



# **International School of Sikh Studies**

Review for Educational Oversight  
by the Quality Assurance Agency  
for Higher Education

June 2012

## Key findings about the International School of Sikh Studies

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in June 2012 the QAA review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of the Association of Business Executives, the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, the Chartered Management Institute and The Institute of Commercial Management.

The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the quality and enhancement of the learning opportunities it offers on behalf of these awarding organisations.

The team considers that **reliance can** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the provider is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

### Good practice

The team has identified the following **good practice**:

- the weekly staff meetings that are attended by student representatives and enable prompt feedback from staff and students (paragraph 2.2).

### Recommendations

The team has also identified a number of **recommendations** for the enhancement of the higher education provision.

The team considers that it is **advisable** for the provider to:

- revise the committee structures to clarify the operation, responsibilities, terms of reference and reporting mechanisms (paragraph 1.2)
- ensure that quality management policies and practices are kept under formal review by the governors and Academic Board (paragraph 1.2)
- revise the Policy Handbook, the Quality Manual and the Quality Assurance Cycle to ensure they are comprehensive (paragraph 1.3)
- formalise the annual monitoring process, to reflect the outcomes of external moderation, student feedback, progression data and teaching observation, and ensure full consideration by Academic Board (paragraphs 1.4 and 2.11)
- ensure that assessment feedback forms are fully completed with relevant written comments to assist students' development (paragraph 2.7)
- continue to check that all current published information is accurate (paragraph 3.2)
- improve the procedures for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of public information (paragraph 3.4).

The team considers that it would be **desirable** for the provider to:

- draw upon the Academic Infrastructure to develop the management of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities (paragraphs 1.5 and 2.3)
- review the module files by agreeing a list of standard information that each should contain (paragraph 2.6)
- formalise the operation of the Student Council (paragraph 2.10)

- request that all awarding organisations and other organisations cease to use the title of University in literature about the School (paragraph 3.3).

## About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)<sup>1</sup> (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at the International School of Sikh Studies (the School). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the provider discharges its stated responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes of study that the provider delivers on behalf the Association of Business Executives, the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, the Chartered Management Institute and The Institute of Commercial Management. The review was carried out by Mr Harry Davison, Ms Amanda Greason and Ms Trudy Stiles (reviewers), and Mr Martin Hill (coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#).<sup>2</sup> Evidence in support of the review included:

- the agreements from the Association of Business Executives, the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, and The Institute of Commercial Management
- the agreement and centre report from the Chartered Management Institute
- meetings with students from the partner college, Khalsa College London
- meetings with staff
- samples of marked student work
- the policy documents and manuals published by the School.

The review team also considered the provider's use of the relevant external reference points:

- business management pathway of the Association of Business Executives
- qualification structure and syllabus of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants
- centre assessment guidance of the Chartered Management Institute
- accreditation documentation from The Institute of Commercial Management.

Please note that if you are unfamiliar with any of the terms used in this report you can find them in the [Glossary](#).

The International School of Sikh Studies (the School) was established in 1997. It is located in Harrow, Middlesex, serving both the local and overseas student market, offering a mixture of professional and religious programmes. It occupies three floors of one building, which are shared with a partner college, Khalsa College London. There are plans to move the School to another location in Harrow. The School and Khalsa College London have the same owners and the management of academic standards and learning opportunities are run jointly.

In 2009, the School began recruiting overseas students for the Association of Business Executives and Chartered Institute of Management Accountants programmes. The main recruitment is from India and Nepal because of the historic and cultural background of the School. In 2010, the School added The Institute of Commercial Management and Chartered Management Institute programmes. The policy of the School is to recruit students to levels 5 to 7 of the professional programmes. The School has never recruited students to the programmes offered by the Association of Business Executives. Currently, there are no

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<sup>1</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/tier-4](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/tier-4).

<sup>2</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx).

students registered with the School. There are nine full-time and three part-time members of academic staff, and two support staff, who also work for Khalsa College London. The School also offers GCSE, A-Level and English as a second language programmes.

