



European College of Law Ltd

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

April 2014

Key findings about European College of Law

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in April 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 programme it offers on behalf of University of London International LLB.

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 this awarding body.

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**:

- the College provides extensive and valuable professional, cultural and social activities which support students' personal development (paragraph 2.5).

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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:

- improve the recording of business and the monitoring of action plans within the committee structure (paragraph 1.2)
- engage more fully with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (paragraphs 1.4 and 2.2)
- ensure a comprehensive student handbook is available for the 2014-15 academic session (paragraph 3.1).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)¹ (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at the European College of Law Ltd (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 University of London International LLB. The review was carried out by Ms Michelle Callanan, Mr Seth Crofts (reviewers) and Dr Peter Steer (Coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the College and in accordance with the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#).² Evidence in support of the review included documentation supplied by the College, meetings with staff and a separate meeting with students.

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

- University of London Teaching Institutions Recognition Framework
- the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code).

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 changed its name from London East Bank College of Law and IT (LEBC) to the European College of Law Ltd in April 2013. LEBC ceased trading in September 2013 and the programmes were transferred to the European College of Law. The mission statement of the College is 'to bridge the gap between industry and the academic world through quality education'. The College is located in Ilford, London, where it occupies a self-contained floor of a multi-occupancy building. This facility includes a library, offices, moot room and classrooms. The College currently has four full-time and five part-time members of staff. The College had a REO in October 2013.

The College provides tuition and learning support for students studying for the following higher education programme with student numbers in brackets:

- the University of London International Programmes LLB (7).

The provider's stated responsibilities

The College is not responsible for summative assessment. It provides teaching and learning support, including mock examinations and formative assessments, for students registered with the University of London International Programmes LLB. The University of London (the University) provides students with comprehensive information about the programme structure and its assessment combined with learning materials to support all aspects of the programme on a distance learning basis.

Recent developments

The College intends to specialise on University of London international programmes where law forms a major part of the curriculum. There are plans to increase the number of programmes the College offers. The seven students being tutored by the College are

¹ www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Pages/Educational-Oversight-.aspx

² www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=2669

enrolled and are undertaking programmes with other colleges for visa reasons, although they started their law programme at LEBC.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on the higher education programme at the College were invited to present a submission to the review team and did so in February 2014. Three students provided a written submission they had prepared taking into account the views of their fellow students. Students met the team during the review. Their involvement was helpful for the team and provided an insight into a number of topics including teaching and learning and student support.

Detailed findings about European College of Law Ltd

1 Academic standards

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

1.1 The arrangements for the management of academic standards are appropriate. The College is fully aware of its responsibilities for managing academic standards under its agreement with the University. The University is responsible for all aspects of the content, summative assessment and final award of the programme. The College provides some formative assessments including mock examinations. The University currently recognises the College as a Registered Centre, meeting a set of specific quality criteria under its Teaching Institutions Recognition Framework. The continuation of the Registered Centre status of the College is subject to the review procedures of the University. Three senior managers oversee the management of the provision with the Director of Studies and the Registrar reporting to the Principal. In this small provision the Principal chairs the College's two senior committees and, with Director of Studies, is a member of several subcommittees. This allows effective liaison between the management of the College and its committee structure.

1.2 The College has made satisfactory progress since the October 2013 REO in establishing a formal committee structure to manage academic standards. There are two senior committees, the Academic Committee and the Student and Staff Welfare Committee, each with the responsibility for a number of subcommittees. For example, the Quality Committee and Data Audit Committee report to the Academic Committee. Each committee has appropriate membership and terms of reference. The two senior committees have a suitable schedule of meetings. The subcommittees meet as needed. However, the link between the business of the Academic Committee and its subcommittees is often not explicitly noted. Therefore it is often not clear exactly how issues have been considered at each stage of the formal approval process. Moreover, where actions are approved there is often little evidence of the later evaluation of the level of success with action points not clearly followed through. It is **advisable** for the College to improve the recording of business and the monitoring of action plans within the committee structure.

