



Higher Education Review (Embedded Colleges) of ONCAMPUS UCLan

February 2018

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About this review

This report should be read in conjunction with the Provider CEG report.

This is a report of a Higher Education Review (Embedded Colleges) conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at ONCAMPUS University of Central Lancashire (UCLan). The review took place from 14 to 15 February 2018 and was conducted by a team of two reviewers, as follows:

- Professor Gaynor Taylor
- Professor Graham Romp

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

In Higher Education Review (Embedded Colleges) the QAA review team:

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

A check is also made on the provider's financial sustainability, management and governance (FSMG) with the aim of giving students reasonable confidence that they should not be at risk of being unable to complete their course as a result of financial failure.

The QAA website gives more information [about QAA](#)² and explains the method for [Higher Education Review \(Embedded Colleges\)](#).³ For an explanation of terms see the glossary at the end of this report.

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

² QAA website: www.qaa.ac.uk.

³ Higher Education Review (Embedded Colleges): www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews-and-reports/how-we-review-higher-education.

Key findings

Judgements

The QAA review team formed the following judgements about the higher education provision.

- The maintenance of the academic standards of awards offered by itself and/or on behalf of degree-awarding bodies and/or other awarding organisations **meets** UK expectations.
- The quality of student learning opportunities **meets** UK expectations.
- The quality of the information about learning opportunities **meets** UK expectation.

Good practice

The QAA review team identified the following features of **good practice**.

- The use of virtual interviews to support appropriate admission decisions for borderline students and for those applying to the Medical Undergraduate Foundation Programme (MUFP) (Expectation B2)
- The highly personalised approach to learning and teaching supports student needs and achievement (Expectation B3)
- The proactive and inclusive approach which results in a high level of student engagement (Expectation B5).

Recommendations and Affirmations

The QAA review team did not identify any recommendations or affirmations.

Financial sustainability, management and governance

The financial sustainability, management and governance check has been satisfactorily completed.

About the provider

ONCAMPUS UCLan opened in 2008. It currently runs the standard UFP programme, the Masters Foundation programme (MFP), and the Medics Undergraduate Foundation Programme (MUFP), which is unique to this Centre. Student numbers are currently small, but growing; there are 107 students in total. The quality assurance procedures apply as per every other centre in the ONCAMPUS network.

The Centre is staffed following the standard ONCAMPUS model, and is led by a Centre Head, supported by a Deputy Centre Head. In addition, the administrative support of the Centre is provided by a Curriculum Information Officer, and a Student Recruitment and Support Officer. The Centre hires mainly sessional teachers, according to standard ONCAMPUS operating procedures.

The Centre has space allocated to it in the Vernon Building, which ensures students are fully embedded in university life from day one of their programmes at ONCAMPUS.

The Centre had an annual monitoring visit in 2017 which deemed the Centre to be making acceptable progress.

Explanation of findings

This section explains the review findings in greater detail.

1 Judgement: The maintenance of the academic standards of awards offered by the provider and/or on behalf of degree-awarding bodies and/or other awarding organisations

Expectation (A1): In order to secure threshold academic standards, degree-awarding bodies:

a) ensure that the requirements of *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)* are met by:

- positioning their qualifications at the appropriate level of the relevant framework for higher education qualifications
- ensuring that programme learning outcomes align with the relevant qualification descriptor in the relevant framework for higher education qualifications
- naming qualifications in accordance with the titling conventions specified in the frameworks for higher education qualifications
- awarding qualifications to mark the achievement of positively defined programme learning outcomes

b) consider and take account of QAA's guidance on qualification characteristics

c) where they award UK credit, assign credit values and design programmes that align with the specifications of the relevant national credit framework

d) consider and take account of relevant Subject Benchmark Statements.

Quality Code, Chapter A1: UK and European Reference Points for Academic Standards

Findings

1.1 ONCAMPUS UCLan, embedded at the University of Central Lancashire, is not a degree awarding body. ONCAMPUS UCLan delivers the standard ONCAMPUS Undergraduate Foundation Programme (UFP) and Master's Foundation Programme (MFP) programmes as well as a Medics UFP (MUFP) which is unique to this Centre. ONCAMPUS has an agreement in place with the University that students meeting specified progression requirements (for the MUFP this includes undertaking a successful interview) can proceed to a relevant degree programme at the University.

1.2 The quality assurance of these programmes is managed centrally with oversight provided by ONCAMPUS Academic Board. For the standard programmes this Centre adopts the centrally produced programme and module specifications that detail aims, programme level learning outcomes, programme structure and entry requirements. There are equivalent documents for the MUFP.

1.3 The review team found that the policies, processes and procedures in place at ONCAMPUS would allow this Expectation to be met.

1.4 The review team examined the effectiveness of these policies, processes and procedures by reviewing the Quality Assurance Manual and approval documentation, including programme and module specifications. The team also held meetings with staff responsible for academic standards.

1.5 Programme specifications provide learning outcomes that reflect the level of the programmes and a mapping between learning outcomes and modules. The programmes delivered at ONCAMPUS UCLan are aligned against a range of external benchmarks, including the UK Quality Code, Subject Benchmark Statements, the Northern Ireland Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (NICATS) level descriptors for level 3 programmes, and the FHEQ for higher level programmes. The programmes are non-credit bearing with stated credit values used as a means to equate notional learning hours to programmes and modules.

1.6 ONCAMPUS UCLan delivers programmes that have been approved through processes that ensure they align with relevant external reference points and that appropriate academic standards are set and maintained. The review team concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A2.1): In order to secure their academic standards, degree-awarding bodies establish transparent and comprehensive academic frameworks and regulations to govern how they award academic credit and qualifications.

