

BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM INSPECTION (College)

NAME OF INSTITUTION: Harvest Bible College

ADDRESS: 179 Shettleston Road
Parkhead
Glasgow
G31 5JL

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Mr Robert Kelley

DATE OF INSPECTION: 17 April 2019

ACCREDITATION STATUS AT INSPECTION: Accredited

DECISION ON ACCREDITATION:

- Re-accreditation awarded for the full four-year period
- Probation accreditation
- Decision on accreditation deferred
- Award of accreditation to be withdrawn

DATE: 16 July 2019

1. Background to the institution

Harvest Bible College (HBC/the College) is part of the United Pentecostal Church of Great Britain and Ireland (the Church). It offers certificate and diploma courses in theology. They are accredited by the Northern Council for Further Education (NCFE) at National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Levels 3 and 4 respectively.

The College is located in the outskirts of Glasgow city centre. The main building includes classrooms, student recreation and relaxation areas, offices, kitchens, female dormitory accommodation and a chapel. The men's dormitories are in an adjacent building.

HBC's mission is to provide biblically grounded teaching and training for effective Christian service and mission. It aims to integrate academic excellence with godliness and practical training for the ministry of the Church.

HBC is owned by the Church, which is a United Kingdom (UK) charity affiliated to the international organisation based in Missouri in the United States of America (USA). The Church's UK headquarters are in London and the head of HBC, the Principal, reports to the governing board based there.

The College's core full-time staff are the Principal, Registrar and Academic Dean. The Principal is responsible for the academic, administrative, pastoral and spiritual leadership of the College and for managing all College staff. Twenty-four part-time staff teach for varying periods of time, depending on the subject being taught, normally for a minimum of two hours a day for two weeks. Many are longstanding teachers at the College.

All staff are unpaid. This voluntary system and the small size of the College mean that the core full-time team all undertake management, teaching, administrative and pastoral responsibilities.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The College has delivered the ten months long certificate in theology course since 2002 and the ten months long diploma in theology course since September 2016. Students can graduate with a certificate or, if they are successful on the certificate course and wish to continue their studies, may undertake the diploma course.

HBC requires applicants for the certificate course to demonstrate that they have sufficient academic background to enable them to be a successful student. Applicants' qualifications are considered on a case by case basis. They are required to have completed their secondary education. The prerequisite for entry to the diploma course is graduation from the certificate course. All applicants must also demonstrate an established spiritual commitment.

The certificate course comprises two-thirds academic work and one-third practical ministry and is undertaken at HBC. The course has three terms, with classes held Tuesday to Friday. The core subjects cover every book in the Bible and other relevant topics for practical ministry as set out in detail in the student handbook. Each student also receives instruction in specialised majors such as pastoral, music, Christian education, missions and Christian media and communication. There are no classes on Mondays to enable students to undertake church activities.

The diploma course is offered through a partnership agreement with Urshan College (UC) in Missouri, USA. It is primarily an internship with an academic component. One-third is academic work delivered by UC by distance learning and two-thirds is practical ministry. Mornings are spent in online lectures from UC, which may be live or recorded, and in classwork and religious activity. Afternoons are spent in practical ministry fieldwork in a church under the supervision of a pastor. Most diploma students undertake this fieldwork in the Glasgow area, so they take classes together in the library and reside in the College dormitories.

There were 13 students enrolled at the time of the inspection, nine on the certificate course and four on the diploma course. The College can accommodate a maximum of 22 students on campus but can accommodate more students if some live off-site. Most students at the time of the inspection were aged between 18 and 30. On the certificate course, four students were from the US, three from the UK, and two from the Republic of Ireland and France. Three of the four diploma students were UK students, with one from the USA. The majority of students were female. College policy is that all students must be over the age of 18.

Both courses begin in September each year.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was carried out by one inspector over one day. Interviews were conducted with the Principal, Registrar, Academic Dean, teachers, and students from the certificate and diploma courses. The inspector observed a teaching session, scrutinised relevant documentation and inspected the facilities. The College cooperated well with the process, with the required information made available and clearly presented.

4. Inspection History

Inspection Type	Date
Full Accreditation	13-14 January 2009
Supplementary	11 May 2009
Interim	19 April 2010
Re-accreditation	26-27 March 2013
Interim	14 April 2015
Re-accreditation	22-23 March 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

At the time of the previous inspection, the diploma course was in its first year of operation. It has now graduated two cohorts. While the number of diploma students currently enrolled remains small at four, HBC is satisfied that the course is progressing satisfactorily. Six students graduated from the diploma course in 2017 and five in 2018.

This year, for the first time, a diploma student is doing their fieldwork in practical ministry outside Glasgow in London. The Academic Dean is the student's primary academic and pastoral contact and he has regular contact with the student and their supervising pastor to ensure that the student's experience is positive and productive and that learning outcomes are being achieved. The student uses electronic media to access College classes and activities.

HBC anticipates that, within two years, half of its diploma students will take the fieldwork part of the course outside Glasgow. This reflects its mission to provide ministry in various parts of the UK. The College is assessing whether any additional resources will be needed for this. It reports that it has received requests from other countries offering fieldwork for its diploma students. However, the College wants to establish this aspect of the provision nationally first before students undertake international fieldwork.

The College plans to increase its enrolment over the next five years, with a target of an average of 15 graduates each year and a more balanced gender distribution. Plans to achieve this aim include an increased social media presence, upgrades to the HBC website, a consistent presence at relevant Church events, communication with pastors about the educational opportunities on offer and encouraging Church districts to start scholarships.

The Vice Principal post is currently vacant as the previous postholder has left the UK. The College intends to appoint a new Vice Principal.

2. Response to actions points in last report

5.5 Greater emphasis must be given to ensuring that potential students' English language ability is sufficient for the course.

The College now requires applicants whose first language is not English to obtain a satisfactory result in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). HBC requires a minimum of IELTS level 5 or Common European Framework (CEF) Level B1-B2, with a preference for IELTS level 6 and CEF Level B2. This provides the College with an objective measure of language fluency that it can use in determining whether an applicant's English is sufficient for their studies.

8.2 Statistical information on student success rates, pass marks and completion rates must form part of the annual College review.

The Principal provides a useful annual report to the General Board of the Church summarising developments during the previous year. Statistical information is not included. The College intends to produce an annual review containing statistical information and it is drafting a framework that will be used for the 2018-19 academic year. This is work in progress.

25.4 Visitors must sign in and out and must be advised of matters relating to health and safety.

Entrance to the College is through a secure door accessed by a code inputted into an electronic keypad. Visitors are admitted and escorted by a member of staff and are normally with a staff member at all times. Where this is not the case as in visits by tradesmen, visitors are required to sign in and out. This ensures the security of the premises.

Visitors to the College are given appropriate health and safety information.

3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

The College should consider making greater use of computer assisted management systems to enhance its systems in the long term.

An objective in HBC's current plan is that the College will have computer assisted management systems for all policies and documents in one year's time. As part of this a member of staff will have a specific College-wide information technology responsibility in the next academic year. The College is working towards implementing this recommendation.

It is recommended that the Staff Handbook be reviewed and that more detail be added, including existing policies.

The staff handbook has been reviewed and amended and more detail has been added including existing policies. There is still scope for making it more comprehensive by including additional HBC policies or electronic links to HBC policies to ensure that all staff have easy access to these policies.

The questions, within the application form, about learning disabilities and students with language shortcomings, should be made clearer.

The application form has been adjusted to make it clearer. It now includes a question about any learning disabilities that could affect the applicant's performance, and a question about the language of the applicant's primary and secondary education.

The Student Handbook would benefit from a contents page at the front and should also make reference to appropriate websites, including those with information about Glasgow. A map of the local area should be included for international students.

The student handbook has been revised to include a contents page and is comprehensive and appropriate. Website links will be included as the College continues its progress towards the use of more electronic communication.

It is suggested that feedback, following each classroom observation, should be shared immediately with the tutor.

The College has considered the recommendation, but it has not been adopted. Its policy is that immediate feedback is not given routinely though it will be shared immediately on request by the teacher. As the College is heavily reliant on part-time teachers it is particularly important that their quality is assured. A policy of providing immediate feedback to teachers after lesson observation rather than on request would provide positive reinforcement to teachers and enable them to address any weaknesses in their teaching.

Consideration should be given to providing a sick bay in the student accommodation.

Sick bays have now been provided for male and female students.

A regular night-time fire drill is recommended to be carried out in the student accommodation.

Students confirmed that regular night-time fire drills are now carried out in dormitories.

4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

4.1 Management, Staffing and Administration (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The College states that its policies are regularly reviewed and where necessary updated. This is clear in some cases, for example the partnership agreement with UC specifies the reviews that have been undertaken with the most recent review taking place in February 2019. It would be beneficial if a review schedule and other policy documentation demonstrated that all HBC policies are periodically reviewed in line with good practice in quality assurance.

HBC's student handbook includes a welcoming and supportive disability strategy. It makes it clear that people with disabilities are encouraged to apply and that the College is committed to responding to their needs.

Language entry requirements are not currently included in the prospectus and doing so would assist applicants' understanding in this area. Analysing the comparative success rates of native English-speakers and students for whom English is not their first language would provide the College with information to use to ensure that its IELTS requirement is set at the appropriate level.

The College has clear and appropriate policies on attendance and punctuality which are included in the student handbook. They specify the action that will be taken if attendance or punctuality is unsatisfactory. This provides clarity for students and is an incentive for compliance with policies that supports effective learning.

Communication with students is excellent. There are weekly meetings of the core full-time team, other staff and student representatives. The student representatives reported that they are encouraged to participate and that their views are listened to. They always receive a response to any feedback they give and an answer to any questions they raise. This means that they contribute to College development and feel valued members of the College community.

8.2 The College does not include statistics on student success rates, pass marks and completion rates in its annual report. As a result, relevant information that should be used for quality monitoring and enhancement is not readily available or communicated within the College.

4.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The lesson observed by the inspector included students making a video presentation and using role play. The teacher ensured class participation and offered encouragement and informal feedback. The session was lively and engaging and provided a positive learning experience for students.

The student handbook provides detailed information about the curricula of the courses. The inclusion of more detail about the assessments which are linked to the classes would enhance students' understanding in this area.

The significant practical ministry component of the diploma course is well-structured and monitored. The students and HBC agree both group and individual outcomes for fieldwork. These are regularly reviewed and adjusted if necessary. This ensures clarity for students and supervisors and maintains a focus on the key objectives of this part of the course.

4.3 Student Welfare (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Students from outside Scotland confirmed that they received very useful information at induction about Scottish life and culture, including Glasgow colloquialisms, which helps them to quickly acclimatise to the College and the city.

Each student has a progress review session with the senior staff every two weeks. The session enables the student to evaluate their progress towards agreed goals and raise any other issues they wish to discuss. The students value this time for reflection and discussion with the Principal and report that it enriches their College experience.

A Dean for Men and a Dean for Women live on-site beside the student dormitories. They are available to students 24 hours a day in the event of an emergency, and the students confirmed that the Deans provide effective and accessible support that makes them feel safe and secure. New showers in the male dormitory have upgraded the accommodation.

4.4 Premises and Facilities (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

There is ample recreation and relaxation space for students, with equipment for exercise and activities. Students praised these resources which enrich the College environment.

The office space shared by the three managers is somewhat cramped. The College plans to address this by converting an adjacent area into additional office space and this would improve the working environment.

4.5 Compliance Declaration

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.

Yes No

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS

The Principal and senior staff are effective managers. Their dedication and motivation are evident in the generally high quality of the provision.

There is effective formal and informal communication between the management team, teaching staff and students which means that the students’ voices are heard and that their views are appropriately considered in College decision-making.

The College is a close-knit community with a nurturing approach. The arrangements that are in place show HBC’s strong commitment to the well-being and personal development of its students which the students appreciate.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

8.2 The College must include statistical information that will support quality assurance in its annual report.

High Medium Low

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT (to be reviewed at the next inspection)

The College should fully implement its plan to have computer assisted management systems for all policies and documents.

The College is recommended to include additional HBC policies or electronic links to HBC policies in its staff handbook to ensure that all staff have easy access to these policies.

The student handbook should include appropriate website links as well as information about assessments in order to provide students with easy access to this material.

It is recommended that the College routinely shares feedback after teaching observation to enhance staff appraisal and development.

HBC should consider providing evidence of the regular review and where necessary amendment of all the College’s policies to demonstrate that the policies are kept up to date and are fit for purpose.

It is recommended that HBC specify language entry requirements in its prospectus and reviews relevant student achievement data to ensure that its language entry requirements are set at the appropriate level.

It is recommended that HBC provide the core management team with more office space to ease current congestion.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS - FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE

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