



Educational Oversight for embedded colleges: report of the monitoring visit of CEG UFP Ltd ONCAMPUS, February 2019

ONCAMPUS Coventry

Outcome of the monitoring visit

1 From the evidence provided in the annual return and at the monitoring visit, the monitoring team concludes that ONCAMPUS Coventry (the Centre) is making commendable progress with continuing to monitor, review and enhance its higher education provision since the February 2018 [Higher Education Review \(Embedded Colleges\)](#).

Changes since the last QAA review

2 The Centre is the largest ONCAMPUS UK centre both in terms of student numbers and staff. Student numbers remain stable after a year of significant growth on the Centre's undergraduate programmes, which account for over 80 per cent of all students. Growth continues in the numbers studying life sciences. There have been no significant staffing changes in the past year.

3 Plans are advanced for the Centre to relocate from its current location to a larger refurbished space in a centrally located building on the University campus. Relocation is scheduled for this year and will involve a staged relocation from various buildings, while refurbishment work is undertaken. The new building will include laboratory space for engineering students.

Findings from the monitoring visit

4 The review team concludes that the Centre is making commendable progress in continuing to monitor, review and enhance its provision. The 2018 Higher Education Review (Embedded College) (HER (EC)) report made no recommendations or affirmations. It identified a feature of good practice in the highly personalised approach to learning and teaching that supports individual student needs and achievement. Following the review, the outcome was discussed by the Centre Leadership Team and an action plan was drawn up. The plan has four parts: providing timely and detailed feedback to students; developing student tracking mechanisms and following up on student performance and welfare; developing the personal tutor programme; and strengthening relationships with the University and increasing engagement activities for students.

5 Action has been taken with respect to all four areas and measures identified to evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives taken. The Centre has a formative assessment strategy in place. Assignments are submitted using plagiarism-detection software; feedback is provided electronically, as far as possible on an individual basis. Feedback should be provided within 10 working days and a tracking system is used to ensure that work is marked and handed back promptly.

6 Students that met the review team stated that feedback was helpful and received in reasonable time. Student tracking systems have been enhanced to ensure that student learning needs are identified at an early stage, for example through initial assessments and diagnostic tests. Case notes are recorded on a welfare tracker spreadsheet and problems categorised and prioritised for response. Implementation and follow up are discussed at welfare meetings. Students who met the review team commented enthusiastically on the learning and personal support they received and on the role of personal tutors, citing examples of how they had impacted positively on their experience at the Centre.

7 The Centre held discussions with the University regarding the development of new pathway opportunities for students to progress to. A range of opportunities are made available to students to engage with the University and their destination departments and programmes including visits, tutorials and workshops. Students who met the review team stated that they thought they were being well prepared for the transition to University.

8 During the past year, internal reviews have taken place of provision at the Centre. The CEG Central Quality Audit gave the Centre a green red-amber-green traffic light system rating (RAG) rating. The report identified good practice in relation to its formative assessment strategy. Annual monitoring reports summarise the action taken with respect to the previous year's action plan and propose further actions. In all cases actions proposed in last year's reports have been addressed and their effectiveness has been evaluated. Actions include strengthening the robustness of assessment processes; data sharing with the University; addressing the issue of space; and increasing engagement with destination schools and programmes.

9 The Centre has developed an enhancement strategy, which describes processes for identifying enhancement opportunities, ways of taking them forward and opportunities for identifying and enhancing good practice (see paragraphs 5 and 8). The strategy is intended to support an action-based approach to improving the student experience. Implementation is led by the Head of Centre working with the Centre Leadership Team. An over-riding strategic priority at the present time is the completion of the relocation to larger premises.

10 The Centre seeks to involve students in continuous improvement and enhancement of its provision. Student opinion is elicited through surveys, meetings with student representatives and an open-door policy, which encourages all students to express their views. Students who met the review team stated that the Centre actively sought their opinions and listened to them. The review team was made aware of a number of examples of changes made as a result of student feedback, such as requiring student punctuality to minimise disruption to classes and optimising aspects of the timetable to improve student study arrangements.

11 The review team concludes that the Centre has transparent, reliable and valid admissions processes. Recruitment, selection and admission of students are undertaken centrally by CEG Central Admissions who work with a network of agents. Although a centralised process, the Centre is involved in admissions in various ways. Academic entrance requirements are agreed between the Centre and the University and notified to Central Admissions. These are published on the website and in centrally generated brochures. Skype interviews with local staff are used during admission if appropriate. The Centre is consulted on borderline applications and a decision on their suitability is made by the Head of Centre, in consultation with tutors and, if appropriate, the University. The Centre is confident that as a result of careful consideration of borderline applicants, it only admits students capable of completing their programmes satisfactorily. The Centre is responsible for providing information and welcome

packs to students who have accepted offers of places. Student documents are checked on arrival. Students who met the review team expressed satisfaction with the admissions process, stating that it was smooth and effective, and that they had been well informed throughout.

12 The Centre operates assessment policies that are rigorous and fair. Assessment is centrally led by subject and pathway leaders whose role extends across all ONCAMPUS provision including that delivered at Coventry. Common summative assessments are undertaken across ONCAMPUS centres. Standard templates are provided for submitting and recording marks. Assessment and assessment related policies, processes and procedures are set out in the CEG Quality Manual.

13 Staff at the Centre are involved in assessment in a variety of ways. Draft summative assessments are discussed at subject group meetings. Formative assessments are developed both centrally and by local teachers. Marking is undertaken locally within the framework for standardisation and moderation set out in the Quality Manual. Feedback to students on formative assessments is provided by the staff at the Centre. Assignments are submitted electronically using plagiarism-detection software. Staff training has taken place on various aspects of assessment and assessment is discussed regularly at internal staff meetings. Students who met the review team indicated that they were clear about what was expected of them and how their work would be marked. They also stated that the feedback they received was timely and helpful; and that they were well briefed on how to avoid plagiarism.

14 No external reviews of the Centre provision have taken place since the 2018 HER (EC).

15 Completion, pass and progression rates are high and generally above target, but vary between pathways. Pass rates are lower on the extended versions of programmes which take students with weaker language scores. Engineering students on the IFP struggle with aspects of the programme. The Centre has identified that groups of students from certain educational backgrounds struggle with some of the demands of UK education. The Centre is addressing the challenges faced by students from particular cultural and educational backgrounds on these programmes using the tracker spreadsheet and early intervention strategies (see paragraph 6).

The embedded colleges' use of external reference points to meet UK expectations for higher education

16 The Centre demonstrates highly effective engagement with relevant external reference points. The requirements of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code), *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications* (FHEQ) and other relevant external frameworks are reflected in the regulations, policies and procedures set out in the ONCAMPUS Quality Manual. The Quality Manual, in turn, informs practice at the Centre. ONCAMPUS centrally appoints external examiners whose reports are shared with the Centre staff, analysed in annual monitoring reports, and appropriate action taken.

17 Staff are made aware of expectations for quality and standards by subject leaders, through learning and teaching events, in staff meetings, during CPD, and have access online to the ONCAMPUS Quality Manual. The Centre staff also work closely with the University. Sharing of good practice is encouraged. Staff who met the review team were aware of the Quality Code and key external reference points that underpin standards, quality and enhancement.

Background to the monitoring visit

18 The monitoring visit serves as a short check on the provider's and its embedded colleges' continuing management of academic standards and quality of provision. It focuses on progress since the previous review. In addition, it provides an opportunity for QAA to advise the provider and its embedded colleges of any matters that have the potential to be of particular interest in the next monitoring visit or review.

19 The monitoring visit was carried out by Cameron Waitt, QAA Officer, and Dr Carol Vielba, QAA Reviewer, on 5 February 2019.

QAA2361a - R10449 - Apr 19

© The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2019
Southgate House, Southgate Street, Gloucester GL1 1UB
Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786

Tel 01452 557050
Web www.qaa.ac.uk