1.3 Since the 2013 REO, the College has implemented an adequate system for the annual monitoring of its provision. This submission of a satisfactory annual monitoring review to the University is a requirement of all Recognised Centres. The University has confirmed its receipt of the College's review. The Academic Committee is responsible for the completion of this review, which includes a useful analysis of the overall performance of the programme against various University indicators, resulting in an action plan.

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

1.4 The College has adequate engagement with external reference points. The University provides programme specifications, module descriptors and intended learning outcomes and conducts all summative assessments. The College makes explicit use of all of the University's regulations and guidance. The College has made significant progress in its use of the Quality Code since the 2013 REO. It has assisted staff in developing an enhanced understanding of the Quality Code. For example, the College has briefed staff on the Quality Code staff development workshops. Staff have an appropriate understanding of how the Quality Code is articulated in current College policies and practice. The College is working to achieve further engagement and understanding of the Quality

Code. The College's Academic Committee is monitoring this development. The College has introduced policies that reflect the guidance in the Quality Code, for example, on Assessment of Learning, Academic Malpractice, and Disciplinary and Misconduct. The Assessment of Learning Policy makes explicit reference to the Quality Code. However, there has not been a detailed mapping to ascertain how the Quality Code can inform College policies and practice. Senior management recognise that further engagement with the Quality Code would enhance the College's quality assurance systems.

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

1.5 The College is not directly responsible for summative assessment or liaison with external examiners. It provides formative assessment consisting of mock examinations and coursework. The College has clear and effective procedures for second-marking of these formative assessments in accordance with the guidance from the University.

1.6 The College has made satisfactory progress since the 2013 REO in establishing more formal systems and procedures for the management of academic standards and for engaging with the Quality Code. The University has responsibility for programme design, content and summative assessments. The College now produces an appropriate annual monitoring review. The College has an effective second marking process for its formative assessments.

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 body.

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 arrangements for the management of quality of learning opportunities are appropriate. The College is responsible for providing teaching and learning, and student support. It also provides some resources to supplement those provided by the University. Admissions are the responsibility of the University. The College uses the management and committee structures considered in paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 for managing the quality of learning opportunities.

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

2.2 There is adequate engagement with external reference points. The College makes explicit use of all of the University's regulations and guidance. The senior managers of the College recognise that work is still required to further embed aspects of the Quality Code into everyday practice and to ensure all aspects of the Quality Code relevant to the quality of learning opportunities are covered. For example, there is scope for more explicit use of the Quality Code in College policies in areas such as equal opportunities. The College has not mapped its policies against the Quality Code to ensure all aspects of it are covered. It is **advisable** for the College to engage more fully with the Quality Code.

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

2.3 The College has appropriate policies and guidelines for the oversight of the quality of teaching and learning. Senior managers provide very detailed guidance to lecturers on the delivery of the programme. For example, they have produced guidelines on effective teaching which have been disseminated to all academic staff. The Director of Studies undertakes an effective process for monitoring teaching and learning based on lecturers supplying information about proposed content through detailed lesson plans. Since the 2013 REO, the College has developed its policies regarding feedback to students on their College-based assessments. The guidance within these policies has been useful to staff who provide effective feedback to students on their formative assessments; students value this feedback. College policies are well understood by academic staff. For a college of its size, the guidance provided for academic staff is effective, although a formal learning and teaching strategy recommended in the 2013 REO, has not been developed.

2.4 The College has suitable processes for its oversight of the delivery of teaching and learning. Staff appraisal is informed by the teaching observations undertaken by managers and peer review of teaching. These form an integrated strategy to support and evaluate teaching and learning, which has been well received by staff. The College has suitable mechanisms for gathering feedback from students including reviews of individual teachers led by the Director of Studies and an annual student satisfaction survey. Students commented very favourably on the quality of the teaching on their programme.

How does the College assure itself that students are supported effectively?

