



Educational Oversight-Exceptional Arrangements: report of the desk-based analysis of International College Dundee, June 2020

Outcome of the desk-based analysis

1 From the evidence provided in the annual return and documentary evidence, the review team concludes that International College Dundee (the College) is making acceptable progress with continuing to monitor, review and enhance its higher education provision since the June 2019 [Review for Educational Oversight-Exceptional Arrangements](#).

Changes since the last QAA review

2 The College was established in 2016 through a collaborative agreement between the Oxford International Education Group (OIEG) and the University of Dundee. The College continues to work with the University of Dundee to validate all its programmes. The College operates a system where students can enrol not only in September, but also in January; and for the Master's programme, in March and June as well; so student numbers can fluctuate significantly during the year. There are currently 53 students enrolled on the International Incorporated Bachelor's programme, which represents an increase of 21 students compared to the previous academic year. The International Incorporated Master's has 47 students enrolled - a reduction of 15 compared to 2018-19. Overall, enrolments have increased from 64 in 2018-19, to 155 in 2019-20. During their programme, students are supported to develop their English skills, in particular their ability to read and write academic texts. They undertake units of study comparable with those taken by the Foundation year students at the University, and are then able to join the university students in the second year to complete their degree programme

3 The college employs 21 sessional staff, of whom 10 have commenced since September 2019; six of the new staff were employed to deliver specialist modules in the two new IS1 pathways - Nursing and Computing. There are three full-time members of the academic and senior management teams, one substantive full-time, and one 75% part-time member of academic staff. The Acting College Director, at the time of the full review in June 2019, has since been appointed College Director.

Findings from the desk-based analysis

4 The outcome of this desk-based review was reached after reviewing the Annual Monitoring Return and the accompanying evidence and, due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, holding an online meeting with the College Director and members of the college staff. The review in June 2019 identified two areas of good practice which the College has continued to develop (paragraphs 5 and 6). The review also identified two recommendations - one advisable and one desirable - both of which have been addressed (paragraph 7). The College works closely with the University of Dundee to enhance the student experience and maintain standards and consistency in parallel programmes, enabling their students to move seamlessly into the rest of their degree programmes (paragraphs 5 and 6).

5 The review in June 2019 identified as good practice, that students' access to university learning resources, including specialist facilities, supports student learning. The College has built on this by ensuring that the induction sessions for students starting in January included link tutors, the Dundee University Student Association, student services and college alumni providing students with identified resources for any queries. Reading lists, materials and other resources are available on the virtual learning environment (VLE). Staff training has been undertaken to ensure that the university policy on reading and resource lists is fully understood and implemented. Students on the art and design programmes are now able to participate in the weekly lecture series with the comparable university cohort. Peer-assisted learning has been introduced, initially with computing students, who are also benefitting from access to specialised resources through the work of their link tutor.

6 Good practice was also identified in the College's tracking of student progress - the College has developed this in conjunction with their link tutors who now have a more active role in monitoring progress. The monitoring of students who have progressed to their university programme has provided feedback on modules, particularly for computing students. The College has responded by revising some of the computing modules and developing peer mentoring for computing students.

7 The recommendations received by the College were to ensure that external examiners have oversight of course work assignments and examination questions, and that the Staff Student Liaison Committee is able to consider the external examiner reports. A process for implementing the oversight of assessments was agreed with the examiners at the Exam Board in September 2019. Assessment materials are uploaded to an external shared folder where they can be accessed by the external examiners who then complete a form detailing their comments on the assessment materials. Changes to assessment plans were made as a result of the COVID-19 regulations; these were presented to the Senior External Examiner and the University for agreement prior to implementation. External examiner reports are made available to staff and students and form an agenda item at the Staff Student Liaison Committee.

8 International Stage 1 (IS1) students may enrol either in September or January but they all undertake 33 weeks of study. International Incorporated Master's (IIM) students can follow either a one-term or two-term programme; one-term enrolments take place in September and June, and two-term students in January, March and June. Enrolled student numbers fluctuate during the year.

9 Student numbers have increased annually - IS1 increasing from a total of 27 students in 2017-18 and 32 in 2018-19, to 55 in the current cohort. Retention in the September enrolments was 100% in both 2017-18 and 2018-19; but January enrolments fell to 89% and 91%, respectively. Retention and success rates have been consistent. Except for two January students in 2018-19, all students successfully completed their programmes. Of these two students - one deferred their programme and the other was unsuccessful.

10 The two-term IIM programme has also seen an increase in recruitment with total enrolments of 14 in 2017-18, 32 in 2018-19 and 48 in 2019-20. In September 2019, an additional one-term programme was introduced; this recruited 52 students. Enrolment data for 2019-20 indicates that in term one, there were 82 students; in January, after the completion of the one-term IIM and the enrolment to IS1 and the two-term IIM, there were 91 students. After the March enrolments and allowing for some withdrawals, the College reported 100 students on roll. At the time of the virtual meeting on 17 June 2020, the College confirmed their current enrolment at 97. Two students had been withdrawn as a result of

non-engagement with their programmes and one student had withdrawn owing to health problems.

11 The college has reacted to the COVID-19 lockdown by moving all delivery to online; a three-hour period each morning has been used to deliver live classroom sessions. The VLE has been rapidly developed to become a dynamic living environment. Approximately 40% of the students have remained in the UK, some in Dundee, but others staying with family throughout the UK. A virtual reception has been established to provide pastoral support to the students. The use of online analytics has enabled the College to closely monitor engagement with study instead of attendance.

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

12 The requirements of the *Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework*, AQA subject descriptors, the *Common European Framework of Reference*, QAA Subject Benchmarks and the International English Language Testing System are used to inform the development and management of all programmes at the College; this is reflected in the programme and module documentation. All programmes are subject to validation by the University of Dundee. In April 2019, the College took part in the Interim Periodic Programme Review by the University of Dundee which resulted in a report and subsequent action plan.

13 The College has worked closely with the Quality Code for Higher Education and, in preparation for the introduction of the Revised Quality Code for the UK, the OEIG produced a mapping document for all its member colleges, detailing all Core and Common practices and the actions undertaken at its colleges. ICD then used this to inform a PowerPoint presentation for staff to show how this would be used within the College in conjunction with the additional requirements of the University of Dundee.

Background to the desk-based analysis

14 The desk-based analysis serves as a short check on the provider's continuing management of academic standards and quality of provision. It focuses on progress since the previous review. In addition, it provides an opportunity for QAA to advise the provider of any matters that have the potential to be of particular interest in the next monitoring visit or review.

15 The desk-based analysis was carried out by Sue Miller, Reviewer, and Alan Weale, QAA Officer, on 17 June 2020

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

Tel 01452 557000
Web www.qaa.ac.uk