Educational Oversight - Exceptional Arrangements

International College Dundee

Review Report

March 2024

Contents

About this report

This is a report of a review under the Educational Oversight - Exceptional Arrangements method conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at International College Dundee. The review took place on 8 February 2024 and was conducted by a review team, as follows:

- Dr Richard Harrison, Reviewer
- Professor Victoria O'Donnell, Reviewer
- Mr Abiodun Olatokun, Student Reviewer.

The main purpose of the review was to:

- make judgements about the provider's management of its responsibilities for academic standards, as set out in its contractual arrangements with its academic partner

- make judgements on the provider's management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities

- report on any features of good practice

- make recommendations for action.

A summary of the key findings can be found in the section starting on page 2. The context in which these findings should be interpreted is explained on page 4. Explanations of the findings are given in numbered paragraphs in the section starting on page 5.

The QAA website gives more information [about QAA](#) and its mission.[1] More information about this review method can be found in the [Handbook for Providers](#).[2]

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[1] www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us
[2] www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/guidance/eo-ea-handbook-for-providers.pdf

Key findings

The QAA team considered evidence relating to the educational provision at International College Dundee (the College), both information supplied in advance and evidence gathered during the review visit. The review has resulted in the key findings stated in this section.

Judgements

The QAA team formed the following judgement about International College Dundee.

Confidence can be placed in **International College Dundee's** management of its responsibilities for academic standards, as set out in its contractual arrangements with its academic partner.

Confidence can be placed in **International College Dundee's** management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities.

Good practice

The QAA team identified the following features of **good practice** at International College Dundee:

- the collegiate and collaborative approach of staff from the College and the University in working together to support the College's strategic mission and goals, to develop policy and practice, and to operationalise a shared vision for the support of international pathway students' journeys (paragraph 1.2)

- the College ethos that empowers students to approach staff at all levels of seniority to resolve academic or pastoral problems. Both staff and students feel a strong sense of belonging to the College which contributes to enhancement efforts as well as student support (paragraph 2.34).

Recommendations

The QAA team makes the following **recommendations** to International College Dundee.

It is **essential** for the provider to:

By June 2024

- clarify with the University of Dundee, the purpose and reporting functions of the Programme Quality Enhancement Report and the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Report. The College should ensure which of these is to be completed annually by the College Director, that the correct templates are used going forward, and reflect on how the templates allow for College-level interrogation and enhancement of learning, teaching, and assessment matters (paragraph 1.7).

By August 2024

- develop effective mechanisms to ensure that feedback, from external examiners to students, and from students themselves, is explicitly and consistently closed (paragraph 2.21).

It is **desirable** for the provider to:

By September 2024

- continue to reflect, with students, and based on current and progressed student voice and educational experience, on the balance between in-person and online classes and revise this balance where appropriate (paragraph 2.22)

- continue to examine ways in which resources from the University, such as access to lectures, can be incorporated into the academic experience of all College students, to ensure parity among students across the College (paragraph 2.44).

About International College Dundee

International College Dundee (ICD) is an embedded college offering integrated programmes under the University of Dundee's (UoD) student sponsor's licence with the UKVI. ICD was established by a Collaboration Agreement and is operated in partnership between Oxford International Education Group (OIEG) and the University of Dundee (UoD).

Since 2020 OIEG has re-focused its activities on its embedded colleges in the UK (such as ICD), Europe and the USA, the London Centre (OILC) for delivery of pathway programmes, the Digital Institute (OIDI) and its language school operations based in the UK in Greenwich, Oxford and Brighton, but also in the USA and Canada. As an embedded college offering integrated programmes and based on the University campus, the programmes available at ICD constitute the first stage of a degree programme and are aimed at international students who fall marginally short - academically and/or linguistically - of the requirements of UoD for direct entry.

Students study for an International Stage 1 or 2 (IS1) in Art & Design, Business, Engineering, Law, Psychology and Social Studies, Life Sciences, Computing or Nursing or an International Stage 2 (IS2) in Business, Mechanical Engineering or Computing. There are also accelerated IS1s in Business, Computing and Nursing for those with higher English levels. The International Incorporated Master's (IIM) is offered in Business, Energy & Sustainability, Engineering, Design, Health, Education & Social Sciences. Students who successfully complete their IS1, IS2 or IIM continue onto the degree for which they received the Unconditional Offer and Confirmation of Acceptance for Study (CAS) from the University and were matriculated on arrival. ICD programmes, in the main, are designed for articulation into a wide range of continuation degrees at the University.

Student numbers have increased since 2017 when there was an enrolment of 41. In 2018-19 this increased to 64, with 167 the following year, 139 in 2020-21, 152 in 2021-22, and a significant increase to 318 in 2022-23, with 70 enrolments at the time of the report submission in the academic year 2023-24. There are approximately 24 staff.

Since the last QAA EOEA review of 2019, the University Link Co-ordinator Role has been split into that of an Academic Lead (AL) and ICD Project Officer who are the University's principal day-to-day point of contact for the College Director. ICD now has a senior leadership team (SLT) consisting of the College Director, the Academic Director (interim), the Head of Business, the Head of Maths and Data Analysis, the Head of English and Digital Education and the College Manager. The Student Experience Team comprises a Student Coordinator and a Student Support Officer, and there is an additional Student Experience Officer within the College who is employed by Oxford International Central and primarily looks after pre-arrival but also supports students once they arrive. Growth and diversity at ICD have increased significantly over the last six years, and the administration of the timetable is now a joint responsibility with the University's central timetabling.

There have been no recent reviews of the provision by any other agency since the QAA EOEA review of 2019.

Detailed findings about International College Dundee

Academic standards

How effectively does the provider fulfil its responsibilities for the management of academic standards?

1.1   The Responsibilities Checklist confirms the responsibilities of the International College Dundee (ICD), the University of Dundee (UoD) as the awarding body, and those responsibilities jointly shared. ICD has sole responsibility for: setting assessments; first marking of student work; second marking or moderation of student work; and giving students written feedback on their work. ICD shares responsibilities with the awarding body for: programme development and approval; modifications to programmes; selection or approval of teaching staff; learning resources; student engagement; responding to external examiner reports; annual monitoring; periodic review; student complaints; student appeals; production of definitive programme documentation; and enhancement. The only responsibility that is fully allocated to the awarding body is student admissions.

1.2   The team met with staff from the provider and from the awarding body and heard that there is strong collaboration and dialogue on student numbers, resourcing programme development, and student support. Where responsibility lies solely with the awarding body, such as student admissions, there is still a significant element of partnership working (para 2.12) and strong sense of dialogue and collaboration through the annual review of admissions criteria. The team considers the collegiate and collaborative approach of staff from the College and the University in working together to support the College's strategic mission and goals, to develop policy and practice, and to operationalise a shared vision for the support of international pathway students' journeys to be **good practice**.

How effectively are external reference points used in the management of academic standards?

1.3   The UOD has a set of curriculum design principles which inform all programme development, including ICD programmes. These principles include the engagement of external stakeholders and sector best practice, and subject benchmarking. ICD programmes are mapped against the *Scottish Credit Qualifications Framework* (SCQF), *The Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland* (FQHEIS), QAA Subject Benchmark Statements, Common European Framework for Reference (CEFR) (for language modules) and International English Language testing system (IELTS) bands 5 and 6. The review team saw templates for undergraduate programme specifications, postgraduate programme specifications and module specifications, some completed module specifications and programme specifications for ICD courses which illustrate alignment with SCQF, FQHEIS, and Subject Benchmark Statements. The team was also provided with rubrics used for the assessment of the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) modules. The self-evaluation document (SED) states that these rubrics are used in the module design process and consider IELTS bands 5 and 6. The mapping against band 6 is clear, but not against band 5. The team was provided with module specifications for the EAP modules in response to the additional evidence request. Teaching staff explained that band 5 is the level of English that students have when they arrive at the College, and while skills and competences for both bands are used when designing programmes, the rubrics for assessments are mapped against band 6 as this represents the aspiration for students. Mapping against the SCQF at level 7 (IS1), 8 (IS2), and 10 (IIM) against programme learning outcomes is evidenced.

How effectively does the provider use external moderation, verification or examining to assure academic standards?

1.4   The UoD has a standardised approach to the development and/or redevelopment of programmes which requires the engagement of external academic and industry experts, as well as professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs) where appropriate. This is supplemented by written guidance and forms specific to the development of ICD programmes. The team saw an example of the guidance and forms in relation to the development of the IS2 Computing programme. At the original approval event for the ICD programmes in 2016, external assessors formed part of the approval team. The Institution of Mechanical Engineers (ImechE) accreditation was sought and obtained in 2022 as part of the consultation for the new IS2 Computing programme.

