



Integrated quality and enhancement review

Summative review

North Warwickshire and Hinckley College

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Preface

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

Purpose of IQER

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

The IQER process

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

Developmental engagement

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

The main elements of a Developmental engagement are:

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

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

Summative review

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

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

Evidence

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

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

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

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

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

Outcomes of IQER

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

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

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

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

Executive summary

The Summative review of North Warwickshire and Hinckley College carried out in June 2011

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

Good practice

The team has identified the following good practice for dissemination:

- arts, graphics and media students benefit from valuable work-related experience in a realistic working environment in the Next Step Studio, providing greater knowledge of the challenges of the world of work.

Recommendations

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

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

- consolidate the operation of the present quality assurance procedures and supplement them with additional elements specific to higher education, to improve the oversight of the provision
- ensure action plans are implemented allowing students to obtain the full benefits of the agreed outcomes of QAA reviews, for example concerning the content of course handbooks
- ensure that admissions procedures provide sufficient guidance and support for students to allow them to achieve the awards for which they were accepted in the expected timescale and advise them in a timely manner if changes to their programme are proposed
- contextualise Edexcel programme specifications using QAA guidelines to provide an oversight of each course that more fully reflects the opportunities available to students, for example on module choice.

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

- ensure that the material on the College's virtual learning environment is well organised to improve students' access to information.

A Introduction and context

1 This report presents the findings of the Summative review of higher education funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) conducted at North Warwickshire and Hinckley College (the College). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the College discharges its responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes which the College delivers on behalf of Birmingham City University, De Montfort University, Edexcel, and the University of Warwick. The review was carried out by Ms Amanda Broughton, Dr Elaine Crosthwaite, Mr David Fallows (reviewers) and Dr Peter Steer (coordinator).

2 The Summative review team (the team) conducted the review in agreement with the College and in accordance with *The handbook for Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review* (the handbook), published by QAA. Evidence in support of the Summative review included documentation supplied by the College, separate meetings with staff including awarding body representatives and students, the student written submission, QAA review reports and Ofsted reports. In particular, the team drew on the findings and recommendations of the Developmental engagement in assessment. A summary of findings from this Developmental engagement is provided in section C of this report. The review also considered the College's use of the Academic Infrastructure, developed by QAA on behalf of higher education providers, with reference to the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education (Code of practice)*, subject and award benchmark statements, *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and programme specifications.

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

4 North Warwickshire and Hinckley College is a large general further education college serving the three borough councils of Nuneaton and Bedworth, North Warwickshire and Hinckley, and Bosworth, with a total population of about 290,000. Students are recruited from this area that crosses the Warwickshire and Leicestershire and the East and West Midlands boundaries. The College was established following the merger of North Warwickshire College and Hinckley College in 1996. Its mission is 'To release potential and transform lives'. The College operates two main campuses in Nuneaton and Hinckley. There are six permanent sites in total with four delivering programmes in local settings at Atherstone, Bedworth, Polesworth and Bermuda Park. Higher education is delivered at the Nuneaton, Hinckley and Atherstone sites. Enrolments for 2010-11 are approximately 17,000, including 3,100 full-time students and 775 14-16 year old students attending on school partnership programmes. The College has a total income of approximately £29 million. About five per cent of total income relates to higher education.

5 The College is organised into seven curriculum areas each managed by a curriculum director. Six of these directorates have HEFCE-funded provision: Business and Management; Creative Arts and Media; Health and Care; Leisure and Public Services; Transport and Engineering; and Travel and Service Industries. In 2009-10, enrolment was 307 full-time equivalents consisting of 173 full-time and 273 part-time students. For 2010-11, enrolment comprises 192 full-time and 334 part-time students representing 371.25 full-time equivalent students. The higher education provision offered by the College is as follows (full-time equivalent student numbers are in brackets):

Integrated quality and enhancement review

Birmingham City University

- Certificate/Diploma Higher Education Art and Design by Negotiated Study (5)
- Certificate/Diploma Higher Education Visual Arts by Negotiated Study (year 2 only) (5)
- HND Fashion and Textiles (11.5)
- HND Graphic Communication (14.5)

De Montfort University

- HNC Computing (13.5)
- FdA Children, Families and Community Health (14)
- FdA Interior Design (Leadership and Enterprise) (18.5)
- FdA Working with Young People and Young People's Services (29)

