



# **Integrated quality and enhancement review**

**Summative review**

**Lambeth College**

**June 2012**

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## Preface

The mission of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is to safeguard the public interest in sound standards of higher education qualifications and to inform and encourage continual improvement in the management of the quality of higher education. As part of this mission, QAA undertakes reviews of higher education provision delivered in further education colleges. This process is known as Integrated quality and enhancement review (IQER).

## Purpose of IQER

Higher education programmes delivered by further education colleges (colleges) lead to awards made by higher education institutions or Edexcel. The awarding bodies retain ultimate responsibility for maintaining the academic standards of their awards and assuring the quality of the students' learning opportunities. The purpose of IQER is, therefore, to safeguard the public interest in the academic standards and quality of higher education delivered in colleges. It achieves this by providing objective and independent information about the way in which colleges discharge their responsibilities within the context of their partnership agreements with awarding bodies. IQER focuses on three core themes: academic standards, quality of learning opportunities and public information.

## The IQER process

IQER is a peer review process. It is divided into two complementary stages: Developmental engagement and Summative review. In accordance with the published method, colleges with less than 100 full-time equivalent students funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), may elect not to take part in Developmental engagements, but all HEFCE-funded colleges will take part in Summative review.

## Developmental engagement

Developmental engagements explore in an open and collegial way the challenges colleges face in specific areas of higher education provision. Each college's first, and often their only, Developmental engagement focuses on student assessment.

The main elements of a Developmental engagement are:

- a self-evaluation by the college
- an optional written submission by the student body
- a preparatory meeting between the college and the IQER coordinator several weeks before the Developmental engagement visit
- the Developmental engagement visit, which normally lasts two days
- the evaluation of the extent to which the college manages effectively its responsibilities for the delivery of academic standards and the quality of its higher education provision, plus the arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of public information it is responsible for publishing about its higher education
- the production of a written report of the team's findings.

To promote a collegial approach, Developmental engagement teams include up to two members of staff from the further education college under review. They are known as nominees for this process.

## Summative review

Summative review addresses all aspects of a college's HEFCE-funded higher education provision and provides judgements on the management and delivery of this provision against core themes one and two, and a conclusion against core theme three.

Summative review shares the main elements of Developmental engagement described above. Summative review teams however, are composed of the IQER coordinator and QAA reviewers. They do not include nominees.

## Evidence

In order to obtain evidence for the review, IQER teams carry out a number of activities, including:

- reviewing the college's self-evaluation and its internal procedures and documents
- reviewing the optional written submission from students
- asking questions of relevant staff
- talking to students about their experiences.

IQER teams' expectations of colleges are guided by a nationally agreed set of reference points, known as the Academic Infrastructure. These are published by QAA and consist of:

- *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)*, which includes descriptions of different higher education qualifications
- the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education (Code of practice)*
- subject benchmark statements, which describe the characteristics of degrees in different subjects
- guidelines for preparing programme specifications, which are descriptions of what is on offer to students in individual programmes of study
- award benchmark statements which describe the generic characteristics of an award, for example Foundation Degrees.

In addition, Developmental engagement teams gather evidence by focusing on particular aspects of the theme under review. These are known as 'lines of enquiry'.

## Outcomes of IQER

Each Developmental engagement and Summative review results in a written report:

- Developmental engagement reports set out good practice and recommendations and implications for the college and its awarding bodies, but do not contain judgements. Recommendations will be at one of three levels - **essential**, **advisable** and **desirable**. To promote an open and collegial approach to Developmental engagements, the reports are not published.
- Summative review reports identify good practice and contain judgements about whether the college is discharging its responsibilities effectively against core themes one and two above. The judgements are **confidence**, **limited confidence** or **no confidence**. There is no judgement for the third core theme, instead the report will provide evaluation and a conclusion. Summative review reports are published. Differentiated judgements can be made where a team judges a college's

management of the standards and/or quality of the awards made by one awarding body to be different from those made by another.

Colleges are required to develop an action plan to address any recommendations arising from IQER. Progress against these action plans is monitored by QAA in conjunction with HEFCE and/or the college's awarding body/ies as appropriate. The college's action plan in response to the conclusions of the Summative review will be published as part of the report.

## Executive summary

### The Summative review of Lambeth College carried out in June 2012

As a result of its investigations, the Summative review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreements, for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreements, for the quality of learning opportunities it offers. The team considers that reliance **can** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

### Good practice

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

- the rigorous moderation processes ensure a shared understanding of academic standards
- a systematic and diligent approach is taken to secure students' active engagement in the quality improvement of the provision and to respond to their concerns
- the continuing strong links with employers promote high-quality learning in the workplace and enhance the vocational currency of the provision as previously identified through the Developmental engagements
- the academic support for learning is well managed, highly accessible and addresses the needs of non-traditional learners
- students have access to high-quality resources supported by the proactive stance of the learning resources team in the development, availability and use of electronic resources
- the course information sheets detail the demands of each programme, and provide information on finances, work-based learning, time requirements, academic expectations and commitments.

### Recommendations

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

The team considers that it would be **advisable** for the College to:

- establish clear reporting lines which articulate responsibilities for the oversight of academic standards within the deliberative structure of the College
- report annually on its higher education provision to ensure the consistent review of standards and the sharing of best practices
- develop a consistent process for receiving, monitoring and responding to the actions and recommendations from external examiner reports
- strengthen its strategic oversight of the quality of higher education provision to ensure the timely completion of actions to support improvements.

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

- develop a staff higher education handbook to provide clear and consistent guidance

on the College's quality processes and procedures for supporting its higher education provision

- review the staff development strategy to ensure activities relevant to higher education provide greater support for the currency of learning opportunities and dissemination of good practice
- systematically map its own provision against the *Code of practice* to confirm threshold standards
- implement a peer observation scheme to support the sharing of good practice and the use of higher education reference points
- formalise the arrangements for the management and safeguarding of public information within an overarching policy to ensure their continuing currency and accuracy.

## A Introduction and context

1 This report presents the findings of the Summative review of higher education funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) conducted at Lambeth College (the College). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the College discharges its responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes which the College delivers on behalf of Canterbury Christ Church University, De Montfort University and London South Bank University. The review was carried out by Dr Colin Fryer, Mrs Catherine Fairhurst, Mr Bob Millington (reviewers) and Mrs Mandy Hobart (coordinator).

2 The Summative review team (the team) conducted the review in agreement with the College and in accordance with *The handbook for Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review* (the handbook), published by QAA. Evidence in support of the Summative review included handbooks, minutes of meetings, policy documents, module specifications, external examiner reports and meetings with staff and students. In particular, the team drew on the findings and recommendations of the Developmental engagement in assessment and the Developmental engagement in work-based learning. A summary of findings from the Developmental engagement in assessment and from the Developmental engagement in work-based learning is provided in Section C of this report. The review also considered the College's use of the Academic Infrastructure, developed by QAA on behalf of higher education providers, with reference to the *Code of practice*, subject and award benchmark statements, the FHEQ and programme specifications.

3 In order to assist HEFCE to gain information to assist with the assessment of the impact of Foundation Degree awards, Section D of this report summarises details of the Foundation Degree programmes delivered at the College.

4 Lambeth College is a large further education college with 9,700 full and part-time students. The College was formed in 1993 through an amalgamation of three former colleges in south London, and currently operates across three sites at Clapham Common, Vauxhall and Brixton. Higher education courses were first delivered in some of the original colleges over 30 years ago through the University of London. The College is an area of high ethnic diversity and with high rates of unemployment.

5 The College has 178 full and part-time HEFCE-funded higher education students (100.02 full-time equivalents), which represent 3 per cent of the student body. The higher education provision includes Foundation Degrees and teacher training in partnership with three universities. The College's higher education provision objectives are based on a college ethos of high standards, performance and expectations through the promotion of equality of opportunity. Of the HEFCE-funded numbers, 56 per cent are female, 77 per cent are over 25 years and 54 per cent are from black and minority ethnic groups.

The following higher education programmes, set under the relevant awarding body, were offered at the College during the academic year 2011-12 (full-time equivalent students in brackets).

### Canterbury Christ Church University

- Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (13.6)

### De Montfort University



- FdASc Dental Technology (39.68)

### **London South Bank University**

- FdA Accountancy (10.63)
- FdA Early Years (26.4)
- FdA Urban Regeneration and Community Development (9.71)

## **Partnership agreements with the awarding bodies**

6 Higher education provision delivered by the College is offered in partnership with the three universities referred to in paragraph 1. The Foundation Degrees are operated in accordance with the rules and regulations of the respective partners. The College routinely engages in partnership planning meetings, course reviews, development meetings, and external moderation and examination boards. Each programme leader is in regular contact with their link tutor in respect of the day-to-day running of the programmes. The partnership with De Montfort University is scheduled to finish once existing students have completed the Foundation Degree in Dental Technology in 2013.

## **Recent developments in higher education at the College**

7 Since the last Developmental engagement in June 2011, there have been a number of staff changes, including the appointment of a new Principal. The College has recently undergone a restructuring and is in the process of establishing new roles and responsibilities, including the role of Head of Higher Education as a Head of School reporting to one of the two Curriculum Directors. This is planned to support the consistency of practice across programmes and to improve the quality of provision. In the autumn of 2009 De Montfort University gave formal notice that as a result of reductions in funding, they intended to terminate the partnership. As a result there have been no new enrolments on the Foundation Degree in Dental Technology.

8 The further capping of HEFCE-funded places for the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector to 35 places proved insufficient to meet the in-service training requirements for College staff. However, since 2011 the College has been able to provide co-funded places to meet the demand from learners and from employers.

## **Students' contribution to the review, including the written submission**

9 Students studying on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the team. Students took part in two online surveys and a student focus group which was chaired by an external consultant. The data and information were collated into a summary document and returned to student representatives for confirmation. The students met with the coordinator during the preparatory meeting, and a small group of students met with the review team, as the visit took place after the end of the teaching year. The team found the written submission and meetings to be a useful platform upon which to further explore the learning experience of students.

## **B Evaluation of the management of HEFCE-funded higher education**

### **Core theme 1: Academic standards**

#### **How are responsibilities for managing and delivering higher education standards delegated within the management structure and what reporting arrangements are in place?**

10 The College adheres closely to the requirements of its three partner universities for the management of standards of its higher education programmes. The College is also reliant upon the awarding bodies' procedures to underpin its own quality assurance processes. The awarding bodies are responsible for establishing and monitoring academic standards of higher education provision offered by the College. Students are bound by university regulations. The awarding bodies provide comprehensive policies and procedures which are clearly articulated in the respective partnership agreements for the management of the standards of its awards. The College adheres strictly to these policies and procedures. In all cases awarding bodies must ratify academic aspects of the provision, approve the qualifications of college staff who teach on programmes, appoint the external examiners, and run the Board of Examiners for the relevant programme.