Quality Code, Chapter A2: Degree-Awarding Bodies' Reference Points for Academic Standards

Findings

1.7 The academic governance framework for ONCAMPUS centres is centralised with Academic Board as the senior committee holding ultimate responsibility for quality and standards. Academic Board has five subcommittees: Learning and Teaching Committee; three programme committees, one for each of UFP, MFP and IY1, and the recently established Quality Committee which has operational oversight of quality processes such as annual monitoring. In addition there are subject groups which report to the relevant Programme Committees. This structure is centralised with committee membership drawn from across ONCAMPUS centres. The only required centre structure is a Staff-Student Consultative Committee (SSCC). Centres may also have representation on partner university committees.

1.8 ONCAMPUS UCLan currently runs the standard UFP programme, the three term MFP and a separate UFP solely for those students wishing to progress to the partner university's medical school. All students on the UFP and MFP follow a centralised curriculum and assessment diet. The UFP for entry into medicine is only offered at this Centre, but is regarded as part of the UFP in terms of regulation. The regulatory framework for the ONCAMPUS programmes is given in the Quality Manual.

1.9 The academic governance structure and the regulatory framework would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.10 The review team examined the Quality Manual and Programmes Handbook, terms of reference of academic governance committees and minutes from these committees. Team members also held discussions with staff and students from the Centre.

1.11 The Centre is represented within the CEG academic governance structure as the Head of Centre is a member of Academic Board and the centre has a representative on both the Quality and the Teaching and Learning Committees. Staff who hold module responsibilities (programme leaders, pathway leaders and subject leaders) and student representatives take part in programme meetings and all staff teaching a particular subject belong to subject groups. The Head of Centre is also a member of the partner university's International Operational Group and International Strategy Group.

1.12 Regulatory issues such as assessment requirements, assessment regulations and academic impropriety are addressed in the Quality Manual and Programmes Handbook. The latter includes examination regulations and programme specifications for UFP and MFP. It also notes the requirement for higher grades for some progression routes. While the regulatory content applies to MUFP students, and this is the handbook issued to them, there is no explicit mention of this programme.

1.13 CEG has in place, and operates, transparent and effective arrangements for academic governance in which staff of the UCLan Centre are involved. The regulatory framework for programmes is clear and easily accessible by staff and students. Thus the Expectation is met and level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A2.2): Degree-awarding bodies maintain a definitive record of each programme and qualification that they approve (and of subsequent changes to it) which constitutes the reference point for delivery and assessment of the programme, its monitoring and review, and for the provision of records of study to students and alumni.

Quality Code, Chapter A2: Degree-Awarding Bodies' Reference Points for Academic Standards

Findings

1.14 All the programmes offered at ONCAMPUS UCLAN were designed by ONCAMPUS which is responsible for their approval and re-approval. Programme specifications exist and comprise the definitive record for each programme. They are completed on a standard template and comprise the definitive record for each programme. There are also schemes of work for individual subjects which provide a more detailed record of the learning outcomes covered in modules.

1.15 These arrangements would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.16 The review team examined programme specifications, schemes of work and documentation for approval and re-approval of the programmes concerned. The team also spoke with staff from CEG and from the Centre.

1.17 All programme specifications are available to staff and students on the centre's VLE and specifications for UFP and MFP, but not MUFP, are included in the ONCAMPUS Student Handbook. Consideration and revision of the appropriate programme specification was at the core of programme re-approval and the team was told that a formal version control system had been introduced to ensure that a single, accurate record was in place.

1.18 The use and careful version control of programme specifications as a definitive record ensures that the Expectation is met and the level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.1): Degree-awarding bodies establish and consistently implement processes for the approval of taught programmes and research degrees that ensure that academic standards are set at a level which meets the UK threshold standard for the qualification and are in accordance with their own academic frameworks and regulations.

Quality Code, Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards

Findings

1.19 The approval of new ONCAMPUS programmes is a Provider-level responsibility and the process is detailed in its Academic Quality Assurance Manual. The standard ONCAMPUS programmes delivered at this Centre were developed and approved prior to its engagement with QAA, and under the regulations that existed at that time. The MUFP was approved in March 2014 and the review and re-approval of the standard UFP was completed at the end of 2014-15, and the MFP at the end of 2016-17.

1.20 The review team found that the policies, processes and procedures in place at ONCAMPUS would allow this Expectation to be met at this Centre.

1.21 As the process for programme approval is similar to that of re-approval the review team tested whether this Expectation is met in practice at this Centre by considering the effectiveness of the more recent re-approval of its programmes. The review team examined the quality assurance manual and re-approval documentation, including programme and module specifications and held meetings with staff involved in the re-approval of ONCAMPUS programmes.

1.22 Programme re-approval is led by the relevant Programme Leader by teaching staff at ONCAMPUS UCLan had extensive engagement in the recent programme reviews that related to this Centre. This involved discussions across different Centres and dialogue with the partner University about proposed programme developments and changes. The implementation and involvement of staff involved in the ONCAMPUS re-approval processes supports the view that its approval processes ensure that academic standards are set at a level which meets the UK threshold standard for the qualification.

1.23 In following the requirements of the ONCAMPUS Quality Assurance Manual, including the Qualifications Framework, ONCAMPUS centres make rigorous and systematic use of external benchmarks and the FHEQ in the design and approval of new programmes. The review team concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.2): Degree-awarding bodies ensure that credit and qualifications are awarded only where:

- **the achievement of relevant learning outcomes (module learning outcomes in the case of credit and programme outcomes in the case of qualifications) has been demonstrated through assessment**
- **both UK threshold standards and their own academic standards have been satisfied.**

Quality Code, Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards

Findings

1.24 Programme specifications, agreed at approval/review, include statements of both generic learning outcomes and, within module descriptions, subject specific outcomes. A mapping of the generic learning outcomes to individual modules is also provided. Schemes of work for each module provide detail of the learning outcomes covered in individual sessions. Responsibility checklists show that assessments for the Provider-approved programmes are set by the Provider. Academic Board has oversight of assessments whose design is 'led by' programme/pathway/subject leaders. External examiners are explicitly asked to check on coverage of learning outcomes in their reports.

1.25 The mapping of learning outcomes to modules, the design of assessments and its oversight by external examiners allows the Expectation to be met.

1.26 The team examined documentation including the Quality Manual, Programme Specifications and external examiners' reports. The review team also spoke with staff at ONCAMPUS UCLan who were involved in setting assessments.

1.27 Programme leaders, pathway leaders and subject leaders take responsibility for one or more modules and for the setting of assessments in these. The team was informed that setting assessments was an activity shared between staff teaching a module, but that overall responsibility lay with the relevant programme, pathway or subject leader. Assessments are scrutinised by external examiners who are required to comment explicitly in their written reports on the extent to which assessment methods test the programme learning outcomes. External examiners commented positively on this aspect.

1.28 A potential issue with respect to this Expectation occurred at the Centre when MFP students were set an assessment at the wrong level and which would not, therefore, have covered the relevant learning outcomes. This was picked up by both the newly appointed Head of Centre and the Provider's Centre Audit and recovery measures put in place. The Head of Centre also explained that additional checks had been introduced to ensure such a situation was avoided in future.

1.29 The consistently positive comments of the external examiners and the detection of, and recovery from the error at ONCAMPUS UCLan demonstrate that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.3): Degree-awarding bodies ensure that processes for the monitoring and review of programmes are implemented which explicitly address whether the UK threshold academic standards are achieved and whether the academic standards required by the individual degree-awarding body are being maintained.

Quality Code, *Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards*

Findings

1.30 The monitoring and review processes are detailed in the Provider's Academic Quality Assurance Manual. Centres make monthly data returns related to key performance indicators (KPIs). Annual monitoring is a shared responsibility between ONCAMPUS and the Centre. The Head of Centre produces an annual monitoring report, which is then peer reviewed before being received and approved by the ONCAMPUS Quality Assurance Committee on behalf of Academic Board. Periodic programme review is an ONCAMPUS responsibility and takes place every five years. ONCAMPUS also undertakes risk based Centre Audits to assess of how well Centres are implementing central policies and procedures.

1.31 The procedures for periodic review and annual monitoring are clear and allow this Expectation to be met.

1.32 The review team tested the effectiveness monitoring and review by examining the Quality Assurance Manual, annual monitoring reports, and documents relating to periodic review and Centre Audit. The review team also met staff involved in monitoring and review processes.

1.33 ONCAMPUS UCLan records the progression and achievement of its students and these are included within the Centre's monthly data return to ONCAMPUS and informs annual monitoring reports. Annual monitoring reports comment on external examiner and student feedback and performance. These reports are peer reviewed prior to approval by Academic Board and evidence self-critical evaluation and action planning.

1.34 Staff from the Centre contribute to periodic programme review (PPR) which considers the level, standards, learning objectives, curriculum and delivery of a programme. The outcome of PPR are revised programme and module specifications. Documentation relating to the periodic review demonstrates a robust process consistent with ONCAMPUS procedures.

1.35 The last ONCAMPUS Audit of this Centre was undertaken in June 2017 and highlighted instances where staff at the Centre had failed to implement policies and procedures designed to ensure the maintenance of academic standards. These issues had previously been identified within the Centre and remedial measures had been introduced to secure academic standards and the student experience. Subsequent to this audit report a detailed action plan was developed and implemented to ensure that ONCAMPUS policies and procedures are fully implemented at this Centre and academic standards maintained.

1.36 The review team found that the Centre implements monitoring and review processes effectively to ensure that UK threshold standards are met. The review team concludes that the Expectation 3.3 and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.4): In order to be transparent and publicly accountable, degree-awarding bodies use external and independent expertise at key stages of setting and maintaining academic standards to advise on whether:

- **UK threshold academic standards are set, delivered and achieved**
- **the academic standards of the degree-awarding body are appropriately set and maintained.**

Quality Code, Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards

Findings

1.37 ONCAMPUS has clearly defined processes, described in its Quality Manual, for the approval of new programmes and for the re-approval of existing programmes. These processes include the appointment of external advisers to comment on both standards and quality. All programmes are expected to have external examiners and additional external examiners have been appointed to ensure that the workload in terms of scrutinising a representative selection of assignments from all centres remains achievable.

1.38 The use of external, independent expertise in approving and reviewing programmes and the continuing scrutiny of such programmes by independent external examiners would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.39 The team accessed the descriptions of approval and re-approval processes in the Quality Manual and also examined the documentation for the approval of MUFP and IY1 Art and Design in Coventry together with the re-approval of the UFP, IY1 and MFP programmes. They scrutinised external examiners reports, the External Examiners Handbook, and a list of current external examiners. Team members also discussed the choice of external and independent advisers with senior staff at CEG.

1.40 The Quality Manual describes the approval process and the Periodic Programme Review (re-approval) process. With respect to approval Academic Board is responsible for appointing an external reviewer and the manual states that 'The External Reviewer will generally not be a member of staff from any institutions with which ONCAMPUS has current dealings, apart from in instances where the university partner has directly requested this' and also notes the need for subject expertise. An exception to this is when new programmes are designed for, and in conjunction with, a particular university partner rather than being available across all centres. In such cases an external assessor is not used and the process relies on input from the partner university to ensure articulation and appropriate standards. The most recent approval involving ONCAMPUS UCLan was that of MUFP in 2014. This did not involve an external reviewer, but the team was informed that the process had changed since that event.

