

BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

College Reaccreditation Inspection

INSTITUTION: FCL College

ADDRESS: Hazel House
1-3 Lancelot Road
Wembley
Middlesex
HA0 2AL

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Mrs S Kumarapalan

DATE OF INSPECTION: 25 - 26 October 2016

ACCREDITATION STATUS AT INSPECTION: Accredited

DECISION ON ACCREDITATION:

- Reaccreditation to be awarded for the full four-year period.
- Decision on accreditation deferred.
- Accreditation to be withdrawn.

Date: 15 Dec 2016

1. Background to the institution

FCL College (the College) was established in 2001 as a private limited company. It operates as a private further education college, focusing on franchised Pitman's programmes. The College also offers English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses at various levels, leading to Cambridge and Trinity qualifications. These are designed to help prepare students for employment in the United Kingdom (UK). The College's main aims are to offer Pitman's programmes in a workshop environment, to enable students to progress at their own pace on chosen modules. All courses lead to nationally recognised certification.

The College has been located, since its inception, in a two-story building near Wembley stadium, with good access to local transport.

Its sole proprietor plays a key part in day to day operations and the supervision of students and staff.

Students are largely recruited through the internet, supplemented by local leafleting and e-mailing discounted offers to former students. FCL does not recruit through agents. All courses except for the Council for Awards in Care Health and Education (CACHE) and Food Hygiene Training can start on any day on a full or part-time basis and the student can choose the times they wish to come to the College to study. For the Pitman's courses, a trained supervisor is on hand at all times to support students in the College. Some courses can be studied on-line, supplemented by tutor support. The annual evaluation of results indicates a high student success rate, coupled with a high degree of referred sales.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The College has course scheme approvals from several examination bodies, including the Pitman Training Group, CACHE, Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT), British Computer Society (BCS), City & Guilds, Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH) and Institute of Certified Book-keepers (ICB).

In addition to its main Pitman provision, FCL currently offers several other courses such as the CACHE course, available at Levels 1, 2 and 3, Life in the UK, which is a citizenship preparation programme, Driving Test Training and a Food Hygiene Training RSPH course at Level 2. New courses recently introduced include the Driving Test Training and there is increasing use of on-line support for students to enhance the face-to-face tuition. Almost all students are part-time, many being in employment, and typically they attend for six hours a week over two mornings.

The student body is largely comprised of mature students from the local area, 70 per cent of whom are from the UK and 30 per cent from other European countries. About two thirds are female and none of the students are aged under 18. There are currently no students on student visas or disabled students. The total number registered, at the time of the inspection, was 223.

Students can begin Pitman's courses at any time, but are enrolled on other courses at fixed entry points several times a year.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was conducted by two inspectors over two days. The Inspectors observed teaching and learning, both in four taught ESOL classes and in the independent learning for Pitman's modules. Inspectors discussed policies and practice regarding administration, teaching, student welfare and quality assurance with the Proprietor, who exerts day to day control as the Principal. Informal interviews were held with staff and students and samples of marked work were observed. Current documentation was scrutinised for validity and accuracy.

4. Inspection history:

Inspection type	Date
Full Accreditation	10-11 March 2008
Supplementary	20 November 2008
Interim	15 February 2010
Spot Check	3 February 2011
Re-accreditation	14-15 November 2012
Interim	29 January 2015

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 institution.

INSPECTION AREA - MANAGEMENT, STAFFING AND ADMINISTRATION

1. The institution 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 institution 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. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

Excellent team work was observed among the management team and tutors. The proprietor has a close working relationship with staff and students to help ensure students' needs are met.

There is an annual business plan which incorporates a good review of business opportunities, based on an analysis of competition in the area.

2. The administration of the institution 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 institution. | <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 institution. | <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 |

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

Comments

3. **The institution 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

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

- 4.1 Text and images provide an accurate depiction of the institution'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

The website is very comprehensive, as are the course brochures.

5. **The institution takes reasonable care to recruit and enrol suitable students for its courses**

- 5.1 Entry requirements for each course are set at an appropriate level and clearly stated in the course descriptions seen by prospective students. Yes No
- 5.2 A formal application process ensures that students meet the entry requirements and any claimed qualifications are verified. Yes No
- 5.3 Students are properly briefed on the nature and requirements of the courses for which they apply, and all application enquiries responded to promptly and appropriately. Yes No
- 5.4 Any overseas recruitment agents are properly selected, briefed, monitored and evaluated. Yes No NA
- 5.5 Students receive a proper initial assessment which includes language ability to confirm their capability to complete the courses on which they are enrolling. Yes No

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

Comments

Very good practice was evidenced for initial placement testing and the development of Individual Learning Plans (ILPs).

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

- 6.1 There is a clear and published policy on student attendance and punctuality, requiring that they attend at least 80% of their scheduled classes. Yes No NA
- 6.2 Accurate and secure records of attendance and punctuality at each session are kept for all students, collated centrally and reviewed at least weekly. Yes No NA
- 6.3 Student absences are followed up promptly and appropriate action taken. Yes No NA

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

Comments

The hard copy and electronic records scrutinised were both accurate and up-to-date. The proprietor provided a print-out of all registered students including course details and dates of birth.

7. **The institution regularly obtains and records feedback from students and other stakeholders and takes appropriate action where necessary**

- 7.1 The institution has effective mechanisms for obtaining feedback from students and other stakeholders (such as staff, partner institutions and employers) on all aspects of the institution's provision, including formal student representation where appropriate. Yes No
- 7.2 Feedback is obtained, recorded and analysed on a regular basis. Yes No
- 7.3 The feedback is reviewed by management and action is taken where necessary. Yes No
- 7.4 There is a mechanism for reporting on the institution's response to the feedback to the student body. Yes No

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

Comments

In addition to regular student feedback, which is very well analysed to produce a yearly summary, there is strong evidence of personal thank you cards from individual students, since 2004, which are displayed on notice boards. Testimonials are provided on the website, which represents very good practice.

8. **The institution has effective systems to review its own standards and assess its own performance with a view to continuing improvement**

- 8.1 There are effective systems for monitoring and periodically reviewing all aspects of the institution's performance. Yes No
- 8.2 Reports are compiled at least annually which present the results of the institution's reviews and incorporate action plans. Reports include analysis of year-on-year results on student satisfaction, retention, achievement, examination results and completion rates. Yes No
- 8.3 Action plans are implemented and regularly reviewed, with outcomes reported to the management. Yes No

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

Comments

The regular visits to monitor FCL's performance, as a franchisee by Pitman, is a particularly effective feature.

Data on student achievement is well evaluated by the College.

8.2 As yet, there is no annual audit of operations, incorporating a year on year analysis of results and including an action plan.

INSPECTION AREA - TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

9. Academic management is effective

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 9.1 | There is a suitably qualified and experienced academic manager or academic management team with responsibility for teaching, learning and assessment. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 9.2 | Classes are timetabled and rooms allocated appropriately for the courses offered. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 9.3 | The allocation of teachers to classes provides for a consistent learning experience. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 9.4 | There is an appropriate policy and effective procedures for the acquisition of academic resources. | <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 more on-line resources are made available for students to access.

10. The courses are planned and delivered in ways that enable students to succeed

- | | | |
|------|--|---|
| 10.1 | Courses are designed and delivered in ways that allow students to develop the knowledge and skills which will be required for final examinations or assessments. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 10.2 | Lessons and assessments maintain an appropriate focus on any assessment objectives or statement of learning outcomes established by the awarding body. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 10.3 | Formative assessments appropriately reflect the nature and standards of summative examinations. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 10.4 | Students are encouraged and enabled to develop independent learning skills. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 10.5 | Full-time courses requiring students to attend for 15 hours or more per week are time tabled over at least three days. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 10.6 | Any required coursework and revision periods are scheduled in advance. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 10.7 | The academic backgrounds and particular needs of students are taken into account in the classroom delivery of the course. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

Tutor and students confirm homework is regularly set on the ESOL course, which enhances independent learning skills very well. Observations confirmed very good tutorial support for students to develop their skills.

11. **Teachers are suitable for the courses to which they are allocated and effective in delivering them**

- 11.1 Teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced. Yes No
- 11.2 Teachers have a level of subject knowledge, pedagogic and communicative skill which allows them to deliver the content of courses effectively. Yes No
- 11.3 The appraisal procedures for teaching staff incorporate regular classroom observation. Yes No
- 11.4 Teachers are supported in their continuing professional development and enabled to develop further pedagogic techniques to enhance the learning of students. Yes No
- 11.5 Teachers respond to different learning needs of students where appropriate, taking various learning styles into account in their planning and delivery of lessons. Yes No
- 11.6 Teachers employ effective strategies to involve all students in active participation and to check their understanding of concepts and course content. Yes No

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

Comments

A high degree of interaction with students was observed in the four taught ESOL lessons.

Teachers' performance in lessons is occasionally observed. It is recommended that this system is formalised to incorporate written feedback to teachers to inform Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

12. **The institution provides students and teachers with access to appropriate resources and materials for study**

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

Comments

Increasingly, courses are being presented in multimedia format, utilising the latest technology. It is recommended that FCL obtains more on-line library resources and reviews the library stock as some books are out of date.