11 The College has a tight management structure, with specific responsibility for higher education as befits its small provision. Programme coordinators report to the Higher Education Curriculum Manager who has a cross-college responsibility for the standards of programme delivery. The Higher Education Curriculum Manager reports directly to the Head of Curriculum who reports to the senior management. Within the current management structure, the programme coordinators and senior managers with responsibility for higher education all have clearly designated roles for the maintenance of standards. Staff work closely with university link tutors to maintain effective liaison with the awarding bodies. The College is in the process of reshaping its management structures and functional responsibilities. As part of this process it is reviewing the quality reporting procedures and mechanisms.

12 The Higher Education Steering Group is the principal quality monitoring body for higher education provision and plays a key role in reviewing and driving the higher education strategy. However, the team saw limited evidence of formal and routine monitoring of the Developmental engagement action plans. While the action plans are considered by senior management, the requirement of undertaking a second Developmental engagement resulted in priority being given to ensuring that the majority of desirable recommendations were implemented. The Adult Responsive Management Board considers admissions, assessment, learning resources and programme review reports, and monitors progress against actions identified in the meetings for all levels of provision. Consequently, there is no discrete reporting channel from the Higher Education Steering Group to College Governors. It is advisable that the College establish clear reporting lines which articulate responsibilities for the oversight of academic standards within the deliberative structure of the College.

13 The regulatory frameworks of each awarding body determine academic standards. However, the differing regulations and requirements of the partner universities pose a challenge for the Higher Education Curriculum Manager and the Higher Education Steering Group in ensuring a consistent oversight of standards. These arrangements would be strengthened through the development of a definitive higher education handbook which articulates procedures for staff to support clarity and consistency across provision. It is desirable that the College develop a staff higher education handbook to provide clear and

consistent guidance on the College's quality processes and procedures supporting its higher education provision.

### **What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?**

14 The College's engagement with the Academic Infrastructure is achieved primarily through the awarding bodies' partnership agreements and regulatory frameworks. Elements including subject benchmarks are embedded in the curricular design of programmes and in programme and module specifications. The awarding bodies' validation processes ensure that programme specifications are mapped to the FHEQ and are designed to meet the relevant subject benchmark statements. These processes require evidence to show that the aims, intended learning outcomes and assessment strategies are set within the context of the *Code of practice* and the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark*. The awarding bodies ensure that assignment briefs take account of the *Code of practice, Section 6: Assessment of students*. Detailed assessment strategies are incorporated into individual module specifications. The College has not formally audited its higher education provision against the different sections of the *Code of practice*, although it is clear that the *Code of practice* does inform practice, for example in relation to work-based learning guidance in handbooks.

### **How does the College assure itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to ensure that the standards of higher education provision meet the requirements of validating partners and awarding bodies?**

15 The College is meeting its responsibilities in respect of the partnership agreements and appropriate academic standards are being safeguarded. The awarding bodies provide a detailed framework for quality assurance within which the College operates as discussed in paragraph 10. Responsibilities are clearly defined within formal memoranda of agreement between the parties. The College is responsible for appointing programme coordinators and operating programme team meetings with student representatives. The College is also responsible for operating student feedback mechanisms and reporting outcomes to the awarding bodies through the annual programme reports.

16 Programmes are reviewed for quality and effectiveness through the College programme review process and consideration of annual programme reports and action plans. The Developmental engagement recommendation to review programme evaluation templates is in the process of being implemented. The modified annual programme review reports, evidence a self-critical and analytical approach with well-focused action plans. These are monitored by the awarding bodies and the College's Higher Education Steering Group. The Quality Improvement Plans are also reviewed throughout the year in team meetings to ensure progress is being achieved. The College has not as yet taken forward the development of an annual institution higher education monitoring report as recommended in the Developmental engagement in assessment action plan. This has in part been due to the withdrawal of a number of programmes. However, a College mechanism to ensure the review and identification of best practice across all higher education provision would facilitate the identification of issues relevant to the future strategic direction of its higher education provision and would support both quality and standards. While the College system is appropriate for the small provision, it would be significantly strengthened by a formal review of the whole higher education offer. It is advisable that the College report annually on its higher education provision to ensure the consistent review of standards and the sharing of best practices.

17 The College has well-established and very close working relationships with its awarding bodies. The awarding body partners appoint a link tutor for each programme who

acts as a point of contact with the programme coordinator to offer support for the College on programme delivery. Programme coordinators and link tutors work closely within the remit of their respective partnership agreements, maintaining regular contact. Relationships are mutually supportive and engender confidence that the partnerships are effective at institutional and programme levels.

18 The programme teams ensure that the number and types of assessment meet the specified learning outcomes. Programme handbooks include assessment schedules and schemes of work. The College has introduced standardised marking submission sheets to enable the Higher Education Steering Group to monitor marking returns to ensure timely feedback. The students confirmed that assessment feedback is helpful, with constructive comments which support achievement. The internal moderation process is effective and activity ensures that there is a shared understanding of the academic standards students are expected to achieve, and that assessment outcomes are fair and reliable. This is further enhanced by consortium standardisation meetings for dental technology, early years and teacher training. The effectiveness of the moderation process was cited in a recent Canterbury Christ Church University periodic review report. The review identified that the rigorous moderation process effectively ensure a shared understanding of academic standards at Lambeth College to be good practice, which the team endorse.

19 Issues identified from external examiner reports are incorporated within appropriate quality improvement plans. The Higher Education Steering Group does not specifically review external examiner reports as these are received by the partner universities in most cases and responded to centrally. However, external examiner reports are considered at the annual programme review meetings where they have been received by the College. Consideration of late reports takes place at programme level, and no formal report is sent to the Higher Education Steering Group. This reduces the effectiveness of the College to ensure central oversight of the process and consistency of practice. The College acknowledges the need to share external examiners' reports with students and this is under development. It is advisable that the College develop a consistent process for receiving, monitoring and responding to the actions and recommendations from external examiner reports.

### **What are the College's arrangements for staff development to support the achievement of appropriate academic standards?**

20 Staff development and continuous professional development activity is an obligation for all teaching staff at the College. The College keeps a record of continuous professional development activity. Mechanisms for identifying staff development needs include teaching observations, annual appraisals, programme reviews and programme team meetings. While the College's staff development programme is well resourced, its continuing professional development directory confirms that staff development activities include few that are specific to higher education. The College acknowledges that there is a need for further training to update staff on the Academic Infrastructure and the appropriate sections of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code). Awarding bodies also offer support to College staff, through access to their own staff development events, for example the consortium based development workshop organised by Canterbury Christ Church University on trainee progress and holistic assessment grading. While the support offered by the awarding bodies provides a valuable contribution to the staff development opportunities, it is desirable that the College review the staff development strategy to ensure activities relevant to higher education provide greater support for currency of learning opportunities and dissemination of good practice.

**The team concludes that it has confidence in the College's management of its responsibilities as set out in its partnership agreements for the management and delivery of the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies.**

## **Core theme 2: Quality of learning opportunities**

### **How are responsibilities for managing the quality of learning opportunities for higher education programmes delegated within the management structure and what reporting arrangements are in place?**

21 The management arrangements for academic standards, described in paragraph 10, ensure that the College meets its responsibilities regarding the quality of learning opportunities. The partnership agreements differ in detail and scope, especially regarding the responsibilities that are shared. Responsibilities include the management of student enrolment, induction and support, the delivery of teaching and learning, the supervision of work-based learning, and the provision of resources. Day-to-day management centres on the work of programme coordinators and includes the regular team meetings to which student representatives are periodically invited. Minutes indicate that meetings are well structured and that teaching staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. The Higher Education Steering Group brings together the programme coordinators and senior management and provides a key forum for consideration of the overall quality of learning opportunities. Programme reviews, student feedback, work-based learning and resources are effectively addressed and support greater consistency and sharing of good practice.

22 Management structures and reporting arrangements are less successful in driving forward and completing identified actions to improve the quality of learning. This is exemplified in the way the College has not fully taken forward the recommendations from the two Developmental engagements. A third of the actions relating to the quality of learning remain to be fully completed. While the team found some evidence of actions being taken forward effectively, within the Higher Education Steering Group's standard agendas, the College has not systematically addressed the completion of all the action plan recommendations. It is advisable that the College strengthens its strategic oversight of the quality of learning for higher education to ensure the timely completion of actions to support improvements.

### **How does the College assure itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to its awarding bodies to ensure that students receive appropriate learning opportunities?**

23 The College is diligent in complying with the awarding bodies' quality management procedures. Activities include the production of annual programme reviews, attendance at consortia and board meetings and the regular liaison with the awarding bodies' link tutors to support the monitoring of programme quality. University representatives confirmed that College staff are conscientious in meeting their obligations and are contributing positively to the development of the respective partnerships.

24 The annual programme reviews and associated quality improvement plans that are forwarded to university partners provide a significant opportunity for the College to assure itself that it is meeting its responsibilities for the quality of learning opportunities. Following the Developmental engagement in assessment in 2010, the College has

introduced a process of reviews at the Higher Education Steering Group including a summary of strengths and areas for improvement by programme teams.

### **What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?**

25 The arrangements described under academic standards in paragraph 14 ensure that the Academic Infrastructure is embedded in the documentation and procedures underpinning the delivery of learning opportunities. However, staff demonstrated only limited direct engagement with the *Code of practice*. The College recognises that it must both extend staff awareness of the Academic Infrastructure and systematically map its own provision against the *Code of practice*. It is desirable that the College systematically maps its own provision against the *Code of practice* to confirm threshold standards.

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

26 Teaching quality on higher education programmes is robustly monitored using the College's overarching observation scheme. Teaching sessions are individually graded and moderated using Ofsted's criteria to provide an overall profile of the provision. The observations also play an important developmental role, with areas for improvement identified for individual staff and the actions followed up in appraisal reviews. Staff find the current arrangements to be fair, supportive, and appropriate. The College plans to introduce a peer observation and feedback scheme for staff teaching higher education from September 2012, to further ensure that teaching supports the development of higher education skills. It is desirable that the College implements a peer observation scheme to support the sharing of good practice and the use of higher education reference points.

27 Students confirmed their satisfaction with the teaching provided on their programmes, and the high level of individual attention they received from staff. Student feedback is rigorously monitored and evaluated at all levels in the College to improve the quality of learning opportunities. A wide range of methods is used to ensure effective student engagement including module questionnaires, team meetings with course representatives and the use of focus groups. The College has responded to the Developmental engagement recommendation in 2010 and has developed biannual online surveys across the provision, which are easily accessible to part-time students and which have encouraged their fuller participation in quality improvement. The College is diligent in responding to student concerns, making use of direct contact with course representatives at team meetings, e-mail feedback, and newsletters posted on the virtual learning environment to keep them informed of developments. The team concluded that the College demonstrates good practice in the systematic and diligent approach that is taken to secure students' active engagement in the quality improvement of the provision and to respond to their concerns.

28 The College liaises closely with employers to support the work-based learning, and effective arrangements ensure consideration of employer feedback for part-time provision in particular. Examples identified include: the ongoing consultations and feedback from employers to inform the currency of the curricula; the clear documentation and feedback from mentors and tutors mapping student achievement against professional practice targets; and the training that is provided for mentors to ensure that they are aware of students' programme outcomes. The team consider that the College's continuing strong links with employers promote high-quality learning in the workplace and enhance the vocational currency of the provision as previously identified as good practice at the Developmental engagements.

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

29 Robust admissions, induction and tutorial procedures are in place to help the College achieve its aim to widen participation in higher education. Arrangements include the initial assessment of the needs of non-traditional entrants, the use of diagnostic tests to ensure that additional needs are properly identified, and timetabled individual tutorials with regular progress reviews. Effective use is made of email, the virtual learning environment, social networking sites and mobile phone text messages to ensure that academic and pastoral support is always accessible to students. A wide range of welfare and support services are available within the College. Students with disabilities such as dyslexia who enrol on London South Bank University programmes make use of its specialist facilities under the terms of the partnership agreement. Staff liaise closely with London South Bank University to ensure students receive the appropriate exam concessions. Student feedback indicates a high level of satisfaction with the quality of programme support, and with the availability of tutors for individual discussions which helps students to build their self-confidence.

30 The effectiveness of support arrangements is monitored closely by the College through the evaluation of student feedback and the analysis of year-on-year retention, achievement and success data. Data provided is comprehensive and confirms a high level of student achievement on the programmes. The team also noted the high level of progression to honours degrees from the early years and accounting Foundation Degrees. The team consider that the academic support for learning is well managed, highly accessible, addresses the needs of non-traditional learners and represents good practice.

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

31 The comments and conclusions drawn on the College's arrangements for staff development under academic standards, in paragraph 20, apply equally to the quality of learning opportunities. While staff are able to access development activities run by the partner universities, there is no discrete budget to support scholarly activity or vocational updating. Much of the in-house staff development provision is targeted at supporting further education provision and general pedagogy, and apart from the planned higher education event on small group teaching, there is no specific higher education activity.

### **How does the College ensure the sufficiency and accessibility of the learning resources the students need to achieve the intended learning outcomes for their programmes?**

32 The College has sound procedures for ensuring the quality of learning resources. The College's budgeting strategy for the higher education programmes is fully integrated with that of the rest of its provision based on the annual allocation to faculties. The special requirements of higher education are taken into account in this process, for example in relation to the reduced class-contact allocated to programme coordinators in recognition of their additional responsibilities. However, the College has not yet found it possible to resource the dedicated teaching and base-rooms for the provision that would enable a distinctive higher education ethos in the College that is envisaged in its Higher Education Strategy. College resources are significantly enriched by the good use made of links with employers to support work-based learning, including the development of dental laboratory facilities as a result of strong industry links with specialist employers within the sector.

33 A particular strength of the provision is the proactive support provided to staff and students by the College's Learning Resources Service Team, recently awarded the Gold

award for excellent service by the Council of Learning Resources in Colleges. The team's approach is especially well suited to higher education and includes the provision of information technology, and electronic book and journal training for students. Annual consultations take place with staff to update reading lists. Representation of learning resource staff on the Higher Education Steering Group supports the curriculum and the development of new initiatives. The College has prioritised the development of electronic resources on its virtual library and virtual learning environment. This ensures that students have access to high quality resources supported by the proactive stance of the learning resources team in the development, availability and use of electronic resources, which represents good practice.

34 Effective mechanisms are in place to ensure the development and availability of resources on the intranet through staff training, checks on usage and regular quality audits. The team found the materials to be appropriate, but identified that more use could be made of interactive materials to support greater independence in learning. Students also make good use of the online learning resources and, where appropriate, the library and other facilities made available by the partner universities. Students expressed their satisfaction with the resources made available to them by the College.

**The team concludes that it has confidence in the College's management of its responsibilities for the quality of the learning opportunities as required by the awarding bodies to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.**

### **Core theme 3: Public information**

#### **What information is the College responsible for publishing about its HEFCE-funded higher education?**

35 The College is responsible for publishing a range of information about its higher education provision including programme handbooks and information sheets for each programme of study. The website and the virtual learning environment house a range of publicity and informational materials including course leaflets, handbooks and assessment information which complies with awarding body requirements. The partnership agreements are supplemented by the awarding bodies' handbooks and guides outlining the College's responsibilities for programme and publicity materials. The College publishes a range of useful information about its higher education provision including prospectuses in both hard copy and electronically. The students also access the College's social networking sites to gain updates and to exchange information. The marketing department has oversight of the social media site and is supporting its development.

36 Students are issued with a detailed programme handbook which they find useful. The handbooks for the London South Bank University and De Montfort University validated programmes are contextualised by the College using templates provided. The programme handbook and additional guides for Canterbury Christ Church University provision are published by the university. The students confirmed that programme handbooks contain essential information on programme content, assessment procedures, communications and support, and are fit for purpose. The students reported that they found the course information sheets helpful when deciding to apply for a higher education programme. The course information sheets which detail the demands of each programme, and provide information on finances, work-based learning, time requirements, academic expectations and commitments, represent good practice.



37 The College operates a virtual learning environment to facilitate student learning, which students reported they found useful. Students have access to programme information, calendars, course and assessment materials, learning resources including the library catalogue and links to a social networking site. The virtual learning environment for each programme is audited by the Higher Education Steering Group twice a year to standardise the content of programme pages. The programme coordinators ensure the currency of the content of the site by editing it annually. The majority of staff delivering Higher Education programmes receive external training in posting documents to the virtual learning environment. The College ensures materials and resources are consistently provided through the College virtual learning environment which the students reported as meeting their needs.