1.41 The PPR process involves the scrutiny of a self-evaluation document and a proposed new programme specification by an external reviewer. While the approval process notes a need for subject expertise, PPR refers to a single assessor only, without reference to subject expertise. The team noted that in the case of the UFP periodic review only one assessor was used to comment on the full range of pathways from science and engineering to art. While the assessor was able to comment on generic issues there is a risk that matters of content and subject specific skills are not subject to scrutiny in such a process and a recommendation has been made to CEG to ensure that the PPR process includes subject specific externality.

1.42 Standards are set at programme approval and reviewed during the PPR, which

takes place at least once in five years. In order to maintain standards external examiners are appointed to all programmes and to all subject areas within these. External examiner duties are clearly specified in the External Examiner Handbook, but the team noted that, although the process for appointing external examiners appears to be clearly understood, it is not documented and there had been a considerable delay in replacing an external examiner in the art and design area.

1.43 Senior staff from the Provider stated that when seeking external and independent advice they prefer to exclude staff from their university partners, but this is becoming more difficult. The current set of external examiners meets this definition of externality as do the two reviewers used in the re-approval of UFP, IY1 and MFP.

1.44 The Expectation A3.4 met in that approval and re-approval involve independent and external assessors and external examiners are in place for all programmes. However, in the light of the recommendation made to the ONCAMPUS Provider, there is a moderate risk to standards in the re-approval process if external advisers are not qualified to comment on the range of subject material and it is recommended that CEG ensures that the periodic programme review process includes subject specific externality.

Expectation: Met

Level of risk: Low

The maintenance of the academic standards of awards offered by the provider and/or on behalf of degree-awarding bodies and/or other awarding organisations: Summary of findings

1.45 In reaching its judgement about the maintenance of academic standards, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex two of the published handbook.

1.46 All Expectations are met with low levels of risk.

1.47 The review team concludes that the maintenance of the academic standards of awards offered by the provider and/or on behalf of degree-awarding bodies and/or other awarding organisations **meets** UK expectations.

2 Judgement: The quality of student learning opportunities

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

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

Findings

2.1 The approval of new ONCAMPUS programmes is a provider level responsibility and the process is detailed in its Academic Quality Assurance Manual. Following business case approval a design and development team is established of staff from across the relevant centres staff with subject specific knowledge to produce the initial programme and module specifications in consultation relevant partner universities. These documents are then subject to external and University scrutiny with approval only being given by Academic Board once any conditions have been met.

2.2 The review team found that the policies, processes and procedures in place at ONCAMPUS would allow this Expectation to be met at this Centre.

2.3 The standard ONCAMPUS programmes delivered at this Centre were developed and approved prior to its engagement with QAA, and under the regulations that existed at that time. More recently the MUFP was approved in March 2014 and the review and re-approval of the standard UFP was completed at the end of 2014-15, and the MFP at the end of 2016-17.

2.4 As the redesign and re-approval process of existing programmes is the same as the design and approval process of new programmes the review team therefore tested whether this Expectation is met in practice at this Centre by considering the effectiveness of the recent re-approval of the standard ONCAMPUS programmes. The review team examined the quality assurance manual and re-approval documentation, including programme and module specifications and held meetings with staff involved in the re-approval of ONCAMPUS programmes.

2.5 The review and re-approval process of the UFP and MFP programmes was based on extensive consultation with staff from different centres and relevant partner universities.

2.6 Staff at this ONCAMPUS UCLan were involved at various stages of this process and were able to identify enhancements made to the quality of learning outcomes on programmes as a result of dialogue with students and the University partner. This process included the robust mapping of ONCAMPUS modules against University programmes to ensure that students completing the programme at ONCAMPUS UCLan are able to succeed when they progress to the next level at the University.

2.7 Through the implementation of its own design, development and approval processes, and through collaborative arrangements with partner Universities ONCAMPUS is able to ensure that programmes provide quality learning opportunities for its students. The review team therefore concludes that Expectation B1 is met and the associated level of risk is low for this Centre.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

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

Findings

2.8 Recruitment, selection and admissions are the responsibility of a central team (CEG Central Admissions) working with a network of agents. Admissions requirements are agreed, and regularly reviewed, with the university partners. CEG Central Admissions maintains a list of requirements and Academic Board, which includes a representative from CEG Central Admissions, maintains oversight. Agents are subject to regular training and monitoring by CEG staff. There is a compliance manual providing an agent recruitment policy Centre and university staff may be involved in selection in certain cases.

2.9 These processes would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.10 The review team examined documentation on the ONCAMPUS website and the compliance manual. Team members also spoke to students at ONCAMPUS UCLan about their experiences and to the Head of Centre about cases where the centre would be directly involved in the admissions process.

2.11 ONCAMPUS UCLan is involved with the consideration of students whose existing qualifications are borderline and in such cases the Head of Centre would consult with colleagues both in centre and at the partner university. In addition, an online interview is held with all candidates for the MUFPP programme and for other programmes where a successful interview by university staff will form part of the progression requirement. This interview ensures the candidate fully understands the requirement for progression and it is **good practice**.

2.12 The students who met members of the review team were positive about their experience of the recruitment process describing it as 'straightforward' and indicating that they received a quick response from CEG. They had been fully informed about progression requirements and any restrictions on the numbers accepted on certain progression pathways and indicated that sufficient information had been available to them before they left their home countries to travel to the UK.

2.13 The centralised processes for recruitment and selection together with the involvement of ONCAMPUS UCLan in decisions concerning both borderline cases and applications to MUFPP ensure that the Expectation is met and the level of risk is low. The use of virtual interviews to support admissions decisions for borderline students and those applying to MUFPP is noted as good practice.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

Quality Code, *Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching*

Findings

2.14 ONCAMPUS has produced a Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2016-20 and its implementation is overseen by the central Learning and Teaching Committee (L and TC). The focus of the strategy is on enabling students to become independent learners through the provision of a high-quality learning opportunities. Responsibility for implementing the Strategy rests with the Academic Office and the Heads of Centre.

2.15 Schemes of work and teaching resources are produced by pathway leaders to be utilised within centres. ONCAMPUS has developed a teaching observation scheme and supports staff through training and development. ONCAMPUS hosts a biennial Learning and Teaching Conference.

2.16 The Centre is responsible for recruiting teaching and local administrative staff and for the provision of appropriate learning resources.

2.17 The review team found that ONCAMPUS UCLan has appropriate policies and processes in place to enhance the provision of learning opportunities and teaching practices that would allow this Expectation to be met.

2.18 The review team tested the Expectation by reviewing programme and module level documentation, reports and action plans, external examiner reports, documents related to training and development and by meeting teaching and support staff, and students.

2.19 Students valued the high quality learning and teaching through class contact and access to materials on the ONCAMPUS VLE. ONCAMPUS UCLan students have access to University student support facilities and relevant learning resources, such as IT and libraries.

2.20 Where possible students are streamed in groups by ability based on diagnostic tests and students reported that they receive helpful feedback to improve their performance. Students also valued the opportunities to meet with the teaching staff on an individual basis to discuss issues related to their learning, teaching and assessment. The highly personalised approach to learning and teaching that supports individual student needs and achievement is **good practice**.

2.21 Teachers at the Centre are primarily recruited as sessional staff and undertake professional development activities and maintain industry links to ensure the currency of their subject knowledge. All staff receive an induction programme when they join the Centre and the Centre implements the new ONCAMPUS observation process that has a focus on self-reflection and enhancement with the observer acting as a coach to support professional development. Regular continuing professional development (CPD) days are held in Centre each academic year with a focus on areas that have been identified through observations, staff appraisals, student feedback or changes in curriculum. Staff from the Centre have attended the ONCAMPUS Learning and Teaching Conference and actions from this are discussed and fed back to other members of staff. Staff at the Centre have also benefited

from CPD events held at the University.

2.22 ONCAMPUS monitors and reviews the effectiveness of learning opportunities by feedback from external examiners, staff and students, and analysing progression rates to the University.

2.23 Learning resources and student support are in place to support students in their development as independent learners and provide a smooth transition to their degree level studies. There are systematic and effective assurance and review processes are in place to ensure the quality of provision is enhanced and the review team concludes that this Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met

Level of risk: Low

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

Quality Code, Chapter B4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement

Findings

2.24 ONCAMPUS has clear policies and procedures to ensure that all students are well supported in their learning and that students reflect on their own personal development. These are specified in the ONCAMPUS Quality Assurance Manual and its Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy. Support services are provided at the Centre and students have access to specialist support services at the University as specified in the Cooperative Agreement.

2.25 The review team found that ONCAMPUS UCLan has appropriate policies and processes in place to monitor and evaluate arrangements and resources that enable students to develop their potential. This enables the Expectation to be met.

2.26 In order to test the effectiveness of the Provider's processes, the review team looked at policies and procedures, handbooks and supporting documentation. The review team discussed the effectiveness of support for students at this Centre in its meetings with staff and students.

2.27 All students receive a comprehensive induction introducing them to the Centre, the expectations of studying in the UK, staff and facilities at the University, and ensuring that required registrations are completed to ensure students can study in the UK.

2.28 This Centre provides an intensive and supportive study environment with teaching undertaken in small groups and with high levels of contact. On joining the Centre all students are allocated a personal tutor to support them in their academic and pastoral development and follow a detailed scheme of work in the personal tutorial sessions.

2.29 The Centre has embedded a number of mechanisms to identify students at risk of non-progression to the University, including the proactive monitoring of student attendance, engagement and achievement, and implement personal plans where this is deemed useful. New staff are prepared for supporting international students through induction sessions, staff development activities and management support.

2.30 Students the review team met confirmed that they had access to pastoral support, and were positive about the ways in which staff enabled them to acquire the knowledge and skills required to progress to higher level study. Information about the services available to them are provided in the Student Handbooks and on the VLE.

2.31 The effectiveness of support provided to students is monitored through annual monitoring, periodic review and Centre Audit, and discussed both at SSCCs and Programme Committees.

2.32 The review team concluded that ONCAMPUS UCLan operates effective mechanisms to enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential. The review team concludes that this Expectation is met with a low level of associated risk.

Expectation: Met

Level of risk: Low

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

Quality Code, Chapter B5: Student Engagement

Findings

2.33 The ONCAMPUS Academic Quality Assurance Manual details the ways in which students engage with quality assurance and enhancement, including the use of surveys and student representation on both central Programme Committees and Centre SSCCs. ONCAMPUS also encourages students to give feedback in more informal settings such as tutor meetings.

2.34 The policies and processes have been designed facilitate student partnership in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience and would allow this Expectation to be met.

2.35 To test the effectiveness of these policies and processes the review team examined documentation including the Quality Assurance Manual, monitoring reports, the minutes of relevant committees and met with both staff and students.

2.36 ONCAMPUS conducts student surveys after induction and at the end of a student's period of study across all centres. The results of these surveys are made available to centres and feed into annual monitoring reviews. Staff from ONCAMPUS meet with students during centre audit and this informs the report provided to that Centre.

2.37 There is a system of student representatives who participate in cross-centre Programme Committees and local staff student liaison committees whose minutes are discussed by L and TC. The Centre Head undertakes additional focus groups to ensure that all students have an opportunity to raise issues. Minutes of the Programme Committees show student representatives making a positive contribution, with a standing item in each meeting devoted to student feedback from each Centre.

2.38 Students met by the review team in the Centre confirmed that the representation system and other mechanisms enabled students to provide timely feedback on their educational experience and gave examples of where the Centre had responded positively. The proactive and inclusive approach which results in a high level of student engagement was considered to be **good practice**.

2.39 The review team concludes that the student engagement is effectively used to enhance student learning opportunities and that this Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

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

Findings

2.40 Students receive both formative and summative assessment with the latter taking place towards the end of the programmes. Assessments are produced by staff who manage modules (programme, pathway or subject leaders) and summative assessments are common across all ONCAMPUS Centres with the possibility of some variation in formative assessments. Feedback is provided to students on their submitted coursework and on formative examinations, but not on summative examinations. The quality manual describes a clear protocol for marking assessments beginning with a standardisation meeting to ensure all staff who mark are working to the same guidelines. A proportion of work is moderated with the person responsible for the module remarking in cases of serious discrepancy. A sample of scripts is also submitted to the relevant external examiner.

2.41 The procedures for setting and marking assessments would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.42 The team examined the Quality Manual, the Student Handbook, documentation supplied to staff to support them in the production of assessments and the giving of feedback, Academic Board and Examination Board minutes and subject guides available to MUFPP students. In addition members of the team met with both staff and students at ONCAMPUS UCLan in addition to staff at the Provider.

2.43 The Quality Manual details the assessment process noting a move towards end of programme assessment. This means that students on three term programmes complete two terms of formative assessment which is followed by final summative assessment in term three.

2.44 Students informed members of the team that assignment descriptions were clear and that they understood what was necessary in order to achieve high marks. Coursework is submitted via plagiarism-detection software and students receive written feedback on all coursework and on formative examinations. Summative examination scripts are not returned. Staff are provided with a Guide to Marking and Feedback, which includes the possibility of verbal feedback on summative examination scripts. Students at ONCAMPUS UCLan indicated that feedback was normally both timely and useful. Although there are no stated maximum times for the marking of work the Academic Calendar, available on the VLE to both staff and students, states when summative assessments are due and by when they will be marked. In the case of formative assessments turnaround time depends on centre assessment strategy and students should be informed by tutors when to expect their work back.

2.45 The process for producing assessments is detailed in writing. Programme, Pathway and Course Leaders who met members of the team explained the process for setting assignment and examination questions. They confirmed these must be commented on by an external examiner before use. Examination papers for the whole academic year, including sufficient for all intakes and for resits, are set at one time and the decision as to which paper to use for a particular examination slot is made by the central academic team ensuring

security as those setting questions are not aware of which questions will appear.

2.46 Work is marked by tutors in the centres. A standardisation meeting is held for all staff who will be marking assessed work in to ensure consistency across centres. The Quality Manual states that 'At least 10% of all assessed work must be second marked by suitably qualified staff, and records kept of agreed marks on the internal moderation sheet. In addition, all fails and assessed work in borderline categories must be second marked. Within this at least one piece of assessment from each grade boundary should be second marked'. In cases of substantial discrepancy between marker and moderator the module lead must be informed and may act as a third marker. A selection of work from each centre is sent to the external examiner for comment. The Quality Manual does not specify the composition of this sample, but staff in the centres explained that external examiners would be sent a representative range of work from each centre.

2.47 Once work has been marked it is presented to a pre-Examination Board (held at the end of Academic Board), held prior to the main Examination Board, at which students with extenuating circumstances can be discussed and their grades modified according to clear guidelines. The pre-Examination Board may also move student module marks into the next grade boundary in certain circumstances when a student is in a borderline category. All ONCAMPUS programmes are considered at a single Examination Board at which external examiners are present and which is chaired by the Chief Academic Officer. The Examination Board considers individual students on each programme and provides a forum for external examiners to comment.

2.48 The ONCAMPUS Student Handbook gives details of assessment regulations including a statement of the right to a single resit for any piece of work. Normally the mark taken forward will be the higher of the two obtained allowing students to improve their grades particularly in cases where the progression grades for the desired university programme are high. In cases where there has been academic misconduct, however, the resit mark will be capped at 40 per cent.

2.49 The team noted that students on the MUFP at ONCAMPUS UCLan were not allowed to progress to the interview stage for the medical degree if they failed to make the required grades at a first attempt. They were eligible to resit, but only to progress to another award of the partner university]. This additional requirement is stated in subject guides for these students, but not in the Student Handbook. To ensure clarity the provider is recommended that this special requirement be included in the ONCAMPUS Student Handbook in addition to being noted in all relevant subject guides.

2.50 These processes enable the Expectation to be met and the level of risk is low. However, to ensure clarity with respect to resit opportunities for MUFP students, the Provider is recommended to ensure that the requirement to achieve the required grade at the first attempt in order to progress to medicine be included in the ONCAMPUS Programme Handbook in addition to being noted in all relevant subject guides.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

Quality Code, Chapter B7: External Examining

Findings

2.51 External examiners are appointed to all programmes and subject areas and the number has recently been increased to reduce workload on individuals. Examiners are expected to be independent of both ONCAMPUS centres and of partner universities. A handbook exists explaining the role and new external examiners have an induction which is based on a meeting with the academic office team and centre staff at one of the centres. Examiners are encouraged to visit a centre at least once in each academic year. All assessments are scrutinised by externals before being set to students. Examiners have sight of and comment on a range of marked assessments and are expected to attend Examination Boards. External examiner reports are made available to students and staff via the VLE and via discussion at programme committees.

2.52 The structure for the appointment and briefing of external examiners and the role which they play in assuring both quality and standards would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.53 The team had access to a range of documentation including the Quality Manual, the External Examiners' Handbook, a list of current external examiners, External Examiner Reports and the minutes of Examination Boards and Programme Committees. In addition members of the team discussed the use of external examiners with staff at CEG and at ONCAMPUS UCLAN.

2.54 The team was informed that when a new external examiner is appointed the position is advertised and candidates considered by the Chief Academic Officer, Deputy Chief Academic Officer and the appropriate subject leader. A proposal is then made to the Academic Board which is responsible for the appointment. However this process is not formally documented. The team also noted that there had been no external examiner in place for art and design in the current academic year although members were informed that interviews were about to take place. Appointment of an external for English had also been delayed. The review team recommended to the Provider that procedures for the appointment of external examiners are formally documented and that they are appointed in a timely fashion.

2.55 A concise and clear handbook explaining the duties involved is provided to examiners and new appointments also have an induction led by the central academic team and held at one of the centres. They are encouraged to visit centres during their term of office and such visits are evidenced in Examination Board minutes. Reports are available to students and staff on the VLE and are discussed at Programme Committees which include both subject leaders and student representatives.

2.56 External examiners are expected to be external to CEG which defines externality as being independent of all its centres and its partner universities the current set of external examiners meets this requirement.

2.57 Examiners are consulted about coursework and examination questions before these are given to students. They receive a range of marked work covering high, medium and low grades and this range is submitted by each Centre giving examiners a full picture of performance of students and of marking quality and accuracy. Examiners' reports were generally detailed, submitted on a standard form and included comment on the range of

topics expected. In some cases this included comment on the performance of individual centres - particularly valuable in the context of centre based annual monitoring- but the team was informed that such comment is an expectation rather than a requirement. Examiners attend the Examination Board and their comments are included in Examination Board Minutes.

2.58 The External Examiners Handbook states that the Chief Academic Officer 'will send a letter to external examiners acknowledging receipt of the report, which includes the main issues which require a response and giving an indication of measures and timescales for further consideration'. This letter is to be sent within 28 days of receipt of the external examiner's report. CEG ONCAMPUS was not able to evidence compliance with this and it is recommended that it is ensured that procedures for responding to external examiners' reports are fully adhered to.

2.59 Process and procedure indicate that the Expectation is met with external examiners appointed to all programmes, inducted into the Provider's approach, expected to comment on assessments before students receive these and to scrutinise the marking process. There were no specific issues at this Centre concerning this Expectation. However, there were issues found at the Provider level concerning the lack of a formally documented process for appointment of external examiners, significant delay in appointment and lack of formal response to external examiners' reports, therefore Expectation is classified as moderate risk. Further details can be found in the associated section of the Provider CEG report.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Moderate

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

Quality Code, Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring and Review

Findings

2.60 The processes for annual monitoring and for periodic review are set out in the ONCAMPUS Academic Quality Assurance Manual. Annual monitoring is a shared responsibility between ONCAMPUS and the Centre. Periodic programme review is an ONCAMPUS responsibility with input from staff and students at the relevant centres. These processes are outlined in A3.3.

2.61 The ONCAMPUS policies and processes in place for the monitoring and review of its programmes would allow this Expectation to be met.

2.62 The review team was able to test the effectiveness of these policies and processes by examining a range of documentation relating to periodic programme reviews, annual monitoring and centre audit. The team also met staff engaged in monitoring and review of programmes during the review visit.

2.63 ONCAMPUS undertakes student surveys at key points during the student journey and shares this data with each centre. Centres provide monthly data returns using a standard template on their performance against academic and business targets. ONCAMPUS UCLan receives information on student achievement from the University to assess the effectiveness of its programmes in preparing students for further study. Student views are collected regularly through SSCCs and focus groups.

2.64 Annual monitoring reports analyse data on student performance and achievement, and reflect on feedback provided by staff, students and external examiner. Reports identify good practice and include action plans designed to address any identified weaknesses and enhance student learning opportunities.

2.65 Staff at the Centre were clear about periodic review processes and gave examples of how they had been actively used in the recent re-approval of programmes through their membership of programme committees, Quality Assurance Committee and Academic Board.

2.66 The review team concludes that monitoring and review process are effectively used at this Centre to assure and enhance the quality of learning opportunities and therefore this Expectation is met with a low level of risk.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

Quality Code, *Chapter B9: Academic Appeals and Student Complaints*

Findings

2.67 ONCAMPUS has detailed procedures for academic appeals which can be found in both the Quality Manual and the programme handbook. A separate procedure for complaints is given in the Quality Manual. An annual report is made to Academic Board on the number and range of appeals and complaints.

2.68 The available processes would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.69 The review team accesses the Quality Manual and the Programme Handbook as well as speaking with students at the Centre.

2.70 The ONCAMPUS Quality Manual gives details of the processes for making a complaint or an appeal. The ONCAMPUS Programme Handbook details the appeals process, but does not mention the separate process for complaints. Students who met with the team understood that there was a process to appeal and indicated that they would resolve complaints by speaking with course representatives or personal tutors in the first instance.

2.71 The processes are specified in detail in the Quality Manual and students felt they were able to resolve complaints and to make an appeal if necessary. The Expectation is met and the level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

The quality of student learning opportunities: Summary of findings

2.72 In reaching its judgement about the quality of student learning opportunities, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex two of the published handbook.

2.73 All Expectation are met with low levels of risk except for B7 where there is moderate risk. There are three examples of good practice concerning the admissions procedures, the personal approach to learning, and the effective student engagement mechanisms adopted by the centre

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

3 Judgement: The quality of the information about learning opportunities

Expectation (C): UK higher education providers produce information for their intended audiences about the higher education they offer that is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy.

Quality Code, Part C: Information about Higher Education Provision

Findings

3.1 Much of the information available to prospective students is provided on the website which is maintained by CEG central marketing. Central Marketing is also responsible for issuing hard copy prospectuses. Academic Board includes a member from Central Marketing to ensure information remains accurate and up to date. Agents also offer advice on the courses available. The programme handbook is maintained by the Academic Office and held on the VLE. The Chief and Deputy Chief Academic Officers are responsible for overseeing these and ensuring they are accurate and up to date.

3.2 The processes in place would allow the Expectation to be met.

3.3 The review team accessed the ONCAMPUS website, the Programme Handbook and Study Guides for students on the MUFP. In addition, the team spoke to students and staff at ONCAMPUS UCLan.

3.4 With respect to ONCAMPUS UCLAN the website states the situation with regard to progression requirements including those with higher grades, the requirement for interview and the limited places on some progression degrees, although some of this information requires some effort to access.

3.5 There is a single Programme Handbook covering all programmes and including assessment regulations as well as more general information. The handbook includes programme specifications for the UFP, IY1 and MFP programmes and detail of the right to resit assessments for these programmes. However, although it is the document available to students following the MUFP at ONCAMPUS UCLan, it does not include the programme specification for MUFP nor does it state the particular regulation that, while MUFP students can resit an assessment once (in common with the case for other programmes), a resit mark is not acceptable for progression to the medicine degree at the partner university. This very specific requirement is stated in MUFP subject guides.

3.6 ONCAMPUS UCLan students who met with members of the review team reported that they found the information available to them accurate and sufficient.

3.7 While the Expectation C concerning public information is met at ONCAMPUS UCLan there were issues with accuracy at another centre leading to a recommendation to CEG concerning published information and in the light of this the risk to quality is moderate. There were no specific issues at this Centre concerning the Expectation. However, because there were issues found at the Provider level concerning the procedures for signing off published material the Expectation is classified as moderate risk. Further details can be found in the associated section of the Provider CEG report.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Moderate

The quality of the information about learning opportunities: Summary of findings

3.8 In reaching its judgement about the quality of information about student learning opportunities, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex two of the published handbook.

3.9 The Expectation is met with a moderate level of risk.

3.10 The review team concludes that the quality of the information produced by the provider about its provision **meets** UK expectations.

4 Commentary on the enhancement of student learning opportunities

Expectation (Enhancement): Deliberate steps are being taken at provider level to improve the quality of students' learning opportunities.

Findings

4.1 ONCAMPUS has developed an Enhancement Strategy, supported by its Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy. In line with ONCAMPUS expectations this Centre has produced its own local enhancement strategy.

4.2 The review team examined relevant documentation and discussed the Centre specific enhancement strategy with staff and students.

4.3 The main priorities for enhancement at this Centre are to enhance student learning, embed a culture of continuous improvement and further develop its relationship with the University. The sharing of good practice is promoted through quality assurance processes such as teaching observations, annual monitoring, Centre Audits and participating in cross centre committees. Staff and students met during the review where able to identify ways in which the Centre proactively engages with them and positively responds to their feedback. There was clear evidence of engagement with staff development designed to enhance learning and teaching and student support, and the sharing of good practice across different centres.

Glossary

This glossary is a quick-reference guide to terms in this report that may be unfamiliar to some readers. Definitions of key operational terms are also given on pages 24-27 of the [Higher Education Review \(Embedded Colleges\) handbook](#).

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

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

Academic standards

The standards set by **degree-awarding bodies** for their courses (programmes and modules) and expected for their awards. See also **threshold academic standard**.

Award

A qualification, or academic credit, conferred in formal recognition that a student has achieved the intended **learning outcomes** and passed the assessments required to meet the academic standards set for a **programme** or unit of study.

Awarding organisation

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

Blended learning

Learning delivered by a number of different methods, usually including face-to-face and e-learning (see **technology enhanced or enabled learning**).

Credit(s)

A means of quantifying and recognising learning, used by most institutions that provide higher education **programmes of study**, expressed as numbers of credits at a specific level.

Degree-awarding body

A UK higher education provider (typically a university) with the power to award degrees, conferred by Royal Charter, or under Section 76 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, or under Section 48 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992, or by Papal Bull, or, since 1999, granted by the Privy Council on advice from QAA (in response to applications for taught degree awarding powers, research degree awarding powers or university title).

Distance learning

A course of study that does not involve face-to-face contact between students and tutors but instead uses technology such as the internet, intranets, broadcast media, CD-ROM and video, or traditional methods of correspondence - learning 'at a distance'. See also **blended learning**.

Dual award or double award

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

e-learning

See technology enhanced or enabled learning.

Enhancement

The process by which higher education providers systematically improve the quality of provision and the ways in which students' learning is supported. It is used as a technical term in our review processes.

Expectations

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

Flexible and distributed learning

A programme or module that does not require the student to attend classes or events at particular times and locations. See also **distance learning**.

Framework

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

Framework for higher education qualifications

A published formal structure that identifies a hierarchy of national qualification levels and describes the general achievement expected of holders of the main qualification types at each level, thus assisting higher education providers in maintaining academic standards. QAA publishes the following frameworks: *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and *The Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland* (FQHEIS).

Good practice

A process or way of working that, in the view of a QAA review team, makes a particularly positive contribution to a higher education provider's management of academic standards and the quality of its educational provision. It is used as a technical term in QAA's audit and review processes.

Learning opportunities

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

Learning outcomes

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

Multiple awards

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

Operational definition

A formal definition of a term, establishing exactly what QAA means when using it in reviews and reports.

Programme (of study)

An approved course of study that provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification.

Programme specifications

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

Quality Code

Short term for the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, which is the UK-wide set of **reference points** for higher education providers (agreed through consultation with the higher education community, and published by QAA), which states the **Expectations** that all providers are required to meet.

Reference points

Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured.

Self-evaluation document

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

Subject Benchmark Statement

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

Technology enhanced or enabled learning (or e-learning)

Learning that is delivered or supported through the use of technology.

Threshold academic standard

The minimum acceptable level of achievement that a student has to demonstrate to be eligible for an academic **award**. Threshold academic standards are set out in the national **frameworks** and **Subject Benchmark Statements**.

Virtual learning environment (VLE)

An intranet or password-only interactive website (also referred to as a platform or user interface) giving access to **learning opportunities** electronically. These might include such resources as course handbooks, information and reading lists; blogs, message boards and forums; recorded lectures; and/or facilities for online seminars (webinars).

Widening participation

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

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