ONLINE DISTANCE AND BLENDED LEARNING (ODBL) SCHEME DOCUMENT

BAC

BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

RAISING STANDARDS IN THE
GLOBAL EDUCATION MARKET

CONTENTS

1. Introduction

BAC accreditation is a voluntary quality assurance scheme for independent providers of further and higher education and vocational training courses.

The online, distance and blended learning accreditation scheme is designed to offer a tailor-made quality assurance scheme which recognises the particular qualities and distinctive character of providers that deliver teaching and learning through a variety of media.

2. Eligibility for accreditation

Any independent education or training institution is eligible for accreditation as a provider of online, distance and blended learning provided that the following requirements are met:

➜ The provider is established as a deliverer of online, distance or blended learning programmes for a minimum period of two years.

➜ The provider is licensed by a local, regional or national licensing agency if such licensing is mandatory and/or holds accreditation from a nationally recognised educational or professional body and/or meets all mandatory requirements to operate.

➜ The provider is able to provide evidence of its financial stability.

➜ Effective control of the provider is the responsibility of an accountable management team.

➜ The provider is led by a proprietor or designated principal/director who has clear contractual responsibilities for the running of the provider and for the quality of its work.

➜ There are no grounds for believing the proprietor, principal/director or any other senior manager to be unfit to have responsibility for the provider. Such grounds may include an assessment of any previous position held at another institution/provider known to BAC, in particular, any institution/provider that consistently failed to meet BAC's standards or failed to repay debts owed to BAC.

3. Accreditation process

Prospective applicants are invited to contact BAC to discuss their eligibility for the scheme. If BAC is satisfied that the eligibility criteria have been met, the provider must submit a completed application form, along with supporting documents, that includes evidence of financial stability.

Once the application has been processed and passed, the next stage is the onsite full inspection. During this visit, the provider's full range of provision will be assessed and evidence will be required that the management is capable of maintaining acceptable standards during the period of accreditation and operating within the requirements of relevant local legislation.

The onsite full inspection will measure the provider and its provision against BAC's minimum standards. The full inspection report is then considered by the Accreditation Committee, which determines whether to award, defer or refuse accreditation. This committee is independent of BAC and is comprised of members from the education sector.

For comprehensive information on the whole of the accreditation process, please see the Accreditation Handbook.

4. Accreditation cycle

The online, distance and blended learning accreditation is valid for four years.

An accredited provider is subject to an interim inspection during an accreditation cycle.

During an accreditation cycle, a provider is subject to all BAC requirements. If there are any significant changes to the management, provision or premises and facilities, a supplementary inspection may be required for the continuation of accreditation.

Accredited providers are notified six months before the end of the accreditation period so that a full inspection can be arranged. The inspection report is then presented to the Accreditation Committee for consideration of re-accreditation before the accreditation period ends.

5. Inspection process

A full inspection is arranged following successful completion of the first stage of the application process.

The inspection process for online, distance and blended learning providers takes into account the special circumstances in which such providers work. The inspection comprises two distinct phases. The first is a computer-based assessment of the provider's website, online materials related to both publicity and learning, and a scrutiny of learners' work. The second phase involves a visit to the main office of the provider where the inspector meets with the management and administration to inspect documentation and to discuss the provider's systems and policies.

The duration of these visits will be determined by the breadth and size of the provider's services. If the provider offers blended learning that includes a face-to-face component, the inspector will visit the delivery venue on a separate occasion to inspect the premises and observe the teaching.

With newly accredited providers, an interim inspection is organised in the first year of accreditation. For accredited institutions, an interim inspection is organised in the middle of the four-year accreditation cycle.

Institutions are required to complete and submit a self-evaluation report assessing their quality assurance mechanisms against specific criteria prior to the inspection being conducted.

5.1 Inspection areas

A full inspection covers the following inspection areas:

➜ Management, Staffing and Administration
➜ Teaching, Learning and Assessment
➜ Learner Support
➜ Face-to-Face Component

5.2 Minimum standards

The minimum standards for the online, distance and blended learning accreditation are set out on page 6. Details are provided of the documents that will need to be supplied and reviewed and of the staff members who will be interviewed by the inspector/s during the inspection.

5.3 Legal and statutory compliance

All new applicants and those applying for re-accreditation are required to sign a declaration stating that the institution complies with all relevant statutory requirements in force in the country of operation in connection with such matters as:

➜ Health and safety
➜ Safeguarding
➜ Employment law
➜ Copyright
➜ Disability provision
➜ Equal opportunities
➜ Planning consent
➜ Data protection
➜ Public liability

It is the provider's responsibility and the personal responsibility of the head of the provider to ensure that all requirements are met.

