



Higher Education Review (Embedded Colleges) of ONCAMPUS Hull

March 2018

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About this review

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

This is a report of a Higher Education Review (Embedded Colleges) conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at ONCAMPUS Hull. The review took place from 1 to 2 March 2018 and was conducted by a team of two reviewers, as follows:

- Dr Sylvia Hargreaves
- Professor Alan Jago.

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 expectations.

Good practice

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

- The highly personalised approach to learning and teaching supports student needs and achievement (Expectation B3)

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 Hull (the Centre) is the seventh centre to be opened in the network and is located on the campus of the University of Hull. ONCAMPUS Hull accepted its first students in January 2016 and recruited approximately 230 students in its first year. The Centre offers an Undergraduate Foundation Programme, International Year 1 Mechanical Engineering programme, and a Master's Foundation Programme. The Centre started admitting students in January 2016 and has recruited approximately 230 students in its first year. There are seven full-time staff and 21 sessional staff. As a new centre, ONCAMPUS Hull underwent a QAA review in 2017. The good practice regarding provision of data on student performance has been progressed. The two recommendations concerning an exit qualification for the IY1 Mechanical Engineering and personal tutoring have been completed.

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 Hull, embedded in Hull University, is not a degree awarding body.

1.2 ONCAMPUS Hull offers three ONCAMPUS programmes, the standard Undergraduate, Foundation Programme (UFP), the standard Masters Foundation programme (MFP), and an International Year 1 (IY1) in Mechanical Engineering.

1.3 ONCAMPUS has an agreement in place that the University will offer successful students progression to a relevant degree programme at the University. Thus quality assurance of programmes is managed entirely by ONCAMPUS.

1.4 There are programme specifications for each of the programmes offered. They state that external reference points used in drawing up the programme specification were the Quality Code, the QAA Subject Benchmark Statements and NICATS level descriptors.

1.5 The design of the process would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.6 The review team examined the effectiveness of the practices and procedures by reviewing contractual and approval documentation, including programme and module specifications, and external examiner reports. The review team also held meetings with students, teaching and administrative staff, and senior staff.

1.7 The documentation that the review team examined demonstrated that the Centre adheres to the ONCAMPUS approval, monitoring and review procedures, which safeguard academic standards.

1.8 Programme specifications provide learning outcomes phased to reflect the level of the programmes and a mapping between learning outcomes and modules.

1.9 The evidence made available satisfied the review team therefore the Expectation is met with a low level of risk

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

1.10 The ONCAMPUS Academic Board has ultimate responsibility for academic standards and quality. Five subcommittees, the Learning and Teaching Committee (with responsibility for the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy), the recently established Quality Committee (with operational oversight of annual monitoring and key quality policies) and three Programme Committees (with responsibility for the MFP, UFP and IY1 respectively) report directly to Academic Board. Subject Groups, responsible for the operation and delivery of the curriculum at subject level for all relevant programmes, report, respectively, to the MFP, UFP and IY1 Programme Committees.

1.11 Executive responsibility for ONCAMPUS standards and quality rests with the Chief and Deputy Academic Officers. Centre Heads, who have operational responsibility for provision at centres, exercise ONCAMPUS academic governance functions as members of Academic Board. All academic and operational managers (Deputy Centre Heads, subject leaders, tutors, and so on) have specific responsibilities for quality, including participating in network-wide quality committees.

1.12 Apart from Staff-Student Consultative Committees (SSCCs), which are required by ONCAMPUS and operate at the Centre, no particular Centre-level quality committee framework is prescribed. The ONCAMPUS/ University of Hull Strategic Development Board and the ONCAMPUS University of Hull Joint Partnership Management Board (JPMB) are established, respectively, to plan the Centre's development in line with University strategic priorities and to contribute to the management of the partnership. Centre Management Team meetings and Subject Team meetings have this year been established to replace the whole team meetings that took place during 2016-17.