1.5   The UoD provides guidance for external examiners (EEs) in the assurance of academic standards. The SED states that the ICD Director submits a completed Annual Learning and Teaching Enhancement Report (ALTER) that includes details of EE feedback, confirmation of the receipt of annual EE reports, and reflections on the EE feedback, with plans for actions in response. The team saw one completed example of this report for 2021-22 which included brief reflections on EE feedback. The team was provided with Programme Quality Enhancement Reports (PQER) for 2020-21 for the IIM and for IS1 and IS2. These reports contained more detailed and focused reflection on, and evaluation of, marking and moderation processes and practices, and on specific EE feedback and actions in response to this feedback, than the combined ALTER.

1.6   During the visit the team sought clarification on the difference between the Annual Learning and Teaching Enhancement Report (ALTER) and the Programme Quality Enhancement Report (PQER) to understand how quality and standards are assured and enhanced, who has responsibility for completing internal review processes, and to understand the flow of information on issues identified through internal review processes. Senior staff and staff involved in learning and teaching were unsure of the processes or who was responsible for them. The team was initially advised that only the PQER is completed by the provider and then submitted to the UoD annually. However, the team was subsequently advised that there was an error in the information provided in the SED, and that the correct process is for ICD to complete only the PQER which is then submitted to the relevant school of the University, focusing on ICD programmes. The academic school of the University completes the ALTER, which has a broader school-wide focus.

1.7   This additional explanation did not align with the evidence presented to the team which was provided with an ALTER for 2021-22 completed by the College Director as well as PQERs completed by the College Director. There were differences noted in the level of scrutiny and detail given to marking and moderation issues, and to issues raised by EEs between the ALTER and the PQER, with PQERs giving these issues more attention than the ALTER. It is **recommended** that the College clarify with the University of Dundee, the purpose and reporting functions of the Programme Quality Enhancement Report and the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Report. The College should ensure which of these is to be completed annually by the College Director, that the correct templates are used going forward, and reflect on how the templates allow for College-level interrogation and enhancement of learning, teaching, and assessment matters.

1.8   The team was provided with examples of three completed EE reports that contain a section for completion and sign off by the Director of Quality and Academic Standards. These sections had not been completed for any of the examples provided. Issues raised in these reports are combined with an ICD EE Action Plan.

1.9   The team reviewed the ICD EE Action Plan 2021-22 which the SED states is considered at the ICD Learning and Teaching Committee and at the Joint Academic Board (JAB). It is not clear where the detail of the response and actions taken are recorded and how these are monitored. For example, the specific details of the EE feedback and responses from the Action Plan 2021-22 are not reflected in the ALTER 2021-22. Senior staff explained to the team that detailed discussions with all those involved in EE feedback take place and that EEs comment in their annual reports on actions taken to address issues they raised in the previous year. The team was advised that the ICD Learning and Teaching Committee track detailed responses and actions taken in response to issues raised by EEs, and that the College Director is responsible for assigning actions to appropriate individuals.

1.10   The SED indicates that at individual module level the responsibility for the annual review and enhancement of individual modules has been devolved to teaching staff. The team saw a blank template for the Annual Module Review and two completed examples for ICD modules. However, these did not include EE feedback. The SED states and senior staff confirmed that EE reports are discussed at the Staff-Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) meetings. The minutes provided from one SSLC meeting did not show that EE reports were discussed. Students reported that the existence of EE reports had been mentioned in SSLC meetings, but that none of those present had been involved in discussions of EE feedback during SSLC meetings (paragraph 2.21).

1.11   There is effective implementation of the Internal Moderation Policy with issues identified and enhancement actions taken. The ALTER from 2021-22 does not confirm details of the effectiveness of moderation in the same way. Understanding the difference between these documents, and where responsibility lies for the confirmation of the implementation of internal moderation, is important as discussed in paragraphs 1.4-1.6. The Internal Moderation Policy states that details of moderation and issues arising may be included in module-level reviews. Moderation was not referenced in either of the two Annual Module Reviews or the Link Tutor Report to JAB seen by the team. A Learning and Teaching Action Plan is developed and updated annually, pulling together issues from a range of sources, synthesising reflective processes undertaken at module and programme levels. The current Learning and Teaching Action Plan does not contain any references to moderation. Senior staff confirmed that a spreadsheet tracking all aspects of marking and moderation, detailing when it is completed, by whom, and any issues arising, is maintained within the College. This assessment spreadsheet was shared with the team during the visit and provides evidence of effective implementation of the University's moderation policy.

The review team concludes that **confidence** can be placed in **International College Dundee's** management of its responsibilities for academic standards, as set out in its contractual arrangements with its academic partner.

Quality of learning opportunities

How effectively does the provider fulfil its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities?

2.1 Responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities are shared between the College and the University of Dundee, with the respective responsibilities clearly set out in the collaborative agreement under which the partnership operates.

2.2 A Steering Group serves as the governing body for the partnership and a Joint Academic Board (JAB) has responsibility for monitoring academic quality and standards. There is also an ICD Learning and Teaching Committee that serves to link the teaching community in the College to the University in respect of learning, teaching and quality issues. Once approved within the College, quality assurance issues such as the approval of module and programme changes are taken forward for approval through the Quality Assurance, Learning and Teaching Committee of the University's School of Business. Examples of minutes of relevant meetings indicate that these bodies are operating effectively.

2.3 Until 2022 Oxford International also operated its own Quality Committee for Embedded Colleges to consider learning, teaching and quality issues across all of its pathway providers. This has now been replaced by an Academic Board that performs a similar function, and the team saw evidence that this was operating effectively and of ICD's engagement with this board.

2.4 Day-to-day responsibility for the management of the College sits with the Director, who provides regular reports to the JAB and the Steering Group. As student numbers have increased, the College has enlarged its senior management team to create a Senior Leadership Team, including several posts with overarching areas of responsibility beneath which are a number of subject leads covering the key subject areas offered by the College. The College Director report, and discussions with staff at multiple levels, confirmed that mechanisms are in place to ensure that sufficient staff resource is put in place in response to increases in student numbers, and that there is effective liaison across the different levels of leadership and management.

2.5 The University has appointed an ICD Academic Lead and ICD Project Officer to act as key points of contact and coordinators between the University and the College. They meet weekly to ensure effective liaison between the two partners. Meetings with representatives of the College and University confirmed that these liaison mechanisms work effectively.

2.6 There is a Link Tutor Framework linking the College to the University departments/school to which the College's successful students progress. Link tutors are all members of the JAB, and over recent years the link tutor system has been strengthened by instituting monthly meetings between the link tutors, the College Director and ICD Academic Lead. The link tutors met by the review team clearly understood their role and described how it operated in practice. Examples of annual link tutor reports detailed appropriate discussion of relevant issues such as student progression and achievement and allowed link tutors to highlight items for discussion and action.

2.7 The partnership operates within the University's quality framework, and a University Periodic Programme Review of the College in November 2023 identified ICD's alignment to University policies and processes as being a feature of good practice.

2.8 The structure and approach to managing academic quality is clear and appropriate, and the evidence considered by the review team demonstrated that this is operating effectively.

How effectively are external reference points used in the management and enhancement of learning opportunities?

2.9 The development of new College programmes is carried out in accordance with the University's Curriculum Design Principles and progressed through the University's standard approval processes. The Curriculum Design Principles require the use of key external reference points such as the SCQF, the UK Quality Code, Subject Benchmark Statements and, where relevant, the requirements of PSRBs. Additionally, the College makes use of relevant external reference points for English language provision, such as the Common European Framework for Reference (CEFR) and IELTS. Programme approval documentation and minutes of approval events confirmed that the College's programmes met the requirements to demonstrate alignment to these reference points, and that the College has mapped its programme learning outcomes against the descriptors in the SCQF.

2.10 Revisions to programmes also follow the University's standard approval processes. Discussions between the College and the departments/schools to which the College's students progress, together with the outcomes of module and programme monitoring review, form part of the revision process. Changes are initially approved by the Quality Assurance, Learning and Teaching Committee of the University's School of Business and ultimately the University Quality Assurance and Standards Committee.

2.11 Responsibility for recruitment rests with the College and Oxford International, which operates in line with the relevant elements of the UK Quality Code and takes account of the requirements of consumer protection law. Information for applicants is provided through a range of channels and media, including College webpages on the University website, and there is regular contact between the responsible colleagues in Oxford International and the University's marketing and global relations teams. The students met by the review team felt that they had received appropriate information as part of their application process.

