



## **Middlesex College of Law**

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

February 2012

## Key findings about Middlesex College of Law

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in February 2012, the QAA review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of the University of London.

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

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

## Good practice

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

- the more effective monitoring of student attendance, following the implementation of strict attendance regulations and a software-based reporting system, has led to improved levels of student attendance (paragraph 1.2)
- rigorous admissions, induction and progress monitoring processes promote students' commitment and support them in pursuing their studies (paragraphs 2.4, 2.10)
- the appointment of a former student as the College Student Liaison Officer who helps to support and to coordinate students' feedback (paragraph 2.9).

## Recommendations

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

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

- review the effectiveness of the formative assessment processes to ensure that they engage more readily with the *Code of practice, Section 6: Assessment of students* (paragraph 1.5)
- fully reflect the programme and module learning outcomes in its assessment feedback and setting of assignments (paragraph 2.5).

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

- review the diverse quality assurance policies and processes to develop a clearer and more coherent framework (paragraph 2.2)
- review the clarity of its procedures for responding to plagiarism and ensure that they are fully understood by staff and students and applied consistently (paragraph 2.3)
- document those activities it uses to enhance learning in the classroom and articulate more clearly its teaching and learning strategy among staff (paragraph 2.6)
- develop and implement a coherent staff development strategy to support the needs of part-time staff (paragraph 2.12).

## About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)<sup>1</sup> (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at Middlesex College of Law (the provider; the College). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the provider discharges its stated responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes of study that the provider delivers on behalf of the University of London. The review was carried out by Mr Gary Hargreaves, Ms Daphne Rowlands and Mr David Malachi (reviewers) and Mr Robert Hodgkinson (coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#).<sup>2</sup> Evidence in support of the review included an agreement with the University of London, the British Accreditation Council accreditation details, programme documents, the College and awarding body's policies and procedures, a quality management handbook, diagrams of the College's quality assurance processes, reports on the quality of provision, minutes of key committee meetings, a sample of student work, and meetings with staff and students.

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

- Academic Infrastructure
- the University of London Institutions Quality Assurance Framework and criteria for permission to teach the Diploma in Law for external students
- the British Accreditation Council accreditation details.

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

The Middlesex College of Law (the College), formerly known as the Southwest London College of Law, was founded in 2000 as a private institution with the aim of providing tuition initially for the University of London External System LLB Degree students (now known as the University of London International Programmes) and for mostly international students. It was located formerly in premises near Clapham Common, and moved to the current premises in 2004, when it commenced offering degree courses. The College was initially established as a registered business name in 2000 and thereafter became incorporated as a limited company in February 2003 with the Chief Executive and his wife being the two shareholders. The College has two campuses. The main campus is in Palmerston Road, while the Masons Avenue campus, which was the main campus from April 2004 to October 2011, is now used as an Enquiries Office. All of the College teaching staff are part-time and their numbers vary according to which programme is being delivered. There are 61 full-time higher education students currently registered at the College.

At the time of the review, the provider offered the following higher education programmes, listed beneath their awarding body with the full-time equivalent student numbers in brackets:

### University of London

- Diploma in Law/LLB Degree Intermediate (48)
- LLB Degree (Finals Part 1) (5)
- LLB (Finals Part 2) (8)

---

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

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

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

The provider has gained approval from the University of London to offer named programmes in law leading to the awarding body's external awards. The provider's stated responsibilities are for programme delivery, formative assessment and internal moderation, the quality of teaching and learning, application of the awarding body's standards, regular internal monitoring of quality, and compliance with the awarding body's requirements for annual evaluation and review. In addition, the provider is expected to meet a range of criteria defined by the British Accreditation Council in respect of health and safety requirements, learning resources provision, centre facilities, teaching staff qualifications, student welfare and entry qualifications.

## **Recent developments**

The College has ceased its relationship with the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants and has implemented a strategy to provide for the placement of affected students with other institutions.

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

Students studying on higher education programmes at the provider were invited to present a submission to the review team. Current students and recent graduates were invited to compile the students' submission. An external quality adviser conducted a focus group of students drawn from the College's courses. Graduates were also contacted by telephone or email to determine their views. The students were briefed on their participation in the review process and asked to respond to a list of questions. A second focus group was held three weeks later, attended by the former President of the University of London Students Union, to further clarify what students expected from the College. A third focus group, led by the College Student Liaison Officer, met a month later to clarify issues that had been raised in earlier focus groups. The College provided an analysis of the results and an interpretive commentary. The students were representative of the provision. Their evidence was of value to the review.

