# Higher Education Review (Foreign Providers) of GIHE UK Ltd

**April 2019**

# Contents

# About this review

This is a report of a Higher Education Review (Foreign Providers) conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at GIHE UK Ltd. The review took place from 3 to 4 April 2019 and was conducted by a team of two reviewers, as follows:

- Dr Elizabeth Briggs
- Professor Peter Bush.

The main purpose of the review was to investigate the higher education provision and to make judgements as to whether or not academic standards and quality meet UK expectations. These expectations are the statements in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code)[1] setting out what all UK higher education providers expect of themselves and of each other, and what the general public can therefore expect of them.

In Higher Education Review (Foreign Providers) the QAA review team:

- makes judgements on
  - the quality of student learning opportunities
  - the information provided about higher education provision
  - the enhancement of student learning opportunities
- provides a commentary on academic standards
- makes recommendations
- identifies features of good practice
- affirms action that the provider is taking or plans to take.

The QAA website gives more information about QAA[2] and explains the method for Higher Education Review (Foreign Providers).[3] For an explanation of terms see the glossary at the end of this report.

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[1] The UK Quality Code for Higher Education is published at: www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code.
[2] QAA website: www.qaa.ac.uk.
[3] Higher Education Review (Foreign Providers) handbook:
www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/types-of-review/higher-education-review.

# Key findings

## Judgements

The QAA review team formed the following judgements about the higher education provision.

- The quality of student learning opportunities is **commended**.
- The quality of the information about learning opportunities **meets** UK expectations.
- The enhancement of student learning opportunities is **commended**.

The QAA review team also provided a commentary on academic standards.

- The provider satisfactorily manages its responsibilities for academic standards, as set out in contractual arrangements with its academic partners.

## Good practice

The QAA review team identified the following features of **good practice**.

- The significant contribution of the Practical Arts course in preparing students for internships, further study and professional practice (Expectation B3 and Enhancement).
- The impact of Communities of Practice in enhancing teaching and learning across campuses (Expectation B3 and Enhancement).
- The wide range of strategic and operational approaches to supporting students which enables them to develop their academic, personal and professional potential (Expectation B4).
- The exceptional internship and networking opportunities available to students (Expectations B4, B10 and Enhancement).
- The detailed and comprehensive information on assessment, which helps to promote a full understanding of the process for staff and students (Expectation B6).
- The strategic and integrated approach to the enhancement of student learning opportunities (Enhancement).

## Recommendations

The QAA review team makes the following **recommendation**.

By October 2019:

- ensure that all approved academic policies and procedures include clearly stated implementation and revision dates (Expectation C).

## Affirmation of action being taken

The QAA review team **affirms** the following action already being taken to make academic standards secure and/or improve the educational provision offered to students:

- the steps being taken to formalise the documentation for programme development, approval, monitoring and review (Expectation C).

# About the provider

The 'Institut International de Glion' opened its doors in 1962 in Switzerland. In 2002, its name was changed to Glion Institute of Higher Education (GIHE). The London campus opened in 2013. Since June 2016, GIHE and its sister School, Les Roches International School of Hotel Management, based in Switzerland, have been owned by the French investment company Eurazeo. Both schools operate as hospitality educational providers through its subsidiary, Sommet Education, which provides central operational management services and support at the advisory level. GIHE UK Ltd is the legal entity operating the UK campus of GIHE. The campus is based on the University of Roehampton's site.

GIHE states that its mission is to 'develop professionals for global careers in the world's premier hospitality and luxury businesses'. It considers that its vision is to 'be known worldwide for excellence as a higher education institution for hospitality and luxury business management'.

The current number of students at the London campus is 256, with 178 students enrolled on the BBA International Hospitality Business, 74 on the MSc International Hospitality Business, and four students completing the final semester of the MBA International Hospitality and Services Industries Management programme in teach-out mode.

The most recent QAA annual monitoring visit in April 2018 resulted in an outcome of 'commendable progress'. GIHE is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NECHE). GIHE is institutionally accredited by the Centre for Excellence in Tourism and Hospitality Education (THE-ICE), although the London campus programmes are not yet accredited.

Key challenges facing GIHE include the current political uncertainties in Europe, and the implementation of a new global Student Information System (SIS) for student records and transfer of data.

# Explanation of findings

This section explains the review findings in greater detail.

# 1 Commentary: The provider satisfactorily manages its responsibilities for academic standards, as set out in contractual arrangements with its academic partners

**Findings**

1.1 GIHE UK Ltd (GIHE) in London is an integral component of the wider Glion Institute of Higher Education. Since the last QAA visit, a new internal governance structure has been introduced and approved by the Governing Board in June 2018. This includes the Academic Board (AB), established in 2017 by the Managing Director with the full authority of GIHE's Governing Board, as the principal academic body. The AB, chaired by the Academic Dean, advises the Governing Board on all academic matters relating to teaching, learning, scholarship and research at GIHE. Its role is to implement, monitor and review the academic affairs of GIHE, and to take responsibility for the achievement of GIHE's educational purposes and plans. Thus, all programmes and courses delivered wholly, or in part, in London are developed, approved, monitored and reviewed under arrangements approved by the AB which has institutional authority for the oversight of the standards and quality of academic awards. Recently established undergraduate and postgraduate Programme Committees (PCs) report to the AB on the operation, monitoring and future developments of their programmes. Examination Boards (also known as Progression or Awards Boards) oversee assessments and student performance and advise AB on the conferral of awards. The AB includes within its membership the Chairs of Programme Committees and Examination Boards, Programme Managers, and faculty members elected by campus peers from each of the three campuses. Monthly meetings of the Leadership Group evaluate the effectiveness of quality assurance procedures to meet GIHE regulatory and compliance obligations as a higher education provider and ensure that the Institution fulfils its mission, values and strategic priorities.

1.2 GIHE programmes are designed to be hospitality based and intellectually challenging, aimed at ensuring its graduates reflect professional competency, global readiness and the key intellectual skills of integrative thinking, critical analysis, problem solving, information literacy, and quantitative competency. Glion Institute of Higher Education is the degree-awarding body for all programmes offered in Switzerland and the UK. All awards are accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NECHE).

