



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM AND SUPPLEMENTARY INSPECTION NEW / ADDITIONAL PREMISES (Independent Higher Education)

INSTITUTION: Mountbatten Institute

ADDRESS: 99 Grays Inn Road
3rd Floor
London
WC1X 8TY

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Mr Gary Ball

ACCREDITATION STATUS: Accredited

DATE OF INSPECTION: 20 August 2019

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: 28 November 2019

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

Mountbatten Institute (the Institution) is the trading name for Mountbatten Programs Limited, a not-for-profit limited company, which provides postgraduate business-related courses in partnership with the University of Chester and Saint Mary's University, Twickenham. It has offices in New York, London and Bangkok. BAC accreditation applies to the London operation only. Its aim is to foster international and cross-cultural understanding through experiential education, practical training and residence abroad and to provide opportunities for personal growth and professional development.

Mountbatten Institute was founded in 1984 as a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) by its current Director General, who is based in New York. The Institution is led by the Managing Director, who is supported by three senior staff covering recruitment, placements, academic matters and students and systems technology.

The Institution occupies office space in Grays Inn Road in central London and hires teaching space as required.

In 2008, a collaborative agreement was signed with St Mary's University Twickenham. As a result, a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in International Business Practice were validated by St Mary's. Since 2014, a collaborative partnership agreement has been in place with the University of Chester that allows students to enrol for a Master of Arts (MA) in Entrepreneurial Leadership and a Post Graduate Certificate in International Business. Teaching and internships take place in London.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The Institution offers a 12-month paid training internship programme for United States of America (USA) citizens and international students. Alongside their internships, the students study, on a full-time basis, for an MBA in International Business Practice with St. Mary's University, Twickenham or an MA in Entrepreneurial Leadership with University of Chester. Another option is that they can undertake a part-time Postgraduate Certification in International Business also with the University of Chester. All three courses offer a mix of evening and weekend face-to-face taught sessions, which are complemented by structured activities undertaken as part of the students' work experience.

At the time of the inspection, 45 students were enrolled in London. The majority of the students were American, female and aged between 21 and 23. Male students represent approximately one-third of the cohort.

There are two start dates for the courses in August and March. Applications are made online with closing dates being approximately five months prior to the intended start date. Each course lasts one year. There are very clear eligibility and application criteria available on the website. Applications exceed the number of placements that are available. The Institution continues to work with its partners to provide internships, but the number available varies depending on a number of economic and business factors that are prevailing at the time.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was carried out by one Inspector over one day. The inspector had discussions with the Head of the Institution and Academic Director and members of the Administration team. Telephone discussions took place with three of the academic staff. The inspector had sight of documentation covering all aspects of the inspection in both electronic and hard copy. The Institution cooperated fully with the inspection.

4. **Inspection history**

Inspection Type	Date
Full Accreditation	7, 10, 12 & 15 April 2013
Interim	25 June 2014
Spot Check	12 April 2016
Full Accreditation	10, 16 & 20 May 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

The Institution moved its office location in London in May 2019. The new office area is in Central London and approximately one mile west of the previous location. The new location is closer to the teaching base that continues to be used, which is approximately half a mile from the new office.

During the last inspection, the Institution had recently been approved by the Skills Funding Agency as an Apprenticeship Training Provider in order to develop a Level 7 Business Management apprenticeship. The Institution made a business decision not to progress with the development of this provision.

From March 2019, the requirement for students to complete a four-month internship in Bangkok was removed from the programmes on offer as it was not attractive to many potential students.

2. Response to actions points in last report

4.12 7.3 27.2 The Institution must develop a transparent appraisal system to be implemented by a trained member of staff.

The Institution has developed an appropriate recording sheet to be used as part of a staff appraisal system. However, this had not yet been implemented at the time of the inspection due to the office move and focus on student recruitment.

3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

The Institution should consider ways in which academic staff could incorporate the students' internship experience within teaching and learning, in order to maximise the benefit of the experience that students get from their internships.

The Institution has undertaken some work to integrate the learning from the student's internships with their academic courses by focussing content and discussions in taught sessions and engaging students to share experiences. Further work in this area was highlighted as an outcome of the recent revalidation of the MBA by St Mary's University, with the suggestion that the most obvious context in which to achieve this is the dissertation module.

The Institution should take ownership of its policies and procedures in order to reduce reliance on those of the validating HEIs.

The Institution has ownership of its own policies where possible. The contractual agreements to deliver the courses from both St Mary's University and the University of Chester require the Institution to follow the policies of the University, which is the normal approach across the sector.

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 continues to maintain an effective governance structure. A clear strategy is provided that is understood by all staff. Effective financial management is in place.

The relationships with the validating partners, St Mary's University and the University of Chester, remain strong. The MBA programme that is validated by St Mary's University was revalidated in July 2019 and continues to be an effective programme.

