BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

College Reaccreditation Inspection

INSTITUTION: OLC (Europe)

ADDRESS: 66 Castle Street
Bolton
BL2 1AE

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Dr Chris Bamber

DATE OF INSPECTION: 11-12 July 2017

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- Accreditation to be withdrawn.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: 25 August 2017
PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution
OLC (Europe) Limited (OLC/the College) was established in 1998 and became a limited company in 2002. In 2006, EETTEC Limited was established by OLC as a separate company. EETTEC provided engineering courses for Libyan customers, which ran in parallel with the management courses already being delivered by OLC. Subsequently, EETTEC has been incorporated into the OLC company framework.

OLC established its premises in Bolton in 1998. Since then, further premises have been established in Manchester and London. The main administration offices are based in Bolton. Training takes place in all three locations.

The senior leaders of OLC are a managing director, a director of academic affairs and an operations director. An academic manager, an operations manager, a sales manager and a campus manager in London support the directors.

The engineering courses are not currently being taught and the current curriculum is focused on business and finance.

The full-time Higher National Diploma and Certificate (HND and HNC) courses are provided through a partnership collaboration agreement with the University Centre, Colchester.

2. Brief description of the current provision
The College delivers full-time HND and HNC business courses, which are accredited by Pearsons. All the HND and HNC students are enrolled with the University Centre, Colchester. In addition, the College has part-time students, most of whom are studying for qualifications in strategic management and leadership. A minority are undertaking Chartered Institute of Credit Management (CICM) qualifications.

All the students are over the age of 18. At the time of the inspection, 91 students were studying full-time business HND and HNC courses. Forty-six students were studying part-time on strategic management and leadership courses and four were enrolled on CICM programmes.

All students are UK residents although the vast majority are from ethnic minorities. In Manchester and Bolton many students have a south Asian heritage while, in London, the majority of the students are African.

3. Inspection process
The inspection was carried out by one inspector over two days. One day was spent in Bolton and one day in London. The inspection included scrutinising documentation and meetings with students from the courses, the teachers, administrators and the manager. A tour took place of the training venues in London and Bolton as well as the office space. Observations of teaching and learning were also carried out. All the staff cooperated very well with the inspection and the information required was clearly presented.

4. Inspection history:

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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. [ ] Yes [ ] 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. [ ] Yes [ ] No
   1.3 There are clear channels of communication between the management and staff. [ ] Yes [ ] No

   **This standard is judged to be:** [ ] Met [ ] Partially Met [ ] Not Met

   **Comments**
   
   OLC is well managed. The managers are experienced and very well qualified. They carry out their management responsibilities effectively.

2. **The administration of the institution is effective**
   2.1 Administrators are suitably qualified or experienced and understand their specific responsibilities and duties. [ ] Yes [ ] No
   2.2 The size of the administrative team is sufficient to ensure the effective day-to-day running of the institution. [ ] Yes [ ] No
   2.3 The administrative support available to the management is clearly defined, documented and understood. [ ] Yes [ ] No
   2.4 Policies, procedures and systems are well documented and effectively disseminated across the institution. [ ] Yes [ ] No
   2.5 Data collection and collation systems are effective. [ ] Yes [ ] No

   **This standard is judged to be:** [ ] Met [ ] Partially Met [ ] Not Met

   **Comments**
   
   The administration team ensures the efficient day-to-day running of the centres.
   
   Effective systems are in place to co-ordinate activities across the three campuses. These include data collection and the effective co-ordination of the marking of students' work.
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.  

3.2 Experience and qualifications claimed are verified before employment.  

3.3 There is an effective system for regularly reviewing the performance of staff.  

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**Comments**

Appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the recruitment and employment of staff. 

Annual appraisal reviews are undertaken that are evaluative and supportive.

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.  

4.2 Information on the courses available is comprehensive, accurate and up to date.  

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**Comments**

A professional and informative website provides potential students with a clear and accurate description of the courses available.

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.  

5.2 A formal application process ensures that students meet the entry requirements and any claimed qualifications are verified.  

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.  

5.4 Any overseas recruitment agents are properly selected, briefed, monitored and evaluated.  

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.  

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**Comments**

OLC recruits students in line with clear entry requirements and a formal application process. 

