



**INTO Scotland LLP, trading as
INTO Glasgow Caledonian University**

**Educational Oversight
- Exceptional Arrangements**

November 2018

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 INTO Glasgow Caledonian University (INTO GCU). The review took place on 15 November 2018 and was conducted by a review team, as follows:

- Dr Helen Corkill
- Professor Alan Jago

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
- make judgements about the reliability of the information that the provider produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers
- 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 3. 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](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us) and its mission.¹ More information about this the review method can be found in the Handbook for providers.

¹ www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us

Key findings

The QAA panel considered evidence relating to the educational provision at INTO GCU (the Centre), 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 panel formed the following judgement about INTO GCU.

- **Confidence** can be placed in INTO GCU's management of its responsibilities for academic standards, as set out in its contractual arrangements with its academic partner.
- **Confidence** can be placed in INTO GCU's management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities.
- **Reliance can** be placed on the information that INTO GCU's produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers.

Good practice

The QAA panel identified the following **features of good practice** at INTO GCU.

- The wide-ranging and highly effective support mechanisms provided by the Centre and the University, which enable students to develop their full potential.
- The positive and effective relationship between the Centre and the University across all aspects of the partnership, which enhances the student experience and assures standards.

Recommendations

The QAA panel makes the following recommendations to INTO GCU.

It is **desirable** for INTO GCU to:

- develop staff understanding of the role of the Quality Code in informing regulation, policy and practice.

About INTO Glasgow Caledonian University

INTO Glasgow Caledonian University (INTO GCU), established in 2008, is a joint venture partnership between INTO University Partnerships (IUP) and Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU). INTO GCU is an embedded college of the University.

The joint venture partnership is based on an alignment of both partners' missions and visions and a shared commitment to the expansion of higher education opportunities for international students which informs the operation and strategy of the Centre. IUP provides a central co-ordinating function and a number of services including a centralised admissions function and visa support, cross-Centre forums to share good practice, co-ordination and analysis of student surveys, co-ordination of the academic English programme, IT infrastructure and services, HR and legal support.

The Centre focuses on international students who do not have the English language and/or academic entry levels for direct entry to GCU. Students who successfully complete their programme at the Centre are able to progress to their chosen programme at GCU.

The partnership arrangements are set out in a formal limited liability partnership agreement. The programmes offered by the Centre are validated by GCU, and the University is ultimately responsible for the quality of the programmes and the academic standards of the awards.

The Centre offers pathway programmes leading to GCU awards in Business and Management, Science, Computing, Engineering and Built Environment. These include International Foundation programmes which lead to: year two of a four-year undergraduate degree; International Diploma programmes which lead to year three of a four-year undergraduate degree; pre-masters and Graduate Diploma programmes which lead to postgraduate study. The Centre also offers a range of English Language Programmes (pre-sessional English, Academic English and Study Abroad with English).

Student numbers in the Centre fluctuate throughout the academic cycle. At the time of the visit there were around 100 students.

This was the first QAA review of INTO GCU. The Centre was accredited by the British Council in 2014, and reaccredited following a visit in March 2018. A successful audit by IELTS took place in 2017. The pathway programmes were reviewed by GCU in May 2018.

Detailed findings about INTO Glasgow Caledonian University

1 Academic standards

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

1.1 The agreement between the University and INTO GCU outlines the responsibilities of each party for academic standards. INTO GCU operates within agreed processes, including quality assurance and assessment procedures as set out in the INTO GCU Academic Programmes Liaison Handbook.

1.2 The governance and strategic management of INTO GCU operates through an agreed committee structure. Academic governance is maintained through the Joint Venture Board (JV Board), which is the executive board. The JV Board has key responsibility in relation to overall strategic development and direction. The JV Board is chaired by the GCU Vice Chancellor and has equal senior officer representation from both GCU and INTO University Partnerships. The Centre Director is answerable to the JV Board. A lay governor sits on the Board as a director. Reports from the Board flow through the University's governance framework and Board committees report directly into the University Court. Key actions are taken back to sub-groups both at INTO and at the University.

1.3 INTO GCU has a comprehensive range of committees and other regular meetings and forums which contribute to the management of academic standards. The INTO GCU Joint Academic Liaison Group (JALG) reports to the JV Board. JALG acts as a formal channel of communication between GCU and INTO GCU. It has oversight of the implementation of all GCU approved academic policies and strategies at INTO GCU, and for the coordination, development and implementation of the enhancement of the student experience at INTO GCU. This is undertaken in partnership with host Schools at the University and with relevant professional support departments. JALG is chaired by GCU's Head of Academic Quality. A recently established Joint Operations Group provides liaison and oversight across a range of functions, including marketing and finance. There is also a Programmes Board, which is responsible to the relevant GCU School for the quality assurance and enhancement of programmes, and Assessment Boards which consider student assessment results, performance and progression.