1.3 The detailed structure and curriculum of the two London programmes underwent major reviews in 2017. These reviews were conducted by specialist ad hoc Task Forces, established following a major change of ownership and the appointment of staff to a restructured senior management team. Task Forces, with some overlapping membership, were established to focus on undergraduate and postgraduate programme structures, learning outcomes, rules and regulations, and pre-sessional arrangements. This involved the preparation of course descriptions, programme specifications, and a faculty handbook. The Task Forces reported their outline recommendations to the Governing Board in September 2017 following a report to all GIHE employees in July 2017. The Communities of Practice (CoPs), autonomous groups of faculty experts from all campuses with a common interest in an area of teaching and often augmented by external industry inputs, including members of GIHE's Industry Advisory Board (IAB), contributed to the development of the detailed course descriptions. The revised programmes were approved following detailed discussion at the October 2017 AB, which commented on the widespread ownership of the

proposals and the detailed engagement of faculty throughout the process. The revised programmes have been delivered from February 2018 with the Academic Catalogue, and the BBA and MSc handbooks being the formal definitive course documents, including the programme specifications. In developing the programme proposals, the task forces were guided by the NEASC standards, *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ), and the Subject Benchmark Statement for Events, Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism.

1.4     Following the major programme review, the Task Forces were stood down as GIHE developed a suite of quality assurance procedures for the development, approval, monitoring and review of its programmes (see Expectations B1 and B8). These are codified in the draft Glion Academic Quality Framework (AQF), which will receive formal consideration by AB in November 2019.

1.5     GIHE uses a wide range of international reference points reflecting the international focus of its student recruitment, degree programmes and graduate employment. Using the Swiss national standards for higher education, NECHE accreditation standards, Standards of Excellence of the International Centre of Excellence in Tourism and Hospitality Education (THE-ICE standards), and the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code), enables GIHE to consolidate the many areas of convergence among these reference points.

1.6     The Swiss standards, which incorporate the Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015), include standards relating to the national degree framework and quality assurance strategy, and have a particular focus on excellence and the link between scholarship and teaching. NECHE is recognised by the US Secretary of State of Education as a reliable authority on the quality of education and has affirmed that NECHE's standards and processes are consistent with its quality, improvement and accountability expectations. GIHE has been accredited by NECHE since 2005 and is currently preparing for a NECHE accreditation visit later in 2019. The team noted the detailed reports presented to NECHE and the positive responses from the accrediting body confirming GIHE's meeting of the NECHE standards. NECHE accreditation is of particular significance to graduates seeking employment in the North American market.

1.7     THE-ICE accreditation of all GIHE's programmes, though not yet of the London site specifically, brings subject-specific international expertise to the assessment of programme quality as well as access to benchmarking of other THE-ICE accredited tourism and hospitality institutions. Following a December 2018 meeting, THE-ICE is now more familiar with the academic governance of GIHE, which operates single quality assurance arrangements for all programmes, irrespective of location.

1.8     GIHE frequently references the Quality Code in its self-evaluation document, and specifically the Subject Benchmark Statement for Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism. GIHE confirmed that the Task Forces' work involved consultation with the subject benchmark statement, while the development of recently approved master's programmes was informed through referencing the 2015 Master's Degree Characteristics Statement. Staff met by the team also stressed that Expectation B6 of the Quality Code had been helpful in developing guidance to staff on assessment issues. GIHE acknowledged the need to support faculty in their understanding and application of the Quality Code and related documents.

1.9     NECHE accreditation does not require external examining to contribute to its assurance requirements for academic standards, and GIHE has no regulatory requirement to engage external examiners for its London programmes. However, GIHE, in alignment with the Quality Code, has used external examiners since 2016. The external examiners appointed to the London programmes had previous experience of acting as external

examiners for GIHE programmes in Switzerland. Following an initial year working with these two external examiners, GIHE appointed one of them to continue for a further four years. The external examiner visits GIHE on an annual basis and prepares a detailed report, which is shared through the governance structure. This report provides an independent, impartial view of academic standards set against benchmarks provided by the Swiss programmes and prevailing UK standards. The 2017 and 2018 reports concluded that the programmes were competently and effectively delivered with no major areas of concern, and that the programmes met the academic standards required (see Expectation B7 for further information).

# The provider satisfactorily manages its responsibilities for academic standards, as set out in contractual arrangements with its academic partners: Summary of findings

1.10    In reaching its conclusion, the review team matched its findings against the three questions specified in Annex 2 of the published handbook. The review team found that GIHE is stringent in managing its responsibilities for maintaining academic standards.

1.11    The review team concludes that the provider satisfactorily manages its responsibilities for academic standards, as set out in contractual arrangements with its academic partners.

# 2    Judgement: The quality of student learning opportunities

**Expectation (B1): Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes.**

**Quality Code,** *Chapter B1: Programme Design, Development and Approval*

**Findings**

2.1    The postgraduate and undergraduate programmes underwent significant reviews by special short-life Task Forces in 2017 resulting in major changes to the structure and curricula of the London programmes. This is considered more fully in Expectation B8. Towards the end of this major review process, in late 2017, GIHE undertook a review of its quality assurance arrangements more widely. This was informed in part by the Task Force operation and resulted in formal arrangements for the development and approval of new courses and programmes. The respective roles of Programme Committees (PCs), students, Communities of Practice and Academic Board (AB) are clearly described in the draft Academic Quality Framework (AQF). None of the current London programmes has been approved and developed through the processes described in the draft AQF. Instead, the team tested the procedures through the approach adopted by GIHE for the design and approval of the MSc Finance, Real Estate and Hotel Management, planned for introduction at the London campus in September 2019. These procedures would enable GIHE to meet the Expectation.

2.2    The team reviewed the effectiveness of these practices and procedures by examining documentation relating to the programme design and approval process and minutes of relevant committee meetings. The team also held meetings with senior and teaching staff, and students.

2.3    The review team found these processes to work effectively in practice. The approval processes for London and Swiss-based programmes are the same, and faculty from both locations share membership of the relevant Communities of Practice (CoP). The team saw evidence that the Governing Board delegates programme approval to AB, and course approval to PCs which then notify AB via minutes of meetings. The PC considers and approves a range of documentation including programme concept, likely graduate profile, proposed learning outcomes, statement of learning resources, course overviews, regulatory framework, and whether the proposal meets the requirements of a Level 7 programme. In developing the programme and course proposals, the team saw evidence that faculty, through the CoP, consulted with colleagues across GIHE, members of the Industry Advisory Board (IAB) and other external practitioners, as well as the relevant Subject Benchmark Statement and SEEC level descriptors. The detailed arrangements reflect those described in the draft AQF.