BAC inspectors will not inspect the above areas but will note any observed breach of regulations. Although the compliance with statutory requirements is not a BAC minimum standard, evidence of non-compliance will provide the Accreditation Committee with grounds for refusal or withdrawal of accreditation.

6. Programmes and awards

BAC's policy is that providers should offer courses leading to approved external awards granted by recognised awarding bodies. BAC does accept, however, that there may be instances where there is no appropriate external awarding body and that the provider will only offer internal awards.

BAC's inspectors will consider the accuracy of any claims made by institutions as to the level and status of any internal awards. This will include a requirement for evidence of the extent to which the institution's internal awards are accepted for the purposes of employment or further study. BAC encourages institutions to involve external moderators in the assessment where appropriate.

7. Accreditation fees

All providers awarded accreditation under this scheme will be required to pay the online, distance and blended learning provider accreditation fee, which is calculated on the basis of the number of students per annum. This is due when accreditation has been awarded and then every September thereafter.

All other fees (including application and inspection fees) are the same for each type of accreditation.

Accurate figures of student numbers must be supplied to BAC once a year on request. If such figures are not supplied by the deadline given, the full maximum accreditation fees will be charged. Failure to pay the annual accreditation fee by the given deadline on the invoice may result in withdrawal of accreditation.

8. Accreditation statements and marks

Providers that have been awarded the online, distance and blended learning accreditation may use the statement of accreditation in their promotional materials subject to certain conditions.

Acceptable forms of the statement are:

➜ "Accredited by the British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education as an Online, Distance and Blended Learning Provider"
➜ "Accredited by the British Accreditation Council as an Online, Distance and Blended Learning Provider"
➜ "Accredited by BAC as an Online, Distance and Blended Learning Provider"
➜ "BAC-accredited as an Online, Distance and Blended Learning Provider"

Once accredited, providers may use the BAC accreditation mark of the online, distance and blended learning accreditation scheme in their promotional materials subject to certain conditions. The standard accreditation mark features the BAC logo, colour-coded to the specific accreditation scheme, and the word 'accredited'.

9. Meeting standards and key indicators

Some of these standards and key indicators may not be applicable to your organisation. This is a judgment that will be made by the inspector/s during the inspection process.

10. Contacting BAC

Further guidance and details of the generic requirements and responsibilities for BAC-accredited institutions can be found in the Accreditation Handbook.

Please contact info@the-bac.org for further information.

11. Accreditation scheme standards

Inspection area – management, staffing and administration

Minimum standards 1–5

1   The provider is effectively managed

1.1   The management structure is clearly defined, documented and understood, including the role and extent of the authority of any owners, trustees or governing body.

1.2   The head of the provider and other senior managers are suitably qualified and/or experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying them out.

1.3   There are clear channels of communication between the management and others working for the organisation, including those working remotely.

1.4   The provider has a written statement of its mission and goals which effectively guides its activities that is communicated to all stakeholders and is effectively implemented and regularly reviewed.

1.5   The provider has a written risk management strategy that includes financial planning and data breaches and is effectively implemented and regularly reviewed.

2   The administration of online, distance and blended learning is effective

2.1   Administrators are suitably qualified and/or experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and duties and are effective in carrying them out.

2.2   The size of the administration team is sufficient to ensure the effective day-to-day running of the provider.

2.3   The administrative support available is clearly defined, documented and understood.

2.4   Administrative policies, procedures and systems are up-to-date, thorough, well-documented and effectively disseminated

across the provider.

2.5   The working environment is fit for purpose and suitably resourced for the effective administration of the provider.

2.6   Data collection and collation systems are effective in supporting the administration of the provider, including the logging and monitoring of tutor and student interaction.

2.7   Learners' and tutors' personal records are sufficiently detailed and regularly updated.

2.8   The provider has a robust security system and policies in place for protecting the data of its learners and tutors.

3   The provider employs appropriate staff

3.1   There are appropriate policies and effective procedures for the recruitment of suitably qualified and experienced staff that include for self-employed staff a signed performance service level agreement.

3.2   Appropriate checks, including experience and qualifications, are carried out before recruitment and accurate records are maintained.

3.3   The provider has a robust tutor recruitment system that includes a face-to-face interview using a suitable online communication platform.

3.4   There is an effective system for regularly reviewing the performance of all staff that incorporates regular monitoring of tutors' feedback to learners.

