



Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of EUSA LLP, February 2017

1 Section 1: Outcome of the monitoring visit

1 From the evidence provided in the annual return and at the monitoring visit, the review panel concludes that EUSA LLP has made commendable progress with implementing the action plan from the February 2016 [Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight](#).

2 Changes since the last QAA review

2 There have been no significant changes to the oversight and management of EUSA London work placement programmes and customised courses since the 2016 RSEO review. EUSA discharges its responsibilities to its university partners through the Executive Director, London Director, the Academic Director, the Operations Director, the Information Director and the Academic Committee. EUSA anticipates that it will enrol a total of about 1,000 students in 2016-17, very similar to the figure of almost 1,000 admitted in the previous year.

3 Findings from the monitoring visit

3 EUSA continues to develop and respond effectively to the three good practice areas identified in the 2016 RSEO report action plan. It has built on its processes for programme evaluation, particularly in respect of the management of internships, and has recently introduced an enhanced formal supervisor evaluation and satisfaction survey to provide clearer student performance indicators. Student performance is rated using seven core competencies, which are mapped to the skill sets in the Personalised Learning Objective Toolkit (PILOT) Skills Catalogue. The core competencies were reviewed at the EUSA Conference in December 2016, and current students confirmed that they make use of PILOT to set personal development goals. The US Advisory Committee has advised on a further project to survey alumni about the impact of EUSA programmes after graduation. Procedures for the management of student placements, including the vetting of new placements, the supervisor agreement and the placement visit checklist, are robust. The Placement Manager Handbook is a comprehensive operational guide to EUSA internships, and the Track Guide for Boston University enables placement managers to ensure coherence with the student's home programme of studies at Boston University.

4 EUSA teaching staff and managers continue to provide extensive pastoral and academic support that is appreciated by students. The new Student Academic Handbook provides documented helpful academic guidance. Students confirmed that all course outlines contain detailed assessment information, grading criteria and a description of the new procedure for extenuating circumstances claims. Students agreed that staff generally use an interactive teaching style and are responsive to their questions, with opportunities to seek further help by appointment. Student evaluations and satisfaction data demonstrate the added benefits of individual academic and pastoral support available to students during assessed field trips. In addition to comprehensive evaluation of formal and informal student feedback, EUSA plans to implement, in summer 2017, a new policy for student representation of programmes with more than 20 students. Representatives will be trained and will be able to present student views directly to the London Director. Examples of EUSA

staff actions to assist individual students with personal issues affecting performance demonstrate the effectiveness of the pastoral support system.

5 EUSA good practice in the innovative use of graphical illustrations to communicate work-based competencies continues to be a high priority. In spite of delays caused by the creation of new EUSA branding and logo, staff continue to be committed to developing further visual content and graphics, and increasing student completion rates using PILOT. EUSA intends to share video interviews with past interns and internship supervisors about their engagement with PILOT, together with other new branded graphical content from 2017.

6 The RSEO action plan contained one desirable recommendation: to consider ways of extending access to library facilities, including the provision of work space, to meet the study needs of students. EUSA included new questions in the student course feedback questionnaires and programme evaluations in summer 2016 to evaluate the extent to which current learning resources are sufficient. The Academic Committee found that access to study materials and availability of private study space are not viewed as a problem by the students. Nonetheless, EUSA has endeavoured to increase student awareness of the comprehensive resources afforded by the local South Kensington public library, which it regards as being well equipped for this purpose. Student uptake of this facility has nevertheless been limited.

7 EUSA's university partners determine the application process and selection criteria for entry to programmes that it manages on their behalf. Promotional material on the website is subject to review and updating to ensure accuracy. EUSA programmes require partner universities to sign letters of agreement stating that students are enrolled on a degree programme and will receive academic credit as a part of their programme. EUSA provides applicants with a helpful guide on applying for, and complying with, the Tier 4 General Student Visa. Pre-placement meetings (in person, or via Skype or telephone) are held to discuss the internship and to ascertain that English language skills are at an appropriate level. Students confirmed that the admissions process is clear and well managed.

8 EUSA has responsibility for the annual quality monitoring of its courses and programmes as set out in the Academic Policy Manual. The Academic Director and the Academic Committee have oversight of student and programme performance at twice-yearly meetings. The Academic Committee membership includes the Executive Director, the Academic Director, the Operations Director, the London Director, a member of part-time faculty, a further visiting faculty member and the EUSA City Director (in addition to the London Director) on a rotational basis. EUSA continues to make effective use of qualitative and quantitative information from academic grades awarded, comprehensive student course and programme evaluations, city staff reports, and feedback from faculty and university partners to produce action plans that are implemented and monitored by Academic Committee. Academic Committee has made recent revisions to two courses in response to student evaluations, and has also assessed the impact of PILOT on the internship programme. In response to partner university feedback, it has revised the syllabus to improve support for writing the research paper based on the internship experience.

9 Student engagement in quality assurance and enhancement is a strong feature of the provision, with input from formal course and programme evaluations, informal feedback to faculty and staff, and close supervision of the internship experience. Some partner universities also require student evaluations of EUSA courses and suggest enhancements for their study abroad programmes, which the EUSA University Relations team reports back to the London city staff.

4 Progress in working with the relevant external reference points relating to academic standards and quality for higher education

10 EUSA courses and programmes respond to the academic standards and credit ratings determined by the partner universities, who are all accredited by US agencies. The EUSA Academic Committee monitors and reviews academic outcomes to ensure compliance with each partner university. Course design and content modifications also require the approval of the partner university. The development of the internship programme is monitored and reviewed by staff and faculty, and makes reference to relevant parts of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

5 Background to the monitoring visit

11 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.

12 The monitoring visit was carried out by Dr Stephen Ryrie, QAA Officer, and Dr Elizabeth Briggs, review panel member, on 21 February 2017.

QAA1838 - R8215 - Apr 17

© The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2017
Southgate House, Southgate Street, Gloucester GL1 1UB
Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786

Tel: 01452 557050
Web: www.qaa.ac.uk