The Institution has very strong relationships with a range of employers who provide internships. These relationships are used to inform the Institution's strategy. The strategy focuses on steady growth of the existing provision and includes consideration of broadening the academic offer in the future, with consideration of possible new subjects including business analytics and digital marketing. However, developments will only be implemented following an evaluation of the demand that confirms an effective market exists.

4.2 Academic Management and Administration (spot check)

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

Comments

The day to day management structure of the Institution is clearly defined and effective. The staff are committed to the provision and very supportive of the students. The staff team is relatively small and, therefore, informal communication channels are used effectively. However there is a lack of formal communication mechanisms to ensure records are maintained.

4.12 7.3 The Institution has developed templates for an appraisal system but has not yet implemented an appraisal system for either academic or administrative staff.

The Institution has effective policies in place to support staff and these are documented in a Staff Handbook. However, not all staff had been provided with a copy of the handbook as part of their induction to the organisation.

The Institution continues to work closely with its validating universities through effective committee structures. The report, following the recent revalidation of the MBA by St Mary's University, provides evidence of the positive relationship.

4.3 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

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

Comments

The academic staff are well qualified with an active research profile. They are employed on a part-time basis and most are also currently employed at universities within the UK higher education sector with whom any required staff development and research activity are undertaken.

Students complete their academic studies alongside a full-time internship arranged by the Institution as part of their study abroad programme. The academic programmes delivered are all at Level 7 and validated by either St Mary's University or the University of Chester.

The teaching material reviewed is of good quality and student feedback indicates that teaching opportunities and quality meet the students' needs. In some classes there is co-teaching of students studying on programmes with both validating universities, where the validated content covers the same subject areas. The feedback from academic staff indicates that this works well, and students are clear of any differences in expectations related to assessments. The written student feedback and oral reports to committee meetings support this view.

Assessments are completed in line with the validated course documents and student work is moderated by the validating university staff and external examiners. These processes confirm that the standards of student performance and the marking and feedback to students match expectations.

Students receive an effective induction, which was commended by St Mary's University in the validation report for the MBA in July 2019. The relevant policies of the university are made available to the students and provide appropriate supporting procedures to assist students and discourage any poor academic practice.

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

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

Comments

The Institution uses an effective recruitment and admissions process. The materials provided to applicants are clear and appropriate, covering the expected areas of detail.

The admissions process is well administered and staff keep the students informed of progress. The entry levels for each programme and policies and procedures for recognition of prior learning are set by the validating University. The number of applicants exceeds the number of placements available and therefore student recruitment follows a selective process in conjunction with the employers providing the internships.

The enrolment process ensures that any special needs of the students are identified and appropriate support is provided. The level of pastoral support provided by the Academic Director is very high and meets the needs of the students very well.

Good quality social activities are provided alongside the internships and academic programmes. These include short residential experiences that suitable enrich the students' experience whilst at the Institution. Attendance and progress systems are effectively monitored and students are supported appropriately in all aspects of their programme.

4.5 Premises, Facilities and Learning Resources (full inspection)

The numbers below refer to the standards as presented in the Independent Higher Education scheme document and main full inspection report

20. The institution has secure possession of and access to its premises

20.1	The institution has secure tenure on its premises.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
20.2	The institution has the legal right to use these premises for the delivery of higher education.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
20.3	Where required, the institution has access to suitable external premises for academic or non-academic purposes of a temporary or occasional nature.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution has a secure tenure on their new office space in Grays Inn Road in central London and continues to hire teaching space in Monticello House in Russell Square, London.

21. The premises provide a safe, secure and clean environment for students and staff

21.1	Access to the premises is appropriately restricted and secured.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
21.2	The premises are maintained in an adequate state of repair, decoration and cleanliness.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
21.3	There are specific safety rules in areas of particular hazard (e.g. science laboratories) which are brought to the attention of students, staff and visitors.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA
21.4	General guidance on health and safety is made available to students, staff and visitors.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
21.5	There is adequate signage inside and outside the premises and general information is displayed effectively.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
21.6	There is adequate circulation space for the number of students and staff accommodated and a suitable area in which to receive visitors.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
21.7	There are toilet and hand-washing facilities of an appropriate number and acceptable level of cleanliness.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
21.8	There is adequate air conditioning, heating and ventilation in all rooms.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

Secure access to the office premises is through a door with intercom locking arrangement.

The office space is well appointed and in good condition. Health and safety signage is in place. The facilities include an open plan office area for the administrative staff, an adjacent office for the managers and a boardroom that can also be used as an extra office area, meeting room or teaching space as required.

The office is on the third floor of an office building with both stairs and lift access. Toilet facilities are appropriate and in good condition. The office areas are well ventilated and have effective heating systems in place.

22. Classrooms and other learning areas are appropriate for the programmes offered

22.1	Classrooms and other learning areas provide adequate accommodation in size and number for the classes (e.g. lectures, seminars, tutorials) allocated to them.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
22.2	Classrooms and/or any specialised learning areas (e.g. laboratories, clinics, workshops, studios) are equipped to a level which allows for the effective delivery of each programme.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
22.3	There are facilities suitable for conducting assessments such as examinations.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

The teaching space used by the Institution continues to be based at Monticello House, Russell Square, London. This has not changed since the previous inspection. It was not possible to access the teaching space during this inspection but the teaching space was confirmed as appropriate at the previous inspection and no contrary indicators were identified during this inspection.

23. There are appropriate additional facilities for students and staff

23.1	Students have access to sufficient space and suitable facilities for private individual study and group work.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
23.2	Academic staff have access to sufficient personal space for preparing lessons, marking work and consultations with students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
23.3	Students and staff have access to space and facilities suitable for relaxation and the consumption of food and drink where appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
23.4	Students and staff have access to secure storage for personal possessions where appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA
23.5	There are individual offices or rooms, in which academic staff and senior management can hold private meetings and a room of sufficient size to hold staff meetings.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
23.6	Administrative offices are adequate in size and suitably resourced for the effective administration of the institution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution's office area has adequate space for the administrative staff to undertake their duties. The space is also available for academic staff to use to undertake preparation activities or marking of work if needed, however, staff generally prepare materials and undertake marking at their main place of work or at home and do not require such access.

There is also a suitable space to meet with students. This can also be used enable students to undertake independent work or relax and for staff meetings.

24. The library is appropriately stocked and provides a fit-for-purpose learning resource for the student body

24.1	There is sufficient provision of learning materials including books, journals and periodicals and online materials.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
24.2	There are clear, systematic and effective means of ensuring the adequacy and currency of library stock to reflect staff and student needs.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
24.3	The library has sufficient space for student independent study and group working.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA
24.4	There is a well-organised lending policy.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
24.5	The library is adequately staffed with appropriately qualified and experienced staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
24.6	Library opening times are sufficient to encourage and support students' independent learning.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

There is no on-site library although access to appropriate learning materials is provided to students. Core texts are provided to each student in hard copy, the cost of which is covered within the student fees. The students have access to the validating university library electronically and follow the usual access and lending arrangements for electronic material as the students at the host university.

The Institution also provides details of how to access local libraries including access to the University of London Library as a guest.

All processes follow the validating university standard policy and access is adequate for the students' needs. The libraries are well stocked with appropriate material and staff are available to answer any questions via online systems. Students do not require access to library-based study space, but have access to study areas in their accommodation, teaching areas and the Institution office area.

25. The information technology resources are well managed, effective and provide a fit-for-purpose learning resource for the student body

25.1	There is appropriate technological access and sufficient connectivity to enable students to study flexibly.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
25.2	Students have effective online resources that assist with their learning, optimise interaction between the institution and the student and enhance instructional and educational services.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
25.3	There is provision of appropriate, up-to-date software and virtual learning environments which reflect the needs of the programmes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
25.4	There is an effective means of ensuring the renewal of hardware and software to ensure efficiency and currency.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
25.5	The institution has access to the services of an experienced Information Technology (IT) technician who can ensure that systems are operative at all times and provide support to students, academic staff, and students and staff working remotely.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
25.6	The institution makes effective provision for students to access conventional and online resources.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

There is adequate wireless internet access at both the office and teaching venue for staff and students.

Students are provided with teaching materials via the Institution's internal noticeboard. This platform provides an accessible virtual learning environment for each course area.

The institution's Director of Information Technology (IT) ensures that all IT provision is adequate and regularly updated as required and is also able to provide technical support at the office. The teaching area has IT technicians available during teaching periods.

4.6 Quality Management, Assurance and Enhancement (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution undertakes regular monitoring of its academic provision in line with the validating universities' requirements. Reports are sent to the universities and follow the required periodic review and revalidation processes. These requirements are in line with the universities' policies and are contractually agreed in line with sector practice. Annual reports are also made to the Institution's board. These provide a review of the provision and identify any future actions required.

Reports cover the expected areas of student performance, achievement and experience. Regular student feedback is received through both informal discussions and more structured mechanisms such as student representation at programme meetings. External examiner reports are also considered. Close relationships are maintained with the employers who provide internship opportunities for the students.

27.2 There are good informal relationships with academic staff although there is no formal appraisal system in place.

The material that is provided to students in advance of their enrolment and to support their learning is effective and reviewed regularly by the Academic Director and marketing staff to ensure that it remains relevant.

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 a close working relationship with their validating universities.

The Institution has an impressive network of industry and sector contacts.

The staff at the Institution have a thorough knowledge of each of their students and provide excellent pastoral support.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

4.12 7.3 27.2 The Institution must implement their appraisal system for all staff.

High Medium Low

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

It is recommended that formal mechanisms for communication be developed between management and administrative staff to enable more effective dissemination of activities, opportunities and challenges in each area of the operation.

It is recommended that the Staff Handbook is made available to all staff to ensure they have easy access to the Institutions relevant staffing policies and procedures.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS - FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE