



Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of European College of Law Ltd, April 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 European College of Law Ltd (the College) has made progress but further improvement is required with implementing the action plan from the April 2014 [Educational Oversight](#).

Changes since the last QAA review

2 There have been few changes at the College since the last review visit. Student enrolment on the University of London (the University) International Programmes LLB has remained at seven. The College has received approval from the NCFE to run its NVQ level 4 Business Administration programme and its NVQ level 5 Management and Leadership programme, although no students have been recruited yet.

Section 3: Findings from the monitoring visit

3 The College is maintaining and extending the professional, cultural and social activities for students identified in the last review. Students are very positive about the activities organised for them which include moots, visits to courts, cultural activities and guest speakers. They clearly see the advantages for their professional development. Staff and students are very committed to these various activities, which they believe are a major strength of College and greatly enhance the student experience.

4 The committee structure is operating but is not fully effective. The Academic Committee and the Student and Staff Welfare Committee are the senior committees in the College. There are also 10 sub-committees reporting to these two senior committees. The overlap of the membership between all the committees is very high. The Academic Committee has only met twice since August 2014 and the Student and Staff Welfare Committee has met once. Senior management explained that most of the work is done in the sub-committees though they expect the senior committees to meet more often once the College has more students. The minutes of the various committees show recording of business and also some picking up of action points from one meeting to another. However, the minutes of the two senior committees do not indicate a strategic or evaluative role. The emphasis is on approving the deliberations of the sub-committees. While senior management indicated that there had been discussions within the College's committees about annual monitoring, the use of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code) and the College's readiness to start new programmes, there is no detailed record in the minutes and little evidence of the approval of policies or procedures.

5 The College makes only limited use of the Quality Code for providing guidance to staff and students. To inform staff and students, the College website has copies of QAA documents covering sections of the Quality Code dated April 2014. However, there is no application of the Quality Code to College policies. The College has held training sessions for staff which its monitoring report indicates are relevant to using the Quality Code. However, the sessions covered topics concerned largely with compliance with government

rules for overseas student enrolment rather than the totality of the Quality Code. Staff have also attended conferences, including ones run by QAA, where some material is relevant to the use of the Quality Code. The College provides some guidance documents for staff on the Quality Code. However, like the guidance on the website, they are generic with little detail on how the Quality Code is to be used to support the student experience through appropriate staff action.

6 Progress on the use of the Quality Code to inform College policies has been limited. Committee minutes provide little evidence of the effective use of the Quality Code. For example, the minutes of Academic Committee show little detailed consideration of the Quality Code. The Principal's log is mainly concerned with compliance with UK government requirements for student enrolment. While use of the Quality Code has improved only modestly since the last review, some useful adjustments have been made; for example to admissions procedures. The College has not undertaken further alignment of all of its policies with the Quality Code in a detailed manner as recommended in the last review; for example, a detailed policy on programme approval which would have been relevant to a recent NCFE application. The College has not formally mapped the Quality Code against all of its present policies as required by the action plan. It has not provided staff with detailed training on the implications of the Quality Code for their professional practice. It has not produced a timetable for regular updating of policies as changes to the Quality Code occur.

7 The College has produced an adequate student handbook for the LLB programme for use in conjunction with the material provided by the University. Students receive the handbook on enrolment. They find it useful, especially when used in conjunction with the information on the College student intranet. The student handbook has its weaknesses. It uses the University's slides meant for informing and guiding providers rather than students on academic impropriety. The handbook has references to a 'state of the art' computer laboratory and a 'lounge for staff and students' that considerably exaggerate reality. There is mention of the College being a 'Higher and Further Education College', although presently there are no further education students. Changes to UK Visa and Immigration regulations regarding language testing concerning the Test of English as a Foreign Language are not properly reflected in the handbook .

8 The College has appropriate procedures for the admission of students. It clearly states the admission requirements of the LLB programme on its website. The College properly applies the University's English language requirements which are a minimum International English Language Testing System (IELTS) overall band score of 6 and with at least 5.5 in the reading component. It receives the IELTS certificate from prospective students. The authenticity of the certificates is checked with the IELTS issuing authority. In addition, the College conducts its own useful intent and ability interview prior to accepting an application. This test involves a language element as well as questions related to the student's commitment to study. Some students come to the College having already enrolled with the University, which means that all the necessary admission requirements have already been undertaken. Academic aspects of student admissions are ultimately the responsibility of the University. However, the College does check the claims of students applying directly to it before confirmation of acceptance by the University. Compared with the global averages provided by the University for the latest period, student success rates from the summative assessments vary considerably between modules, some are higher others are lower. In all cases, the number of students taking the summative assessments is small so meaningful statistical analysis is difficult.

9 The College provides extensive guidance for agents on its website. As the College does not have Tier 4 status, agents have not undertaken any recruitment activity since the last review.

10 The College has satisfactory assessment procedures. It provides suitable formative assessment for the LLB programme including mock examinations, class tests and coursework. Mock examinations are second marked. The University is responsible for the setting and marking of all summative assessments and liaison with the external examiners. It is also responsible for providing students with information about summative assessment. The University checks summative coursework using anti-plagiarism software. The College keep students fully informed about formative assessments through both written information and the student intranet.

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

11 The College's only external benchmark is the Quality Code which is discussed in paragraphs 5 and 6 under the recommendations from the last review.

Section 5: Background to the monitoring visit

12 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 for review.

13 The monitoring visit was carried out by Dr Peter Steer and Dr Laila Halani on 21 April 2015.

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