



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

RANDOM SPOT CHECK INSPECTION (Short Course Provider)

PROVIDER: Summit Education Enterprise

ADDRESS: Beaver House
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Oxford
OX1 2EP

HEAD OF PROVIDER: Dr Yi Samuel Chen

DATE OF INSPECTION: 6 August 2018

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Continued accreditation 27 September 2018

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the provider

Summit Education Enterprise (SEE/the Provider) was founded in February 2012. It is a private limited company. It offers residential educational summer and winter short courses at various colleges of the University of Oxford for students from a number of major Chinese universities, with which the Provider has developed relationships.

The two founders and co-owners are also Directors. Both of them also work at the University of Oxford. One of the Directors is the Provider's Managing Director and is closely involved in the day-to-day running of the organisation. The other Director is part of the Provider's senior management team and attends some of the weekly team meetings and is involved in setting the future direction and strategy. She also delivers some lectures and, therefore, knows the students.

The main Director is supported by a self-employed Management Consultant, a Programme Manager, an Operations Coordinator and an Office Manager. There is also a team of programme assistants, who are postgraduate Oxford University students. The Provider also has contacts with a number of Oxford University teaching staff who are invited to provide teaching on their programmes.

There is also an advisory board, which is made up of the two Directors, two advisors from the Provider's accountants as well as the management consultant.

SEE aims to serve talented students and professionals from overseas, especially China, to help them explore and make good use of a rich variety of excellent education and professional development opportunities in the United Kingdom (UK). SEE's programmes offer participants the opportunity to explore different aspects of Oxford education, experience student life in Oxford and be immersed in British culture.

All the courses are delivered in University of Oxford or its colleges' premises. In addition, the Provider rents a small administrative office in central Oxford.

2. Brief description of the current provision

SEE provides residential educational summer and winter short courses at various colleges of the University of Oxford. In addition, SEE is involved in consultancy and project management activities for a variety of educational and commercial clients. This latter business forms a minority of SEE's business and is outside the remit of this inspection and not accredited by BAC.

The Provider runs a two-week Oxford Study Programme in July. This offers participants, who come from various Chinese universities, a multi-disciplinary academic programme, which provides an insight into life as a student at the University of Oxford. The lectures and workshops cover areas such as innovation and entrepreneurship, international relations and the history and development of the University of Oxford as well as English pronunciation and public speaking skills. The sessions are designed and delivered predominantly by members of the University of Oxford academic community and professionals from industry. The programme also includes various cultural activities, such as visits to museums and excursions to places of interest. Since it first began to offer short courses in summer 2015, SEE has run short courses to students who have come from more than 30 different Chinese universities. They were all over the age of 18 and there was an equal mix of male and female students.

SEE also provides bespoke client programmes, often in collaboration with branches and colleges of the University of Oxford. At the time of the inspection, a joint programme was being run collaboratively with Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, for students from a university in China. This is a four-week course, which focuses on

leadership training in arts, sciences and humanities subjects such as artificial intelligence, international relations and politics. It also includes skills-based courses in English pronunciation, public speaking, research methods and study skills. The lecturers on the course come from Oxford University, the Imperial College London and Warwick Business School. There are also speakers from the UK government and organisations such as Transport for London and EDF energy company.

The Global Leadership for the Future of Cities Summer Course is jointly offered by the University of Oxford Programme for the Future of Cities, Oxford Sustainable Enterprise and the Provider. It is designed to provide advanced university students and professionals with exposure to the key areas involved in sustainable urban development. The areas covered include governance, policy, design and planning.

At the time of the inspection, there were 33 Chinese students enrolled on the four-week bespoke course. The majority were male and all were over the age of 18. In addition, they were accompanied by two teachers from their home university in China.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was conducted by one inspector over half a day. Meetings were held with the main Director, the Programme Manager and the Office Manager as well as with one of the programme assistants. An observation of a teaching session was carried out as well as a meeting with a group of students. The inspector reviewed the administrative office and various documentation was scrutinised. The Provider co-operated very well with the inspector.

4. Inspection history

Full inspection: 30 July & 17 August 2016

Interim inspection: 29 July 2017

PART B – JUDGMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgments 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

New staff have been recruited. An office manager, who is responsible for human resources and finance activities as well as day-to-day matters connected with pastoral support and student accommodation, has been in post since March 2018. He has a background in working with international students. In addition, an Operations Coordinator began working for the Provider on a part-time basis in July 2017 and is now working full-time since November 2017. A management consultant has been working with the Provider since October 2017 on areas such as the development of the organisational structure and business planning.

A new student records management system is in its development stage. This will replace the spreadsheets that are currently in use. The new system will provide increased automation and will be more efficient. In addition, there is a new finance system, which will improve the way the Provider works with its accountants. A new company website is being designed to provide a better sense of focus of the Provider's main services and to improve the content of the website and make it more navigable. It is hoped that the new website will be completed by November 2018.

The Provider has moved to a larger administrative office in the same building. SEE plans to move again, in December 2018, to an office with improved meeting space, again in the current building in central Oxford.

It is possible, in the future, that courses for participants under the age of 18 will be developed and offered.

2. Response to actions points in last report

8.1 8.2 8.3 The proposed review of the company's performance and structure must be completed and clear plans for the implementation of the measures necessary to maintain its viability and the quality of the provision must be developed.

A Management Consultant was employed in October 2017 to review the company's performance and structure. With the consultant's help, the Provider has developed a clear organisational structure with clear roles and centrally stored job descriptions. A business plan has also been formulated in the form of a set of slides. The plan sets out the SEE's key strengths, business structure and its short, medium and long-term business objectives. The business plan has been presented to the team so that the team is clear about the strategy. The review, carried out by the Management Consultant, has also resulted in new accounting, student records and human resources systems to improve the efficiency of the operation.

Regular staff meetings take place, including of the managers and the board. The minutes of these meetings include clear action plans, which allow for the effective monitoring of the actions to ensure they are appropriately implemented.

The website must be updated to provide accurate information on SEE's current provision.

The website is now up-to-date and includes accurate information about the Provider's current provision.

3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

SEE's proposal to relocate to larger office premises should be implemented when budget and the availability of a suitable space permits. The Provider should then consider how it can improve the presentation of SEE within the larger space in order to better market its provision.

The Provider has already moved to a larger administration office in the same building since the last inspection. This office is considered adequate for the number of staff, who are there at any one time. There are plans to move again, by December 2018, to provide more meeting space. The administration office was not visited during this inspection.

It is recommended that SEE reviews the wide range of educational services that it currently offers, but which make up a small part of its business and consider whether it wishes to concentrate more on the provision of short courses, for which it currently has a growing demand.

As a result of the business plan that has recently been developed, the Provider has decided to focus on its core business of running short courses in collaboration with partners rather than consultancy and project management activities.

4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

4.1 Management, Staffing and Administration (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
<p>The main Director has a clear and realistic vision for the organisation, which is effectively shared with the staff. He is committed to providing a quality experience for the students.</p> <p>Communication is effective. There are weekly recorded staff meetings and monthly senior management meetings. There are also quarterly board meetings. As a result, the staff are aware of the priorities and work well as a team.</p> <p>There are clear English language entry requirements for the students. The students' home universities sponsor their students to attend the courses and, therefore, ensure that they are suitable and will benefit from attending.</p> <p>Attendance is monitored through the use of registers, which are taken in the morning and afternoon.</p>				

4.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
<p>The Programme Manager oversees the running of the programmes. She also trains the programme assistants. She considers that the programmes are of high quality and well put together. Inspection findings confirm this view.</p> <p>The classroom sessions are interesting and the lecturers make good use of engaging slides and course materials. The sessions are interactive with good opportunities for the students to ask questions. Therefore, the students are engaged and actively participating. The students confirmed that they were enjoying their lectures.</p>				

4.3 Participant Welfare (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
<p>Comments</p> <p>The students receive appropriate pastoral support to meet their needs. They confirmed that they had received good information before arrival that enabled them to know what to expect and to help them to settle quickly into their studies. The Operations Coordinator is Chinese and is the person to whom the students would go if they had any personal issues.</p> <p>Residential accommodation is arranged within Oxford University's colleges, in en-suite twin rooms, except when courses coincide with Oxford University's normal term times, when home stay arrangements are in place.</p> <p>The students confirmed that there was an appropriate social programme, which included trips to interesting museums, London, Cambridge, and Blenheim Palace.</p>				

4.4 Premises and Facilities (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
<p>Comments</p> <p>Lady Margaret Hall provides an excellent learning environment for the students. The lecture theatre and dining hall are spacious and well equipped.</p> <p>The office used on-site for the administration of the courses, when they are running, is sufficiently well equipped and fit-for-purpose.</p>				

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS
A committed management team, which works well together to meet the Provider’s aims.
A strong focus on the quality of the overall experience provided to the students.

ACTIONS REQUIRED	Priority H/M/L
None	

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT
The Provider is recommended to continue its implementation of the business plan so that it focuses on its core business in order to grow the business for the future and maintain the high quality of the provision.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	
Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.	YES
Further comments, if applicable	