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

The Cambridge Theological Federation

November 2013

Contents

Key findings about The Cambridge Theological Federation

As a result of its Review for specific Course Designation carried out in November 2013, 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 programmes it offers on behalf of Anglia Ruskin University and the University of Cambridge.

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 these awarding bodies.

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**:

- the provision for anonymous staff contribution to the development of the Strategic Plan (paragraph 1.2)
- the integration of differences between the churches into a workable ecumenical federal structure (paragraphs 1.6 and 2.4)
- the annual personal visits of tutors to all Eastern Region Ministry Course students in their home environment (paragraph 2.9)
- the development of an online module specifically for students with learning difficulties (paragraph 2.10)
- the opportunity for prospective students to observe and participate in a teaching session (paragraph 3.2).

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 provider to:

- clarify the division of responsibilities between the Federation and the University of Cambridge for all collaborative programmes (paragraphs 1.1)
- produce annual monitoring reports with action plans for all of its programmes (paragraph 2.2)
- share all external examiners' reports with students (paragraph 2.3)
- develop and implement an institution-wide information strategy (paragraph 3.7).

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

- enable students to participate fully in committees (paragraph 1.4)
- make further use of the Quality Code in relation to all of its programmes, policies and procedures (paragraphs 1.5, 2.3 and 3.7)
- respond formally to all external examiners' reports and develop an action plan (paragraph 1.7)
- implement its emerging draft staff development policy and procedures (paragraph 2.11)
- develop a policy for the use of the virtual learning environment (paragraph 2.14)

- provide students with information on what they can expect from the Federation and what the Federation expects of them (paragraph 3.5)
- share the good practice evident in the best quality tutor handbooks produced by some Houses across the institution (paragraph 3.6).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Specific Course Designation](link)[1] conducted by [QAA](link) at The Cambridge Theological Federation (the Federation), 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 programmes of study that the provider delivers on behalf of Anglia Ruskin University and the University of Cambridge. The review was carried out by Ms Caroline Dangerfield, Ms Sarah Macdonald, Mr Paul Monroe (reviewers) and Professor Edward J Esche (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](link)*.[2] Evidence in support of the review included a range of documentation, including policy, procedure and strategy statements, records and minutes of meetings, and information produced for students and staff, including handbooks, curriculum and teaching materials. The team looked at a sample of assessed student work and held meetings with staff and students. It considered external reports from Anglia Ruskin University and the churches.

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

- subject benchmark statements
- the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code)
- *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*
- Quality in Formation Panel: Inspection report
- Shaping the Future: New patterns of training for lay and ordained
- The Methodist Church: Handbook for ministerial probation.

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

The Cambridge Theological Federation (the Federation) was formed in 1972 by the coming together of three residential theological colleges - Ridley Hall, Wesley House and Westcott House. Initially focusing on training for ordained ministry in the Methodist and Anglican Churches, the Federation's work expanded over the decades to encompass a broader range of denominations and ministries which specialise in teaching and training for lay ministries within their respective churches. In its size (both in terms of member institutions and of students) and its ecumenical breadth, the Federation is unique.

The Federation is a multi-layered complex organisation. Its two awarding bodies, Anglia Ruskin University and the University of Cambridge, are ultimately responsible for the quality of the higher education provision. The Federation answers directly to them and satisfies all of their requirements. The Federation discharges its responsibility for the delivery of its validated programmes through its seven full and two associate member institutions, which are called Houses. The seven full member Houses enrol students across all of the programmes and are linked to Christian churches; the two associate Houses do not enrol students, but do provide teaching staff for the programmes. Most students who enrol on Federation programmes are referred by their sponsoring churches and are training for ordained or authorised lay ministry, but students can also enrol individually without

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[1] www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/designated-providers/Pages/default.aspx
[2] www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/REO-designated-providers-handbook-13.aspx

sponsorship. Each undergraduate student and most postgraduate students are members of one of the Houses, but there are also independent students who are not affiliated with a House. The Federation works through negotiation and consensual agreement with the Houses and the churches. The Houses have different practices, but in all matters of quality assurance, the awarding bodies' requirements take precedence over those of the Houses and churches. Oversight is ensured by the Management Committee, upon which all House Principals sit.