2.4    From the evidence seen, the new programme approval arrangements are comprehensive and effective. The team, therefore, concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

**Expectation:    Met**
**Level of risk:    Low**

**Expectation (B2): Recruitment, selection and admission policies and procedures adhere to the principles of fair admission. They are transparent, reliable, valid, inclusive and underpinned by appropriate organisational structures and processes. They support higher education providers in the selection of students who are able to complete their programme.**

**Quality Code, *Chapter B2: Recruitment, Selection and Admission to Higher Education***

**Findings**

2.5      The GIHE UK Admissions Officer liaises with the Head of Admissions, based in Switzerland, to process applications to the UK campus. Central oversight by the Head of Admissions ensures the consistency and coherence of recruitment and selection across all three campuses. English language proficiency for admission to programmes which are taught in English is covered by clearly specified entry criteria in programme brochures, the Academic Catalogue, and all other marketing information. Educational Counsellors and GIHE staff involved in admissions are trained regularly by the admissions team to ensure that potential students receive guidance to meet the IELTS English language criteria. For a non-EU student who has completed a recognised three-year degree programme in an English-speaking institution, the degree certificate is submitted with the application and reviewed for authenticity. Students who do not meet the English language requirement may be offered a deferred place until they can present evidence of having reached the required standard. The procedures in place would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.6      The review team examined the effectiveness of the recruitment, selection and admissions procedures for the BBA and MSc programmes by analysing published documentation including website information, programme brochures and the Academic Catalogue. The team also met senior academic staff, support staff and students.

2.7      The review team found that the procedures for recruitment, selection and admission of students works effectively in practice. The overall entry criteria for applicants are based on additional assessment tools, including age and years of previous education on the application form and accompanying CV, together with relevant school and university transcripts of educational attainment. Important other criteria focus on the work experience portfolio of the applicant containing employer references, CVs, internship and employment reports.

2.8      The recently approved revisions to the Accreditation of Prior Learning Policy (APL) improve the consistency of guidance for staff in assessing prior learning for all applicants. An assessment is made from the applicant's statement of study and post-study plans of their commitment to the industry and intention to study. Such information from undergraduate applicants may be supplemented by a compatibility assessment interview to confirm suitability for the programme.

2.9      Applicants may be referred to an intensive hospitality English language programme (IHELP), available as a 15-week summer pre-sessional course, designed to enable students to attain the required level for the BBA or MSc programme. The Head of Admissions commented on the helpful addition of an Admissions Commission, set up to adjudicate on applications, which did not meet admissions requirements in full.

2.10      Campus open days provide opportunities for applicants to explore further the GIHE learning environment. The provision of additional cultural activities with a London location focus for the majority of non-UK students facilitates adjustment to a new learning environment. On arrival, GIHE provides a comprehensive welcome, orientation and induction

programme. During the first semester Practical Arts module, a further diagnostic English language test is taken by all students to ensure that appropriate individual language support is provided. Students met by the team agreed that the admissions policies and procedures were clear, accessible and supported by counselling staff.

2.11     The GIHE policies and procedures for student admissions have been updated since the last QAA visit at which they were found to be applied in a rigorous manner. More detailed procedures for assessing claims for APL have strengthened further the admissions and selection processes. Students confirmed that the processes for the recruitment, selection and admission of students are accessible, fair and comprehensive. The team, therefore, concludes that the Expectation is met, and the associated level of risk is low.

**Expectation:    Met**
**Level of risk:   Low**

**Expectation (B3): Higher education providers, working with their staff, students and other stakeholders, articulate and systematically review and enhance the provision of learning opportunities and teaching practices, so that every student is enabled to develop as an independent learner, study their chosen subject(s) in depth and enhance their capacity for analytical, critical and creative thinking.**

**Quality Code, *Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching***

**Findings**

2.12     GIHE articulates its approach to teaching, learning and assessment in the Glion Academic Handbook: Teaching, Learning and Assessment Guide. There is a current strategy to enhance effective learning and teaching by planning for learning differences 'to enable all students to access teaching, learning and assessment opportunities'. The Strategic Plan 2018-22 commits to the implementation of a revised Global Learning Model and Student Information System to support teaching and learning. Resources, including information technology (IT), are planned to provide a variety of learning experiences to engage students. The procedures in place would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.13     The review team examined the effectiveness of learning opportunities and teaching practices by reading documentation concerning strategic approaches and related procedures, including the Strategic Plan 2018-22, the Global Learning Model and the Academic Handbook. Additional information was reviewed relating to teaching staff observations and performance reviews, student evaluations, staff development and cross-campus professional development. The team also held meetings with senior, academic and support staff, and students.

2.14     The review team found these strategies and processes to work effectively in practice. The use of the virtual learning environment (VLE) facilitates teaching, learning and assessment by making resources accessible to all, enables assessment submission and online marking with feedback and, additionally, provides a forum for student feedback. Classrooms have been modified to permit greater interaction between teachers and students using the resources of the VLE. GIHE is progressing further initiatives to develop the E-Portfolio to map and track the student journey including skills and competencies acquired throughout the programme. Students have access to a comprehensive range of University of Roehampton facilities, including the library which is open 24 hours every day, and to library databases on the e-portal of the extranet site. Students met by the team confirmed that resources are easy to access, with helpful library support, and they were particularly impressed by the additional resources available in the GLION library collection relating to the hospitality industry.

2.15     All London campus students study the Practical Arts course in the first semester in Switzerland, an innovation resulting from the BBA programme review 2017. The course comprises five rotations of four weeks to develop professional skills in preparation for internships in the hospitality industry and for advanced studies. Rotations include practical culinary skills, gastronomy, hotel operations and management, oenology, restaurant management and a boutique-style hotel simulation. Students and faculty the team met described the considerable benefits to students of specialist practical learning and personal and team-working skills developed during the Practical Arts course. The significant contribution of the Practical Arts course in preparing students for internships, further study and professional practice is **good practice**.