Edexcel

- HNC Business (21.5)
- HNC Electrical/Electronic Engineering (16)
- HNC General Engineering (3)
- HND Electrical/Electronic Engineering (3.75)
- HND Manufacturing Engineering (2.25)
- HNC Manufacturing Engineering (7.5)
- HNC Mechanical Engineering (10)
- HND Mechanical Engineering (0.75)
- HND Media Production (Moving Image) (16)
- HND Photography (9)
- HNC Sports Science (3)
- HND Sports Science (16)
- HND Sports Therapy (1)
- HND Travel and Tourism (22)

University of Warwick

- Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (35)
- FdA Early Years and Learning Support (30.5)
- BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies (2+2) (39)
- BA (Hons) Health and Social Studies/Social Policy (2+2) (24)

Partnership agreements with the awarding bodies

6 All the partnership agreements provide clear guidance as to the responsibilities of the partners. College staff set the assessments for most of the provision. De Montfort University takes responsibility for assessments on its awards. The College operates the standard contract for programmes awarded directly by Edexcel. For the rest of the provision, moderation of completed work is a joint responsibility between the College and the relevant university. All the awarding bodies require the College to provide the resources to support learning. Students on programmes awarded by De Montfort University and the University of Warwick are entitled to use many university resources.

Recent developments in higher education at the College

7 The present site in London Road Hinckley will be replaced next academic year by a new building in the centre of Hinckley which will focus on art and design, media and performing arts. There has been an increase in enrolments since the Development engagement of about 65 full-time equivalent students. No further growth in the provision is planned.

Students' contribution to the review, including the written submission

8 Students studying on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the Summative review team and did so in March 2011. The submission was led by the higher education Student Mentor helped by student representatives, who together analysed the results and produced the text. It is based on an online survey and termly college surveys which both had a response rate of about 10 per cent. Students met the team during the review and also contributed to the preparatory meeting. The team found all the students' contributions helpful.

B Evaluation of the management of HEFCE-funded higher education

Core theme 1: Academic standards

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

9 The partnership agreements with its awarding bodies provide clear and comprehensive guidance on the College's responsibilities. Key features are described in paragraph 6. The College adheres closely to these requirements. The provision is managed by course leaders in the six curriculum areas. Each area has a curriculum director with responsibility for both further and higher education courses. Curriculum directors have the task of ensuring the quality of provision in their area. They report to the Principal and the senior executive team at monthly meetings. Course leaders liaise with partner institutions and examining bodies and report to team meetings and the Higher Education Forum.

10 The College has recently appointed a Higher Education and Inclusion Manager, who has responsibility for the coordination and planning of the provision. The role provides a useful point of reference and focus for the consideration of issues. The College has a Standards and Performance Manager with a specific brief for higher education, including consideration of external examiner reports and the validation of programme self-assessment reports. A team of quality performance leaders are attached to curriculum areas. The one with a specific remit for higher education has been appointed recently to the role. Activity so far has been predominantly to share information and spread good practice within the Directorate of Creative Arts and Media, rather than across the whole provision.

11 The Developmental engagement advised the Higher Education Forum to fulfil its terms of reference, which cover many significant aspects of an oversight of the provision. The Higher Education Forum has successfully developed its role and now has a standing agenda and a planned calendar that reflects more closely the needs of its terms of reference. Its membership has been extended to ensure representation from non-teaching

staff. The Higher Education Forum receives documentation relevant to higher education and makes recommendations to senior managers. Staff gave examples of its developing role in dissemination of effective practice. The team concludes the Higher Education Forum is developing its role in providing an oversight of the provision and as a conduit through which higher education matters are reported to senior managers. Outcomes from more academic years, with consolidation of the operation of the recently introduced quality assurance procedures for higher education, for example the role of the Higher Education and Inclusion Manager, are needed to fully assess its effectiveness.

What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?

12 The College is guided appropriately by the Academic Infrastructure with respect to academic standards. Its awarding bodies provide valuable guidance on the use of the Academic Infrastructure, for example concerning the subject benchmark statements, the use of the FHEQ and the role of external examiners. The *Code of practice* is on the College's extranet for consideration by staff. *Section 6: Assessment of students* has been mapped to the College's policies and procedures. The Higher Education and Inclusion Manager has responsibility for disseminating changes in the Academic Infrastructure. The quality performance leader for higher education is a valuable conduit for the discussion of developments.

13 Staff engage with the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark* in partnership with their awarding universities. For example, on FdA Working with Young People and Young People's Services, employers were part of the initial consultation, validation and delivery process. Following the Developmental engagement, the College produced the document *Assessment Principles and Practice: A guide for work-placement Mentors and Assessors* which has been disseminated to staff. Staff confirm that on visits to students in the workplace, this assessment guidance is shared successfully with employers.

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

14 The quality assurance arrangements for higher education reflect the College's procedures for all its courses. For example, the programme self-assessment reports are based on a further education model. Since the Developmental engagement, the College has implemented a system whereby the programme self-assessment reports have a greater higher education emphasis by using headings referring to areas of the *Code of practice*. Programme self-assessment reports detail actions for improvement. They feed into self-assessment reports produced by each curriculum area which contribute to the college Self-Assessment Report. An outcome of these procedures is a Quality Improvement Plan which the College reviews at three points in the year. While the procedures are largely appropriate, programme self-assessment reports lack sufficient detailed evaluation of some key aspects of the delivery of higher education, for example external examiner feedback. This adversely affects the effectiveness of the rest of the quality assurance procedures.

15 The College has decided to reintroduce the Curriculum Self-Assessment Report for Higher Education. So far, one has been produced. This is compiled by the Higher Education and Inclusion Manager who monitors its actions. This is a useful evaluative document focusing specifically on higher education issues. It incorporates material that is not always in the programme self-assessment reports and therefore provides a helpful addition to the oversight of the provision.

16 Effective links with university partners supplement college procedures. These include regular input from link tutors, annual review reports and meetings between the Higher Education and Inclusion Manager and university representatives. External examiners confirm that there are strong collaborative links at course level. Tutors at the College and the universities facilitate progression opportunities and student projects.

17 External examiners comment favourably on the standards demonstrated by students. For example, the external examiner report for HNC Computing for 2009-10 praises employer involvement in course delivery. There are clear procedures in place to respond directly to external examiners on the issues they raise. On Edexcel courses the initial response is by course leaders, while the university partners coordinate the responses for the programmes they validate.

18 The Development engagement recommended that the module review procedure used in one curriculum area was extended to other areas of the College in order to help the evaluation of assessment. This now occurs in two curriculum areas, creative arts and media and health and care. The College indicates that it intends to extend the use of module review.

What are the College's arrangements for staff development to support the achievement of appropriate academic standard(s)?

19 The College has a human resource strategy that supports staff in continuous professional development and provides sufficient opportunities to support delivery of the provision. The staff have an annual appraisal where staff development needs are discussed. Curriculum directors then identify staff development opportunities. Staff are supported in pursuing higher level qualifications. As well as accessing the human resources budget for continuous professional development, staff also use the Innovations Fund, which supports new developments within the College and the associated staff development requirements. Staff in the computing and media areas have used this fund extensively. An end-of-year staff development week incorporates team-level activities, including some associated with higher education. Partner universities offer staff development opportunities. For example, De Montfort University provided training to update and enhance assessment practice which was available to all staff teaching higher education at the College. Staff teaching on university courses also have access to online information and support materials.

20 Following the recommendation from the Developmental engagement, records of staff development activity now identify those which relate to higher education. Course leaders report to the Higher Education and Inclusion Manager on staff development opportunities which partners have organised. The Higher Education Forum is becoming a forum for sharing effective practice.

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

Core theme 2: Quality of learning opportunities

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

21 As indicated in the partnership agreements, the College is responsible for the quality of all the teaching on the provision, admissions, induction procedures, student support and the provision of suitable work-related learning opportunities. It is also responsible for ensuring that learning accommodation and resources are appropriate. De Montfort University and the University of Warwick provide substantial access to their facilities for students.

22 The College's management structure, processes and procedures, together with the operation of the Higher Education Forum in the oversight of the provision are described and evaluated in paragraphs 9 to 18. There is a clear and detailed procedure for allocating resources. Budgets are finalised by senior management after a planning process starting in the autumn term with initial income projections. The curriculum directors have a budget that covers day-to-day expenses for both further and higher education.

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

23 College procedures for fulfilling its responsibilities to its awarding bodies for the quality of learning opportunities are described in paragraphs 9 to 18, 21 and 22. The success of policies is evaluated through student questionnaires, course annual reports and the activities of university link tutors. The Higher Education Forum provides an opportunity to disseminate effective practice across the College. Student questionnaires reflect further education practice. The first student questionnaire each year gives informative and positive feedback on student induction, information and guidance in a format relevant for all students. The exact nature of the questions used for the later questionnaires on support for learning and the impact of learning lacks a sufficiently strong focus on higher education.

What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?

24 College use of the sections of the *Code of practice* relevant to the quality of learning opportunities is appropriate, although formal mapping has not been undertaken. Foundation Degree and teacher education courses fully reflect the guidance provided by the *Code of practice, Section 9: Work-based and placement learning*. Engagement with the *Code of practice, Section 8: Careers education, information, advice and guidance* varies in the extent to which it informs teaching and learning. Most courses, including those in the arts, relate learning closely to employment and career opportunities. This is less so on HND Travel and Tourism Management.

25 The College has been unable to introduce successfully the Employer Forum and Higher Education Learner Forum as recommended by the Developmental engagement. This means there is more reliance on contact at the course level. The aim to promote effective practice through the college-level collection of the views of students and employers has not been fulfilled.

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

26 The College has a teaching and learning strategy that is common for all its provision. It contains a comprehensive set of descriptions of good teaching that is derived from further education practice, There is little guidance or targets for strategic enhancement in a higher education context. A system for classroom observation is well embedded in the College. Staff are observed at least once a year, although not necessarily in a higher education session. The template used to evaluate classroom performance is focused on further education requirements. Based on the analysis in paragraphs 10, 11, 14, 15, 23 and 26, the team considers it advisable to consolidate the operation of the present quality assurance procedures and supplement them with additional elements specific to higher education, to improve the oversight of the provision.

27 Curriculum directors and the quality performance leaders have a responsibility to enhance learning and teaching. The team of quality performance leaders has regular meetings to discuss and disseminate best practice in teaching and learning. Tutors new to the delivery of higher education are inducted through an informal mentoring approach. Students report that teaching is generally good and relevant to their subjects. Staff provide timely written feedback on student work of an appropriate quality.

28 The College is expanding its use of its virtual learning environment to support learning and teaching, although there are considerable differences in use between and within courses. Some virtual learning environment sites are poorly organised which makes access to information difficult. The College does not provide explicit guidance on the use of the virtual learning environment, but monitors its use by students. College provision of electronic learning and teaching aids is supplemented by De Montfort University and University of Warwick facilities.

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

29 The College interviews all applicants. Students on most courses value the support they receive during the admissions process. For the students admitted to the 2008-10 cohort on HND Sports Science, however, only two students out of 11 gained the award, due to a lack of scientific knowledge required of students by the curriculum. The team concludes that this scientific knowledge needed to be clearer in the admissions requirements so that more students could achieve their target award. At the beginning of the 2011-12 academic year, students recruited onto the two-year full-time Diploma Higher Education Art and Design by Negotiated Study course were transferred onto a part-time mode of study to enable the College to meet its HEFCE-funded enrolment targets. This process occurred in the first week of attendance at the College after some had already arranged student loans. All 11 students were transferred to the part-time mode. The original college admission target was seven full-time students. Students the team met indicated that they felt that they had no choice but agree to the change. The College believes it had the full agreement of all the students. It has waived the fees and provides additional support in compensation. The aim is to complete delivery in December 2012, although progression opportunities will not be available until the academic year 2013-14. The team concludes that admissions advice in 2010 on Diploma Higher Education Art and Design by Negotiated Study was not timely. Students will not achieve their award in the timescale they had originally expected. The team considers it advisable to ensure that admissions procedures provide sufficient guidance and support to allow students to achieve the awards for which they were accepted in the expected timescale and advise them in a timely manner if changes to their programme are proposed.

30 All students have a thorough college induction on enrolment. The universities also provide an induction. Students value the tutorial support they receive from course staff. Support for individual learning needs is effective, with a system of referral to specialist services. Students the team met report that staff and employers provide valuable support for work-based learning.

