



# **Integrated quality and enhancement review**

**Summative review**

**Redcar and Cleveland College**

**April 2012**

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## **Preface**

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

## **Purpose of IQER**

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

## **The IQER process**

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

## **Developmental engagement**

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

The main elements of a Developmental engagement are:

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

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

## Summative review

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

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

## Evidence

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

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

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

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

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

## Outcomes of IQER

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

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

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

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

## Executive summary

### The Summative review of Redcar and Cleveland College carried out in April 2012

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

### Good practice

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

- the various processes for monitoring and enhancing the quality of learning and teaching
- the involvement of FdA and BA (Hons) Counselling students in the counselling conference, which enhances their learning opportunities.

### Recommendations

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

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

- clarify the role of the Higher Education Programme Leaders Group and provide it with terms of reference
- make more explicit references in its Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy to Teesside University's Priorities of the Strategy
- work with the University to request that external examiners' comments in generic reports are more college-specific
- adopt a more rigorous system to ensure the sharing of good practice
- review its strategies for the use of the virtual learning environment to stimulate further interactive teaching and learning opportunities for students.

## A Introduction and context

1 This report presents the findings of the Summative review of higher education funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) conducted at Redcar and Cleveland College (the College). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the College discharges its responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes which the College delivers on behalf of Teesside University (the University). The review was carried out by Maxina Butler-Holmes, Rob Mason, Brian Whitehead (reviewers) and Philip Markey (coordinator).

2 The Summative review team (the team) conducted the review in agreement with the College and in accordance with *The handbook for Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review* (the handbook), published by QAA. Evidence in support of the Summative review included documentation supplied by the College and its awarding body, including annual reports, external examiner reports and student evaluations, including the National Student Survey. Meetings with staff and students formed part of the evidence. In particular, the team drew on the findings and recommendations of the Developmental engagement in assessment and a second Developmental engagement in learning and teaching. A summary of findings from the two Developmental engagements is provided in Section C of this report. The review also considered the College's use of the Academic Infrastructure, developed by QAA on behalf of higher education providers, with reference to the *Code of practice*, subject and award benchmark statements, the FHEQ and programme specifications.

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

4 Redcar and Cleveland College is a medium-sized further education college located in the seaside town of Redcar. In 2008, the College located to a new purpose-built site where all its provision is now delivered. The College is closely linked with the industrial developments in the region and its provision is mainly based in engineering, building, information technology, and the service and public sectors. Higher education programmes are delivered in two faculties: Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths (STEM) and Construction, Service and Creative Industries.

5 In 2010-11, the College enrolled 3,193 students of whom 559.81 were in higher education. In 2011-12, it enrolled 2,644 students of whom 497 were in higher education, making a total of 262.6 full-time equivalent students. All higher education students are part-time. Most of the programmes are directly funded and are validated by Teesside University.

6 The following programmes are offered by Redcar and Cleveland College in 2011-12. All programmes are delivered on a part-time basis. Full-time equivalent student numbers are shown in brackets.

### Teesside University

- BA Education Studies (25)
- BA Therapeutic Counselling (Top Up) (8)
- Bridging Module for Certificate in Education (0.4)
- Certificate in Education: Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (9)
- PGCE Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (5.5)
- FdA Early Years (31)
- FdA Counselling (54)

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- FdSc Sports Coaching and Exercise (5)

### **Edexcel (validated by Teesside University)**

- HNC Building Studies (12)
- HNC Chemical Engineering (20.5)
- HNC Electrical & Electronic Engineering (11.5)
- HNC Electrical Engineering (Opito) (8)
- HNC Instrumentation and Control Engineering (16)
- HNC Mechanical Engineering (2)

### **Partnership agreements with the awarding body**

7 Along with four other colleges in the region, Redcar and Cleveland College is part of the Higher Education Business Partnership (the Partnership) of Teesside University. This is a mature partnership with a clear strategic direction. The Memorandum of Agreement between the College and the University lays down the arrangements for the partnership which is secured until 2014.

### **Recent developments in higher education at the College**

8 Enrolments for higher education programmes increased by 17 per cent in 2006-07, by 22 per cent in 2008-09 and by 40 per cent in 2009-10. There was a decline in enrolments in 2010-11 mainly, due to the economic downturn. The College has a strategic aim to develop STEM subjects to support emerging technologies, engineering and building. Aided by funds from the University and The Sir William Turner Foundation, the College has built a Higher Education and Conference Centre. The College's responsibilities for the management of higher education have been simplified since the first Developmental engagement in 2009.

### **Students' contribution to the review, including the written submission**

9 Students studying on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the team. A submission was provided for the review. It was based on information gathered in three focus groups and an internal survey distributed to all higher education students. All responses were collated under the headings of induction, learning and teaching, student support and pre-course information. The summary document was commented on and then approved by students. The team used the submission as a guide to setting the agenda for the review and was able to discuss issues raised during its meeting with students during the visit.



## **B Evaluation of the management of HEFCE-funded higher education**

### **Core theme 1: Academic standards**

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

10 In 2011 the management of higher education was restructured. The Principal of the College is responsible for quality and standards, chairing the College's Quality and Standards Strategic Team and reporting to the Quality and Standards Committee (a sub-committee of the Corporate Board). The College's programmes are divided between two faculties, both offering higher education programmes. The responsibility for managing and delivering higher education is assigned to the College's Assistant Principal (Curriculum) who works with the Heads of Faculty, Heads of Division and programme leaders to provide strategic development, support and quality monitoring for all programmes. This role is supported by the Higher Education Manager who works with programme teams and liaises with the awarding body. Programme teams in the College also work directly with the programme leaders of the University. Student engagement is encouraged and information is provided for students on the virtual learning environment about the role of student representatives and student governors.

11 Reporting systems begin with the Course Evaluation Documents which are written by the programme leaders. Although based mainly on further education templates, they provide an effective review and identify action plans for higher education. Action plans are monitored by the Heads of Faculty. For University programmes, programme leaders produce annual reports which take into account external examiners' reports, the University's Quality Monitoring Visits, student feedback and success rates. The reports are considered by the faculties and then form the basis of the Collaborative Provision Annual Monitoring Report which is written by the Higher Education Manager and the Assistant Principal, and presented to the Senior Management Team. There is some duplication between the Course Evaluation Document and the Collaborative Provision Annual Monitoring Reports.

12 Recognising the need for regular higher education-focused meetings, a Higher Education Programme Leaders Group was introduced in 2010-11, meeting fortnightly. However, the place of this group in the managing and reporting processes is unclear. It is not referred to in any of the organisation charts. The group does not have terms of reference or set agenda items. The team considers it desirable that the College clarifies the role of the Higher Education Programme Leaders Group and provides it with terms of reference.

#### **What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?**

13 The Developmental engagement recommended that the College ensure that all staff are more familiar with the application of the Academic Infrastructure, especially regarding updates. Staff are now familiar with all aspects of the Academic Infrastructure. Updates and refresher sessions are delivered at the College and the University. Staff showed knowledge of the new UK Quality Code for Higher Education. The College uses the University's mapping to ensure the Academic Infrastructure is embedded throughout the development and delivery of higher education at the College. Programme specifications are mapped to the FHEQ, and the *Code of practice* informs the programmes in terms of programme design, assessment practice, information and guidance, and work-based learning.

### **How does the College assure itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to ensure that the standards of higher education provision meet the requirements of its awarding body?**

14 The relationship between the College and the University is based on the Partnership involving four other colleges. The relationship is highly successful, mature and based on mutual trust and understanding. It is defined in the Memorandum of Agreement and in the comprehensive and highly useful Operations Manual, which clearly sets out each institution's responsibilities. Following the Developmental engagement recommendation for an explicit and documented learning and teaching strategy, aligned with the awarding body's Priorities of the Strategy, the College has produced a detailed Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy for the higher education programmes. However, the team was not able to identify explicit references to the awarding body's priorities. The team considers it desirable that the College makes more explicit references in its Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy to the University's Priorities of the Strategy.

15 The awarding body monitors the provision through the Teesside University Quality Assurance Monitoring Visits. Regular review meetings are held to ensure that the terms and conditions of the Partnership are being met. The College is represented at these meetings by the Assistant Principal and the Higher Education Manager. Reports from the monitoring visits, the review meetings, plus reports from the professional bodies and Edexcel, are forwarded to the Heads of Faculties and Heads of Departments for action.

16 External examiners' reports are distributed to programme leaders and Heads of Departments and Faculties. Comments and action plans are the responsibility of programme leaders and are returned to the University for scrutiny. The main issues in the reports and responses are collated into a summary report produced by the Quality Monitoring Adviser which is distributed to Senior Management Team. The Assistant Principal monitors the action plans. Students are able to access the previous year's external examiners' reports through the website link to the University. The reports are also an agenda item at the University Programme Boards at which student representatives are present. In some programmes, for example, FdA Early Years, tutors discuss the main points with students. Staff have difficulties with some reports because of their generic nature, where reports are for the same programme offered at several colleges in the Partnership. The team considers that it is desirable for the College to work with the University to request that external examiners' comments in generic reports are more college-specific. This would enable the College to use reports more effectively to enhance the provision.

17 Assessment is managed in line with the relevant schools at the University. The process is guided by the University Operations Manual, which contains clear and detailed information about assessment requirements. The University's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy includes guidelines for first and second marking, verification and moderation processes. The team found evidence that in previous years, second marking and moderation was not consistently aligned with the requirements of the awarding body. However, the team is able to confirm that the College has taken steps to ensure the assessment practices are in line with this strategy.

### **What are the College's arrangements for staff development to support the achievement of appropriate academic standards?**

18 The College has a People and Skills strategy which supports staff development. It is reviewed annually and identifies key themes for staff development. Higher education is identified as a key area and four days per year are devoted to higher education staff development. These events tend to relate to operational issues such as preparation for

reviews. The College's staff development strategy includes support for industrial updating to maintain industrial skills. Staff are increasingly taking the opportunity to undertake postgraduate study. The College provides an induction process for new staff with a workshop on the learning resources, including e-learning. New staff are supported by mentors who help with lesson structure and advise on teaching at the different levels. However, this is organised informally. Staff are encouraged to participate in the well attended Higher Education in Further Education Conference with the University, which provides a series of workshops on such matters as groupwork assessment and developments with industry. Staff find these workshops useful and staff from the College have presented sessions at the conference.

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

## **Core theme 2: Quality of learning opportunities**

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

19 Responsibilities for managing the quality of learning opportunities are similar to those outlined for academic standards in paragraphs 10 to 12. The University's Operational Manual clearly describes the College's responsibilities for the management and operation of the quality of learning opportunities. These include programme development, management, review and monitoring, staffing, teaching and learning resources, sharing of external examiner reports, student support, and the operation of disciplinary and complaints procedures.

20 The informal identification and dissemination of good practice is used effectively within programme teams, for example discussions relating to lesson observation feedback and the use of learning technologies. Formal identification of good practice is from the University's annual quality monitoring review process, which results in a report compiled by the University. This report is sent to College programme leaders and the Assistant Principal Curriculum who use it to inform actions, improvements and best practice. However, there is no clear or formal mechanism to ensure that good practice noted in the reports is disseminated, either in faculties or the College. It is desirable that the College adopts a more rigorous system to ensure the sharing of good practice. This could be a consideration for the Higher Education Programme Leaders Group referred to in paragraph 12.

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

21 The way in which the College assures itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to its awarding body regarding learning opportunities is similar to that outlined in paragraphs 14 to 17. The University's Operations Manual and Memorandum of Agreement also set out the quality assurance and enhancement procedures that the College is required to implement. The quality assurance arrangements also apply to the Professional Qualifications awarded by the University, including those for the Institute of Leadership and Management, Association of Accounting Technicians and Chartered Institute of Building.

## **What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?**

22 The way in which the College takes account of the Academic Infrastructure is outlined in paragraph 13. The College and the University have worked together to ensure that regular briefings take place to promote further understanding of the elements of the Academic Infrastructure.

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

23 The College has a robust system for ensuring that the quality of learning and teaching is maintained and enhanced. Quality is monitored through the College's observation of teaching and learning process using annual formal observations. Guidelines for the process are outlined in an Observation of Teaching and Learning Policy that applies to further and higher education. External observers with higher education experience carry out observations. Written feedback is thorough and comprehensive and appropriately focuses on higher education factors and teaching practice, for example the acquisition of higher-level skills and knowledge. Staff are also able to reflect on the lesson with written comments on their performance.

