quality assurance mechanisms and have been regularly reviewed by QAA. Within the context of the arrangements and procedures outlined in paragraphs 2.2 to 2.3, EPA staff and students met by the panel confirmed the adequacy of the formal and informal opportunities available to them to raise any issues regarding the quality of teaching and learning, and the capacity of EPA and the universities to resolve them. As part of their mid and end-of-semester evaluations, students are asked about their classes with comments, on the whole, being positive.

2.6 EPA maintains records of suitably qualified, high-quality teaching personnel whose experience includes overseas work. For the summer programmes in both Edinburgh and London, EPA has taken deliberate steps to recruit experts in the history and culture of the respective cities. The specialists approach the subject matter through a mixture of formal lectures and linked visits. Student feedback confirms the approach as being both informative and interesting. The effective selection and engagement of subject experts to enrich the student learning experience on the summer programmes is **good practice**.

How effectively does EPA assure itself that students are appropriately supported?

2.7 UW and NU conduct intensive orientations for students and provide them with access to advice, guidance and support services afforded to all enrolled students. Information about these services is set out fully in the universities' student handbooks. In addition, students also receive face-to-face and online support from academic staff in and outside office hours.

2.8 In addition, EPA offers comprehensive support to its students through the two Programme Directors. The panel heard that regular liaison takes place between students and Programme Directors from before arrival and then throughout the programme. Students are able to contact members of staff regarding housing or any other issues, and Programme Directors make impromptu visits to students every other week and visit them at least once while on internship. Feedback from students is usually very positive and provides evidence of EPA's responsiveness to student needs. Staff and students have a good rapport, with the former being fully engaged with students' concerns. The effective and proactive support provided to students from before application to completion of the programme is **good practice**.

2.9 EPA Programme Directors monitor internships through workplace visits, meetings with supervisors, and student feedback, the latter including informal and end-of-semester feedback. Programme Directors have developed strong relationships with placement providers from a range of sectors and take great care to match each student to the most appropriate internship. Applicants are asked to submit a written outline of what they want to achieve from a period of internship, and how this fits with their career aspirations. This forms the basis of a negotiation and discussions on a personal level to provide the student with an appropriate internship experience. Students met by the panel reported high levels of

satisfaction with their internships, stating that they received information and support while in the US and that their internships matched both their US programmes and their career intentions. The care taken to place, support and monitor students in internships relevant to their career aspirations is **good practice**.

How effective are EPA's arrangements for staff development in relation to maintaining and/or enhancing the quality of learning opportunities?

2.10 EPA is responsible for the development of its own core staff, while responsibility for the development of academic staff working for UW and NU rests with those institutions. EPA is a member of the Association of American Study Abroad Programmes (AASAP). Programme Directors have attended study abroad conferences in the US and Ireland, as well as the Forum on Education conference, Global Internship conference, and AASAP workshops and meetings. The professor teaching on the London summer programme confirmed that he regularly engages in relevant professional development as part of his teaching at other institutions and this has a direct bearing on his work with EPA.

How effectively does EPA ensure that students have access to learning resources that are sufficient to enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes of their programmes?

2.11 EPA students have the same access to resources at UW and NU as any other students. While in the UK, students can also log on to home resources. EPA discusses resources with university partners in the UK as well as receiving feedback from students and US institutions with regard to the quality of resources.

The panel has **confidence** that Educational Programmes Abroad is fulfilling its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of the learning opportunities it provides for students.

3 Public information

How effective are EPA's arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of information it has responsibility for publishing?

3.1 EPA publishes a wide variety of information in paper and electronic formats. EPA conveys a significant amount of information to students through email, and students found these communications timely and helpful. UW also provided weekly emails for students prior to arrival. These were focused on a range of practical topics that students found helpful in preparing to live and work in the UK.

3.2 Information about the programmes that are run in both London and Edinburgh is available on the EPA website. The information presented is written for students, and for staff at client institutions. It is clear and accessible, and includes transparent information on fees. The website information is intended to be introductory, and more detailed information on courses, accommodation and credit transfer is provided to enquirers, applicants and students on a personal basis. While some general information is provided about internships, and a few opportunities are listed on the website, much of the information regarding the application for and organisation of internships is undertaken on a personal level. Students met by the team confirmed that the information on the website was useful prior to entry. They also confirmed the accuracy of the information they had been provided with, and that it had enabled their expectations to be met, especially in relation to internships, with students appreciating the personal approach and the mixture of written and verbal communication.