The application process is effectively combined with appropriate initial assessments of students on entry to the courses. This process ensures that applicants are suitable for their courses.
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**

Students are expected to achieve an attendance rate of at least 90 per cent.

Effective systems are in place to capture attendance such as biometric hand scanning.

Patterns of attendance are monitored. Staff respond promptly to non-attendance through the use of telephone calls and text messages.

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**

OLC has effective methods for obtaining and recording student feedback. Questionnaires are completed each term for each unit.

The results are analysed and the outcomes are reviewed at the academic board meetings.

Student representatives attend regular meetings so that they can express the views of the student body to the management and report back to the students on actions taken as a result of the feedback.
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.

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.

8.3 Action plans are implemented and regularly reviewed, with outcomes reported to the management.

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

Comments

OLC has effective methods to review its performance. These include unit assessment boards, which take place each term, and teaching and learning review meetings, where staff reflect on the performance and progress made in the teaching of each unit. The reports from these meetings lead to recommendations for improvement.

OLC is subject to annual Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) reviews, which result in appropriate action plans.

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.

9.2 Classes are timetabled and rooms allocated appropriately for the courses offered.

9.3 The allocation of teachers to classes provides for a consistent learning experience.

9.4 There is an appropriate policy and effective procedures for the acquisition of academic resources.

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

Comments

The academic managers are very well qualified and very experienced in managing HND programmes.

Students benefit from academic resources supplied by University Centre Colchester. These include access to their Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).
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. | Yes | No |
| 10.2 | Lessons and assessments maintain an appropriate focus on any assessment objectives or statement of learning outcomes established by the awarding body. | Yes | No |
| 10.3 | Formative assessments appropriately reflect the nature and standards of summative examinations. | Yes | No |
| 10.4 | Students are encouraged and enabled to develop independent learning skills. | Yes | 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. | Yes | No |
| 10.6 | Any required coursework and revision periods are scheduled in advance. | Yes | No |
| 10.7 | The academic backgrounds and particular needs of students are taken into account in the classroom delivery of the course. | Yes | No |

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

**Comments**
Courses are planned well to meet the needs of students and to ensure that they are well prepared to meet the assessment criteria of the awarding bodies. Students report that they are well prepared for their examinations.

Teachers are sensitive to the backgrounds and needs of their students.

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**
Teachers are very well qualified and are effective communicators.

Regular observations of teaching and learning are undertaken which are evaluative and supportive.

Teaching staff are supported to undertake on-going professional development.

Teachers make good use of questioning in lessons to check and extend students' understanding.
12. The institution provides students and teachers with access to appropriate resources and materials for study

This standard is judged to be:  

Comments
Small libraries and open access Information Technology (IT) laboratories are available on each campus. These provide good sources of materials for study.

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.  

13.2 Assessment outcomes are monitored to enable the identification of students who are not making satisfactory progress and prompt intervention where appropriate.  

13.3 Students are made aware of how their progress relates to their targeted level of achievement.  

13.4 The institution takes appropriate steps to identify and discourage cheating and other misdemeanours, and to penalise offenders.  

13.5 Additional support or advice on alternative courses is provided to students who are judged not to be making sufficient progress to succeed.  

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.  

13.7 Students have appropriate access outside class time to teachers or personal tutors for academic support.

This standard is judged to be:  

Comments
Assessment procedures are effective. The awarding bodies' review of assessment practice is positive about OLC's management of assessment.

Students are clear about the progress that they are making.

Good support is provided to help students succeed, including outside class time.

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.  

14.2 For courses leading to other UK awards, the awarding body is recognised by the relevant regulator.  

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.

This standard is judged to be:  

Comments
Students are offered appropriate qualifications that are widely recognised.
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

Assessments are undertaken in a manner that satisfies the requirements of the awarding bodies.

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

Students are well supported in relation to their next steps. They are clear about the progression opportunities provided by the HND.

Students benefit from an appropriate employability and engagement programme that support their progression into higher education and employment.
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.  

18.2 Students receive appropriate advice before arrival.  

18.3 Students receive an appropriate induction and relevant information upon arrival.  

18.4 Students are issued with a contact number for out-of-hours and emergency support.  

18.5 The institution has policies in place to avoid discrimination and a published procedure for dealing with any abusive behaviour.  