1.4 The University provides the quality assurance framework and regulations within which INTO GCU operates, and assures the setting and maintaining of threshold academic standards. All programmes are approved as GCU programmes and are subject to the quality assurance and enhancement procedures of the University. The University has ultimate responsibility for academic awards and the appointment and induction of external examiners. Teaching staff have GCU Associate Lecturer status and all appointments are approved by the University.

1.5 The Centre and the University share responsibility for programme development and approval, modifications to programmes and the setting of assessments. The University is responsible for academic appeals. The Centre holds the responsibility for the production of definitive programme information, first marking of work, feedback to students, responding to external examiner reports, holding of exam boards, annual monitoring and periodic review. The relevant procedures are laid out in the Quality Enhancement and Assurance Handbook (QEAH) and Assessment Regulations.

1.6 The Centre and the University work closely together at all levels. Formal and informal mechanisms for liaison are very well embedded. On a formal basis, these are governed by the INTO GCU Liaison Handbook. Each of the three Schools of the University which offer programmes in conjunction with INTO GCU is represented by an Academic Link Liaison. Their role is to ensure that everyone is working to the same standards, as a unified team. They approve assessments, moderate work, sit on programme and assessment boards and on academic liaison groups. There is also a Module Link Tutor for each module. The Module Link Tutors work with teaching staff in the Centre to look at modules and assessments. They oversee teaching, and have more contact with students than the Academic Link Liaison.

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

1.7 The Centre makes appropriate use of a range of external reference points. All programmes, standards and processes are mapped against the Quality Code, Subject Benchmark Statements, the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework and the Quality Enhancement Framework (the enhancement-led approach to quality in Scotland). The University and the Centre are currently looking at the transition to the new version of the Quality Code. Responsibilities for programme design, development and approval are shared by the Centre and the University and use GCU's process which is informed by the Quality Code. The University's approval procedures include the involvement of external members on panels. English language programme content and assessments are based on internationally agreed standards such as the British Council and the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

1.8 The Centre makes extensive use of University reference points, including GCU Assessment Regulations, the QEAH, the Project Management Framework and the Strategy for Learning. Its processes and curriculum are also mapped against the GCU Common Good Curriculum, which operationalises the University's mission to make a positive difference in the communities it serves, through mechanisms including community and public engagement and social innovation. Many of the pathway programmes link to GCU awards which have professional body accreditation. Although the pathway programmes themselves are not accredited, where relevant, they are informed by professional body considerations.

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

1.9 The Centre follows the University's processes for external examining. A module external examiner and a pathway external examiner is appointed. External examiners are appointed by the University. Where appropriate, the Centre uses the University's existing external examiners. External examiners are required to submit annual written reports which comment on the maintenance of academic standards and learning opportunities. External examiners normally complete a separate report for INTO GCU students as assessment takes place at different times from the corresponding programmes and modules at the University. Feedback from external examiners is also captured at assessment boards. The external examiner system provides both programme and module level scrutiny.

1.10 Assessment boards are chaired by a member of the appropriate University School. External examiners attend exam boards where possible, and provide a verbal report to the board (or a written report if not able to attend). The formal responses to external examiners' reports are provided by the Academic Director, following consultation with the teaching staff and the Programmes Board. External examiners are able to meet students, if desired, although sample external examiner reports provided to the team do not make reference to this having occurred. Students were aware of external examiners visiting the Centre, but

confirmed that they had not met with external examiners and were unsure of their role. External examiner reports are not currently shared with students or student representatives.

1.11 There is a thorough annual programme monitoring process which includes consideration of statistical information about student achievement and progression, and comments made by external examiners.

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

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 main aim of the INTO GCU programmes is to prepare international students for successful transition into the UK higher education system. This is monitored in a number of ways including through feedback from GCU on the achievement of students progressing from INTO GCU. The programmes are designed in order to support international students in both language and academic skills development.