3.5   All staff are appropriately supported in their continuing professional development.

4   Publicity material provides a comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate description of the online, distance and blended learning offered

4.1   Text and images used in publicity materials provide an accurate depiction of the provider's facilities and the range and nature of the resources and services offered, including where appropriate, location and administrative premises.

4.2 Information on programmes is comprehensive and accurate.

4.3 The provider's key policies are accessible through the website.

5 The provider has effective systems to monitor its own standards and assess its own performance with a view to continuous improvement

5.1 There are effective systems for monitoring and periodically reviewing all aspects of the provider's performance.

5.2 The provider has effective mechanisms for obtaining feedback from learners and other stakeholders, such as staff, partner providers and employers, on all aspects of the provider's provision.

5.3 Feedback is obtained, recorded and analysed on a regular basis.

5.4 The feedback is reviewed by the management and appropriate action is taken.

5.5 There is a mechanism for reporting to the learners what the provider has done in response to their feedback.

5.6 Reports are compiled at least annually, that include the results of the provider's performance reviews, an analysis of relevant data, including learner feedback, and action plans.

5.7 Action plans are implemented and regularly reviewed, with outcomes reported to senior management.

Documentation required
→ Internal and external quality assurance documentation, including copies of any policies used as a means of quality management, annual reports and action plans
→ Responses made as a result of external audits
→ Samples and summaries of any learner and other stakeholder feedback, including completed feedback questionnaires
→ Action plans for dealing with stakeholder feedback
→ Documentation relating to policies and procedures informing stakeholders of the response made to their feedback

→ Performance data maintained by the organisation, for example, examination pass rates/stakeholder feedback scores/attendance rates
→ Annual performance reviews against strategic targets at organisation/department/course and programme levels
→ Up-to-date organisation chart or outline description of the staff structure, with names of post-holders and individual roles
→ List of committees/boards together with their terms of reference and membership
→ Detailed Curricula Vitae (CVs) for all staff including all academic/teaching staff to include evidence of academic and teaching qualifications
→ Detailed job descriptions of for all staff
→ Minutes of relevant committee and/or board meetings
→ Minutes of staff meetings
→ The strategy/development plan including strategic targets
→ Documentation on risk planning and completed risk assessments
→ Financial planning documentation
→ General management and administrative policies, procedures and systems
→ Samples of administration correspondence with learners
→ Policies to protect the data of participants and staff
→ Key policies underpinning the running of the organisation, for example, those relating to staff recruitment, staff performance monitoring and staff development, quality assurance, assessment, and learner welfare
→ Staff personnel files and records
→ Up-to-date signed contracts of employment for all staff
→ Self-employment contracts/agreements for all self-employed staff
→ Staff, including academic and teaching staff, induction programmes
→ Staff handbook
→ Staff appraisal procedures and completed documentation
→ Evidence of monitoring of teaching/training/tutoring staff, including completed classroom observation records
→ Evidence of continuing professional development/training opportunities and individual development logs
→ Up-to-date prospectus, course brochures and other marketing materials to include clear entry requirements where applicable

Inspection area – teaching, learning and assessment

Minimum standards 6–12

6 Management of the programmes is effective

6.1 There is an effective manager or management team with experience of online, distance and blended learning who have responsibility for programme delivery and management of the teaching, learning and assessment team.

6.2 The allocation of tutors to programmes provides a consistent learning experience and delivery is monitored to ensure consistency.

6.3 Realistic deadlines and schedules, including revision periods, are set and communicated well in advance to learners.

6.4 Delivery methods and programme design ensure that the programme objectives and intended learning outcomes are effectively achieved.

6.5 The programmes' content is regularly reviewed and reflects current knowledge and practice.

6.6 Programmes are designed in ways that allow learners to develop the knowledge and skills required for final examinations and/or assessments or that meet the needs of the learners and other stakeholders.

6.7 The commissioning of individual course content and materials is managed effectively and is checked to ensure standardisation across the provision.

6.8 Learners have appropriate access to staff for academic and/or learning support.

7 Tutors have an appropriate level of subject knowledge and pedagogic skill relevant to online, distance and blended learning

7.1 Tutors are appropriately qualified and/or experienced.

7.2 Tutors demonstrate an understanding of the challenges and demands of online, distance and blended learning.

7.3 Tutors have an appropriate level of subject knowledge, pedagogic and communication skills that allows them to deliver the programmes effectively.

7.4 Tutors are appropriately trained with respect to provider policies, learner needs, teaching and instructional approaches, and the use of the technology.

