



## **BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT**

### **SUPPLEMENTARY INSPECTION FOLLOWING A DEFERRAL**

**INSTITUTION:** CBL International Oxbridge Programmes

**ADDRESS:** 3rd Quad  
Oriol College  
Oriol Square  
Oxford  
OX1 4EW

**HEAD OF INSTITUTION:** Mr Simon Talbot

**TYPE OF ACCREDITATION:** Short Course Provider accreditation

**ACCREDITATION STATUS:** Accreditation deferred

**DATE OF INSPECTION:** 21-23 February 2018

**ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION ON ACCREDITATION AND DATE:** Accredited 22 March 2018

## **PART A - INTRODUCTION**

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

CBL International Oxbridge Programmes (CBL/the Provider) is the United Kingdom (UK) arm of an organisation called CBL International. The Provider is a private limited company and was first established under the name of Oxford King's College in 2012. Teaching began in March 2013 and the name of the company was changed to CBL International Oxbridge Programmes on 28 August 2015.

CBL International, of which the Provider is a part, offers similar study abroad and enrichment programmes to the Provider but in Dubai, the United States and China. CBL International has, since 2015, been part of WorldStrides International limited liability company (LLC), which specialises in education trips worldwide for school, university and college students.

The Provider is managed by a Director, who also holds the title Vice-President of Academic Programmes. The Director is supported by the Assistant Manager Academic Programmes. She reports to a managing partner, who has wider responsibilities within CBL International.

CBL provides short academic courses for high school, college and university students and adults in Oxford and Cambridge at Easter and during the summer. The academic study is complemented by a programme of excursions and activities, which enable the participants to engage with British life and culture. Its aim is to provide a distinctive residential study experience in Oxford and Cambridge to a cosmopolitan participant body from schools, colleges and universities around the world.

The courses are run in Oriel College, Oxford and Magdalene College, Cambridge. In 2017, additional teaching and residential accommodation was used in Somerville and St Anne's colleges in Oxford as well as other locations as required.

CBL occupies administrative premises within Oriel College, Oxford. The registered office of the company is in London.

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

CBL offers four different groups of programmes for university undergraduates, graduates and working professionals. The programmes are offered in two-week units for up to four weeks at Easter and up to ten weeks in the summer. Participants select one subject for each two-week unit. Academic courses are at undergraduate level. They are complemented by a programme of trips and evening lectures, some relating to the subjects of study and others with a cultural, social and recreational focus. Participants may combine courses in Oxford and Cambridge.

The undergraduate courses are offered under four brands. The Oxford Summer Institute offers courses in subjects such as economics, law, philosophy, politics and economics, business and legal English and computer science. The Cambridge Summer Institute offers courses in subjects such as international politics, business management and British and economic history. The Oxford Summer Law School includes specialist law courses. The Oxford Summer Business School provides a range of business courses.

The smaller summer programme for high school students is branded Oxford Cambridge Summer Academy (OCSA). It offers fully residential two-week courses in Oxford or Cambridge for students aged 14 to 19 in a variety of subjects. Participants select one subject for the duration of the course from a range, including economics, law, philosophy, politics and economics and business and management. In addition, they receive sessions to prepare them for making applications to university. Participants take part in a programme of lectures, visits and social, cultural and recreational activities. Teaching is carried out by doctoral research students or established academics from the universities of Oxford or Cambridge.

Courses in Oxford are arranged jointly with Oriel College and those in Cambridge with Magdalene College. These partner colleges suggest lecturers for the courses. The completion certificate, which is received by the participants, is jointly signed by the college and CBL. Teaching is by college and university lecturers and professors or other academics with doctorates.

The majority of participants on the undergraduate programmes in the period September 2016 to September 2017 were from China. The majority of participants on the OCSA high school course are under 18. Approximately a quarter of participants on the high school programme are from the United States and the remainder come from over 30 other countries including Hong Kong and China. While there are approximately equal proportions of male and female participants on the high school programme, the majority of students on the undergraduate programmes is female.

At the time of the last re-accreditation inspection, to which this inspection is a follow-up, there was a total of 338 participants enrolled on the Provider's courses. Of these, 305 were enrolled on the undergraduate programmes and 33 on the OCSA course.

### **3. Inspection process**

The inspector held an initial telephone conversation with the new Director. The Director was appointed in November 2017. During this conversation, the Director outlined his responses to those action points from the previous report that had been implemented or planned. The inspection was undertaken by reviewing documentation subsequently submitted by the Provider, including a new Safeguarding Children Policy document, a Complaint Policy as well as a letter outlining all responses to the action points and an Action Plan giving dates when specific actions were taken or due to be taken. The Provider's website was also examined in relation to the action points to be addressed.

### **4. Inspection history**

Full accreditation	21 & 27-28 August 2013
Interim	27 August 2014
Re-accreditation	2-3 August 2017

### **5. Background to supplementary inspection**

At its meeting on 19 October 2017, the Accreditation Committee deferred its decision on the re-accreditation of CBL. The Accreditation Committee asked the Provider to take action as soon as possible and to submit evidence, within three months, to meet certain of the action points in the report of the August 2017 inspection.

The Director has reported that a transfer of ownership is underway from CBL International Oxbridge Programmes Limited to Casterbridge Tours Limited, another UK division of the overall parent company WorldStrides.

