



## BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

### INTERIM VISIT (International Centre)

**INSTITUTION:** Universidad Chileno-Britanica de Cultura

**ADDRESS:** Santa Lucia 124  
Santiago  
Chile

**HEAD OF INSTITUTION:** Ms Maria Cristina Brieba

**Accreditation status:** Accredited

**Date of visit:** 25 November 2016

**ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION ON ACCREDITATION:** 15 December 2016

## **PART A - INTRODUCTION**

### **1. Background to the institution**

The Universidad Chileno Britanica de Cultura (UCBC) is a private university, which was established in 2004. As required by the Chilean Ministry of Education, it is a not-for-profit organisation. UCBC has its origins in two other organisations, the Institute Chileno Britanica de Cultura (ICB), which was established by the British Council in 1938 and continues to operate as a language school delivering sub-degree programmes and the Instituto Profesional Chileno-Britanica which was established in 1982 to provide language teacher training.

UCBC now operates as a separate entity but draws some funding from ICB. It shares premises with the other organisations. However, BAC accreditation only applies to UCBC.

UCBC's mission states that the Universidad Chileno Britanica de Cultura is a bicultural higher education institution, that trains competent professionals, through several teaching programmes oriented to applied study and optimum command of the English language, within the framework of the culture associated with English speaking countries.

The Chilean Higher Education (HE) sector has both private and state funded institutions. UCBC was approved for university status in 2006. Currently it is in the licensing stage, during which it receives annual visits from the Chilean National Education Council. The most recent visit feedback was positive. Once licensed, UCBC will have greater autonomy and fall under the National Accreditation Council rather than under the National Education Council.

Recent legislation requires all universities to become complex universities. As such, they must engage in research and engage with the community. The new requirements, coupled with BAC's standards and feedback from stakeholders, have informed the latest General Development Plan for the period 2016-2020.

The Chilean Government also requires institutions to have higher entry standards in an attempt to enhance the level of education generally.

At the time of the interim visit, there were nine full-time teaching staff, 11 part-time teaching staff and 24 teaching staff on short term contracts. The administrative staff complement was 24 full-time and five part-time. There was one full-time member of ancillary staff.

### **2. Brief description of the current provision**

UCBC delivers four degree courses: Teaching English as a Foreign Language; English-Spanish Translation Studies; General Primary School Education with English, and Pre-School Education with English. These degree courses last for five years and include a final year internship. Since January 2015, the Institution has delivered the Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA) course in both intensive and part times modes with four intakes a year.

UCBC also undertakes consultancy work and other short courses. This provision falls outside this accreditation.

At the time of the inspection, 416 full-time students and 70 part-time students were enrolled on the degree programmes. On the most recently completed CELTA courses, there were eight students on the full time (intensive) and seven on the part-time course.

### **3. Inspection visit process**

The interim inspection was carried out by one inspector over an afternoon. The inspection included a visit to both premises, meetings with the Pro Vice Chancellor Academic, who was acting as Vice Chancellor in the absence of the post holder, and the Pro Vice Chancellor Administration, the Director of Quality, the Director of International Relations and the Coordinator of International Relations. A review of documents, which addressed the action points in the 2015 accreditation report, was also carried out.

The institution had prepared fully for the visit, sending some documents in advance including a summary of how they had addressed the action points. They had also prepared a file of documents, that was clearly indexed and easy to follow. The Director of Quality was also able to demonstrate a number of points online during the meetings.

#### **4. Inspection history**

Full Accreditation inspection: 7-8 September 2015

## **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 institution**

### **1. Significant changes since the last inspection**

In the last year UCBC has developed its new General Development Plan for 2016 to 2020. The plan has four major themes, which are management and self-regulation, research and relationships with the community, sustainability and identity. These themes reflect the development towards being a fully licensed institution, the changing requirements of the Chilean government and the challenges of operating in a difficult economic climate.

UCBC has increased its agreements and collaboration with both Chilean and UK institutions. This is partly in response to the new government requirements but also aligns with the institution's aims and objectives. New work includes initiating a four-year project with San Sebastian University to enhance the level of English of over 1,000 continuing education students, agreements with eight Chilean universities to facilitate exchange programmes with twelve UK universities and a project with the London School of Economics to pilot a model of interdisciplinary collaborative partnership, which engages students from both institutions. UCBC has also modified its entry requirements in response to the government's requirements.

There has been significant progress in elaborating and documenting quality management processes. The institution is also harmonising its systems to create greater consistency. For example, the data collection form prepared for the 2015 BAC accreditation visit and that prepared for the 2016 interim inspection differed in the staff numbers, which were significantly lower in the 2016 form. This was accounted for by a different approach to how data is collected. The current approach counts the actual staff numbers, whereas the earlier approach was based on the number of staff allocated to a specific degree programme thus resulting in some staff appearing twice in the data. This applied to both administrative and teaching staff.

The institution has significantly strengthened the role of the Director of International Relations. This reflects the emphasis on international agreements and collaborations, as well as the links that the university has generated with other national universities which are a key element of the UCBC's development plans.

### **2. Response to action points in last report**

*2.4 UCBC must produce articulate policies and procedures for staff appraisal (including teaching observation), annual monitoring, student representation and feedback, student support and guidance and complaints.*

UCBC has made considerable progress in articulating its policies and procedures across all areas identified in the report. The documents demonstrate a consistency of approach, which makes them accessible to stakeholders. UCBC has an intranet with portals for students and for staff and on which policies and procedures are held as appropriate. Policies and procedures are also covered in meetings with staff and in the student handbook, which is provided during induction. The documents prepared for the purposes of BAC's visit had been translated into English. UCBC is encouraged to make the English versions of these and other policies and processes available, alongside the Spanish version on the student and staff portals and, where relevant, on the website.

The Quality Assurance Policy is detailed and includes definitions, rationale and the aims and outputs of quality assurance in the institution. There is a clear timeline for full implementation of the policy by 2019. The associated processes are inclusive of all students and staff, with a cycle of reports going up through the hierarchy. The policy embraces an annual reporting cycle, which brings together information from courses, including student retention and progression and evaluations of staff, and enables monitoring at the course and programme level. This feeds into the reporting structure up to the institutional committees and senior leadership. This presents a sound design for quality management and assurance in the institution. As demonstrated during the visit, the new process is well supported by data that is already collected and available through the information management system.

UCBC has developed a Curriculum Articulation Process, which is linked to the quality assurance cycle. It is designed to evaluate the different elements of the curriculum and to ensure that students achieve the different competencies required for the graduate profile and do this in an appropriately phased way. The document outlining the process is detailed and clear. The process of implementation is still in its very early stages. UCBC is recommended to review implementation to enhance its effectiveness and ensure its appropriateness.

*3.3 UCBC must design and implement an appraisal procedure for administrative staff.*

UCBC has designed an appraisal process for administrative staff, which is detailed and clear. The scheme is inclusive and applies to all administrative and managerial staff including, the Vice-Chancellor and Pro Vice Chancellors. UCBC has linked the process to job descriptions and has detailed descriptors for different levels of performance. Appraisal will be carried out by a more senior member of staff. The Vice Chancellor will be appraised by a member of the Board. UCBC is taking a staged approach to implementation and started with the senior staff. This approach has been adopted to encourage buy-in from staff who are not accustomed to being appraised. The aim is to include all staff by 2018. Good appraisals can lead to rewards in the form of further training, conference attendance or support for a particular project. It is not linked to pay.

It is recommended that UCBC outlines a process of evaluating the implementation of administrative staff appraisal to support the development of the process.

*7.4 UCBC must ensure that students receive the outcome of their feedback.*

UCBC has initiated a meeting for students and produced a colourful leaflet called Your Opinion Matters to Us, which acts as an invitation to students to attend the meeting. The leaflet outlines the process for student evaluation of teaching staff, teacher self-evaluation and course director evaluation and the associated scoring scale. The meeting is a further opportunity to collect student views.

Regular meetings, between the senior management and the student union, provide a further forum for receiving student views and for letting students know the actions UCBC has taken. However, this is not a consistent and reliable process for informing students of actions taken in response to their feedback. UCBC must formalise the closing of the loop: you said, we did. This could be done, for example, through use of the intranet or by e mail.

*10.2 UCBC must ensure that relevant references to learning objectives are contained in learning support materials and exemplified in lessons.*

Individual course specifications identify the learning objectives and these are available to students. It was reported that, following the BAC accreditation report in 2015, staff are routinely required to include the stated learning objectives at the start of each teaching session. It is recommended that UCBC use the processes of peer lesson observation and focussed feedback from students to monitor this and ensure that students are clear about the learning objectives of individual teaching sessions and associated learning materials, including assessment.

*15.3 UCBC must introduce the use of external moderators in the assessment process where appropriate.*

UCBC has adopted a staged approach to the use of external moderators. A document, called Collaboration of the Formation Process, elaborates the assessment process and includes the use of an external evaluator. The stated intention is to include the external evaluator at the end of the second and final year of study and to link the evaluator's focus to the graduate profile, which covers knowledge and skills. Academic staff will be responsible for the identification of the external evaluator in the subject area. The process for the approval of the proposed external evaluator, by senior management, has yet to be decided. It is likely to be made through the consultative committees of the institution. UCBC is also mindful of the need to ensure students are apprised of changes in process before new processes are introduced. External evaluators will be introduced in 2017. UCBC is encouraged to implement the scheme and then monitor the use of external evaluators and consider extending it to other years.

