



## **BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT**

### **INTERIM INSPECTION (Short Course Provider)**

**PROVIDER:** Capernwray Bible School

**ADDRESS:** Capernwray Hall  
Carnforth  
Lancashire  
LA6 1AG

**HEAD OF PROVIDER:** Mr Jonathan Halsey

**ACCREDITATION STATUS:** Accredited

**DATE OF INSPECTION:** 20 October 2020

**ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE:** Continued accreditation, 28 January 2021

## **PART A – INTRODUCTION**

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### **1. Background to the provider**

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Capernwray Bible School (CBS/the Provider) is an interdenominational Christian bible school that offers short-term accredited courses at Level 3 on the United Kingdom (UK) Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). It is operated by the Capernwray Missionary Fellowship of Torchbearers (the Fellowship), which has 25 centres worldwide. The Fellowship is a charitable organisation and a company limited by guarantee, both of which are registered in England. The five Trustees of the Fellowship have overall responsibility for CBS. BAC accreditation applies to CBS's provision in the UK.

The Provider is located in the Fellowship's premises of Capernwray Hall, a former manor house set within 175 acres of farmland and landscaped gardens in North Lancashire. It houses CBS and the Fellowship's Christian Holiday Centre.

CBS aims to provide biblical teaching and practical training that benefits participants and the community of the church. Its objectives are to develop participants spiritually, academically, personally and socially, so that they can play their full part in Christian life.

The Fellowship's Managing Director and Head of Institution (MD) administers CBS on behalf of the Trustees. The CBS's Principal supports the MD. They work together with other senior managers, including the Operations Manager and Finance and Facilities Manager, to fulfil CBS's aims and objectives.

CBS offered its first short-term Bible course in 1949 for participants from the UK and from other countries and this international aspect remains a major part of its ethos.

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

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CBS offers a ten-week Spring course on Principles in Christian Life and Service commencing in April, and a 22-week Winter course on Foundations in Christian Life and Service commencing in September. Participants can elect to take both courses sequentially. Both courses are full time.

Courses are delivered through face-to-face learning and are residential. If required, participants are able to participate from their rooms as all learning can be accessed online, through a mixture of live-streaming and video-conferencing.

Lectures are the primary teaching method, and tutorials, seminars and small-group work are also used. Teaching takes place in the mornings and evenings, with afternoons free for other activities. Participants are also involved in the activities of local churches, youth groups and school assemblies in the community. These outreach activities are currently provided online.

There are 60 participants enrolled on the current Winter course. All the participants are over 18 years of age and the Provider does not accept applications from applicants who will be under the age of 18 at the course's commencement. The majority of participants are in their late teens or early twenties and are female.

The majority of participants are from Canada, the United States of America (USA), Germany and the UK. The remaining participants are from Switzerland, Croatia, the Netherlands, Ecuador and Uzbekistan.

A total of 32 participants have been accepted for the Spring course, and CBS anticipates that numbers will rise to at least 60.

There are no formal academic or language entry requirements, as the key admission criteria are an applicant's intent to deepen their Christian discipleship, spiritual growth and Biblical knowledge.

### **3. Inspection process**

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The inspection was carried out over one day by one inspector making use of remote online communication methods. The inspector had discussions with the MD, a Trustee, the Principal and other senior management staff. Trainers and participants were interviewed. The inspector observed a teaching session by live-streaming and saw a demonstration of the new administrative system. The premises and facilities were inspected by video. A wide range of documentation was also scrutinised. CBS co-operated very well with the whole inspection process.

### **4. Inspection history**

<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Date</b>
Full Accreditation	28-29 May 2019

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## **PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE**

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*The following judgements 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**

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CBS reduced the maximum number of participants who could enrol on its Winter course to 60 in response to the Coronavirus pandemic. It also upgraded its wireless provision so that all lectures could be live-streamed to participants' bedrooms if they were unable to attend face-to-face classes for part of the course. The Provider produced detailed information in advance for participants and staff on the changes to its provision, so they were well-prepared.

New online administrative systems have replaced previous paper-based systems, with online functions including course applications and the submission and marking of assignments. The Human Resources (HR) systems have also been improved in order to provide adequate support to enable more efficient planning and compliance.

The management structure has been reviewed. A new post of Operations Manager and the post of Finance and Facilities Manager have replaced the previous post of Bursar. The Head of HR role has been expanded to include Compliance. The Women's Pastoral Care Co-ordinator role has been assimilated into the role of the Assistant Dean of Participants. The Student Studies Co-ordinator now has a part-time assistant. The revised structure provides an appropriate framework for future planning and course delivery.