1.13 The ONCAMPUS assessment regulations apply to all ONCAMPUS Hull programmes, including the IY1 Engineering. The regulations were approved by the University before their formal adoption for this particular programme.

1.14 The arrangements in place would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.15 The review team examined the effectiveness of academic governance by reviewing the ONCAMPUS Quality Assurance Manual and an extensive range of ONCAMPUS and ONCAMPUS Hull committee minutes. The team also held meetings with senior staff, teaching and support staff, a University representative, and students.

1.16 The Centre is represented effectively within ONCAMPUS through membership of Academic Board and Quality Committee (Centre Head), Learning and Teaching Committee (Deputy Centre Head), Programme Committees (relevant tutors, student representative) and Subject Groups (relevant tutors).

1.17 The Strategic Development Board considers proposals for growing the partnership, taken forward within the extensive ONCAMPUS Hull Strategic Growth Plan. JPMB provides an effective joint forum for discussion at senior level. Notably, the ONCAMPUS Hull IY1 in Engineering was developed as a result of the partnership board engagement. Formally

minuted Management Team meetings, established as a forum for sharing ideas and overseeing and planning provision, provide for effective communication with ONCAMPUS and the University. Subject tutor meetings, where discussion ranges over schemes of work, teaching delivery and external examiner reports, are becoming more formalised. English team meetings are well-established.

1.18 ONCAMPUS Hull has in place and operates transparent and effective arrangements for academic governance and management. The Expectation is met and the level of associated 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

1.19 With the exception of the IY1 Engineering which was designed in conjunction with the University, all the programmes currently being delivered at ONCAMPUS Hull were designed by ONCAMPUS. ONCAMPUS is responsible for programme approval, modification and revalidation.

1.20 All the programme specifications, which were developed during the programme design phase and formally approved by ONCAMPUS at programme approval, are completed in the ONCAMPUS template and comprise the definitive records of each programme. Setting out programme learning outcomes and organisation, learning, teaching and assessment strategies, arrangements to support student learning, and quality assurance processes, programme specifications provide the reference point for programme delivery and assessment, monitoring and review.

1.21 The arrangements in place would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.22 In considering this Expectation the review team viewed the VLE and examined regulatory and policy documentation, programme specifications, sample schemes of work and annual monitoring reports. The team also held meetings with senior staff, teaching and support staff, a University representative, and students.

1.23 Programme specifications, which are readily accessible to staff and students on the virtual learning environment (VLE), are used in the development and design of schemes of work and assessment, and inform teaching and learning. Staff met by the review team indicated that local module delivery may include additional prescribed reading or additional content, but changes to module or programme specifications require formal approval by Academic Board.

1.24 As required by the ONCAMPUS template, annual monitoring reports address core programme elements including content, delivery and assessment, student support, and student feedback.

1.25 Programme specifications are used effectively as the reference point for programme delivery, assessment and monitoring. The review team concludes that the Expect is met and the level of associated 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

1.26 The ONCAMPUS Academic Quality Assurance Manual details the procedures for initial programme approval. ONCAMPUS Hull follows the processes for the design and approval of modules, programmes and new pathways.

1.27 The procedures for programme approval provide a framework that allows the Expectation to be met

1.28 The review team considered a range of documentation relating to programme approval and review, including relevant quality assurance processes, programme and module specifications, and committee minutes. The team also met staff responsible for the oversight and operation of the processes within the Centre.

1.29 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.

1.30 There are effective processes in place for the approval and re-approval of taught programmes that enable the Centre to ensure academic standards are set at a level that meets the UK standard for the qualification and are in accordance with ONCAMPUS's academic frameworks and regulations. 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

1.31 The programme specifications for all the programmes delivered at ONCAMPUS Hull are completed in the ONCAMPUS template. They set out the intended learning outcomes of the programmes, providing opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in intellectual, subject-specific and transferable skills. Programme specifications also set out assessment methods and describe how these relate to testing the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. Module assessments are designed to combine to assess students on the overall programme outcomes, as represented in the mapping tables contained in the relevant programme specifications.

1.32 The processes and documentation in place would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.33 The review team examined the effectiveness of the practices and procedures by reviewing programme specifications (including mapping tables), sample assignment briefs and external examiner reports. The team also held meetings with senior staff, teaching and support staff, a University representative and students.

1.34 In the meeting with the review team, tutors indicated that programme and module learning outcomes inform teaching practice (through the relevant schemes of work), assessment design and student progress monitoring.

1.35 Assignment briefs identify the specific learning outcomes being tested. Clear assessment criteria are provided to staff and students with the assignment briefs. Tutors mark assessed work against authorised mark schemes.

1.36 External examiners confirm that assessment processes are well aligned with the learning outcomes and so effectively test achievement of the learning outcomes.

1.37 The arrangements in place ensure that the achievement of relevant learning outcomes has been demonstrated through assessment. Therefore the Expectation is met and the level of associated 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

1.38 Programmes are subject to periodic review every five years. The procedure for conducting periodic review is set out in the Quality Manual.

1.39 Procedures for annual monitoring are also set out in the Quality Manual. This involves the completion of a standard form for each programme with a Centre based commentary.

1.40 The procedures for both periodic review and annual monitoring are clearly articulated and would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.41 The review team tested whether this was the case by reading documentation. Particularly the Quality Assurance Manual, programme annual monitoring reviews (AMRs), and the Centre based Annual Review Commentary for Hull Centre, and through discussions with staff.

1.42 Documentation relating to the periodic review of the MFP demonstrates a robust process that follows ONCAMPUS procedures closely.

1.43 In relation to Annual Programme Monitoring, the AMRs produced for 2016-17 are comprehensive reports which evidence a robust and self-critical process.

1.44 ONCAMPUS has also conducted a Centre Academic Oversight Audit of the Centre, which gives an overall evaluation of how well the Centre is operating and the extent to which they are adhering to ONCAMPUS policies and procedures. The last audit of the Hull Centre was undertaken in November 2016, and the Centre outcomes were good, rated 'Green' on the ONCAMPUS risk based scale.

1.45 The review team concludes that the Expectation is met with low level of risk.

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

1.46 ONCAMPUS, which holds ultimate responsibility for academic standards, uses external expertise in its programme design, approval and periodic review processes, and appoints external examiners to its ONCAMPUS programmes, to advise on whether academic standards are appropriately set and maintained. Where programmes are developed in conjunction with university partners, university staff members act as the external body for approval purposes. With regard to the design, approval and review of programmes developed by ONCAMPUS, the processes require consultation with independent external subject specialists. At Centre level, the external examiner system provides for ongoing engagement with external expertise, as does continuing liaison with colleagues at the respective partner universities.

1.47 The processes in place allow the Expectation to be met.

1.48 The review team examined the effectiveness of the arrangements by reviewing process and procedural documentation and internal meeting minutes. The team also held meetings with senior staff, teaching and support staff, a University representative and students.

1.49 The ONCAMPUS/University of Hull Joint Partnership Management Board (JPMB), established to contribute to the management of the partnership, provides an effective forum for continuing joint oversight of programme design and development, definitive programme documentation, progression data and the tracer data (tracking alumni achievement) provided by the University.

1.50 The ONCAMPUS Hull IY1 Engineering, designed in close collaboration with the University, was developed as a result of the partnership board engagement. With respect to this particular programme, the ONCAMPUS assessment regulations, which apply to all ONCAMPUS Hull programmes, were approved by the University before their formal adoption.

1.51 The strategic approach to the partnership, operationalised formally through the ONCAMPUS/ University of Hull Strategic Development Board and the JPMB, is supplemented by tutor links at programme level and liaison with the University International Office.

1.52 In addition to the use of external examiners under formal ONCAMPUS processes, the ONCAMPUS Learning and Teaching conference, held last year at Hull, provided a good opportunity for tutors to meet external examiners in attendance and to discuss the programmes with them.