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

31 Arrangements for staff development are described in paragraphs 19 and 20. For central support and technical staff, development needs are identified in appraisals and team meetings.

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

32 The College has appropriate arrangements for the provision, support and maintenance of learning resources which are overseen by the College Planning Group. Curriculum directors' budgets are subject to bids by course leaders who identify subject needs. There is a suitable budget for central services such as library and student support. For university courses, evaluation of learning resources is included in the validation and annual reporting processes.

33 Students and staff indicate that resources are sufficient for supporting effective learning. With the completion of a new building, courses in the Creative Arts directorate are relocating and some resources which at present are not up to date are being replaced. The external examiner for engineering indicates there is limited access to computing facilities and dedicated software, but recognises that this is being addressed in a newly-built facility for next year. Students the team met reported that the technical support is excellent.

34 In partnership with a local employer, the College has established a realistic working environment for students on arts, graphics and media courses called the Next Step Studio. It is adjacent to the new building in Hinckley and provides students with valuable work-related experience, for example, in selling services and working on commercial contracts. The facility is also an exhibition space for showcasing students' work and achievements. Arts, graphics and media students report extensive contact with practitioners in support of their learning, particularly in the form of live briefs. They value the greater knowledge of the world of work that this provides. The work-related experience provided by the Next Step Studio is good practice.

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

Core theme 3: Public information

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

35 The College has published its higher education strategy in line with HEFCE requirements and this document articulates development priorities, curriculum plans and

estates strategy. The College has a marketing strategy which promotes the provision through open evenings, award evenings, and an annual festival that showcases the work of students. Information for prospective students is published through a range of paper-based and electronic materials. These include course leaflets, a higher education prospectus available both in hard copy and online and an attractive and well laid-out website with a dedicated area for higher education. The college marketing department produces the prospectus, and publications such as the guide to library resources. The website provides information on the range of courses offered, entry requirements, application procedures and contact details. Students find the information provided prior to enrolment helpful in making informed choices about studying at the College.

36 College procedures meet the various requirements of its awarding bodies. Responsibility for the prospectus and website rests with the College for Birmingham City University and Edexcel provision, while it is shared for De Montfort University and University of Warwick courses. For student information, the College uses the documentation provided by partner universities, supplemented by college-specific information, and prepares its own documentation for Edexcel courses. For example, for FdA Early Years and Learning Support, the University of Warwick provides the handbook as well as module booklets, and the College tutor adds local information about course dates and link tutors. A similar contextualisation process is undertaken for the course handbook with other partner universities, for example on FdA Working with Young People and Young People's Services and HND Graphic Communications. In these cases, the College produces the module guides jointly with the university.

37 The College provides course handbooks for all of the provision. Students receive them during the enrolment period, either in hard copy or through the college virtual learning environment. The handbooks differ in content and style, depending on the awarding body, and contain varying levels of information on the course, its delivery and assessment. The College is in the process of adopting a corporate house style and standardised headings for those handbooks that it is responsible for producing, and is aiming for completion by 2012. Students feel well informed about their studies.

38 Detailed programme specifications are available for all university-validated courses. For the majority of Edexcel awards for which the College is solely responsible, there are no course-specific programme specifications. Students use the programme specifications provided by Edexcel. While valuable, these programme specifications are not contextualised to provide detailed information about the exact nature of opportunities available to students, for example concerning module choice. The team considers it advisable to contextualise Edexcel programme specifications using QAA guidelines to provide an oversight of each course that more fully reflects the opportunities available to students, for example on module choice.

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

39 The College has a publishing protocol to ensure that marketing material is accurate and up to date, and the requirements of its partners are met. The protocol requires that information on the college website, and in prospectuses and programme leaflets is subject to approval, and that consistency is achieved through the involvement of the marketing department. Programme teams have initial responsibility for the preparation of materials which are checked by the marketing department before forwarding to the respective university for approval. Final proofs of the prospectus are signed off by programme leaders. For almost all documents these procedures work effectively.

40 Following the Developmental engagement recommendation to ensure that information about option availability for HNC/D Manufacturing Engineering and HNC/D Mechanical Engineering courses is realistic, the College has taken action. College documentation now only indicates options available at the College rather than the list of all possible options provided by Edexcel. The information about the number of units to be studied in the HND Mechanical Engineering is unclear in the prospectus. There are also minor inaccuracies in course titles in some internal documents, and minor omissions in the details provided in course information on the website, for example for BA Early Childhood Studies.

41 The College has made progress in responding to the Developmental engagement recommendation to promote the use of its virtual learning environment. Some courses make extensive use of the virtual learning environment, for example, BA Childhood Studies. Others, for example, HNC Business and HND Travel and Tourism, provide little information. Students find the virtual learning environment sites easy to access, although in some cases they are not organised in a meaningful way, so information is difficult to retrieve. There is little college guidance on content and presentation, with decisions being left to individual tutors. The team considers it desirable to ensure that the material on the College's virtual learning environment is well organised to improve students' access to information. As part of its action plan from the Developmental engagement relating to the virtual learning environment, the College is aiming for assessment guidelines to be available within all course handbooks by September 2011.

42 Students indicate that the course information they receive for all courses except Certificate/Diploma Higher Education Art and Design by Negotiated Study is helpful and accurate. On the Certificate/Diploma Higher Education Art and Design by Negotiated Study, students the team met reported uncertainty regarding course requirements following a change in study mode.

43 The College indicated that it had responded fully to the Developmental engagement recommendation to include comprehensive information in all course handbooks about student complaints and appeals procedures. The team found that the information had not been included in some handbooks to the detriment of students, in particular those relating to the College's Edexcel provision. The team concludes that college arrangements to check the outcomes of action plans are not effective. Based on analysis in paragraphs 18, 25 and 42, the team considers it advisable to ensure action plans are implemented allowing students to obtain the full benefits of the agreed outcomes of QAA reviews, for example concerning the content of course handbooks.

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

C Summary of findings from the Developmental engagement in assessment

44 The Developmental engagement in assessment took place in February 2010. It addressed the following lines of enquiry agreed with the College:

Line of enquiry 1: Does the College provide students with timely feedback on assessed work that is effective in promoting reflective practice and facilitating improvement?

Line of enquiry 2: Does the College ensure that the requirements for the quality and range of assessment methods are well understood by staff and applied consistently across programmes?

Line of enquiry 3: How effective is the College in ensuring that the information it publishes for students on assessment is accessible, clear and accurate?

45 The areas of good practice identified during the Developmental engagement were the constructive written feedback in the curriculum areas of Art, Media and Performing Arts and the Sports Academy; informative verbal feedback in the curriculum areas of Art, Media and Performing Arts and the Sports Academy; effective formative feedback on the HND Graphic Communication and HNC/D 3D Design Practice programmes; effective mentor feedback on HND Sports and Exercise Science; a wide range of varied and innovative assessment methods, both formative and summative, for example on HND Computing and HNC Business; valuable employer involvement in assessment design on HNC/D Fashion and Textiles and HND Moving Image; the comprehensive student handbooks on FD Leadership, Management and Enterprise (Interior Design) and HND Graphic; and student involvement in the evaluation and review of programme and module handbooks on Certificate and Diploma Higher Education Visual Arts by Negotiated Study.

46 The Developmental engagement indicated that it was advisable for the Higher Education Forum to fulfil its terms of reference. It also considered it desirable to work with De Montfort University to reduce the time taken for students on FD Children, Families and Community Health to receive all their feedback; to improve the effectiveness of the Higher Education Learner Forum and Higher Education Employer Forum; to include more evaluation in the curriculum area self-evaluation reports; to extend the module review procedure used in the curriculum area of Art, Media and Performing Arts to other areas of the provision; to maintain records of staff attendance at staff development events; to ensure student information concerning option choices on HNC/D Manufacturing Engineering and HNC/D Mechanical Engineering indicates only modules actually taught by the College rather than the list published by Edexcel covering all possibilities; to include comprehensive information on student complaints and appeals in all programme handbooks; and promote the use of the virtual learning environment to provide more complete information on assessment.

D Foundation Degrees

47 The College has four Foundation Degrees, all indirectly funded. Enrolment in 2009-10 was 35 full-time and 84 part-time students representing 77 full-time equivalent students. For 2010-11, enrolment is 42 full-time and 100 part-time students giving a total of 92 full-time equivalent students. There are no plans for further expansion.

48 Foundation Degrees are managed effectively through strong partnerships with De Montfort University and the University of Warwick. Both universities provide access to their resources, guidance for students and extensive support for staff. The College was unable to attract employers to an arranged meeting during the review.

49 All the team's findings and conclusions, except for the fourth advisable recommendation, are relevant to Foundation Degrees.

E Conclusions and summary of judgements

50 The Summative review team has identified one feature of good practice in North Warwickshire and Hinckley College's management of its responsibilities for academic standards and for the quality of learning opportunities of the awards the College offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. This was based upon discussion with staff and students and scrutiny of evidence provided by the College and its awarding bodies Birmingham City University, De Montfort University, Edexcel and the University of Warwick.

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

- arts, graphics and media students benefit from valuable work-related experience in a realistic working environment in the Next Step Studio, providing greater knowledge of the challenges of the world of work (paragraph 34).

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

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

- consolidate the operation of the present quality assurance procedures and supplement them with additional elements specific to higher education, to improve the oversight of the provision (paragraphs 10, 11, 14, 15, 23, 26)
- ensure action plans are implemented allowing students to obtain the full benefits of the agreed outcomes of QAA reviews, for example concerning the content of course handbooks (paragraphs 18, 25, 43)
- ensure that admissions procedures provide sufficient guidance and support for students to allow them to achieve the awards for which they were accepted in the expected timescale and advise them in a timely manner if changes to their programme are proposed (paragraph 29)
- contextualise Edexcel programme specifications using QAA guidelines to provide an oversight of each course that more fully reflects the opportunities available to students, for example on module choice (paragraph 38).

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

- to ensure that the material on the College's virtual learning environment is well organised to improve students' access to information (paragraphs 28, 41).

55 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, and other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that it has **confidence** that, in the context of this Summative review, the College discharges its responsibilities effectively, as set out in the relevant partnership agreement for the management of the standards of the awards of its awarding bodies.

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

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

North Warwickshire and Hinckley College action plan relating to the Summative review: June 2012						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
In the course of the Summative review the team identified the following areas of good practice that are worthy of wider dissemination within the College:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> arts, graphics and media students benefit from valuable work-related experience in a realistic working environment in the Next Step Studio, providing greater knowledge of the challenges of the world of work (paragraph 34). 	Enhance work placement opportunities through closer working with employers - this will include similar models where appropriate	July 2012	Programme leaders Higher Education & Inclusion Manager	Increased engagement with employers to provide additional and enhanced work placement opportunities	Higher Education & Inclusion Manager, Assistant Principal Standards & Performance, Higher Education Forum	Annual Self-Assessment Report documentation, student feedback, programme review, employer feedback
Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team considers that it is advisable for the College to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consolidate the operation of the present quality assurance procedures and 	Additional relevant elements/criteria to be added to ensure compliance to higher education requirements					

supplement them with additional elements specific to higher education, to improve the oversight of the provision (paragraphs 10, 11, 14, 15, 23, 26)	and Quality Assurance Agency <i>Code of practice</i> to the following cross-college documentation					
	Self-Assessment Report documentation (programme and curriculum level)	July 2012	Higher Education & Inclusion Manager, Quality Performance Leader Higher Education, Assistant Principal Standards & Performance	Programme and curriculum self-assessment reports contain direct reference to higher education practice and requirements to inform Higher Education Self-Assessment Report	Higher Education & Inclusion Manager, Assistant Principal Standards & Performance	Higher Education Forum, Higher Education Self-Assessment Report, annual programme self-assessment reports, Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality
	Teaching and learning strategy	July 2012	Higher Education & Inclusion Manager, Quality Performance Leader Higher Education, Quality & Standards Manager, Assistant Principal Standards & Performance	College Teaching and Learning Strategy reflects higher education practice and requirements	Assistant Principal Standards & Performance	Higher Education Forum, annual programme self-assessment reports, observation reports, Student Feedback

	Observation documentation	July 2012	Higher Education and Inclusion Manager, Quality Performance Leader, Higher Education Quality & Standards Manager, Assistant Principal Standards & Performance	Observation documentation contains direct reference to higher education practice and requirements	Higher Education & Inclusion Manager, Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality	Higher Education Forum, observation reports annual programme self-assessment reports
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure action plans are implemented allowing students to obtain the full benefits of the agreed outcomes of QAA reviews, for example concerning the content of course handbooks (paragraphs 18, 25, 43) 	Effective tracking of action plan to ensure standardisation of module review documentation and practice	July 2012	Programme leaders, Higher Education & Inclusion Manager	All module review documents are comprehensive, inclusive of student feedback/input, are of standardised format and contain relevant information	Higher Education Forum, Higher Education & Inclusion Manager, Assistant Principal Standards & Performance	Higher Education Forum, one-to-one meetings, self-assessment reports
	Increase employer contact/activity/feedback	July 2012	Programme leaders, Higher Education & Inclusion Manager, curriculum directors	Increased employer engagement through an online benchmarked survey	Higher Education Forum, Higher Education & Inclusion Manager, Assistant Principal Standards &	Programme self-assessment reports, Higher Education Self-Assessment Report, student feedback, employer feedback

	Effective tracking to ensure the development and implementation of standardised course handbook template fulfilling information requirements	July 2012	Programme leaders, Higher Education & Inclusion Manager	All handbooks are of standardised format and contain relevant information	Performance Higher Education Forum, Higher Education & Inclusion Manager, Assistant Principal Standards & Performance	Higher Education Forum, student feedback
	Annual checking procedures for accuracy and content of handbooks to be introduced via the Higher Education & Inclusion Manager/ Higher Education Forum	July 2012	Higher Education & Inclusion Manager, Higher Education Forum, Quality & Standards Manager	Effective auditable process to monitor completion and compliance	Higher Education Forum, Higher Education & Inclusion Manager, Assistant Principal Standards & Performance	Higher Education Forum, self-assessment reports, annual programme reports, one to one meetings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that admissions procedures provide sufficient guidance and support for students to allow them to achieve the awards for which they were accepted in the expected timescale and advise them in a 	All full-time applications to be submitted via UCAS	July 2012	Higher Education & Inclusion Manager	100 per cent of applications processed via UCAS to ensure timely recruitment	Higher Education & Inclusion Manager, Assistant Principal Standards & Performance, Assistant Principal Community Partnerships & Customer Service	Higher Education Forum, one-to-one meetings, Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality

timely manner if changes to their programme are proposed (paragraph 29)	Allocated named customer service personnel with specified higher education recruitment monitoring and administrative responsibility	July 2012	Higher Education & Inclusion Manager, customer service personnel	Accuracy of recruitment monitoring data and timely actions for impact	Higher Education & Inclusion Manager, Assistant Principal Standards & Performance	Effective and auditable process, student feedback, tutor feedback, self-assessment reports, Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contextualise Edexcel programme specifications using QAA guidelines to provide an oversight of each course that more fully reflects the opportunities available to students, for example on module choice (paragraph 38). 	Contextualisation of all Edexcel programme specifications	July 2012	Programme leaders, Quality Performance Leader, Higher Education Quality & Standards Manager	All Edexcel specifications adapted to ensure enhanced programme information for students	Higher Education & Inclusion Manager	Higher Education Forum, self-assessment reports, student feedback
	Checking/monitoring process for programme handbooks and specifications to support compliance	July 2012	Higher Education & Inclusion Manager	Specifications that accurately reflect the options available to students	Higher Education Manager	Higher Education Forum, tutor feedback, self-assessment reports
Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team considers that it is desirable for the College to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that the material on the College's virtual learning environment is well 	Virtual learning environment training to be included as 'Sharing of Good Practice' activity at Higher	December 2011	Higher Education Manager, directors, programme	All programmes effectively using virtual learning environment to enable students	Higher Education & Inclusion Manager, Higher Education Forum, Assistant	Higher Education Forum, qualitative questionnaire, register of attendance,

organised to improve students' access to information (paragraphs 28, 41).	Education Forum meeting Increased usage of the virtual learning environment and available material for students	July 2012	leaders, specified trainer Higher Education & Inclusion Manager, directors programme leaders	to access information Enhanced information for students and monitor use via virtual learning environment statistics	Principal Standards & Performance Higher Education Manager, Higher Education Forum	student feedback, self-assessment reports 'Virtual learning environment Stats', self-assessment reports, student feedback
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