



Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers) of London Churchill College Ltd

Partial review

March 2017

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About this review

This is a report of a Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers) partial review conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at [London Churchill College Ltd](#). The review took place on March 29 and was conducted by a team of two reviewers, as follows:

- Dr David Stannard
- Dr Fiona Thompson.

The main purpose of the review was to investigate the higher education provided by London Churchill College Ltd and to make judgements as to whether or not its academic standards and quality meet UK expectations. These expectations are the statements in the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) (the Quality Code)¹ setting out what all UK [higher education providers](#) expect of themselves and of each other, and what the general public can therefore expect of them.

This was a partial review following an original review undertaken in May 2016, which resulted in the following [published report](#). The QAA review team made judgements on one area requiring improvement - the quality of student learning opportunities.

In Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers) the QAA review team:

- makes judgements on
 - the setting and maintenance of academic standards
 - the quality of student learning opportunities
 - the information provided about higher education provision
 - the enhancement of student learning opportunities
- makes recommendations
- identifies features of good practice
- affirms action that the provider is taking or plans to take.

A summary of the findings can be found in the section starting on page 2. [Explanations of the findings](#) are given in numbered paragraphs in the section starting on page 3.

The QAA website gives more information [about QAA](#) and its mission.² A dedicated section explains the method for [Higher Education Review \(Alternative Providers\)](#).³ For an explanation of terms see the [glossary](#) at the end of this report.

¹ The UK Quality Code for Higher Education is published at: www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code

² QAA website: www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us.

³ Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers): www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Pages/Educational-Oversight.aspx

Key findings

QAA's judgements about London Churchill College Ltd

The QAA review team formed the following judgements about the higher education provision at London Churchill College Ltd.

- The quality of student learning opportunities **meets** UK expectations.

Further explanation of the key findings can be found in the handbook available on the QAA webpage explaining [Higher Education Review \(Alternative Providers\)](#).

About London Churchill College Ltd

London Churchill College Ltd (the College) is an alternative for-profit provider established in 2006. It is based in East London and has three sites, an existing location in Whitechapel and two new buildings in Forest Gate and Barking, which are under development.

The College's mission is to 'provide the highest quality learning opportunities that meet the specific needs of our students and which promote and enhance self-confidence, develop personal achievement and an enterprising outlook to maximise employability.' A new Strategic Plan was revised by the senior management team (SMT) in December 2015 and approved by the Academic Board and the College Oversight Board in the spring of 2016. It includes the aim to 'encourage the widest possible participation of students both formally and informally, in education, leading to progression into employment or higher education, through fostering a culture of student employability, and continually seeking to expand our student numbers and our offering.'

Since 2012, the College has offered Pearson Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) in Business, Health and Social Care, and Hospitality Management to UK and EU students. In June 2014 the College was approved by the University of Bedfordshire (the University) to deliver franchised foundation degrees in Business Management, and Events and Hospitality Management. Delivery commenced in September 2016.

The College is also approved by the University as a study centre whereby the provider's sites are used to deliver a University Level 6 Business Management programme. Academic staff delivering this are either University or College staff employed by the former for that work. Under this arrangement, College professional staff support functions including marketing, admissions, student support, and complaints.

The College has 843 registered students, with 90 on University awards and the rest on the HND programmes.

QAA carried out a Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers) of the College in May 2016. The [report](#) formed the judgement that the quality of student learning opportunities at the College required improvement to meet UK expectations and made seven recommendations for the College to address. In response, it has developed an action plan, the details of which are discussed in the main report.

Since May 2016, the College has reviewed its committee structure, giving the College Oversight Board oversight of governance. A Quality Enhancement Steering Committee (QESC) has replaced Learning, Teaching, Quality Committee, and a Recruitment and Admissions Committee (RAC) has been introduced. A Head of Quality Assurance and a Registrar have been appointed.

Explanation of the findings about London Churchill College Ltd

This section explains the review findings in more detail.

Terms that may be unfamiliar to some readers have been included in a [brief glossary](#) at the end of this report. A fuller [glossary of terms](#) is available on the QAA website, and formal definitions of certain terms may be found in the operational description and handbook for the [review method](#), also on the QAA website.

1 Judgement: The quality of student learning opportunities

Expectation (B1): Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes

Quality Code, Chapter B1: Programme Design, Development and Approval

Findings

1.1 The College operates within processes and procedures set out by its awarding partners for the development and approval of programmes. The Academic Board has overall responsibility for oversight of developments. A Quality Enhancement Steering Committee (QESC) has been established with responsibility for checking and enhancing College policies, procedures and processes as well as disseminating these across the institution.

1.2 The 2016 review **recommended** that the College develop and implement a process for the formal amendment of its provision, with specific attention to Pearson programmes. The College has introduced a Programme Modification and Withdrawal Policy. There have been no further programme developments since the last review.

1.3 These processes would allow the Expectation to be met. The team tested the Expectation through consideration of a range of documentation, including policy documents, course approval outcome reports, committee terms of reference and minutes, and staff development registers, and through meetings with staff.

1.4 In response to the previous review, the College embarked on a systematic evaluation and redevelopment of a range of policies designed to provide clarity to processes for students and staff. The development of policy was managed and monitored through senior management team (SMT) and the academic governance structures and included consultation with staff and external input. The new policies identify clearly the timescale for review as well as referencing to external sources such as the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code) and Pearson's Guides.

1.5 Students were involved in developments through their membership of the Academic Board, and student representatives were advised of the new policies at a specially convened meeting. All policies were approved by the Academic Board with final sign-off through the Chair's action in December 2016. Staff training was provided on the new policies with further staff development scheduled to ensure the processes are embedded. Policies are published on the College's website and through its virtual learning environment (VLE).

1.6 While yet to be tested, the College has introduced a Programme Modification and Withdrawal Policy in response to the recommendation. This policy also articulates the procedure designed to facilitate the timely modification of processes, with relevant external scrutiny and student input, as well as the withdrawal of provision and the protection of the academic interests of registered students. Final approval is via the Academic Board. The process, as described by the College, will include input from the awarding partners as well as consultation with students. Staff training on Expectation B1 was provided by the College.

1.7 The team concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low. The new Programme Modification and Withdrawal Policy has yet to be tested in practice

but the review team were assured that there was a shared understanding of the process across the College staff community.

Expectation: Met

Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B2): Recruitment, selection and admission policies and procedures adhere to the principles of fair admission. They are transparent, reliable, valid, inclusive and underpinned by appropriate organisational structures and processes. They support higher education providers in the selection of students who are able to complete their programme.

Quality Code, *Chapter B2: Recruitment, Selection and Admission to Higher Education*

Findings

1.8 The College has a strategic aim to widen participation and admissions policies and processes that are aligned with the expectations of the Quality Code. Its entry criteria conform to the requirements of the relevant awarding body and organisation. All academic staff and Admissions Officers are trained for their admissions role. Students receive a short induction at the beginning of their programmes that includes information about College facilities and services, their specific programme, and information regarding assessment, plagiarism and academic misconduct.

1.9 The May 2016 review recommended that the College introduce a systematic means of evaluating student application, enrolment and induction procedures to promote more effective organisational structures and processes for recruitment, selection and admission of students.

1.10 The College's admissions policies and processes, associated training for its staff and an induction for students, which helps prepare them for their studies, would enable the Expectation to be met.

1.11 The review team assessed the College website and considered a range of documentation including key policies, committee papers, survey outcomes and statistical data. The review team also met a group of students, as well as staff involved with admissions, to discuss how processes operate.

1.12 Since the review, the College has introduced a Recruitment, Selection and Admissions Policy and a Recognition of Prior Learning Policy, both of which were approved by the Academic Board in November 2016. It has also established a new Recruitment and Admissions Committee (RAC) reporting to the Academic Board and providing regular feedback to QESC. RAC has a broad membership including key stakeholders in the admissions process and is chaired by the Registrar. It convenes after each admissions period and has a specific responsibility for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating admissions and induction processes, with the expectation that recommendations be implemented for the next admissions period. It also monitors complaints and appeals relating to the admissions process, although the review team was informed that no such complaints and appeals have yet been received.

1.13 All applicants are interviewed and the College has increased the involvement of a range of staff, including personal tutors, in the process to address pressure on staff workloads. The approach to testing English language standard of applicants has also been reviewed with those candidates failing to meet threshold criteria on recognised tests being offered English language support to help them be admitted.

1.14 It was confirmed that no admissions-related applications for Recognition of Prior Learning had been received since the new Recognition of Prior Learning Policy was approved and that any such applications would be managed by the Admissions and Administration Manager.

1.15 RAC receives and considers statistical information including a report comparing admissions and demographic data for recent years. The review team noted that the report consisted of raw data without any detailed analysis, a position acknowledged by managers who explained that the College was intending to develop its analysis of quantitative data. The review team encourages the College in this ambition.

1.16 An admissions and induction survey takes place after each admissions period, with results reported to the RAC. The approach to induction has been revised to include an induction checklist for students. The results of the most recent surveys were broadly positive, although the College was also seeking to address student concerns with efforts to release timetable information earlier and by increasing the availability of admissions interview slots. The students with whom the review team met confirmed that the admissions process was fair, transparent and effective.

1.17 The College has clear admissions policies and processes, recently revised, which align with the Quality Code. RAC has a specific responsibility for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating admissions and induction processes, and it discharges this responsibility by various means including consideration of survey results and admissions data. While the College is still developing a more analytical approach to its use of data, the review team nevertheless concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B3): Higher education providers, working with their staff, students and other stakeholders, articulate and systematically review and enhance the provision of learning opportunities and teaching practices, so that every student is enabled to develop as an independent learner, study their chosen subject(s) in depth and enhance their capacity for analytical, critical and creative thinking.

Quality Code, *Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching*

Findings

1.18 The Strategic Plan has five aims designed to support enhancement of learning and teaching, including the development of learning resources that achieve effective and efficient learning. Formal oversight of learning and teaching rests with the Academic Board and there are committee and reporting structures that seek to enable monitor and review of learning and teaching. The College Annual Monitoring Report (CAMR) reviews aspects of learning, teaching and assessment including human and physical resources, and results in an action plan.

1.19 Since the previous review, the College's Learning and Teaching Strategy has been reformulated as the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy and Strategy, with six key strategic aims. This process included external input and implementation was supported by staff development activity covering pedagogical and assessment skills, the gaining of higher level qualifications, and the facilitation of scholarly activity. In addition, a Learning Resources Strategy is being updated 'to articulate the approach to the delivery of learning resources that enables every student to develop as self-directed and autonomous learners'.

1.20 The College's Strategic Plan and the new Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy and Strategy provide a strategic framework for learning and teaching. This, and the accompanying reporting structures, would enable the Expectation to be met.

1.21 The team reviewed the College's VLE and considered of documentation including key policies and committee papers. The team also met a group of students, and academic and support staff.

1.22 The College intends to invest in additional resources for delivery of the University programmes. The quality of learning resources is a standing item on the agenda of the Higher Education Group (HEG) which was convened in November 2016 to report on campus developments at the College's other sites. HEG meets at least monthly, is chaired by the Head of Higher Education, includes student representatives, and reports to QESC. University representatives may attend meetings where relevant.

1.23 The Learning Resources Strategy includes a resource allocation model for the provision of books, with key texts being supplied direct to students. The students with whom the review team met are generally satisfied with the College's learning resource provision including the VLE, where lecture notes, journals and other materials are uploaded.

1.24 The College provides a range of staff development activities, with staff also able to join staff development opportunities provided by the University. With the help of the University, the College has begun training aimed at enabling academic staff to attain Higher Education Academy affiliation. Eight staff are training to achieve Fellow status and two, Senior Fellow status.

1.25 There is a process of peer review of teaching which uses a standard feedback template. A comprehensive summary of peer review outcomes, including recommendations, is produced each semester. Outcomes also inform REP Reports and the CAMR.

1.26 The College's approach to learning and teaching enable it to review and enhance its provision of learning opportunities. Required resources, including staff development, are in place. The review team therefore concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met

Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B4): Higher education providers have in place, monitor and evaluate arrangements and resources which enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.

Quality Code, Chapter B4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement

Findings

1.27 The College has policies and procedures designed to help students develop their academic, personal and professional potential, and to ensure the equitable identification and treatment of students with additional needs. The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy and Strategy describes support given to students, including tutorials, individual learning planning and preparing for employment. It also states that student support is reviewed at both the Academic Board and through Programme Committees, as well as by student representatives. A commitment to equity is outlined in the Equality and Diversity Policy. The process to support students with disabilities is outlined in a new Student Support and Reasonable Adjustment Policy.

1.28 The 2016 review recommended that the College should strengthen and publish the policies and procedures for the effective and equitable identification and support of students with additional needs.

1.29 The College's policy framework and the associated support arrangements, which are regularly reviewed by formal committees, would enable the Expectation to be met. To test this, the review team considered relevant documentation, including key policies and committee papers, and met students, as well as groups of academic and support staff.

1.30 Following the 2016 review, the College undertook a review of policies relating to the quality of learning opportunities, leading to revisions to existing policies and the introduction of new processes such as the Student Support and Reasonable Adjustment Policy. To support this process, staff were consulted and able to feedback on draft documents, with training provided at a range of events. The review team heard that while the new policies had now been implemented, their comparatively recent introduction meant that they had not yet been fully embedded. The Principal's Executive Group and the Academic Board are receiving progress reports on the introduction of new policies.

1.31 Informed by the Personal Tutoring and Enabling Student Development Policy, personal tutors provide pastoral guidance, supporting students in setting and achieving personal targets. With the support of personal tutors, students develop Individual Assessment and Learning Plans (IALPs), which reflect a student's specific, individual learning context. Students with whom the review team met confirmed that they found these useful in building their motivation and supporting their progress.

1.32 Support for students with additional needs is managed by the Registrar, who meets with applicants and students to discuss support needs and any reasonable adjustments that can be made to support their learning experience. A record of the agreed support plan is maintained by the Registrar with a termly report on any issues arising being made to the Academic Board. Students confirmed that support is available and that appropriate adjustments are put in place.

1.33 The College has strengthened its policies for the effective, equitable identification and support of students with additional needs. While the revised arrangements are still being embedding the approach to student support is being monitored. Students feel well supported. The review team therefore concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B5): Higher education providers take deliberate steps to engage all students, individually and collectively, as partners in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience.

Quality Code, Chapter B5: Student Engagement

Findings

1.34 Student engagement for University and Pearson programmes is enabled both through representation on College and programme-level committees and through student evaluations. The student representation system is designed to both capture the student voice and to communicate the College's response to students. The team heard that recent changes to the College's committee structure were designed to enhance the student voice and to increase student representation.

1.35 Student representatives are recruited annually. The College provides training which, for student representatives on University programmes, is augmented by support from University staff. The College has developed a draft Student Representative Guide, which sets out roles and responsibilities.

1.36 The College's student representation system and its arrangements for student evaluations support student engagement and would enable the Expectation to be met.

1.37 To test the College's evidence, the review team considered key policies and committee papers, and also met a group of students, a number of whom were student representatives, as well as academic and support staff.

1.38 The College has sought to engage students in its recent work reviewing policies (see paragraph 1.30). Student representatives on the Academic Board confirmed that they had been invited to review the College's action plan and that workshops on revised arrangements had been held in March 2017 covering such policies as Student Support and Reasonable Adjustment, Mitigating Circumstances and Work Experience. The College has appointed an Alumni Officer, whose role includes working with elected student representatives. Representatives are provided with the Student Representative Handbook and are trained for their role. Students with whom the review team met confirmed that this training had not only been effective in supporting them in their role but also in building student confidence, including public speaking.

1.39 Programme Leaders produce reports on student feedback to inform the Review Enhancement Process (REP) and CAMR reports. The review team saw examples of feedback being collected and resulting actions being taken. The College is using social media and other tools to seek student views and create further opportunities for student engagement. The review team noted, for example, that there is student membership on the College's Employers Forum.

1.40 The students with whom the team met confirmed that representation on College committees was widespread, that they were given appropriate opportunities to raise issues and that their views were taken seriously. They also confirmed that actions taken to respond to student concerns were appropriately highlighted.

1.41 The College has effective arrangements in place to seek and act on the views of its students. The review team therefore concludes that the Expectation is met and that the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B6): Higher education providers operate equitable, valid and reliable processes of assessment, including for the recognition of prior learning, which enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification being sought.

Quality Code, Chapter B6: Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning

Findings

1.42 The College's role in assessment is determined by the nature of the arrangements with its awarding partners. For the University, as they operate under a franchise model, all assessment is managed by the University although the College has ambition to be directly involved in the setting and marking of assessment tasks in the future. For its Pearson provision, the College is responsible for the setting, marking, internal verification and provision of student feedback on its HND programmes, in line with Pearson regulations and guidance. The College has focused, for the purposes of review, on Pearson provision although they have ensured that the new policies are aligned with University policies.

1.43 At the last review, the review team **recommended** that:

- the College should strengthen and publish the policies and procedures for the effective and equitable identification and support of students with additional needs (Expectations B4 and B6)
- the College publish assessment policies which are clear, comprehensive, consistent and appropriately targeted towards defined student groups (Expectation B6).

1.44 To address these recommendations, the College has undertaken a comprehensive review of a number of policies relating to assessment. These include the Learning Teaching and Assessment Policy and Strategy; the Mitigating Circumstances Policy and Procedure; Student Support and Reasonable Adjustments Policy; Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedures; and the Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure.

1.45 The processes and policies identified would allow the Expectation to be met. The review team tested this Expectation through consideration of a range of documentation including policies, handbooks, and relevant committee minutes, and through meetings with staff and students.

1.46 The assessment process is managed by the Programme Manager and there is an internal verification process. Programme Committees are used for discussion between staff and students to promote a shared understanding of the basis on which academic judgements are made and, in addition, staff share good practice at termly lecturer meetings.

1.47 The new policies were developed through QESC and SMT and discussed at the Academic Board in November 2016 with final approval in December 2016. A workshop was held with programme leaders and marketing staff in October to allow for feedback on policies, including those relating to assessment.

1.48 The review team noted that training relating to a number of the new policies had been provided for academic staff as well as specific training for marketing and recruitment staff on the new Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedure. The review team heard that further staff development is scheduled to ensure the processes are embedded. Student representatives were also updated on the new policies in March 2017.

1.49 The review team noted that the revised and consolidated Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy and Strategy was a comprehensive document and students indicated a high level of satisfaction with the support available to them. Feedback was returned promptly within 15 working days and students considered this to be constructive and aligned to the assessment criteria.

1.50 The provision of Expected Answer Guidelines has been extended across programmes, building on the good practice identified at the last review, and this has been received positively by students.

1.51 The Mitigating Circumstances Policy and Procedure is clear and understood by students. The Policy also identifies the appeal routes for both Pearson and University provision. The Student Support and Reasonable Adjustments Policy is also comprehensive. Processes are in place for supporting students with disabilities and the Registrar is directly involved in working with students to develop an appropriate Support Agreement Plan, which is then monitored. Applications for mitigating circumstances, needs assessment interviews, and College consideration show a rigorous and evidence-based approach.

1.52 The Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedure provides a framework within which the College can assess whether learners can demonstrate they have met the assessment requirements for a particular unit. As it stands, the policy states that for RPL the college will 'report/propose' to the University Portfolio Board and, for Pearson, RPL is 'reported/proposed' to the College Assessment and Progress Board. The College clarified that the final decision rests with the awarding partners. This aligns with Pearson's own process and with the University's processes. A comprehensive RPL Handbook is available via the College website, which details these. The Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedure has not yet been tested in practice.

1.53 The Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure is clear and comprehensive and differentiates between different awarding partners and their processes. Students were aware of the process including the grounds for an appeal. However, the process has not yet been tested in practice (see also Expectation B9).

1.54 The team considered that the range of new policies and associated procedures, while recognising that several of these had not yet been tested in practice, provided a clear framework for the equitable, valid and reliable assessment of student learning. Students and staff the review team met had a demonstrable understanding of the new processes and students were very positive about the support they received, relating to assessment, from admissions through to the management of mitigating circumstances arising during their programme. On this basis, the team concludes that the College had addressed the recommendations of the previous review, that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B7): Higher education providers make scrupulous use of external examiners.

Quality Code, Chapter B7: External Examining

Findings

1.55 For HND provision, the College operates within the awarding organisation's process using Standard Verifiers, appointed by Pearson, to bring an external perspective to the attainment and management of standards. Currently, the College has limited involvement with the external examining process at the University but, as their relationship develops, the College expects to increase its direct involvement.

1.56 Following the last QAA visit, the College has reviewed its approach to external examiner feedback in order to identify improvements. The College has noted that robust analysis of reports had not hitherto been present in REP reports. To address this, training needs have been identified and a programme put in place. All issues raised by Standard Verifiers are reported via the CAMR which is considered by Academic Board, and this provides College oversight of all Standards Verifier reports.

1.57 This approach should enable the Expectation to be met. The team tested the Expectation through meetings with students and staff as well as consideration of documentation including external reports and responses, minutes of relevant meetings, the University's Collaborative Procedure Manual, and annual monitoring reports.

1.58 The University has responsibility for the selection and recruitment of external examiners, as detailed in their Collaborative Procedure Manual. It also manages the scrutiny of external examiner reports including to ensure that reports are shared with partners via the Link Coordinator, who is also responsible for ensuring that reports and their responses have been shared with students. The Manual also articulates the responsibility for addressing external examiner reports with the University responding for franchised provision and the partner responding for validated provision in consultation with the University.

1.59 For Pearson provision the Standards Verifiers are appointed by the awarding organisation. Reports are considered at the Programme Committee and analysis included in the REPs which feeds into the CAMR. The latter is then considered at QESC and Academic Board. The team noted that the level of analysis of reports was limited and this had been identified by the College as an action for future years, with a planned revision of the templates to support greater analysis of both Standards Verifiers' reports and data.

1.60 Responses to Standards Verifiers' reports are provided by the Programme Team and students are provided with access to full Standards Verifiers' reports and associated action plans, through the VLE.

1.61 On the basis of the evidence provided, including the action identified to improve the analysis of, and effective responses to Standards Verifiers' reports, the review team concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B8): Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective, regular and systematic processes for monitoring and for review of programmes.

Quality Code, Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring and Review

Findings

1.62 At the last review, the review team **recommended** 'that the College develop and implement a procedure for periodic review of all of its provision.' As a consequence, the College has defined policies and procedures relating to both the annual and periodic review of programmes with the Academic Board having responsibility for approving and reviewing procedures, and for consideration of reports and subsequent action plans.

1.63 The process as defined would allow the Expectation to be met. The team tested the Expectation through meetings with staff and through consideration of relevant documentation including policies, reports and committee meeting minutes.

1.64 The annual monitoring process starts with unit evaluations which cover module statistics, feedback from external examiners (as applicable), reflection on learning opportunities and resources, plus an action plan. This feeds into the REP which is produced by the Programme Leader, directed by the Programme Manager, reviewed by the Head of Quality Assurance and signed off by the Director of Studies. The report incorporates analysis of student data, external reports, outcomes of peer review, and student feedback.

1.65 The current template is being reviewed so that the reports, in future, will be more critically robust, evaluative, comprehensive and, only where necessary, descriptive. The team noted that the presentation of data lacked accompanying analysis and the College advised that this was being addressed through the new template, which will be in place for the annual review process of academic year 2016-17. The reports identified areas of good practice and areas for enhancement with an accompanying action plan. The review team recognised that the College systematically reviews data and the team would encourage the College in their planned action to ensure that such data is presented with an accompanying strategic analysis (see also Expectations B2 and B7). In addition, the team noted that action has been taken by QESC to ensure that REPs will go to the Academic Board after internal monitoring by the Head of Quality Assurance, the Registrar, or the Quality Assurance Officer.

1.66 The CAMR is prepared by the Head of Higher Education, drawing on the REPS, and provides a comprehensive overview of Pearson provision. As the first intake to the University foundation degrees (FdAs) was in September 2016, this provision will be considered in the next academic annual review cycle. The CAMR monitors the previous year's action plan while also setting out planned action for the forthcoming year. This report is considered by QESC, and received by the Academic Board and the College Oversight Board.

1.67 In response to the recommendation in the previous HER (AP) report, the College has developed a College Provision Review Policy approved by the Academic Board in December 2016. The new policy, which includes the procedure for subject review, will be introduced in academic year 2017-18, with further reviews planned on a five-year cycle. With regard to the University provision, it is designed to add value to the formal reviews undertaken through the University's own review processes. The Policy states explicitly that the aim is to give assurance of the quality of the integrated subject provision across the College, including that of both Pearson and the University. The process will include external

input, as members of the reviewing panel, and reports will be considered by the Academic Board and the College Oversight Board with SMT accountable for actions arising.

1.68 REPs and the CAMR are also made available to students via the VLE.

1.69 On the basis of the evidence provided, the review team concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low. The team recognised that the College has taken significant steps in response to the previous recommendation, including the development of policy, processes and templates. The efficacy of the new processes, including the systematic analysis of data and subject review, will be tested in practice through implementation in 2017-18.

Expectation: Met

Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B9): Higher education providers have procedures for handling academic appeals and student complaints about the quality of learning opportunities; these procedures are fair, accessible and timely, and enable enhancement.

Quality Code, Chapter B9: Academic Appeals and Student Complaints

Findings

1.70 The College has a Student Complaints Policy and Procedure and an Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure. Both processes differentiate between types of provision and articulate the role of the awarding partners and of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). The College seeks to resolve issues informally and without recourse to the formal procedures.

1.71 The College's policies and processes would enable the Expectation to be met. The Expectation was tested through consideration of policies and procedures, information provided to students, and through meetings with staff and students.

1.72 The College has revised its procedures for complaints and academic appeals and these were approved at the November 2016 Academic Board, subject to amendment pending external input from the University member of the Board, and were signed off by the Chair in December.

1.73 The revised policies and procedures are comprehensive. The Student Complaints Policy and Procedure details process and timescales and includes appropriate information relating to Pearson and the University's involvement. The University reviews the judgement of the College's internal investigation for their provision and HND students are advised that they can escalate the complaint to Pearson once the College's investigations have concluded. Information is also provided about the OIA's role.

1.74 The Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures are similarly comprehensive and follow a similar pattern to the Complaints policy in terms of identifying process and the role of the awarding partners and the OIA.

1.75 The student induction check list asks for students to identify that they have accessed these processes. This check list has to be signed off by a College tutor. Both policies are accessible via the College's website and the VLE. Reference to appeals and complaints, and the processes to be followed, is also made in the Recruitment, Selection and Admission Policy. Students were well aware of the processes and policies, including the grounds for an academic appeal and the role of the awarding partners, and supported the College's aim to manage any complaints or appeals informally.

1.76 At the time of the review there had been no formal complaints or appeals under the new processes.

1.77 On the basis of the evidence provided, the team concludes that policies and procedures for the consideration of complaints and academic appeals, although as yet untested in practice, were appropriately robust and rigorous. As such the review team concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B10): Degree-awarding bodies take ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, irrespective of where these are delivered or who provides them. Arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with organisations other than the degree-awarding body are implemented securely and managed effectively.

Quality Code, Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others

Findings

1.78 Several of the College's HNDs and FdAs involve work experience or work-based learning. The FdAs in Business Management, and Events and Hospitality Management require students to either be in work or be willing to undertake voluntary work. The latter also offers a range of work-integrated activities and as a work-based project in the second year. The HND Health and Social Care has a mandatory placement where students are required to complete 200 hours in a relevant setting. The College is seeking to enhance its work-based learning provision and to grow engagement with employers. As part of this initiative, it hosted an Employers Forum in December 2016.

1.79 The 2016 review recommended that the College should strengthen oversight and operational management of students' mandatory work placements. Since then, the College has revised and implemented its Work Experience Policy and introduced a Due Diligence pro forma for FdAs with work-based learning elements. The revised Policy, which covers both HNDs and FdAs, clarifies the responsibilities of students, College staff, and employers. It was developed in consultation with relevant staff and involved input from the University.

1.80 The College's revised Work Experience Policy and accompanying procedures would enable the Expectation to be met. To assess the College's approach, the review team considered documentation including key policies and committee papers, and met students, several of whom had undertaken work experience, and academic and support staff.

1.81 The College has sought to adopt a more proactive approach to the management of students' work experience with the introduction of the new Work Experience Policy. Support for, and monitoring of, students undertaking mandatory work experience placements has been strengthened with the introduction of weekly meetings between the Head of Employability, the Work-Based Learning Coordinator and Course Leaders. The Head of Employability now provides the Academic Board with an annual report on employability which covers provider support for students finding placements, as well as the more strategic oversight of students' work experience.

1.82 Work placements are operationally managed by the Work-Based Learning Coordinator working in conjunction with a work-based learning team. The Coordinator confirms the appropriateness of employers and location in advance of the placement. The due diligence form is sent for signing by employers to confirm that they are covered by insurance and have relevant health and safety procedures. The review team was made aware that the College is developing a partnership with a local NHS Trust, to provide volunteering opportunities in a hospital for the HND Health and Social Care students.

1.83 Before undertaking a placement, students receive an induction which explains their obligations, including the requirement to complete the appropriate number of hours in a relevant setting. They are also provided with a comprehensive Work Experience Handbook, which acts both as an information source and as a reflective log. Completion of the appropriate number of placement hours is logged in the Handbook, signed-off by all relevant parties including the employer, and recorded in a newly developed database of employers and students. The College sees its relationship with employers as one of a partnership and

confirmed that employers report issues and problems, such as student non-attendance at placements. Students with problems are expected to talk initially to their personal tutor, with the Work-Based Learning Coordinator subsequently liaising with the employer where necessary. Students felt that they are well briefed and supported during their work experience.

1.84 The College has strengthened its oversight and operational management of students' mandatory work placements, through the implementation of a new Work Experience Policy and a range of monitoring procedures. The review team therefore concludes that the Expectation is met and that the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B11): Research degrees are awarded in a research environment that provides secure academic standards for doing research and learning about research approaches, methods, procedures and protocols. This environment offers students quality of opportunities and the support they need to achieve successful academic, personal and professional outcomes from their research degrees.

Quality Code, *Chapter B11: Research Degrees*

Findings

1.85 London Churchill College does not offer research degrees. Therefore, the Expectation is not applicable.

The quality of student learning opportunities: Summary of findings

1.86 In reaching its judgement about the quality of student learning opportunities, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published Handbook.

1.87 All 10 applicable expectations are met with low levels of risk. The College has addressed recommendations arising from the 2016 review report. It has effective policies in place for programme approval, admissions, learning and teaching, student support, student engagement, assessment, programme review, complaints and appeals, and working with others. Some newer procedures have not yet been fully implemented but the frameworks put in place give confidence that policies provide an effective means of managing the quality of student learning opportunities.

1.88 The review team concludes that the quality of student learning opportunities at the College **meets** UK expectations.

Glossary

This glossary is a quick-reference guide to terms in this report that may be unfamiliar to some readers. Definitions of key operational terms are also given on pages 21-24 of the [Higher Education Review \(Alternative Providers\) handbook](#)

If you require formal definitions of other terms please refer to the section on assuring standards and quality: www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality

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

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.

Awarding organisation

An organisation authorised to award a particular qualification; an organisation recognised by Ofqual to award Ofqual-regulated qualifications

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**.

Dual award or double award

The granting of separate awards (and certificates) for the same **programme** by two **degree-awarding bodies** who have jointly delivered the programme of study leading to them. See also **multiple award**.

e-learning

See technology enhanced or enabled learning

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.

Expectations

Statements in the **Quality Code** that set out what all UK higher education providers expect of themselves and each other, and what the general public can therefore expect of them.

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* (FQHEIS).

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.

Multiple awards

An arrangement where three or more **degree-awarding bodies** together provide a single jointly delivered **programme** (or programmes) leading to a separate **award** (and separate certification) of each awarding body. The arrangement is the same as for **dual/double awards**, but with three or more awarding bodies being involved.

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.

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.

Self-evaluation document

A report submitted by a higher education provider, assessing its own performance, to be used as evidence in a QAA review.

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 such resources 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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