8 Tutors respond to the individual learning needs of learners

8.1 The academic and/or professional backgrounds and particular support needs of learners are taken into account in the planning, design and delivery of the programmes.

8.2 Learners are encouraged and enabled to develop independent learning skills.

8.3 Tutors employ effective strategies to check learners' understanding of concepts and programme content.

9 Learners receive appropriate assessment and feedback on their performance and progress, which are effectively monitored

9.1 Programmes include a schedule of assessments, the procedures and criteria for which are available in writing and are provided in advance to learners and tutors.

9.2 Assessments maintain an appropriate focus on assessment criteria and the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

9.3 Ongoing assessments appropriately reflect the content and standards of any final assessments.

9.4 Learner assessment is guided by grading policies that are consistent and well-communicated with a robust, fair and effective marking system that ensures assessments are returned to learners in a timely manner.

9.5 Progress and assessment outcomes are monitored to enable the identification of learners who are not making satisfactory progress and timely interventions take place if required.

9.6 Feedback is given to individual learners on a regular basis, tailored to meet their specific needs and constructive in its nature and delivery.

9.7 Learners are made aware of how their progress relates to their target level of achievement.

9.8 Timely advice and guidance on alternative programmes are provided to learners who are judged to be making insufficient progress.

9.9 The provider takes effective steps to identify and discourage cheating and plagiarism and takes effective action.

9.10 Tutor and learner assessment submissions are monitored and appropriate action is taken if the timeliness of these falls below expectations.

10 The provider offers courses leading to accredited awards granted by recognised awarding bodies

11 There is a clear rationale for programmes leading to unaccredited or internal awards

11.1 There is a clear statement of the level claimed relative to the relevant national qualifications framework, for example, the RQF, CQFW or SCQF in the United Kingdom, and evidence that learners who receive the award meet the stated requirements for that level.

11.2 There is evidence of the extent to which the awards are accepted for the purposes of employment or further study, such as learners' destination data, employer feedback, student testimonials and success stories and post-course questionnaires.

11.3 External moderators are involved in the assessment process.

12 There are satisfactory procedures for the administration of examinations and other means of assessment

12.1 The provider complies with the requirements of the relevant awarding bodies in terms of assessment security and administration.

12.2 For internal awards, there are effective systems in place for assessment security and administration.

12.3 For internal awards, there are clear procedures for learners to appeal against their marks.

12.4 There is an authentication process which

enables the provider to verify that the learner who is registered on the programme is the same person who attends, completes the programme and receives any programme credit.

Documentation required

→ Detailed up-to-date list of programmes available, taken from the application form and/or data collection form, so please just update one of those lists if necessary, rather than producing something new

→ A detailed timetable of the courses/classes taking place at the time of the inspection

→ Whole course/academic year plans/schemes of work

→ Module/course descriptions

→ Completed lesson/lecture plans

→ Outline curriculum for each training programme, including assessment procedures

→ Current class timetables

→ Policies and procedures for the acquisition of teaching/training and learning resources

→ Assessment procedures/schedule of assessments/samples of assessment methods/assessment tools/statement of intended learning outcomes

→ Samples of marked learners' work with feedback for the learner

→ Records of learner progress

→ Summaries of results/grades awarded for the previous three years for each academic programme or from the start date if the courses have not been available for that time

→ Policies to prevent cheating and plagiarism

→ Agreements with awarding bodies

→ Copies of annual reports to the awarding bodies for the previous three years for each academic programme or from the start date if the courses have not been available for that time

→ Copies of audits and academic reviews carried out by or on behalf of the awarding bodies or partnership organisations

→ Documents relating to external moderation

→ Copies of external examiners' reports for the previous three years for each academic programme or from the start date if the course has not been available for that time

→ Learners' academic appeals and grievance procedures

→ A list of learners on site on the day/s of the inspection, broken down by level of English competence (where relevant), gender, age, country of origin, programme and start date, to choose a group to meet with as part of the inspection

Inspection area – learner support

Minimum standards 13–16

13 The enrolment process is comprehensive, transparent and supportive to applicants

13.1 The provider ensures that the specific programmes on which learners are registered are likely to meet the learners' expectations and needs.

13.2 Applicants are provided with sufficient information to make an informed decision on the suitability of the programmes and their delivery methods and can discuss any concerns before enrolment.

13.3 Enrolment and application documentation is easily accessible and simple to complete and submit.

13.4 The provider replies to all application enquiries in line with its appropriate target response times.

13.5 Entry requirements for each programme, including those relating to language ability where applicable, are set at an appropriate level and clearly stated in the programme descriptions read by prospective learners.

