

Review for Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of Redcliffe College, June 2014

Section 1: Outcome of the monitoring visit

1 From the evidence provided in the annual return and at the monitoring visit, the review team concludes that Redcliffe College (the College) has made acceptable progress with continuing to monitor, review and enhance its higher education provision since the previous [monitoring visit](#) in June 2013.

Section 2: Changes since the last QAA monitoring visit

2 Since the last monitoring visit Redcliffe College has taken on the staff and students from another college, integrating its linguistics and literacy programmes. As a result, two new MA courses with a combined student cohort of 34 are now being offered by the College. Total student numbers have increased from 113 in total to 145. Several new permanent members of faculty have joined the College with the total number of academic staff increasing from 5.6 to 8.3 full-time equivalent.

3 Three new director roles have been created. The Director of Research and Innovation is mainly responsible for the quality assurance of the higher education provision, working alongside the Director of Teaching and Learning and the Director of Community.

Section 3: Findings from the monitoring visit

4 The College has improved its processes for ensuring the quality of its higher education provision. The Board of Trustees has responsibility for developments on a strategic and business level. There is significant academic input into the Board at the senior management level with increased academic representation on the leadership team.

5 The newly established Academic Board, which has responsibility for all academic issues, met for the first time in June and its terms of reference have subsequently been revised so have not yet had time to be evaluated. The Academic Board, though, is already having a positive impact through the clear separation of strategic issues from academic issues.

6 All of the College's programmes have been successfully validated or revalidated in the past 13 months and all conditions identified by the awarding body have been met. Recommendations in the validation reports are actioned by the individual course leader unless they are significant in which case they have historically gone to a faculty meeting. The College is aware that this means that the recommendations may not be dealt with in a timely manner and in future they will go to Academic Board. All programmes are subject to annual programme monitoring in accordance with the awarding body's expectations.

7 The College has produced a Quality Handbook as recommended by the Review for Educational Oversight in 2012. Staff report that this is a useful source of quality related information and refer to it as a 'go to' document. This is accompanied by staff training on its use in the quality assurance of the higher education provision.

8 The College has managed the integration of new staff, students and programmes effectively to minimise the impact on the students. Students and staff consider the transition and its management to have been a positive experience and an enhancement of the existing Redcliffe community.

9 The College has continued the development of its virtual learning environment (VLE). The VLE is currently used as a repository for lecture materials and for submission of assessments. The College has yet to develop a strategy for the use of the VLE by academic staff or to audit the use of the VLE by students. The College has invested in bespoke student tracking software and is making progress with the articulation of this with the VLE.

10 The College has produced a placement policy and an updated accompanying placement handbook is issued to students pre-placement.

11 The College has in place a number of methods by which students can provide feedback. These include informal conversations, course committees, end of module evaluations, student committees and student representatives. Students appreciate the support given. Identifiable actions are achieved; for example, the formation of a library committee allowing the oversight of library resources.

12 The use of depersonalised feedback is now in place on all modules and programmes.

13 There is little evidence of the College identifying and delivering improvements beyond the action plan.

Section 4: Progress in working with the external reference points to meet UK expectations for higher education

14 The College is making good progress in the use of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code) to support the quality assurance of its provision. The Quality Handbook makes explicit reference to the Quality Code in relation to programme validation requirements, in accordance with the benchmark statements, the use of other relevant external reference points, programme monitoring and review.

15 The College recognises the need for more explicit reference to the Quality Code in the remainder of its documentation and will provide staff training to ensure that this need is met. The College has invested in the services of an external consultant to assist with staff development. All course handbooks will be revised to include more explicit reference to the Quality Code for the 2014-15 academic year.

16 The College has good links with providers of field-based experience and there is evidence that employers contribute to the development, monitoring and review of the College's provision. An alumni group exists that offers post-graduation support and access to the College and its resources.

Section 5: Background to the monitoring visit

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

18 The monitoring visit was carried out by Dr Alun Thomas (Coordinator) and Dr Hayley Randle (Reviewer) on 24 June 2014.

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