At the time of the review, the School was not offering any higher education programmes. The School has accreditation from the Association of Business Executives, the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, the Chartered Management Institute and The Institute of Commercial Management.

## **The provider's stated responsibilities**

The School shares a joint mission with Khalsa College London to provide affordable and accessible education to the student community it serves. Its goals are to provide access to different levels of education, to offer career counselling that meets the needs of students and industry, to provide opportunities for personal growth, and to deliver support programmes to help students achieve their goals and utilise the skills gained to develop the business environment.

The School is responsible for the recruitment of students, their induction and guidance. With the exception of the Chartered Management Institute awards, the awarding organisations have responsibility for curriculum design, development and assessment. For the Chartered Management Institute awards, School staff summatively assess and undertake internal verification before student work is submitted for external verification. The School has responsibility for programme delivery. Students are prepared for the examinations of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants and The Institute of Commercial Management. The School is required to respond to monitoring reviews from the external verifiers. It is responsible for providing learning resources, and gathering and acting upon student feedback. The School is responsible for the completeness and accuracy of information in its online prospectus, learning materials and website.

## **Recent developments**

At the beginning of 2012, 84 students were registered at the School on programmes awarded by the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, the Chartered Management Institute and The Institute of Commercial Management. The UK Border Agency revoked the School's licence in January 2012 on the basis of poor attendance management. Currently, there are no students registered. The School proposes to make a new application for a licence.

## **Students' contribution to the review**

There were no students studying on higher education programmes at the School when the invitation to present a submission to the review team was made. A representative from the Student Council for the partner college, Khalsa College London, attended a QAA briefing on the Review for Educational Oversight. This student subsequently wrote a statement on the student experience at the School, based on his understanding and recollections. The statement was very similar to that from the students at Khalsa College London. This document was helpful to the team in preparing for the review. The team met the students from the partner college, Khalsa College London, during the preparatory meeting and the visit, and was able to gather their views about the joint aspects of the operation of the School and the College.

## Detailed findings about the International School of Sikh Studies

### 1 Academic standards

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

1.1 The governors have oversight of the management of the School and day-to-day management is delegated to the Vice Chancellor. He has overall responsibility for maintaining standards and promoting enhancement through an informal process of monitoring and review. He is supported by a team comprising the Principal, the Administration and Admissions Officer, and the Marketing and Public Relations Officer. Programme delivery is managed at the operational level by the Coordinator Professional Studies. School documentation also identified the post of Academic Registrar. However, the team was informed that this role was now within the remit of the Principal.

1.2 The quality assurance structure for the School identifies groups that report directly to the Vice Chancellor and ultimately to the governors. The School states that the Policy and Planning Committee focuses on mid to long-term goals in its strategic plan. This committee meets annually. The team found that it focused on financial aspects of the provision, but found little evidence of how the goals will be evaluated. The self-evaluation identified a Management Committee, but the team found that this committee did not exist. The Quality Manual indicates that it is the responsibility of the Academic Board to monitor academic quality and standards, but few formal actions are recorded. The Examination Board is identified as having the responsibility to monitor internal assessments, external examinations, and awarding organisations' moderation reports. However, the Board does not minute the identification, or the monitoring, of actions following the receipt of external moderators' reports. The team found that these actions may be considered at the Academic Board. Committee agendas are minimal and the very brief notes of meetings lack sufficient detail of the actions agreed, responsibilities for action and timescales. It is advisable that the School revises the committee structures to clarify the operation, responsibilities, terms of reference and reporting mechanisms. It is also advisable that the policies and practices are kept under formal review by the governors and Academic Board.

1.3 Two handbooks aim to guide staff on the management of standards and learning opportunities. The Policy Handbook 2011-14 contains a significant number of administrative and academic policies. The Quality Manual is extremely brief and is augmented by a written Quality Assurance Cycle, which indicates a number of key monthly activities. However, the handbooks omit some key academic policies and procedures, most notably relating to student feedback and representation, and annual monitoring. The Quality Assurance Cycle omits some key activities relating to monitoring. It is advisable that the School revises the Policy Handbook, the Quality Manual and the Quality Assurance Cycle to ensure they are comprehensive. The School may also wish to consider including all their policies and procedures in a single document.