18.6 Effective safeguarding arrangements are in place and are regularly reviewed to keep all students safe.  

18.7 Effective arrangements are in place to protect students from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.  

**This standard is judged to be:**  

- [ ] Met  
- [ ] Partially Met  
- [ ] Not Met

**Comments**

Students are very well supported, including good access to out-of-hours support.

18.7 Staff are currently being trained in relation to the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. However the students have not received sufficient guidance in this area.

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.  

19.2 International students receive an appropriate induction upon arrival covering issues specific to the local area.  

19.3 Information and advice specific to international students continues to be available throughout the course of study.  

19.4 Provision of support takes into account cultural and religious considerations. Where possible, students have access to speakers of their own first language.  

**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.  

20.2 Students have access to a fair complaints procedure of which they are informed in writing at the start of the course.

20.3 Students are advised of BAC's own complaints procedure.

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**Comments**

The contractual arrangements for students are fair and transparent. Relevant students are clear that, although they are being taught by OLC, they are in fact enrolled on University Centre Colchester courses.

20.3 Students are not made aware of BAC's complaints procedure.

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.

21.2 Any residential accommodation is open to inspection by the appropriate authorities, including Ofsted where students under 18 are accommodated.

21.3 Clear rules and fire, health and safety procedures are in place, with appropriate precautions taken for security of students and their property.

21.4 A level of supervision is provided appropriate to the needs of students.

21.5 Separate accommodation blocks are provided for students under 18.

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**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

23.2 Students at the London campus benefit from a social programme. This is not the case at the Manchester and Bolton campuses. In these campuses, students are encouraged to participate in the occasional charity event but very little, in the way of other social activities, is arranged for students.
The institution has secure possession of and access to its premises

The institution has secure tenure on its premises.

Where required, the institution has access to suitable external premises for academic or non-academic purposes of a temporary or occasional nature.

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

Comments

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

Access to the premises is appropriately restricted and secured.

The premises are maintained in an adequate state of repair, decoration and cleanliness.

There are specific safety rules in areas of particular hazard (e.g. science laboratories), made readily available to students, staff and visitors.

General guidance on health and safety is made available to students, staff and visitors.

There is adequate signage inside and outside of the premises and notice boards for the display of general information.

There is adequate circulation space for the number of students and staff accommodated, and a suitable area in which to receive visitors.

There are toilet facilities of an appropriate number and level of cleanliness.

There is adequate heating and ventilation in all rooms.

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

Comments

Students learn within secure buildings, which are maintained to an adequate standard.
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.  

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.  

26.3 There are facilities suitable for conducting the assessments required on each course.  

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**Comments**  
Classrooms are spacious for the size of the groups being taught. They are appropriately equipped, including with multi-media projectors.

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.  

27.2 Teaching staff have access to sufficient personal space for preparing lessons, marking work and relaxation.  

27.3 Students and staff have access to space and facilities suitable for relaxation and the consumption of food and drink where appropriate.  

27.4 Students and staff have access to storage for personal possessions where appropriate.  

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.  

27.6 Administrative offices are adequate in size and resources for the effective administration of the institution.  

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**Comments**  
Spacious accommodation is available for students and staff.

Students have access to a small library and to open access IT suites at each campus, where they can undertake independent study.

Appropriate break out spaces are available.

**COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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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

OLC is well managed and efficiently run.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions required</th>
<th>Priority H/M/L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low</td>
</tr>
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</table>

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Institution’s strengths

Students benefit from being taught by teachers who are experienced and very well qualified.

Teachers make effective use of questioning to check and extend students’ understanding.

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Priority H/M/L</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

STUDENT WELFARE

Institution’s strengths

Students are well supported and are clear about the progression opportunities provided by their courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions required</th>
<th>Priority H/M/L</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18.7 Students must receive training on issues relating to the risks of radicalisation and extremism.</td>
<td>☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.3 Students must be made aware of BAC’s own complaints procedure.</td>
<td>☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.2 OLC must develop an appropriate social programme for students attending the Bolton and Manchester campuses.</td>
<td>☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PREMISES AND FACILITIES

Institution’s strengths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions required</th>
<th>Priority H/M/L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
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RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT