

Embedded College Review for Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of Kaplan International Colleges, May 2013

Annex 1: Kaplan International College Bournemouth

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 Kaplan International College Bournemouth (KICB) has made commendable progress following the July 2012 [Embedded College Review for Educational Oversight](#).

Section 2: Changes since the last QAA review

2 At the time of the annual monitoring return for KICB, there had been an increase in student numbers over the 2012 review. KICB has subsequently recruited a number of additional students to its pre-sessional English for University Study programme, which is a newly approved programme with Bournemouth University. As stated in the 2012 review report, the Diploma in Business and Management (CertHE) will cease to be validated by the University of Wales by the end of 2014. At the time of the monitoring visit, discussions were ongoing concerning the future strategic direction of KICB and its relationship with Bournemouth University.

Section 3: Findings from the monitoring visit

3 KICB has made progress on all of the recommendations contained in the action plan based on the 2012 review report. The advisable recommendation relating to the provision of external assurance for the Pre-Master's programme has been addressed through the appointment of an external examiner for this programme. Similarly, all examination questions and summative assignments are now reviewed by the relevant external examiner, prior to being issued to students. These changes have improved the management of KICB's higher education provision: the review of how it can use external examiners more fully to enhance the quality of this provision is ongoing.

4 In relation to the good practice identified at KICB by the last review, there is evidence of further progress and consolidation. KICB continues to have constructive student engagement with its quality assurance processes, with evidence that issues raised by students are appropriately responded to in a timely manner. Training for student representatives is made available at partner universities, but further work is needed to encourage students to take up these opportunities. Students from certain regional markets are now able to receive joint offers to study both English language and academic pathway programmes. Students remain extremely positive about the quality of pastoral and academic support provided. Students also value the role and support provided by the Kaplan International College (KIC) University Placement Service and the action points associated with this feature of good practice have been implemented.

5 Additional guidance has been provided to new and existing staff on the expectations associated with the quality of written feedback provided to students, and the KIC framework for grade descriptors has been implemented across all pathway

programmes. The quality of feedback provided to students is monitored via the double marking and moderation procedures, external examiner scrutiny and student feedback. The students confirmed that feedback received on their performance is very helpful.

6 There is evidence of greater awareness of, and engagement with, the KIC's Centre for Learning Innovation and Quality (CLIQ). Since the review, staff and students have participated in CLIQ-organised events and projects, and representatives from CLIQ have been involved in programme development and various programme committee meetings and approval events at KICB. During the monitoring visit, evidence was seen regarding the implementation of the KIC Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy at college level. In particular, KICB has significantly enhanced their provision of blended learning and associated technologies to enhance the student learning experience.

7 Student support continues to be effective and is well regarded. Students found pre-joining information, whether from agents or from the website, to be accurate. Experience on the course had equalled or exceeded their expectations, though some students commented that their access to library resources was currently restricted compared to students on programmes validated by a partner university. Students continue to be very positive about the support they receive and were enthusiastic about the range of extra-curricular activities that are organised and made available to them

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

8 KICB receives and is guided by the KIC Academic Standards and Quality Manual, which has been mapped against sections of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code) by CLIQ. In addition, the Senior Management Team has undertaken work on key sections of the Quality Code, notably *Chapter B7: External examining*, *Chapter B5: Student engagement* and *Chapter B3: Learning and teaching*, with a view to understanding their implications for quality and standards in KICB. Work is ongoing in familiarising teaching and support staff with the framework provided by the Quality Code.

Section 5: Background to the monitoring visit

9 The monitoring visit serves as a short check on the provider's and its embedded colleges' 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 and its embedded colleges of any matters that have the potential to be of particular interest in the next monitoring visit or review.

10 The monitoring visit was carried out by Dr P Findlay (QAA Officer) and Professor G Romp (Reviewer) on 2 May 2013.