3.3 EPA does not have an intranet or equivalent for storing and disseminating a variety of information to students. A general student handbook is mailed to students two weeks before arrival. In Edinburgh, one copy is put in the residences for reference purposes. Students have to sign to say they have read the handbook and are held responsible for knowing the content. Management documents are held on a free, commercial cloud-based storage platform but staff were unsure how secure this was. EPA is highly conscious of the benefits and risks of social media platforms, particularly as some students undertake internships in sensitive political environments. While students are issued with social media guidelines, the team heard that these had not been updated since 2014. Therefore, it would be **desirable** for EPA to review and update social media guidelines on an annual basis.

3.4 EPA is rigorous in ensuring that the information it publishes, and is published about itself, is accurate and current. This includes an effective system of regular checks on website accuracy and currency. The information is checked every six weeks by the Programme Directors, and updated as required centrally at the University of Rochester. The Executive Director at EPA Inc is responsible for communication with the client institutions. This includes providing information about EPA programmes and any changes to the programmes offered by partner institutions. Every three months, EPA also carries out checks on information published about itself. The Programme Directors check the information provided to students by UW and NU. The universities inform EPA of any changes that occur, and EPA's information is then updated.

3.5 Overall, the panel found that EPA has effective arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of information for which it has responsibility for publishing, and the information produced is clear and accurate, and welcomed by students.

The panel concludes that **reliance can** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that Educational Programmes Abroad is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

4 Action plan³

Educational Programmes Abroad action plan relating to the Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight in July 2016						
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 panel identified the following areas of good practice that are worthy of wider dissemination within EPA:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the effective selection and engagement of subject experts to enrich the student learning experience on the summer programmes (paragraph 2.6) 	To continue to engage the current subject experts and for them to continue to make use of formal lectures and linked cultural visits	Give student feedback to the subject experts EPA engages and make changes on the basis of student feedback	Ongoing	EPA London and Edinburgh Director	EPA Executive Programme Director	EPA London and Edinburgh Programme Directors to produce a document based on student feedback on classes and discussed with summer professors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the effective and proactive support provided to students from before 	To continues with effective proactive support and response to students needs and queries	To continue to make sure all procedures and outcomes for students are clear and to follow up on student feedback from	Ongoing	All EPA and EPA Inc staff	EPA Executive Director	Student feedback

³ EPA 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.

application to completion of the programme (paragraph 2.8)		mid-semester and end-of-semester evaluations				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the care taken to place, support and monitor students in internships relevant to their career aspirations (paragraph 2.9). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to seek new and appropriate internships Continue to support students and monitor the internships Make any important changes to internships as necessary 	<p>Continue to maintain student satisfaction</p> <p>Make use of student feedback at mid-semester meetings and end-of-semester students evaluations</p>	Ongoing	London and Edinburgh Programme Directors	EPA Executive Director	Feedback from students and internship supervisors
Advisable	Intended outcomes	Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes	Target date(s)	Action by	Reported to	Evaluation (process or evidence)
The panel considers that it is advisable for EPA to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider ways of recording formally the monitoring of programmes to create a cycle of quality improvement (paragraph 1.6) 	To formalise and improve current arrangements for monitoring of programmes	<p>EPA will begin to formally record conversations between programme directors regarding the monitoring of student feedback during courses</p> <p>After site visits, EPA will collate feedback and the Executive Director and Programme Directors will discuss the feedback and any possible solutions/</p>	<p>First draft September 2016</p> <p>Final draft February 2017</p> <p>And ongoing</p>	<p>London and Edinburgh Programme Directors</p> <p>Executive Director</p>	Executive Director	Discuss with students at the end of semester, and add a section in the end-of-semester evaluation, the effectiveness of EPA in dealing with issues in a timely manner

		improvements to any issues in a timely manner (that is, implement solutions before the end of the semester)				This feedback will be discussed via informal meetings and any salient points will be formally recorded in order to create a cycle of improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use second marking on the summer programmes to align with the assessment practices on the fall and spring programmes (paragraph 1.11). 	EPA to create a fully embedded formal policy on internal verification of assessment of student work in the summer programmes as per fall/spring programmes	<p>EPA will hire second markers for any summer programmes in order to ensure the fair marking of student coursework</p> <p>EPA will also produce a document outlining the consideration of student feedback regarding their internship, as well as considering student timesheets for working hours, when considering supervisor evaluations</p> <p>If any discrepancies arise then EPA will request marking from another member of staff at the internship and advise the home institution of any discrepancies should they arise</p>	<p>Second marking implemented before summer 2017 semester</p> <p>Begin considering student feedback formally immediately, with a document outlining guidelines for this by September 2016</p>	London and Edinburgh Programme Directors	Executive Director	The EPA US executive director will liaise with students after their programme and ensure that there are no discrepancies in grades awarded and feedback given by supervisors, and student opinions

		EPA will also assess feedback against the grades offered to students				
Desirable	Intended outcomes	Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes	Target date/s	Action by	Reported to	Evaluation (process or evidence)
The panel considers that it would be desirable for EPA to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide information and guidance to workplace supervisors on assessing internships (paragraph 1.5) 	EPA to produce a document to give to internship supervisors outlining clear guidance on assessing the students internship so that there are no discrepancies in assessment between supervisors	<p>EPA will produce a document to be sent to supervisors regarding the grading of student internships</p> <p>This will be based on several factors to be outlined, such as student work ethic, ability to complete tasks unassisted, student desire for challenging work and students integration within teams</p> <p>Students will also be given guidelines as to how their internships will be assessed, bearing in mind that this will vary from supervisor to supervisor and complete</p>	Final draft by September 2016	London and Edinburgh Programme Directors	Executive Director	<p>EPA will seek feedback from supervisors regarding the guidelines given for marking</p> <p>EPA Programme Directors and Executive Director will discuss this and formally monitor any issues or possible improvements suggested and act on them in a timely manner</p>

		<p>standardisation will be impossible</p> <p>Student advice documentation will be updated with how to achieve a high grade for their internship</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that terminology is accurate and used consistently throughout all documentation (paragraph 1.10) 	<p>EPA Programme Directors to check that terminology is used accurately and consistently throughout all documentation</p>	<p>EPA will update documentation to ensure that NVQ level equivalence is present in any documentation in terms of FHEQ levels and mapped against QAA subject benchmarks</p> <p>EPA will also discuss with students during orientations that second marking is completed by Westminster and Napier Universities (and on the summer course as already outlined) and that further information is available through these institutions' websites</p> <p>Students will also receive clear instructions regarding the grading of their internships (including journal assessments) and courses (spring and fall</p>	<p>First draft by September 2016</p> <p>Final drafts by December 2016</p>	<p>London and Edinburgh Programme Directors</p>	<p>Executive Director</p>	<p>EPA will include in site visit and end-of-programme assessments questions regarding terminology for students, and review this in formal meetings</p> <p>EPA will also work with QAA in future reviews to ensure terminology is consistent</p>

		students will be referred to Westminster and Napier guidelines)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review and update social media guidelines on an annual basis (paragraph 3.3). 	Update social media guidelines on an annual basis	<p>EPA will incorporate social media guidelines into its regular updating of documents</p> <p>EPA will consider the use of a dedicated cloud platform for students to store information given to them throughout their programme</p> <p>EPA will formally consider the security of its current internal cloud storage platform</p> <p>The cloud platform is secure, however, as with most systems, end users are the most vulnerable parts of a system</p> <p>For this reason EPA will implement regular password changes for this account, and ensure that no personal information of students or sensitive information is stored on the cloud platform</p>	<p>Begin reviewing social media immediately</p> <p>Security document draft by December 2016</p>	Programme Directors, Executive Director and US Executive Director	Executive Director	<p>EPA will incorporate social media policy into its current document review system, and discuss any issues at formal meetings</p> <p>The security review will be updated yearly, making use of security advice given by companies that offer cloud-based storage</p>

Glossary

This glossary explains terms used in this report. You can find a fuller glossary at: www.gaa.ac.uk/about-us/glossary. More details and formal definitions of key terms can be found in the [handbook](#)⁴ for this review method.

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 standard**.

Credit(s) A means of quantifying and recognising learning, used by most institutions that provide higher education programmes of study, expressed as 'numbers of credits' at a specific level.

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.

Good practice A process or way of working that, in the view of a QAA review panel, 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 outcome 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 which provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification.

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

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

QAA1686 - R5000 - July 16

© The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2016
Southgate House, Southgate Street, Gloucester GL1 1UB
Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786

Tel 01452 557050

Web www.gaa.ac.uk

⁴ www.gaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication/?PubID=202