Some facilities have been upgraded. New reception and main office areas were opened in September 2019. This creates a more welcoming and effective environment for participants and visitors on their arrival and for the handling of their subsequent queries and bookings. The refurbishment of the office space and meeting room has also improved the quality of the facilities.

The Provider is working towards introducing a Level 4 (RQF) course in September 2021. It is in discussions with theological colleges about the potential recognition of the Level 4 qualification as equivalent to the first year of an undergraduate degree course.

### **2. Response to actions points in last report**

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There were no action points identified in the last report.

### **3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report**

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*The Provider should make the link between assessment and learning objectives in planning documents more consistently evidenced.*

Assignment header sheets include the learning objectives and the sheets direct participants towards further details included in the participant handbook. The Student Studies Co-ordinator and trainers regularly remind participants of the relevant learning outcomes. Markers' comments on assignments regularly reference the participant's progress towards meeting the relevant learning outcomes. This ensures that the link between assessment and learning outcomes is clear and enables CBS and participants to monitor progress effectively. These mechanisms were implemented for the Winter course in 2019.

*The Provider should consider providing a programme at a lower level on the RQF than the current offering as this could benefit some prospective participants and give a better choice on the level of programme and accreditation available.*

This recommendation was considered by senior managers and the Board of Trustees. As part of this, CBS reviewed the participant pass rate. Their view was that, as the vast majority of participants are able to achieve the current Level 3 qualification, there is no urgent need for the introduction of a Level 2 qualification. CBS believes that the introduction of a Level 2 qualification could act as a disincentive and encourage a minority of

Level 3 participants to reduce their efforts to derive maximum benefit from the course. The Provider was also keen to direct its available resources towards developing a Level 4 course. CBS will continue to monitor the situation to evaluate whether a Level 2 course is desirable and feasible.

#### 4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

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##### 4.1 Management, Staffing and Administration (spot check)

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The standards are judged to be:

Met     Partially Met     Not Met

##### Comments

The organisational structure is clearly defined and understood and is included appropriately in online information and in handbooks. All staff understand the aims of the Provider and subscribe to its values. This effectively supports good management.

The information provided in managers' Curricula Vitae (CVs) demonstrates that they are highly qualified and experienced and well equipped to perform their leadership roles.

There are effective channels of communication for discussions and decisions. There are scheduled, structured and recorded meetings. The Board of Trustees meets four times a year. There are weekly meetings of heads of department from across the Fellowship that include the Principal. Meetings of all CBS staff are held weekly. Meeting records include allocated action points. All staff share a calendar, and a weekly news bulletin is e-mailed to all staff. This framework supports effective planning and decision-making and reinforces CBS's community ethos.

Administration is highly efficient and supports the effective delivery of the courses. A comprehensive staff handbook includes detailed job descriptions and staff receive an appropriate induction. As a result, the staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities.

Policies and procedures are comprehensive and detailed and are available online and in handbooks. The new online systems have consolidated and streamlined administrative functions, and this enables the rapid extraction and analysis of data to support monitoring and planning. All participants praised the helpful and rapid responses they had received from the administrative staff, both at the application stage and after their arrival at CBS.

There is an appropriate staff appraisal and development system. CVs demonstrate that management and administrative staff undertake a wide variety of relevant short courses to support their personal development and to meet the Provider's needs.

Applicants' academic capacity and language proficiency are appropriately assessed during the application process. The information obtained from the application form as well as from the communication with the applicant through telephone calls and where necessary, an online interview, is taken into account in assessing suitability for the course. References are also used. A member of staff has a qualification in Teaching English as a Second Language, so additional expert language support is available for any participant that needs it. The pass rates and levels of participant satisfaction demonstrate that CBS takes reasonable care to recruit suitable participants for its courses.

Groups of participants meet weekly. They discuss issues of common interest or concern and provide feedback to CBS. There are currently ten groups. A representative from each interactive group attends a termly Student Voice session. At these sessions, the participant representatives provide formal feedback to the Principal and other staff present on topics including community living, teaching and assignments, social life and outreach. Participants are subsequently updated on CBS's responses to their feedback, including any resulting actions taken.

The participants interviewed by the inspector were the leaders of the participant interactive groups. They were very satisfied with the system and confirmed that it worked well. As a result, the participants feel part of a community that values their contribution and responds appropriately to their feedback.

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#### 4.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

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**The standards are judged to be:**

Met     Partially Met     Not Met

**Comments**

The Principal is also the Programme Manager and is experienced and well-qualified. He is responsible for managing the training team.

Some participants completed the first two weeks of the course through live-streaming prior to starting face-to-face classes. Participants reported that the live streaming of lectures and support from staff enabled them to study effectively and make progress towards the course learning objectives during this time.

Courses are planned and delivered in ways that allow participants to succeed. The course handbook is exemplary and includes the teaching timetable, lesson content, learning outcomes and assignment schedule. Participants therefore have all the information they need to derive maximum benefit from the course.

Trainers are well-qualified and experienced. The CBS's core teaching team is supplemented by guest lecturers who may come from the international Fellowship community or from the wider church, or they may be former staff of CBS. Their expertise enriches the courses and the participants' experience.

The performance of all trainers is supervised as part of the staff appraisal and development process. Lessons are regularly observed by the Principal, and useful feedback is provided to trainers, enabling effective quality monitoring and improvement.

Participants praised the high standard of teaching on the course and reported that it supported effective learning and the achievement of the learning outcomes very well. This view was reflected in the lecture that was observed, which was of a high quality and included effective interaction with the participants.

Oral and written feedback is regularly provided to participants in tutorials and in marked assignments. This enables participants to monitor their progress towards meeting the learning outcomes.

Comprehensive and detailed information about the schedule, procedures and criteria for assignments is included in the participant and course handbooks and is reinforced during the course induction. This supports participants' understanding of the Provider's expectations and requirements.

Assignment results are logged on the online administrative system. They are reviewed after each assignment by the Student Studies Co-ordinator. The Student Studies Co-ordinator discusses the results with the participants. Advice and additional tutorials are provided for participants who need assistance to meet the learning outcomes. If necessary, participants resubmit their assignment after receiving feedback and extra help. Trainers are available to participants outside class time.

Participants praised the trainers' accessibility and the feedback and support they received from trainers and the Student Studies Co-ordinator. The inspection findings confirm this view.

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#### 4.3 Participant Welfare (spot check)

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**The standards are judged to be:**

Met     Partially Met     Not Met

**Comments**

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There are designated pastoral care leads who are appropriately experienced and qualified and are a valuable resource for the Provider.

Support groups, involving participants and led by a member of staff, are known as family groups. The staff members that lead these groups come from across the Fellowship, and the Principal trains them for their role. The family groups meet weekly to share reflections and spiritual testimony. The system provides excellent support for participants. Participants described the family group meetings as challenging, fun and a useful and enjoyable part of their experience.

Participants arriving prior to the start of the face-to-face element of the course receive at least one daily check-in from a staff member. There is an online exercise class and the opportunity to exercise outside in the grounds each day, all of which effectively support the participants' wellbeing.

There is a 24-hour on-call designated incident controller and a staff rota system that ensures an effective response in an emergency. Trainers live in the residential accommodation and, therefore, are on site to provide support out of hours.

There is a welcome pack that includes a comprehensive participant handbook. The handbook includes policies and useful information, including about the course, the support offered, the recreational facilities, staff contacts, health and safety, discipline, complaints including complaints to the BAC, bullying and extremism. It is a very useful resource and ensures that participants have the necessary information about all aspects of CBS.

International participants are very appreciative of the information and support they received before admission and at induction. They praised CBS's care and commitment to their well-being.

The residential accommodation is clean, safe and of a high standard. It meets the needs of participants well.

The recreational facilities available include a swimming pool, sports hall and fitness room. Participants appreciated the extra-curricular activities provided by CBS.

The Provider's evident commitment to protecting the health and welfare of its course participants is reflected in participants' views. The participants interviewed were all very positive about the support they receive from CBS.

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#### 4.4 Premises and Facilities (spot check)

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**The standards are judged to be:**

Met

Partially Met

Not Met

**Comments**

The premises are maintained in an excellent state of repair. Decoration and cleanliness of the building and the upkeep of the grounds and gardens are of a very high standard.

Notice boards are used for the display of general and health and welfare information for participants. They, therefore, facilitate effective communication.

The conference hall is modern and spacious and can accommodate all participants for lectures and assessments. It is well-equipped with computers, projectors and screens. Suitable smaller rooms are also available for quiet study, tutorials and assessments. The library provides a comfortable space for private study.

There is a large dining room with capacity for all staff and participants to eat together when this is possible, and there are other, smaller refreshment hubs.

Overall, the premises and facilities provide an excellent studying and working environment for participants and staff.

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4.5 Compliance Declaration

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**Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.**

Yes     No

**PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS**

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**STRENGTHS**

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A clear vision and mission, shared by participants and staff, create a community dedicated to the delivery of a high-quality provision.

Energetic and effective management ensures that appropriate policies and procedures are in place and well implemented.

Well-managed and effective trainers enable participants to attain the learning outcomes.

A commitment to participants' welfare is demonstrated by highly effective support mechanisms and participants' satisfaction.

**ACTIONS REQUIRED**

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None

High    Medium    Low

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

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None

**COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS – FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE**

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