At the time of the review, the Federation offered the following higher education programmes, listed beneath their awarding bodies, with student numbers in brackets:

Anglia Ruskin University
- Certificate of Higher Education in Christian Theology (14)
- Foundation Degree in Arts Christian Theology (110)
- Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Christian Theology (59)
- Postgraduate Certificate in Christian Theology (0)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Christian Theology (0)
- Master of Arts in Christian Theology (24)
- Postgraduate Certificate in Pastoral Theology (0)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Pastoral Theology (0)
- Master of Arts in Pastoral Theology (85)
- Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology (51)
- Master of Philosophy (0)
- Doctor of Philosophy (6)

University of Cambridge
- Certificate in Theology for Ministry (30)
- Bachelor of Theology for Ministry (48)

The provider's stated responsibilities

The Federation has the following responsibilities for all programmes: first marking, moderation or second marking and provision of assessment feedback to students, guidance for progression and liaison with and involvement of employers. For programmes validated by Anglia Ruskin University, the Federation has responsibility for setting assignments, student recruitment and selection, provision for staff higher education subject updating and scholarship, academic tutorial and guidance, and review and monitoring. For programmes validated by the University of Cambridge, the Federation has responsibility for the identification of curriculum needs.

The Federation has the following shared responsibilities for all programmes: curriculum development, monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, student admission guidance and induction, learning resources, collecting and acting upon student feedback, information about learning opportunities. On Anglia Ruskin University-validated programmes, the Federation has shared responsibility with the University for the identification of curriculum needs and strategic development of higher education. On University of Cambridge-validated programmes the Federation has shared responsibility with the University for setting assessments, student recruitment and selection, provision for staff higher education subject updating and scholarship, academic tutorial and guidance, and review and monitoring.

Both awarding bodies have responsibility for the quality review of higher education provision and the student appeal system. The University of Cambridge has responsibility for the strategic development of its higher education programmes.

Recent developments

The Federation's higher education provision has developed through the years in response to the changing needs of its member institutions and of higher education in general. A new taught Master of Arts in Christian Theology was recently introduced to complement the Master of Arts in Pastoral Theology. The Bachelor of Theology for Ministry was also recently revised to reflect changes in the nature of applicants for the award. The composition of the Federation has changed as a result of changes in the way in which the sponsoring churches choose to train their ministerial candidates. The two Diocesan Ministry Courses (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich and Norwich), which were previously associate member Houses of the Federation, closed in 2012 and 2013 respectively. Students formerly training through these Houses have transferred to the Eastern Region Ministry Course, which is a full member House. Wesley House admitted its final student ministers in 2012, when the Methodist Church ceased its funding for the training of ministers. The House is currently exploring new business models to enable it to continue as part of the Federation once its final students leave in the summer of 2014.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes at the Federation presented a written student submission to the review team. The submission was drafted by the Officers of the Student Forum, drawing upon student views from a number of sources, including questionnaires, module feedback, minutes of Student Forum meetings, and National Student Survey responses. A representative sample of students from across the Federation programmes met the coordinator at the preparatory meeting and the team at the review visit.

Detailed findings about The Cambridge Theological Federation

1   Academic standards

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

1.1   The Federation has effective formal and informal procedures for managing the academic standards of the programmes it delivers. There is a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding with Anglia Ruskin University and separate agreements with the University of Cambridge concerning finance and the appointment of staff. There is no formal document detailing respective individual responsibilities between the University of Cambridge and the Federation, and the status of the associated awards was not always clear from the website and the awarding body. It is **advisable** for the Federation to clarify the division of responsibilities between the Federation and the University of Cambridge for all collaborative programmes.

1.2   The Strategic Plan 2009-14 is comprehensive regarding the committee structure, the terms of reference of the committees, the link between intended academic activities and the learning resources required to deliver those activities. The plan was produced by a steering group and supported by a planning group. Opportunities were provided for staff to contribute to the plan, managed by an external consultant to ensure anonymity. The provision for anonymous staff contribution to the development of the Strategic Plan is **good practice**.

1.3   The Federation's taught awards are managed in a systematic and constructive manner through the quality assurance processes of its awarding bodies and the Federation responds to their separate requirements in a systematic and constructive manner. Academic oversight is exercised by the Curriculum Committee which receives reports from the university committees established to manage the undergraduate awards. Working parties are established when needed to deal with specific issues, such as the development of a core curriculum for the FdA Christian Theology and the revision of the Teaching and Learning Policy.

1.4   The Curriculum Committee systematically reports to the Federation Management Committee. All meetings are formally minuted, but some minutes lack detail and not all actions are presented in a specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound format. Membership includes provision for student representatives, but some of these positions are currently unfilled in part because the meetings are held at times and in locations that are not always convenient for students. It would be **desirable** for the Federation to enable students to participate fully in committees.

How effectively does the Federation make use of external reference points to manage academic standards?

1.5   The Federation has made constructive use of subject benchmark statements but not Part A of the Quality Code: 'Setting and maintaining academic standards' in the management of academic standards. There are programme specifications in place for all programmes. A mapping of policies and procedures against the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* was undertaken some time ago, but a similar exercise against the Quality Code has not been undertaken. The Federation recognises that it needs to align its provision with current practice. It would

be **desirable** for the Federation to make further use of the Quality Code in relation to its programmes, policies and procedures.

1.6   The Federation uses scrupulously all of the formal contributions offered by the different churches to inform its provision. Some churches have their own benchmarks and learning outcomes for higher education and others carry out their own reviews of teaching relevant to their ministry. In every instance, the churches' contributions are in support of, not in replacement of or contradiction to, the awarding bodies' requirements.

How does the Federation use external moderation, verification or examining to assure academic standards?

1.7   The Federation makes satisfactory use of external examiners to assure academic standards in compliance with university guidelines. The reports for Anglia Ruskin University programmes are scrutinised by the University and action plans are created to take account of external examiners' comments. The action plan is circulated to all relevant Federation staff at the beginning of the academic year. The Management Committee for the Bachelor of Theology for Ministry, awarded by the University of Cambridge, scrutinises external examiners' reports directly and implements changes. Any actions required are communicated to Federation staff either directly or through reports to Curriculum Committee, but there is no formal plan requiring action by the Federation. It would be **desirable** for the Federation to respond formally to all external examiners' reports and develop an action plan.

1.8   Marking and moderation are carried out consistently in line with guidelines provided by the awarding bodies. There are thorough and clearly defined procedures for resolving any differences in the double marking process. There has been student dissatisfaction regarding the outcomes of double marking in the recent past but this has been addressed to the students' satisfaction.

The review team has **confidence** in the provider's management of its responsibilities for the standards of the programmes it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies.

2   Quality of learning opportunities

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

2.1   The Federation manages all areas of the quality of learning opportunities appropriately given the complexity and constraints within which it is working, such as the delivery of its programmes through its House structure and its relationships with the churches. Federation staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.

2.2   The practice of conducting monitoring reports for all the Federation's programmes is inconsistent. Student feedback is collected during programmes through questionnaires, exit interviews and the National Student Survey. Relevant committees analyse the feedback and monitor appropriate actions. Anglia Ruskin University programmes go through an annual monitoring report process with action plans. There is no annual monitoring report for University of Cambridge programmes. It is **advisable** for the Federation to produce annual monitoring reports with action plans for all of its programmes.

How effectively does the Federation make use of external reference points to manage and enhance learning opportunities?

2.3   The Federation makes varying use of a range of external reference points to manage and enhance learning opportunities, including Part B of the Quality Code: 'Assuring and enhancing academic quality', external examiners' reports, and those of its validating partners and the churches. The Federation uses the Quality Code to inform and guide many of their processes, although staff knowledge of it is variable. External examiners' reports are subject to scrutiny and their recommendations are acted upon. Extracts are discussed by committees on which students are represented, but the full reports are not made available. It is **advisable** for the Federation to share all external examiners' reports with students.

2.4   The engagement of the Federation with the different sponsoring churches is a particular strength which enhances the curriculum. The Federation is monitored by some of the churches and the findings of their reviews are effectively followed up through actions developed, implemented and reported. For instance, an external ecumenical Quality in Formation Panel Inspection Report informs curriculum development together with benchmarks produced by the various denominations. In every case, the churches' activities complement and enhance the awarding bodies' expectations. The Federation also engages with the wider church community by using lay and ordained ministers as occasional tutors and to oversee practical training and placements. The ecumenical nature of the Federation, with students training for ministry in many different denominations working side by side, is seen as a unique strength by both students and staff. The integration of differences between the churches into a workable ecumenical federal structure is **good practice**.

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

2.5   The Federation has appropriate mechanisms for monitoring the quality of learning and teaching and has acted to ensure that they are now implemented more effectively. A Teaching and Learning Policy Review was undertaken in 2003, but many of the recommendations from it were not implemented due to the lack of appropriate processes and committee structures. The Federation addressed this by obtaining funding to undertake a full strategic review. It generated an action plan which was implemented and monitored by relevant committees and the governing council. One result was the development of a teaching and learning policy, but it is a descriptive rather than an aspirational document and the review scheduled for 2013 is yet to occur.

2.6   The Federation successfully brings together the different pedagogical approaches of the two awarding bodies. The approaches are complementary, giving opportunity to offer appropriate pathways for different students.

2.7   The Federation undertakes peer observation of teaching as a supportive tool in assuring the quality of learning and teaching. Lecturers are given feedback after the exercise and the record is used in staff appraisals.

How does the Federation assure itself that students are supported effectively?

2.8   The Federation is aware of the challenges surrounding a diverse student body and has put in place effective mechanisms to support it. Federation students come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Most are mature students, many are parents and an increasing number are international. The Federation provides, for instance, study skills programmes, tutorial support and the opportunity to study part-time or online.

2.9   There is an effective personal tutor system provided by the Houses. Students in Cambridge see their tutors at least twice a term. Bachelor of Theology for Ministry students also have personal tutor support from the University of Cambridge. In the case of students taking programmes through the Eastern Region Ministry Course, which is a House dispersed throughout the UK and Europe, tutors visits students personally even if overseas, at least once a year. The annual personal visits of tutors to all Eastern Region Ministry Course students in their home environment is **good practice**.

2.10   The Federation has thorough systems for supporting students with disabilities. These include provision of appropriate resources, tailored support, study skills, class scheduling in accessible rooms in historical buildings and specific staff development activities to ensure the understanding of differing learning needs. The development of an online module specifically for students with learning difficulties is **good practice**. The module can be taken by any student, not only those with learning difficulties.

How effectively does the Federation develop its staff in order to improve student learning opportunities?

2.11   The Federation is not sufficiently systematic in developing its staff. The Staff Development Committee did not have a policy until immediately before the review and thus it does not have a cohesive operational process for identifying, approving and monitoring staff development needs. There are a number of staff development opportunities around, for example, external examiners' reports, inspections, appraisals, and needs arising from the development of new programmes, but the approach is inconsistent because staff volunteer individually. Staff also have opportunities to engage with the awarding bodies, such as being supported to pursue doctorates. There is an induction and mentoring process for all new staff. It would be **desirable** for the Federation to implement its emerging draft staff development policy and procedures.

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

2.12   The provision of learning resources is satisfactory. Students have access to the respective university libraries as well as all of the House libraries.

2.13   The Federation takes effective action to improve learning resources. For example, matters identified in the Quality in Formation Panel Inspection Report, such as refurbishment of teaching spaces and improvements to the virtual learning environment, are being addressed by the Strategic Estates Review process.

2.14   The Federation uses its virtual learning environment inconsistently. Some of the programme modules provide comprehensive resources online and some do not. Effective use of online learning tools for part-time and blended-learning students enable them to participate fully in programmes and to receive appropriate support. There is no overarching virtual learning environment policy. It would be **desirable** for the Federation to develop a policy for the use of the virtual learning environment.

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.

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3 Information about learning opportunities

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

3.1   The Federation has an external website which provides an adequate amount of information about its learning opportunities. Both staff and students acknowledge that the website requires redevelopment, which will be prioritised once agreed funding obtained through the Strategic Estates Review process is released. The admissions process to the Federation's programmes is not explained fully on the website. For instance, it is not clear that the ultimate decision-making responsibilities for admission lie with the awarding bodies. Students are initially admitted by the Federation and then put forward to the relevant awarding body, who makes the final decision. The process is explained fully to prospective students by staff once they are in contact with the Federation or one of the Federation's Houses.

3.2   The Federation makes available adequate information to prospective students to help them select their programmes with an understanding of the academic environment in which they will be studying and the support that will be available to them. Students regard the information provided throughout their application process to be very helpful. The information is communicated through the Federation's external website, the external websites of the Houses, promotional material published by the Houses and bespoke personal contact with Federation staff. Consistency of practice is ensured through oversight of the Management Committee. The Federation offers open mornings and taste and try sessions which provide prospective students with an opportunity to meet current students. The opportunity for prospective students to observe and participate in a teaching session is **good practice**.

3.3   An extensive amount of information, including detailed programme information, is available to all students on the intranet. The Federation does not provide an overarching single student handbook, but some of the Houses produce their own, for which the Management Committee has oversight responsibility. Handbooks for all programmes offered through Anglia Ruskin University are available on the intranet as are the regulations and assessment criteria for all University of Cambridge programmes.

3.4   Information about support services is readily available in several formats. Students speak highly of the personal tutor system and pastoral support offered by Federation staff. The Federation produces a weekly e-newsletter to ensure students are kept up to date throughout their programme of study.

3.5   The information provided by the Federation regarding mutual expectations is variable. The two awarding bodies have documents which set out both the expectations of students and what students can expect from their experience. Students report that these documents are not easily accessible. Some of the Houses set out in their handbooks the behavioural and denominational expectations placed upon students, and some provide limited information on what students can expect from their House and academic environment. It would be **desirable** for the Federation to provide students with information on what they can expect from the Federation and what the Federation expects of them.

3.6   The written information for staff about quality assurance is variable. The university websites provide thorough guidance for their respective programmes. The Federation does not have its own quality assurance handbook. Some Houses have comprehensive tutor handbooks, but others do not. It would be **desirable** for the Federation to share the good practice evident in the best quality tutor handbooks produced by some Houses across the institution.

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

3.7   The monitoring and oversight of public information about learning opportunities is not systematic. The awareness among staff of Part C of the Quality Code: 'Information about higher education provision' is low. The Federation does not have a policy to ensure the accuracy of all its information and relies on informal user feedback to assure the accuracy of the website and intranet. The responsibility for information accuracy resides with the Management Committee, but there is no formal signing-off procedure. Module materials are reviewed and updated annually, but the website and intranet contain minor inaccuracies and content is not always up to date. As a means of helping to ensure that the Federation's arrangements for assuring that information about learning opportunities is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy, it is **advisable** for the Federation to develop and implement an institution-wide information strategy.

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[3]

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 **good practice** that are worthy of wider dissemination within the Federation:						
• the provision for anonymous staff contribution to the development of the Strategic Plan (paragraph 1.2)	For all strategic planning initiatives, mechanisms are in place which allow for anonymous input The opportunity to submit feedback is advertised to relevant stakeholders At least 50 per cent of academic staff submit anonymous feedback	Management Committee or relevant subcommittee identifies suitable mechanism for obtaining anonymous feedback Timescales for major planning initiatives include a period for collecting and analysing feedback Management Committee scrutinises timescale and operating method for all planning initiatives Feedback is analysed to measure participation rate	At each revision of the Strategic Plan from 2015	Management Committee	Governing Council	Governing Council minutes recording progress reports Report on methodology included in new Strategic Plan

The Cambridge Theological Federation action plan relating to the Review of Specific Course Designation November 2013

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[3] The Federation 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 Federation's awarding bodies.

		by relevant group Progress reports issued to Governing Council				
• the integration of differences between the churches into a workable ecumenical federal structure (paragraphs 1.6 and 2.4)	Integration is achieved in programme design for all programmes Every House is represented at discussion/review of programme design	Ensure all Houses have representatives on Curriculum Committee Make arrangements for committee members to send alternates if unable to attend Maintain record of attendance	Curriculum Committee meeting March 2014 and all relevant meetings thereafter	Curriculum Committee	Management Committee	Management Committee minutes
	Federation operates ecumenically	a) Management Committee discussion of where ecumenicity is held	March 2014 (initial discussion) then annual review	Working party	Management Committee	Management Committee minutes
		b) Report on current and future membership of Federation is made to the Governing Council	December 2014	Executive Director	Governing Council	Governing Council minutes
• the annual personal visits of tutors to all Eastern Region Ministry Course students in their home environment (paragraph 2.9)	At least 90 per cent of dispersed students are visited in their home environment during the academic year	Eastern Region Ministry Course continues current practice Postgraduate Director ensures international Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology students receive visits	September 2014	Principal of Eastern Region Ministry Course, Postgraduate awards Director	Curriculum Committee	Curriculum Committee minutes

		Information about visits made is included in regular report to Curriculum Committee for the relevant awards				
• the development of an online module specifically for students with learning difficulties (paragraph 2.10)	Online module developed for FdA/BA is adapted and made available to all students admitted in 2015-16 and subsequent years	Redesign module to ensure compatibility with other courses Arrange access (passwords) for all students admitted in 2015-16 Programme leaders and directors of studies inform students during induction sessions and encourage take-up of the module Module leader uses the virtual learning environment access logs to monitor take-up and reports to Curriculum Committee	August 2015	Module leader	Curriculum Committee	E-mail confirmation from Information Technology Officer that all new students have access to the module Curriculum Committee minutes
• the opportunity for prospective students to observe and participate in a teaching session (paragraph 3.2).	Note: This is particularly relevant to postgraduate students Prospective postgraduate students have the opportunity to observe and participate in a teaching session	Identify at least one session for each postgraduate award Issue invitations to prospective students Add information about sessions to publicity	Set up by December 2014 for students enquiring about entry in 2015-16 Continue in	Postgraduate awards Director	Vice President Academic	Register of attendance at relevant sessions to identify visitors

Advisable	Intended outcomes	Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes	Target date(s)	Action by	Reported to	Evaluation (process or evidence)
		material and to external website	subsequent years			
The team considers that it **advisable** for the Federation to:						
• clarify the division of responsibilities between the Federation and the University of Cambridge for all collaborative programmes (paragraph 1.1)	Clear statement of division of responsibilities	Meeting with University of Cambridge representatives to prepare statement Ensure appropriate input from Federation committees	Initial meeting January 2014 Statement agreed by October 2014	Registrar	Management Committee	Statement agreed and signed
• produce annual monitoring reports with action plans for all of its programmes (paragraph 2.2)	Extend practice of Anglia Ruskin awards to Certificate in Theology for Ministry and Bachelor of Theology for Ministry Annual monitoring reports produced for all awards	Produce template for annual monitoring report Identify relevant sources of information Report and action plan submitted to Curriculum Committee	Template prepared by July 2014 First report produced in September 2014	Bachelor of Theology Secretary	Curriculum Committee	Curriculum Committee minutes Annual monitoring reports
• share all external examiners' reports with	Link from Federation intranet to relevant University website	Partner universities asked to supply link to relevant page on their website	February 2014	Award Secretaries	Curriculum Committee	Curriculum Committee minutes

	Intended outcomes	Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes	Target date/s	Action by	Reported to	Evaluation (process or evidence)
students (paragraph 2.3)	Creation of link reported to all students	Information Technology Officer adds link to course information on intranet Availability of reports disseminated via Federation e-newsletter				
• develop and implement an institution-wide information strategy (paragraph 3.7).	Redesigned website Guidelines for the use of information Formal procedures/ mechanisms for checking accuracy of published information Strategy approved and implemented	Executive Director to scope and lead on drafting policy in consultation with Information Technology Officer and key stakeholders	Strategy outlined by end of September 2014 Implemented by December 2014	Executive Director	Management Committee	Management Committee minutes Executive Director's report on progress (December 2014)
Desirable	**Intended outcomes**	**Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes**	**Target date/s**	**Action by**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation (process or evidence)**
The team considers that it would be **desirable** for the Federation to:						
• enable students to participate fully in committees (paragraph 1.4)	All student places on committees are filled Committee meetings are	Identify and resolve constraints on student membership Discuss with Student Forum	March 2014 for current vacancies: end of October in subsequent years Committee	Federation Management Committee Executive Sub-committee	Management Committee	Attendance records within committee minutes for Governing Council, Curriculum Committee,

	scheduled at times/ venues that will maximise participation by all members		meeting schedule for 2014-15 and subsequent years			award-specific committees and Worship and Community Life Committee
• make further use of the Quality Code in relation to all of its programmes, policies and procedures (paragraphs 1.5, 2.3 and 3.7)	Quality Code used explicitly within the Federation	Staff development day to raise awareness Set up working party with responsibility for quality assurance matters Record current usage of the Quality Code Identify areas where more use could be made Issue guidance/ recommendations to relevant committee/ individual Review on annual basis and report to Curriculum Committee	December 2014 January 2014 to set up working party Guidance issued by September 2014 First review January 2015	Staff Development Officer Curriculum Committee	Management Committee Management Committee	Management Committee minutes Curriculum Committee minutes
• respond formally to all external examiners' reports and develop an action plan (paragraph 1.7)	Extend practice of Anglia Ruskin awards to Certificate in Theology for Ministry and Bachelor of Theology for Ministry	Ensure this is embedded in the Annual Monitoring Report (see above)	In place by June 2014 for 2014 external examiner's report	Bachelor of Theology Secretary	Curriculum Committee	Curriculum Committee minutes

• implement its emerging draft staff development policy and procedures (paragraph 2.11)	Staff development policy/procedures are approved and used	Set up working party to support the Staff Development Officer in producing policy	April 2014 Used in relation to appraisals in summer 2014	Staff Development Officer and working party chair	Management Committee	Management Committee minutes Reports from appraisers to Staff Development Officer
• develop a policy for the use of the virtual learning environment (paragraph 2.14)	Policy developed and disseminated to all academic staff	Executive Director to scope and lead on drafting in consultation with the Information Technology Officer and key stakeholders Implementation recorded in annual monitoring reports	Policy approved by December 2014	Executive Director	Curriculum Committee	Curriculum Committee minutes and annual monitoring reports
• provide students with information on what they can expect from the Federation and what the Federation expects of them (paragraph 3.5)	Clear statement of expectations is available on Federation intranet Statement disseminated to current students and highlighted during induction for new students	Ascertain/collate what is already available Provide clearer links to existing information Draft statement to cover any gaps in existing information	Revision of FedNet during summer of 2014 Induction process in 2014-15	Award secretaries	Management Committee	Management Committee minutes
• share the good practice evident in the best quality tutor handbooks produced by	Houses are aware of the content of handbooks from other member institutions	Principals provide/allow access to their handbooks Registrar monitors (by	Access provided Jan-March 2014 Management	Principals, Registrar	Management Committee	Management Committee minutes

some Houses across the institution (paragraph 3.6).		e-mail enquiry) take-up of opportunity to compare handbooks Management Committee discusses best practice in light of shared information	Committee discussion March 2014 to inform preparation of 2014-15 handbooks		

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.

More detail about Review of Courses Specifically Designated for Student Support can be found at: 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. Formal definitions of key terms can be found in the
*Review for Educational Oversight (and for specific course designation): Handbook,
April 2013*.[4]

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 Courses 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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[4] 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.