2.2 INTO GCU shares responsibility for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities with GCU. Under the terms of the collaboration agreement, GCU provides premises for INTO GCU, validates the programmes and provides ongoing quality assurance processes for monitoring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities. The JALG is responsible for monitoring the quality of learning opportunities at INTO GCU. Operational management of the partnership with the University is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team (SMT) which consists of the Centre Director, Academic Director, Head of Student Services, Assistant Director - Recruitment, and the HR Manager. The SMT meets weekly, and focuses on the key operational aspects of academic performance and student satisfaction, employee engagement and liaison with GCU staff in the three host Schools. The SMT is supported by the attendance of Academic and English Programme Managers and other Centre staff when required.

2.3 INTO GCU is responsible for delivering the programmes, student support, first marking of assessments and providing feedback to students. Responsibility for setting assessments is shared, and second marking or moderation is the responsibility of the University. INTO GCU uses a number of methods to monitor and track student engagement and progression. This includes student feedback, tutor comments and the outcomes of Assessment Boards.

2.4 The Centre has a Teaching and Learning Framework that informs the management and enhancement of learning opportunities. The Centre recognises the opportunities and challenges in supporting international students from diverse backgrounds and there is an emphasis on small class tuition to encourage the active engagement of all students. The Centre places a strong emphasis on formative assessment where tasks are set, marked and returned to students with detailed constructive feedback.

2.5 The team found that there are positive and effective relationships in place across the various areas involved in the partnership, at a strategic and management level and between academic and professional support staff at the Centre and at GCU. These links all contribute to assuring the standards and quality of the programmes, and the provision of a

positive student experience. The team considers the positive and effective relationship between the Centre and the University across all aspects of the partnership, which enhances the student experience and assures standards, is **good practice**.

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

2.6 INTO GCU uses a range of external reference points for the management and enhancement of learning opportunities. These include the GCU processes for programme design, approval and review.

2.7 INTO operates a centralised admissions function, and is committed to providing a fair, effective and responsible admissions service. Central admissions staff may refer individual cases to the Centre. The University sets the entry requirements and has ultimate responsibility for admissions decisions.

2.8 The GCU Academic Link Liaison plays a role in enabling student development and achievement, providing liaison at subject level and at the level of individual modules. There is a GCU Academic Link Liaison person for each of the three host Schools of the University. They work closely with the staff teaching on the GCU INTO programmes in order to facilitate quality assurance and enhancement, maintaining links with INTO Associate Lecturers teaching on the INTO GCU programmes. They also act as liaison for any communication between INTO GCU and relevant GCU Programme Leaders. There are also GCU Module Link Tutors for each module.

2.9 External examiners, who are appointed by GCU, provide an external reference point for the management and enhancement of learning opportunities on the INTO GCU pathways. INTO GCU has adopted a policy of, where possible, engaging the same external examiners as used in the corresponding GCU programmes and modules. Their annual report provides feedback which is used for the enhancement of learning opportunities. The Annual Programme Analysis (APA) includes a review of external examiner feedback and consequential revisions and enhancements.

2.10 The English language modules which form part of the programmes are mapped to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) to ensure that the assessment of the learning outcomes of these modules enables students to demonstrate their level of language ability.

2.11 INTO GCU uses GCU's Appeals and Complaints procedures which make provision for referral to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). Appeals can be made on the grounds of material administrative error, regulatory irregularity or other material irregularity. All appeals are considered firstly by GCU's Department of Academic Quality, who notify the relevant Assessment Board Chair, who then prepares a written statement. The Complaints procedure has two stages: the first stage is where a complaint can be resolved by frontline resolution; the second stage is where the complaint is complex or where the first stage has not resolved it. The procedures for appeals and complaints are available to students both on the GCU website and in the Student Services Handbook.

2.12 The Centre's engagement with the Quality Code is primarily through the application of GCU policies and procedures which are aligned with the Code. The review team found that the Quality Code had informed the development and approval of programmes but that the Centre's staff had limited awareness of how the Code informs or impacts on other areas of operation. The review team considers it **desirable** that GCU INTO develop staff understanding of the role of the Quality Code in informing regulation, policy and practice.

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

2.13 The Joint Academic Liaison Group (JALG) is responsible for the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the learning experience. It meets regularly and considers the outcomes of various monitoring reports, programme boards, feedback from external examiners, reviews of staff development and issues arising in Staff Student Consultative Groups.

2.14 INTO GCU effectively uses GCU's quality assurance processes to monitor and enhance the student learning experience at the module and programme level through the Annual Programme Analysis and Programme Enhancement Plan. The Centre operates annual monitoring and review processes for all courses and modules through the Programmes Board which is informed by statistical information and feedback from students and staff. Statistical information on student progression, achievement and retention is collated after the assessment boards. The Academic Director writes up an Annual Programme Analysis (APA) for each programme, informed by statistical information, student feedback and external examiners' comments.

2.15 Student feedback is obtained through a range of mechanisms including module evaluation, student satisfaction surveys and the operation of the Student Staff Consultative Group. Feedback is also obtained from lecturers, including contributions to the reflective content of the APAs. Link Liaison staff are able to contribute to the reports via the Programmes Board. APAs are submitted to the JALG for approval and comment before being submitted to the Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee.

2.16 The Centre Director produces an annual report on the provision overall, that contains key statistical information on student recruitment and performance and identifies areas which have gone well and also those that require improvement. This report is considered by the Joint Venture Board (JV Board). The JALG receives a verbal update from the Centre Director, along with the APA.

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

2.17 INTO GCU effectively supports the continuing professional development of all staff through a range of staff development, training and mentoring. These are set out in the staff development policy.

2.18 The procedure for the appointment of staff is set out in the GCU Liaison Handbook. All INTO GCU staff involved in the delivery of programmes and modules are designated as GCU Associate Lecturers. The host School and INTO GCU identify appropriately qualified staff to teach modules and any nominations for appointment have to be approved by the Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee.

2.19 New staff undergo a detailed induction programme which introduces them to INTO GCU and the specific needs of their students. At the beginning of each term, further induction sessions are held to ensure staff are familiar with any module changes and different teaching activities.

2.20 All staff have an annual performance review with their line manager, which includes discussion of objectives and, where applicable, staff development needs. The quality of teaching is monitored through the annual performance review process. This process is designed to help tutors to develop their teaching practice and enables INTO GCU to ensure that teaching is effectively supporting learning opportunities. Performance targets are agreed

at these meetings and any development needs are identified. Additionally teaching staff are encouraged to peer review each other across subject areas to support the blended approach to teaching and learning.

2.21 Staff are able to attend training and development events run by the University as well as those run in-house by the Centre. Specific needs identified by the Centre Director are discussed with IUP's HR function to shape any specific training and development needs. The Centre is also willing to fund external development for staff, if relevant and of benefit to their role. The Centre maintains a detailed schedule of training activities for each member of staff and also records CPD in annual performance review process.

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

2.22 INTO GCU in partnership with the University has put in place a range of measures to effectively support international students in their transition to the UK higher education system.

2.23 All students receive an induction when they arrive at the Centre. Students are required to attend all sessions and scheduled classes and the Centre operates a rigorous attendance monitoring system. The Centre has adopted effective mechanisms to identify and support students perceived to be at risk of academic failure. Support is available through weekly tutorials with a personal tutor. These meetings are complemented by Progress Reports, which are completed each half term.

2.24 Students have access to revision and additional support classes. They are also directed to a common area on the GCU Learn site which is updated regularly with academic support materials. In addition INTO GCU students have access to the Learning and Development Centres in the three host Schools.

2.25 INTO GCU has a comprehensive student support resource in-house, with a Head of Student Services supported by Student Services officers and administrative staff. The team offers a first point of contact for students. When necessary the team signposts students to more specialised support services. Students that the team met commented favourably on the level of support they were able to access and the approachability of staff for students seeking help or support.

2.26 INTO GCU reviews the effectiveness of its support for students on an ongoing basis through its monitoring processes. Satisfaction levels with student support are collected through the Annual Student Experience Survey and through the meetings of the Staff:Student Consultative Group (SSCG).

2.27 The team considers the wide-ranging and highly-effective support mechanisms provided by the Centre and the University, which enable students to develop their full potential, is **good practice**.

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

2.28 The provision of learning resources is a shared responsibility between INTO GCU and the University. The JV Board is responsible for the strategic oversight of resources. INTO GCU recognises the need to continually monitor resources to ensure that they meet the needs of the student population. Students and staff provide feedback on the learning resources which feed through the SSCG and the Programme Board into the JALG.

2.29 Students are fully enrolled as students of the University and have access to all University services and facilities, including the activities and services offered by the Students' Union. The Centre is self-contained and well-equipped for study and leisure. It is well located on the main GCU campus, which facilitates involvement in University life and access to the resources and support available at the University.

2.30 The VLE is used for academic support and skills development and provides additional learning material for students. Students that the team met confirmed that all the learning materials relating to their programmes and modules were made available on the VLE.

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

3 Information

How effective are the provider's arrangements for ensuring that information about learning opportunities is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy?

3.1 There are clear procedures and processes for marketing INTO GCU to prospective students through programme and module information, prospectuses and other media. IUP provides information about INTO GCU through a variety of media, including its Partner Portal, the corporate website, the INTO GCU website, and INTO GCU prospectuses. The latter are produced by the Joint Marketing and Recruitment Group, which works closely with relevant teams within the University. Externally-facing information about programmes and the link with the University is approved by the University and INTO.

3.2 Information used in marketing material (such as that relating to academic performance, student satisfaction levels, and student feedback) undergoes a thorough checking process before inclusion in any marketing material, and checks are made at each stage of the process. Agents used by IUP are thoroughly briefed and trained to ensure that they are providing accurate and consistent information to applicants. Social media channels are maintained and monitored by the IUP Digital content team.

3.3 Pre-arrival guides and handbooks are made available to applicants once they have accepted an offer to study at the Centre. Other student-facing information, including Programme Handbooks, is made available to students on arrival, as part of their induction to the programmes. In addition, students receive briefing sessions and interactive presentations. Information for students is checked by the Centre and the University, for example, Student Handbooks are checked by the Academic Director before final approval by GCU. Students commented positively about the accuracy and the timeliness of the information they received. This applied to information provided both before arrival, on arrival and during their time on the programme.

The review team concludes that **reliance can** be placed on the information that INTO GCU produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers.

Glossary

This glossary is a quick-reference guide to terms that may be used in this report.

User-friendly explanations of a wide range of terms can be found in the longer **Glossary** on the QAA website: www.qaa.ac.uk/glossary.

Academic standards

The standards set by **degree-awarding bodies** for their courses (programmes and modules) and expected for their awards. See also **threshold academic standard**.

Award

A qualification, or academic credit, conferred in formal recognition that a student has achieved the intended **learning outcomes** and passed the assessments required to meet the academic standards set for a **programme** or unit of study.

Blended learning

Learning delivered by a number of different methods, usually including face-to-face and e-learning (see **technology enhanced** or **enabled learning**).

Credit(s)

A means of quantifying and recognising learning, used by most institutions that provide higher education **programmes of study**, expressed as numbers of credits at a specific level.

Degree-awarding body

A UK higher education provider (typically a university) with the power to award degrees, conferred by Royal Charter, or under Section 76 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, or under Section 48 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992, or by Papal Bull, or, since 1999, granted by the Privy Council on advice from QAA (in response to applications for taught degree awarding powers, research degree awarding powers or university title).

Distance learning

A course of study that does not involve face-to-face contact between students and tutors but instead uses technology such as the internet, intranets, broadcast media, CD-ROM and video, or traditional methods of correspondence - learning 'at a distance'.

See also **blended learning**.

e-learning

See **technology enhanced** or **enabled learning**.

Embedded college

Colleges, often operating as part of a network, that are embedded on or near the campuses of UK higher education institutions (HEI) and that primarily provide preparatory programmes for higher education.

Enhancement

The process by which higher education providers systematically improve the quality of provision and the ways in which students' learning is supported. It is used as a technical term in our review processes.

Flexible and distributed learning

A programme or module that does not require the student to attend classes or events at particular times and locations. See also **distance learning**.

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: *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and *The Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland* (FHEQIS).

Good practice

A process or way of working that, in the view of a QAA review team, makes a particularly positive contribution to a higher education provider's management of academic standards and the quality of its educational provision. It is used as a technical term in QAA's audit and review processes.

Learning opportunities

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

Learning outcomes

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, establishing exactly what QAA means when using it in reviews and reports.

Programme (of study)

An approved course of study that 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.

Public information

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

Quality Code

Short term for the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, which is the UK-wide set of **reference points** for higher education providers (agreed through consultation with the higher education community, and published by QAA), which states the Expectations that all providers are required to meet.

Reference points

Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured.

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.

Technology enhanced or enabled learning (or e-learning)

Learning that is delivered or supported through the use of technology.

Threshold academic standard

The minimum acceptable level of achievement that a student has to demonstrate to be eligible for an academic **award**. Threshold academic standards are set out in the national **frameworks** and **subject benchmark statements**.

Virtual learning environment (VLE)

An intranet or password-only interactive website (also referred to as a platform or user interface) giving access to **learning opportunities** electronically. These might include resources such as: course handbooks, information and reading lists; blogs, message boards and forums; recorded lectures; and/or facilities for online seminars (webinars).

Widening participation

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

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