2.12 Overall responsibility for admissions sits with the University, though in practice the activity is shared between the College, supported by central teams from the Oxford International Group, and the University. Admissions criteria are agreed between the University and the College, following which operational recruitment and admissions is managed by Oxford International's central admissions team to the point of an offer being made to applicants. Admissions paperwork is passed to the University, whose admissions office makes offers and is responsible for issuing Confirmation of Acceptance for Study (CAS) letters. This reflects approaches and processes as set out in the respective admissions policies of OEIG, and the University of Dundee. These are consistent with the allocation of responsibilities set out in the collaboration agreement, and the review team's discussion with senior staff from the College and the University demonstrated a clear understanding of respective roles and responsibilities.

2.13 Once admitted, all College students are registered as full students at the University. As such, students are subject, and have access, to the University's complaints and appeals processes including support in such matters from the Students' Union. Information on these processes is made available to students through their programme handbooks, and the students the review team met had a clear understanding of how to raise questions or concerns with the College.

How effectively does the provider assure itself that the quality of teaching and learning is being maintained and enhanced?

2.14 Oxford International Group employ the College's teaching staff, but all appointments of such staff must be approved by the University's Academic Lead. Once appointed, teaching staff have the status of associate staff of the University. The team saw documentation demonstrating the operation of this procedure. Senior staff of the University confirmed that they reviewed information on each member of staff before coming to a decision on whether to appoint them to teach on the College's programmes.

2.15 The College seeks to appoint staff with recognised teaching qualifications, but balances this with the need to recruit staff with the relevant discipline knowledge and experience. It ensures that all teaching staff have a qualification at least one level above the level at which they will teach. Staff without teaching qualifications are expected to undertake the University's Learning to Teach in Higher Education course (paragraph 2.25). Teaching staff described effective induction for new staff, and the value of the initial and continuing professional development (CPD) available to them in respect of learning and teaching. The support for staff development was identified in the recent periodic review as a feature of good practice.

2.16 Within the first month of their employment, new staff have their teaching observed by a senior member of the College, and the College operates an annual peer review process for all teaching staff. Clear and appropriate processes are in place and staff confirmed that this was operating effectively. The operation of peer observation was highlighted as a feature of good practice in the periodic review of the College conducted by the University in November 2023.

2.17 All modules and programmes are subject to annual monitoring and review, incorporating a range of data including student feedback gained through questionnaires, the Staff-Student Liaison Committee and more informally through the feedback that tutors receive directly from students on their modules. This results in an Annual Module Quality Enhancement Report for each module that feeds into an Annual Programme Quality Enhancement Report for each programme and ultimately an Annual School Learning and Teaching Enhancement Report that covers all College provision.

2.18 The team considered examples of annual module reports from 2022-23. There were minor inconsistencies, but overall their coverage was appropriate, and they demonstrated reflection on the modules and action planning for the future based on this reflection. The two programme-level reports from 2020-21 considered by the team were more consistent in covering all of the required areas, and again there was evidence of appropriate reflection and action planning. This was also true of the College-wide Annual School Learning and Teaching Enhancement Report for 2021-22 provided to the team. There was, however, some lack of clarity on the alignment of the different levels/types of report, which is addressed earlier in this review report (paragraphs 1.4-1.6).

2.19 The College's provision is also subject to the University's periodic review process, most recently in November 2023. The evidence seen by the team demonstrated that this was a thorough and effective process, and that the College's provision was found by this periodic review to be meeting the University's expectations in respect of academic quality and standards.

2.20 Maintenance and enhancement of the quality of provision is informed by the student voice through a range of mechanisms, including student surveys and the operation of a Staff-Student Liaison Committee (SSLC). The team saw collations of module questionnaire

feedback that demonstrated the operation of this aspect of student voice, and that this feedback was considered as part of the annual module review process. The module evaluation data is summarised, alongside issues arising from the SSLC, to create an action plan that is considered in September by the College Learning and Teaching Committee.

2.21 The review team noted that response rates for surveys were somewhat variable. This was acknowledged by staff, but students were clear about the opportunities they had to provide feedback and staff gave several examples of the ways in which they had taken action to revise provision in consideration of feedback received from students. Staff were positive about the College's 'You Said, We Did' approach to student feedback, but students were less clear about how they found out what action was taken in response to their feedback. The review team was also informed by students that while they were informed about reports from external examiners, they did not receive the reports themselves, and the SSLC minutes considered by the team did not demonstrate students receiving these reports. Consequently, the review team **recommends** that the College develop effective mechanisms to ensure that feedback from external examiners to students, and from students themselves, is explicitly considered and consistently closed.

