

BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

Short Course Provider (SCP) Candidacy / Stage 2 Inspection

PROVIDER: Oxford Scholastica Academy

ADDRESS: Belsyre Court
57 Woodstock Road
Oxford
OX2 6HJ

HEAD OF PROVIDER: Jamie Dear and Bobby Seagull, Co-Founders

DATE OF INSPECTION: 11 February 2014

ACCREDITATION STATUS AT INSPECTION: Unaccredited

DECISION ON ACCREDITATION:

- Accreditation awarded for 6 months.
- Award of accreditation deferred.
- Award of accreditation refused.

Date: 13 Mar 2014

1. Background to the provider

The two co-founders had worked together for several years prior to the setting-up of their new company Oxford Scholastica Academy Ltd (OSA) in May 2013. They are both Oxford graduates, with experience of undergraduate study at Oxford, and they have a sound knowledge of the provision made by Oxford University, and of the facilities available in and around Oxford.

The co-founders form the Senior Management Team, and currently hold the responsibilities for business policy, administration, finance, information technology, premises, course policy and outline content, marketing, student recruitment and registration. There are also 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 co-founders aim to ensure that their students understand how completing their education will help them in later life. Their motto is "to learn, to see, and to do".

To this end, the co-founders intend to facilitate the broader education of young people. Their students will be aged from 15 to 18 years, from the UK, Europe and overseas, and from both maintained and independent sector schools. It is anticipated that there will be approximately equal numbers of male and female students. The OSA courses are designed to enable these students better to benefit from the opportunities provided by higher education at, for example, Oxford University. In particular, students will 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 will address such topics as UCAS statements, interview techniques, relevance of their previous employment and their charitable work-experience.

OSA's first courses will take place in summer 2014 and will comprise two courses, each of two weeks' duration. These have been timetabled end-to-end, so that students have the option of a two week or of a four week course. In the later case, the range of topic areas to be studied will be extended appropriately. Tutors will 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 will provide a record of attendance to each student at the final Graduation Dinner, to which parents also are invited.

Prospective students for this summer's courses have been recruited from the following countries/regions where English is likely to be the students' first or second language: USA, Canada, European Union, Middle East and India. Diversity is encouraged in the prospective student cohort.

3. Inspection process

This stage 2 inspection was conducted by one inspector over one day. A separate, private room was made available for the inspector, where all the relevant documentation was well indexed and easily accessible.

The inspector held meetings with the two co-founders comprising the Senior Management Team, both together and individually. In addition the inspector spoke with two staff members: the Tutoring Consultant and the Housemistress. A visit was made to the teaching and accommodation venue at St Peter's College in central Oxford.

The co-founders, Consultants, and staff at St Peter's College were all readily available, helpful, and most hospitable throughout the inspection.

PART B - JUDGEMENT 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.

INSPECTION AREA - MANAGEMENT, STAFFING AND ADMINISTRATION

1. The provider is effectively managed

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 1.1 | The management structure is clearly defined, documented and understood, including the role and extent of authority of any owners, trustees or governing body. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 1.2 | The head of the provider and other senior managers are suitably qualified and experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying them out. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 1.3 | There are clear channels of communication between the management and staff and those working at the delivery venue/s. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |

This standard is judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Notes of meetings are appropriately concise for the current operation, but will need to provide a greater level of detail for an extended programme of courses in the future.

2. The administration of the provider is effective

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 2.1 | Administrators are suitably qualified or experienced and understand their specific responsibilities and duties. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 2.2 | The size of the administrative team is sufficient to ensure the effective day-to-day running of the provider. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 2.3 | The administrative support available to the management is clearly defined, documented and understood. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 2.4 | Policies, procedures and systems are well documented and effectively disseminated across the provider. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 2.5 | Data collection and collation systems are effective. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 2.6 | Administrative offices are adequate in size and resources for the effective administration of the provider. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |

This standard is judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

It is recommended that comprehensive, up-to-date paper records for each member of staff, tutor, and student are kept, as well as those records held electronically.

3. **The provider employs appropriate managerial and administrative staff**

- 3.1 There are appropriate policies and effective procedures for the recruitment and continuing employment of suitably qualified and experienced staff. Yes No
- 3.2 Experience and qualifications claimed are verified before employment. Yes No
- 3.3 There is an effective system for regularly reviewing the performance of staff. Yes No

This standard is judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Current staff are well known to the co-founders, and have been appointed for their particular experience and skills. A quality of performance policy is extant, and the systematic application and analysis of this will be developed before the first courses start.

4. **Publicity material, both printed and electronic, gives a comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate description of the provider and its programmes**

- 4.1 Text and images provide an accurate depiction of the provider's location, premises, facilities and the range and nature of resources and services offered. Yes No
- 4.2 Information on the courses available is comprehensive, accurate and up to date. Yes No

This standard is judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

4.1 Inevitably, the current images are from stock sources, but it is OSA's intention to employ a professional photographer to generate a set of images reflecting the experiences of this summer's cohort of students. The OSA website is in the process of being upgraded technically. OSA could consider producing printed promotional material direct from their own website, and to print only sufficient for their immediate needs.

5. **The provider takes reasonable care to recruit and enrol suitable participants for its courses**

- 5.1 Entry requirements for each course, including those relating to language ability, are set at an appropriate level and clearly stated in the course descriptions seen by prospective participants. Yes No NA
- 5.2 A formal application process ensures that participants meet the entry requirements and any claimed qualifications are verified. Yes No NA
- 5.3 The provider replies to all application enquiries promptly and appropriately and briefs all stakeholders properly on the nature and requirements of its programmes. Yes No NA
- 5.4 Any overseas recruitment agents are properly selected, briefed, monitored and evaluated. Yes No NA

This standard is judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Applications are received via OSA's website application form, and then followed up with requests for further, detailed information via email and/or Skype. All prospective students and their parents are interviewed personally by one of the co-founders via Skype according to a scripted prompt list.

6. **There is an appropriate policy on participant attendance and effective procedures and systems to enforce it**

6.1 There is a clear and published policy on participant attendance and punctuality. Yes No

This standard is judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

6.1 There is a policy on participant attendance and punctuality; however, OSA should specify the definitions for lateness and non-attendance in all their relevant handbooks, and reinforce this, and other policies, at the students' induction meetings.

INSPECTION AREA - PARTICIPANT WELFARE

20. **Where residential accommodation is offered, it is fit for purpose, well maintained and appropriately supervised**

20.1 Any residential accommodation is clean, safe and of a standard which is adequate to the needs of participants. Yes No

20.2 Any residential accommodation is open to inspection by the appropriate authorities, including Ofsted where participants under 18 are accommodated. Yes No NA

20.3 Clear rules and fire, health and safety procedures are in place, with appropriate precautions taken for security of participants and their property. Yes No

20.4 A level of supervision is provided appropriate to the needs of participants. Yes No

20.5 Separate accommodation blocks are provided for participants under 18. Yes No NA

This standard is judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

Residential accommodation is provided by St Peter's College. Breakfast is provided by OSA and dinner is taken in local restaurants, while students have the opportunity to explore Oxford for their lunch.
20.3 OSA is in the process of identifying the various situations where there could be risks, and of producing the detailed risk assessments.

21. **Where home-stay accommodation is organised, the welfare of participants is ensured and the provider's relationship with hosts is properly managed**

- 21.1 Due care is taken in selecting home-stay accommodation which both provides a safe and comfortable living environment for participants and is appropriately located for travel to the provider and back. Yes No
- 21.2 Any home-stay accommodation is inspected before participants are placed and is subject to regular re-inspection by a responsible representative or agent of the provider. Yes No
- 21.3 The provider has appropriate contracts in place with any hosts, clearly setting out the rules, terms and conditions of the provision. Yes No
- 21.4 Appropriate advice and support is given to both hosts and participants before and during the placement. Yes No
- 21.5 Clear monitoring procedures are in place with opportunities for participant feedback and prompt action taken in the event of problems. Yes No

This standard is judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

22. **The provider provides an appropriate social programme for participants and information on leisure activities in the area**

- 22.1 Participants are provided with appropriate information on opportunities for participation at events and other leisure activities which may be of interest. Yes No
- 22.2 The social programme is responsive to the needs and wishes of participants. Yes No NA
- 22.3 Any activities within the social programme have been chosen with consideration for their affordability by the majority of participants. Yes No NA
- 22.4 Any activities organised by the provider are supervised by a responsible representative with suitable qualifications and experience. Yes No NA

This standard is judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

The fees are inclusive of all activities for the duration of the course.
OSA needs to develop a process for the monitoring of students during their free time.

INSPECTION AREA - PREMISES AND FACILITIES

23. The provider has secure possession of and access to its premises

23.1 The provider has secure tenure on its premises. Yes No NA

23.2 Where required, the provider has access to suitable external premises for training purposes of a temporary or occasional nature. Yes No NA

This standard is judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

Tutoring accommodation is provided by St Peter's College and other Oxford University colleges of the appointed tutors.

24. The premises provide a safe, secure and clean environment for participants and staff

24.1 Access to the premises is appropriately restricted and secured. Yes No

24.2 The premises are maintained in an adequate state of repair, decoration and cleanliness. Yes No

24.3 There are specific safety rules in areas of particular hazard (e.g. science laboratories), made readily available to participants, staff and visitors. Yes No NA

24.4 General guidance on health and safety is made available to participants, staff and visitors. Yes No

24.5 There is adequate signage inside and outside of the premises and notice boards for the display of general information. Yes No

24.6 There is adequate circulation space for the number of participants and staff accommodated, and a suitable area in which to receive visitors. Yes No

24.7 There are toilet facilities of an appropriate number and level of cleanliness. Yes No

24.8 There is adequate heating and ventilation in all rooms. Yes No

This standard is judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

OSA may find it appropriate to set up a temporary student notice board in the common room of the St Peter's College accommodation.

25. **Training rooms and other learning areas are appropriate for the courses offered**

- 25.1 Training rooms and other learning areas provide adequate accommodation in size and number for the classes allocated to them. Yes No
- 25.2 Training rooms and any specialised learning areas (e.g. laboratories, workshops, studios) are equipped to a level which allows for the effective delivery of each course. Yes No
- 25.3 There are facilities suitable for conducting the assessments required on each course. Yes No NA

This standard is judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

26. **There are appropriate additional facilities for participants and staff**

- 26.1 Participants have access to sufficient space and suitable facilities for private study, including library and IT resources. Yes No NA
- 26.2 Trainers have access to sufficient personal space for preparing lessons, marking work and relaxation. Yes No NA
- 26.3 Participants and staff have access to space and facilities suitable for relaxation and the consumption of food and drink where appropriate. Yes No NA
- 26.4 Participants and staff have access to storage for personal possessions where appropriate. Yes No NA
- 26.5 There are individual offices or rooms in which trainers and senior management can hold private meetings and a room of sufficient size to hold staff meetings. Yes No

This standard is judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Oxford University tutors work from their own college and/or home premises.
OSA will set up an office for administration, communications, and student/tutor support within St Peter's College for the duration.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated. Yes No

PART C - SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

Numbering of action points aligns with that of the minimum standards

MANAGEMENT, STAFFING AND ADMINISTRATION

Provider's strengths

Highly motivated co-founders, with recent directly relevant experience.
Excellent administration, documentation and consultant access towards the development, and the quality control of courses for this summer.
Appreciation of the need to employ additional necessary staff with specific skills and experience.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
4.1 OSA should proceed with the intention to generate a set of images reflecting the experiences of this summer's cohort of students.	<input type="radio"/> High <input type="radio"/> Medium <input checked="" type="radio"/> Low
6.1 OSA should specify the definitions for lateness and non-attendance in all their relevant handbooks and reinforce this, and other policies, at the students' induction meetings.	<input type="radio"/> High <input type="radio"/> Medium <input checked="" type="radio"/> Low

PARTICIPANT WELFARE

Provider's strengths

Employment of Consultants with directly relevant skills and considerable experience.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
20.3 OSA should complete relevant and appropriate risk assessments currently in process.	<input type="radio"/> High <input type="radio"/> Medium <input checked="" type="radio"/> Low
22 OSA should develop a process for the monitoring of students during their free time.	<input type="radio"/> High <input type="radio"/> Medium <input checked="" type="radio"/> Low

PREMISES AND FACILITIES

Provider's strengths

Small but modern OSA office accommodation, with all the appropriate facilities for the current size of the business.
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.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	<input type="radio"/> High <input type="radio"/> Medium <input type="radio"/> Low

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

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

It is recommended that comprehensive, up-to-date paper records for all members of staff, tutors, and students are kept, as well as those records held electronically.

The systematic application and analysis of the quality of performance policy should be developed before the first courses start.

OSA could consider producing printed promotional material direct from their own website, and to print only sufficient for their immediate needs.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS