



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM INSPECTION (College)

INSTITUTION: OLC (Europe) Ltd incorporating EETTEC Ltd

ADDRESS: 66 Castle Street, Bolton, BL2 1AE
New premises:
726-728 Seven Sisters Road, London, N15 5NH

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Dr Chris Bamber

Accreditation status: Accredited

Date of inspection: 13 November 2015

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: 26 November 2015

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

OLC (Europe) Ltd (OLC or the College) was established in 1998 and became a limited company in 2002. In 2006 EETTEC Ltd was established as a separate company to provide engineering courses for Libyan customers to run in parallel with management courses already being delivered by OLC. Subsequently EETTEC was incorporated into the OLC company framework. OLC opened its first premises in Bolton in 1998 and later acquired additional premises in Manchester, which were reviewed in 2011. In 2013 the College was successful in enabling its students to obtain student loans and, as a result, the number of students increased greatly to around 800. Consequently, it took on two additional premises, one in Manchester and the other in London, which were inspected in February 2014. Since then, as additional space became available in the Bolton and original Manchester buildings, the additional premises in Manchester were vacated in July 2014. The lease on the London premises, in the Lee Valley Technopark, expired in July 2015 and the landlord wanted the premises back. Therefore, the College has moved to new premises in London, which are the subject of the new premises report, included in this interim inspection report. Overall governance of the College is provided by the Managing Director, to whom both the Director of Academic Affairs and the Operations and Finance Director report. These three directors make up the Board.

2. Brief description of the current provision

OLC specialises in delivering management and engineering courses to UK students and overseas students, on student visitor visas. The College is accredited by Edexcel (now part of Pearson) to offer a range of higher national certificates (HNCs) and diplomas (HNDs), at levels 4 and 5, in engineering, chemical science, business, management and finance, as well as a Certificate in Education at level 4. The College also offers post graduate programmes in strategic management and leadership at level 7, accredited by Pearson. In addition, the College has a number of part-time students who are studying for Chartered Institute of Credit Management (CICM) qualifications at levels 3 and 5. Finally, a small number of short courses, at level 2, are offered in the health and safety and environmental protection areas.

3. Inspection process

One inspector conducted the inspection over half a day. The inspection included meetings with the Director of Academic Affairs, the London Campus Manager and the Administrator. The inspector also had a tour of the premises and scrutinised the electronic database and some relevant documents provided by the College.

4. Inspection history

Stage 2 inspection:	22 July 2009
Stage 3 inspection:	22 December 2009
Interim inspection	16 August 2011
Supplementary inspection	9 October 2012
Re-accreditation inspection	15 and 16 October 2013
New premises inspection	6 and 17 February 2014

PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgements and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector during the inspection and from documentation provided by the institution.

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

As a result of the expiration of the lease on the original London Premises, OLC has moved its London base to a building in Seven Sisters Road, close to the location of the original premises. It is this building, which is the subject of the new premises report below.

The College lost its Highly Trusted Sponsor (HTS) status in January 2015, following an unsuccessful spot check carried out by the Home Office. An application has been made to the Home Office for a new Tier 4 licence. The College has educational oversight from the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA).

Due to a change of funding policy from the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS), OLC's funding is due to cease in July 2016. Therefore, OLC is continuing to teach the existing students until then and is considering alternative strategies to maintain its provision thereafter.

A biometric hand scanning facility has been implemented in the Bolton and Manchester premises for staff and students to help with the management of health and safety. In addition, extra computer suites, library resources and notice boards have been installed.

In June 2015, OLC has opened a new campus in Fethiye in Turkey, in partnership with its Libyan investors. The centre is accredited to offer HNCs, HNDs and level 7 programmes in engineering and business to the employees of oil companies. Local staff, for the new centre, have been recruited and it is hoped to start the programmes shortly.

2. Response to recommendations in last report

The appraisal system for administrative staff should be developed and implemented regularly.

All administrative staff have been incorporated into a revised appraisal system. Appraisals are scheduled in advance to ensure they take place regularly. The paperwork has been simplified to make it easier to complete. The process includes an element of self-appraisal, which is very well documented and forms the basis for the discussion with the manager. A good development plan, including completion dates for the actions to be taken, forms part of the appraisal record. Future performance objectives set are not sufficiently specific, measurable and timed to ensure effective follow-up. The system is overseen by the Operations and Finance Director. The administrator interviewed confirmed that she had been recently appraised and that she found it very helpful.

The paper system of data collection should be changed to a computerised system.

An electronic database has been purchased and is used very effectively to record and maintain students' registration details and personal data. It is also used to store records of communication with the students including e-mails. Students can access the system to retrieve academic timetables and resources for example handbooks, assignment briefs and teaching materials such as powerpoint slides. In addition, administrators maintain electronic records of students' progress in assignments to ensure effective follow-up and to keep students on track with their assessments.

Consider more 'peer' observation of teaching staff than at present, rather than management observation.

A specific and clear peer observations policy has been developed and is being effectively implemented. The aim is to have at least one scheduled peer observation a year. Some staff are studying for a certificate in training and

education and have to do teaching and reflective practice as part of their course. Peer observations can form part of the evidence for this, which encourages the observations to take place. The process includes a pre-observation and a feedback meeting to ensure teachers get the full benefit from the observation. The observation record template is good and detailed. It includes suitable assessment criteria and a scoring system to enable improvement targets to be set. It includes space to record suggestions for development and an improvement action plan. Observations do not sufficiently focus on students' learning and achievement in class so that teachers know how to improve their teaching for the benefit of the students.

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 None				

3.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments None				

3.3 Student Welfare

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments None				

3.4 Premises and Facilities

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments The College rents one floor in a building on a small industrial estate near Seven Sisters underground station. The building is already used for educational purposes and, therefore, has the required D1 use. The premises are fit for purpose. They are secured under a lease, which is in force until 31 May 2019, with the possibility to review this before the end date, if required. The College has access to additional space in nearby colleges and in the college, which shares the building, with which OLC has a link. The premises are secure. The College has its own front door, which is protected by a grille when the building is closed. CCTV provides security for the small car park area adjacent to the premises and the reception area. This is monitored from another location in the building. Opposite the front door, there is a manned reception desk, where sign-in procedures are in place for all visitors and staff. The premises are not accessible to those with severe mobility impairment. They are maintained in an adequate state of repair, decoration and cleanliness. General guidance on health and safety is provided to staff and students at induction and students are reminded of their responsibilities for the maintenance of health and safety each term. There are clear				

evacuation and fire exit notices around the premises and the health and safety policy statement is displayed on a noticeboard. Any issues about health and safety are discussed in staff meetings. Signage outside and inside the premises is adequate and noticeboards are used well to display useful information for the students. Circulation space throughout the premises is good. There is a suitable reception area and a small office, both of which can be used to receive and/or meet with visitors. Toilet facilities are sufficient for the number of students in the premises at any one time. They are maintained at an appropriate level of cleanliness and hygiene. There is adequate heating and ventilation in the premises.

There are three appropriately equipped classroom spaces. One is also used as a breakout/syndicate room and student lunch area and another, which seats up to 15 people, is also used for staff meetings. The main dedicated classroom is bright and spacious and is well furnished and equipped with whiteboards, flipchart and projectors to show powerpoint slides. It can accommodate up to 30 students. Therefore, classrooms provide good accommodation for the classes allocated to them and for the effective delivery of the courses. There are suitable facilities for conducting the assessments required on each course. The furniture in the main classroom can be easily moved to provide for appropriate space between tables and there is a safe in a lockable office to keep examination papers secure.

Students have access to sufficient space and facilities for private study. The premises include a pleasant reading room and a small adequately resourced library, with work stations for private study. There is also an information technology (IT) lounge with eight computers. There is wireless access throughout the premises and suitable space for students to sit and work on their own computers. Appropriate space is also available for teachers to have one to one tutorials with students. Adequate facilities are provided for teachers to work and relax between classes. A dedicated tutor office can be used for this purpose, as can other office space if required. Students have access to a good sized lunch area and a small kitchen with adequate facilities for the heating up of food and making hot drinks. In addition, there is a vending machine in the reception area and a table football game. These facilities can also be used by the staff. There is good space in the main classroom for students to leave personal belongings and in the offices for the staff. Suitable accommodation is available for small management meetings and there is a spacious meeting room for large staff meetings. Administrative offices are adequate in size and are provided in the reception area and the management office and there is additional space for filing. As a result, the premises provide a satisfactory learning and working environment.

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

<p>Institution's strengths Managers are enthusiastic and passionate about education and helping their students to learn and succeed. Administrative staff are very satisfied with the support they receive from managers to carry out their roles effectively.</p>

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
The college must meet future performance objectives for staff, which are specific, measurable and timed to ensure effective follow-up.	M
The college must ensure lesson observations include a sufficient focus on students' learning and achievement so that teachers know how to improve their teaching for the benefit of the students.	M

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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