**What arrangements does the College have in place to assure the accuracy and completeness of information the College has responsibility for publishing?  
How does the College know that these arrangements are effective?**

38 Accurate information is provided to students, and the College's arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of information for internal use are adequate but informal. These arrangements rely heavily on programme coordinators ensuring accuracy and currency of the information. Students' views are sought on published materials such as the draft higher education student handbook and collected through autumn and spring online surveys. The document version control system has recently been reviewed and a tag system is used to identify the latest version of a document. To further assure the quality of information it is desirable that the College formalise arrangements for the management and safeguarding public information within an overarching policy to ensure their continuing currency and accuracy.

39 There are suitable arrangements in place for checking the accuracy and consistency of publicity and marketing information for the College's higher education provision. The Principal has overall responsibility for marketing and public information. Programme coordinators are responsible for providing programme information for the prospectus using a standard template and checking that it is current and correct with the link tutors. These are checked by the Higher Education Curriculum Manager prior to being sent to the marketing department. The programme outlines form the basis of the printed higher education prospectus and are uploaded to the College website based on a standard template following approval by the Registrar. There is a useful checklist for dates for the publication of pre-programme information. However, the explicit publications strategy as recommended in the Developmental engagement is still being developed, including explicit timelines and responsibilities for updates. The draft strategy includes the addition of a public information self-assessment in the annual review process. The processes by which information is produced, approved, registered, published and audited are yet to be formally defined in the strategy. The students reported that they are satisfied with the quality and currency of published information available to them both when they were applying and as students at the College.

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

## **C Summary of findings from the Developmental engagements**

### **Developmental engagement in assessment**

40 The Developmental engagement in assessment took place in May 2010. The lines of enquiry allowed a broad consideration of the management of assessment in the College. The lines of enquiry were as follows.

**Line of enquiry 1:** How does the College ensure that assessments are fit for purpose and support achievement, including consideration of learner feedback?

**Line of enquiry 2:** How does the College ensure that students receive good quality feedback on both formative and summative assessments?

**Line of enquiry 3:** How does the College ensure that published information on assessment is clear and understood by learners?

41 Good practice was found in oversight of academic standards and quality by the Higher Education Steering Group. The College's active engagement with employers to enhance the currency of its programmes and clear assessment strategies in the Foundation Degree Dental Technology in particular promote employability skills through the incorporation of professional standards. The team also identified good use of information from module evaluations to inform changes and improvements to a range of programmes.

42 Recommendations included the advisable development of a higher education handbook to provide clear and consistent information on assessments and academic requirements. All other recommendations were desirable. This included the introduction of annual monitoring at institution level to support the sharing of good practice. The development and application of common terminology in moderation along with a common course evaluation template would support consistency and evaluation across programmes. The further development of the role of the Higher Education Steering Group to include consideration of external examiner and other reports would ensure clear monitoring assessments. The team also identified the need for an institution-level higher education student survey to build on existing feedback mechanisms and to support college-wide analysis, along with the adoption of a standardised module questionnaire. To ensure clarity for students, submission and return dates should be included on assessment briefs. Training for staff in the use of the virtual learning environment was encouraged to improve the range and quality of public information available electronically and through other mediums.

### **Developmental engagement in work-based learning**

43 The Developmental engagement in work-based learning took place in June 2011 following a limited confidence judgement linked to one of the College's former partner universities at the time of the first Developmental engagement. The lines of enquiry allowed a broad consideration of the management of work-based learning in the College. The lines of enquiry were as follows.

**Line of enquiry 1:** How does the College ensure that work-based learning helps students to achieve their learning outcomes?

**Line of enquiry 2:** How does the College ensure that employers are effectively supported in mentoring and in giving assessment support and feedback to students on their work placements?

**Line of enquiry 3:** How does the College ensure that published information on work-based learning is complete and consistent across handbooks, assignment briefs, prospectus and programme information?

44 Good practice was identified in the strong links with employers that promote learning in the workplace and the role of work-based coordinators and mentors in supporting students. The effective support for employers in mentoring students and the use of employer links to inform assessment and promote employability skills promotes student achievement. The clear documentation in the FdA Early Years explicitly maps student achievement against professional practice targets and learning outcomes. Standard course sheets provide prospective students with clear and detailed information on work-based learning and the audit of the virtual learning environment ensures the clarity, accuracy and completeness of published work-based learning information.

45 The team identified a number of desirable recommendations including the introduction of a college-wide work-based learning policy and the inclusion of work-based learning as a standard agenda item for team meetings. The development of online surveys to capture work-based learning feedback from students and processes for informing students about actions taken in response to issues raised should be introduced. A standardised approach to mentor training should be developed to ensure consistency of support. Prospective students should be provided with clear information on programme assessment strategies for work-based learning and the College should review the way in which it records changes to mentor handbooks and communicates these to stakeholders. The team also recommended that the College develop an explicit publications strategy including time-lines and responsibilities for ensuring information is updated.

## **D Foundation Degrees**

46 The College currently offers four Foundation Degrees in accounting, dental technology, early years and urban regeneration. The FdSc in Dental Technology is due to finish in 2013 and is being replaced by a level 3 qualification recognised by the British Dental Council. The College is reviewing its partnerships with universities and may seek to introduce new programmes depending on the availability of numbers and identified demand in the local community. Progression routes are in place for all Foundation Degrees, though most students from dental technology progress directly in to employment.

47 All conclusions on good practice shown in paragraph 49 also apply to Foundation Degrees, as do the recommendations in paragraphs 51 and 52.

## **E Conclusions and summary of judgements**

48 The team has identified a number of features of good practice in the College's management of its responsibilities for academic standards and for the quality of learning opportunities of the awards the College offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. This was based upon discussion with staff and students and scrutiny of evidence provided by the College and its awarding bodies, Canterbury Christ Church University, De Montfort University and London South Bank University.

49 In the course of the review, the team identified the following areas of **good practice**:

- the rigorous moderation processes ensure a shared understanding of academic standards (paragraph 18)
- a systematic and diligent approach is taken to secure students' active engagement in the quality improvement of the provision and to respond to their concerns (paragraph 27)
- the continuing strong links with employers promote high-quality learning in the workplace and enhance the vocational currency of the provision as previously identified through the Developmental engagements (paragraph 28)
- the academic support for learning is well managed, highly accessible and addresses the needs of non-traditional learners (paragraph 30)
- students have access to high-quality resources supported by the proactive stance of the learning resources team in the development, availability and use of electronic resources (paragraph 33)
- the course information sheets detail the demands of each programme, and provide information on finances, work-based learning, time requirements, academic expectations and commitments (paragraph 36).

50 The team also makes some recommendations for consideration by the College and its awarding bodies.

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

- establish clear reporting lines which articulate responsibilities for the oversight of academic standards within the deliberative structure of the College (paragraph 12)
- report annually on its higher education provision to ensure the consistent review of standards and the sharing of best practices (paragraph 16)
- develop a consistent process for receiving, monitoring and responding to the actions and recommendations from external examiner reports (paragraph 19)
- strengthen its strategic oversight of the quality of higher education provision to ensure the timely completion of actions to support improvements (paragraph 22).

52 The team considers that it is **desirable** for the College to:

- develop a staff higher education handbook to provide clear and consistent guidance on the College's quality processes and procedures for supporting its higher education provision (paragraph 13)
- review the staff development strategy to ensure activities relevant to higher education provide greater support for the currency of learning opportunities and dissemination of good practice (paragraph 20)
- systematically map its own provision against the *Code of practice* to confirm threshold standards (paragraph 25)
- implement a peer observation scheme to support the sharing of good practice and the use of higher education reference points (paragraph 26)
- formalise the arrangements for the management and safeguarding of public information within an overarching policy and to ensure their continuing currency and accuracy (paragraph 38).

53 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that it has **confidence** that, in the context of this Summative review, the College discharges its

responsibilities effectively, as set out in the relevant partnership agreement for the management of the standards of the awards of its awarding bodies.

54 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that it has **confidence** that, in the context of this Summative review, the College discharges its responsibilities effectively, as set out in the relevant partnership agreement for the management of the quality of learning opportunities to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

55 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that, in the context of this Summative review, reliance **can** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

<b>Lambeth College action plan relating to the Summative review: June 2012</b>						
<b>Good practice</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>
In the course of the Summative review the team identified the following areas of <b>good practice</b> that are worthy of wider dissemination within the College:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the rigorous moderation processes ensure a shared understanding of academic standards (paragraph 18)</li> </ul>	Continue to ensure moderation processes retain rigour to ensure shared understanding of academic standards	July 2013	Head of Higher Education, Programme Coordinators, Link tutors	External examiner, consortium, internal moderator reports	Higher Education Steering Group	Internal moderator and external examiner reports; staff and student feedback
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a systematic and diligent approach is taken to secure students' active engagement in the quality improvement of the provision and to respond to their concerns (paragraph 27)</li> </ul>	Maintain regular student feedback mechanisms to ensure active participation by students leads to improvement of provision and student experience	July 2013	Head of Higher Education, Programme coordinators	Improved engagement with students; impact of feedback in Higher Education Steering Group minutes	Higher Education Steering Group	Higher education online surveys; course representative meetings; team meetings, Lambeth College mid-module evaluations; e-newsletter summary, Higher Education Steering Group minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the continuing strong links with</li> </ul>	Maintain strong links with employers to	June 2013		Improved engagement with	Higher Education Steering Group	Employer feedback,

<p>employers promote high-quality learning in the workplace and enhance the vocational currency of the provision as previously identified through the Developmental engagements (paragraph 28)</p>	<p>ensure vocational currency</p> <p>Continue to conduct the Employer Telephone Survey annually to review employer support and standardise feedback</p> <p>Review and enhance mentor support packs and training annually</p>	<p>September 2012</p>	<p>Head of Higher Education /Secretariat, Programme coordinators and tutors</p> <p>Programme Coordinators</p>	<p>employers and positive evaluations from students on placements; recorded in Higher Education Steering Group minutes, employer/mentor feedback and telephone surveys, and student surveys</p>		<p>Employer Telephone Survey results</p> <p>Student feedback from module surveys, Higher Education surveys and course reviews</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the academic support for learning is well managed, highly accessible and addresses the needs of non-traditional learners (paragraph 30)</li> </ul>	<p>Maintain monitoring of academic support systems through regular use of one-to-one tutorials and progress reviews</p>	<p>July 2013</p>	<p>Programme Coordinators, Head of Higher Education, Head of Learning Resources</p>	<p>Student performance data; participation in additional support sessions</p>	<p>Higher Education Steering Group</p>	<p>Student feedback from Higher Education surveys, course representative minutes, team meeting minutes, module surveys</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>students have access to high quality resources supported by the proactive stance of the learning resources team in the development, availability and use of electronic</li> </ul>	<p>Maintain and further develop resources for higher education programmes in partnership with the learning resources team</p> <p>Add as standing item to Higher Education Steering Group</p>	<p>July 2013</p> <p>September 2012</p>	<p>Programme Coordinators, Head of Higher Education, Head of Learning Resources</p> <p>Head of Higher Education</p>	<p>Data on student and programme usage, developments reported in Higher Education Steering Group minutes</p>	<p>Higher Education Steering Group</p>	<p>Student feedback, usage reports, Higher Education Steering Group minutes, external examiner reports</p>

resources (paragraph 33)	agenda					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the course information sheets detail the demands of each programme, and provide information on finances, work-based learning, time requirements, academic expectations and commitments (paragraph 36).</li> </ul>	<p>Continue to issue course information sheets to new applicants to provide detailed information on course demands</p> <p>Review information annually prior to enrolment period to ensure accuracy of content</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>January 2013</p>	Head of Higher Education, Programme coordinators	<p>All course sheets contain accurate information</p> <p>Annual checking process reported in Higher Education Steering Group Minutes</p>	Higher Education Steering Group & Director of Curriculum	Student feedback from higher education online surveys and course representative minutes
<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 College to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>establish clear reporting lines which articulate responsibilities for the oversight of academic standards within the deliberative structure of the College (paragraph 12)</li> </ul>	Embed clear reporting lines within the new College management structure to articulate responsibilities for academic oversight	September 2012	Director of Curriculum	<p>Higher Education provision is a half-termly agenda item of relevant meetings of the College Leadership Group</p> <p>Weekly progress review meetings with Head of Higher Education and Director of</p>	College Leadership Group  Principal	Minutes of College Leadership Group meetings, scheduled progress reviews and resulting action logs



				Curriculum		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>report annually on its higher education provision to ensure the consistent review of standards and the sharing of best practices (paragraph 16)</li> </ul>	Introduce an annual monitoring report which is separate from the College self-assessment report and not embedded in the Further Education provision, to enable the consistent review of standards and the sharing of best practice throughout the higher education provision. The Higher Education self-assessment report to be published on the virtual learning environment	November 2012	Head of Higher Education	Report in place and action plan agreed, monitored and recorded by the Higher Education Steering Group. Identified good practice adopted through all programme areas	Higher Education Steering Group & Director of Curriculum  College Leadership Group	External examiner, staff and student feedback. Improving student performance and experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop a consistent process for receiving, monitoring and responding to the actions and recommendations from external examiner reports (paragraph 19)</li> </ul>	External examiner, consortium and internal moderator reports to be 'signed' in at Higher Education Steering Group meetings and actions reviewed and 'signed' off on a monthly basis to ensure consistency of response.	October 2012	Head of Higher Education, Programme Coordinators	Consistency in receiving, monitoring and responding to actions from external examiners' reports reported in the Higher Education Steering Group minutes	Higher Education Steering Group & Director of Curriculum  Director of Performance & Standards	External examiner reports, consortium reports, awarding body annual review meeting minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>strengthen its strategic oversight of the</li> </ul>	Strengthen oversight of the quality of the higher education	September 2012	Head of Higher Education	Completed actions reported in Higher Education	Higher Education Steering Group & Director of	Staff feedback, student feedback from higher

quality of higher education provision to ensure the timely completion of actions to support improvements (paragraph 22)	provision by adding the IQER action plans as a standing item to the Higher Education Steering Group meeting agenda			Steering Group meeting minutes	Curriculum Director of Performance & Standards	education surveys, course representative and team meetings
<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 College to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop a staff higher education handbook to provide clear and consistent guidance on the College's quality processes and procedures for supporting its higher education provision (paragraph 13)</li> </ul>	Produce a College higher education handbook to provide information to staff on assessment protocols and academic requirements; upload to the College's higher education page on the virtual learning environment and include in new staff induction checklist	December 2012	Head of Higher Education, Programme Coordinators	Staff feedback in one-to-one sessions; amendments to handbook based on staff evaluations	Higher Education Steering Group & Director of Curriculum  Director of Performance & Standards	Staff feedback, Student feedback from higher education surveys, course representative and team meetings Internal moderation reports, external examiner reports
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review the staff development strategy to ensure activities relevant to higher education provide greater support for the currency of learning</li> </ul>	Develop higher education staff development strategy to ensure higher education specific activities and training are provided and staff attendance is monitored	January 2013	Head of Higher Education, Workforce Development/Human Resources Manager, Programme Coordinators	Workforce Development Staff Directory includes higher education specific content, Staff participation Student feedback	Higher Education Steering Group & Director of Curriculum  Workforce Development  Director of	Staff feedback in Performance Development Reviews, Workforce Development audits/staff continuing professional

opportunities and dissemination of good practice (paragraph 20)					Performance & Standards	development records
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>systematically map its own provision against the <i>Code of practice</i> to confirm threshold standards (paragraph 25)</li> </ul>	Map provision and address areas of development to ensure threshold standards are met	January 2013	Head of Higher Education, Programme coordinators	Mapping document with linked action plan	Higher Education Steering Group & Director of Curriculum  Director of Performance & Standards	College adaption to <i>Code of practice</i> in place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>implement a peer observation scheme to support the sharing of good practice and the use of higher education reference points (paragraph 26)</li> </ul>	Pilot a peer observation scheme to develop and support the sharing of good practice and the use of higher education reference points	July 2013	Head of Higher Education, Head of Teaching & Learning, Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector programme coordinator	Good practice shared across higher education programmes and staff development needs monitored and addressed	Higher Education Steering Group & Director of Curriculum  Director of Performance & Standards	Staff and student feedback  Peer observation reports and action plans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>formalise the arrangements for the management and safeguarding of public information within an overarching policy and to ensure their continuing currency and accuracy (paragraph 38).</li> </ul>	Develop higher education programme information publishing timeline and responsibilities in conjunction with the College's overall publication strategy	March/April 2013	Head of Higher Education, Head of Marketing	Higher Education public information publishing strategy in place and monitored in Higher Education Steering Group minutes	Higher Education Steering Group & Director of Curriculum  Director of Marketing	Recorded updates to programme information

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