2.5 The College has effective arrangements for the student support. Induction provides students with a valuable overview of the programme and their responsibilities. Students indicated that staff are readily available. Academic and administrative staff are very approachable, responsive to student needs and provide a high level of support. The College prepares a monthly progress report for all students which records attendance, student achievement and academic engagement. If students are having difficulties, staff provide additional academic or pastoral support. The College ensures that students are well supported in facing the challenges associated with living away from home and becoming lawyers. It provides an extensive range of valuable professional, cultural and social activities that support wider learning opportunities, encourage personal development and the formation of a sense of college community. For example, the College is a centre for social and cultural activities, as well as organising moots and visits to law courts. Students value these activities in supporting their studies. The College's provision of extensive and valuable professional, cultural and social activities which supports students' personal development represents **good practice**.

2.6 College engagement with the student body is working effectively. Student representatives operate on an informal basis collecting views from other students and approaching staff as necessary. The College is very responsive to student feedback and responds effectively to student concerns; for example by altering the teaching timetable in response to comments from students that a teaching block of four hours was too long.

How effectively does the College develop its staff in order to improve student learning opportunities?

2.7 The College has adequate processes for the recruitment and development of staff. It has established a systematic and coherent approach to staff development suitable for its small size. The College provides an appropriate induction for new staff. These staff have the opportunity to comment on the induction process and request additional information.

Subject-specific staff development is largely the responsibility of individual members of staff. Teaching staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. The qualifications of all staff are submitted to the University, which oversees the appropriateness of academic staffing as part of the annual monitoring review process for the College as a Recognised Centre. The College completes the analysis of its staff development needs and sets priorities following completion of the teaching observations and staff appraisals. It keeps a record of staff development to monitor progress and inform future staffing requirements as the teaching of additional modules is planned. There is a specific programme of staff development for administrative staff to develop a more effective service for students. The College supports academic staff through mentorship and internal staff development workshops. For example, it has provided workshops on assessment and the Quality Code, which have been well attended. The College provides some financial support to assist staff undertake external staff development including attendance at seminars on law, and learning and teaching.

How effectively does the College ensure that learning resources are accessible to students and sufficient to enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes?

2.8 Students have access to sufficient resources to achieve the intended learning outcomes. They have easy access to a wide range of resources supplied by the University, including study guides and a virtual learning environment, which supports a diverse range of electronic learning resources such as e-books and journal articles. The College supplements these resources with a library that provides additional relevant texts. This provision has been recently enhanced by a significant investment in new books. Students reported satisfaction with the learning resources provided by the College. They stated that the College materials supplement those from the University in helping them to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

2.9 Resources requirements are properly evaluated. Senior managers conduct effective reviews of the sufficiency of learning resources. Currently, this is managed on an informal basis which is appropriate due to the small size of the College. This is a carefully managed process for resource planning covering both academic staffing and physical learning resources, which takes proper account of feedback from students.

2.10 The management of the oversight of the quality of learning opportunities is effective. The College provides valuable teaching and learning and student support for the University of London International LLB programme but recognises the need for further engagement with the Quality Code.

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 effectively does the College communicate information about learning opportunities to students and other stakeholders?

3.1 The College provides adequate information about learning opportunities in conjunction with the information available online from the University. The College's website, revised since the REO in 2013, is now clear, easily navigable and factually accurate. It includes adequate information about the College and its delivery of the programme. The College provides students with information concerning the teaching of modules

including details of individual session content, information about formative assessment and the learning resources. As recommended in the 2013 REO, the College has produced a student handbook for the 2014-15 academic session, which is currently in draft form. Current students have access to sufficient information from a variety of sources and they report that the information they received was helpful. However, the lack of a student handbook makes the provision of information about College policies and programme guidance less systematic and less easily available for students. It is **advisable** for the College to ensure a comprehensive student handbook is available for the 2014-15 academic session.

3.2 The virtual learning environment (VLE) is a useful source of additional information for students. The College has recently completed a significant amount of work on its VLE. This provides students with easy access to module information and additional teaching and learning guidance. Development work on the VLE is continuing. Students reported that they found it to be an effective and useful resource which complements the information available from the University.