2.16    Students may follow subject specialisms which reflect their preferences and longer-term career aspirations. Personal tutors support individual students and offer guidance on access to relevant resources. Higher level analytical and critical skills are developed in Research Methods, with individual dissertation supervision provided for in-depth study and investigation of topics selected by the student. The two semesters before the BBA final year offer wider learning experiences through six-month internships and provide further practical professional insights into the hospitality industries relevant for career planning. The MSc programme has a new, recently validated internship course.

2.17    Teaching staff range from full-time and proportional appointments to part-time staff, visiting lecturers, contracted consultants and occasional guest lecturers. The Campus Director oversees new faculty induction and orientation to ensure that they are aware of academic rules and campus regulations detailed in the Faculty Handbook. GIHE has a faculty workload model to ensure a correct balance between teaching and other professional activities. Faculty appointed as a result of their relevant employment experience are supported by the Campus Director using a development plan, including registration for further academic studies, and are mentored by experienced faculty. Permanent faculty undergo performance reviews with their line manager through self-appraisal and a self-review portfolio. Performance reviews, peer observations in the classroom, student satisfaction reports, student course evaluations and course internal verification assist the monitoring of the effectiveness of teaching and the quality of student learning and enhancement activities. The annual report of faculty development and appraisal informs plans for professional development, scholarship and career planning.

2.18    Communities of Practice of faculty with shared academic interests and subject expertise communicate regularly on teaching and learning activities across campuses. Faculty value the four development days, which support the development of specific subject teaching and learning activities through the Communities of Practice, including an annual trip to the Swiss campuses to share best practices and work with colleagues. Faculty met by the team confirmed the positive contribution of Communities of Practice, for example, to the revised delivery of finance courses in the BBA to enhance student learning and, more generally, to programme design. The impact of Communities of Practice in enhancing teaching and learning across campuses is **good practice**.

2.19    GIHE has an effective strategic approach to student learning and teaching, supported by appropriate staff performance review and professional development, and comprehensive mechanisms for students to provide feedback on the quality of their courses and their teachers. The review team, therefore, concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

**Expectation:    Met**
**Level of risk:    Low**

**Expectation (B4): Higher education providers have in place, monitor and evaluate arrangements and resources which enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.**

**Quality Code, *Chapter B4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement***

**Findings**

2.20     GIHE is committed to developing and improving the academic, personal and professional development of its students with current and future initiatives articulated clearly in the Strategic Plan 2018-22. The current structures of programme management, led by programme managers and faculty, additional support for internships and careers aspirations, the personal tutor system and student welfare provision underpin opportunities for students to achieve their potential. Academic guidance from faculty and personal tutors helps students to meet deadlines and develop organisational skills by setting personal goals. Professional development is ensured through internships courses that emphasise links between classroom learning and practical experience of the world of work. The Student Affairs Department, working with the Academic Dean, provides personal welfare support and encourages a healthy balance between academic commitment and leisure time. Students have opportunities to participate in leisure, sporting and some cultural activities related to their professional interests. The Dean of Students promotes student engagement in quality assurance processes with GIHE in London and the Swiss campuses in Glion and Bulle. The clear management responsibilities and additional arrangements for support and guidance for student development and achievement would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.21     The review team examined the arrangements and resources by reading documentation relating to policies and procedures, minutes of senior committees and programme committees, student handbooks and support information, induction information, student evaluation and feedback, and monitoring reports. The team also met senior, academic and support staff, employers and students.

2.22     The review team found that mechanisms for implementing, evaluating and monitoring arrangements and resources work effectively in practice. Students receive the Academic Catalogue at induction that is a valuable source of references to policies and procedures, and includes an academic calendar, programme structures with learning outcomes, assessment information, student support and internship information. GIHE monitors and evaluates the BBA and MSc programmes to ensure that students achieve their potential. Student retention and progression data show high rates of achievement, generally up to 100 per cent, confirming the success of student learning outcomes. End of semester student evaluations demonstrate a commitment to monitoring all aspects of student development and learning experience. Library and IT, together with the VLE, contribute to student learning and research. Compulsory language electives in French and Spanish are offered at different levels to enable students to improve language skills and broaden the range of international internships. Student transitions, guided by academic and support staff, are also facilitated by increased language skills. Students confirmed that the academic, pastoral and individual support that they receive is accessible and valued from pre-arrival to completion of their studies. The wide range of strategic and operational approaches to supporting students which enables them to develop their academic, personal and professional potential is **good practice**.

2.23     The BBA and MSc programme internships and Capstone project ensure that students develop the professional skills and attributes to enhance future career potential. The internship course is underpinned by a preparation during the Practical Arts course, where students write professional CVs and acquire knowledge and skills to search for a placement. Support provided by the Careers and Internship Department includes

placements in leading hospitality and luxury brand employers and provides students with industry networking opportunities. Students sign an internship agreement with the employer and complete an online credit-bearing course 'Reflection on Practice' during the placement. Students and employers commented on the value added to the development of learning opportunities afforded by internships. The exceptional internship and networking opportunities available to students is **good practice**.

2.24    GIHE takes effective strategic steps to enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential. The review team concludes that the Expectation is met, and the associated level of risk is low.

**Expectation:    Met**
**Level of risk:    Low**

**Expectation (B5): Higher education providers take deliberate steps to engage all students, individually and collectively, as partners in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience.**

**Quality Code,** *Chapter B5: Student Engagement*

**Findings**

2.25 Student engagement is well embedded in quality assurance and enhancement activities within the new governance structure. Students are trained to make formal contributions to the Academic and Student Experience Committee and PCs, and to act as elected class representatives in monthly meetings with academic staff. Student representatives report to the GIHE Student Governance Association Academic Representative on cross-campus matters, and act as Student Ambassadors at open days. Students are able to engage with their personal tutors and the Programme Manager on an individual basis. The procedures for student engagement would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.26 The review team tested the effectiveness of the procedures for engaging students by examining minutes of relevant committees, student handbooks and the detailed results of student evaluations. The team also met senior, academic and support staff, and students.

2.27 The review team found that the procedures for student engagement work effectively in practice. Senior staff value feedback from students in comprehensive course review evaluations and end of semester surveys that are analysed by the programme managers. The student submission includes comments on the institutional ethos of continuous improvement of learning experiences. The wide range of survey questions provides feedback on the quality of teaching and learning experiences, course content, and access to and appropriateness of learning resources and facilities. Students commented on their involvement in deliberations with staff about course changes, new subject specialisms, additional language courses and field trips. Students contributed to new programme development of an MSc in Finance, Real Estate and Hotel Development, starting in September 2019 at the UK campus.

