



## Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight: report of the desk-based analysis of EUSA LLP, June 2023

### Outcome of the desk-based analysis

1 From the annual return and documentary evidence, the monitoring team concludes that EUSA LLP (EUSA) is continuing to maintain academic standards and the quality of student learning opportunities since the March 2022 [Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight monitoring report](#).

### Changes since the last QAA monitoring visit

2 In 2022, student numbers stood at 76% of those in the pre-pandemic year of 2019. There were 638 students enrolled on the provider's London programmes. In June 2023, EUSA added a new delivery site at Birkbeck College, University of London, owing to accommodation at Kings College, London being no longer available.

3 The Executive Director of EUSA left the post in May 2022 and a new Managing Director was appointed as replacement. This post was filled by a staff member who previously held the posts of London City Director and Assistant Director. The Management Team of EUSA includes the Managing Director, Finance Director, Finance Manager, University Relations Director, Academic Director and Vice-President and Associate Provost of Boston University (BU).

### Findings from the monitoring visit

4 The desk-based analysis was carried out using the Annual Return and other documentation provided by EUSA. The provider continues to make progress in responding to the recommendation and good practice identified in the Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight Review of 2020.

5 In response to the advisable recommendation, EUSA has established the Annual Enhancement Plan which has been renamed as the Enhancement Tracker. This provides effective organisational oversight of actions taken and systematic evaluation at institutional level, by all stakeholders.

6 The development of Growth Tracker to increase student engagement and professional development across the student journey, was identified as good practice. The Growth Tracker has now been fully operational since March 2022. The Academic Committee has reported that up to 60% of students use the tool effectively to shape their learning on the Understanding the London Experience internship course, delivered in summer 2022. EUSA has also developed further measures to improve student engagement using the tracker. These measures are likely to include improving the visibility on mobile devices as part of a comprehensive upgrade of the tool, and extending access to the tracker to all London Boston University (BU) students.

7 The revised management structures are overseen by the EUSA Board, which meets three times a year. Since May 2022, BU's Associate Director for Academic Affairs has become a standing member of the Academic Committee. This has further strengthened the

provider's responsibilities in meeting the quality standards of relevant national qualifications frameworks across all EUSA sites and partner organisations. Routine meetings are also held between EUSA's Managing Director and BU's Associate Provost which enable greater integration between the provider and the administrative structures of BU.

8 The Enhancement Tracker acts as the key mechanisms for maintaining and enhancing academic standards. The tracker collates all action points from the various committees, acting as a vital mechanism for tracking quality and improvement. It is also used as a reference tool for compilation of the Board Book report for the EUSA Board.

9 Following Academic Committee discussion of Growth Tracker in October 2021 and the University Relations review in April 2021, EUSA has decided to cease all virtual internship programme delivery and return to in-person teaching. This has been welcomed by university partners and is supported in feedback from students.

10 The effective delivery of the spring and summer 2022 programme was assessed by the Academic Committee in April and October 2022 as part of the metrics for measuring success. Student satisfaction relating to workshops, Growth Tracker and overall experience is routinely analysed and reported to the EUSA Board. The overall student satisfaction rate has increased between summer 2022 and autumn 2022.

11 Since spring 2022, EUSA partners have been systematically sent a Partner End of Program Summary containing quantitative and qualitative feedback from City Directors and students. The Management Team monitors these reviews and responses to ensure that feedback is acted upon accordingly.

12 All student-orientated communication materials have been redesigned with a greater emphasis on graphics. Text-based approaches have been supplemented with video explanations to accommodate a variety of learning styles with the overall effect of increasing student engagement and promoting student autonomy.

13 As an enhancement initiative, the provider has launched a student wellbeing programme. Students are invited to join a 20-minute virtual session facilitated weekly by staff. The aim is to provide a space to focus on wellbeing and provide tools and strategies for resilience and stress management. The sessions cover a range of topics such as Tools to Focus and De-stress, Stretching, Journaling, Relaxation and Visualisation techniques.

14 A staff wellbeing programme named EUSA Connect has also been introduced with the aim of fostering cohesion and team spirit among staff. In addition, the provider has worked with Mental Health First Aid England to run sessions on relevant mental health issues. Staff have also undertaken courses on sexual harassment and misconduct.

15 In 2022, student numbers were moving towards pre-pandemic levels and all EUSA's programmes were delivered in person. There were 638 students placed in internships and six courses were delivered to a total of 40 students. One course had three sessions and was delivered in a hybrid model. The EUSA provision is made up of short programmes of study with a range of requirements and expectations which provides limited opportunities to draw conclusions from the analysis of student data.

## **Progress in working with the external reference points to meet UK expectations for higher education**

16 EUSA's main external reference point for academic standards continues to be working closely with its fully accredited US university partners to meet the quality and inclusivity

standards of those degree-awarding institutions. The Advisory Committee meets twice yearly and serves as an effective external reference point for ensuring academic standards.

17 The provider states that it utilises QAA's cyclical monitoring and evaluation process, underpinned by the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code), to shape its own structures and goals, and that the Quality Code informs all EUSA processes.

18 EUSA also remains alert to the output of the Office for Students as well as other UK and European-based regulatory frameworks. The provider's Growth Tracker scheme was developed in alignment with key professional competencies as defined by the National Association of Colleges and Employers. Changes to student communication methods have been influenced by contemporary research to include a more visual approach.

19 The City Director is a member of the Board of the American Study Abroad Programmes UK which considers matters such as mental health best practices, climate change and sustainability, and UKVI visa challenges.

## **Background to the desk-based analysis**

20 The desk-based analysis 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/annual monitoring. 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 process or review.

21 The desk-based analysis was carried out by Fahmida Khan Rushdy, Reviewer, and Simon Ives, QAA Officer, in June 2023. No meetings were held with students or staff, and the conclusions presented in this report are based on the analysis of documentary evidence submitted by the provider.

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Southgate House, Southgate Street, Gloucester GL1 1UB  
Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786

Tel 01452 557000  
Web [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)