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

3.3 As recommended in the 2013 REO, the College has introduced an effective formal system for checking the accuracy, consistency and trustworthiness of the information it publishes. The responsibility for reviewing the content of the website and all public information lies with the Data Audit Subcommittee, with final approval by the Academic Committee. Under the terms of the agreement with the University, the College must seek approval for its prospectus before publishing it. At the time of the review, the prospectus was still in draft form and awaiting final approval from the University. Once documents are finally approved, they are uploaded onto the website. Module information is the responsibility of individual lecturers although their detailed lesson plans are checked by the Director of Studies.

3.4 The College provides sufficient information for applicants and students on its website. It has made acceptable progress in the implementation of a system for providing and checking the information it publishes about itself. The lack of a comprehensive student handbook means that information is not always easily available to students in a systematic way.

<p>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.</p>

Action plan³

European College of Law Ltd action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight of April 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:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the College provides extensive and valuable professional, cultural and social activities which support students' personal development (paragraph 2.5). 	Activities on track, successful completion and enhanced, reviewed expansion	<p>Ensuring continuity of activities</p> <p>Materialising the full objective of lifestyle cultural programme</p> <p>Introducing Art exhibition, Musical Programme, book fair and inter-College cultural competition</p>	1st week of November 2014, then twice a year	Head of the Department, Law	Student and Staff Welfare Committee	<p>Students' end of semester survey form</p> <p>Staff feedback</p> <p>Students' success with awarding and professional bodies</p>

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 College's awarding body.

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:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> improve the recording of business and the monitoring of action plans within the committee structure (paragraph 1.2) 	<p>A comprehensive meeting minutes of Academic and Student and Staff Welfare Committees</p> <p>Subcommittee reports are linked with Academic and Student and Staff Welfare Committees evaluation</p> <p>Evaluative meeting minutes of Academic and Students and Staff Welfare Committees</p>	<p>Reflective recording of subcommittees' daily business on affairs</p> <p>Developing an effective reporting process to committees ensuring necessary link in approval process</p> <p>Endorsing an effective follow-up on committee decisions and performance review</p>	<p>2nd week of August 2014</p> <p>2nd week of September 2014</p> <p>2nd week of October 2014</p>	<p>Director of Studies</p> <p>Registrar</p> <p>Director of Studies</p>	<p>Principal</p> <p>Principal</p> <p>Principal</p>	<p>Meeting minutes of Academic Committee</p> <p>Work log sheet of senior management</p> <p>Awarding body feed back</p> <p>Quarterly staff performance review</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> engage more fully with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (paragraphs 1.4 and 2.2) 	<p>Mapped College's own quality practice in conjunction with Quality Code</p> <p>College policies compatible with Quality Code</p>	<p>Enhancing and broadening the scope and space for staff training through workshop and training sessions internally and externally</p> <p>Staff engagement with three internal training and workshops</p>	<p>3rd week of August 2014 and then quarterly</p> <p>3rd week of September 2014 and then</p>	<p>Principal</p> <p>Principal</p>	<p>Academic Committee</p> <p>Academic Committee</p>	<p>Post training Staff Feedback</p> <p>Senior management's work log sheet</p> <p>Academic Committee's meeting</p>

		One external workshop/training session conducted by awarding body/QAA	quarterly 3rd Week February 2015			minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure a comprehensive student handbook is available for the 2014-15 academic session (paragraph 3.1). 	A comprehensive handbook is ready for use	Producing a print and online version of handbook, complete, accurate and navigable	15 September 2014	Data Audit Subcommittee	Academic Committee	<p>Students' feedback on College information</p> <p>Staff feedback on completeness and data accuracy</p> <p>Awarding body feedback on data compliance</p>

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 for Educational Oversight can be found at: www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Pages/Educational-Oversight-.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 Educational Oversight: Handbook](#).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.

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

designated body An organisation that has been formally appointed or recognised to perform a particular function. QAA has been recognised by UKBA as a designated body for the purpose of providing educational oversight.

differentiated judgements In a Review for Educational Oversight, 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.

highly trusted sponsor An organisation that the UK Government trusts to admit migrant students from overseas, according to Tier 4 of the UK Border Agency's points-based immigration system. Higher education providers wishing to obtain this status must undergo a successful review by QAA.

⁴ www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=2669

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.

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**.

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