13.6 The provider takes reasonable steps to ensure that learners accepted for programmes meet any enrolment requirements and that any claimed qualifications are verified.

13.7 The provider makes it clear to applicants that they are responsible for checking that they have the digital literacy and system requirements necessary to study on their chosen programme.

13.8 The provider has effective systems to identify learners who have special educational needs and disabilities requiring additional learning support or other any reasonable adjustments so that these can be put in place.

13.9 Learners apply for and are enrolled on programmes under fair and transparent contractual terms and conditions, which include appropriate refund arrangements and a cooling-off period.

14 Services provided meet the reasonable needs of learners

14.1 Staff are available to assist learners to resolve issues of a general and technical nature and all enquiries from learners are handled promptly and sympathetically.

14.2 The provider supports and encourages peer interaction through a variety of channels, including social media and virtual learning environment platforms.

14.3 Staff monitor the online activity of learners and tutors and take action promptly if there are concerns about cyberbullying or other online risks to learners.

14.4 Learners have access to a fair written complaints procedure of which they are informed at the start of the programme.

14.5 Learners are advised of BAC's complaints procedure.

14.6 Effective safeguarding arrangements are in place for learners under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults, which are regularly reviewed.

14.7 A suitable policy and effective arrangements are in place to protect learners from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.

15 Programme materials are appropriate to the medium of delivery and are effective

15.1 Programme designers make effective use of appropriate teaching and learning resources.

15.2 Programme materials are designed for a specific and clearly stated level of study and include appropriate support material.

15.3 Programme materials are appropriately presented and sufficiently comprehensive to enable learners to achieve the programme objectives.

15.4 Programme materials are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure that they are accurate and reflect current knowledge and practice.

15.5 Instructions and guidance on how to study and how to use the learning materials are made available to assist learners to learn effectively.

16   The technology used to deliver the programmes is fit for purpose and effective

16.1   The provider uses appropriate and accessible technology to optimise the interaction between the provider and the learner.

16.2   The provider ensures that the materials and learning resources can be easily accessed by learners and checks this regularly.

16.3   The provider has access to the services of an experienced technical support provider that ensures systems are operative at all times and provides appropriate support to tutors and staff working remotely.

Documentation required

➜ Information for learners relating to qualifications and awarding bodies
➜ Initial guidance documents for learners
➜ Enrolment application form with details of fees and refund policy
➜ Completed learner application forms and any learner contracts
➜ Policy on accreditation of prior learning, including experiential learning for prospective participants
➜ Learner files with details of registration, enrolment, attendance and qualifications
➜ Induction packs for home and international learners
➜ Sample placement/initial tests, including completed documentation
➜ Careers advice and guidance documentation
➜ Learner handbook
➜ E-policy that covers learners' onsite use of social media and devices such as mobile telephones, tablets and cameras
➜ Policy documents related to discrimination, bullying and abusive behaviour, including cyberbullying
➜ Complaints policy and procedure documentation, including reference to BAC's complaints procedure if relevant
➜ For a list of the safeguarding documentation required, please see the safeguarding checklist in Appendix B
➜ Policy on preventing radicalisation and extremism
➜ Evidence of appropriate prevention of radicalisation and extremism training for all staff
➜ Risk assessment regarding prevention of radicalisation and extremism

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Inspection area – face-to-face component (if applicable)

Minimum standards 17–26

17   The provider has formal arrangements in place that mean it has possession of and/or access to suitable premises

17.1   The provider has formal arrangements in place that mean it has possession of and/or access to suitable premises.

17.2   The provider has access to suitable external premises of a temporary or occasional nature for training purposes.

18   The premises provide a safe, secure and clean environment for learners and staff

18.1   Access to the premises is appropriately restricted and secured.

18.2   The premises are maintained in an adequate state of repair, decoration and cleanliness.

18.3   There are specific safety rules in hazardous areas, for example, science laboratories, that are readily accessible to learners, staff and visitors.

18.4   General guidance on health and safety is made available to learners, staff and visitors.

18.5   There is adequate signage inside and outside the premises and notice boards for the display of general information.

18.6   There is adequate circulation space for the number of learners and staff accommodated and a suitable area in which to receive visitors.

18.7   There are toilet facilities of an appropriate number and level of cleanliness.

18.8   There is adequate heating and ventilation in all rooms.

19   Training rooms and other learning areas are appropriate for the programmes offered

19.1   Training rooms and other learning areas provide adequate accommodation for the teaching/training sessions allocated to them.

19.2 Training rooms and any specialised learning areas, for example, laboratories, workshops and studios, are equipped to a level that allows for the effective delivery of each programme.

19.3 There are facilities suitable for conducting the assessments required for each programme.

19.4 Training sessions are timetabled and rooms are allocated appropriately for the programmes offered.

20 There are appropriate additional facilities for learners and staff

20.1 Learners have access to sufficient space, which could include a library and suitable IT facilities, so that they can carry out their own private work and/or study.

20.2 Tutors have access to sufficient personal space for preparing teaching/training sessions, marking work and relaxation.

20.3 Learners and staff have access to space and facilities suitable for relaxation and the consumption of food and drink, including facilities that are located outside the premises.

20.4 There are individual offices or rooms in which tutors and senior management can hold private meetings and a room of sufficient size to hold staff meetings.

21 There is an appropriate policy on learner attendance and effective procedures and systems to enforce it

21.1 There is a clear policy on learner attendance and punctuality that is communicated to all learners and other stakeholders.

21.2 Accurate and secure records of attendance and punctuality at each session are kept for all learners, collated centrally and regularly reviewed.

21.3 Learner absences are followed up promptly and appropriate action is taken.

22 Learners attending face-to-face components receive appropriate support

22.1 There is at least one named staff member responsible for learner welfare who is suitably trained and/or experienced accessible to all learners and available to provide advice.

22.2 Learners receive appropriate information, advice and guidance before the start of the course.

22.3 Learners receive an appropriate induction and relevant information at the start of the course.

22.4 Learners are issued with a contact number for out-of-hours and emergency support.

22.5 The provider has policies in place to avoid discrimination and a procedure for dealing with any abusive behaviour, including cyberbullying, and these are effectively implemented.

22.6 There is an e-policy in place that references any existing staff and learner codes of conduct and covers learners' onsite use of social media and devices such as mobile telephones, tablets and cameras.

22.7 The provider collects contact details for learners and their next of kin and appropriate staff can access the information quickly and easily, in and out of normal operating hours.

22.8 There are appropriate policies and procedures for the acquisition of teaching/training and learning resources which ensure that all tutors have access to the appropriate quantity and quality of resources on the day/s of the course for the benefit of the learners.

22.9 Teaching/training sessions maintain an appropriate focus on any assessment objectives or statement of intended learning outcomes established by the awarding and/or examination body.

23 International learners are provided with specific advice and assistance

23.1 International learners receive appropriate advice before their arrival on travelling to and living in their host country.

23.2 International learners receive an appropriate induction upon arrival covering issues specific to the local area.

23.3 Information and advice specific to international learners continues to be available throughout their programme of study.

23.4 Provision of support takes into account cultural

and religious considerations.

24   Tutors are suitable for the courses to which they are allocated and effective in delivering them

24.1   Tutors are supported in their continuing professional development and enabled to develop further pedagogic techniques to enhance the learning.

24.2   Tutors respond to different backgrounds and particular support needs of learners in their delivery of the teaching/training sessions.

24.3   Tutors employ effective strategies to involve all learners in active participation and to check their understanding of concepts and course content.

24.4   There is an effective system for regularly reviewing the performance of the tutors that includes regular scheduled course delivery observations.

25   Residential accommodation that is directly managed by the provider is fit for purpose, well-maintained and appropriately supervised

25.1   Any residential accommodation is clean, safe and of a standard that is adequate to meet the needs of the learners.

25.2   Any residential accommodation where learners under 18 are accommodated is open to inspection by the appropriate authorities, including Ofsted.

25.3   Clear rules regarding fire safety and other health and safety procedures are in place and appropriate precautions are taken for the security of learners and their property.

25.4   A level of supervision appropriate to the needs of learners is provided.

25.5   Appropriate measures are in place to ensure that learners under the age of 18 and those over the age of 18 are separated when allocating accommodation.

26   Where homestay accommodation is organised, the welfare of learners is ensured and the provider's relationship with hosts is properly managed

26.1   Homestay accommodation is selected so that it provides a safe and comfortable living environment for learners and is appropriately located for travel to and from the provider.

26.2   Homestay accommodation is inspected before learners are placed there and is subject to regular re-inspection by a responsible member of staff or agent of the provider.

26.3   The provider has appropriate contracts with the hosts and learners before and during the homestay placement that clearly set out the rules, terms and conditions of host family accommodation.

26.4   Appropriate advice and support are given to both hosts and learners before and during the homestay placement.

26.5   Clear monitoring procedures are in place with opportunities for learner feedback and prompt action taken in the event of problems.

Documentation required
➜ Evidence of the ownership or tenure of the premises or evidence of the hire or lease agreement
➜ Floor plan of each site being inspected accommodation
➜ Health and safety guidance for learners, staff and visitors
➜ Information relating to the number, specification, location and accessibility of computing and related IT resources
➜ Guide to the library and IT facilities
➜ Catalogue of library stock
➜ Evidence of attendance monitoring, including class registers for each course/programme
➜ Documents related to residential accommodation
➜ Documents related to home-stay accommodation, including advice to home-stay learners and organisations

Appendix A: Glossary

Definitions and/or explanations of key terms in the BAC standards document.

Cyberbullying – the use of electronic communication to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature.

External moderator – an academic who is competent in terms of the academic level and subject matter of the assessments that he/she is called upon to moderate. The external moderator is external to the institution offering the assessments and has no conflict of interest in relation to the provider. He/she 'steps into the shoes' of the provider's assessors to provide a balanced and unbiased view and to ensure that the quality and standard of the assessments are appropriate and that the assessments are fit for purpose.

Extremism – holding extreme political or religious views that may deny rights to any group or individual. Extremism can refer to a range of views, for example, racism, homophobia, right-wing ideology and any religious extremism.

Intended learning outcomes – an intended learning outcome describes in detail what learners should know or be able to do on completion of a learning programme or part thereof. It may relate to knowledge, understanding and skills that the learner did not have before undertaking the programme.

Key policies – policies that are considered crucial to the effective governance, management and operation of an organisation. Some examples are provided as part of the standards, for example, relating to key indicator 2.4, 2.8, 3.1, 8.4, 11.3, 12.9, 13.4, 13.6, 13.7, 21.1, 22.5, 22.6, 22.8 and 26.5. However, there may be others that are relevant to an organisation.

Mission statement – most organisations have a published mission statement that sets out the key aims and aspirations of the organisation. This provides a focus for the provider and its future development.

Performance review – an internal review of how well the provider has achieved its mission and goals, through which the provider assesses what it does well and what it could develop and/or improve in the future.

Programme objectives – brief, clear statements that describe the overall intended purposes and expected results of undertaking a programme of study.

Radicalisation – the process of an individual or a group of people adopting extreme political, religious or social doctrines or ideas.

Robust security system – a system or set of processes which ensure that all data is protected from unauthorised access and data corruption. They include key management practices that protect data across all applications and platforms – see key indicator 2.8.

Service level agreement – a contract between a service provider and its customers which establishes a set of deliverables that one party has agreed to provide to another.

Stakeholders – any person, group or organisation that has an interest or concern in an organisation and can affect or be affected by the organisation's actions, objectives and policies, for example, learners, staff, and learners' employers.

Submissions – learner and tutor interactions and posts relating to assessments made via the electronic learning platform.

Target level of achievement – the goals and objectives related to the overall programme objectives and intended learning outcomes that the learner hopes to achieve as a result of studying on a programme. The goals and objectives should include an element of stretching to support continuous development of the learner.

Working environment – the surrounding conditions in which an employee operates, which could be at home or in a commercial office space.

UK Qualification Frameworks –
RQF – The Regulated Qualifications Framework in England and Northern Ireland
CQFW – The Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales
SCQF – The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

Appendix B: care of under 18s and vulnerable adults

While we do not generally inspect compliance with legal and statutory requirements, given the importance of this aspect in educational contexts and the fact that we have a duty of care to ensure that such providers are fully compliant with all safeguarding requirements, we are obliged to inspect this aspect of the provision. The institution will still be asked to sign the Declaration of Compliance with Legal and Statutory Requirements, which also covers safeguarding.

Key Definitions

Children: In accordance with the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004, a child is any person who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Vulnerable adults: A vulnerable adult is generally defined as 'an adult who is unable to function cognitively or adequately undertake basic day-to-day functions without the help or oversight of someone not impaired in these ways or who is unable to protect him/herself against significant harms or exploitation'.

During the inspection, the inspection team will assess an organisation on the following aspects of safeguarding.