2.28 Students have access to support on non-academic matters and welfare services from the departments managed by the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students departments offer comprehensive services on admissions, academic administration, student affairs, library and, careers and internships. Students benefit from pre-arrival information, induction programmes to enable them to settle into London campus life and opportunities to experience a range of extracurricular activities. The Student Affairs Department encourages active participation in committees and feedback communications channels, including an extensive THE-ICE iGraduate barometer survey, which inform action planning through student engagement.

2.29 Student engagement in learning is monitored actively and supported by attendance monitoring, which addresses non-compliance issues. Programme managers are responsible for supporting academic development in monthly student representative meetings with academic staff, responding to student queries in tutorials in a timely manner and using tailored individual study plans.

2.30 The team found that student engagement in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience is effectively organised and robustly monitored. Student feedback mechanisms are comprehensive, with appropriate consideration by senior management and inform future action plans. The team concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

**Expectation: Met**
**Level of risk: Low**

**Expectation (B6): Higher education providers operate equitable, valid and reliable processes of assessment, including for the recognition of prior learning, which enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification being sought.**

**Quality Code, *Chapter B6: Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning***

### Findings

2.31      Students are assessed according to the principles of constructive alignment requiring them to demonstrate the acquisition of specific targeted learning outcomes and transferable skills. GIHE applies multiple assessment methods to support this approach and prioritises the development of particular skills in different semesters. The types of formative and summative assessment methods employed include practical and project work, groupwork, case studies, essays, reading and information searches, and graded end-of-course examinations. Assessments are intended to evaluate achievement of learning outcomes and develop transferable skills, and they form an integral part of the teaching and learning strategy. Given the diversity of assessment methods, GIHE recognises the importance of students and faculty understanding fully the purpose and nature of assessments. Therefore, information on assessment is available in the Faculty Handbook, Academic Rules and Regulations Handbook, and the Assessment Map. GIHE's policy on APL acknowledges its commitment to recognising credit from previous study at the appropriate level. The procedures for assessment would enable the Expectation to be met.

2.32      The team tested the Expectation by scrutinising the evidence provided by GIHE, including assessment policies and regulations, faculty and student handbooks, course descriptors on the VLE, external examiner reports and minutes from Examination Boards. The team also met with academic and support staff, and students.

2.33      The review team found that the procedures for assessment work effectively in practice. Learning outcomes, transferable skills and professional competences are described in detail within each course descriptor, the information being easily accessible on the VLE. Each course descriptor also provides an overview of each assignment, its weighting and deadline for submission. There is additionally a comprehensive GIHE Assessment Map, which outlines for each course the mid-term, final and resit information on type of assessment, percentage weighting, submission and return dates. The map is the outcome of GIHE's response to the 2018 external examiner's report. This map is available before the start of the first semester in each year and is compiled and monitored by the Academic Office. Students the team met greatly appreciated the assessment information available to them, with students also commenting on the timely and helpful feedback on their assignments. In addition to receiving comprehensive written feedback, students also have ready access to faculty to discuss their assignment outcomes. Students met by the team were also aware of the comprehensive and detailed Academic Rules and Regulations Handbook which includes information on progression rules and re-takes, graduation requirements, group work policy, GIHE grading scales and explanations, arrangements for incomplete or late submissions, academic and intellectual integrity and related sanctions, and academic appeals.

2.34      Guidance to staff is available in a clear and comprehensive Faculty Handbook. The Handbook contains a range of detailed information for staff including: specific guidance on assessing at levels 4-7; institutional level descriptors and intended student learning outcomes at each level; guides to the creating and writing of various types of effective assessments and formal examinations; guidance on assessing group work; moderation

arrangements; and guidance on grading. Together with the Assessment Map and a detailed Assessment Checklist, the Faculty Handbook provides well constructed, detailed and comprehensive guidance to faculty on all elements of assessment. The Faculty Handbook is in the process of being expanded into a draft Handbook on Learning, Teaching and Assessment, due for introduction in September 2019. This will link with the draft Academic Quality Framework to provide a complete, two-volume Academic Handbook. Based on the findings in paragraphs 2.33-2.34, the team considers that the detailed and comprehensive information on assessment which helps to promote a full understanding of the process for staff and students is **good practice**.

2.35     GIHE's assessment procedures are clearly articulated and their implementation transparently explained and applied. Assessment details are accessible to students prior to the commencement of each year, and staff and students are fully aware of the assessment and grading criteria for the multiple types of assessment. Therefore, the review team concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

**Expectation:     Met**
**Level of risk:     Low**

## Expectation (B7): Higher education providers make scrupulous use of external examiners.

**Quality Code, *Chapter B7: External Examining***

**Findings**

2.36      Although there are no requirements for programmes to appoint external examiners, GIHE does appoint an external examiner to its London-based programmes for a five-year term. The role expectation requires the external examiner to carry out quality assurance and control activities to monitor the academic level of course objectives and assessments, and to confirm that processes are in place to maintain the integrity of academic practices and judgments (see also paragraph 1.9). The comprehensive role description explains the purpose, main duties and responsibilities of external examiners, and outlines the required education, professional qualifications and experience of an appointee. The examiner is expected to offer to Programme Managers advice on good practice, programme enhancement and student continuous improvement. Having met students and staff, examined students' work and attended the Examination Board, the examiner submits an annual report to the London Campus Director. The arrangements in place would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.37      In order to test the Expectation, the team read the external examiner's role expectations and 2016-18 reports. The team also discussed GIHE's use of the reports with senior staff and faculty members.

2.38      The review team found that the procedures for external examining work effectively in practice. The reports submitted by the two external examiners in 2016 and by the single examiner in 2017 and 2018 were comprehensive and detailed, and reflected the external examiner role description. Examiners concluded that the programmes were competently and effectively delivered, that they met the standards established by GIHE, and offered a number of recommendations to enhance the assessment process. Following discussions with this external examiner on his examining experiences more generally, GIHE has decided, on the grounds of good practice, to appoint external examiners from 2020 for a three-year period and will be revising the role description accordingly. The formal appointment will be made by the AB and the new arrangement will be incorporated within the draft AQF.

2.39      On receipt of the external examiner reports, the London Campus Director shares them with the Leadership Group. From academic year 2018-19, reports have additionally been shared with Programme Managers and the PC. Among the actions taken in response to the reports have been increased support for sessional staff, including collaborative work with colleagues in Switzerland via the Communities of Practice network, and the introduction of an Assessment Map outlining assessment types and timescales (see paragraph 2.33). Reports are available online to all staff, and Programme Managers discuss the findings with faculty colleagues. The reports are also considered at PCs. As outlined in the draft AQF, PCs will, from September 2019, be required to provide detailed action plans resulting from the external examiner's report and to advise AB accordingly.

2.40      The external examining system works effectively, and GIHE has determined to formalise the role of PCs in developing action plans in addition to central consideration of reports. The team, therefore, concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

**Expectation:    Met**
**Level of risk:    Low**

**Expectation (B8): Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective, regular and systematic processes for monitoring and for review of programmes.**

**Quality Code,** *Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring and Review*

### Findings

2.41      Prior to the adoption of the new governance arrangements in September 2018, a major programme of reviews was undertaken by ad hoc specialist Task Forces, recommending their outcomes to the AB and the Governing Board (see also paragraphs 1.1-1.4 and 2.1). The Task Forces comprised senior staff, faculty representatives and external advisers, primarily from the Industry Advisory Board (IAB). The use of the Task Forces was a temporary approach, pending the development of new arrangements for the development, approval, monitoring and review of programmes in 2018. The revised arrangements involve the use of student feedback, the experience of faculty through their Communities of Practice, inputs from the IAB, and formal views from the relevant PC and AB. These new arrangements are encapsulated in the draft GIHE AQF which is due to be approved at AB in November 2019. Both the Task Force approach and the current arrangements would enable the Expectation to be met.

2.42      In order to test the Expectation, the team viewed the draft AQF, Task Force presentations, and minutes of AB, Governing Board, and PCs. The team also met with senior staff, faculty, students and employers.

2.43      The review team found that the procedures for programme monitoring and review work effectively in practice. The major programme review conducted during the summer of 2017 was undertaken by five separate Task Forces, with the Academic Dean attending meetings of each one. During the first phase, the Task Forces produced outline proposals for each of their remits, and reported these in presentations to all staff, the AB and the Governing Board. The second phase involved the Task Forces in more detailed discussions with faculty through the Communities of Practice, involving employers and other industry representatives, the preparation of draft course and programmes specifications for the Academic Catalogue and Course Brochures, and formal approval from the AB, Governing Board and NECHE (see also paragraphs 1.1-1.4).

2.44      PCs were re-established by the Governing Board in September 2018 to report to the AB on student learning, the continuous improvement of teaching methods and the use of new technologies, and the link between education and scholarly activities. AB receives the minutes, including any recommendations, from the PCs. The Managing Director, on behalf of the Leadership Group, determines which outcomes from the AB's consideration of PC recommendations need to be progressed to the Leadership Group and/or the Governing Board. The two PCs have an extensive composition including student representatives and representatives from the Internship and academic administration offices. The PCs are also informed by discussions of the IAB, student feedback gathered by course review and evaluation, end of semester surveys and meetings with class representatives.
The Communities of Practice communicate informally online or face-to-face concerning teaching, learning assessment and the student experience, advising PCs of any recommendations.

2.45      Besides providing formal feedback through the Course Review and Evaluation Survey and the End of Semester Survey, students meet frequently and informally with staff and are supported effectively by their student representatives who brief them before and after PC meetings.

2.46    The Task Forces led a successful major review of programmes. The new arrangements for annual monitoring, under the auspices of the PCs and the developing Quality Assurance Framework, are detailed and comprehensive. Therefore, the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

**Expectation:    Met**
**Level of risk:    Low**

**Expectation (B9): Higher education providers have procedures for handling academic appeals and student complaints about the quality of learning opportunities; these procedures are fair, accessible and timely, and enable enhancement.**

**Quality Code, *Chapter B9: Academic Appeals and Student Complaints***

**Findings**

2.47    GIHE has an academic appeals policy which details procedures for students and is published in the Academic Rules and Regulations for Students. All student appeals are considered by the same Appeals Panel and are monitored and reviewed in detail across the campuses. The new Student Complaints Policy has recently been reviewed and approved. The framework for complaints and appeals would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.48    The review team examined the effectiveness of managing student academic appeals and complaints by scrutinising policy documents, minutes of relevant committees and appeals data monitoring reports. The team also met senior, academic and support staff and students.

2.49    The review team found that the procedures for handling academic appeals and student complaints work effectively in practice. Programme Managers and PCs review academic appeals data on a regular basis. Information on procedures for non-academic complaints is available in the Student Feedback Policy. The Dean of Students drafted a Student Complaints Policy which received PC approval under delegated powers in November 2018 for implementation in February 2019. The approval of the policy was noted by the AB with unspecified implementation and review dates (see also paragraph 3.4). While the review team noted that the latest Academic Rules and Regulations contain the new policy, students and academic staff were unclear about whether the new procedures had been published although they were aware of how to access guidance on the VLE.

2.50    Procedures for academic appeals and complaints about the quality of learning opportunities are fair, accessible and timely. The review team concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

**Expectation:    Met**
**Level of risk:   Low**

**Expectation (B10): Degree-awarding bodies take ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, irrespective of where these are delivered or who provides them. Arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with organisations other than the degree-awarding body are implemented securely and managed effectively.**

**Quality Code, *Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others***

**Findings**

2.51      The governance structure and strategic plan support the development and management of the arrangements for delivery of the internships within the two programmes. Employers within the internship programme offer placements in the fields of hotel, hospitality, leisure, tourism and luxury brand management, which are based on strong networking relationships with GIHE staff. The Student Careers and Internships Officer supports students in finding internships, arranges company visits and manages employer relationships. Students and employers are guided in their expectations and delivery of internships by the Internship Agreement and by the comprehensive Internship Procedures Handbook. Internship opportunities are shared between the London, Bulle and Glion campuses on an equal-opportunities basis. Each semester there is a Career and Recruitment day attended by international employers, which provides many networking opportunities for students. The arrangements and procedures in place would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.52      The review team tested the effectiveness of the delivery of learning opportunities in the internship programme by scrutinising published documentation for the management of internships. The team also met senior and academic staff, support staff, students and employers.

2.53      The review team found that the management and delivery of internships works effectively in practice (see also paragraph 2.23). The Careers and Internship Office maintains regular contact with the student and employer during the internship. Each placement is for 24 weeks in a professional local or international environment and enables the student to demonstrate the skills set required by the employer and to reflect on professional practice. The current list of employers and placement locations demonstrates an impressive range of highly relevant opportunities that enhance professional development. Students, staff and employers confirmed the value-added aspect of 'learning by doing' in the hospitality industry afforded by internships, which widen career opportunities. These findings contribute to the **good practice** in paragraph 2.23 regarding the exceptional internship and networking opportunities available to students.

2.54      Procedures for managing higher education provision with other organisations are implemented securely and effectively. The team, therefore, concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

**Expectation:    Met**
**Level of risk:   Low**

**Expectation (B11): Research degrees are awarded in a research environment that provides secure academic standards for doing research and learning about research approaches, methods, procedures and protocols.**
**This environment offers students quality of opportunities and the support they need to achieve successful academic, personal and professional outcomes from their research degrees.**

**Quality Code, *Chapter B11: Research Degrees***

**Findings**

2.55     GIHE does not offer research degrees. Therefore, this Expectation is not applicable.

# The quality of student learning opportunities: Summary of findings

2.56     In reaching its judgement, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published Handbook. All of the 10 applicable Expectations are met with low risk.

2.57     The review team identifies five features of good practice which relate to: the significant contribution of the Practical Arts course in preparing students for internships, further study and professional practice (B3); the impact of Communities of Practice in enhancing teaching and learning across campuses (B3); the wide range of strategic and operational approaches to supporting students which enables them to develop their academic, personal and professional potential (B4); the exceptional internship and networking opportunities available to students (B4 and B10); and the detailed and comprehensive information on assessment which helps to promote a full understanding of the process for staff and students (B6).

2.58     The review team makes no recommendations or affirmations with regard to the quality of student learning opportunities.

2.59     The review team concludes that the quality of student learning opportunities at the provider is **commended**.

# 3 Judgement: The quality of the information about learning opportunities

**Expectation (C): UK higher education providers produce information for their intended audiences about the higher education they offer that is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy.**

**Quality Code, Part C: Information about Higher Education Provision**

**Findings**

3.1 GIHE's information about its higher education provision is updated and published in consultation with the Marketing Department, with academic information being checked for accuracy by Programme Managers and subsequently by the Academic Dean. Information for staff, in addition to the Academic Catalogue, is overseen by the Academic Dean. Course information is approved by Programme Committees (PCs), and programme information by Academic Board (AB) and thereafter passed to the Marketing Managers for inclusion in the annually updated Academic Catalogue and course brochures. Any minor changes are signed off by Programme Managers. More detailed information on courses is accessible to registered students via the VLE student portal. Draft staff and student handbooks are considered by AB for formal approval. Information about the Institution is primarily available via the GIHE website, the Academic Catalogue and the course brochures. These arrangements would allow the Expectation to be met.

3.2 The review team tested the effectiveness of GIHE's arrangements for publication and assurance of information by exploring the availability and accuracy of information on the website and VLE, and by scrutinising handbooks and the minutes of AB and PC. The team also held meetings with senior, academic and support staff, students and employers.

3.3 The review team found that the procedures for the production of information are firmly established, familiar to staff, and work effectively in practice. Staff met by the team attested to the value of the comprehensive Faculty Handbook and welcomed its expansion into a Teaching, Learning and Assessment Handbook. While faculty were aware of arrangements for programme approval, review and monitoring, they welcomed GIHE's decision to codify the draft Academic Quality Framework (AQF) as a second part of a faculty handbook. The team learned that the AQF has been developed in draft since mid-2018, and a version would be presented to Academic Board in November 2019 for implementation the following February. The team **affirms** the steps being taken to formalise the documentation for programme development, approval, monitoring and review.

3.4 In light of the lengthy period taken for the development, approval and implementation of new and amended policies, GIHE may wish to consider whether the current arrangements of holding PCs and ABs normally only once per semester continue to be appropriate for its needs. The review team noted examples of policies approved by AB without reference to any formal implementation date, and that approval, implementation and renewal dates were not always consistently included in the approved policy documents themselves (see also paragraph 2.49). While the team learned that new policies are normally introduced at the start of the semester following their approval, the team **recommends** that GIHE ensures that all approved academic policies and procedures include clearly stated implementation and revision dates.

3.5 The website, Academic Catalogue, course brochures and VLE provide clear and detailed information on a range of topics including: admissions requirements and processes; links to pre-arrival information; student life in London; GIHE's links with the hospitality

industry; course information; learning and teaching; and study abroad opportunities. Students met by the team reported that promotional material, and pre-departure and arrival information were accurate and comprehensive. They also found the VLE induction helpful and the content of the course pages complete and accurate. Employers, too, confirmed that the information was helpful, and assisted them in understanding both the links between the programmes and employment, and the experiences of GIHE interns and graduates seeking employment.

3.6     Overall, GIHE produces information that is comprehensive, accurate and well presented. The team affirms the steps being taken to formalise the documentation for programme development, approval, monitoring and review. It also recommends that all approved academic policies and procedures include clearly stated implementation and revision dates. The team concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

**Expectation:    Met**
**Level of risk:   Low**

# The quality of the information about learning opportunities: Summary of findings

3.7      In reaching its judgement, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published Handbook. The Expectation is met with low risk.

3.8      The review team makes one new recommendation for GIHE to ensure that all approved academic policies and procedures include clearly stated implementation and revision dates.

3.9      The review team makes one new affirmation concerning the steps being taken to formalise the documentation for programme development, approval, monitoring and review.

3.10      There are no features of good practice with regard to the quality of information about learning opportunities.

3.11      The review team concludes that the quality of the information about learning opportunities at the provider **meets** UK expectations.

# 4     Judgement: The enhancement of student learning opportunities

**Expectation (Enhancement): Deliberate steps are being taken at provider level to improve the quality of students' learning opportunities.**

## Findings

4.1     The strategic approach of GIHE to institutional effectiveness is articulated in the current global Strategic Plan 2018-22 which includes enhancement of learning opportunities for students as a central planning focus. The overall enhancement agenda is communicated in detail to all staff and guides future developments across the programmes. Programmes continue to be designed to reflect the current requirements of the service industries of tourism, hospitality, events, sport and entertainment, and are informed by external views of the Industry Advisory Board (IAB) and THE-ICE concerning currency and relevance. The strategies and procedures in place would allow the Expectation to be met.

4.2     The review team evaluated the effectiveness of the strategies and procedures by examining the Strategic Plan, information about internships, minutes of relevant committee meetings, the student submission, and student evaluations. The team also met senior, academic and support staff, students and employers.

4.3     The strategies and procedures for enhancement work effectively in practice. The new governance structure and the Strategic Plan facilitate faculty and student engagement to improve the quality of student learning opportunities. Integration of services to students is managed using shared calendars for faculty and student affairs staff, with greater recent emphasis on student welfare issues. This integrated approach to services, managed through the Academic Dean and the Dean of Student Affairs, provides high level student support.

4.4     The creation of a new post to lead initiatives for event and employer engagement provides further support for internships and future career development. Students and employers provide feedback on careers and recruitment days that offer students opportunities to explore a wide range of industrial environments. These findings contribute to the **good practice** in paragraph 2.23 regarding the exceptional internship and networking opportunities available to students (see also paragraph 2.53).

4.5     GIHE maintains strategic alignment across the UK and Swiss campuses, for example, in ensuring the consistency of delivery of the Practical Arts course by the same leading industry professional team (see also paragraph 2.15). These findings contribute to the **good practice** in paragraph 2.15 regarding the significant contribution of the Practical Arts course in preparing for students for internships, further study and professional practice.

4.6     Faculty within their Communities of Practice share their teaching experiences and best practice with colleagues in Switzerland at faculty development days to enhance teaching and learning activities (see also paragraph 2.18). These findings contribute to the **good practice** in paragraph 2.18 regarding the impact of Communities of Practice in enhancing teaching and learning across campuses.

4.7     Student transfer opportunities provide unique access to learning and professional enhancement through the recent cooperation between Glion and Les-Roches brands, with increased locations of study in China and Spain as well as the UK and Switzerland. These transfer opportunities are substantial enhancements for students to achieve wide-ranging career aspirations. GIHE plans to introduce electives in Mandarin and Sign-language, in addition to existing electives in French and Spanish, to further enable

student transfers. The findings in paragraphs 4.3-4.7 contribute to the **good practice** with regard to the strategic and integrated approach to the enhancement of student learning opportunities.

4.8　　　The review team concludes that GIHE is taking deliberate steps to improve the quality of student learning opportunities. Therefore, the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

**Expectation:　Met**
**Level of risk:　Low**

# The enhancement of student learning opportunities: Summary of findings

4.9     In reaching its judgement, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published Handbook. The Expectation is met with a low level of risk.

4.10     The review team makes no recommendations or affirmations in the enhancement of student learning opportunities.

4.11     There is one new feature of good practice which relates to GIHE's strategic and integrated approach to the enhancement of student learning opportunities. The team repeats three features of good practice from Expectations B3 and B4 regarding the Practical Arts course, Communities of Practice, and the internship and networking opportunities.

4.12     The review team concludes that the enhancement of student learning opportunities at the provider is **commended**.

# Glossary

This glossary is a quick-reference guide to terms in this report that may be unfamiliar to some readers.

User-friendly explanations of a wide range of terms can be found in the Glossary on the QAA website: [www.qaa.ac.uk/glossary](www.qaa.ac.uk/glossary).

**Academic standards**
The standards set by **degree-awarding bodies** for their courses (programmes and modules) and expected for their awards. See also **threshold academic standard**.

**Award**
A qualification, or academic credit, conferred in formal recognition that a student has achieved the intended **learning outcomes** and passed the assessments required to meet the academic standards set for a **programme** or unit of study.

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

**Blended learning**
Learning delivered by a number of different methods, usually including face-to-face and e-learning (see **technology enhanced or enabled learning**).

**Credit(s)**
A means of quantifying and recognising learning, used by most institutions that provide higher education **programmes of study**, expressed as numbers of credits at a specific level.

**Degree-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 (in response to applications for taught degree awarding powers, research degree awarding powers or university title).

**Distance learning**
A course of study that does not involve face-to-face contact between students and tutors but instead uses technology such as the internet, intranets, broadcast media, CD-ROM and video, or traditional methods of correspondence - learning 'at a distance'. See also **blended learning**.

**Dual award or double award**
The granting of separate awards (and certificates) for the same **programme** by two **degree-awarding bodies** who have jointly delivered the programme of study leading to them. See also **multiple award**.

**e-learning**
See technology enhanced or enabled learning.

**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 our review processes.

**Expectations**
Statements in the **Quality Code** that set out what all UK higher education providers expect of themselves and each other, and what the general public can therefore expect of them.

**Flexible and distributed learning**
A programme or module that does not require the student to attend classes or events at particular times and locations. See also **distance learning**.

**Framework**
A published formal structure. See also **framework for higher education qualifications**.

**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* (FQHEIS).

**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 audit and review processes.

**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.

**Multiple awards**
An arrangement where three or more **degree-awarding bodies** together provide a single jointly delivered **programme** (or programmes) leading to a separate **award** (and separate certification) of each awarding body. The arrangement is the same as for **dual/double awards**, but with three or more awarding bodies being involved.

**Operational definition**
A formal definition of a term, establishing exactly what QAA means when using it in reviews and reports.

**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.

**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.

**Self-evaluation document**
A report submitted by a higher education provider, assessing its own performance, to be used as evidence in a QAA review.

**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.

**Technology enhanced or enabled learning** (or **e-learning**)
Learning that is delivered or supported through the use of technology.

**Threshold academic standard**
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** and **Subject Benchmark Statements**.

**Virtual learning environment** (VLE)
An intranet or password-only interactive website (also referred to as a platform or user interface) giving access to **learning opportunities** electronically. These might include such resources as course handbooks, information and reading lists; blogs, message boards and forums; recorded lectures; and/or facilities for online seminars (webinars).

**Widening participation**
Increasing the involvement in higher education of people from a wider range of backgrounds.