

# Review for Specific Course Designation by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

## **Salvation Army Trustee Company t/a William Booth College**

February 2014

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## Key findings about Salvation Army Trustee Company t/a William Booth College

As a result of its Review for Specific Course Designation carried out in February 2014, the QAA review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the standards of the programme it offers on behalf of the University of Gloucestershire.

The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the quality and enhancement of the learning opportunities it offers on behalf of this awarding body.

The team considers that reliance **can** be placed on the information that the provider produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers.

### Good practice

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

- guest speakers and substantial placements enhance learning opportunities (paragraph 2.6)
- the evaluation of the relevance of the course to students' subsequent employment (paragraph 2.7)
- recruitment, admissions and induction procedures for students and staff are comprehensive and valuable (paragraphs 2.9, 2.10 and 3.1)
- the integration between the vocational and spiritual programme, the residential environment and student and staff commitment creates a strong community (paragraph 2.9)
- academic, pastoral and learning support is of high quality and meets the needs of students from diverse backgrounds (paragraph 2.11)
- the College and The Salvation Army jointly demonstrate a high level of commitment to the professional development of the staff (paragraph 2.14)
- the library is well managed, well resourced and responsive to the needs of students and staff (paragraph 2.17).

### Recommendations

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

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

- develop methods to raise awareness of the Quality Code in the programme team and ensure the Quality Code's implementation (paragraphs 1.5 and 2.2)
- ensure that protocols and procedures are recorded consistently and formally (paragraphs 1.6, 2.1 and 3.3).

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

- develop and implement a clear written protocol for teaching observations that is followed by staff (paragraph 2.5).

## About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Specific Course Designation](#)<sup>1</sup> conducted by [QAA](#) at Salvation Army Trustee Company t/a William Booth College (the College), which is a privately funded provider of higher education. The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the provider discharges its stated responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to a programme of study that the provider delivers on behalf of the University of Gloucestershire (the University). The review was carried out by Mr Martin Eayrs, Mrs Patricia Millner (reviewers) and Ms Penny Blackie (coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the [Review for Educational Oversight \(and for specific course designation\): Handbook, April 2013](#).<sup>2</sup> Evidence in support of the review included the agreement with the awarding body; programme documents; School and awarding body policies, procedures and manuals; diagrams of the College's organisational and committee structure; reports on the quality of provision; minutes of key committee meetings; a sample of student work and meetings with staff and students.

The review team also considered the provider's use of the relevant external reference points:

- programme documents and regulations of the University
- Salvation Army Handbooks and documentation
- the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code).

Please note that if you are unfamiliar with any of the terms used in this report you can find them in the [Glossary](#).

The College is an integral part of The Salvation Army (UK with the Republic of Ireland Territory). Its mission is 'empowering, developing and resourcing people for effective participation in God's mission'. The aim of the College is to provide training programmes and resources to enable The Salvation Army in the UK, and elsewhere, to fulfil its mission more effectively. The School for Officer Training (the School) within the College is the sole provider of training for Salvation Army Officers (Ministers of Religion) in the UK, and also offers training to students from a number of other Salvation Army territories in Europe. This ministerial training is centred upon the learning undertaken in the course of completing a Diploma in Higher Education, Salvation Army Officer Training (DipHE), validated by the University since 1998.

A distance-learning route was validated in 2002, and in 2007 this was approved to extend the provision of distance learning beyond the UK. The DipHE is the only full-time programme at the College, the rest of the provision being made up of short courses. The collaborative partnership between the College and the University is governed by a Collaboration Agreement, outlining the responsibilities and duties of each partner. The work of the College as a whole is scrutinised by the College Governing Council, which brings together directors of College departments with those responsible for the broader leadership of The Salvation Army in the UK Territory.

The College is located on an extensive campus at Denmark Hill in south-east London. In addition to the teaching and learning facilities in a Grade II listed building it provides residential accommodation for students and nursery provision.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/designated-providers/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/designated-providers/Pages/default.aspx)

<sup>2</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/REO-designated-providers-handbook-13.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/REO-designated-providers-handbook-13.aspx)

At the time of the review, the provider offered the following higher education programme, listed beneath its awarding body with the number of students in brackets.

### **University of Gloucestershire**

- Salvation Army Officer Training (DipHE) (64).

### **The provider's stated responsibilities**

The College has responsibility for maintaining academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities. The Collaborative Agreement with the University sets out the mutual responsibilities which gives the College responsibility for the majority of aspects of its higher education provision. The University provides guidance, but the College has devolved responsibility for all aspects of curriculum development; programme specifications; assessment; student recruitment; admissions and support engagement with employers; collecting and using student opinion; annual monitoring reports; learning resources; and information for learning opportunities. The College shares responsibility with the University for quality review and monitoring of higher education, the development of staff teaching, learning and assessment at higher education level and student appeals.

### **Recent developments**

In the three-year period since the previous revalidation in 2009, the campus at the College has undergone extensive refurbishments. The scope of the works has been the largest project undertaken by The Salvation Army in the UK. The phasing of the project allowed the College to maintain the quality of provision, and it considers it is now equipped to offer a learning experience of the highest standard. Flexible teaching spaces are fully equipped with appropriate audio-visual facilities and centralised communal spaces for relaxation and recreation have enhanced the student experience. Residential accommodation has also been fully refurbished. Teaching staff have been provided with office accommodation which readily facilitates the high level of student contact for both tutorial and pastoral support that is a feature of the officer training course. The College is in the process of finalising a number of strategic action groups to coordinate developments between the various College schools and units. The work of these groups culminated in a specific staff training day in January 2014 to share experiences.

### **Students' contribution to the review**

Students studying on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the review team. The students did not submit a written document, partly because the College considered that the small cohort of students would be adequately represented at the students' meeting during the visit. Students met reviewers during the review visit and the coordinator at the preparatory meeting. The views they expressed and their enthusiasm for the programme were useful to the team.

## Detailed findings about Salvation Army Trustee Company t/a William Booth College

### 1 Academic standards

#### How effectively does the College fulfil its responsibilities for the management of academic standards?

1.1 The College is clear about its delegated responsibilities for the management of academic standards, as defined in the Collaborative Agreement with the University. It is subject to the validating body's regulations and to the internal orders and regulations of The Salvation Army. Lines of academic reporting are clearly identified. The University is responsible for the overall management of academic standards, and students enrolled on the DipHE are students of the University. The awarding body appoints external examiners for the programme and University and College academic staff attend programme boards.

1.2 The College has well-defined management and committee structures. It is led by the Principal who, together with two academic directors, oversees the DipHE programme. The Principal chairs the Course Management Committee and the Training Programme Director, also the programme leader, chairs tutors' meetings. The DipHE is scrutinised internally by the College Governing Council, whose composition includes members of The Salvation Army in the UK. The College provides the University with a detailed Annual Monitoring Report that focuses on the running of the programme, tracks minor programme modifications and records implementation of action plans. Every three years a periodic review and revalidation takes place, the most recent of which was in 2012. Action plans for quality improvement are drawn from a number of different monitoring mechanisms, notably external examiner reports.

1.3 The College delivers the full-time DipHE programme effectively within an appropriate learning environment. A small number of part-time, distance-learning students attend the College intermittently for intensive input. The College assumes full responsibility for admissions and recruitment. The programme is taught fully in accordance with the programme specification and module descriptors approved by the validating body. The schemes of work and lesson plans the College prepares are aligned to these documents. Link tutors' support ensures adequate liaison between the College and the validating body.

1.4 Responsibilities are effectively delegated within the area of academic management and there are robust reporting mechanisms. The College is an integral part of The Salvation Army (UK with the Republic of Ireland Territory). Responsibility for the day-to-day running of the DipHE is in the hands of the Training Programme Director who regularly reviews the programme through a number of different reporting and feedback mechanisms. The Course Management Committee is the significant group that successfully monitors and oversees the development of the programme. It considers such matters as annual review and action plan monitoring, responding to external examiner reports, curriculum development and student evaluations of their learning experience. Chaired by the College Principal, this committee approves the thorough annual Course Review before it is forwarded to the awarding body. These well-attended meetings have appropriate frequency and membership, including two students from each year and representation from the awarding body.

## **How effectively are external reference points used in the management of academic standards?**

1.5 The DipHE programme is aligned to the University's academic structures and regulations, to the *Theological and religious studies* subject benchmark statement and to *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ). The College has not yet aligned the DipHE to the Quality Code but declares its intention to do so. There is a close and comprehensive working relationship between the College and the awarding body in spite of some changes to the University's collaborative provision arrangements.

## **How does the College use external moderation, verification or examining to assure academic standards?**

1.6 The College has relatively effective assessment and moderation practice and the staff understand how it operates. Assignment briefs are agreed collectively by tutors before distribution. A team of tutors and the external examiner moderate assessed work. Marking criteria are made known to the students but the assignment briefs do not always make explicit reference to learning outcomes. This assessment process is implemented effectively but is not described formally. Although the team considers that academic standards are secure, the College would benefit from a more formal assessment procedure.

1.7 The University provides a Chair for the Board of Examiners and the College manages the meetings in accordance with University regulations. Comments from the external examiner are generally favourable and any recommendations are followed up by the College through monitored action plans. The College responds formally to the external examiner's reports through the Annual Monitoring Report. Students are made aware of the external examiner's reports through the Course Management Committee. The College has a clear and documented process for academic misconduct, appeals procedures and mitigating circumstances in alignment with the validating body's policies. Good practice is collated and discussed through tutors' meetings and staff training days.

1.8 The College has well-designed and effective management and committee structures with clear reporting lines to assure academic standards. A cooperative relationship with the University leads to productive annual monitoring and periodic review and revalidation processes. The University appoints external examiners and the College responds to their reports, generating action plans.

The review team has **confidence** that the provider is fulfilling its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of the intended learning opportunities it provides for students.

## **2 Quality of learning opportunities**

### **How effectively does the College fulfil its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities?**

2.1 The College has constructive and effective organisational and committee structures for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities (see paragraph 1.2). The College has considerable autonomy in all aspects of quality assurance except where duties are shared with the University: quality monitoring and review, teaching and learning, provision for staff development and the student appeal system. The programme leader

carries out efficient operational management of the DipHE and leads the committed teaching staff and the Training Coordinator who provides learning support. This group of staff meets regularly every four to six weeks for tutors' meetings, thus staff maintain close supervision of student progress and programme coordination throughout the year. However, minutes are not structured sufficiently clearly to track matters arising or identify how actions are reported in subsequent tutors' meetings. It is **advisable** for the College to ensure that protocols and procedures are recorded consistently and formally.

### **How effectively are external reference points used in the management and enhancement of learning opportunities?**

2.2 Awareness and mapping of the Quality Code are at a very early stage. The College is using its experience of the QAA visit to inform its understanding of the requirements of the Quality Code. Previously the College has adjusted its policies and practices to align with those of the University of Gloucestershire and its collaborative partners. It is **advisable** that the College develop methods to raise awareness of the Quality Code in the programme team and ensure the Quality Code's implementation.

2.3 The College maintains contact with stakeholders who have a particular interest in the officer training programme, for example the local Salvation Army churches. It seeks their views to ascertain their needs and ensure that officers and church leaders are appropriately trained. The College conscientiously fulfils the policy requirements of *Orders and Regulations for the Training of Salvation Army Officers (1991)*.

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

2.4 The College maintains appropriate operational oversight of the quality of teaching and learning. The Course Handbook contains the clear Learning and Teaching Strategy and is available to students and staff. Teaching staff are well qualified both academically and in the practice of their ministry. The national leadership of The Salvation Army appoints teaching and managerial staff on the basis of their competence in pastoral care and academic expertise. Staff are active ministers and the majority hold degrees and higher degrees. They are all alumni of the officer training course at the College, providing them with a thorough, empathetic understanding of its teaching and learning. This reflects the integration of the spiritual and vocational programme. Curriculum content and development is continually informed by research and practice. Students benefit from enhanced curricular activities such as specialist guest speakers and work experience built into the programme.

2.5 Effective peer review allows for valuable sharing of practice. More formal managerial observation processes are new and have the potential to provide an holistic overview for development of further opportunities for teaching enhancement. Staff find the confidential process of peer observation supportive. The pilot of the managerial observations carried out by the Principal and Programme Leader will be developed into a formal system allowing a better overview to identify good practice which can be shared and support better performance where needed. It would be **desirable** for the College to develop and implement a clear written protocol for teaching observation that is followed by staff.

2.6 The flexible and integrated DipHE course is designed to give due weighting to spiritual, academic and practical components to prepare students for service as officers in The Salvation Army. Students are encouraged to develop their research skills and there is emphasis on self-understanding and reflective practice. Students appreciate the range of specialist guest lecturers and enhanced curricular activities in the complementary learning scheme integral to their programme which greatly enhances their experience. In particular, in the 12-week programme of work placements, students test and apply concepts in real-life

settings and are frequently given substantial responsibility. A Placement Officer organises and finds relevant vocational placements for students, which they appreciate. Guest speakers and substantial placements enhance learning opportunities and are **good practice**.

2.7 The College actively seek students' views on the curriculum and teaching and learning. Module and course evaluations and student representation at the Course Management Committee are successful in bringing about change which is effectively reported to students, including distance learners. Further student feedback is gathered one year after they complete the DipHE when students evaluate the relevance of the officer training course to their subsequent employment. This evaluation of the relevance of the course to students' subsequent employment is **good practice**.

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

2.8 Support for students is a significant strength of the College. The admissions, induction and on-course support processes are thorough, effective and accessible to all students. The College provides specialist services as well as generic practices to help students develop their academic potential. The Training Coordinator works individually with students who have particular needs, for example those with dyslexia, English as a second language or Irlen syndrome. The coordinator is also responsible for producing the detailed and useful study skills handbook and delivering a programme of study skills to all students. A formative assignment is set and thoroughly assessed early in the programme. This provides students with clear guidance of what is expected in relation to their current level of competence.

2.9 The student profile is diverse in terms of background, experience and age. There is a suitably extended period of pre-admission preparation to ensure applicants are appropriate for officer training and fully informed of the demands of the DipHE programme. All students apply through The Salvation Army. The Salvation Army UK Territorial Candidates Council makes final decisions about the suitability of applicants for the programme, taking advice from College directors and an extensive process that includes tests, workshops and interviews. The College successfully accommodates the variations in students' previous educational experiences by providing a thorough grounding in study skills and the committed, approachable staff provide ongoing supervision. The residential accommodation on the campus for full-time students and their families increases the strong sense of community. The integration between the vocational and spiritual programme, the residential environment and student and staff commitment creates a strong community and is **good practice**.

2.10 Students appreciate the thorough induction period which has a mix of formal information and less formal activities. Distance learners attend the College for induction and gain an advantage from getting to know their peer group and the College. Thereafter distance-learning students benefit from the open invitation to attend the College once a month to study alongside residential students, have tutorials and use the library. All students appreciate the library induction and ongoing support from the librarian who delivers short refresher sessions. The librarian also provides constant assistance including communications to distance learners with suggestions for useful learning materials.

2.11 Students receive detailed, constructive feedback on their assessed work which is returned in a timely way to inform improvements for future assignments. Formal review and evaluation sessions twice per year are helpful opportunities for students to discuss their academic progress with a designated member of staff. The close positive working relationships and flexibility of staff enable students to seek help and advice at any time. Furthermore, the College offers a high level of pastoral support. Each student has an



allocated Pastoral Support Officer who offers guidance and mentoring throughout their study period. The high quality academic, pastoral and learning support is a significant strength for students from diverse backgrounds and is **good practice**.

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

2.12 The College has robust arrangements for the induction of new staff and there is strong support for ongoing academic and professional development. New staff are usually appointed two months before teaching starts. The long lead-in time allows for valuable formal and informal activities. New staff, supported by members of the programme team, mark the formative essay undertaken by students early during induction (see paragraph 2.9) so that they become familiar with marking protocols, providing assessment feedback and standardisation. Further sharing of practice for consistency and benchmarking occurs through informal staff gatherings, the regular tutor meetings, peer review and team teaching on some modules. Staff who have attended courses or external events feed back to the teaching team at in-house staff development days. For example, recent days have focused on assessment of reflective writing, supporting the development of theological reflection, dyslexia awareness and moderation.

2.13 The Salvation Army maintains an overview of staff development in coordination with the College. A methodical process of annual and five-yearly appraisals provides opportunities for staff to identify professional development needs in line with strategic priorities. The Salvation Army actively encourages continual training and generously finances many academic and personal growth opportunities. These include attendance at conference and seminars, some at the University, and texts for personal use to maintain currency of knowledge. A number of staff are undertaking further academic qualifications such as teaching certificates, master's degrees and doctorates.

2.14 Staff engage in research, professional practice and scholarly activity which inform curriculum content and development. The College has plans to produce a journal for internal dissemination which will collate peer-reviewed articles that members of staff write, including papers from staff theses. The International Heritage Centre, the archive for The Salvation Army, is housed on the College's premises. It is used by teaching staff and external visitors to access important archive material for theological study and preparation of learning materials. The high level of commitment jointly demonstrated by the College and The Salvation Army to the professional development of the staff is **good practice**.

### **How effectively does the College ensure that learning resources are accessible to students and sufficient to enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes?**

2.15 The College provides high-quality learning resources for students to enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Classrooms have been refurbished to a high standard with up-to-date audio-visual aids and flexible configuration to enable a range of teaching methods and pastoral support opportunities. There are communal spaces for students to meet informally and wireless internet access available across the campus. The External Examiner Report 2013 comments on the good facilities with 'well-developed classrooms and a strong library'.

2.16 The College ensures students have access to key texts by holding multiple copies or retaining them for reference only. The librarian proactively monitors usage and availability of materials and liaises with teaching staff to keep stock sufficient and current. The College continues to invest in electronic journal services and e-texts which students use extensively. They also make full use of the databases available through the University. The Course

Handbook provides information about how students can access College library facilities and further detailed information is contained in the very helpful library handbook. Library opening hours enable students to have access at any time. Distance-learning students make good use of the library when on campus.

2.17 The librarian presents a thorough annual library report to the Course Management Committee. End-of-module student evaluations seek to identify the usefulness of study aids and the availability of library resources. There is also an annual library satisfaction survey to evaluate access to learning resources. The College has not yet invested in a virtual learning environment and does not have an e-learning policy. However, use of the College's intranet, shared drives and online resources meets the academic needs of staff and students. The well-managed and well-resourced library which is responsive to the needs of students and staff is **good practice**.

2.18 The College has a wide range of high-quality systems for determining the quality of learning opportunities. The Salvation Army plays a key part in financing staff development opportunities. Enhanced curricular activities enhance the DipHE programme. Staff benefit from teaching observations. The College works closely with The Salvation Army and follows its systems for student applications and staff recruitment to prepare students for officer training. Staff and students have a positive induction and students appreciate the wide range of support available. The accommodation and library provide valuable facilities and are well managed.

The review team has **confidence** that the provider is fulfilling its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of the intended learning opportunities it provides for students.

### 3 Information about learning opportunities

#### How effectively does the College communicate information about learning opportunities to students and other stakeholders?

3.1 Communications in the College are extensive. Programme and College information is delivered efficiently to students and members of staff. Both groups receive comprehensive induction programmes before the start of the academic year. The website is professionally designed, attractive and easily navigable. Students are well informed about their academic commitments. Pre-course information is made available as part of the lengthy application and induction procedure. During this process students are given printed information about the College and the DipHE, particularly the Course Guide Lite. On acceptance, students receive a Candidate Acceptance pack and on enrolment a Cadet Manual, a Library Handbook and a comprehensive and detailed Course Handbook, all of high quality. The Cadet's Manual contains the College's Mission Statement and details of the structure and organisation. The Course Handbook, which includes the programme specification, provides students with information about modules and assessment. All these documents are approved in principle by the University.

#### How effective are the College's arrangements for assuring that information about learning opportunities is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy?

3.2 As an integral part of The Salvation Army, the College has appropriate organisational units and procedures to ensure that the website and published documents for prospective and current students are complete, accurate and up to date. All promotional material must be approved by the University via the link tutor before it is published.

The Candidates Unit undertakes marketing activities to encourage people to explore their spiritual vocation including officer training. The Business Services Department maintains the website and its Director has ultimate responsibility for its accuracy.

3.3 The Candidates Unit provides comprehensive printed material for applicants for vocational training. The detailed handbooks produced for current students include the library handbook, study skills handbook and module guides. These are checked and proofread by at least three module leaders and signed off by the Training Programme Director. The Principal signs off the Cadet Manual. Students are able to comment on the information they receive at the Course Management Committee. For example, as a result of their comments, referencing guides have been updated. These protocols are effective and understood by staff but not documented. To ensure a robust systematic approach for ensuring the accuracy and completeness the College would gain from formalising its procedures for production and checking information about learning opportunities.

3.4 The College has an effective set of documents and electronic sources to support information about learning opportunities. Students and new staff have comprehensive induction programmes. Students also have a lengthy and well-supported application process to ensure their understanding of the programme. A number of handbooks provide thorough and clear information. Arrangements for signing off published information and website content are not formalised.

The team concludes that reliance **can** be placed on the information that the provider produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers.

## Action plan<sup>3</sup>

Salvation Army Trustee Company t/a William Booth College action plan relating to the Review for Specific Course Designation February 2014						
Good practice	Intended outcomes	Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes	Target date(s)	Action by	Reported to	Evaluation (process or evidence)
The review 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>• guest speakers and substantial placements enhance learning opportunities (paragraph 2.6)</li> </ul>	<p>The use of appropriate guest speakers and experiential learning placements to be continued across the programme</p> <p>Role of placements as learning opportunities to be further highlighted</p>	<p>Identification of speakers and placement opportunities</p> <p>Increased emphasis in student inductions</p>	<p>September 2014 and annually</p> <p>September 2014 and annually</p>	<p>Module Unit Leaders Placement Officer</p> <p>Training Programme Director</p>	<p>Tutors' Meeting</p> <p>School for Officer Training</p> <p>Coordinating Council (SFOTCC)</p>	<p>Tutors' Meeting Minutes</p> <p>Induction/Study Skills Evaluations</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the evaluation of the relevance of the course to students'</li> </ul>	Highlight the links between study units and core competencies	Mapping of core competencies to study units to be outlined in study guides	September 2014 and annually	Module Unit Leaders	Course Management Committee	Course Management Committee Minutes

<sup>3</sup> The College has been required to develop this action plan to follow up on good practice and address any recommendations arising from the review. QAA monitors progress against the action plan, in conjunction with the College's awarding body.

subsequent employment (paragraph 2.7)						Study Guides
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recruitment admissions and induction procedures for students and staff are comprehensive and valuable (paragraphs 2.9, 2.10 and 3.1)</li> </ul>	Further enhancement of induction processes	<p>Review information provided in student handbook</p> <p>Produce staff handbook of policies and procedures</p>	September 2014 and annually	Training Programme Director	<p>Senior Management Team</p> <p>Tutors Meeting</p>	<p>Student Handbook</p> <p>Staff Handbook</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the integration between the vocational and spiritual programme, the residential environment and student and staff commitment creates a strong community (paragraph 2.9)</li> </ul>	Continue to highlight the integrated and holistic nature of the programme	Ensure that all elements continue to be highlighted in induction processes	September 2014 and annually	All staff	SFOTCC	Induction/Study Skills Evaluations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>academic, pastoral and learning support is of high quality and meets the needs of students from diverse backgrounds</li> </ul>	Continue the programme of staff development in all areas of student support	Development and training in all areas	September 2014 and annually	<p>Training Programme Director</p> <p>Spiritual Programme Director</p> <p>Learning</p>	School for Officer Training (SFOT) Forum	Development programme and records of training events

(paragraph 2.11)				Support Coordinator		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the College and The Salvation Army jointly demonstrate a high level of commitment to the professional development of the staff (paragraph 2.14)</li> </ul>	Continue to encourage staff to pursue appropriate avenues of professional development	Flexible development pathways to be mapped	December 2014	Senior Management Team	SFOT Forum	Map of developmental pathways  Qualifications achieved, evidenced in CVs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the library is well managed, well resourced and responsive to the needs of students and staff (paragraph 2.17)</li> </ul>	Continue to ensure that the library provides a high-quality service	Reading lists to be revised annually  Source appropriate additions to stock	June 2015	Module Unit Leaders  Librarian	Course Management Committee	Student evaluations  Annual library survey
<b>Advisable</b>	<b>Intended outcomes</b>	<b>Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes</b>	<b>Target date(s)</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Reported to</b>	<b>Evaluation (process or evidence)</b>
The team considers that it is <b>advisable</b> for the College to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop methods to raise awareness of the Quality Code in the programme</li> </ul>	All staff to be aware of the broad scope and relevant areas for implementation of the Quality Code	Dissemination of Quality Code	May 2014 and at Tutors' Meetings thereafter	Training Programme Director (dissemination)	Tutors' meeting	Tutors' meeting minutes

team and ensure the Quality Code's implementation (paragraphs 1.5 and 2.2)	Map sections of the Quality Code against College practice	Staff training as appropriate to aid implementation		All tutors (implementation)		Annual staff appraisals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure that protocols and procedures are recorded consistently and formally (paragraphs 1.6, 2.1 and 3.3)</li> </ul>	Protocols and procedures currently held in institutional memory to be formally recorded	Production of Staff Handbook, outlining relevant policies and procedures	September 2014, revised annually	Training Programme Director	Tutors' Meeting	Tutors' Meeting Minutes
<b>Desirable</b>	<b>Intended outcomes</b>	<b>Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes</b>	<b>Target date/s</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Reported to</b>	<b>Evaluation (process or evidence)</b>
The team considers that it would be <b>desirable</b> for the College to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop and implement a clear written protocol for teaching observations that is followed by staff (paragraph 2.5)</li> </ul>	Clear written protocol and central recording of observations	Protocol to be included in Staff Handbook  Central recording of observations	September 2014 and annually	Training Programme Director  Course Administrator	Tutors' Meeting	Tutors' Meeting Minutes Staff Handbook  Central record of observations

## About QAA

QAA is the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. QAA's mission is to safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK higher education.

QAA's aims are to:

- meet students' needs and be valued by them
- safeguard standards in an increasingly diverse UK and international context
- drive improvements in UK higher education
- improve public understanding of higher education standards and quality.

QAA conducts reviews of higher education institutions and publishes reports on the findings. QAA also publishes a range of guidance documents to help safeguard standards and improve quality.

More information about the work of QAA is available at: [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk).

More detail about Review for Specific Course Designation can be found at:  
[www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/designated-providers/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/designated-providers/Pages/default.aspx).



## Glossary

This glossary explains terms used in this report. You can find a fuller glossary at: [www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary). Formal definitions of key terms can be found in the [Review for Educational Oversight \(and for specific course designation\): Handbook, April 2013](#).<sup>4</sup>

**academic quality** A comprehensive term referring to how, and how well, higher education providers manage teaching and learning opportunities to help students progress and succeed.

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

**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).

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

**differentiated judgements** In a Review for Specific Course Designation, separate judgements respectively for the provision validated by separate awarding bodies.

**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 QAA's review processes.

**external examiner** An independent expert appointed by an institution to comment on student achievement in relation to established academic standards and to look at approaches to assessment.

**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*.

**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 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.

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<sup>4</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/REO-designated-providers-handbook-13.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/REO-designated-providers-handbook-13.aspx)

**operational definition** A formal definition of a term, which establishes 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.

**provider(s) (of higher education)** Organisations that deliver higher education. In the UK they may be a degree-awarding body or another organisation that offers programmes of higher education on behalf of degree-awarding bodies or awarding organisations. In the context of Review for Specific Course Designation the term means an independent college.

**public information** Information that is freely available to the public (sometimes referred to as being 'in the public domain').

**quality** See **academic quality**.

**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. Internal reference points may be used by providers for purposes of self-regulation; external ones are used and accepted throughout the higher education community for the checking of standards and quality.

**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.

**threshold academic standards** 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 for higher education qualifications** and **subject benchmark statements**. See also **academic standards**.

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

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