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

**The following judgments and comments are based upon the additional evidence provided by the institution and seen by the inspector:**

### **1. Response to high priority action points in the previous report, including areas still to be addressed:**

*3.2 More complete recruitment checks must be undertaken on staff working with participants under 18, relating to qualifications, experience and suitability to work with young people.*

A sound recruitment procedure has been developed, which emphasises the importance of safeguarding in advertisements, job descriptions, person specifications and interviews. The jobs section on the website now makes reference to safeguarding.

The new Safeguarding Children Policy states that CBL will seek two references from each candidate and referees will be asked about the candidate's suitability to work with children. The Action Plan, that was submitted as evidence, stated that this had been implemented by 22 January 2018. However, the recruitment procedure being used at the time of this inspection included requesting that references are submitted by job candidates. If this is the case, this approach does not provide CBL with the opportunity to request a statement on the candidate's suitability to work with young people.

*17.6 The arrangements for safeguarding must be strengthened so that they fully meet requirements.*

A Safeguarding Children Policy has been formulated. This is a comprehensive document that covers major areas of safeguarding. It has clear aims and the sections of the report include safer recruitment, accommodation arrangements for under 18s, a staff code of conduct for dealing with under 18s, and measures to prevent extremism and radicalisation. The flow chart showing how safeguarding concerns are escalated is clear and helpful.

However, the document has shortcomings as a practical working document. It is unclear regarding policies, tasks to be undertaken at management level and practical procedures for staff to follow. As a result, it makes it difficult for staff to know what they should do in different situations.

The action that should be taken in certain specific situations, notably on notification of individuals' conduct to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), is unclear.

Mention is made that people for whom all checks have not yet been completed might be allowed to commence work. No details are included as to the arrangements that would be made under such circumstances to safeguard children.

Arrangements for the administration of medication and medical treatment are not clear from the Safeguarding Children Policy. There is a conflict between giving medicines to under 18s only with parental consent and medicines being given under medical direction in an emergency, with subsequent notification to parents.

Not all documents provided to staff include the name of the Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) so that they are clear to whom they should report concerns. This applies particularly to the Provider because many staff members are working for short periods of time and may be unfamiliar with job titles.

*20.5 Participants under the age of 18 must be accommodated in separate blocks.*

The appropriate distribution of students by gender, age and course is clearly set out in a section of the Safeguarding Children Policy. The implementation of these policies can be checked at the next inspection.

**2. Response to medium priority action points in the previous report, including areas still to be addressed:**

*16.2 A more formalised process for participants to appeal on their test results must be introduced.*

An appeals procedure has been developed. The process, which applies to all courses, provides for an appeal to the Programme Director to undertake an administrative check, and, if appropriate, to refer the appeal to the relevant faculty member who undertook the initial assessment. Thereafter, unresolved appeals are fed into the normal complaints procedure. The outcome of such complaints is handled by general company personnel, with a final reference to the BAC's complaints procedure.

The procedure is satisfactory for high school students on enrichment courses. However, academic appeals for university level courses are not handled by academics and it is doubtful that, in these cases, an unresolved appeal could be addressed credibly and to the satisfaction of an appealing participant if the final decision is made by non-academics.

The Provider has indicated that the appeals procedure will be reviewed in the context of a more general review of assessment procedures before the start of the next academic session in August 2018.

*19.3 Participants must be advised of BAC's own complaints procedure.*

The revised complaints procedure includes appropriate reference to BAC as a final stage in resolving complaints. This procedure will form part of the student handbook

The Complaints Policy document combines the procedures to follow for both staff and students, which may lead to confusion.

**3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in the previous report:**

Responses to recommendations made in the report of the August 2017 inspection were not required at this stage.

**PART C – CONCLUSION, INCLUDING ANY ACTIONS OR RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THIS INSPECTION OR STILL REQUIRING ATTENTION FROM THE PREVIOUS INSPECTION**

<b>ACTIONS STILL REQUIRED FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION</b>	<b>Priority H/M/L</b>
The Provider must contact referees directly when seeking references for potential staff members. The Provider must ensure that referees are asked to evaluate potential staff members' suitability to work with children.	M

<b>ACTIONS REQUIRED FROM THIS INSPECTION</b>	<b>Priority H/M/L</b>
The Safeguarding Children Policy must be reviewed in detail to make it clear what people engaged to work on programmes are expected to do in safeguarding situations and separate this guidance from other administrative and managerial requirements.	M
The arrangements for staff for whom recruitments checks have not been completed by the time they start working with children must be set out clearly.	H

<b>RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT</b>
The Provider is recommended to clarify, precisely, who should submit reports on conduct to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
Arrangements for the administration of medication and medical treatment, to those under the age of 18, should be made clear in the Safeguarding Children Policy with regard to medicines being given only with parental consent or medicines being given under medical direction in an emergency, with subsequent notification to parents.
It is strongly recommended that consideration be given to establishing an appeals procedure, which is appropriate for university level courses.
It is recommended to revise the Complaints Policy to produce a separate complaints procedure specifically pitched at participants that sets out clearly the steps they should take in the event of a complaint.
The Provider should name the individual who is acting as DSP in any document given to staff, so that they are clear to whom they should report concerns.