



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM INSPECTION (Short Course Provider)

ORGANISATION: Kingdom Education (UK) Limited

ADDRESS: 26 Dover Street
London
W1S 4LY

HEAD OF ORGANISATION: Mr Samuel Yang

Accreditation status: Accredited

Date of inspection: 7 August 2014

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Continued accreditation 4 September 2014

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the organisation

The Kingdom Education Group (UK) Ltd (KE or the Company) was established in 2012 to provide short course English language and university preparation programmes for students mainly from East Asia. The Group is a new legal entity in the UK but the senior management has considerable experience in the field of education, having worked in other organisations on curriculum design and delivery and on student assessment models. The first courses, summer courses for 16-18 year olds, were run in 2013 in Oxford, Cambridge, York and Ampleforth. An adjunct company, Kingdom Education Group LLC, will oversee expected educational activities in the USA, New Zealand and Australia. The focus of activities for the company, which trades as Kingdom Education or KE, will initially be provision of short educational courses.

The Company employees operate from home outside the summer course period, using an online office environment. Weekly meetings are held.

2. Brief description of the current provision

KE currently offers summer courses for high school students, aged 14 and above, based in university accommodation in Oxford (Queen's College), York and St Andrews. Students attend for one, two or three weeks, and may attend one, two or three centres. Courses are based on modules of one week length. The basic modules are Language and Culture (which includes various English language options), and an academic module (student select from engineering and technology, law, medicine, economics and business studies, and politics and international relations). A third module, offered to those students staying for a third week and only at the St Andrews centre, is Skills for Learning and Skills for Living. This offers a range of options including time management, critical thinking, academic ethics, debating, and "what makes a good photo". The courses also offer an introduction to university application processes and cultural, sporting and social activities making use of the centre locations and nearby places of interest.

Residential accommodation is provided in undergraduate accommodation and teaching is in other university or college premises. In 2013 courses were offered for students aged 16-18 only and a total of 192 students were enrolled on the high school courses, with a further 50 on a sports programme at Ampleforth College. In 2014 courses were offered over a seven-week period and a course for younger high school students aged 14-16 was offered for the first time. Ampleforth College, used for 2013 courses, was not used in 2014, but St Andrews University was offered as an additional centre. KE has also been engaged with a sports course at Lord Wandsworth College, in conjunction with the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC).

Total enrolment for these courses was 157 students on high school courses and 28 on the sports programme. Courses for undergraduates at a Cambridge centre were also advertised in 2014, but these did not secure sufficient enrolment to operate.

Most students continue to come from East Asia, although it is hoped to broaden the range of nationalities in future years.

KE has also arranged ancillary services for a course for students from a Taiwanese university, delivered by the university's own accompanying staff.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was undertaken by one inspector in a half-day visit to the summer course base in Queen's College, Oxford. During the visit he scrutinised documents, met with the General Manager and Administration Manager/UK Coordinator and spoke by phone with the Welfare Officer for the company based at the York centre.

4. Inspection history

Stage 2 inspection	8 April 2013
Stage 3/full inspection	16 July and 7 August 2013

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 provider

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

The Company has introduced a new centre at St Andrews University. The sports programme relocated from Ampleforth College to Lord Wandsworth College, Hampshire.

Courses have been offered for the first time for high schools students aged 14-16 for which there was reasonable enrolment, and for university students, which were not viable.

All courses have been revised in detail. Initially, academic courses were devised by an outside company, and these have been adjusted by the General Manager for this year.

As enrolment in 2014 has been lower than in 2013, the roles of centre manager and director of studies have been combined in St Andrews and York centres.

Plans for next year include the introduction of a variety of creative courses (music, theatre and drama, art, design and photography and creative writing and journalism) as an alternative to the academic module courses currently offered. It is expected that courses will be offered at Durham University instead of York University in 2015.

2. Response to actions points in last report

Develop a quality review and assurance system to enable Kingdom to accurately assess its strengths and areas for development.

The Company has a range of processes for quality review and assurance during and outside the summer course period. It has well developed documentation for policies and procedures which are subject to regular review. It also holds frequent staff meetings, which it considers to be of key importance at this stage of its development. In the non-operational period, weekly meetings are held between the General Manager, administrative and marketing staff. During the summer period there are regular staff meetings, organised by the centre managers, and workshops for teachers, arranged by directors of studies.

Feedback is elicited from students and staff on a systematic basis. Students complete feedback questionnaires both early in their course (on which immediate action can potentially be taken) and at the end. Staff are encouraged to provide feedback informally, through a suggestions box, exit interviews, and an end-of-course questionnaire.

Teachers are observed by the Director of Studies at least once, and all staff receive performance review meetings part way through the course and, for those staying longer than two weeks, at the end of the course. For teachers this includes feedback on lesson observation.

Separate end-of-season management review meetings were held in 2013 for directors of studies, centre managers and the administrative team. The minutes of these meetings indicate that they were thorough, practical, forward-looking and action-based. Similar meetings are scheduled for 2014.

The quality assurance and review procedures are considered to be both strong and appropriate for the company at this stage of its development.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the lesson observation system focuses on the outcomes of learning and not just the process of teaching.

The General Manager reported that this recommendation had been implemented, and the focus of lesson observation had been adjusted.

3. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements – spot check

3.1 Management, Staffing and Administration

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments A selection of documents, forms and procedures was reviewed. The enrolment form is thorough and comprehensive, and includes clear terms and conditions. The Welcome Pack sent to enrolled students is very comprehensive and thorough. It includes a parental consent form, an airport transfer form, and a comprehensive medical questionnaire. All forms are returned electronically and stored in the online student management system. Students are also required to bring hard copies with them, which are collected at the start of each course and held in the centre office.				

3.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments The extensive and prescriptive material designed by outside consultants for delivery of academic courses has been revised by the General Manager to allow teachers more freedom to design their own lessons and to enable them better to adjust teaching to the particular needs and interests of their students. The guidance and suggestions for teaching activities retained are helpful and clear.				

3.3 Participant Welfare

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments Safeguarding and child protection is overseen by the Welfare Officer, who may be reached at any time during the summer courses and is involved with development and review of policies and procedures during the rest of the year. She is an experienced housemistress and deputy head of boarding at a leading independent school, and has received up-to-date training in the areas of child protection and pastoral care. She takes the lead management role for student welfare and serves as child protection/safeguarding officer. Although based at one of the centres, she offers support and advice on student welfare matters to staff from all centres. She also				

takes on an informal pastoral role for the relatively young staff who are engaged as student mentors.

The **safeguarding policy** is very thorough and attuned to the particular context of the Company. It includes relevant staff contact details for all centres. There is also a staff Code of Behaviour relating to safeguarding, and there are policies on missing students, physical contact and restraint, anti-bullying and boarding.

Evidence of **DBS disclosures** was seen. There are occasions when, because of last minute withdrawals, members of staff might be engaged for whom no DBS disclosure has been received. Currently no special supervisory arrangements are in place for these staff and this is strongly recommended. It is also recommended that ways of obtaining DBS disclosures at short notice are investigated.

Risk assessments have been undertaken for course venues, for trips and excursions, and for all activities. The basic risk assessments were prepared by an outside consultant and have been subsequently modified by the General Manager. Most of the risk assessment is generic, with relatively little that is specific to the particular activity or excursion undertaken. Staff involved with the activity or excursion are required to sign to indicate that they have read the risk assessment, and are required to take a copy with them off site.

This means that staff actually engaged in excursions or activities have not undertaken any element of the risk assessment themselves. It is recommended that the aspects of each risk assessment that are specific to that particular location or activity should be more completely separated from the generic elements. It is suggested that staff engaged in the activity/excursion might be required to undertake elements of the risk assessment – perhaps relating to the specific context of the activity/excursion they will accompany.

Staff training on safeguarding is undertaken at two levels. The Welfare Officer designs and delivers a training session of approximately 90 minutes to centre managers during their training days. The centre managers then train their own staff in the various centres. Information to be covered in these trickle-down sessions is specified by the Welfare Officer. Staff sign a form confirming that they have received briefing on health and safety and child protection matters.

Information to staff on conduct in relation to children is somewhat dispersed, including in a handbook, contracts and a useful but incomplete Code of Behaviour and a Staff Prudence Code. It is recommended that relevant information is consolidated, reviewed and presented in a single complete document referred to in a contract, and forming part of any handbook. It is recommended that information and rules relating to safeguarding/child protection are presented clearly under that heading.

Information relating to child protection is primarily relayed to staff once they have been appointed. It is recommended that reference to the DBS disclosures and other checks is made in job advertisements, in job descriptions, in correspondence relating to staff recruitment (an email strap-line can be helpful in this regard), and in interview forms, as a reminder to interviewers to address this area. Examples of references on staff were seen. They are provided on a well-designed form, which requires referees to make a declaration on suitability to work with children.

Information provided to parent/guardians of students under 18 is partial and somewhat dispersed. It appears in Terms and Conditions, in the Welcome Pack and in other documents, and questions from parents are answered during enrolment enquiries and processing.

Rules for students in residential care are also somewhat dispersed and rather incomplete; a number of key rules, for instance on curfews, are given orally by centre managers. There are no different written rules for students under 16, and it is very strongly recommended that rules specifically for the care and supervision of these younger students should be developed. The inspector considered that it would be relatively difficult for parents to acquire a clear understanding of the particular regime operated by the Company in terms of care, freedom vs supervision etc from the written information provided and available on the website. It is recommended that information relating to rules and care is pulled together and expanded in a single

document, with clear indications of differences between arrangements for students under and over 16, and over 18, made available to prospective students and parents before enrolment and to which they agree on enrolment.

No homestay accommodation is arranged.

The Welfare Officer has a job description. Her CV and the conversation held with her indicate that she is very well placed to undertake the duties associated with the summer courses.

3.4 Premises and Facilities

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

Institution's strengths

The Company has expended considerable effort and resources in detailed planning for its range of courses and has developed a distinctive ethos in this competitive market. It has an emphasis on quality and considerable ambition.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	
The following recommendations are made:	
It is strongly recommended to establish and implement special supervisory arrangements for staff for whom DBS disclosures have not been received by the start of their work.	
KE is recommended to investigate ways of obtaining DBS disclosures at short notice.	
It is recommended that the aspects of each risk assessment that are specific to that particular location or activity should be more completely separated from the generic elements.	
It is recommended that information for staff relevant to safeguarding and child protection and behaviour with students is consolidated, reviewed and presented in a single complete document, referred to in a contract, and forming part of any handbook. It is recommended that information and rules relating to safeguarding/child protection specifically are presented clearly under that heading.	
It is recommended that references to the DBS disclosures and other checks is made in job advertisements, in job descriptions, in correspondence relating to staff recruitment, and in interview forms.	
There are no different written rules for students under 16, and it is very strongly recommended that rules specifically for the care and supervision of these younger students should be developed.	
It is recommended that information relating to rules and care is pulled together and expanded in a single document, with clear indications of differences between arrangements for students under and over 16, and over 18, and made available to prospective students and parents before enrolment and to which they agree on enrolment.	

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.	YES
Further comments, if applicable	