*16.2 UCBC must produce a clear written procedure for student academic appeals and make this available.*

The document, which is called the Security of Exams and their Administration, outlines the processes for ensuring the security of exams and assessments. This is sound and appropriate. The process and policy is to be implemented in 2017 and after it has been approved by UCBC's committees. Related to this, is the development of written procedures, for students, for final examinations and resit examinations. These procedures make reference to the Student Regulations, which make it clear what a student can appeal against and what are the appropriate time frames. The procedures, outlined in the regulations, also cover other appeals and complaints and thus address the action, from the previous inspection, *that there is an absence of a written complaints procedure, which includes stages in handling, timelines, and appeals procedure and it is required that UCBC addresses this omission.*

*18.5 UCBC is required to develop written policies and procedures to ensure the avoidance of discrimination and abusive behaviour.*

UCBC has produced a policy for discrimination and harassment. The policy appropriately includes a statement with definitions of terms and principles. The policy makes reference to the regulations, which were also available during the inspection. The regulations clearly outline the process that an individual will take, should they wish, to make an allegation of discrimination. The regulations include sample forms and timescales, which ensure that an individual would know how to go about making a complaint.

In the wider context it is noted that the Chilean government has recently introduced policies on discrimination and harassment, to which UCBC is subject.

### **3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report**

*Consider the use of the strap line The British University in Santiago.*

The use was not widespread and has been removed entirely.

*Enhance the provision of information on the website for international exchange students.*

The website was reviewed and there is now detailed information for international exchange students. However, it is not immediately clear to the outside visitor where this information is. It is recommended that UCBC includes something on the front page which will enable non-Spanish speaking and international visitors more widely to find the relevant pages with greater ease.

*Introduce a signing in requirement at reception at both campuses.*

The BAC inspector was invited to sign in on arrival and was presented with a visitor's badge to be worn while on campus. An inspection of the sign-in book demonstrated that the system was being used by visitors. There was no signing out requirement, so it is not clear, in the event of an evacuation of the building, whether the institution would be confident that no one had inadvertently stayed inside. The relevant committee may like to consider including a signing-out column.

*Review the signage through both campuses to ensure that it is provided in all areas.*

Health and safety information, including fire procedures is displayed on the wall in the classrooms and meeting rooms. Although the leaflet on health and safety is printed in Spanish on one side and English on the other, the notices on the walls seen were in Spanish only. UCBC might consider having all such notices displayed in both languages. UCBC's Joint Committee for Health and Safety meets regularly and visits premises to ensure consistency of information and signage. This committee is also responsible for fire drills which are carried out at regular intervals.

### **4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements**

#### 4.1 Management, Staffing and Administration (spot check)

|   | Met | Partially met | Not met | NA |
|---|-----|---------------|---------|----|
| The standards are judged to be  |     | ✓             |         |    |
| <b>Comments</b>   |     |               |         |    |
| 7.4 There is no formal mechanism for reporting on the Institution feedback to the learner body. |     |               |         |    |

#### 4.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

|                                | Met | Partially met | Not met | NA |
|--------------------------------|-----|---------------|---------|----|
| The standards are judged to be | ✓   |               |         |    |
| <b>Comments</b>                |     |               |         |    |
| None                           |     |               |         |    |

#### 4.3 Learner Welfare (spot check)

|   | Met | Partially met | Not met | NA |
|---|-----|---------------|---------|----|
| The standards are judged to be                                  | ✓   |               |         |    |
| <b>Comments</b>   |     |               |         |    |
| There is full information for exchange students on the website. |     |               |         |    |

#### 4.4 Premises and Facilities (spot check)

|  | Met | Partially met | Not met | NA |
|--|-----|---------------|---------|----|
| The standards are judged to be   | ✓   |               |         |    |
| <b>Comments</b>  |     |               |         |    |
| The visit to the premises confirmed that there has been no changes since accreditation and the premises continue to be appropriate. The inspection also confirmed the enhanced use of signage. |     |               |         |    |

## **PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS**

| <b>Strengths</b>  |
|---|
| The phased implementation of new policies and procedures, which aims to achieve staff buy-in.             |
| The inclusive nature of the administrative staff appraisal scheme.  |
| The continued stability of the staff and the creation of the post of Director of International Relations. |
| The growth in collaborative activity, which is both national and international.                           |
| The consistent and detailed approach to the development of new policies and procedures.                   |

| <b>Actions required</b>  | <b>Priority H/M/L</b> |
|--|-----------------------|
| 7.4 UCBC must complete the cycle regarding student feedback and ensure students are consistently informed of the response to their feedback and associated outcomes. | H                     |

| <b>Recommended areas for improvement</b>  |
|---|
| It is recommended that UCBC makes policies and procedures consistently available in both Spanish and English.   |
| UCBC is recommended to review the implementation of the Curriculum Articulation Process to enhance its effectiveness and ensure its appropriateness.  |
| It is recommended that UCBC articulates a general process for reviewing the impact and effectiveness of new processes, including administrative staff appraisal and peer observation of teaching. |
| It is recommended that UCBC makes reference to Chilean legislation in its discrimination and harassment policy.   |
| It is recommended that UCBC enhances access to the information for international exchanges via the website's home page.   |
| It is recommended that consideration be given to including a signing-out process at the reception so that it is clear that no one has inadvertently stayed inside in the event of an evacuation.  |
| It is recommended that UCBC provides dual language health and safety signage.   |

| <b>COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS</b>               |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.</b> | <b>YES</b> |
| <b>Further comments, if applicable</b>                      |            |
| <b>None</b>   |            |