1.4 The School does not have an annual monitoring policy but does gather qualitative and quantitative data on student and lecturer feedback, student performance and achievement and teaching observations. The School Quality Assurance Cycle identifies set points within the academic year to plan, monitor and review programme delivery. However, a triennial periodic review carried out by the School contained little evaluative detail. Two different report templates for monitoring are in use and they do not indicate actions or timescales. There is no clear indication of how this information is used to provide monitoring and enhancement of programmes. It is advisable that the School formalises the annual

monitoring process, to reflect the outcomes of external moderation, student feedback, progression data and teaching observation. The process should also provide for full consideration by Academic Board.

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

1.5 All programmes delivered by the School are accredited to the Qualifications and Credit Framework by the awarding organisations that develop and review the specifications and assessments. The School's main relationship with these external reference points is through the application of assessment guidance from the awarding organisations. Staff are aware of these external reference points. However, the team found that there was a limited awareness of academic standards as considered in the Academic Infrastructure. This is further discussed in paragraph 2.3. It is desirable that the School draws upon the Academic Infrastructure in reviewing its policies and procedures.

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

1.6 The awarding organisations are responsible for the external verification of student work marked by the School. For the Chartered Management Institute programmes, School staff set the assessments and these are approved by the awarding organisation, which ensures that they meet the learning outcomes and are at the required level. The assessment briefs for the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants and The Institute of Commercial Management programmes are externally set with samples being externally moderated. These awards have external examinations and the School is only responsible for formative assessment. The external verifier's report for the Chartered Management Institute programmes contained action plans and dates for review. These are placed before the Academic Board, but there is little detail of how they are monitored and used for development and enhancement.

1.7 Internal moderation to assure standards is carried out effectively within the School by tutors who ensure the awarding organisations' requirements are met. Four members of staff are currently undertaking formal internal verifier qualifications and are designated as internal moderators. External moderation reports and awarding organisations' visits confirm that standards are being maintained. However, the most recent report identified areas for improvement about internal verification and the recording of minutes.

The review team has **confidence** in the provider's management of its responsibilities for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding organisations.

## **2 Quality of learning opportunities**

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

2.1 The committee arrangements for the management and enhancement of learning opportunities are as outlined in paragraph 1.2.

2.2 The School has allocated responsibilities for aspects of learning opportunities. Specific posts include an Admissions Officer and a Student Welfare Officer who discharge their roles effectively. Course coordinators play a positive role in managing the programmes

on a day-to-day basis. A feature of good practice is the weekly staff meetings that are attended by the student representatives, enabling prompt feedback from staff and students.

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

2.3 The School's use of external reference points with regard to academic standards has been outlined in paragraph 1.5. While the School takes into account the reference points of its awarding organisations with reference to standards, it has not been required to consider the sections of the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*) relating to the quality of learning opportunities.

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

2.4 The Assessment and Record Keeping Policy and the Learning Policy are valuable reference sources for staff in the design of assessments. Students are satisfied with the quality of teaching and value the variety of teaching methods. Staff are clearly aware of what is expected of them in the delivery of their modules through the provision of the Policy Handbook, the weekly staff meetings and the regular inspection by the Vice Chancellor of their teaching files. The two policy documents contribute to meeting the School's aims for teaching and learning, but it could be more effective if these policies could be incorporated into a single policy.

2.5 The awarding organisations see all staff curriculum vitae when programmes are approved and approve any changes in teaching staff. There are also random awarding organisations' inspections to scrutinise the currency of knowledge. All new staff have a formal induction that ensures they understand how the School operates. They receive a Staff Handbook and Policy Handbook, and keep a personal file that includes regular self-appraisals. The Performance Management Policy is an effective process for ensuring the quality of teaching. It requires the completion of self-assessment questionnaires by each lecturer and teaching observations carried out annually by the Vice Chancellor. These feed into discussions at annual staff appraisal.

2.6 Lecturers are required to compile a module file to include a scheme of work detailing the module delivery and the teaching and learning methods. Some files also include the awarding organisations' information, including programme specifications and the School Policy Handbook. While the team noted the effective process, a review of a number of files indicated differences in the type of information each contained. It is desirable for the School to agree a list of standard information that module files should contain.

2.7 Students from the partner college, Khalsa College London, confirmed that they are clear about assessment. The School recognises the value of formative assessment, particularly on those programmes where the summative assessment is externally set. A review of student work confirmed that formative assessment is widespread and systematic. However, a variety of feedback forms are used, the quality and quantity of written feedback is minimal and its value to students is questionable. The recent Chartered Management Institute report identified this as an issue. The review team was informed that feedback to students is often verbal and students confirmed this. It is advisable that the School ensures that the feedback forms are fully completed with relevant written comments to assist students' development.

### **How does the provider assure itself that students are supported effectively?**

2.8 The School strives to recruit students with appropriate qualifications and with the motivation to benefit from and succeed on their programmes. Students from the partner college, Khalsa College London, are satisfied with the induction arrangements, which effectively acquaint them with the School, its staff and resources and their programmes.

2.9 The School currently works with a low staff/student ratio and prides itself on offering strong student support. The team concluded that the student support arrangements are effective. Students from the partner college, Khalsa College London, were complimentary about the academic and pastoral support. They have helpful access to lecturers and course coordinators during and outside teaching sessions. The Student Welfare Officer is available to deal with non-academic matters and refers students to external agencies where necessary. The Vice Chancellor is also available on an appointment basis.

2.10 A strength of the College is the process for ensuring students' views are sought. Students confirmed that action is taken on issues they raise, such as the introduction of an extra overhead projector. Three different forms are used to elicit quantitative and qualitative feedback. The feedback gathered is analysed and summaries are produced, although these are not considered formally by the Academic Board. The appointment of student representatives for each programme and level augments the processes of feedback. The team found that the Student Council functions as an informal group, despite the academic structure of the School explicitly indicating the contrary. It is desirable that the School formalises the operation of the Student Council.

2.11 The School carefully records student progression and achievement. On the whole, student achievement is satisfactory, but there are subjects on each programme where it is very poor. The team was informed that student performance data informs actions on learning opportunities, but it is not clear that such data feeds into any annual review nor is it considered by the Academic Board. The School should maximise the use of the data it produces on student progression and achievement, ensuring that it feeds into annual monitoring and is considered by the Academic Board, as recommended in paragraph 1.4.

### **What are the provider's arrangements for staff development to maintain and/or enhance the quality of learning opportunities?**

2.12 The School recruits staff with existing professional experience and relevant qualifications. Many of the staff have postgraduate qualifications; one is currently working towards a master's degree. Staff development is largely offered through training events provided by the awarding organisations. The School recently organised an in-house Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector training programme that was attended by all staff, both academic and administrative. The staff who attend training events and conferences feed back to other staff at the weekly staff meetings.

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

2.13 Students from the partner college, Khalsa College London, stated their satisfaction with the provision of learning resources, which includes a textbook for each module, a hard copy from the awarding organisation and online resources. The School's small premises are adequate for the number of students and the number of programmes. In addition to teaching and administrative space, there is a small student common room, which had recently been provided as a result of students' requests.

2.14 The library has a modest collection of business and management-related textbooks, but provides additional reference material. The School has subscriptions to two business and management journals to which students can refer. Most students have their own laptops, but the School provides laptops for student use in teaching rooms and the computer room has 18 computers for student use. A virtual learning environment is being developed and will be in use from September 2012 when lecturers will upload module-related information. The School ensures that relevant resources are acquired and an element of its strategic plan is to equip the library with recent publications. It reviews its resource requirements annually when it invites lecturers to make requests for the forthcoming academic year, which are generally met.

The review team has **confidence** that the provider is fulfilling its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of the intended learning opportunities it provides for students.

### 3 Public information

#### **How effectively does the provider's public information communicate to students and other stakeholders about the higher education it provides?**

3.1 The School uses a variety of information from the awarding organisations to produce the prospectus and for programme and module information. Programme information is available on the website and in printed handbooks for staff and students. The printed prospectus gives an outline of the professional programmes and the structure of teaching and assessment. Students are given an induction pack that includes a prospectus, Student Handbook, Policy Handbook, school calendar and further detailed information on their programmes. Students also use the programme and module specifications, as provided by the awarding organisations' websites. The School has used two agents in India, but personal recommendations and the website are more productive recruitment tools. Enquirers are referred to the website and, where practical, invited to visit the School. The website has recently been redesigned and is still being populated. It provides information on living in London and outlines all the programmes with links to the awarding organisations. An application form and the Policy Handbook can be downloaded.

3.2 The Student Handbook has details of the induction programme, a summary of the UK Border Agency attendance policy, a brief summary of each awarding organisation, and reminders of essential personal information. The Policy Handbook includes most of the School academic policies, including admissions, assessment, behaviour, bullying, career development, complaints, health and safety, equal opportunities, and performance management. The Chartered Management Institute recently commended as good practice both the induction checklist that assesses pre-programme requirements and possible support needs, and the Student Handbook that summarises centre and learner obligations. However, the Policy Handbook refers to an Academic Registrar, although the post no longer exists. The Student Handbook refers to the role of the personal tutor and group tutorials, although this system does not operate. The team identified a programme from the Chartered Management Institute which was included in the prospectus supplied in advance but was not offered. At the visit, a corrected prospectus was made available. It is advisable that the School continues to check that all current published information is accurate.

3.3 Prior to the review, the School included University in its title. Following representations from QAA, the School has removed the word from its signage, website and printed documents. All handbooks have been reprinted to ensure they refer just to the School. However, in its recent report, the Chartered Management Institute still used the title

of University, as do other websites seen by the team. It is desirable that the School requests that all awarding organisations and other website organisations cease to use the title of University in literature about the School.

**How effective are the provider's arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of information it has responsibility for publishing?**

3.4 The School is required to send copies of printed documents and programme specifications to the awarding organisations for authorisation prior to publication. There is no formal information management policy, but the School has established procedure with clearly defined responsibilities. The Director Marketing and Public Relations is responsible for compiling and checking all public information, whether on the website or in printed format. The Vice Chancellor checks all draft copies and authorises publication. Draft copies of the policies and handbooks are returned to the School before printing to be checked again by the Director Marketing and Public Relations and finally approved by the Vice Chancellor. The team saw evidence that the School corrects errors in their public information as they are identified, but it is advisable that the School improves the procedures for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of public information.

3.5 The School has informal methods for evaluating the effectiveness and accuracy of its information from its students. Students agreed that the information was generally useful, relevant and accurate.

The team concludes that **reliance can be placed** on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the provider is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

## Action plan<sup>3</sup>

International School of Sikh Studies action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight June 2012						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The review team identified the following area of <b>good practice</b> that are worthy of wider dissemination within the provider:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the weekly staff meetings that are attended by student representatives and enable prompt feedback from staff and students (paragraph 2.2).</li> </ul>	<p>Introduce new student council members to the purpose of the meetings Meetings will be become more formalised and structured as International School of Sikh Studies develops</p> <p>Meetings are scheduled weekly to address issues and impart information academically in that course updates, students requirements and to relate general welfare</p>	Continuous throughout the academic year	Student Welfare Officer, staff and students	Clear lines of communication leading to effective feedback from students and staff, minuted meetings provide an opportunity to check on action taken and whether the outcome is agreed generally	Academic Board	<p>Weekly meetings will assess the monitoring, feedback and communication on action taken This will be marked against the action noted in the minutes</p> <p>This will allow us to identify if the required outcome has been achieved</p>

<sup>3</sup> The provider has been required to develop this action plan to follow up on good practice and address any recommendations arising from the review. QAA monitors progress against the action plan, in conjunction with the provider's awarding organisations.

	issues for both staff and students					
<b>Advisable</b>	<b>Action to be taken</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Success indicators</b>	<b>Reported to</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
The team considers that it is <b>advisable</b> for the provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>revise the committee structures to clarify the operation, responsibilities, terms of reference and reporting mechanisms (paragraph 1.2)</li> </ul>	<p>A meeting was held in July to establish new committee structures to streamline those in place and to redefine designations</p> <p>This was achieved and it was decided to review the structures annually in August</p> <p>Clearer committee structures have been implemented to clarify the operation, responsibilities, terms of reference and reporting mechanisms as advised</p>	July and August annually	Administration Head	A clearer understanding of operation, responsibilities, terms of reference and reported mechanisms are achieved, with staff and students having a clearer understanding of reporting structures	Vice Chancellor	<p>Newly produced charts showing structures have been produced and displayed throughout the School</p> <p>Annual evaluation will keep the structures and designations up to date, leading to clear communication pathways</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure that quality management policies and practices are kept under formal review by the</li> </ul>	Formalised meetings to be scheduled to discuss review of policies and practices to be minuted and actioned	August annually	Vice Chancellor and Administration Head	Clear lines of communication to be established between Vice Chancellor, Administration Head, Academic	Academic Board/Governors	Content to be assessed annually in August Meetings minuted with clearly defined actions

governors and Academic Board (paragraph 1.2)	<p>Academic and management structures have been revised</p> <p>Clearer committee structures have been implemented to clarify the operation, responsibilities, terms of reference and reporting mechanisms as advised</p>			Board and Governors to establish a more formal reporting dialogue		<p>will allow us to identify if the required outcome has been achieved with set timelines to be met</p> <p>The Academic Board meets four times a year with main review of printed/published changes to be made in August</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>revise the Policy Handbook, the Quality Manual and the Quality Assurance Cycle to ensure they are comprehensive (paragraph 1.3)</li> </ul>	Printed and updated versions of these publications are being addressed after meetings with relevant staff, incorporating student feedback and representation and annual monitoring policies and procedures the Policy Handbook and Quality Manual to be merged	August annually	Principal and Administration Head	A more streamlined and concise document which covers support of academic staff and students Further policy additions relating to student feedback, representation and annual monitoring are to be implemented giving support and confidence to students	Academic Board	<p>Content assessed annually and printed in August</p> <p>The Academic Board meets four times in a year Their main review of handbooks and manuals and so on is taken in July/ August annually; through minuted meetings action can be seen to be taken</p> <p>The evidence is a clear, final version which is</p>

						current and meets legislative requirements where appropriate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>formalise the annual monitoring process, to reflect the outcomes of external moderation, student feedback, progression data and teaching observation, and ensure full consideration by Academic Board (paragraphs 1.4 and 2.11)</li> </ul>	Annual monitoring and assessment has been reassessed and a template produced which incorporates actions, timescales, clearer observation feedback	August annually	Vice Chancellor	<p>External examiners comments and progression data is analysed on a term-by-term basis or as published by them; any recommendations made for further improvement and so on Will be passed to course coordinators through specific staff meetings with clear action plans on how to achieve any desired outcomes</p> <p>Clearer monitoring of data will give confidence to students Staff similarly will have better</p>	Academic Board and course coordinators	<p>Teaching observations regular assessments formal and informal; formalised written script comments and review of feedback reports</p> <p>The evidence will be qualitative and quantitative data based on feedback, performance, achievement and observations on students/teachers which will be analysed and actioned</p> <p>Academic Board will oversee progression and achievement and give comments in its annual review</p>

				<p>control of students achievements and capabilities, allowing for specific additional support if identified</p> <p>A clearer, termly review with students with a final annual review will be implemented</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure that assessment feedback forms are fully completed with relevant written comments to assist students' development (paragraph 2.7)</li> </ul>	<p>A student assessment feedback form will be analysed termly and data produced which will be acted on through recommendations made by course coordinators, a new format has been designed to take into consideration teachers comments for students development</p> <p>Awarding organisations to be made aware of our assessment feedback</p>	Termly/ annually	Course coordinators	<p>Written developmental comments are included, backed up with verbal comments throughout the academic year</p> <p>Students will gain a clearer understanding of achievements and goals</p>	Vice Chancellor	<p>Formalised written script comments and review of feedback reports will be produced by course coordinators; the data stored and referenced termly to establish a pattern of student's abilities and desired outcomes This will be available for awarding organisations</p>

	forms as appropriate					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>continue to check that all current published information is accurate (paragraph 3.2)</li> </ul>	<p>An ongoing assessment is made to ensure that all published information is current and relevant</p> <p>Information Technology department oversees the virtual learning environment input, and websites</p> <p>Course coordinators check on new specifications, units and so on and notify any changes through staff meetings and/or a separate published information meeting</p>	Throughout the academic year	Administration Head, course coordinators and Information Technology Head	The success indicator is good feedback and knowledge that we are offering current and relevant information, whether it is for academic courses, policies or the website	Vice Chancellor	Continued monitoring to maintain relevance and currency, submission to awarding organisations for checking prior to printing will ensure details are correct
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>improve the procedures for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of public information (paragraph 3.4).</li> </ul>	<p>Clear procedures have been set to ensure all brochures and the website are checked by relevant staff</p> <p>Additionally all published materials are sent to the awarding bodies for their approval before</p>	July/August (printing) and throughout the year	Administration Head/Information Technology Head	Feedback from awarding organisations, administration and Information Technology Head for accuracy before printing and publication on website and virtual learning environment	Vice Chancellor	<p>Continuous monitoring to maintain up-to-date published information by Administration Head and Information Technology Head</p> <p>A more consistent</p>

	printing, they are also given links to websites to check on the information published about their particular courses			This will ensure that public information is up to date and not misrepresented Signed off by Vice Chancellor		monitoring approach will identify issues earlier in the process rather than annually
<b>Desirable</b>	<b>Action to be taken</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Success indicators</b>	<b>Reported to</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
The team considers that it is <b>desirable</b> for the provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>draw upon the Academic Infrastructure to develop the management of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities (paragraphs 1.5 and 2.3)</li> </ul>	To keep up-to-date with subject benchmark statements, to make reference to the <i>Code of practice</i> and ensure have been incorporated through continuous monitoring and feedback allowing us to develop stronger infrastructures offering better support to both staff and students	August annually	Vice Chancellor	Through staff undertaking thorough reviews of all courses and awarding organisations data, incorporating it into a structured approach to developing a course and its delivery to students	Academic Board	Formulating results, classroom observations, assessments in a clearer format improving communication of same to students  Clearer direction from the Academic Board to teachers regarding academic standards will improve understanding of policies and procedures and this in turn will

						feedback through teaching standards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review the module files by agreeing a list of standard information that each should contain (paragraph 2.6)</li> </ul>	All files to be standardised with generic institution information backed up by specific course materials This has been scheduled for a termly staff meeting	Termly	Teachers and course coordinators	The module files are referred to on a regular basis and updated by course coordinators with specifications, schemes of work and so on	Vice Chancellor	<p>Inspections by awarding organisations can see that relevant teaching is being carried out and that files contain current information</p> <p>Internal termly inspections will also confirm currency and relevance</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>formalise the operation of the Student Council (paragraph 2.10)</li> </ul>	To be established as a formal Student Council when licence is reinstated	First academic term	Student Welfare Officer and Administration Head	<p>Canvassing for a Student Council to be organised</p> <p>Clear lines of communication from students to teachers/management allowing for a good pastoral and academic welfare environment</p>	Vice Chancellor	A portal for students to discuss issues from welfare to academics, with meetings minuted, actioned and timelines set
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>request that all awarding organisations and other</li> </ul>	All parties concerned with using the name of University have been contacted in	July	Vice Chancellor	Completed and acknowledged by awarding organisations	Academic Board	Successful written acknowledgements from all

<p>organisations cease to use the title of University in literature about the School (paragraph 3.3).</p>	<p>writing by email and letter asking them to remove the name University and refer to the institution as International School of Sikh Studies</p> <p>This has been achieved and acknowledged by all concerned</p> <p>Information Technology Head has contacted website hosting company to ask for removal of University name</p>			<p>International School of Sikh Studies has its own stand-alone website</p>		<p>concerned have been received and noted</p> <p>Recent inspections for reaccreditation have also noted the name change is visible</p>
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## About QAA

QAA is the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. QAA's mission is to safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK higher education.

QAA's aims are to:

- meet students' needs and be valued by them
- safeguard standards in an increasingly diverse UK and international context
- drive improvements in UK higher education
- improve public understanding of higher education standards and quality.

QAA conducts reviews of higher education institutions and publishes reports on the findings. QAA also publishes a range of guidance documents to help safeguard standards and improve quality.

More information about the work of QAA is available at: [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk).

More detail about Review for Educational Oversight can be found at: [www.qaa.ac.uk/institutionreports/types-of-review/tier-4](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/institutionreports/types-of-review/tier-4).

## Glossary

This glossary explains terms used in this report. You can find a fuller glossary at: [www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary). Formal definitions of key terms can be found in the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#)<sup>4</sup>

**Academic Infrastructure** Guidance developed and agreed by the higher education community and published by QAA, which is used by institutions to ensure that their courses meet national expectations for academic standards and that students have access to a suitable environment for learning (academic quality). It consists of four groups of reference points: the **frameworks for higher education qualifications**, the **subject benchmark statements**, the **programme specifications** and the **Code of practice**. Work is underway (2011-12) to revise the Academic Infrastructure as the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

**academic quality** A comprehensive term referring to how, and how well, institutions manage teaching and learning opportunities to help students progress and succeed.

**academic standards** The standards set and maintained by institutions for their courses and expected for their awards. See also **threshold academic standard**.

**awarding body** A body with the authority to award academic qualifications located on the **framework for higher education qualifications**, such as diplomas or degrees.

**awarding organisation** An organisation with the authority to award academic qualifications located on the Qualifications and Credit Framework for England and Northern Ireland (these qualifications are at levels 1 to 8, with levels 4 and above being classed as 'higher education').

**Code of practice** *The Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*, published by QAA: a set of interrelated documents giving guidance for higher education institutions.

**designated body** An organisation that has been formally appointed to perform a particular function.

**differentiated judgements** In a Review for Educational Oversight, separate judgements respectively for the provision validated by separate awarding bodies.

**enhancement** Taking deliberate steps at institutional level to improve the quality of **learning opportunities**. It is used as a technical term in QAA's audit and review processes.

**feature of good practice** A positive aspect of the way a higher education institution manages quality and standards, which may be seen as exemplary to others.

**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:

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<sup>4</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx).

*The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) and The framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland.*

**highly trusted sponsor** An education provider that the UK government trusts to admit migrant students from overseas, according to Tier 4 of the UK Border Agency's points-based immigration system. Higher education providers wishing to obtain this status must undergo a successful review by QAA.

**learning opportunities** The provision made for students' learning, including planned **programmes of study**, teaching, assessment, academic and personal support, resources (such as libraries and information systems, laboratories or studios) and staff development.

**learning outcome** What a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completing a process of learning.

**operational definition** A formal definition of a term, which establishes exactly what QAA means when using it in reports.

**programme (of study)** An approved course of study which 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.

**provider** An institution that offers courses of higher education, typically on behalf of a separate **awarding body or organisation**. In the context of REO, the term means an independent college.

**public information** Information that is freely available to the public (sometimes referred to as being 'in the public domain').

**reference points** Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured. Internal reference points may be used by providers for purposes of self-regulation; external ones are used and accepted throughout the higher education community for the checking of standards and quality.

**quality** See **academic quality**.

**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.

**threshold academic standard** The minimum standard that a student should reach in order to gain a particular qualification or award, as set out in the **subject benchmark statements** and national qualifications frameworks. Threshold standards are distinct from the standards of performance that students need to achieve in order to gain any particular class of award, for example a first-class bachelor's degree. See also **academic standard**.

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

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