24 Staff take part in the College's 'Teaching Squares' peer observation. This enables them to share good practice, learn new techniques and identify how their practices can be enhanced. In addition, a number of staff are designated as teaching and learning practitioners. Their roles include delivering good practice workshops, and mentoring underperforming teachers.

25 Students' views on teaching are gathered from surveys at induction, mid-year and at the end of the course. Curriculum managers and other appropriate members of programme teams respond to survey results. In addition, students take part in the National Student Survey (NSS). In 2010-11, results from this survey showed that students' perception of the quality of teaching improved, but it was still below the sector average. In response to this, the College has introduced effective systems for identifying teaching quality issues with better use of induction surveys, focus groups, and discussions with senior staff. This was confirmed by students, who stated that the quality of teaching is challenging and interesting. In addition, end of module evaluations are completed and these are used to inform course evaluation documents and contribute to quality assurance and monitoring of programmes. The team considers that the College's various processes for monitoring and enhancing the quality of learning and teaching are good practice.

26 Work-based learning is well organised. Students and employers are thoroughly informed of assessment requirements. Employers are fully briefed with appropriate information about their role in supervising students. On some programmes, for example FdA Early Years, employer input has been used to design employer handbooks.

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

27 Students are effectively supported at all stages of their careers in the College. They have an interview and are provided with clear information about their programme of study. The College provides a thorough induction at programme and College levels. It provides students with relevant information about their programmes and facilities, including an informative College handbook, programme and module guides, timetables, and assessment schedules. Students are made fully aware of procedures and regulations relating to appeals, complaints, mitigating circumstances and plagiarism. They visit the

University's campus to view additional resources and facilities available to them during their programme.

28 Students are assessed at the start of their programme to identify learning support needs. Any additional support is readily available on an appointment or drop-in basis. Students cited good support for dyslexia. Students have tutorials although these vary in style and frequency from programme to programme. However, they stated that tutorial provision was supportive and met their learning and personal needs, either on a one-to-one or group basis. Informal support from tutors and the ability to contact them outside class time, for example by email, was available.

29 Advice and guidance are provided to students through the College's Student Services Department. This includes help with finances, careers and mentoring. Support and guidance information is also available on the University's virtual learning environment.

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

30 The College's staff development policy is outlined in paragraph 18. With reference to learning opportunities, staff development takes place through the observation and appraisal system. Professional development for individual staff is identified in an employee review process. Staff are encouraged to seek out appropriate development which may be of interest to them and which meets the College's aims. The College actively supports staff who wish to undertake further qualifications, for example higher degrees, to enhance their knowledge and skills. At the time of the review, approximately a third has done so. A small number of staff have been actively involved in scholarly and related activities, for example the production of research papers, texts for books, presentation at conferences and similar projects during the current academic year. Of particular note is the work of the Care, Counselling and Health teaching team which clearly impacts on student learning. With staff at another Partnership college, they have arranged a conference focusing on research in counselling for practising counsellors. The conference involves presentations from current and past students. This contributes well to their personal development and aspirations, and enhances their learning opportunities. The team considers that the involvement of FdA and BA (Hons) Counselling students in the counselling conference enhances their learning opportunities and is good practice.

31 All staff hold a relevant teaching qualification. New teaching staff are required to undertake appropriate training and the University approves the qualifications and experience of these staff. Each teacher's curriculum vitae is also checked annually by the University to monitor scholarly activity and the acquisition of further qualifications.

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

32 The College has appropriate mechanisms for ensuring that sufficient resources are available for students. Both new and replacement capital resources are identified through an annual bidding process. The College recently invested in a dedicated higher education centre which includes well equipped teaching rooms, specialist engineering resources and extensive information technology. The Developmental engagement recommended that the College should introduce learning and teaching strategies to make best use of this centre to enhance the learning opportunities for students. This has been successfully achieved by optimising room use, extensive use of electronic resources and digital technology, effective

use of specialist workshops, provision of a wide range of learning resources, and the creation of work and social spaces appropriate to the needs of higher education students.