1. Is there a suitable policy for the protection of students under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults that is reviewed at least annually?
2. Is there a named designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who is responsible for implementing this policy and responding to child protection allegations?
3. The policy should be a working document (regularly reviewed) that sets out an organisation's commitment to protect children from harm and the procedures in place to support this. It should cover policy statements, codes of conduct, health and safety, safer recruitment, training, welfare provision and child protection procedures (including awareness, how to raise concerns, responding to disclosure, named person/s responsible, the decision-making process, systems for recording and reporting information and handling allegations/incidents). The policy should be clear and relevant to the organisation and updated at least annually.
4. Has the provider made the safeguarding policy known to all adults in contact with under 18s through their role with the organisation (including employees, sub-contractors, homestay hosts, group leaders and volunteers) and provided guidance or training relevant to its effective implementation?
5. Is there a code of conduct for staff covering relationships with students under the age of 18 that includes whistleblowing procedures?
6. Are there arrangements in place to identify any person who is vulnerable and to ensure the right help and support are provided in a reasonable time scale?
7. Are up-to-date contact details recorded for a parent, carer or person acting in loco parentis for students aged under 18 (and under 25 for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities if the students wish this to be so)?
8. Are students aware of how they can access support or complain if they do not feel safe?
9. Is there an appropriate course of action to follow should a participant/student report abuse or concerns about their wellbeing? In reports of abuse, the arrangements should indicate how to respond to disclosures and pass them on to statutory agencies and deal with staff who are subject to allegations.
10. Do recruitment and selection procedures follow safer recruitment best practice? Do the recruitment and selection procedures and other human resources management processes help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children or are otherwise unsuited to work with them? Is appropriate information provided to job applicants? Do recruitment materials for roles involving responsibility for or substantial access to under 18s (staff and host families) include reference to the organisation's commitment to safeguarding and inform applicants that suitability checks will be required?
11. Are arrangements made for appropriate checks on staff, including enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks from 2013 for staff who have regular, unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults and where appropriate (based on risk assessment), on proprietor/governors and volunteers.

   In accordance with best practice, appropriate DBS checks should be carried out on all host families. These checks should be carried out prior to their appointment or prior to the start of their regulated unsupervised

activities. If a new starter does commence employment prior to clearance being received, they must have signed a self-declaration and their access should be supervised at all times; they must not be left alone with children.

12. Does a single central record (SCR) exist of all checks on college staff and where appropriate, proprietor/governors and volunteers?

13. Are references taken up for all staff prior to employment and recorded on the SCR?

14. Do all staff, volunteers and contractors undertake appropriate training on safeguarding that is recorded and monitored for currency? Is this training updated regularly in line with advice from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)?

15. For those working with regularly or hosting under 18s and vulnerable adults, does the training include how to recognise signs of abuse and how to respond to disclosures from students?

16. Is safeguarding training part of the induction training for all newly appointed permanent staff, temporary staff and volunteers? Does this include the safeguarding policy, staff behaviour policy or code of conduct and the identification and role of the DSL and how to recognise and respond to concerns?

17. Good practice is that all staff are trained to level 1 (basic), management to level 2 (advanced) and the DSL to level 3.

18. Is there a board-level lead responsible for safeguarding? Is there a designated senior member of staff responsible for safeguarding arrangements who has been trained to the appropriate level (including inter-agency working) and understands her/his responsibilities with respect to the protection and welfare of students under 18 and vulnerable adults?

19. Is clear information provided to the parents/guardians of under 18s? Does the publicity or other information made available before enrolment provide an accurate description of the level of care and support given to students under 18, especially concerning any periods when students are unsupervised as well as sleeping arrangements when accommodated overnight or when at leisure?

20. Are there safe working arrangements for off-site activities, such as any social programme?

21. Are effective arrangements made to protect participants from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism? These include policy wording, a risk assessment and staff training.

22. Is there an e-safety policy that references the staff code of conduct and students' use of social media and devices such as mobile phones and cameras onsite?

23. Do managers and staff take action immediately if there are concerns about any form of cyberbullying or other online risks to the students?

24. Are arrangements for accommodation through homestay, halls of residence or otherwise appropriately managed and registered in accordance with national requirements?

25. When the institution arranges host family accommodation for under 18s, are enhanced DBS and barred list checks made for all permanent residents who are aged 16 or over?

26. Where under 16s are accommodated, other than with their parents or guardians, for more than 28 days, has the local authority been alerted?

Useful websites for further information and guidance on safeguarding

The Children Act 2004:
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/pdfs/ukpga_20040031_en.pdf

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019: – refer to this document as a basis for good practice, although it is our understanding that it is not a legal requirement in the private sector:

assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835733/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2019.pdf

Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-safer-recruitment-in-education

Safeguarding:
www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/care-children

Prevent:
www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/information_for_providers_on_prevent_obligations_0.pdf

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