



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM INSPECTION (College)

INSTITUTION: Westfield House of Theological Studies

ADDRESS: 30 Huntingdon Road
Cambridge
CB3 0HH

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Dr Joel Humann

Accreditation status: Accredited

Date of inspection: 28 May 2015

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Decision pending

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

Westfield House of Theological Studies (WH) is the theological training institution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of England (ELCE), and was inaugurated in 1962. It is a registered charity and prepares its students for ministry in the Lutheran Church. Students attend classes throughout the week and may also use the facilities of the Divinity faculty at Cambridge. The Preceptor and staff are extremely well qualified and experienced. Since June 2012 the institution has been accredited by Bridge Schools Inspectorate and has a Tier 4, Tier 5 and Tier 2 sponsorship licence with Highly Trusted Sponsor Status.

2. Brief description of the current provision

WH is a residential higher education (HE) College with links with the several US Concordia University campuses (American Lutheran MDiv and Bachelor students take courses at WH for transfer of credit and form the majority of students), the University of London and the University of Cambridge, where it is attached to Fitzwilliam College. In the most recently completed semester eight students were enrolled on Student Visitor visas. WH became a Registered Centre of the University of London's International Programmes in March 2013. Provision is mixed. Some students require visas for courses of study of over six months in duration, whilst others stay for provision of much shorter duration. All provision is categorised as Higher Education. Over the course of the next year it is anticipated that WH will be partaking in the University of Durham Common Awards Scheme covering theological educational provision in the UK.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was conducted over one half-day by one inspector. The Preceptor and the Principal were interviewed, documents were scrutinised and the premises reviewed. There were no classes being held on the day of the inspection and no students present.

4. Inspection history

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Full Accreditation inspection: | 2 and 3 March 2009 |
| Interim inspection: | 23 April 2010 |
| Supplementary inspection | 1 March 2011 |
| Reaccreditation inspection | 23 May 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 institution

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

The Head of the Institution at the time of the last BAC inspection has retired and the new Preceptor has been appointed from amongst existing staff. Additionally, the anticipated appointment of a college Principal, as noted in the May 2013 reaccreditation inspection, has taken place and this has resulted in strengthened administrative and regulatory/compliance systems being developed.

2. Response to action points in last report

Minutes or action points must be kept of weekly staff meetings.

This is now routine.

Reports on student performance, achievement and feedback must be produced annually.

This action takes place at the end of a students' programme of study and such reports may thus be produced more frequently than once per year.

Annual reports of reviews with action plans for performance and quality assurance must be instituted.

Annual strategy planning is now taking place involving staff, student feedback and interested stakeholders. A number of actions have been identified contributing to effective quality assurance practice. These include improving the student application process, updating personnel systems and processes (including job descriptions), strengthening links with the University of Cambridge, standardising grading structures, improving the information given to students in a handbook, launching the college website and renovating premises.

Annual staff development reviews and classroom observations must be held.

This action has not been systematically and consistently applied and remains an action point.

Formal external moderation of assessments must happen as soon as possible.

This action has not been applied and remains an action point.

A formal appeals policy must be written and posted on the WH website.

This action is not completed and remains an action point.

Steps must be taken to introduce students to the BAC complaints procedure.

This action is completed.

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 There is a strong working relationship between the Preceptor and the Principal. Whilst not all action points have been completed following the re-accreditation inspection of 2013, the leadership team has accomplished much in revising administrative systems and processes, developing the curriculum, revising policies and procedures, strengthening links with external stakeholders, improving many aspects of the services and information provided to students and also in remaining compliant with ever changing UKVI requirements. | | | | |

3.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

| | Met | Partially met | Not met | NA |
|---|-----|---------------|---------|----|
| The standards are judged to be | ✓ | | | |
| Comments No teaching was observed. Judgement is based on quality assurance and assessment documentation supplied. | | | | |

3.3 Student Welfare

| | Met | Partially met | Not met | NA |
|--|-----|---------------|---------|----|
| The standards are judged to be | ✓ | | | |
| Comments Students were not available for interview at this inspection. | | | | |

3.4 Premises and Facilities

| | Met | Partially met | Not met | NA |
|--|-----|---------------|---------|----|
| The standards are judged to be | ✓ | | | |
| Comments First class throughout. | | | | |

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

Institution’s strengths

An effective senior management team that has been very considerably enhanced by the appointment of a Principal along with the smooth transition to the current postholder of Preceptor following a retirement from that post. The new management team are focusing on a number of actions to improve quality assurance and the overall student experience. The current team recognises that there is still work to do.

| Actions required | Priority H/M/L |
|---|---------------------------|
| Formal external moderation of assessments must be arranged. | H |
| Annual staff development reviews and classroom observations must be held. | H |
| A formal appeals policy must be written and posted on the WH website. | H |
| | |

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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