



Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of EUSA LLP, London, February 2019

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 (The Academic Internship Experts) has made commendable progress with continuing to monitor, review and enhance its higher education provision since the February 2017 [monitoring visit](#).

Changes since the last QAA monitoring visit

2 There have been no significant changes to the oversight, operation and type of programme offered by EUSA since the last QAA monitoring visit in February 2017, with university partners continuing to reapprove courses on each occasion they are offered by EUSA. EUSA London enrolled over 800 students across the spring, summer and autumn programmes in 2018. Students from the University of Boston, which owns EUSA, have contributed significantly to enrolments.

Findings from the monitoring visit

3 EUSA's Academic Committee (AC) continues to have overall responsibility for the quality management of its academic affairs, including oversight of student performance and programme monitoring, the scope of which is clearly described in the Academic Policy Manual. The action points from the AC minutes collectively provide an ongoing action plan. The Academic Director has managerial oversight for academic affairs and chairs the AC, of which the Executive and Operations Directors and the London Director and Assistant Director are among the membership; this also includes a faculty representative from London on an annual rotating basis, and a rotating representative from the other European EUSA offices. EUSA London contributes significantly to AC agendas following discussions at a local level. The EUSA Academic Director and Operations Director monitor the progress of agreed actions. The EUSA management team has a development plan for the forthcoming three to five-year period, based on EUSA's core values.

4 EUSA has continued to develop its programme evaluation arrangements, with significant evidence of ongoing course monitoring. The AC considers, for each course, a detailed report from the local City Director that is divided into sections on delivery, assessment methods, student feedback and other comments. It also considers the course outlines, faculty self-assessments, grade sheets and student course evaluation sheets. Consequent actions resulting from the AC minutes are monitored by the Academic Director, Operations Director and the local team.

5 Apart from reacting positively to student comments concerning, for example, classroom accommodation and the length of teaching sessions, EUSA London has significantly amended London courses to reduce syllabus overlap. AC has taken steps to enhance the student questionnaires, for both standard and internship courses, by ensuring that the questions are fewer and directly relevant, reflecting the triangular relationship between the lecturer, the programme syllabus and course delivery. The spring 2018 AC

meeting also benefited from an improvement in the data to include the average question scores from students on each course.

6 AC has considered the student experience of two EUSA courses, including the Personalised Internship Learning Objective Toolkit (PILOT) which identifies a set of professional competencies that students are encouraged to develop, especially during their internship experience, and to discuss these in class. Early evaluations in 2017 and 2018 of PILOT's introduction revealed that some students were reluctant to use PILOT fully. EUSA has therefore endeavoured to make PILOT more sensitive to the needs of individuals, and students met by the panel were enthusiastic about their current engagement with PILOT as it assisted them in identifying and monitoring their emerging internship skillsets. EUSA is taking forward the Paris practice of using film clips of students discussing their approach to PILOT through a centrally managed project to create a bank of readily available film footage, which will be available to all of EUSA later in 2019.

7 EUSA has continued to develop its monitoring of the internship programmes, a key attraction for students in applying to the programme. EUSA receives feedback from students and placement supervisors midway through and at the end of the internship programme, and is constantly reviewing its database of existing and potential placement providers. It also works closely with home universities to plan placement numbers and to identify student preferences. Students confirmed their understanding of the placement experience in offering opportunities to expand their experiential learning and to develop a range of skills relevant to future placements.

8 Apart from monitoring and enhancing its courses, EUSA London introduced field trips in 2018 with the intention of contextualising two of its compulsory courses, and enabling further informal interaction with faculty and the development of students' note-taking skills. The field trip guidance sheets were discussed and then revised at AC which concluded that the trips were fully integrated within the courses. Students met by the panel were enthusiastic about the value of these trips, with examples including visits to London, Bath and Stonehenge.

9 EUSA continues to provide extensive pastoral and academic support to all students. EUSA has centrally developed an outline skeletal template for student orientation across all EUSA locations. Apart from support pre-arrival and on entry to the UK, EUSA staff are available permanently via email, through arranged appointments, and by drop-in as necessary. EUSA is focusing in particular on health and safety matters in student accommodation and more generally on living abroad. EUSA continues to provide ongoing training in health and safety and student support, including mental health. Students have direct access to faculty within teaching sessions, 'office hours' and through email, with responses required within 48 hours, though students confirmed that staff responded usually within 24 hours. Students spoke highly of the commitment of all EUSA London staff and noted, in particular, the arrangements made at short notice for students when the water supply in the residences failed.

10 EUSA's university partners determine their individual selection criteria and manage the application process. The university partner is required to confirm all admitted students to be degree-seeking, enrolled and in good standing with their university. University partners formally agree to the award of credit for successful participation in the EUSA programme, and the other terms and conditions of their relationship with EUSA. EUSA also requires students to provide a copy of their university transcript to confirm their enrolment status. The university is accountable to EUSA for their students' compliance with the requirements of the Letter of Agreement. EUSA requires university confirmation that its students have appropriate proficiency in English. In addition, EUSA staff are able to check this during their internship consultation interviews with accepted students which initiate the internship

placement process. Students met by the panel confirmed the value of these interviews with London staff. Students confirmed that they applied to their home university which supplied comprehensive and accurate information on EUSA London opportunities, with further detailed information on the courses, placements and living in London received from EUSA London once their application was successful. Students also noted the positive relationship between EUSA London and their home university with the latter keeping in regular touch with students during their stay in London.

11 Assessment policies are detailed in each course outline which are scrutinised by the Academic Director prior to final approval by the partner university. Both the Student Academic Handbook (SAH) and the Faculty Guidance Note explain EUSA-wide assignment grading policies and criteria, and faculty are instructed to relate grade feedback to the specific grading criteria. EUSA London courses reflect a mixture of formative and summative assessments. Assignment marks are reported to students within 10 days of submission and are intended to provide constructive and developmental advice. Each course syllabus and the SAH detail the two-level grade dispute processes which encourage students to receive additional feedback from Faculty. Students confirmed their familiarity with these processes. Internship assessment is primarily through a reflective piece of written work, assessed through the application of EUSA's grading criteria. Students understood the assessment processes, the grading criteria and arrangements for extenuating circumstances which were clearly explained in the comprehensive SAH and by faculty. Students welcomed the timely and helpful feedback on their assignments. EUSA reported that confirmed plagiarism cases were extremely rare and would be investigated formally by the university partner. Faculty whom the team met were fully familiar with EUSA's assessment arrangements, grading policies and grade dispute procedures.

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

12 The design and standards of EUSA programmes continue to be driven by EUSA's university partners which are recognised by the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) and are responsible for the award of credit to students on all EUSA programmes. The partner university will present a skeletal syllabus and standards requirement to guide EUSA in the development of courses for subsequent approval by the university. EUSA benefits from working with a wide range of renowned US universities and has built on this through the establishment of the EUSA US Advisory Committee, founded in 2014-15, which shares good practice through annual meetings. At the March 2018 meeting in Boston, for example, participants discussed new programming, continued discussions on US standards and how best to reflect these in EUSA courses; and considered the EUSA student scholarship programme.

13 EUSA has carefully mapped its assessment arrangements against the indicators of *Chapter B6* of the previous UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code). It has also welcomed the guidance in *Chapter B10* of the Quality Code in monitoring the effectiveness of its internship arrangements. Staff met by the panel were aware of the recently published version of the new Quality Code.

Background to the monitoring visit

14 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.

15 The monitoring visit was carried out by Mr Lee Smith, QAA Officer, and Professor Peter Bush, review panel member, on 12 February 2019.

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