1.53 ONCAMPUS Hull uses external and independent expertise effectively with respect to programme design, ongoing development and review. Therefore the review team

concludes that the Expectation is met and the level of associated risk is low.

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

1.54 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.

1.55 All the Expectations in this area are met with low levels of risk.

1.56 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 arrangements for design, development and approval of programmes are detailed in the Quality Manual. This process applied to the UFO and MFP programmes, which operate at ONCAMPUS Hull. The process for developing and approving the IY1 in Mechanical Engineering included an additional approval granted by the University using its own quality assurance processes.

2.2 The procedures for programme approval laid down in the ONCAMPUS Academic Quality Assurance Manual provide a framework which in principle allows the Expectation to be met.

2.3 The review team examined documentation related to approval and re-approval of the Centre's programmes and asked staff about the process, and thus were able to test whether the Expectations is met.

2.4 There is a Joint Partnership Board at ONCAMPUS Hull, with colleagues from the University, which is responsible for oversight of all areas of the partnership. This includes issues relating to academic provision, strategic planning, marketing and recruitment, student numbers, financial modelling, facilities and teaching spaces. The IY1 in Mechanical Engineering was developed as a result of partnership board engagement. The programme differs from the rest of the ONCAMPUS Hull programme portfolio in that the University is responsible for setting all the assignments, except those in English. The programme was developed in conjunction with the Faculty of Engineering at Hull, and approved at the Partnership Board, and formally approved at the ONCAMPUS Academic Board.

2.5 The evidence made available to the review team confirms that the Expectation is met with a low level of risk.

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

2.6 ONCAMPUS uses a world-wide network of student recruitment agents, which operates within a detailed, documented compliance and monitoring framework. Students are invited to provide feedback on the quality of agents' services via the ONCAMPUS induction questionnaire. Admissions are handled by the ONCAMPUS admissions team. Entry requirements are determined by the Head of Admissions, in consultation with partner universities, on the basis of a range of criteria, including degree progression requirements and sector benchmarking. Prospective students apply for a particular degree programme when they apply for admission to an ONCAMPUS programme. Applicants are asked to report any disabilities or special needs, so that appropriate support can be provided. Heads of Centre have a formal role in admissions, making final decisions on borderline applications passed to them by the ONCAMPUS admissions team.

2.7 Admissions processes would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.8 The review team considered the effectiveness of the practices and procedures by viewing the ONCAMPUS website, reviewing survey and student completion data and examining procedural and compliance documents and other documentation including sample offer packs. The team also held meetings with senior, teaching and support staff, a University representative and students.

2.9 Clear and comprehensive information about ONCAMPUS Hull, the programmes, entry requirements and the application process is accessible on the website. The brochure, which is available online, details the grade requirements for progression to each specific Hull University programme. The helpful standard offer pack, sent out by the ONCAMPUS admissions team, sets out offer conditions, and course and fee information, and confirms eligibility for a specified degree course, subject to University entry criteria. Applicants are referred to the University website for further relevant information.

2.10 The Head of Centre makes decisions on borderline applications passed to him by ONCAMPUS central admissions. He examines documentation including transcripts, certificates and personal statements, and bases decisions on an applicant's potential to succeed, demonstrated by academic qualifications and attributes in relationship to the demands of the relevant course. Recent completion data shows that pass rates for borderline students at ONCAMPUS Hull are broadly in line with those for non-borderline students, indicating that the Centre's borderline decision-making process is robust overall, though this data is to be treated with a degree of caution, as it records percentage pass-rates rather than the percentage of students eligible to progress.

2.11 While the response rate to the 2016-17 induction survey from ONCAMPUS Hull students was somewhat lower than for other centres, the responses received indicate that ONCAMPUS Hull students are generally satisfied with agents' services and confirm the usefulness of website information. Students whom the review team met confirmed that they received useful, accurate information pre-arrival.

2.12 Overall, recruitment, selection and admission procedures are transparent and inclusive and operate fairly with respect to the ONCAMPUS Hull programmes. The review team concludes that the Expectation is met and the level of associated risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

Quality Code, Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching

Findings

2.13 ONCAMPUS has a Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2016-20 which is owned and managed by the central learning and Teaching Committee. A representative from ONCAMPUS Hull sits on the committee. The focus of the strategy is on students as independent learners and the provision of a high-quality learning environment. Responsibility for the Strategy rests with the Academic Office and the Heads of Centre. External examiners have commented positively about how well students are prepared for progression to their university partners.

2.14 The policies and practices of the Provider would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.15 The review team tested the Expectation by reviewing documentation including curriculum documents and external examiner reports, and by meeting teaching and support staff, and students.

2.16 Teaching staff come from a predominantly further education background. Their teaching practice is supported in a number of ways, including on-line materials through the VLE, specific training for Centre staff by the central Academic Office, the biennial Learning and Teaching Conference, regular in-session training days and a continuing professional development (CPD) fund. Staff at ONCAMPUS Hull, have access to staff development opportunities in their university partner. All staff receive an induction programme. Teaching staff have regular management teaching observations as part of the appraisal process. There is also an informal peer observation process in operation in the Centre.

2.17 Students are given a comprehensive induction programme where they are introduced to their programme as well as their university partner. The students have access to the ONCAMPUS VLE which is used extensively by students and staff to support learning. The highly personalised approach to learning and teaching that supports individual student needs and achievement is **good practice**. Students are well supported in their development as independent learners which gives them a smooth transition to their degree studies. This transition is helped by contact with the university teaching departments and the ability to use university resources and facilities.

2.18 ONCAMPUS monitors and reviews the effectiveness of learning opportunities by end of programme surveys and by feedback through the committee structure. In addition the ONCAMPUS Centre Academic Oversight Process contributes to the review and enhancement of learning opportunities and teaching practices.

2.19 Learning resources and student support are in place to support student learning and achievement and prepare students for university study. They are systematic and effective assurance and review processes are in place to ensure the quality of provision is enhanced. Therefore the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

Quality Code, Chapter B4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement

Findings

2.20 ONCAMPUS has a clear policy to support students in their development. They provide a process for monitoring and preparing for student development, enabling students to reflect and lead their own development through the IT portal, with the provision of in-depth feedback from staff. Support services are provided in the Centre and have access to specialist support services at the University.

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

2.22 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 availability of support services and the development of skills for higher education in its meetings with both staff and students.

2.23 The review team concludes that ONCAMPUS Hull provides a range of activities and support services that enable students to develop their academic and personal potential. Programmes are structured to provide an intensive and supportive study environment, with teaching in small groups and high levels of contact. By using both regular personal tutorials and regular subject based tutorials staff facilitate individual learning and achievement. New staff are prepared for supporting students by their induction and management support.

2.24 All students receive a thorough induction programme where students are introduced to the practicalities of studying in the UK, and the expectations arising from this. Each student is given a personal tutor. The ONCAMPUS tutorial policy is that all students have personal contact with their students at least weekly. The Centre monitors attendance and student achievement closely. Students at risk are noted and appropriate follow up action taken. Students who met the review team confirmed that they had ready access to support services should they need them, and spoke positively about the ways in which the Centre's staff enabled them to develop and achieve. Information about the services available to them are provided in the Student Handbooks and is available on the virtual learning environment (VLE).

2.25 The adequacy and efficiency of services that enable student development and achievement is monitored through Centre Audit, annual monitoring and periodic review, and discussed both at Staff-Student Consultative Committees (SSCCs) and Programme Committees.

2.26 The review team concludes that ONCAMPUS Hull operates effectively to enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential. Therefore the Expectation is met with a low level of 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

2.27 The ONCAMPUS Academic Quality Assurance Manual lists a number of ways in which students are engaged with quality assurance and enhancement, including surveys and student representation on both central Programme Committees and Centre Staff Student Consultative Committees (SSCC). Prompt questions at SSCCs have replaced end of module surveys. Minutes from SSCCs are made available to the Learning and Teaching Committee, Programme Committees and to programme/pathway leaders. Questionnaires are continuing in relation to student views about induction and the end of programme. ONCAMPUS Hull provides student representatives on the central Programme Committees, with training given on how to be effective in the role.

2.28 The framework which ONCAMPUS has set to secure student engagement with quality assurance of their educational experience should ensure that student views are articulated both on a group and on an individual basis and would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.29 In order to ascertain whether this operates in practice, the review team examined documentation including the Quality Manual, the minutes of relevant committees and met with both staff and students.

2.30 Staff and students that the review team met in the Centre confirmed the arrangements described in the Quality Manual were operational. There was a system of student representation and students received training to exercise their role. Students confirmed that they were able to identify issues which they had raised and to which the Centre had responded positively. They also understood that it was not always possible for the Centre to make any changes that students had requested. SSCCs meet termly and minutes of their meetings are made available to all students. Minutes of the Programme Committees show student representatives making a contribution, with a standing item in each meeting devoted to a student from each Centre reporting.

2.31 The review team is satisfied that this Expectation is met with a low level of risk.

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

2.32 In accordance with ONCAMPUS strategy, programme specifications set out a range of assessment methodologies including project work, reports, essays, presentations, and examinations. The strategic approach highlights the value of formative assessment.

2.33 At ONCAMPUS Hull, assessment processes for the IY1 Engineering operate slightly differently from the other Hull programmes, in that assessment briefs are set by the University in accordance with University regulations. With that single exception, assessment processes for all ONCAMPUS Hull programmes operate within a network-wide system.

2.34 Subject groups are responsible for producing assessments. External examiners must be consulted on draft examination papers and marking schemes. Student requests for 'reasonable adjustments' are considered by the ONCAMPUS Chief Academic Officer and the range of available adjustments is formally documented. Marking and moderation is completed by tutors at Centres, using authorised mark schemes. Subject groups must undertake pre-assessment standardisation involving all relevant tutors. External examiners scrutinise sample marked assessed work. Plagiarism-detection software is used to support students' understanding of plagiarism and as a tool to deal with academic offences. Responsibility for providing feedback to students rests with tutors. Examination boards are administered by ONCAMPUS. Extenuating circumstances are considered at pre-examination boards.

2.35 Assessment processes would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.36 The review team examined the effectiveness of the practices and procedures by reviewing policy and procedural documentation, programme specifications, external examiner reports, internal moderation reports and annual programme monitoring reports. The team also held meetings with senior, teaching and support staff, a University representative, and students.

2.37 In meetings at the review, staff provided a clear account of assessment processes at ONCAMPUS Hull, including tutor participation in (virtual) standardisation meetings, the use of authorised mark schemes, internal moderation and plagiarism detection software. Formal records provided evidence of effective internal moderation. Staff also referred to the use of informal cross-network post-marking moderation.

2.38 Students receive individual feedback on formative assessments and on all summative assessments except examinations, for which generic feedback is given to the student group. ONCAMPUS does not require the provision of individual feedback to students on summative examinations, and students are not allowed access to their marked examination scripts. In the meeting with the review team, students confirmed the helpfulness and timeliness of feedback, and the student submission refers to the helpfulness of one-to-one meetings with tutors to discuss their strengths and weaknesses. Overall, students are provided with sufficient feedback to help them improve their work.

2.39 Senior staff confirmed that there is no specified deadline for return of marked work, but indicated that the ONCAMPUS annual calendar sets completion dates for each stage of the summative assessment process. Staff stated that, in practice, marked work is returned as soon as possible.

2.40 Students confirmed that they are provided with clear information about grade and assessment criteria and, generally, about what is expected in assessments, including the avoidance of plagiarism, though some students were uncertain as to the regulations on assessment resit opportunities. The student submission comments that assessment is fair and that the level of challenge increases as the course progresses.

