

BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM INSPECTION (Independent Higher Education)

INSTITUTION: International University in Geneva

ADDRESS: 20 Route de Pre-Bois
Geneva
1215
Switzerland

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Mr Eric Willumsen

ACCREDITATION STATUS: Accredited

DATE OF INSPECTION: 8 November 2018

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Continued accreditation 28 March 2019

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

The International University in Geneva (IUG/the Institution) was established in 1997 and is a non-profit institution of Higher Education. IUG offers undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in Business Administration, International Relations, Digital Media and Computer Science Management.

IUG has agreements with a large number of international higher education institutions around the world. Most of these are for student and staff exchanges but there are three agreements for joint degrees with institutions in Russia, Mexico and Columbia. It also has an agreement with the University of Plymouth, which enables its successful postgraduate students to progress to Doctoral programmes in Business Administration and Public Administration.

The Institution is located in a suburb of Geneva, close to the airport. Its premises are situated on the ground floor of a large modern convention centre, which is occupied by a variety of other organisations.

IUG aims to provide quality education for students who wish to study International Business and Management subjects and develop professionals to serve a sustainable society.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is supported by the Chancellor, Advisory Board and a Senior Management Team, all of whom report to a Foundation Board. Academic staff are managed by heads of department who report to the Academic Dean.

2. Brief description of the current provision

IUG currently offers five undergraduate and six post graduate programmes. At undergraduate level, it delivers a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) together with a range of Bachelor of Arts awards in business, management and media communications. At postgraduate level, it delivers a Master of Business Administration, a Master of Business Administration in Sales and Marketing and a range of other Master's awards in business and management and media communications. All students are studying on a full-time basis.

At the time of the inspection, 144 undergraduate and postgraduate students were enrolled. The current capacity for the Institution is 200. The vast majority of students are over the age of 18. There is a mix of male and female students across undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

The Institution's programmes are accredited by two external organisations. These are the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programmes (ASBSP) and the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education (IACBE). Both these organisations are recognised by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) in the United States of America.

The Institution operates on an annual academic year enrolment basis. Enrolment is on the basis of previous learning and subject experience. For validated programmes, the Institution follows Plymouth University's entry requirements.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was carried out, over one day, by one inspector. Meetings took place with the CEO, Academic Dean, heads of department, administrators, student welfare staff, lecturers and students. A tour of the premises was carried out and one lesson was observed. Various documentation was scrutinised by means of hard copy

records, electronic files and the website. The availability of the information provided to the inspector was excellent and the Institution co-operated highly effectively with the inspector throughout the inspection.

4. Inspection History

Inspection Type	Date
Full Accreditation	25-26 May 2016
End of Probation Review	2-3 October 2017

PART B – JUDGMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgments 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

IUG has a newly accredited Bachelor of Science with Honours in Business Management validated by Plymouth University since September 2018 and has recently increased their offer of postgraduate programmes to include Media and Communications. There has continued to be an excellent professional relationship with Plymouth University and the Institution is planning to increase the number of validated programmes for 2019.

IUG is currently transitioning towards a British higher education system, rather than an American higher education system as this is a more accurate reflection of how the Institution operates.

2. Response to actions points in last report

There were no action points in the last report.

3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

The University may wish to re-visit its periodic review process to provide clarity over the process to be followed when the outcomes of a periodic review recommend that revalidation is required.

The Institution has a clear and documented policy that outlines how programmes are periodically reviewed. This includes a clear process to be followed regarding revalidation.

4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

4.1 Governance, Strategy and Financial Management (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met

Partially Met

Not Met

Comments

The Institution has a clearly defined management structure. This is documented in an organisation chart that clearly states the staff hierarchy and job roles. The chart includes a clear reference to the Foundation Board, Chancellor, Advisory Board, the Senior Leadership Team, academic management and teachers. The structure is clearly understood by all staff and students and roles and responsibilities are further explained in the relevant staff and student handbooks.

There are clear contractual agreements in place with Plymouth University. The Institution follows many of the same quality assurance processes of the university, which have been adapted to ensure they reflect the Institution, and its provision and students. In addition, the Institution has relationships with a large number of other universities both in Switzerland and internationally. These relationships are clearly set out in formal agreements. They provide the Institution with an effective international network for staff and student exchanges.

IUG has a clear strategic plan for the vision and development of its higher education provision. This is a comprehensive report that includes undergraduate and postgraduate programme offers, subject specialist areas to develop and financial management. The quality of the student experience forms the focus of the report, which is accessible to internal staff and external stakeholders.

The Institution conducts its financial affairs professionally, transparently and with appropriate probity. There is clear reference to the Institution's financial status and aims within the strategic report. The Institution's finance reports are up-to-date and available for external audit at any time. Most recent independent external financial audits are securely stored and were available for review at the time of inspection.

4.2 Academic Management and Administration (spot check)

The standards are judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

There is a clear structure in place for the academic management of the Institution. Teachers are managed by heads of departments who report to the Academic Dean.

The Institution works closely with Plymouth University regarding the proposal of any new programmes, based on student and market demand. They are currently validated for one undergraduate programme and are in the process of increasing undergraduate and postgraduate programmes as part of their strategic aims for 2019.

All programmes have clear specifications and include modules with clear intended learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Students confirmed that they understand the specifications and module structures and that staff fully adhere to these.

The Institution has a team of administrators who are effectively managed by an administration manager. The administration staff and administration manager are clearly identified on the organisation chart.

The size of the administration team is appropriate for the number of staff and students and to ensure the effective day-to-day administration of the Institution.

4.3 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

The standards are judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution aims to provide quality education for students who wish to progress to international careers in business, management and media communications. The experience of staff is wide ranging and many teachers are current or recent industry practitioners within their specialist subjects. Therefore, staff have the expertise to facilitate international progression effectively.

IUG have a collaborative approach to teaching and continuous learning. This is implemented by sharing good practice, educational research and a programme of continuous professional development. All these processes have an emphasis on skill development and practical skills application. The design and application of formative and summative assessment methods support this approach effectively.

Assessment methods are varied and appropriate at each level. They are also fully reflective of the subject discipline and provide appropriate challenge.

The Programme Handbooks include an assessment schedule that clearly indicates any formative and summative assessments. There is also a clear indication of External Examination periods and Assessment Boards.

4.4 Student Recruitment, Support, Guidance and Progression (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met

Partially Met

Not Met

Comments

The entry requirements for any validated programme are approved by Plymouth University at validation and are based on the level of each programme. This process includes any initial assessments required for each programme. Other programmes follow the same model.

Entry requirements for all programmes are clearly stated on the website, application forms and published prospectuses. They include any essential language requirements.

Teachers are also responsible for pastoral support. They are the first line of communication for students who require both academic and pastoral support. Sufficient time is allocated for group and individual pastoral activities on each programme timetable. In addition, the Student Services department is the official contact for students who may require specialist pastoral support or a professional referral.

The student induction is a comprehensive standardised programme that provides introductory sessions including use of the library, academic referencing and Information Communication Technology (ICT) services. The induction also outlines the role of the teachers, heads of department, Academic Dean and the roles and contact details of the Student Services department. Emergency contact details are also provided to students at induction and are accessible in the Programme Handbooks.

Students have access to appropriate support and regular review of their academic progress. This support involves a documented process, which is carried out through formative feedback sessions. Summative assessment records are securely stored on the central administration system. Standardised templates for recording assessment are used across programmes. Summative Assessment grades and feedback are also monitored and analysed to improve future progress. This is also collated into a report that informs Academic Monitoring Reports (AMRs) and Academic Board meetings.

There is an effective Safeguarding Policy and the recruitment policy, application process and support systems take good account of students under the age of 18.

There is a clear complaints procedure published in the Programme Handbooks. This is also explained at the induction. There is a reference to the BAC complaints procedure but not all students were aware how to complain to BAC.

4.5 Premises, Facilities and Learning Resources (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met

Partially Met

Not Met

Comments

The Institution has secure tenure agreements for its premises and contracts and agreements are securely stored in hard copy in the CEO's office.

The lease agreements on its premises permit the Institution to use them for the delivery of all its undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

The premises provide a safe, secure and clean environment for staff and students. There is appropriate private access to the Institution through the main building reception area on the ground floor.

The premises are spacious, well ventilated, effectively maintained and clean. They provide more than adequate circulation space for the number of students and staff accommodated and a suitable area in which to receive visitors.

All programme materials are designed by subject specialists with the level of programme as a priority. Subject specialists are responsible for writing and creating the learning resources and they make effective use of a range of teaching and learning aids. Teachers are also very proactive in introducing new technologies, where appropriate, to deliver lessons. Delivery and session plans demonstrate valid differentiation to ensure that all students' needs are met.

4.6 Quality Management, Assurance and Enhancement (spot check)

The standards are judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Academic Dean leads on internal quality assurance.

There are clear and up-to-date higher education quality assurance policies in place that follow those of Plymouth University.

Quality assurance has high priority and this is evident across all departments and levels. The Institution has a detailed strategic report that clearly outlines the aims, objectives and intentions of the Institution for forthcoming years.

The AMRs provide a year-on-year comprehensive review of higher education quality standards as well as self-assessing the Institution's performance for each programme. These reports are focused on the student learning experience, student satisfaction, retention and achievement. The AMRs also provide a detailed analysis of student performance and progression. In addition, heads of departments collate and analyse students' destination data to inform future planning.

External quality assurance for any validated programmes is undertaken by Plymouth University, the ASBSP and the IACBE. All programmes are subject to assessment involving external examiners.

All AMR action plans are effectively monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and any actions are addressed and signed off by the CEO.

4.7 Compliance Declaration

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated. Yes No

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS

The Institution has detailed quality assurance policies that have been recently reviewed and updated. These follow those of Plymouth University.

The Institution promotes a unique, engaging and professional learning environment that enables students to develop a wide range of skills to prepare them well for international careers.

The Institution has a highly qualified and experienced team of international academic staff who contribute to students’ access to valuable and wide-ranging industry contacts.

The Institution has an excellent programme of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) that is effectively supported internally and externally.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

None	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
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RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT *(to be reviewed at the next inspection)*

It is recommended that the Institution advises students proactively about BAC’s complaints procedure so that they are more aware of its existence.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS - FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE

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