



## Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of GIHE UK Limited, March 2021

### Outcome of the monitoring visit

1 From the evidence provided in the annual return and at the monitoring visit, the review team concludes that GIHE UK Limited is making commendable progress with continuing to monitor, review and enhance its higher education provision since the [April 2019 Higher Education Review \(Foreign Providers\)](#).

2 As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the monitoring visit of GIHE in 2020-21 review was conducted online and included meetings with the senior management team, teaching staff and students. The scope of the evidence considered, and the nature of the judgements and operational milestones have remained the same but with some adjustments owing to the online format. A risk assessment was carried out prior to the review to identify and mitigate any potential risks.

### Changes since the last QAA review

3 Summary statistics dating from April 2018 to March 2020 indicate that undergraduate student numbers on the Bachelor in Business Administration (BBA) Hospitality Management have fluctuated between 117 and 178. During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic numbers dropped to 89. In response to the pandemic, undergraduates were recruited in both August 2020 and October 2020 and the academic calendar was adapted to accommodate this change. The MSc International Hospitality Business numbers have fluctuated between 49 and 74 and, as of November 2020, the programme has 59 students. The MSc Real Estate, Finance and Hotel Development was approved to start in September 2019 and recruited 14 students in its first year. Between its inception and November 2020, the programme has doubled the number of registered students, which now stands at 29.

4 Two senior lecturers were appointed in 2019 and one further appointed in 2020. All appointments were made as proportional full-time posts. The London campus makes use of a large number of visiting lecturers including consultants from the hospitality industry. GIHE is committed to making better, more timely use of its data and is setting up a data dashboard to support this aim. A new position of Institutional Effectiveness Associate Data Analyst has been created and has been recruited, and is located within the Student Pillar of the organisation. This role will support both GIHE UK and Swiss campuses.

5 The major change since the 2019 QAA Higher Education Review visit has been the impact of COVID-19. Adaptations have been made to classrooms to make them Covid compliant and online learning has been implemented effectively. This implementation has required the purchase of additional technology and the production of e-learning guidelines for staff and students. At the time of review a small number of students were still living at the London campus, although most had returned to their home country and all were studying online.

## Findings from the monitoring visit

6 Since the last QAA review, GIHE has fully implemented the single recommendation and finalised the actions related to the affirmation. Additionally, there is clear evidence that the five areas of good practice have been enhanced and that a number of new initiatives are underway.

7 The good practice related to the significant contribution made by the Practical Arts modules in preparing students for internships, further study and professional practice, has been extended. These modules are included in the first semester of the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) and all students study the first semester on one of the two Swiss campuses. There is flexibility throughout the programme for students to transfer between campuses. The Industry Advisory Board advises on the design and scope of these modules. Students consider these modules provide a valuable introduction to the hospitality industry. They provide a range of challenges for the students and enable them to learn very quickly. Additionally, GIHE has increased the range of modules including the introduction of a number of foreign language modules and a module in geopolitics in semester three.

8 The good practice related to the impact of communities of practice in enhancing teaching and learning across campuses, has been further enhanced. Staff were able to describe the shared creation and updating of virtual learning environment sites, the use of common materials and case studies, and the joint review of modules. Close collaboration at module level has promoted synergy in the student experience and in assessment. The new Advisory Faculty Committee (AFC) has facilitated cross-campus liaison between managers and staff. This new committee represents faculty views and advises management on academic matters. Faculty staff presented examples of topics recently discussed. There are clear terms of reference, constitution and membership for AFC. Staff training has enhanced an understanding of the role of each committee. The chair of each committee has been interviewed in order to explain the purpose of the committee, its membership and the topics generally discussed, and these interviews are available online to staff.

9 The wide range of strategic and operational approaches to supporting students which enables them to develop their academic, personal and professional potential has been further enhanced. In addition to a comprehensive induction and a personal academic support tutorial system, students indicate that they are able to access a number of student services and join sports teams and social activities at the University of Roehampton. There is support with academic writing for students. A number of non-accredited certificates are available for students to study online. Students speak highly of the value of these additional elements.

10 Good practice was identified in the exceptional internship and networking opportunities available to students. GIHE publishes a large number of documents for all students related to internships. Specific procedures apply on the London campus with reference to UK laws. Given the pandemic situation that has disproportionately affected the hospitality industry, continuing to operate the internship has proved difficult. GIHE has been innovative and flexible in adapting the internship to ensure that all students are able to complete their programme within the original timeframe. For some students this has meant 'internship jumping' - the substitution of an internship semester for a taught semester - with students completing their internship at a later date. In place of a long internship, students are able to complete two or three shorter ones. Some students have been able to gain accreditation for prior experiential learning. Given that the students come from a wide geographical area, some of them have been able to base themselves in locations where hotels are still trading.

11 Further work has taken place to enhance the good practice in providing detailed and comprehensive information on assessment. There is both an undergraduate and a postgraduate handbook on assessment and all assessment submission is undertaken through specialist detection software. Students confirm that they find this online check helpful and that support is provided to help them reference correctly which is supported through the internal verification of assessment.

12 The recommendation to ensure that all approved academic policies and procedures include clearly stated implementation and revision dates has been completed. All academic policies and procedures are now located in a secure online repository. Implementation and revision dates, together with date of end of validity and document ownership, are included in each document.

13 Further action has taken place related to the affirmation supporting the steps being taken to formalise the documentation for programme development, approval, monitoring and review. The Academic Quality Framework includes a documentation record which was approved by Academic Board in November 2019. There are three explicit elements to the Academic Quality Framework: governance and autonomy; external quality assurance; and internal quality assurance.

14 Students regularly move between campuses making it problematic to disaggregate retention data. For the BBA Hospitality Management, the year one to year two retention rate has increased to 91%. For the BBA Hospitality Management, year two to year three retention was 93% in 2020. Student retention for the MSc International Hospitality Business programme remained high at 98%. The MSc in Real Estate, Finance and Hotel Development programme, running only on the London campus, has a retention rate of 93% for its first cohort moving between semesters.

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

15 GIHE is accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE), one of seven regional higher education accrediting bodies in the United States. Through its accreditation and evaluation activities NECHE provides public assurance about the educational quality of degree-awarding institutions. The GIHE UK campus was subject to a NECHE accreditation visit in October 2019 with a further visit made to the Swiss campuses. The NECHE report identified a significant number of strengths. A small number of recommendations were made and appropriate action has been taken. Staff report their efforts to recruit more faculty with doctoral qualifications, additional languages are being offered to students and a module in geopolitics has been introduced.

16 GIHE also complies with Swiss National Standards for Higher Education Institutions, incorporating the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. These standards encompass activities including: degree frameworks; quality assurance strategy; governance; teaching, research and services; resources; and external and internal communication.

17 There is no requirement under the American accreditation system to appoint external examiners. However, as GIHE is operating partly in the UK, it has appointed an external examiner to provide impartial and independent assessment of the academic standards and integrity of assessment. External examiner visits occur twice annually, with on campus meetings and a report produced following the final visit. In the most recent report, the external examiner commented positively on the transition to online study including both live and recorded lectures, and on the effectiveness of assessment and feedback to students.

18 Modules are designed to map against QAA Subject Benchmark Statements for Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure. This is evidenced in the undergraduate Hospitality Events Operations module and the postgraduate modules Managing Hospitality and Luxury Operations.

## **Background to the monitoring visit**

19 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.

20 The monitoring visit was carried out by Dr Jenny Gilbert, Reviewer, and Simon Ives, QAA Officer, on 30 March 2021.

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