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

West London College of Business & Management Sciences Ltd

January 2014

Contents

Key findings about the West London College of Business & Management Sciences Ltd

As a result of its Review for Specific Course Designation carried out in January 2014, the QAA review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in how the College manages its stated responsibilities for the standards of the programmes it offers on behalf of Pearson and CILEx - The Chartered Institute of Legal Executives.

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

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

Good practice

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

* including an external academic as a member of the committees that consider academic quality and standards (paragraph 1.3).

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:

* produce more detailed minutes to aid monitoring of academic standards (paragraph 1.2)
* review student membership of relevant committees (paragraph 1.4)
* provide each student with feedback that is consistent with the marking (paragraph 1.8)
* appoint subject specialists as internal verifiers to apply consistent verification of students' assessed work (paragraph 1.10)
* collect and analyse academic data through a formal documented process (paragraph 1.11)
* engage with relevant external reference points to develop contextualised programme specifications (paragraph 2.2)
* use plagiarism-detection software to check students' submitted assignments (paragraph 2.3)
* implement consistent individual learning plans and a tutorial policy to support the progression of students (paragraph 2.8)
* develop management structures and information for students and employers to support students' work placements (paragraph 2.15).

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

* conduct business in accordance with all committees' terms of reference (paragraph 1.5)
* include all internal examiners as members of the Examinations and Assessment Committee to assure standards (paragraph 1.9)

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- review procedures and documentation for monitoring teaching and learning quality (paragraph 2.5)
- provide comprehensive and consistent programme and unit information (paragraph 3.2).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Specific Course Designation](#)[1] conducted by [QAA](#) at the West London College of Business & Management Sciences Ltd (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 programmes of study that the provider delivers on behalf of Pearson and CILEx -The Chartered Institute of Legal Executives. The review was carried out by Mr James Freeman, Mrs Heather Miller, and Professor Anthony Whitehouse (reviewers) and Professor Patricia Higham (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](#)*.[2] Evidence in support of the review included documentation supplied by the provider and awarding organisations and meetings with staff and with students.

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

- the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code)
- awarding organisations' guidelines and requirements.

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 was formed in 2005 to offer full and part-time further and higher education courses in business, management, computing, health and social care, law, and English language. The College is located on two nearby sites in Hounslow, west London, with one site offering mainly further education courses and one site focusing on higher education. Currently, 821 higher education students are enrolled.

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

Pearson
- Higher National Diploma in Business - level 5 (659)
- Higher National Diploma in Computing and System Development - level 5 (23)
- Higher National Diploma in Health and Social Care (Management) - level 5 (133)

CILEx - The Chartered Institute of Legal Executives
- Diploma in Law and Practice - level 6 (6)

The provider's stated responsibilities

For its Pearson and CILEx courses, the College is responsible for identifying curriculum needs; student recruitment and selection; monitoring student admission, retention and completion; reviewing and responding to annual monitoring reviews and module evaluations; quality reviews of higher education provision; provision for developing staff teaching and assessing skills at higher education levels; staff higher education subject updating and scholarship; monitoring the quality of higher education teaching and learning; student admission guidance and induction; academic tutorial/review and monitoring/academic

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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](#)

guidance, library and learning resources available to students; guidance for progression; liaison with and involvement of employers; collecting and acting upon student feedback/opinion; programme and module information available to students; public information on the web and in the prospectus; and procedures for ensuring the accuracy of public information.

Pearson and CILEx are responsible for the strategic development of higher education and curriculum development. The College, Pearson, and CILEx share responsibility for programme specifications and intended learning outcomes. For Pearson awards, the College is responsible for setting assessments, first marking of student assignments, giving feedback to students on their assignments, and the student appeal system. Pearson is responsible for external verification of assessments conducted by the College. CILEx is responsible for the student appeal system for its awards. Setting of assignments, first marking of assignments, and giving feedback to students on assignments are not applicable to CILEx awards, which are assessed by examinations. Moderation and second marking are responsibilities of CILEx.

Recent developments

Following the loss of its highly trusted sponsor license in 2011, numbers of student enrolments from overseas countries fell rapidly. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills designated the College for student finance for six core courses in January 2013. The College now recruits its students from the local population and has expanded its numbers. The Pearson HND Health and Social Care (Management) was introduced in January 2013. Over Christmas 2013 the College relocated its higher education provision to larger premises in West Hounslow. The College plans to develop a campus in Dubai in the latter part of 2014. It is also seeking to broaden its provision to include corporate training.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes presented a written submission to the review team. The student representative coordinator and 13 student representatives prepared the submission, drawing on a range of evidence that included the National Student Survey and student feedback for each semester. Students identified key themes that included students' contribution to quality assurance, effective complaints and appeals processes, communication with students about improvements made, and the College's use of the student voice to inform, develop and implement improvements.

The review coordinator met a group of students during the preparation visit, and the review team met students during the review visit.

Detailed findings about the West London College of Business & Management Sciences Ltd

1　　Academic standards

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

1.1　　The College's organisational structure offers effective management of academic standards and quality. Responsibilities for the management of academic standards are clearly defined by the respective awarding organisations and understood by staff. The management structure comprises the Principal, who takes overall responsibility for academic standards, the Director of Studies, the Quality Assurance Manager and the Programmes Manager. The Quality Assurance Manager, supported by programme teams, is responsible for assuring academic standards and quality. The Principal convenes a Principal's Central Committee that is not part of the formal structure to assist with coordination of responsibilities.

1.2　　Minutes of meetings and external examiner reports indicate effective management of academic standards. The Academic Committee, which meets each semester, is responsible for overseeing academic standards and quality. Monthly meetings of the Quality Assurance Committee and semester meetings of the Programmes Committee report to the Academic Committee. Programmes Committee minutes are made available to external examiners, who confirm that required actions are addressed and that 'quality assurance processes are rigorous and all members of staff engage with them'. Staff accept that a number of committee minutes are terse, do not fully cover their terms of reference, and lack sufficient detail to enable retrospective understanding or to provide an audit trail. It is **advisable** for the College to produce more detailed minutes to aid monitoring of academic standards.

1.3　　An Executive Committee is responsible for defining the policies, strategies and academic affairs of the College, minutes of which confirm that relevant issues are considered. Programme reviews are carried out every six months with actions reported and consolidated into an annual report. The College has appointed an experienced university academic as an external adviser on quality assurance. Minutes of the Academic Committee and Quality Assurance Committee confirm that the adviser regularly attends. The principle of including an external academic as a member of the committees that consider academic quality and standards is **good practice**.

1.4　　Students are represented on all committees except for the Quality Assurance Committee. This arrangement inhibits student engagement and the College misses the valuable perspective that students can bring to the management of academic standards. The presence of student representatives, who are under a 'confidentiality bind', on the Examinations and Assessment Committee has the potential to compromise standards. It is **advisable** for the College to review student membership of relevant committees.

1.5　　Progression and completion statistics show suitable student attainment. Students confirmed that they are happy with progression opportunities to other programmes and careers. Collection and scrutiny of management information is informal. The Principal obtains feedback via the committee structure and from staff. Terms of reference require the Quality Assurance Committee to provide 'an overview of the statistics on completion rates, withdrawals, examination irregularities (including cases of plagiarism), student appeals and disciplinary and report annually to the Executive Committee.' Minutes do not confirm such

matters are considered. It would be **desirable** for the College to conduct business in accordance with all committees' terms of reference.

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

1.6   The College is aware of the Quality Code and has begun to map its procedures against it. External examiner reports confirm documented procedures follow and conform to the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*, the precursor to the Quality Code. Documented procedures are in place to meet much of *Part B: Assuring and enhancing academic quality* of the Quality Code for which the College is responsible. Staff appreciate that more work is needed.

1.7   Effective use is made of relevant external reference points to manage academic standards. The Ofqual-regulated awarding organisations embed reference points in their programmes and provide guidance on academic standards that refers to the Quality Code and confirms adherence to the Qualifications and Credit Framework. Learning outcomes for Pearson programmes were developed in accordance with *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*. Awarding organisation standards and professional codes of practice are embedded in the CILEx programmes.

How does the College use external moderation, verification or examination to assure academic standards?

1.8   External examiners confirm that appropriate systems are in place to manage academic standards with clear evidence of internal verification. Copies of assignments contained inconsistent marking and feedback. In many instances the learner feedback sheet on which feedback should have been given for each assessment criteria was not provided. Often no audit trail of marking was evident. It is **advisable** for the College to provide each student with feedback that is consistent with the marking.

1.9   The Examinations and Assessment Committee (which reports to the Academic Committee) considers reports from internal verifiers and external examiners and receives and approves assignment briefs to be issued in the following semester. The Director of Studies chairs the Committee, whose membership includes programme managers, internal verifiers, student representatives, and external quality advisers. Internal examiners do not attend. The Committee evaluates assessment and moderation, but the minutes do not identify consideration of academic standards or record decisions on individual candidates. To assure academic standards it would be **desirable** for the College to include all internal examiners as members of the Examinations and Assessment Committee.

1.10   The internal verification policy lacks detail, and the sampling process is not defined. A single member of staff undertakes internal verification of all units across three disciplines and another member of staff with relevant qualifications and experience acts as verifier for another subject. Internal verification is inconsistent and often based on brief feedback of original markers. Not all marked work contains a record of verification. It is **advisable** for the College to appoint subject specialists as internal verifiers to apply consistent verification of students' assessed work.

1.11   It is not clear how the College evaluates the effectiveness of its management structures and processes for moderation and examining. The College has no recorded evidence of statistical analysis of results within programmes. It is **advisable** for the College to collect and analyse academic data through a formal documented process.

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

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 manages the quality of learning opportunities with processes reflecting those within academic standards outlined in paragraphs 1.1-1.3. Responsibility for managing the quality of learning opportunities rests with the Director of Studies, who is informed by the Academic Committee, the Quality Assurance Committee, the Programmes Committee, the Examination and Assessment Committee, and the Staff/Student Consultative Committee, and is a member of the Executive Committee and Principal's Central Committee. A detailed quality assurance manual guides the committees. Events are coordinated through the use of a quality calendar that provides key dates. Programme files provide standardisation of schemes of work, lesson plans and assignment formats.

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

2.2   The College has begun to make use of the Quality Code as an external reference point, as discussed in paragraphs 1.10-1.11. However, staff showed limited awareness of *Chapter A3: The programme level* of the Quality Code and the Pearson specialist guidance to provide contextualised programme specifications for each programme. It is **advisable** for the College to engage with relevant external reference points to develop contextualised programme specifications.

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

2.3   The College has appropriate policies to oversee teaching and learning. A recently introduced learning and teaching strategy informs higher education delivery. An ongoing initiative to develop a customised virtual learning environment will provide a repository for programme and assessment materials and enhance communication with students. Students commented that they found the virtual learning environment useful in supporting their learning but health and social care students felt that they required further guidance on using the system. The College provides guidance on plagiarism, and has begun to use detection software on a trial basis. Assignments are not routinely checked with plagiarism-detection software. It is **advisable** for the College to use plagiarism-detection software to check students' submitted assignments.

2.4   The College has a formal process for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning through peer review and feedback from students. The College's appraisal process is part of performance management and is separate from peer review. The peer review process includes lesson observation and focuses on quality enhancement to identify areas for further development. Lesson observations are formally recorded, but documentation reflects the school sector rather than the requirements of higher education teaching and learning.

2.5   Modules are taught in sequence across the academic year. Fresh cohorts enrol each semester, resulting in students not taking modules in the same order. Students felt this may disadvantage them. The College has not analysed results to confirm that students enrolling in the second and third semesters are not at an academic disadvantage compared

to students who enrol in the first semester. It would be **desirable** for the College to review procedures and documentation for monitoring teaching and learning quality.

2.6   Students commented that staff are approachable, listen to their views, are willing to resolve issues of concern and that actions are taken. The College uses a variety of methods, including module reviews, student exit surveys, and experience surveys to collect student views regularly. The Programmes Manager analyses student comments and response rates and these are discussed by programme committees who develop and implement action plans.

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

2.7   Processes to support students' academic progress lack detail and are not implemented consistently. The requirements of minimum attendance outlined in the tutorial policy are not included in student or programme handbooks. Students and staff confirmed that tutorial attendance was advisory rather than compulsory. Individual learning plans to support and review student progress were not updated regularly, nor were outcomes monitored.

2.8   The principles of student progression are unclear because detailed assessment regulations for resubmissions, referrals and calculation of overall grades for Pearson programmes have not been developed in the assessment policy or included within student and programme handbooks. For example, arrangements to support the progression of a group of health and social care students are imprecise. The programme began in January 2013 and a number of students were referred in units at the end of their first semester, but resubmission and support arrangements have not been clearly detailed nor the issue discussed at the Examination and Assessment Committee. It is **advisable** for the College to implement consistent individual learning plans and a tutorial policy to support the progression of students.

2.9   There is a comprehensive admissions policy. Students are given a planned and appropriate induction. Students receive a one-to-one interview on admission and complete a diagnostic assessment to indicate support needs for numeracy, literacy and information and computer technology. Students who need support are invited to attend weekly support sessions.

2.10   The College actively manages student welfare. The student welfare officer, with two support workers, acts as a first point of contact for student issues. They provide practical support on financial, social and housing issues and signpost students to a wide range of external agencies. The College has developed an effective student representative process for all committees that is managed by the Student Welfare Officer through the Staff Student Consultative Committee. The Programmes Manager currently acts as the Careers and Disability Advisor but allocation of this role is being reviewed due to College expansion.

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

2.11   The clear staff development policy is supported by an appropriate implementation strategy that reflects recent expanded staffing levels. Well resourced staff induction, mentoring and probation processes are tracked and managed by the Quality Assurance Manager. Outcomes are reported to the Quality Assurance Committee. New staff members are supported by their line manager, mentor, or induction adviser, and have an induction development plan and a personal development plan. A probation review panel oversees probation periods. Staff members receive an appraisal following completion of probation.

2.12   College appraisal and programme review processes inform the annual staff development timetable. The staff development budget is not delineated but the Executive Committee considers all requests and staff have attended academic conferences, awarding organisation events and briefings. The impact of staff development for improving student learning opportunities is not evaluated in detail as part of internal review processes, but there is evidence of responses to strategic and individual priorities.

2.13   Staff members are well qualified. They hold master's degree level qualifications or above in relevant disciplines. Most staff members have gained teaching qualifications. The use of active learning strategies within computing studies is a strength that could be encouraged by sharing these strategies across the College as 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?

2.14   College learning resources are sufficient for the current number of students enrolled. The recent move to new premises provides a campus that focuses on higher education students. The Executive Committee, assisted by the Principal's Central Committee, manages provision of resources as part of the programme planning and approval process. The library and information resources management and access policy set minimum levels of key texts available in the library and this is discussed at programmes committees and at programme reviews. Students and external examiners have raised concerns about the availability of books, and these concerns have been addressed within a reasonable timeframe.

2.15   Management processes for the compulsory work placement element within the Higher National Diploma in Health and Social Care are underdeveloped. The College's work placement statement is aspirational rather than operational, and guidance in the programme and student handbook about placement requirements lacks detail. Managers have discussed placement requirements but have not yet produced information for employers or for students. While a large number of the students are in relevant part-time employment, a significant minority are not and plans to secure placements for these students are unclear. It is **advisable** for the College to develop management structures and information for students and employers to support students' work placements.

> The review team has **confidence** that the College 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   The College markets its programmes online and via a printed prospectus, both of which provide an adequate range of accurate information, including relevant policy documents. Although the website's programmes pages list unit choices, the programme information available is not equivalent to programme specifications. The College's student handbook is available online and provides clear guidance about complaints and appeals procedures, College expectations, and practical information. Students can attend the College before starting their programme and are provided with further information through a handbook, pre-enrolment communications and an on-site induction.

3.2   The College acknowledges that programme information is an area for improvement. The review team was made aware of the ongoing creation and development of unit handbooks. Teaching staff distribute assignment briefs for each assessment task. Information provided in programme handbooks is variable, with little changed from awarding organisations' guidance to centres. Handbooks do include unit outlines and information regarding appeals and plagiarism. It would be **desirable** for the College to provide comprehensive and consistent programme and unit information.

3.3   Students the team met confirmed the College's information was broadly accurate. The College is committed to the development of e-learning and this is supported by a dedicated e-learning service responsible for multimedia services, training and software support. The information technology resources are sufficient for current students. As discussed in paragraph 2.3, a virtual learning environment (VLE) is being introduced across the College following a successful pilot with the CILEx programme. Staff assured the team that a VLE induction had been offered, but students the team met showed variable awareness. Some programmes use the VLE to distribute assignment and teaching information.

3.4   Many students found their induction and programme information helpful, but a minority had experienced a delay in receiving assignment information. Students see external examiner reports via their representatives' committee membership or the Staff/Student Consultative Committee.

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

3.5   The College has a public information policy that lists key responsibilities, assigns 'ownership' of material to individuals, and charges committees with the review of information. The Principal retains overall editorial control and staff check information for accuracy twice per year. However, the terms of reference for the College's committees do not explicitly include review of public information. Brief discussion in the Quality Assurance Committee and Executive Committee minutes provided some evidence of review, but minutes did not show that the Academic Committee reviews prospectus information. Implementing the recommendation in paragraph 1.2 to produce more detailed minutes of committee meetings would strengthen the College's management of information.

3.6   The Academic Committee approves changes to programmes and is responsible for amending specifications as well as for reviewing the effectiveness of the VLE. An Information Technology Officer is responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the College's social media presence, and is jointly responsible with the Principal for the VLE content. The College plans to introduce an electronic system for streamlining the approval, review, and production of programme and unit documentation.

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

Action plan[3]

West London College of Business & Management Sciences Ltd action plan relating to the Review of Specific Course Designation January 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 **good practice** that are worthy of wider dissemination within the College:						
• including an external academic as a member of the committees that consider academic quality and standards (paragraph 1.3).	Continued attendance of external members of the relevant committees To increase academic quality and standards, external subject specialist will be appointed	Appoint external subject specialist to the programme committees	August 2014	Director of Studies	Executive committee	Membership of external subject specialists at the programme level

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[3] 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 organisations

Advisable	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 is **advisable** for the College to:						
• produce more detailed minutes to aid monitoring of academic standards (paragraph 1.2)	Successful implementation of formal committees and formal meeting minutes linked to the terms of reference	Implement a system of recording and tracking actions and outcomes	April 2014	Quality Assurance Manager	Executive committee	Audit trail linking the committee meetings with an action plan and review of action taken
• review student membership of relevant committees (paragraph 1.4)	Student representation on the relevant committees	Student membership will be reviewed for each committee to ensure standards are not compromised Each newly elected student representative will be given relevant training in order to prepare them for their role sufficiently	May 2014	Quality Assurance Manager	The Director of Studies	Ensure students are part of the College quality enhancement and decision-making process without compromising standards
• provide each student with feedback that is consistent with the marking (paragraph 1.8)	Feedback sheets will include feedback related not only to learning outcomes but also to assessment criteria	Marking sheets will be standardised for all assignment-based courses All assessment staff will be required to utilise all marking sheets in line with	April 2014	Programmes Manager	Director of Studies	Internal verification reports

		the College's assessment policy				
• appoint subject specialists as internal verifiers to apply consistent verification of students' assessed work (paragraph 1.10)	Appointment of subject-specific internal verifiers supported by lead verifier	By appointing subject-specific verifiers for each programme, this will improve the quality assurance	April 2014	Programme Manager	Director of studies	Internal verification reports and standards verification reports
• collect and analyse academic data through a formal documented process (paragraph 1.11)	A formal process for collating and reviewing academic data for each programme to show data trends such as pass rates, progression, retention rates, completion rates, student experience, staff feedback, academic appeal and complaints and external feedback	Programme and module evaluation currently exists, however more data analysis will be done in terms of pass rates, progression, retention rates, completion rates, student experience, staff feedback, academic appeal and complaints and external feedback	August 2014	Programmes Manager and Quality Assurance Manager	Director of Studies	Annual programme monitoring report to include academic data and review of actions taken
• engage with relevant external reference points to develop contextualised programme specifications (paragraph	Reference will be made to the relevant awarding organisations to contextualise specifications within the student course handbooks	All student course handbooks for all programmes will be revised using extensive external reference points within the specifications	May 2014	Course leaders and Programmes Manager	Director of Studies	Contextualised programme handbooks for each programme

2.2)						
• use plagiarism-detection software to check students' submitted assignments (paragraph 2.3)	The use of plagiarism-detection software for all submitted student assignments	Training for all staff and students on using plagiarism-detection software and reviewing assessment policy in line with its use	September 2014	Programmes Manager and Information Technology Manager	Director of Studies	Student and staff feedback on effective use of plagiarism-detection software
• implement consistent individual learning plans and a tutorial policy to support the progression of students (paragraph 2.8)	Standardised individual learning plans and tutorial policy for personal and academic tutoring to provide support for student progression	Tutorial policy will be reviewed in consultation with academic and student support staff Individual learning plans will include tutorial support given to the student, both personal and subject related and how that support is implemented and used to aid and assist student progression through the course and beyond	May 2014	Programme Manager and Quality Assurance Manager	Director of Studies	Programmes committee review of tutorial support and effectiveness of the individual learning plans
• develop management structures and information for students and employers to support students' work placements (paragraph	Provide students, employers and teachers with work placement guide	The College will produce a guide to offer easy to use support to make sure teachers, students and employers get the most out of a placement The guide will clearly define roles and responsibilities of	May 2014	Programme Manager and course leaders	Director of Studies	The work placement guides with all relevant information

Desirable	Intended outcomes	Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes	Target date/s	Action by	Reported to	Evaluation (process or evidence)
2.15).		students, employers, and the people involved in the delivery and assessment of work placement				
The team considers that it would be **desirable** for the College to:						
• conduct business in accordance with all committees' terms of reference (paragraph 1.5)	All committee meetings conducted in accordance with the terms of reference	All committees will be advised to conduct their business in accordance with their terms of reference This will give each committee more direction, purpose and focus Decisions and discussions will be more focused and less terse	April 2014	Quality Assurance Manager	Quality Assurance Manager	Detailed minutes of meetings showing what has been discussed and action points generated which is linked to the terms of reference
• include all internal examiners as members of the Examinations and Assessment Committee to assure	Examination and Assessment Committee memberships include all internal examiners	Review the terms of reference and membership of the Examination and Assessment Committee to include all internal examiners	April 2014	Quality Assurance Manager	Quality Assurance Manager	Attendance of internal examiners in Examinations and Assessment Committee

standards (paragraph 1.9)						
• review procedures and documentation for monitoring teaching and learning quality (paragraph 2.5)	Monitor teaching and learning quality by provision of fair learning opportunities	Teaching and learning quality monitoring procedure will be reviewed to include the impact of students enrolling in the second and third semesters to determine whether they are at an academic disadvantage compared to students who enrol in the first semester Future planning will be based on the analysis to enhance the teaching and learning quality	June 2014	Quality Assurance Manager	Director of Studies	Revised procedures for monitoring teaching and learning quality and data analysis of current provision
• provide comprehensive and consistent programme and unit information (paragraph 3.2).	Standardise format for publishing of course information via the programme handbooks Programme handbooks will include detailed unit and study skills guides	Course leaders review the programme handbooks and published information to agree standard content and format for dissemination	April 2014	Course leaders and Programme Manager	Academic Committee	The Programmes Committee will review the new improved course handbooks with unit information across all programmes in the College

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 for Specific Course Designation 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 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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[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.