A large proportion of students on Pitman's courses study mostly at home on computers readily accessing both FCL materials and feedback from tutors.

13. **Students receive appropriate assessment and feedback on their performance and progress, which are effectively monitored**

- 13.1 Courses are planned to include a schedule of assessments, the procedures and criteria for which are available in writing and in advance to students and teachers. Yes No
- 13.2 Assessment outcomes are monitored to enable the identification of students who are not making satisfactory progress and prompt intervention where appropriate. Yes No
- 13.3 Students are made aware of how their progress relates to their targeted level of achievement. Yes No
- 13.4 The institution takes appropriate steps to identify and discourage cheating and other misdemeanours, and to penalise offenders. Yes No
- 13.5 Additional support or advice on alternative courses is provided to students who are judged not to be making sufficient progress to succeed. Yes No
- 13.6 Oral and written feedback is given to individual students on a regular basis, tailored to meet their specific needs and constructive in its nature and delivery. Yes No
- 13.7 Students have appropriate access outside class time to teachers or personal tutors for academic support. Yes No

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

Comments

Students speak highly of support received. The monthly student reviews on Pitman's courses are an excellent feature.

Learning is increasingly taking place on-line from the student's home supplemented by in-college tutorial support, which is tailored very well to individual needs.

The College should provide more detailed on-going classroom feedback on students' writing in ESOL classes to consolidate writing skills.

14. **The institution offers courses leading to accredited awards granted by recognised awarding bodies wherever appropriate**

- 14.1 For courses leading to the award of a UK degree, the institution has a formal agreement with a recognised UK degree-awarding body. Yes No NA
- 14.2 For courses leading to other UK awards, the awarding body is recognised by the relevant regulator. Yes No NA
- 14.3 For courses leading to the award of an overseas degree, the institution has a formal partnership agreement with the overseas degree-awarding body, which is itself accredited by a recognised national agency. Yes No NA

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

Comments

Examiners' reports from Cambridge indicate that ESOL provision is fully compliant. Ongoing monitoring e-mails from Pitmans show excellent practice.

15. **There is a clear rationale for courses leading to unaccredited or internal awards**

- 15.1 There is a clear statement of the level claimed relative to the NQF/QCF and evidence that students who receive the award meet the stated requirements for that level. Yes No NA
- 15.2 There is evidence of the extent to which the awards are accepted for the purposes of employment or further study. Yes No NA
- 15.3 External moderators are involved in the assessment process where appropriate. Yes No NA

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

Comments

16. **There are satisfactory procedures for the administration of examinations and other means of assessment**

- 16.1 The institution complies with the requirements of the relevant awarding bodies in terms of examination security and administration. Yes No NA
- 16.2 For internal awards, there are effective systems in place for examination security and administration, and clear procedures for students to appeal against their marks. Yes No NA

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

Comments

All examinations are held on the premises.

17. **There is appropriate provision of advice for students intending to proceed to employment or higher/further education**

- 17.1 Students have access to advice from appropriate staff member on further study and career opportunities. Yes No
- 17.2 If the institution offers courses preparing students for higher education, they have access to prospectuses and to advice from a designated staff member both on selecting courses and institutions and on the application process. Yes No NA

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

Comments

There is exceptionally good careers advice provided. There were several examples of students securing jobs locally after completing courses.

INSPECTION AREA - STUDENT WELFARE

18. Students receive pastoral support appropriate to their age, background and circumstances

- 18.1 There is at least one named staff member responsible for student welfare who is suitably trained, accessible to all students and available to provide advice and counselling. Yes No
- 18.2 Students receive appropriate advice before arrival. Yes No
- 18.3 Students receive an appropriate induction and relevant information upon arrival. Yes No
- 18.4 Students are issued with a contact number for out-of-hours and emergency support. Yes No
- 18.5 The institution has policies in place to avoid discrimination and a published procedure for dealing with any abusive behaviour. Yes No

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

Comments

Prospective students can have a free three-hour trial. Each student receives a personal induction from a tutor.

18.4 In the inspectors judgment, this key indicator is not applicable as students are part-time UK based students and the majority are in employment.

19. International students are provided with specific advice and assistance

- 19.1 International students receive appropriate advice before their arrival on travelling to and staying in the UK. Yes No
- 19.2 International students receive an appropriate induction upon arrival covering issues specific to the local area. Yes No
- 19.3 Information and advice specific to international students continues to be available throughout the course of study. Yes No
- 19.4 Provision of support takes into account cultural and religious considerations. Where possible, students have access to speakers of their own first language. Yes No

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

Comments

20. **The fair treatment of students is ensured**

- 20.1 Students apply for and are enrolled on courses under fair and transparent contractual terms and conditions. Yes No
- 20.2 Students have access to a fair complaints procedure of which they are informed in writing at the start of the course. Yes No
- 20.3 Students are advised of BAC's own complaints procedure. Yes No

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

Comments _____

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

- 21.1 Any residential accommodation is clean, safe and of a standard which is adequate to the needs of students. Yes No
- 21.2 Any residential accommodation is open to inspection by the appropriate authorities, including Ofsted where students under 18 are accommodated. Yes No NA
- 21.3 Clear rules and fire, health and safety procedures are in place, with appropriate precautions taken for security of students and their property. Yes No
- 21.4 A level of supervision is provided appropriate to the needs of students. Yes No
- 21.5 Separate accommodation blocks are provided for students under 18. Yes No NA

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

Comments _____

22. **Where home-stay accommodation is organised, the welfare of students is ensured and the institution's relationship with hosts is properly managed**

- 22.1 Due care is taken in selecting home-stay accommodation which both provides a safe and comfortable living environment for students and is appropriately located for travel to the institution and back. Yes No
- 22.2 Any home-stay accommodation is inspected before students are placed and is subject to regular re-inspection by a responsible representative or agent of the institution. Yes No
- 22.3 The institution has appropriate contracts in place with any hosts, clearly setting out the rules, terms and conditions of the provision. Yes No
- 22.4 Appropriate advice and support is given to both hosts and students before and during the placement. Yes No
- 22.5 Clear monitoring procedures are in place with opportunities for student 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 _____

23. **The institution provides an appropriate social programme for students and information on leisure activities in the area**

- 23.1 Students are provided with appropriate information on opportunities for participation at events and other leisure activities which may be of interest. Yes No
- 23.2 The social programme is responsive to the needs and wishes of students. Yes No NA
- 23.3 Any activities within the social programme have been chosen with consideration for their affordability by the majority of students. Yes No NA
- 23.4 Any activities organised by the institution 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 _____

INSPECTION AREA - PREMISES AND FACILITIES

24. The institution has secure possession of and access to its premises

24.1 The institution has secure tenure on its premises. Yes No NA

24.2 Where required, the institution has access to suitable external premises for academic or non-academic purposes of a temporary or occasional nature. Yes No NA

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

Comments

The proprietor owns the College building.

25. The premises provide a safe, secure and clean environment for students and staff

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Comments

26. Classrooms and other learning areas are appropriate for the courses offered

- 26.1 Classrooms and other learning areas provide adequate accommodation in size and number for the classes allocated to them. Yes No
- 26.2 Classrooms 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
- 26.3 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 _____

27. There are appropriate additional facilities for students and staff

- 27.1 Students have access to sufficient space and suitable facilities for private study, including library and IT resources. Yes No
- 27.2 Teaching staff have access to sufficient personal space for preparing lessons, marking work and relaxation. Yes No
- 27.3 Students and staff have access to space and facilities suitable for relaxation and the consumption of food and drink where appropriate. Yes No NA
- 27.4 Students and staff have access to storage for personal possessions where appropriate. Yes No NA
- 27.5 There are individual offices or rooms in which academic staff and senior management can hold private meetings and a room of sufficient size to hold staff meetings. Yes No
- 27.6 Administrative offices are adequate in size and resources for the effective administration of the institution. Yes No

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

Comments _____

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

Institution's strengths

Very good and transparent staff relationships exist at all levels.

Well established procedures and practice, which include the recording of attendance, progress and results.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
8.2 The provider must produce an annual audit of operations to enable year on year comparison of results and to provide a basis for action planning.	<input type="radio"/> High <input checked="" type="radio"/> Medium <input type="radio"/> Low

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Institution's strengths

A flexible course offering includes a wide range of Pitman's modules, resulting in consistently high success rates.

Well qualified staff subject expertise in a number of subject areas including IT, hygiene, ESOL, business and accounting and child care.

Individual tutorial support for Pitman's modules is particularly effective, resulting in considerable repeat business. Students speak highly of the teaching and tutorial support provided.

Increasing use of on-line learning for Pitman's courses is proving popular and effective.

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

STUDENT WELFARE

Institution's strengths

The college provides a highly supportive environment.

Students state they feel very well supported and individual needs are well catered for.

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

PREMISES AND FACILITIES

Institution's strengths

Premises are well located and sufficiently spacious for the programmes offered.

IT facilities are good allowing development of independent learning as on Pitmans courses.

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

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The College should consider obtaining additional on-line library resources to support on-line learners and review current book stock.

The College should record lesson observations and feedback in writing to help inform tutors' CPD and to identify training needs.

The College should provide more detailed on-going classroom feedback on students' writing in ESOL classes to consolidate writing skills.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS