

BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

College Reaccreditation Inspection

INSTITUTION: Washington International Studies Council

ADDRESS: 3rd Floor
Chester House
21-27 George Street
Oxford
OX1 2AY

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Mr Robert Schuettinger

DATE OF INSPECTION: 17-18 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- Accreditation to be withdrawn.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: 19 October 2017

1. Background to the institution

Washington International Studies Council (WISC/the College) was founded by the current President and has, since 1985, arranged study abroad programmes in Oxford for undergraduates from universities in the United States of America (USA). The College remains in the President's sole ownership and the Academic Director is also Vice-President and Company Secretary. A second, non-executive, Vice-President based in the USA, heads an Advisory Board.

WISC operates a wholly owned division, Oxford Study Abroad Programme (OSAP), initially an alternative branding pitched at US state universities, but under which all its programmes are now marketed. The administration of WISC and OSAP is combined. In this report WISC is taken to refer to both WISC and OSAP.

The College aims to provide its students with opportunities to study abroad with some of the best scholars and alongside some of the best students in the world and to be as integrated as possible into the host college or university.

The large majority of WISC students are admitted to WISC's academic programme, on which they are taught by tutors who also teach for the University of Oxford or its colleges. These students become associate members of a college of the University, usually New, Trinity, Christ Church or Magdalen. A minority of WISC students are admitted to Magdalen or New College as visiting students. For these students, the academic programme and ultimately the verification of their studies, will be the responsibility of the Oxford college.

The WISC headquarters are on the third floor of an office building in central Oxford. A small satellite office of WISC in the USA receives and despatches key documents, and undertakes a limited administrative role.

2. Brief description of the current provision

Since its foundation, WISC has offered one-to-one tutorial programmes to students who have previously studied at over 650 universities or colleges, almost exclusively in the USA. The very large majority of the students currently come from 25 US institutions, with each of which WISC maintains Consortium Agreements. In Autumn 2016, WISC introduced a formal procedure to ensure that all contractual agreements or consortium agreements with its regular partner universities or colleges are both current and subject to regular reviews by WISC and the affiliated universities or colleges. WISC is currently updating contracts with these 25 institutions by changing the language of such agreements to include more information regarding insurance coverage and legal protections for students and the home institutions.

The academic programme of students attending as associate members of university colleges is arranged and overseen by WISC, which accepts students itself, and engages tutors directly. Associate members usually follow one primary course, with eight tutorials in the extended term, and one secondary course, with four tutorials.

For visiting students, academic responsibility for the students rests with the hosting Oxford college, which arranges all teaching. Acceptance as a visiting student is by the college concerned, with WISC collating and forwarding documentation. Visiting students are registered with the University of Oxford, are entitled to attend all university lectures and to use library and other facilities on the same basis as regular undergraduates. Visiting students usually study two primary courses, with a total of 16 tutorials, eight in each course, during the extended term.

The study abroad students attend for periods of up to a year. Most stay for one or two extended terms of 12 to 13 weeks. Each term begins with an orientation period and incorporates the university full term of eight weeks, followed by a period for additional study and completion of tutorials.

Teaching is by one-to-one tutorials, almost exclusively with tutors who also teach in the collegiate university. Teaching is arranged to individual student's requirements and interests and to enable them to obtain credit for equivalent courses at their home university in the USA.

During the academic year all students are offered a programme of social receptions, excursions to places of cultural and historic interest and educational tours.

In addition to the academic year tutorial programme, WISC currently arranges flexible, credit-bearing summer courses with start dates in May, June and July of varying duration, for individual summer students, as well as 12 faculty-led programmes in May and June for university students from the USA and elsewhere, combining lectures, tutorials, and excursions.

The students are all over the age of 18. Most study abroad students are from the USA.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was conducted by a single inspector over two days. The process included meetings with staff and students, visits to residential accommodation and observations of two teaching sessions. The meetings were held in the WISC offices in central Oxford. One teaching session was observed at New College.

4. Inspection history:

Inspection type	Date
Full Accreditation	14-15 July 2009
Interim	29 October 2010
Re-accreditation	8-9 July 2013
Interim	23 September 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

The members of the small management team work well together and operate in a reasonably flexible manner, which ensures that urgent matters can usually be dealt with in a timely fashion. The owner and President is actively involved in the teaching of summer programmes, as well as the development of the provision that the College offers.

Regular meetings supplement the routine, informal contacts between staff based in Oxford. The head of the US office visits Oxford twice a year and is in routine contact throughout the year. As a result, communication is effective.

2. The administration of the institution is effective

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|-----|--|---|
| 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

The College continues to implement a Human Resources (HR) software system. This provides a secure and consistent basis for record-keeping.

Administrative support is currently provided by a fixed-term appointee and plans are in place for recruitment of a permanent member of staff, who will also be responsible for reception duties, after the summer holiday period.

A staff handbook is available, including relevant policies and procedures.

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

Staff records are kept in the HR system, with records verified and copies of documentation retained.

3.3 Although feedback on staff performance is provided informally, there is no formal performance review system.

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

A significant amount of work has recently been done to update and improve the website, which is the main student recruitment tool. Work has been done to consolidate the material that was held on either the WISC or the OSAP websites into a single online presence. The WISC site is now a single page, which explains the relationship between the two organisations and then directs users to the OSAP site.

4.2 The new OSAP site is well-structured although it still contains some inconsistencies, in particular with regard to different levels of required Grade Point Average (GPA), which are quoted for Associate Students in several places.

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

5.1 Published information on entry requirements is inconsistent although the entry requirements are clarified through the rigorous application procedure.

Enquiries during application are answered by the US office or forwarded to Oxford as appropriate. Students report that responses are timely and helpful.

Applications are processed through an online system, with the WISC US office verifying and collating supporting materials for despatch to, and consideration by, staff in Oxford. Admissions decisions are made in Oxford.

All students applying to the WISC programme are already studying in the medium of English and information will be available on the level of their language ability.

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

Attendance is effectively monitored.

Course information on summer programmes is clear that non-attendance, late arrival or early departure from lectures is not expected and can potentially have an impact on final assessment.

Attendance at tutorials is, by the nature of the format, directly monitored by the tutor and reported to the Senior Academic Advisor.

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

Formal feedback is collected from students on completion of their tutorial term, with reminders sent to increase response rates. This process is being transferred to an online system, with the aim of increasing response rates further. The most recent mid-term feedback form had almost a 100 per cent response rate.

Students have a short introductory, mid-programme and end of term meeting with the Senior Academic Advisor and can organise additional, or informal, meetings if necessary. These are good opportunities to gather informal feedback and also to arrange interventions if necessary.

Under the new Consortium Agreements that are being introduced with the main home institutions, there is an increased expectation that regular contact will be maintained at an institutional level. This will include information on student feedback, developments and changes introduced by WISC.

Faculty from US institutions are welcome to visit WISC during their summer breaks, as part of study trips, and these meetings provide informal opportunities for feedback and discussion of programme outcomes.

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 senior management team works effectively to monitor information on the operation of the College and identify areas that may need their attention. A report on key performance outcomes is provided to the annual meeting of the Academic Board, for consideration and review.

The Consortium Agreements that are being signed with 25 feeder institutions in the US, have established a framework, under which there is expected to be increased feedback on student outcomes.

INSPECTION AREA - TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

9. Academic management is effective

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|-----|---|---|
| 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

The senior staff are well-acquainted with the US university system and, therefore, the context in which students come to study in Oxford. They work with individual applicants to agree appropriate tutorial programmes and liaise, as appropriate, with their home institutions to ensure that these will satisfy their credit requirements.

WISC has built up working relationships with a broad range of Oxford tutors in the subjects that it is regularly asked to cover. Through these links, and those with the Oxford colleges with which they work, WISC is able to readily identify suitable tutors for other topics.

Students have access to appropriate college library resources.

The books in the library in the WISC offices come from donations from students who have completed their studies so this is very much a support to the other good facilities offered. The current informal arrangement of books, with just some basic sorting into broad categories, does not facilitate the maximum use of this resource.

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

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- 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
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- 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
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- 10.3 Formative assessments appropriately reflect the nature and standards of summative examinations. Yes No
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- 10.4 Students are encouraged and enabled to develop independent learning skills. Yes No
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- 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
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- 10.6 Any required coursework and revision periods are scheduled in advance. Yes No
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- 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

The tutorial system creates an environment in which provision can readily be shaped to reflect a student's learning style and academic background. It also effectively develops independent learning skills, while providing detailed and timely feedback on weekly essays.

WISC issues a Teaching Agreement to a tutor for each series of tutorials. This clarifies the topic and number of sessions and provides basic information on the student to be taught.

Student feedback indicates that it would be very helpful to be notified as to which of the options for tutorial study, that they have expressed an interest in, is to be offered prior to arrival in Oxford, so they can focus their pre-reading accordingly.

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

Tutors are active academics within the University of Oxford and bring substantial professional experience and knowledge. Teachers on the summer programmes include senior figures from public life who bring significant experience and relevant insight to the content of their sessions.

11.3 11.4 The work that tutors do for WISC is a small part of a wider portfolio of teaching. Their professional development is supported in the context of that work which forms a larger part of their academic work. However, WISC do not currently have processes in place which make it clear to students that they can raise issues about their tutorial teaching, should these arise.

The tutorial format lends itself well to personalised teaching, that is responsive to the background and learning style of individual students. It is an environment in which active participation of the student is inevitable.

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

Students have access to appropriate library facilities and resources. Wireless connectivity is provided in the WISC office and residential accommodation so that appropriate study resources can be readily accessed. Tutors are drawn from members of the university, where they have full access to relevant resources.

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

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|------|---|---|
| 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. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 13.2 | Assessment outcomes are monitored to enable the identification of students who are not making satisfactory progress and prompt intervention where appropriate. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 13.3 | Students are made aware of how their progress relates to their targeted level of achievement. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 13.4 | The institution takes appropriate steps to identify and discourage cheating and other misdemeanours, and to penalise offenders. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> 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. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> 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. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 13.7 | Students have appropriate access outside class time to teachers or personal tutors for academic support. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

Students receive critical feedback on their work during each tutorial, with a detailed report and single overall mark awarded on completion of the course. Students are therefore made aware that this is the basis on which they will be assessed.

Tutorial teaching offers flexibility to adjust the work programme to reflect the progress of each individual student. Where students have concerns about their tutorial pairing or progress, they speak to the Senior Academic Advisor or one of his colleagues. Contact can then be made with the tutor to discuss the student's progress and identify any concerns to be addressed.

Students on summer programmes are assessed by a combination of essays and examinations. Evaluation methods are clearly explained in online publicity materials and subsequent course information.

There is a clear policy in place on plagiarism, and students are made aware of expectations concerning the use of sources.

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

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|------|--|---|
| 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. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> NA |
| 14.2 | For courses leading to other UK awards, the awarding body is recognised by the relevant regulator. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> 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. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> NA |

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

Comments

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 _____

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 _____

Appropriate advice is provided to students who are considering graduate study. If required, references are written by tutors.

INSPECTION AREA - STUDENT WELFARE

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

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|------|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 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. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No | |
| 18.2 | Students receive appropriate advice before arrival. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No | |
| 18.3 | Students receive an appropriate induction and relevant information upon arrival. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No | |
| 18.4 | Students are issued with a contact number for out-of-hours and emergency support. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No | |
| 18.5 | The institution has policies in place to avoid discrimination and a published procedure for dealing with any abusive behaviour. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No | |
| 18.6 | Effective safeguarding arrangements are in place and are regularly reviewed to keep all students safe. | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No | <input checked="" type="radio"/> NA |
| 18.7 | Effective arrangements are in place to protect students from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No | |

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

Comments

Students receive appropriate advice on preparation for, and what to expect during their stay in Oxford.

An out of hours contact system operates, with senior staff available to offer advice and support as necessary.

The Student Handbook covers codes and expectations of student behaviour.

19. International students are provided with specific advice and assistance

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|------|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 19.1 | International students receive appropriate advice before their arrival on travelling to and staying in the UK. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| 19.2 | International students receive an appropriate induction upon arrival covering issues specific to the local area. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| 19.3 | Information and advice specific to international students continues to be available throughout the course of study. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> 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. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

Comprehensive practical information is supplied to students in advance of their arrival in the UK.

International students have an induction programme on arrival and the necessary support is available throughout their stay in Oxford.

Students are all from the US and already studying in the medium of English.

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

Clear documentation is provided to students, confirming the courses that they are being offered and the terms under which this offer is made.

A comprehensive handbook includes details of relevant complaints procedures.

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

WISC works with a selection of landlords and managing agents, with whom it has built up a good professional relationship over a number of years. It takes out leases on properties and then sublets to its students.

The College employs a Housing Manager, who is the first line of response for minor or urgent repairs. Students report that problems with accommodation are resolved promptly and effectively.

There is a high rate of occupancy and, as such, properties become tired and in need of minor cosmetic refurbishment.

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

A number of social occasions, including outings to London and on a river cruise, with staff attending are arranged for students. The students can also participate in any of the social events and sports arranged by their college.

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 lease on the WISC office in central Oxford is due for renewal in 2019 and planning is already underway to negotiate its renewal.

The College has access to teaching rooms in its partner colleges. Tutorials are held in locations that are chosen by individual tutors such as a college or departmental office or in a teaching room in the WISC offices.

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

The location and layout of the WISC office are suitable for its operations.

At the time of inspection, the lift was out of service and, when the lift does operate, there are still steps to reach the WISC offices. Therefore, the College has contingency plans in place, to use accommodation and facilities in one of its four partner Oxford colleges, should it have a student with limited mobility.

25.5 There is no sign at street level to identify the Oxford premises as the WISC office. At time of inspection, the name of the College was not on the door bell.

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

In addition to the rooms for tutorials at its own offices, WISC can book rooms in Oxford colleges, as necessary.

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

Teaching staff and students use space at the WISC offices, including the library area, as an informal work space.

Administrative staff have suitable offices, with private space where necessary. Tutors often choose to work in their College or departmental office.

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

The small management teams work collaboratively and flexibly. This enables it to be responsive to issues as they arise.

The members of the team have a good understanding of the US Higher Education system and are well linked in to the University of Oxford.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
3.3 The College must work with staff to develop and implement a system of performance review that is suitable for operation within a small team.	<input type="radio"/> High <input checked="" type="radio"/> Medium <input type="radio"/> Low
4.2 5.1 The College must review its website to remove any inconsistencies in information, in particular in relation to admission requirements.	<input type="radio"/> High <input checked="" type="radio"/> Medium <input type="radio"/> Low

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Institution's strengths

WISC has well-established links with academic staff and colleges within the University of Oxford, which enable it to offer a well-respected Study Abroad programme.

WISC's summer school courses attract speakers of a high calibre and help students to develop critical thinking. The courses introduce participants to a range of perspectives on topics in humanities and the social sciences.

Through Associate Membership or Visiting Student status, students gain experience of many of the aspects of life as an undergraduate at the University of Oxford.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
11.3 11.4 WISC must put processes in place to ensure that students are aware of appropriate routes to express any concerns that may arise about the tutorial teaching that is put in place for them with the Senior Academic Advisor.	<input type="radio"/> High <input checked="" type="radio"/> Medium <input type="radio"/> Low

STUDENT WELFARE

Institution's strengths

Students are accommodated in shared houses or flats managed by the College, with a dedicated member of staff on call to address issues that arise.

A social programme introduces students to life in Oxford and the UK. They are encouraged to engage with activities, which encourage integration into the wider Oxford University student community.

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

In addition to appropriate facilities in its offices in central Oxford, WISC has links with several Oxford colleges and, through these, the potential to use their teaching facilities.

Students have access to a wide range of learning resources and social facilities.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
25.5 WISC must arrange for appropriate signage at the main entrance to its George Street premises, both outside and to direct students and visitors once inside the building.	<input type="radio"/> High <input checked="" type="radio"/> Medium <input type="radio"/> Low

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The College is recommended to consider introducing a more formal approach to cataloguing and organising the materials in the library at WISC.

WISC should let students know which of the tutorial options they have put on their short list are going to be provided, as soon as these has been confirmed. This will to enable students to organise any pre-reading they wish to undertake before arriving in Oxford.

More attention should be paid to maintaining the standards of decoration in the residential accommodation.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS