



Educational Oversight for embedded colleges: report of the monitoring visit of Navitas UK Holdings Ltd, April 2018

International College Portsmouth

1 Outcome of the monitoring visit

1 From the evidence provided in the annual return and at the monitoring visit, the monitoring team concludes that International College Portsmouth (ICP) is making commendable progress with continuing to monitor, review and enhance its higher education provision since the April 2016 [annual monitoring visit](#).

2 Changes since the last QAA review

2 Since the last QAA review in 2016 the College has appointed a new Principal following the promotion of the previous incumbent. Student numbers have remained steady over the period, with some fluctuation from year to year. The programmes offered remain primarily the same, as does the profile of students, with the overwhelming majority of students split evenly between level 3 and 4 studies. Business and engineering remain the most popular subjects. Retention and pass rates remain high but fluctuate from year to year.

3 Findings from the monitoring visit

3 The College has built further on the strengths identified by QAA and actions have been implemented. It has also addressed issues, weaknesses and opportunities for enhancement identified through its processes of effective monitoring and review and actions have led to improvements in the embedded college's management of its higher education provision.

4 The College has an action plan which brings together actions identified through four processes: the last QAA review, the College Learning and Teaching Quality Action Plan; the College Enhancement Plan; and the Annual Programme Review Action Plan. Oversight of the action plan is maintained by the senior management team. Responsibility for action is delegated to the College Learning and Teaching Board and target completion dates are set. Updates show that all actions have been addressed and the great majority have been completed. Detailed action plans include success criteria the achievement of which is monitored through a range of processes including student feedback.

5 The last full QAA review in 2016 made no recommendations for action at provider or College level. The report on the College identified four areas where minor action was required or where improvements should be considered. Three of these related to the student portal which was found to be difficult for students to use and to locate key material. Uploaded material has been rationalised, prioritised and better sign-posted through the creation of a virtual reception

area. Students comment favourably on the ease of using the portal. The College is seeking student feedback and involvement while developing the portal further.

6 In response to the fourth matter noted in the report, the College has updated its Operations Manual to include correct information about the role of the University in the final stage of the College's complaints procedure.

7 The College has built on the four features of good practice identified in the 2016 QAA Higher Education Review. The review commended the highly responsive and collaborative approach taken to new programme development. In response the College has reviewed the local programme approval policy, CPR QS1, in conjunction with the University's quality department, and new forms and templates have been created to streamline processes.

8 A second feature of good practice was the Careers Week and support for employability. A further Careers Week has been scheduled. Other initiatives including sessions at the University, opportunities for volunteering and acting as student ambassadors have been introduced.

9 The 2016 review identified the College's process for providing and monitoring feedback provided to students as a feature of good practice. Since the review the College has focused on the benefits of feedforward, including undertaking a research study using stored student feedback to identify how formative feedback is perceived and used by students.

10 The fourth area of good practice identified in the review was the effective use of tracer data. The College has worked with link tutors from the University to analyse data at a more detailed level and understand better the factors behind the degree of success of students who proceed to the University. Because of this work the College has identified areas of weakness in individual modules that can be addressed. Weaknesses identified from analysis of tracer data which have been addressed include action being taken to reduce a recognised gap in student engagement opportunities at College-level; developing the Student-in-Jeopardy programme through closer monitoring of attendance; improving access to mental health and well-being services; introducing a Disability Policy; and benchmarking digital learning at the College against national best practice.

11 The College's admissions policy has been developed within the framework laid down by the provider. General admissions procedures are set out in the College's Operations Manual. Admission requirements are agreed with the University and published on the College's website and in brochures. The processes of recruitment and admissions are undertaken centrally by the provider. The provider's Admissions and Recruitment Centre (ARC) works closely with the College to ensure that admissions requirements are met and ARC staff are familiar with the College's staff and provision. International students must meet English language entry requirements, assessed through the use of Home Office approved Secure English Language Tests. Those who marginally fall below the required level may be offered a place on a pre-course English programme. The College, and in some cases also the University, advises on the suitability of candidates whose qualifications are borderline. Interviews may be used selectively to check on an applicant's genuine intention to study. Students state that the admissions process operates smoothly and effectively.

12 The provider sets out the framework for annual monitoring within which the College's policies and procedures are developed. The report currently prepared by the College meets the requirements of the University. Both the provider and the University are in the process of reviewing their annual monitoring templates. Annual monitoring reports (AMRs) draw upon a

range of data including moderation reports; student performance data from both the College and the University; student and staff feedback; and comments from the University's link tutor. The body of the report presents analysis of the data collected with respect to learning and teaching; assessment and feedback; the student experience; facilities and resources; and enhancement. Reports include action plans and recommendations for minor amendments: they also identify good practice.

13 AMRs are presented to the College's Learning and Teaching Board and to the joint Academic Advisory Committee. AMRs are also presented to the provider's Learning and Teaching Committee.

4 The embedded colleges' use of external reference points to meet UK expectations for higher education

14 The College demonstrates highly effective engagement with relevant external reference points, including the Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code). Staff are familiarised with the Quality Code at induction and on training days. Copies of the Quality Code are readily available in the Staff Room and online. The Quality Code is referenced in the College's action plan. The College has benchmarked its TEL provision against that of others using criteria developed by JISC. The College is taking a lead on digital learning which is disseminated across the provider network.

5 Background to the monitoring visit

15 The monitoring visit serves as a short check on the provider's and its embedded colleges' 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 and its embedded colleges of any matters that have the potential to be of particular interest in the next monitoring visit or review.

16 The monitoring visit was carried out by Mr Cameron Waitt, QAA Officer, and Dr Carol Vielba, QAA Reviewer, on 12 April 2018.

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