2.41 Assessment processes at ONCAMPUS Hull operate fairly and in accordance with ONCAMPUS requirements. Therefore the review team concludes that the Expectation is met and the level of associated risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

Quality Code, Chapter B7: External Examining

Findings

2.42 External examiners are appointed by ONCAMPUS. They are inducted to their role and guided by the external examiner handbook. External examiners must be consulted on draft examination papers and related marking schemes. The ONCAMPUS report template asks external examiners to comment on the academic standards of the awards, student achievement, assessment processes, and curriculum design and delivery. The processes also require formal responses to be made by ONCAMPUS directly to external examiners, following consideration of their reports. External examiners are encouraged to visit one of the Centres in each year of their appointment.

2.43 The external examiner arrangements in place allow the Expectation to be met.

2.44 In considering this Expectation the review team viewed the VLE and examined regulatory documentation, the external examiner handbook, annual programme monitoring reports, external examiner reports and minutes of meetings. The team also held meetings with senior staff, teaching and support staff, a University representative, and students.

2.45 The 2016-17 annual monitoring reports (AMRs) for the ONCAMPUS Hull UFP and MFP programmes (which have been produced under the new, Centre-authored AMR requirements) record generic programme feedback from external examiners, with commentary on associated ONCAMPUS Hull assessment practice and action planning where relevant and appropriate. Hull-specific feedback for the IY1 Engineering from the external examiner is also being appropriately addressed by the course team. External examiner reports, which are readily accessible to staff and students on the VLE, are discussed at subject team meetings.

2.46 Teaching staff reported that the ONCAMPUS Learning and Teaching conference, held last year at Hull, had provided a good opportunity for them to meet external examiners in attendance and to discuss the programmes with them.

2.47 The Centre implements ONCAMPUS processes with respect to external examiners, and this enables the Expectation to be met. In the light of recommendations to ONCAMPUS in this area, the level of associated risk is moderate. There were no specific issues regarding this Expectation. However, because of issues found at the Provider 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, the Expectation is classified as a 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

2.48 The processes for annual monitoring and for periodic review are clearly articulated in the Academic Quality Assurance Manual. These processes are outlined in section A3.3 above.

2.49 In principle, the approach which ONCAMPUS has adopted should ensure it is able to operate effective, regular and systematic processes for the monitoring and for the review of programmes, allowing the Expectation to be met.

2.50 The review team was able to test this in practice, by examining a range of documentation relating to the periodic review of the MFP, the annual monitoring of 2016-17 and through meetings with staff during the review visit.

2.51 It was clear to the review team that the processes for annual monitoring and periodic review of programmes were effective.

2.52 The review team concluded that ONCAMPUS Hull operates robust procedures for both periodic programme review and annual programme monitoring which ensures that the 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

2.53 ONCAMPUS appeals and complaints policies and processes, which apply across the ONCAMPUS network, are set out in the Academic Quality Assurance Manual.

2.54 The appeals procedure, which is facilitated by the ONCAMPUS Chief Academic Officer (CAO), defines the grounds for appeal and sets out deadlines. Following initial assessment by the CAO, and if not upheld or rejected at this stage, an appeal moves to the Academic Appeals Committee, which acts under the full delegated authority of Academic Board. The outcomes of the committee hearing are conveyed to the appellant and to the relevant Centre Head (for action where required) and formally reported to Academic Board.

2.55 The complaints process begins locally with the staff member concerned or another member of staff and, if unresolved, moves to the Centre Head (or, for a complaint against them, to another Centre Head) for formal review and thence, if still unresolved, to final review by the Reviewing Officer (Chief Operating Officer, Chief Academic Officer and/or Managing Director). Deadlines for each stage are set out clearly, and the process is formally completed with a written response to the complainant, together with a 'Completion of Procedures' letter if the complaint is not upheld.

