



## **BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT**

### **INTERIM VISIT (College)**

**INSTITUTION:** Orion Pax Institute

**ADDRESS:** 57 Market Square  
Edmonton Green  
London  
N9 0TZ

**HEAD OF INSTITUTION:** Dr Eugene Mgbemere

**DATE OF VISIT:** 27 November 2017

**ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE:** Continued accreditation 14 December 2017

## **PART A - INTRODUCTION**

### **1. Background to the institution**

Orion Pax Institute (OPI/the Institution) is part of an organisation called Orion Pax Limited (Ltd). Orion Pax Ltd is established as a company Limited by Guarantee and was established in 1997. The Institution is an independent community college of further education and training. It runs programmes for adults and young people and operates on a not-for-profit basis. The main areas of learning offered are childcare, health and social care, functional skills in mathematics and English and skills for work such as conflict management and first aid.

The Institution's aims include enabling individuals to maximise their potential and quality of life, through the provision of bespoke education and training leading to internationally recognised qualifications, along with careers information, advice and guidance, mentoring and coaching.

OPI's management board comprises its founder, who is the Managing Director and also Principal and Chief Executive of OPI and two other directors. There is also a management committee, which oversees strategy as well as the day-to-day operations. The Principal acts as both chair and secretary of the board with authority to manage the Institution as appropriate, keeping the board members informed of key actions and issues.

The Institution uses premises in Edmonton Green shopping centre in North London. It is located on the first floor, directly above a market. There is a good variety of shops, cafes and other facilities close by, with good transport facilities. The accommodation comprises offices, kitchen and toilet facilities and an Information Technology (IT) training room and classroom. There is also a good number of books, journals and magazines in the library area. In addition, students access the Edmonton Green public library directly below the Institution.

OPI has long established working links with the London Borough of Enfield (LBE) Skills for Work Service and, as an institution partner, Barnet and Southgate College (BSC). Regular contacts are maintained with several local community based organisations, with whom collaborative training projects have been delivered, often linked with external funding, for example Enterprise Enfield, SE Ltd. Working relationships are also maintained with Job Centre Plus, LBE Job and Careers Advisory Services and Children and Adult Services.

### **2. Brief description of the current provision**

OPI provides education and training courses from basic to advanced level, in a wide range of academic and vocational subjects, along with preparation for employment services, for those who live and work in London, as well as for overseas students.

Both accredited and non-accredited programmes are provided. They range from basic, pre-entry or Level 1 through to more advanced Levels 3 to 4. The programmes are largely part-time. They are offered over short or longer periods, for example, from two days to one year, in response to identified needs and demands.

The Institution is a centre, which is approved by various awarding bodies, for example, the Council for Awards in Care, Health and Education (CACHE), NCFE and Pearson EDI. It is approved to deliver courses in health and social care, childcare and early years, IT and communication technology, conflict management, English for speakers of other languages, functional skills, first aid and food safety.

Visits to, and placements with, local employers are organised for the work-based programmes of study.

At the time of the interim inspection there were 32 students registered on short courses and recruitment is an on-going process. The large majority are female and all are over 19 years of age and are residents of the United

Kingdom (UK). A high proportion of the learners live locally. Many students originally coming from places such as Somalia, Sudan, Congo, Ghana, the Caribbean, Asia, Turkey and Eastern Europe, including an increasing Bulgarian and Romanian cohort, many of whom are asylum seekers and refugees.

### **3. Inspection visit process**

The inspection was conducted over one half day by one inspector. The Inspector interviewed the Principal and two other members of the management committee. A short tour of the premises was carried out and a spot check of a good range of documentation including self-assessment and quality improvement reports and plans, student feedback forms, management files and operating plans.

### **4. Inspection history**

Full Accreditation:	27-28 September 2010
Supplementary:	24 March 2011
Interim:	11 June 2012
Re-accreditation Inspection	30 April & 1 May 2015
Supplementary Premises Inspection:	23 October 2015

## **PART B – JUDGMENTS AND EVIDENCE**

**The following judgments 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**

Due to diminishing funding availability, the provision has reduced to lower levels than those reported previously. Current student numbers are much reduced at around 30 students due to start courses over the next few weeks. This represents a significant fall in enrolments. The Institution has a number of strategies to attempt to address this reduction in its provision. These proposals are at the planning and development stage but OPI has shown resilience in navigating the changes to the educational landscape in which it operates.

### **2. Response to action points in last report**

*2.5 The Institution needs to review its data collection and collation systems, taking into account commissioning partners' requirements, in order to be able to use this information to plan and review courses and services.*

Although the Institution gathers information on its students, and identifies some gaps in its provision, for example, English for mini-cab drivers, this information is not yet systematically gathered and analysed. The current process relies too much on anecdotal evidence. As a result, self-assessment does not use the full range of evidence available in order to ensure the provision meets its students' needs.

*8.2 8.3 The Institution needs to implement a more consistent approach to the review of action plans in order to evaluate current provision more effectively and to bring about improvements.*

Although the Institution carries out a comprehensive self-assessment process, it is not conducted anew each year, but is supplemented with new information. This means that the precise identification of current actions for improvement are not always sufficiently recorded or followed up. Some participation gaps have also emerged, for example, the male to female imbalance.

At the new premises inspection on 23 October 2015, there were also a number of identified actions points to address:

*The Institution must send BAC a copy of the Lease/Tenancy Agreement documentation for current premises.*

The new lease is dated 11 September 2015 and a copy was received by BAC on 07 December 2015.

*The Institution must carry out Health and Safety checks on Fire Extinguishers and Smoke alarms.*

The necessary checks were carried out on 20 November 2015 and a copy of the Safety Certificate was received by BAC on 07 December 2015.

*The Institution must commission Pat Testing Certificates on all electrical equipment.*

The necessary checks were carried out on 20 November 2015 and a copy of the Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) Certificate was received by BAC on 07 December 2015.

### **3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report**

There were no recommendations for improvement in the last inspection report.

#### 4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

##### 4.1 Management, Staffing and Administration (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be		✓		
<p><b>Comments</b></p> <p>The Institution maintains a strong ethos of care for its students and its community and is firmly situated, both geographically and symbolically, right in the heart of the market in Edmonton Green.</p> <p>Staff are well-qualified and effective systems have enabled full compliance with the rigorous quality assurance standards expected of their main partner, the Barnet and Southgate College (BSC).</p> <p>Training plans for staff are comprehensive and focus correctly on aspects of compliance with legislation and the development of teaching skills. Policies are reviewed annually and management ensure they are kept up-to-date.</p> <p>However, some aspects of self-assessment and improvement planning require further improvement. There are some staff performance appraisal gaps, including the appraisal of the Principal.</p> <p>The lesson observation system has relied too much on external observations carried out by BSC and learner feedback is difficult to map to exact courses within the provision.</p> <p>These missed opportunities to collect the full range of information required for rigorous self-assessment have resulted in a self-assessment report that is, in part, overly detailed and descriptive and a quality improvement plan that shows some slippage where due actions have not yet been met.</p>				

##### 4.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
<p><b>Comments</b></p> <p>Teaching staff are well-qualified with full teaching qualifications and a good quality continuing professional development plan is in place.</p>				

##### 4.3 Student Welfare (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
<p><b>Comments</b></p> <p>Integrated pastoral care, support, mentoring, coaching and information advice and guidance is provided along with additional learning support.</p> <p>The Institution is successful in its mission to engage its local residents in lifelong learning and in its attempts to get as much of its community in employment as it can. It is especially skilled at recruiting students who lack the confidence to attend a larger, more corporate institution.</p> <p>It uses local intelligence well to plan provision which meets its community's needs.</p>				

#### 4.4 Premises and Facilities (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
<b>Comments</b> The accommodation is of a good standard and has adequate signage, toilet facilities and space for staff and students to relax.  There are two classrooms, one of which is IT enabled.  There is a small resource centre with some educational books and journals.  The space is friendly and accessible to its local community.				

**PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS**

<b>STRENGTHS</b>
Leadership is resilient and responsive. Leaders and managers have adapted to the challenging environment in which they operate and have made the necessary adjustments required to stay in operation.
Effective quality assurance systems have enabled direct claims status with awarding bodies, and full compliance with partners’ requirements, to be maintained.
Good quality support is provided by skilled and highly qualified stakeholders and through a supportive network of partners.

<b>ACTIONS REQUIRED</b>	<b>Priority H/M/L</b>
2.5 The Institution must further improve its data collection and collation systems, encompassing a broader range of evidence to meet commissioning partners’ requirements, and ensuring it gathers the full range of data necessary to plan and review courses and services.	M
The Institution must ensure that its arrangements for the appraisal of senior staff including the Principal, are rigorous and robust.	M
8.2 8.3 The Institution must develop an approach which ensures it represents an annual update on the provision. The self-assessment report should further improve its use of evaluation.	M

<b>RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT</b>
The Institution should consider reinvigorating the observation process so that some of it is taken in-house and so that strengths and areas for improvement identified can inform the self-assessment and action planning process.
The Institution should consider adapting its learner feedback forms so that they can identify the specific courses that students do, and capture information about students that should be used to evaluate the effectiveness of provision in meeting age and gender needs, so that careful analysis of learners’ feedback can be used to improve current and future provision.
The Institution should ensure that its quality improvement plans are routinely and precisely reviewed so that slippage against actions is reduced.

<b>COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS</b>	
<b>Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Further comments, if applicable</b>	