



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM INSPECTION (Short Course Provider)

ORGANISATION: Oxford Scholastica Academy

ADDRESS: Florence House
29 Grove Street
Oxford
OX2 7JT

HEAD OF ORGANISATION: Jamie Dear, Director

Accreditation status: Accredited

Date of inspection: 10 August 2015

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: 10th September 2015

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the organisation

The two co-founders had previously worked together for several years for a similar provision, prior to the setting-up of their new company Oxford Scholastica Academy Ltd (OSA) in May 2013. They were both Oxford graduates, with experience of undergraduate study at Oxford, and had a sound knowledge of the opportunities made by Oxford University and of the facilities available in and around Oxford. One co-founder left the business in 2014. The remaining co-founder took the role of Director and, with a new Director, now forms the Senior Management Team. These two Directors currently hold responsibility for business policy, administration, finance, information technology, premises, course policy and outline content, marketing, student recruitment and registration. In addition, there are two Consultants who are responsible for detailed academic content, tutor selection, quality control, health and safety, and pastoral care.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The Directors aim to ensure that students understand how they can crystallise their plans and undertake appropriate education to take advantage of selected experiences that will support them in their career decisions and later life. Their motto is "to learn, to see, and to do". Considerable efforts are made to ensure that the learning environment has a strong family-supportive emphasis, personal care, and excellent intercommunications. The intention is to provide a memorable summer. To this end, the Directors facilitate the broader education of young people via annual Summer Schools. The Summer Schools have been designed to enable these students to benefit from personal experience of higher education within the context of Oxford University. In particular, students experience tutorials focused on their chosen subject area, personal study, group-work challenges, vocational inspiration, living in college, sport and personal contact with Oxford undergraduates and graduates. Additional elements of the courses address such topics as UCAS statements, interview techniques, relevance of their previous employment, and experience of charitable work.

Students for the Summer Schools have been recruited from the following countries/regions where English is likely to be the students' first or second language: USA, Canada, EU, Middle East, and India. Diversity is encouraged in prospective student cohorts. The 2015 Summer School students are from the UK, Europe and overseas, including the USA, Australia, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia. They are from both maintained and independent sector schools. The six-week period of Summer Schools, in July-August 2015, comprise three different cohorts of 77, 77, and 45 students, each for a two-week session. Overall, there is about equal representation of male and female students. Each student opts for their specialist subject, and the consequential specialist class-sizes vary from four to 15 students. For 2015, the range of specialist options has been extended to include Engineering and Psychology.

Tutors provide personal academic feedback to each student individually, as well as a group question and answer session on the viability of their group-work challenge proposals. OSA provides a record of attendance to each student at the final Graduation Dinner, to which parents also are invited.

3. Inspection process

This Interim inspection was conducted by one inspector over half a day at St Thomas's Building, within St Peter's College in central Oxford. A separate room was made available where all relevant documentation was easily accessible, and there was quiet opportunity to hold interviews. The inspector spoke with the Director, the Head of Events, the administrative team and a group of students. All relevant staff were readily available, helpful, and most hospitable throughout this inspection.

4. Inspection history

Full SCP inspection Stage 2: 11 February 2014

Full SCP inspection Stage 3: 14 July 2014

PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgements and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector(s) during the inspection and from documentation provided by the provider

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

A new more commodious office has been established. This is well equipped for its two full-time occupants, and also provides adequate storage space for archive material and training equipment. Additional space has been made available at the St Thomas’s Building, within St Peter’s College, both for the students and the Activities Coordinators.

2. Response to action points in last report

Recommended areas for quality improvement:

A greater level of detail in the minutes of meetings should be provided as the business grows.

This had been done. This now comprises an ongoing schedule of notes for action, and includes details of by whom and by when tasks need completion.

3. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements – spot check

3.1 Management, Staffing and Administration

| | Met | Partially met | Not met | NA |
|--|-----|---------------|---------|----|
| The standards are judged to be | ✓ | | | |
| Comments An updated organogram is in place, together with concise role descriptors. There is considerable continuity of staffing for all aspects and at all levels. Archiving is via an appropriately secure and remote system. A new website has been developed for the 2015 summer school recruitment using material from 2014. An alumni scheme has been established to encourage communications between new and existing students. | | | | |

3.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

| | Met | Partially met | Not met | NA |
|--|-----|---------------|---------|----|
| The standards are judged to be | ✓ | | | |
| Comments A new clarified structure for training has been developed and is in place for 2015. There has been no shortage of recruits for administrative and tuition roles. | | | | |

3.3 Participant Welfare

| | Met | Partially met | Not met | NA |
|--|-----|---------------|---------|----|
| The standards are judged to be | ✓ | | | |
| Comments Students were especially complimentary about the induction and ice-breaking opportunities. All students sign to confirm that they had read and understood all relevant induction material. | | | | |

3.4 Premises and Facilities

| | Met | Partially met | Not met | NA |
|--|-----|---------------|---------|----|
| The standards are judged to be | ✓ | | | |
| Comments Additional space has been made available within St Peter's both for students and the Activities Coordinators. | | | | |

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

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| <p>Institution’s strengths Highly motivated Directors, with current relevant experience. Enhanced administration, documentation and consultant access for the quality control of Summer Schools for this summer. Appreciation of the need to employ additional necessary staff with clearly identified specific skills and experience. Sensitivity to and effective management to ensure continuity of staffing and of overall provision. High quality, comprehensive handbooks for staff and students.</p> <p>Highly skilled, enthusiastic, and knowledgeable tutors, who are very familiar with Oxford and able to adapt effectively to the variety of ages and backgrounds of the students. Ability to extend the range of optional specialist subjects towards an even broader provision.</p> <p>Employment of Consultants with directly relevant skills and considerable experience. Particular care to ensure an overall supportive family environment.</p> <p>New OSA office accommodation, with all the appropriate facilities for the current size of the business and allowing for some expansion. Accommodation and meals within the modern wing of an Oxford University college in central Oxford. Tuition at various Oxford University colleges according to those tutors appointed.</p> |
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| Actions required | Priority H/M/L |
|------------------|-------------------|
| None. | |

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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| Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated. | YES |
| Further comments, if applicable | |