2.56 Policies and procedures for student complaints and appeals allow the Expectation to be met.

2.57 In order to test this Expectation the review team viewed the VLE and examined policy and procedural documents and other documentation including the student handbook, the ONCAMPUS complaints log and meeting minutes, with associated documentation. The team also held meetings with senior staff, teaching and support staff, a University representative, and students.

2.58 The complaints policy and procedure, together with the relevant forms for the formal stages of the process, are accessible to students on the VLE. The appeals policy and procedure are set out in full in the ONCAMPUS student handbook.

2.59 There have been no formal complaints or appeals from ONCAMPUS Hull students. Informal complaints, together with the outcomes, are recorded in individual student files. These digitised records can be accessed by all staff, and a flagging facility is used to alert individual staff to matters of particular relevance to them.

2.60 Students whom the review team met said that advice and support would be available from administrative staff should they wish to pursue a complaint or appeal.

2.61 ONCAMPUS Hull students have access to appropriate processes, information, advice and support should they wish to pursue a complaint or appeal. Therefore the review team concludes that the Expectation is met and the level of associated risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

The quality of student learning opportunities: Summary of findings

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

2.63 All the Expectations are met all with low levels of risk except for B7 where there is moderate risk. There is one good practice concerning the personalised approach to learning.

2.64 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 The ONCAMPUS central marketing department is responsible for issuing public information, and for maintaining the accuracy of the website. The central marketing team is represented on Academic Board, to facilitate the oversight of processes designed to ensure the accuracy of externally published information. Information is available to prospective students via printed literature and the ONCAMPUS website, and information is also available from ONCAMPUS overseas agents. Additional documentation, such as programme handbooks, are maintained by the Academic Office and held on the ONCAMPUS VLE. The information they contain is checked and overseen by the Chief and Deputy Chief Academic Officers. Responsibility for signing off ONCAMPUS Hull-specific published information rests with the Head of Centre, following checking and approval by the University.

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

3.3 In considering the effectiveness of the processes for ensuring that published information is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy, the review team viewed the ONCAMPUS Hull website and examined the brochure, student handbooks and other published information. The team also held meetings with senior staff, teaching and support staff, a University representative, and students.

3.4 Senior staff described a robust process for ensuring the accuracy of Centre-specific information for publication, including the brochure, which requires University approval and Head of Centre sign-off following the receipt of draft information from the ONCAMPUS central marketing team.

3.5 Clear and helpful information for prospective students about ONCAMPUS Hull, the programmes, the entry requirements, the application process and the grades required for onward progression to the Hull University programmes is accessible on the website. Prospective students also have access to additional information online, including the useful ONCAMPUS Hull pre-arrival Handbook (covering visa requirements, what to expect on arrival, travel to Hull, accommodation, finance, and a sample timetable) and a separate accommodation guide.

3.6 The ONCAMPUS Programme Handbook, together with a wealth of programme and Centre-specific information and links to related websites, is readily accessible to current students on the VLE.

3.7 In their written submission for the review, students reported that the website is user-friendly and provides prospective students with good information on what the course entails, how it is assessed and the qualifications required to progress, and that the VLE contains accessible and accurate information. These positive views were echoed in the meeting with students during the review visit.

3.8 The processes for ensuring that published information about ONCAMPUS Hull is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy are robust and implemented effectively. Accordingly,

the Expectation C is met. In the light of the recommendation to ONCAMPUS in this area, the associated level of risk is moderate. There were no specific issues at this Centre in relation to this expectation. However, because there were issues found at the Provider relating to 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

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

3.10 The Expectation is met with a moderate risk.

3.11 The review team concludes that the quality of the information produced by the Centre 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 a newly instigated Enhancement Strategy, which is supported by the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy. Centres are expected to produce a Centre-specific enhancement strategy that they wish to undertake for their students.

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

4.3 ONCAMPUS Hull has developed an Enhancement Strategy. The priorities identified include improving the space available to students with a proposed move to a new building later this year, and increased engagement with two more faculties in the University.

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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