33 The virtual learning environment contains a wide range of programme and College information and is used extensively by staff and students. Types of information include a generic student handbook, academic and pastoral support, guides for each module, assessment schedules, course notes and documents, and study skills. There has also been a drive to ensure a consistent approach to programme documentation on the virtual learning environment and, overall, this is successful. Access to electronic resources effectively supports learning. Students value the option of using this resource when away from the College. Although the virtual learning environment has the provision to use discussion forums, very few programmes use this facility. However, most staff post useful information and reminders to students, for example forthcoming deadlines for assignments. It is desirable that the College reviews its strategies for the use of the virtual learning environment to stimulate further interactive teaching and learning opportunities for its students.

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

### **Core theme 3: Public information**

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

34 The College has a clear understanding of its responsibilities for publishing information about its provision. The College works with the University through a marketing group which checks on the public information. The prospectus, programme handbooks and a range of information sheets are published by the College. The prospectus is produced with support from an agency. It is attractive, informative and contains student success stories which provide a flavour of the student experience. The information sheets, which are available to download from the website, provide a summary of programme content, entry requirements and key practical facts. The College has responded fully to the desirable recommendation from the Developmental engagement that more detailed hard copy pre-course information is made available. Students confirmed that this information is clear and helpful in assisting student choice.

35 The website provides user-friendly information and a welcoming image to prospective students. This includes guidance on student support and financial matters. The Higher Education Prospectus is available for download. There is a clear link to the Partnership webpage and all of the listed programmes include a link to the University webpage where online applications may be made. Students confirmed the usefulness of the College website.

36 Students are provided with information at induction and enrolment. The primary source of information relating to supporting students' experiences at the College is the student handbook. This is available electronically and in hard copy. The complaints procedure is included and appropriately references the University's procedures. The handbook is arranged into sections which cover a wide range of College policies, procedures and general college-wide information and the route to access additional learning support needs. Much of the content does not relate to higher education students.

Both staff and students admitted that there is limited reference to this document and that the programme handbooks or direct individual contact are the most frequent sources of reference.

37 Programme specifications are produced by the University in consultation with teaching staff. They provide accurate information on areas such as teaching and learning strategies, assessment and learning outcomes. Key information extracted from programme specifications is presented in programme handbooks.

38 Programme handbooks provide a wide range of information. These are produced in partnership with the University and, if appropriate, other colleges in the Partnership. The team was able to confirm the progress made on the desirable recommendation from the Developmental engagement to provide programme handbooks to students on the HNC Electrical Engineering. For all handbooks, there is appropriate coverage of programme aims and learning outcomes, and subject and assessment information. Practice and work-based learning handbooks provide comprehensive information to Foundation Degree students on assessment and working with employers.

### **What arrangements does the College have in place to assure the accuracy and completeness of information the College has responsibility for publishing?**

39 The College has rigorous arrangements to assure that public information is accurate and complete. It follows the guidelines for the production of marketing and publicity materials as defined in the University's Operations Manual. Paper and web-based promotional information is tracked through the activity planner/contact report, which is produced by an external marketing agency. The Deputy Principal reports progress to the Senior Management Team. The College is represented by the Deputy Principal at the Partnership's marketing meetings and the lead contact from the agency maintains regular dialogue with the University Directorate of Educational Partnerships. These arrangements ensure that the University's processes are followed. The accuracy and completeness of public information is checked as part of the annual quality monitoring visits which are conducted by the University. Students are involved in the process by taking part in a survey to check the information in the prospectus, leaflets and handbooks. The external agency used by the College plays a key role in ensuring the quality of all public information.

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

## **C Summary of findings from the Developmental engagements**

### **Developmental engagement in assessment**

40 The Developmental engagement in assessment took place in March 2010. It covered all the five colleges in the Teesside Higher Education Business Partnership. It addressed the following lines of enquiry agreed with the colleges.

**Line of enquiry 1:** How do the colleges in the Partnership assure themselves that they are fulfilling the requirements of the awarding body in relation to assessment?

**Line of enquiry 2:** Are the requirements for feedback on assessed work being understood by all to support the achievement of the intended learning outcomes?

**Line of enquiry 3:** How does each college in the Partnership ensure the accuracy and consistency of information it publishes on assessment?

41 The Developmental engagement identified a number of areas of good practice. These included the collaborative arrangements between the College and its awarding body for the assessment process and for the internal approval processes for new programmes prior to consideration by the University. The assessment exercises used in the induction period help students to understand plagiarism. Where similar programmes are delivered across the colleges, the robust and secure assessment processes ensure consistency and comparability. Staff development in assessment is strengthened by the use of 'Teaching Squares'. There is high quality of written feedback on assignments in Foundation Degrees in Early Years. The efficient system for returning assignments supports student learning. The assessment details in the programme specifications and information sheets are especially clear and demonstrate the close collaboration between the College and University. The work-based learning handbooks for students and employers are particularly detailed and comprehensive, especially the information on assessment.

42 The team made eight desirable recommendations, all of which have been implemented by the College. Students, employers and work-based mentors now have access to external examiner reports, although this practice has since been suspended. There are details in handbooks on the agreed policy for the reading of drafts of summative assessments. Written feedback now refers more to intended learning outcomes. These are now checked to ensure that they are consistent across all documents. Word-processed feedback is now provided on the feedback sheets and it was recommended that there should be more annotations on student assignments. Information on assessment and progression routes for Foundation Degrees is provided. Programme handbooks and module guides provide the information identified in the University's Threshold Quality Standards document. All the recommendations have been completed and evaluated.

## **Developmental engagement in learning and teaching**

43 The second Developmental engagement took place in March 2011. It covered all the five colleges in the Teesside Higher Education Business Partnership. It addressed the following lines of enquiry agreed by the colleges.

**Line of enquiry 1:** How do the colleges ensure that the standards of teaching and learning on the higher education programmes meet the requirements of the awarding body?

**Line of enquiry 2:** How do the colleges ensure that higher education learners have access to a wide range of learning opportunities?

**Line of enquiry 3:** Do the colleges publish informative and accurate information about teaching and learning on their programmes?

44 This Developmental engagement identified four areas of good practice relating to all the colleges. The Partnership's continuing professional development strategy and its provision of opportunities for higher education staff to gain postgraduate qualifications and/or industrial experience strengthens learning and teaching. The Partnership demonstrates the sharing of good practice in learning and teaching across many programmes, especially in the FdA Early Years programme. Academic support for learning is well organised and is particularly appropriate for part-time students. The College has extensive links with local



industry and services which serve to enhance students' learning through the opportunity for work placements and enables the College to identify and develop skills for its students.

45 There was one advisable recommendation for the College, namely that students on one particular programme should receive a student handbook to provide them with guidance and help them plan their learning. This has been completed. The five desirable recommendations included producing an explicit and documented learning and teaching strategy aligned with the awarding body's 'Priorities of the Strategy' in its Threshold Quality and Standards. The College should ensure that all staff are more familiar with the application of the Academic Infrastructure, especially regarding any updates. It should also ensure that all programmes build on existing practices and make fuller use of the virtual learning environment. Learning and teaching strategies should include reference to making the best use of the higher education centre to enhance the learning opportunities for students. More general information should be provided on learning and teaching in pre-enrolment documentation. For on-programme documentation, the College should make more reference to the range and types of learning and teaching. All the recommendations have been completed and evaluated.

## **D Foundation Degrees**

46 The College offers three Foundation Degrees in Counselling, Early Years, and Sports Coaching and Exercise. Recruitment to the first two programmes is healthy, but the Sports Coaching and Exercise has low recruitment levels and was suspended for 2011-12. There are 100 per cent completion and achievement rates for the last three cohorts in the Foundation Degree Early Years programme.

47 The College has productive relationships with local industries and services. Employers are involved in advising programme teams on curriculum and in supporting students on their work-based learning projects. Progression routes have been developed with Teesside University. The College provides its own progression route, BA (Hons) Therapeutic Counselling, for the FdA Counselling students.

## **E Conclusions and summary of judgements**

48 The team has identified a number of features of good practice in the College's management of its responsibilities for academic standards and for the quality of learning opportunities of the awards the College offers on behalf of its awarding body. This was based upon discussion with staff and students and scrutiny of evidence provided by the College and its awarding body, Teesside University.

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

- the various processes for monitoring and enhancing the quality of learning and teaching (paragraph 25)
- the involvement of FdA and BA (Hons) Counselling students in the counselling conference, which enhances their learning opportunities (paragraph 30).

50 The team also makes some recommendations for consideration by the College and its awarding body.

## Integrated quality and enhancement review

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

- clarify the role of the Higher Education Programme Leaders Group and provide it with terms of reference (paragraph 12)
- make more explicit references in its Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy to Teesside University's Priorities of the Strategy (paragraph 14)
- work with the University to request that external examiners' comments in generic reports are more college-specific (paragraph 16)
- adopt a more rigorous system to ensure the sharing of good practice (paragraph 20)
- review its strategies for the use of the virtual learning environment to stimulate further interactive teaching and learning opportunities for students (paragraph 33).

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

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

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

<b>Redcar and Cleveland College action plan relating to the Summative review: April 2012</b>						
<b>Good practice</b>	<b>Action to be taken</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Success indicators</b>	<b>Reported to</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
In the course of the Summative review the team identified the following areas of <b>good practice</b> that are worthy of wider dissemination within the College:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the various processes for monitoring and enhancing the quality of learning and teaching (paragraph 25)</li> </ul>	Review processes; enhance Teaching Squares process  Disseminate good practice from particular College areas to all via Continuing Professional Development	December 2012	Director of Quality and Learner Services and Quality Monitor	Efficient and effective processes including Teaching Squares  Consistent application of learning and teaching monitoring processes	Business and Performance Team	Review revised processes; review impact of dissemination of processes across College
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the involvement of FdA and BA (Hons) Counselling students in the counselling conference, which enhances their learning opportunities (paragraph 30)</li> </ul>	Deliver feedback/Continuing Professional Development session on counselling conference to higher education staff through Higher Education Good Practice forum  Develop similar	March 2013	Programme Leader for Counselling/ Higher Education Manager	Events planned by other higher education areas in College	Higher Education Programme Leaders Group	Evaluate feedback, review development of student events

	events and activities in other higher education areas					
<b>Desirable</b>	<b>Action to be taken</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Success indicators</b>	<b>Reported to</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
The team considers that it is <b>desirable</b> for the College to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarify the role of the Higher Education Programme Leaders Group and provide it with terms of reference (paragraph 12)</li> </ul>	<p>Establish a Higher Education Programme Leader Group in College Management Communication structure</p> <p>Identify Terms of Reference and Membership</p>	August 2012	Higher Education Manager	Higher Education Programme Leader Group established and operating within College management structure	Business and Performance Team	Minutes and actions of Higher Education Programme Leader Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>make more explicit references in its Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy to Teesside University's Priorities of the Strategy (paragraph 14)</li> </ul>	Revise College's Higher Education Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy to refer explicitly to University's priorities	September 2012	Higher Education Manager	New revised and approved version of Higher Education Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy	Business and Performance Team	Annual Review of Higher Education Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy document
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work with the University to request that external examiners' in generic reports comments are more college-specific</li> </ul>	<p>Discuss with University Educational Partnerships</p> <p>University revise external examiner</p>	September 2012	Higher Education Manager; Teesside University Educational Partnerships	Revised external examiner reports with college-specific comments	Higher Education Programme Leaders Group	Review of revised external examiner report format; review of completed external examiner reports

(paragraph 16)	forms and procedures					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>adopt a more rigorous system to ensure the sharing of good practice (paragraph 20)</li> </ul>	Develop a Higher Education Good Practice Forum with regular meetings across higher education programme areas and a Virtual Learning Environment Wiki for sharing of resources	November 2012	Higher Education Manager	<p>Good Practice Forum and Wiki in place</p> <p>Good practice shared across higher education programme areas</p>	Higher Education Programme Leaders Group	Evaluate extent of sharing of good practice via forum and Wiki
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review its strategies for the use of the virtual learning environment to stimulate further interactive teaching and learning opportunities for students (paragraph 33).</li> </ul>	<p>Introduce Continuing Professional Development for interactive teaching and learning using the virtual learning environment</p> <p>Extend existing higher education virtual learning environment audit to monitor use of interactive teaching and learning</p>	February 2013	Higher Education Manager	Interactive teaching and learning activities in place on virtual learning environment across a range of programmes	Higher Education Programme Leaders Group	Evaluate results of virtual learning environment audit to determine adoption and use of interactive virtual learning environment activities

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