## Detailed findings about Middlesex College of Law

### 1 Academic standards

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

1.1 The College's responsibilities are defined clearly in its agreement with the awarding body. These are also set out in the awarding body's Institutions Quality Assurance Framework, its Institution Periodic Review Handbook and documentation relating to the delivery of the courses. The Framework provides a formal basis for the awarding body's relationship with the College. The College is a recognised registered centre of the awarding body, reaching acceptable standards for the support of students in preparing them for its examinations. The College has been designated with Diploma Teaching Status that allows it to provide education prior to, and at the early stages of, undergraduate study, requiring students to enrol at the College for face-to-face teaching. Student recruitment and selection, and the monitoring and review of the quality of the provision, is shared by the College and the awarding body. The College is responsible for staff development, including that relating to assessment, and for the appointment of its teaching staff, with their qualifications being monitored annually by the awarding body. The latter confirms that the College complies with its criteria for the organisation and administration of the programmes, the provision of teaching and facilities, and providing support to students. These responsibilities are reflected in the College's policies and regulations prescribed in its Quality Assurance Framework and the staff handbook.

1.2 The College is accredited by the British Accreditation Council. The latter's recent inspection required the College to monitor student attendance more effectively. The College has responded by implementing strict attendance regulations and monitoring processes. A policy on authorised student absences is issued to all students and all absences are monitored carefully. Its effectiveness is confirmed by the analysis of data on student absences that shows significant improvement. The more effective monitoring of student attendance, following the implementation of strict attendance regulations and a software-based reporting system, has led to improved levels of student attendance and represents good practice.

1.3 There are well defined and articulated processes for the delegation of responsibility for academic standards. The organisation reflects the small size of the provision. The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the delivery of programmes and is responsible directly for staff recruitment, policy decisions, course development, collaboration with the awarding body and resources. Operational responsibilities are devolved to senior part-time staff and external advisers. The Academic Board provides overall leadership and direction for the College. Formal minutes of its meetings are not always kept, but decisions and actions are recorded in email streams. Given the small size of the provision and the high proportion of part-time staff this is appropriate. The Senior Management Team meets weekly, formally and informally, as required. It implements decisions made by the Academic Board and its membership includes the College's Head of the Law. Academic issues are discussed in staff meetings, the outcomes of which are reported to the Senior Management Team. The well defined and coherent organisational structure and management processes underpin the delivery of the courses and are appropriate to the size of the provision and the needs of a high proportion of part-time teaching staff.

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

1.4 External reference points are used to good effect by the College to maintain and secure academic standards. The Academic Infrastructure is reflected clearly in the awarding body's requirements. In particular, the University of London's Quality Assurance Framework is devised to ensure that the programmes align with *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ). The relevant subject benchmark statements inform the curriculum design and are reflected in the detailed subject guides supplied by the awarding body, which detail the content of the programmes. The awarding body undertakes institutional annual monitoring and periodic review of the College's provision. The awarding body's liaison officer visits the College several times a year to foster links with the College and to discuss new developments. The Academic Board, which meets termly, oversees the College's relationship with the awarding body, the British Accreditation Council and the UK Border Agency. The British Accreditation Council has approved the College's quality assurance procedures and, in the main, endorses its processes for the management of quality.

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

1.5 The arrangements for internal verification and moderation of formative work require improvement. The College conducts formative assessment with the awarding body, retaining responsibility for the design of the programmes of study and for their summative assessment. The College's Programme Annual Report makes it mandatory for Diploma in Law students to undertake a much increased schedule of sixteen course assignments and also mock examinations. The team's sampling of student work showed that the feedback provided to students to help them improve future performance is limited and sometimes unhelpful. There is no evidence that student work is internally verified. It is advisable that the effectiveness of these formative assessment processes is reviewed to ensure that they engage more readily with the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*), *Section 6: Assessment of students*.

1.6 The awarding body produces annual programme reports covering all its delegated centres. These highlight matters for consideration relating to quality and standards. These are generic and do not refer specifically to the performances of students at individual institutions. They are used to inform lecturers of gaps in student knowledge and actions needed to address future assessments more effectively. The awarding body monitors the results of its external examinations. Centres are obliged to respond to lower than average pass rates. Recent correspondence between the awarding body and the College on the results of the Diploma in Law cites a range of strategies that the College is implementing to improve future examination results. These include: lecturers participating in the marking of the awarding body's scripts, further and mandatory revision classes, a significant increase in course assignments, additional tutorials and bringing forward the date of mock examinations. These strategies have been accepted as appropriate by the awarding body.

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

## 2 Quality of learning opportunities

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

2.1 The responsibilities for the management of the quality of learning opportunities and reporting arrangements reflect those detailed in paragraphs 1.1-1.3. An Academic Advisor on policy and staff development informs the Human Resources Director on staff recruitment, development and appraisal. The Director of Studies supervises course delivery and assessment supported by the Head of Administration who manages assessment records and responds to student feedback. Overall, the management processes are responsive to staff and students, and ensure delegated responsibilities are well defined. The appointment of the College Student Liaison Officer is helping to further improve the communication between staff and students.

2.2 The College's Quality Assurance Framework underpins these processes. The Framework is evolving and includes information on staff recruitment, appraisal, administration, management of lectures, assessment (assignments), teaching, class observation, and student feedback. These policies and processes are not well integrated and it is recommended that the College reviews the diverse quality assurance policies and processes to develop a clearer and more coherent framework for quality.

2.3 Meetings with staff and scrutiny of minutes of meetings showed that policies and procedures are not always applied consistently across the provision. For example, although there is a record of plagiarism investigation for criminal law and the awarding body specifies assessment offences and penalties, there is no reference to the College policy on plagiarism in the student and staff handbooks or in its Quality Assurance Framework. Procedures endorsed in the minutes of a departmental staff meeting state that students could be failed for plagiarism. Review of a sample of student work, where plagiarism was confirmed, indicated that the actions taken and the high mark awarded did not accord with those recorded in previous and similar instances. It is recommended that the College reviews the clarity of its procedures for responding to plagiarism and ensures that they are fully understood by staff and students and applied consistently.

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

2.4 The external reference points mentioned in paragraph 1.4, also apply to this section of the report. In particular, the College's policies and procedures engage with the *Code of practice, Section 3: Disabled students, Section 5: Academic appeals and student complaints on academic matters*, and to some precepts of *Section 6: Assessment of students*. The College engages appropriately with the *Code of practice, Section 10: Admissions to higher education*. Admissions procedures and induction processes are rigorously applied and well received by students.

2.5 The College's formative assessments do not fully engage with the precepts of the *Code of practice, Section 6: Assessment of students*. Standard assessment feedback sheets are provided for the formative assignments. They do not fully reflect the programme learning outcomes, but do provide learning objectives that relate to teaching and lecture plans. The College is advised to fully reflect the programme and module learning outcomes in its assessment feedback and setting of assignments.

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

2.6 The arrangements for assuring the quality of teaching and learning require enhancement. There is no specific teaching and learning strategy, although staff use a range of mechanisms to enhance teaching and learning. These include: peer observation, student feedback, departmental discussions in meetings, reference to the College's Quality Assurance Framework, a newly introduced awarding body's teaching and learning strategy, and subject guides. Staff work closely together to share good practice at staff meetings. The development of teaching plans is evolving and current pro forma do not encourage the articulation of learning objectives and learning outcomes (see paragraph 2.5). The impact of the awarding body's generic guidance on the delivery of teaching and learning has been limited. The College has recently introduced a training plan that relates to its teaching and learning, the effectiveness of which is yet to be established. There is evidence of sound and stimulating activities being used to enhance learning in the classroom. These are not well documented. It is recommended that the College documents those activities it uses to enhance learning in the classroom and articulates more clearly its teaching and learning strategy among staff.

2.7 Although its terms of reference are not explicit, the Senior Management Team regularly reviews teaching and learning, including the planned introduction of peer observation. This is confirmed in a recent awarding body's periodic review report audit that identifies teaching plans, which are clear and provide useful qualitative feedback. Records of class observations confirm the good level of dialogue and engagement between staff and students. Observations are undertaken informally as part of peer observation and formally by the Senior Management Team and a newly appointed Director of Studies. The students are very positive about their experiences and rate the teaching and support highly.

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

2.8 The initial support for new students and the monitoring of their progress is relatively effective. The College's policies and procedures support this. There is also further support and academic guidance provided by the awarding body in its student handbook, virtual learning environment and study packs. The College provides formal and informal opportunities for academic and pastoral support to address the particular challenges faced by the overseas students studying the programmes. Students value the study packs and find them to be very helpful.

2.9 Students are afforded good opportunities to feed back their views on the teaching, the support and guidance they receive and the adequacy of resources that underpin the delivery of the programmes. A student forum, along with regular feedback from questionnaire surveys, keeps the Chief Executive well informed about the effectiveness of the delivery of the provision. The opportunities for student feedback and its analysis by staff is well established. It is further encouraged by the recent appointment of a former student as the College Student Liaison Officer who helps to support and to coordinate students' feedback on the quality of their learning experiences. The students welcome this initiative, which represents good practice. A College graduate skills survey and focus groups provide opportunities for students to share their views. The students confirm that the opportunities for feedback and support are good and that they promote action by the College.

2.10 There is a range of adequately developed policies and procedures for academic, pastoral and learning support that are sufficient for the existing provision. These are detailed in the Quality Assurance Framework handbook and relevant extracts are provided in student and staff handbooks. They include: policies on academic misconduct, student complaints procedures, welfare, disabilities and student induction. The College's admissions procedures



are well defined and rigorous, and students endorse their effectiveness. The students are very satisfied with thoroughness and transparency of the induction process and documentation, which is supportive of the particular needs of overseas students studying away from home. The students describe staff as being very supportive of their needs. Individual progress charts carefully monitor students' performance in assignments and their progress through the programme. This allows the College to intervene early where necessary and to identify appropriate methods to support each student. These rigorous admissions, induction and progress monitoring processes promote students' commitment and support them in pursuing their studies, and represent good practice.

2.11 Designated staff act as mentors for small tutor groups of students. Specific staff are assigned to support male and female students, some of whom are trained counsellors. Students value this support and the access to student officers to represent their views.

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

2.12 The arrangements for staff development are limited and require some development for the part-time staff. The College's policy on staff performance appraisal has been applied only to its administrative and support staff; however, the College is planning to extend this to academic staff. A staff development policy outlines the College's commitment to the development of staff and there are some opportunities for staff to enhance their teaching, for example, by attendance at conferences. Opportunities for staff development offered by the Association of Law Teachers are displayed on the College's intranet and, in some cases, the College pays for staff to attend the Association of Law Teachers meetings. There are informal arrangements whereby academic staff are encouraged to develop their skills and knowledge by attendance at continual professional staff development events. The College is introducing an action plan to direct its teaching and learning staff development. It is recommended that the College develops and implements a coherent staff development strategy to support the needs of its part-time staff.

2.13 The induction process for teaching staff is thorough. It encompasses all matters that relate to the delivery of the provision, including the management of teaching and learning. The Chief Executive Officer, adhering to guidelines issued by the University of London, manages the recruitment of staff. Administrative staff guide new teachers through employment and general administrative matters, resources and policies, as outlined in the staff handbook. The Chief Executive Officer and Director of Studies brief new staff on their teaching and learning duties.

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

2.14 The College has an effective policy for resourcing learning opportunities; as a result, learning resources are more than adequate to underpin student learning. The College has its own well developed virtual learning environment that provides students with a range of resources to enhance their learning. Study guides and all the necessary information to underpin students' studies is provided in the awarding body's virtual learning environment and there is online access to an extensive range of subject-related books and journals. The College's information technology provision and reference stock of books is adequate. Feedback from the teaching staff and students ensures that the learning resources' availability is monitored closely. The students are very satisfied with this aspect of the provision.

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

### **3 Public information**

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

3.1 The information that the provider publishes about itself and its courses is communicated clearly and, in the main, accurately to students and stakeholders. This information takes the form of publications produced by the College and the awarding body. Prospective students are supported in making an informed choice as to their programme of study by using the recently improved College website. The website provides a range of clearly expressed information, including online application forms, information on visa applications, and details of the courses and their examination requirements. It also has a helpful video explaining the College's links with the awarding body and the Universities of West London, Greenwich, Southampton, Portsmouth and Aberystwyth.

3.2 Although there is a good array of evidence of policies and procedures that underpin the provision, some documentation is still under development. The College publishes information for prospective students in its prospectus that is designed very attractively to meet their needs. Its content is appropriate and expressed clearly, with sections on student applications and entrance requirements. Student course handbooks provide a factual overview of each programme of study and policies and procedures which relate to students' day-to-day studies. These include: complaints procedures, a student code of conduct, and policies on punctuality and authorised absences. All course information is taken directly from the details provided by the awarding body and is available on the College's and the awarding body's virtual learning environment. The awarding body's study/module guides, including assessment details and a range of policies and procedures, set out the entry and study requirements for the awarding body's external examinations. The Quality Assurance Framework provides source information on the College's policies and procedures that apply to its staff, students and recruitment agents. It is used to inform a range of documents, including student handbooks and induction procedures.

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

3.3 The processes and procedures outlined below and the relationship and responsibilities of the awarding body to the provision are sufficient to secure the accuracy and completeness of the information that the College publishes. The Chief Executive Officer, the Head of Administration, the Director of Studies and the Admissions and Records Manager are responsible for making changes to the College's publications. In the main, the College's information is accurate. The awarding body supplies much of the information concerning the content of the programmes and the policies and procedures for their delivery are the College's responsibility. Accountability for the accuracy of information remains the responsibility of the originating source. The College adheres to the branding guidelines of its awarding body and the promotional literature supports this. Any inaccuracies that are identified are swiftly rectified, although sometimes the processes undertaken are informal and not fully documented.

3.4 The Admissions and Records Manager and Head of Administration, with the assistance of the Admissions and Records Officer, review the accuracy and update the content of the website monthly. The approval of the awarding body is required when major changes are made. The observance of processes for the publication of course information, including lecture sequence documents, teaching plans and assignment submission schedules, is carefully monitored and controlled by senior staff.

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

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

Middlesex College of Law action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight February 2012						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The review team identified the following areas of <b>good practice</b> that are worthy of wider dissemination within the provider:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the more effective monitoring of student attendance, following the implementation of strict attendance regulations and a software-based reporting system, has led to improved levels of student attendance (paragraph 1.2)</li> </ul>	Employ a full time Records Officer to consolidate the work of the Attendance Monitoring Team  Update the Computer Information Management Systems Software to ensure it continues to meet the UK Border Agency guidelines	September 2012	Chief Executive	Continued effective attendance monitoring and record keeping in line with the UK Border Agency guidelines	Senior Management Team	Termly review of effectiveness of attendance monitoring and records

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>rigorous admissions, induction and progress monitoring processes promote students' commitment and support them in pursuing their studies (paragraphs 2.4, 2.10)</li> </ul>	Establish an Admissions, Induction and Progress Monitoring Team	September 2012	Admissions and Records Manager	Continued rigorous admissions, induction and progress monitoring processes	Head of Administration	Termly review of admissions, induction and progress monitoring processes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the appointment of a former student as the College Student Liaison Officer who helps to support and to coordinate students' feedback (paragraph 2.9).</li> </ul>	Create a permanent position of Student Liaison Officer	September 2012	Chief Executive	Effective communication between the College's management, staff and students	Senior Management Team	Annual review of the Student Liaison Officer's role by the Senior Management Team
<b>Advisable</b>	<b>Action to be taken</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Success indicators</b>	<b>Reported to</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
The team considers that it is <b>advisable</b> for the provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review the effectiveness of the formative assessment processes to ensure that they engage more readily with the <i>Code of practice, Section 6: Assessment of students</i></li> </ul>	<p>Review the setting and verification of formative assessments to ensure that it engages with the <i>Code of practice, Section 6</i></p> <p>Update the written process for teaching</p>	September 2012	Head of Law Department	Successful implementation of improved processes for formative assessments in line with the <i>Code of practice, Section 6</i>	Director of Studies	Annual review of formative assessment processes by the Senior Management Team

(paragraph 1.5)	<p>staff on formative assessments to include sign-off sheets to confirm compliance</p> <p>Brief teaching staff on standardising marking of essays, for example on grade descriptors</p>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fully reflect the programme and module learning outcomes in its assessment feedback and setting of assignments (paragraph 2.5).</li> </ul>	<p>Redesign assessment feedback forms to fully reflect the programme and module learning outcomes of Diploma in Law and LLB Degree courses</p> <p>State clearly programme and module intended learning outcomes on top of printed assignment cover sheets and indicate which outcomes the assignment tests</p>	December 2012	Head of Law Department	<p>Full reflection of programme and module learning outcomes in redesigned assessment feedback forms</p> <p>Inclusion of intended module learning outcomes that are clearly written on top of printed assignment cover sheets</p>	Director of Studies	Termly review of effectiveness of redesigned assessment feedback forms by Senior Management Team

Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team considers that it is <b>desirable</b> for the provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review the diverse quality assurance policies and processes to develop a clearer and more coherent framework (paragraph 2.2)</li> </ul>	<p>Review and update the College's Quality Assurance Framework to reflect a clearer and more coherent framework</p> <p>Discuss changes and new inclusions at the autumn term 2012 Senior Management Team Meeting</p>	December 2012	Director of Studies/Chief Executive	Updated Quality Assurance Framework that is clearer, more effective and coherent	Senior Management Team	Annual review of Quality Assurance Framework by the Academic Board
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review the clarity of its procedures for responding to plagiarism and ensure that they are fully understood by staff and students and applied consistently (paragraph 2.3)</li> </ul>	<p>Draw up clear and precise rules on plagiarism</p> <p>Include the rules in the Student Handbook and Staff Handbook</p> <p>Ensure all teaching staff and students receive copies of updated handbooks as part of student and staff induction processes</p>	September 2012	Head of Law Department/Head of Administration	<p>Implementation of clear and precise rules on plagiarism</p> <p>Dissemination of rules on plagiarism to all students and teaching staff during induction processes</p> <p>Having Turnitin software in place by September 2012</p>	Chief Executive	Annual review by the Senior Management Team

	Introduce the use of Turnitin software to identify plagiarism in students' written work					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>document those activities it uses to enhance learning in the classroom and articulate more clearly its teaching and learning strategy among staff (paragraph 2.6)</li> </ul>	<p>Create a document that clearly articulates the College's teaching and learning strategy and reflects the activities the College uses to enhance learning in the classroom</p> <p>Disseminate the document to Senior Management Team members for discussion and review purpose</p>	September 2012	Director of Studies	<p>Production of document on teaching and learning strategy</p> <p>Dissemination of the document to all teaching staff and students</p>	Chief Executive	Annual review of document on teaching and learning strategy by Senior Management Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop and implement a coherent staff development strategy to support the needs of part-time staff (paragraph 2.12).</li> </ul>	<p>Review and develop a coherent staff development strategy for all teaching staff and particularly part-time teaching staff</p> <p>Include new strategy as part of staff appraisal process for part-time teaching staff</p>	September 2012	Human Resources Adviser/ Director of Studies	<p>Implementation of a coherent staff development policy for part-time teaching staff</p> <p>Having a revised and coherent staff development policy in place by September 2012</p>	Chief Executive	Annual review by Senior Management Team



## About QAA

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

QAA's aims are to:

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

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

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

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

## Glossary

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**framework** A published formal structure. See also **framework for higher education qualifications**.

**framework for higher education qualifications** A published formal structure that identifies a hierarchy of national qualification levels and describes the general achievement expected of holders of the main qualification types at each level, thus assisting higher education providers in maintaining academic standards. QAA publishes the following frameworks:

---

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

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

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

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

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

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

**programme (of study)** An approved course of study which provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification.

**programme specifications** Published statements about the intended **learning outcomes** of **programmes of study**, containing information about teaching and learning methods, support and assessment methods, and how individual units relate to levels of achievement.

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

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

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

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

**subject benchmark statement** A published statement that sets out what knowledge, understanding, abilities and skills are expected of those graduating in each of the main subject areas (mostly applying to bachelor's degrees), and explains what gives that particular discipline its coherence and identity.

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

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

**RG 886 05/12**

**The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education**

Southgate House  
Southgate Street  
Gloucester  
GL1 1UB

Tel 01452 557000  
Fax 01452 557070  
Email [comms@qaa.ac.uk](mailto:comms@qaa.ac.uk)  
Web [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)

© The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2012

ISBN 978 1 84979 528 9

All QAA's publications are available on our website [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)

Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786