2.22 Both the meeting with students and the documentary evidence reviewed by the team, such as student evaluations of teaching, module reports, and programme reports demonstrated that students found the teaching they experienced to be of good quality and staff to be approachable and supportive (paragraph 2.34). Students also informed the review team of their feedback concerns about the balance between in-person and online teaching in some classes. They felt that their requests to move some online classes to in-person delivery had not been addressed and therefore had not led to changes to the mode of delivery. Discussions with senior staff, and scrutiny of a range of documentation, demonstrated that the issue of the balance between in-person and online classes had been given careful consideration on the basis of educational and pedagogical issues, and student feedback. Decisions had not been driven by operational factors, and the issues remained under review. While acknowledging the College response to these issues, the review team **recommends** that the College continue to reflect, with students, and based on current and progressed student voice and educational experience, on the balance between in-person and online classes and revise this balance, where appropriate, based on this reflection.

2.23 The SSLC is chaired by a former College student who has progressed to their full degree programme at UoD. The sample set of SSLC minutes reviewed by the team demonstrated good attendance from student representatives; that a wide range of issues and comments were raised by students; and that considered responses to these were provided.

How effective are the provider's arrangements for staff development in relation to maintaining and/or enhancing the quality of learning opportunities?

2.24 College-specific CPD is available to ICD staff, as well as the 'Professional Learning Framework Fellowship Programme', which is an experiential route to fellowship of AdvanceHE, the 'PGCAPHE', and general University of Dundee CPD. An indicative list of the topics covered by the ICD CPD programme is provided within the SED. ICD staff have access to the University's annual programme of generic and academic staff development, through the Organisational and Professional Development unit. Staff may also apply for staff development funding through a formal application process.

2.25 Newly appointed staff without a teaching qualification are required to undertake the University of Dundee's internal course, 'Learning to Teach in HE' (paragraph 2.15). This 9-week non-accredited course is designed for research postgraduates who are new to

teaching. It is not clear if the possession of any teaching qualification means that a new member of staff is not required to take this course, or whether the possession of a higher education teaching qualification specifically is required. The College provided a spreadsheet to the team during the visit detailing ICD staff qualifications and experience. Not all staff appear to have either a teaching qualification or to have completed the internal Learning to Teach course. The team was advised by senior staff that while it is desirable for all staff to have a higher education teaching qualification it is not always possible due to staff shortages in certain areas, and that there is a need to ensure that ICD teaching staff have the right balance of qualifications, expertise with pathway students, and the motivation and enthusiasm to work with international students.

2.26 Senior staff confirmed that all ICD teaching staff appointments must be approved by the University, and the team heard that focused conversations had taken place if the University or ICD were unsure about an applicant's qualifications. The team heard that all teaching staff present at the meeting had undertaken the LTHE course, and met with staff who had completed, or were currently enrolled on the PGCAP. It was stated that new staff would join the course in early October 2023 and January 2024. All staff spoke positively about their experiences of engaging with these formal opportunities to develop their learning and teaching, as well as the opportunities it provides to meet with higher education professionals from other disciplines and parts of the University, which supports the sharing of good practice with others.

2.27 The team met with staff who had been through an induction process at ICD and heard that this consisted of formal introductions through Human Resources to key processes and systems, policies, and procedures. Following this induction, new staff engage in an ongoing process of induction with their line manager who provides individual support and subject-specific guidance. All new staff have a two-week review, and then a four-week review, and thereafter weekly meetings with line managers continue on an ongoing basis.

2.28 All new staff are observed teaching during their first month of employment carried out by the College Director or Subject Lead. An example of a completed template Tutor Observation was provided to the team that showed evidence of a formative and developmental approach to the support of teaching staff. Thereafter, teaching staff participate in the University's mandatory annual review of teaching practice. Two completed peer observation forms were provided but were less effective as tools to support development. Only one of them provided suggestions or formative feedback to the teacher to enhance their practice. Completed observation forms are kept in a secure Teams site. Teaching staff confirmed that formal observations are carried out for new staff, and that the peer observation process for all staff is perceived as mandatory, useful, and serving a developmental purpose. They also confirmed that where a developmental need is identified through observation or other review processes CPD sessions or workshops are made available and are welcomed by staff.

2.29 ICD staff engage in an annual performance review process called a 'Role Review'. Staff confirmed that role reviews primarily serve to support individual career progression and development, but that individual goals are also aligned with more strategic goals for the College, thus supporting improvements to learning and teaching.

2.30 Within the annual Programme Quality Enhancement Reports for 2020-21 consistency in marking was highlighted as an issue. The College responded in 2021-22 by providing workshops focused on good practice in assessment and feedback, and established Assessment Mentors to support staff. ICD staff have developed expertise in generative AI, and have developed and delivered CPD in this area, as well as contributing to sector-wide development opportunities through AdvanceHE. The team heard from staff who confirmed

that they are proud of the work they have produced on generative AI, and highlighted CPD they have developed to support students with special needs and disability.

How effectively does the provider assure itself that students are appropriately and effectively supported?

2.31   Before a Confirmation of Acceptance for Study (CAS) letter is issued, prospective students are supported by OIEG's Conversion team and Pre-Arrival team. The Pre-Arrivals team supports students with their ICD registration and arrival, assists students with accommodation booking, airport transfers, with university accommodation where there is a need, and ensures that they have early engagement with ICD staff prior to arrival. There is a Student Experience Officer within ICD who is employed by OIEG, supporting students before they commence their studies at ICD and afterwards, so that students already know someone within ICD when they arrive.

2.32   Students receive a comprehensive Programme Handbook and an induction to support them upon arrival at ICD that introduces them to the College, the University and the city of Dundee. They are also supported through an academic induction to introduce them to software, learning materials, and to their classes. They are provided with a termly assessment calendar so that they are clear about the expectations of them across the year and can plan accordingly. Students are then surveyed to obtain their feedback on the pre-arrival and induction process and information provided. All ICD students are allocated an Advisor of Studies. The pre-arrival information is reviewed annually by the ICD Manager based on the experience of the previous year and feedback from students.

2.33   As discussed in paragraphs 2.17, 2.20 and 2.21, ICD uses a variety of mechanisms to obtain feedback from students across their journey and this was confirmed by the students who met with the team. Students noted that while they provide this regular feedback to individual lecturers as well as to the College more formally, they do not always know how their feedback has been acted on, or what actions have been taken by individual teaching staff or by more senior staff to address issues raised (paragraph 2.21).

2.34   ICD programmes are subject to periodic review, an internal reflective peer review process which identifies areas of good practice, areas for development where appropriate, and makes suggestions for improvements. In the periodic review conducted in 2023, embedded academic skills and positive feedback from students were identified as areas of good practice, allowing the provider to assure itself of the appropriate and effective support it provides for students. Students who met with the team confirmed that they are able to approach staff at all levels of seniority to resolve academic or pastoral problems. Both staff and students feel a strong sense of belonging to the College which contributes to enhancement efforts as well as student support. This is identified as **good practice**.

2.35   To support the transition of students from ICD to UoD, the University allocates link tutors from each academic school who act as the primary academic liaison between the school and ICD, monitoring progress by ICD students who transition to the University (paragraph 2.6). They provide reports to JAB so that issues relating to the effective support of students and their transition are addressed at the operational level and the strategic level. Link tutors meet with and monitor the progress of all students who progress to their school and the Link Tutor Framework states that they will address any concerns through early interventions. During the review visit the team heard from link tutors directly about the actions they take to proactively support students progressing from ICD to their schools, such as feeding back on individual student progress to relevant colleagues.

2.36   The team met with current ICD students and ICD alumni and heard that some would like (or would have liked) more contact with the University departments to which they

intended to transition during their time at ICD (paragraph 2.44). Other students were satisfied with the contact and support from the University departments that they received while at ICD.

2.37 ICD together with UoD run a series of webinars to support students transitioning to the University. Once students have progressed to UoD, ICD obtains feedback from them through an annual student survey. Modules are reviewed and evaluated internally on an annual basis and areas for enhancement or development are identified. This includes the review of student performance, student satisfaction, and external examiner feedback on the modules. Programmes are reviewed annually through internal processes. The team heard several specific examples of this from link tutors where changes had been made to Maths content in ICD modules to better prepare students transitioning to Business, and where changes to assessments in ICD modules had been made to better prepare students for examinations at the University.

2.38 ICD's academic staff base has grown and now comprises an academic senior leadership team with oversight of a few subject leads as well as teachers (permanent and sessional). There are Academic & Quality Support Officers, and the College Manager oversees a Student Experience team which comprises a Student Coordinator and a Student Support Officer.

2.39 The Learning, Teaching, and Assessment Strategy is written into module specifications and recognises the specific support needs of International Pathway students. In recognition of these needs, ICD considers experience with international students to be highly desirable in the academic staff it recruits. Class sizes are capped at 20 students. Student progress is monitored regularly, with staff completing academic progress monitoring reports for each student throughout the year, within which each student's progress is RAG rated, allowing for early identification of those who may be struggling, and triggering early interventions as necessary. Senior academic staff meet three times per term to discuss any concerns that arise from these. An example of an extract from a meeting considering these reports was provided to the team.

2.40 ICD students have access to the UoD Disability Services who provide support in the form of assistive technology, sign language interpretation or other specialist help as required. ICD make reasonable adjustments for disabled students as appropriate. This example and explanations provided in meetings with senior and teaching staff provided the review team with assurance that students with specific learning needs can be supported appropriately.

2.41 ICD has engaged with the TESTA process (an internal enhancement-led process to collect data) to critically self-reflect on the support provided to students for assessment. ICD staff typically provide feedback to students on written work within two weeks of submission.

2.42 Some students are under the age of 18 and there is a safeguarding and Child Protection Policy to ensure arrangements for their wellbeing. It was explained that all staff receive safeguarding training during their induction, and that a senior member of staff is responsible for ensuring the welfare of those under 18. The College explained that any safeguarding concerns regarding under-18s are usually addressed within the working day. Staff must also undergo the UoD Equality and Diversity training. These policies and training in combination with the College's inclusive curriculum illustrate an approach that can help the College to meet the needs of a diverse student body.

2.43 ICD provides scholarships to high-performing international students. This includes a partial tuition fee waiver for UoD programmes. It was suggested that this is an incentive to 'get students to aim higher' and the team agrees that this supports the ambitions of students to progress.

How effectively does the provider ensure that learning resources are accessible and sufficient to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes?

2.44 ICD students have access to the same learning resources as all other fully matriculated UoD students. This includes the physical environment, with UoD classrooms used by ICD students, and scheduled through central timetabling. The College has taken steps to connect the experiences of ICD students to their future study through 'next-level visit days' and 'sampling' of UoD classes. This is an area of growth for the College. A student representative met by the team suggested that arts students specifically would like more time in the studios at the University. Students on Politics programmes stated that they appreciated the integrated UoD opportunities because they provided a sense of what to expect at the next stage of their studies. The team heard from former ICD students that the style of teaching and learning within ICD classes is very different to that of the University, as are the size of classes within ICD, and that this had come as a surprise to them following their transition to the University. They indicated that it would have been useful for them to have had more access to university classes during their time at ICD so that they could experience the type of teaching and the large-size classes that they will encounter once they transition. The team **recommends** that the College continues to examine ways in which resources from the University, such as access to lectures, can be incorporated into the academic experience of all College students, to ensure parity among students across the College.

2.45 The College has strategic plans for further integration of UoD opportunities into its Periodic Programme Review School Action Plan, and notes that the ICD College Director has been assigned a role in ensuring its implementation across all schools by August 2024. Staff outlined several creative ideas for implementing these plans across a range of disciplines and these will be evaluated in the future.

2.46 ICD students have access to the UoD VLE (BlackBoard) as the single portal through which they can access learning materials, the UoD Library with the same borrowing rights as other students, and have access to UoD IT. ICD module leaders update their reading lists through reading list management software within the VLE so that resources can be provided by the Library. A member of Library staff sits on the ICD Staff-Student Liaison Committee.

2.47 The UoD sets out its key principles for curriculum design. One of the hallmarks of UoD provision according to these principles is an inclusive curriculum that should be relevant and accessible to all. Design for inclusivity is one of the key programme design principles set out in this document. ICD applies an inclusive curriculum checklist during programme development, approval, and review processes, which encourages academic staff to reflect on and ensure that learning materials embrace cultural diversity and encourage the exchange of knowledge through inclusive examples and language.

2.48 Programme specification documents are produced as part of the development of provision. Templates for both UG and PG programme specifications require programme teams to consider the inclusive nature of the curriculum and its delivery and learning resources. Module specification documents are produced as part of the development of provision. The template for module specifications requires module teams to consider the inclusive nature of the curriculum and its delivery and learning and assessment resources. Such documents provide evidence that the provider ensures the accessibility of resources from an inclusivity perspective.

The review team concludes that **confidence** can be placed in **International College Dundee's** management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities.