BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

College ODBL Re-accreditation Inspection

NAME OF INSTITUTION: Middlebury College–CMRS Oxford Humanities Program

ADDRESS: St Michael's Hall
Shoe Lane
Oxford
OX1 2DP
UK

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Dr Guy Perry

DATE OF INSPECTION: 28 February, 1 & 3 March 2022

ACCREDITATION STATUS AT INSPECTION: Accredited

DECISION ON ACCREDITATION:

☐ Re-accreditation awarded for the full four-year period

☐ Probation re-accreditation

☒ Decision on re-accreditation deferred

☐ Award of accreditation to be withdrawn

DATE: 19 May 2022

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

Middlebury College–CMRS Oxford Humanities Program (M–CMRS/the Institution) offers a residential Study Abroad programme for students, mainly from the United States of America (USA). The Institution was founded in 1975 as a Study Abroad programme for USA students, run in association with Keble College, University of Oxford. The Institution is run in perpetuity by Middlebury College United Kingdom (UK) Trust, an independent charity, which is associated with Keble College. The trust formally appoints and pays the staff. Middlebury College is a liberal arts college based in Vermont in the USA. In 2014, CMRS became part of the Middlebury College Schools Abroad network, an arrangement that became permanent in 2017.

Students, mostly from Middlebury College but also from other universities in the USA, are able to experience one or more semesters of life at Oxford. Grades are finalised by M-CMRS and formally issued at Middlebury College. These count as part of the student's overarching degree. The Institution is based at St Michael's Hall, a four-storey building in central Oxford in the United Kingdom (UK). M-CMRS students are also Associate Members of Keble College, which gives them access to dining, library, sports and social facilities. However, students' academic progress and overall welfare remain the responsibility of M-CMRS.

The programmes provide interdisciplinary study across the humanities. The aims are to provide students with an enriching experience of life and study at Oxford, in such a way as is most compatible with their degrees back in the USA.

The Principal is supported by a small senior management team, consisting of the Senior Tutor and the Administrator. They are supported by the Assistant Senior Tutor and the Librarian, as well as two Junior Deans, two Housekeepers, and individually contracted self-employed tutors.

The Principal, Senior Tutor and Assistant Senior Tutor collectively comprise the Academic Committee, which regularly meets to make decisions on admissions and grading, discuss other academic and pastoral matters, and agree on proposals to submit to the Academic Board. The latter, which consists of UK and US academics, meets once a year, and the Principal, Senior Tutor and Assistant Senior Tutor all report to the Academic Board. M-CMRS is overseen by the Dean of International Programs and the Faculty Advisory Board in Middlebury College.

M-CMRS works very closely with the Middlebury Study Abroad Office, which provides support for admissions, recruitment and marketing. Although the Principal, Senior Tutor and Assistant Tutor provide some of the teaching, most of the teaching is done by self-employed part-time tutors. The vast majority of these tutors hold positions within the colleges or humanities faculties of Oxford University.

2. Brief description of the current provision

Two regular programmes are held each year, each of which lasts for one semester. The programmes cover an extensive range of humanities-related subjects at Level 6 of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). The standard programme consists of a weekly lecture, currently delivered remotely, plus a seminar, two one-to-one tutorial courses, and a research course, all of which are delivered in person.

Tutorials are selected from a comprehensive list, and the structure of the programme allows courses of study to be tailored to a student's specific interests and requirements. Most students attend for only one semester, but a small minority attend for two.

Since 2017, M-CMRS also offers a five-week credit-bearing summer programme in Museum Studies at Level 6, which incorporates seminars, lectures, study visits and practical elements. This is operated in partnership with Compton Verney, a stately home and art gallery in Warwickshire.

Middlebury College acts as the School of Record and awards graduation credit for each semester successfully completed at M-CMRS. For students who come from other universities, who collectively constitute about a third of the cohort, this is recognised for credit purposes by the Institution at which the students are registered, using the standard USA academic credit transfer processes.

The total capacity of the Institution is 35 students. At the time of the inspection, there were 28 students, approximately two-thirds of whom were female. Most students come from the USA. Other countries represented are China, Thailand, Spain and Malaysia. The Institution does not accept students under the age of 18.

Enrolment takes place on a continuous basis. The academic programmes begin in September and January. Summer programmes begin at the end of May.

Entry requirements for the programme include a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.5 for the regular programmes, and 3.0 for Museum Studies. All admission decisions are made in the UK, and the application process includes a personal statement, transcripts, letters of recommendation and samples of academic writing.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was conducted over three days by one inspector with one day on site, and two days remotely. Meetings were held with the Principal, the Senior Tutor, the Assistant Senior Tutor, the Administrator, the Librarian, and a Housekeeper. Teaching and learning were observed. In addition, focus meetings were held with a group of students and a group of tutors. A tour of the premises was carried out, and the website and documentation were scrutinised. The information required was readily provided and the Institution co-operated very efficiently with the inspection process.

4. Inspection history

Inspection type	Date
Full Accreditation	10–11 March 2009
Interim	12 March 2010
Re-accreditation	7–8 March 2013

PART B – JUDGEMENT AND EVIDENCE

The following judgements and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector(s) during the inspection and from documentation provided by the institution.

INSPECTION AREA – MANAGEMENT, STAFFING AND ADMINISTRATION

1.   The institution is effectively managed

1.1	The management structure is clearly defined, documented and understood, including the role and extent of authority of any owners, trustees or governing body.	☒ Yes	☐ No
1.2	The head of the institution and other senior managers are suitably qualified and experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying them out.	☒ Yes	☐ No
1.3	Senior managers have an understanding of the special requirements of online, distance and blended learning.	☒ Yes	☐ No
1.4	There are clear channels of communication between the management and staff, especially those working remotely.	☒ Yes	☐ No

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

Comments

> The organisation chart is clear, and the management structure is well defined and understood. Members of the principal and senior management team are all extremely highly qualified and experienced and carry out their responsibilities effectively.
>
> Senior managers understand the requirements of online, distance and blended learning (ODBL) and have experience in delivery and support.
>
> Communication methods include e-mail, informal contacts and regular meetings. There are weekly staff meetings and bi-weekly Academic Committee meetings. Tutor meetings take place in the middle of each semester. Meetings take place in person and remotely. Consequently, communication is clear, and management is effective, which results in a good experience for the students.

2.   The administration of the institution is effective

2.1	Administrators are suitably qualified or experienced and understand their specific responsibilities and duties.	☒ Yes	☐ No
2.2	The size of the administrative team is sufficient to ensure the effective day-to-day running of the institution.	☒ Yes	☐ No
2.3	The administrative support available to the management is clearly defined, documented and understood.	☒ Yes	☐ No
2.4	Policies, procedures and systems are well documented and effectively disseminated across the institution.	☒ Yes	☐ No
2.5	Data collection and collation systems are well documented and effectively disseminated.	☒ Yes	☐ No
2.6	Student and teaching staff records are sufficient, accurately maintained and up to date.	☒ Yes	☐ No
2.7	The institution has a robust security system and policies in place for protecting the data of its students and teaching staff.	☒ Yes	☐ No

2.8	The institution has processes through which the institution verifies the student who registers on the programme is the same student who participates on and completes and receives the credit.	☒ Yes ☐ No
2.9	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, teaching staff and staff working remotely.	☒ Yes ☐ No
2.10	Staff are available to assist students to resolve issues of a general and/or technological nature. All enquiries from students are handled promptly and sympathetically.	☒ Yes ☐ No

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

Comments

The Administrator is suitably qualified, experienced and efficient, and has a clear understanding of her specific responsibilities. The size of the administration team is sufficient for the current day-to-day administrative needs of the Institution, supplemented by input from senior managers on academic issues.

Administrative support to management is clearly defined and documented, primarily through the staff handbook. Policies, procedures and systems are well documented and effectively disseminated across the Institution, through the staff, tutor and student handbooks, and meetings and discussion forums.

Data collection and collation systems are effective and further supplemented by support from Middlebury College, where appropriate. Student and staff records are accurately maintained and up to date. Security and data protection policies are good and systems to verify the identity of students are strong and effective.

Where technical issues cannot be resolved in-house, M-CMRS benefits from the services of an external company to ensure access to technical expertise. If required, it can also access support from Middlebury and Keble College. As a result, student enquiries are handled promptly and effectively. Overall, administration processes are efficient and well managed.

3. The institution employs appropriate managerial and administrative staff

3.1	There are appropriate policies and effective procedures for the recruitment and continuing employment of suitably qualified and experienced staff.	☒ Yes ☐ No
3.2	Experience and qualifications claimed are verified before employment.	☒ Yes ☐ No
3.3	The institution has a robust teaching staff recruitment system that is designed to ensure the safety of the students. The recruitment process for teaching staff working remotely includes a face-to-face interview using a suitable online communication platform.	☒ Yes ☐ No
3.4	There is an effective system for regularly reviewing the performance of staff.	☐ Yes ☒ No

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

Comments

The Institution employs appropriate managerial and administrative staff. There are effective recruitment and selection procedures for the employment of staff, all of whom are highly qualified and experienced.

References are taken up, and experience and qualifications are verified before employment. Most tutors are already working within Oxford University and are recommended. All staff are interviewed face-to-face before being appointed.

Staff performance is managed on an informal basis, through professional dialogue, and oversight is also provided by the Academic Committee and the Academic Board. Senior staff often observe lectures and provide informal feedback to the teaching staff, although this is not recorded, which limits opportunities for further reflection or the ability to measure impact.3.4. The formal staff appraisal system was halted by the home institution at Middlebury College. The Principal wishes to reinstate formal appraisals to provide an opportunity for an overall review of performance and goals but no decision has yet been made by Middlebury College on what should replace the previous system.

4.	**Publicity material, both printed and electronic, gives a comprehensive, up to date and accurate description of the institution and its curriculum**		
4.1	Text and images provide an accurate depiction of the institution's location, premises, facilities and the range and nature of resources and services offered.	☒ Yes	☐ No
4.2	Information on the courses available is comprehensive, accurate and up to date.	☒ Yes	☐ No

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

Comments

Printed and electronic material, both online and in brochures, gives a comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate description of the Institution and its programmes.

The text and images provide an accurate depiction of the Institution's location, premises, facilities and the range and nature of resources and services offered.

Information on the courses available is comprehensive, accurate and up to date.

5.	**The institution takes reasonable care to recruit and enrol suitable students for its courses**			
5.1	Entry requirements for each course are set at an appropriate level and clearly stated in the course descriptions seen by prospective students.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
5.2	A formal application process ensures that students meet the entry requirements and any claimed qualifications are verified.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
5.3	Students are properly briefed on the nature and requirements of the courses for which they apply, and all application enquiries are responded to promptly and appropriately.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
5.4	Any overseas recruitment agents are properly selected, briefed, monitored and evaluated.	☐ Yes	☐ No	☒ NA
5.5	Students receive a proper initial assessment, which includes language ability to confirm their capability to complete the courses on which they are enrolling.	☒ Yes	☐ No	☐ NA
5.6	Students are made aware of the necessary level of digital literacy required to follow the stated programmes.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
5.7	The institution makes it clear to applicants that they are responsible for checking that they have the skills and knowledge required to study on the chosen course.	☒ Yes	☐ No	

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

Comments

The entry requirements for the Study Abroad programme are set at an appropriate level. The entry requirements are made clear in course descriptions online and in brochures.

Students complete a formal application process, which includes a personal statement, their course choices, an essay, a sample of academic written work, a transcript of what has been studied so far, with grades, and two faculty references. Final decisions about admissions are reviewed by the Academic Committee at M-CMRS, where the final decision is made.

Students are fully briefed on the nature and requirements of their course, and application enquiries receive prompt responses. M-CMRS works in partnership with Middlebury's Schools Abroad network, and student applications are properly evaluated to ensure students' suitability for their chosen course.

Students' initial assessment is done by the Academic Committee, through means of their application and a submitted essay. This includes evidence of their language ability to show that they have the skills and ability to cope with the fast-paced and demanding nature of the programme in the UK.

Prospective students are aware of the level of digital literacy needed and already have the necessary skills. The Institution makes the demanding nature of the course clear, together with the responsibility of students to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge to complete the course successfully.

6.   There is an appropriate policy on student attendance and effective procedures and systems to enforce it

6.1	There is an appropriate, clear and published policy on student attendance and punctuality.	☒ Yes	☐ No
6.2	Accurate and secure records of attendance and punctuality at each session are kept for all students, collated centrally and reviewed at least weekly.	☒ Yes	☐ No
6.3	Student absences are followed up promptly and appropriate action taken.	☒ Yes	☐ No

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

Comments

M-CMRS's academic engagement policy is clear, with the expectation that students will attend all academic events. The policy for attendance and punctuality is clearly set out in the student handbook.

Accurate and secure records are kept for all students, collated by the Administrator, and reviewed weekly.

Student absences are swiftly followed up by the Administrator and/or the Principal, Senior Tutor and Assistant Senior Tutor. If a student is ill or has compassionate leave, alternative arrangements, including catch-up tutorials are put in place.

7.   The institution regularly obtains and records feedback from students and other stakeholders and takes appropriate action where necessary

7.1	The institution has effective mechanisms for obtaining feedback from students and other stakeholders (such as staff, partner institutions and employers) on all aspects of the institution's provision, including formal student representation where appropriate.	☒ Yes	☐ No
7.2	Feedback is obtained, recorded and analysed on a regular basis.	☒ Yes	☐ No
7.3	The feedback is reviewed by management and action is taken where necessary.	☒ Yes	☐ No
7.4	There is a mechanism for reporting on the institution's response to the feedback to the student body.	☒ Yes	☐ No

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

Comments

Informal mechanisms to obtain student feedback are very good. Senior managers maintain close contact with students and solicit their views on all aspects of the provision. This is also done by contact with the students' elected representatives.

Feedback from other stakeholders includes oversight reports on all aspects of the Institution's performance from Middlebury College in America.. Formal analysis of academic results is provided by the Faculty Advisory Board, and the Academic Board gives feedback on the performance of M-CMRS each year at its annual meeting. Tutors have an opportunity to provide feedback to managers on their teaching experience in the regular tutor meetings in each semester.

Managers elicit oral feedback from students which is effective in keeping managers informed regarding students' experience, and enables actions for improvement, but this is not recorded. Formal written student feedback is only recorded at the end of the course. This inhibits data analysis and opportunities to evidence the impact of any actions taken in response to improve the provision. It is also too late to benefit the students who have already finished their course. Plans to collect and record formal feedback earlier in the course are currently under discussion.

Managers take appropriate action to make improvements in response to feedback where necessary. Information regarding the Institution's response to the feedback is sent out to the student body by means of group e-mails.

8. The institution has effective systems to review its own standards and assess its own performance with a view to continuing improvement

8.1	There are effective systems for monitoring and periodically reviewing all aspects of the institution's performance.	☒ Yes	☐ No
8.2	Reports are compiled at least annually that present the results of the institution's reviews and incorporate action plans. Reports include analysis of year-on-year results on student satisfaction, retention and achievement, and examination results and completion rates.	☒ Yes	☐ No
8.3	Action plans are implemented and regularly reviewed, with outcomes reported to the management.	☒ Yes	☐ No

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

Comments

There are effective systems to monitor and review all aspects of the Institution's performance. Close contact with the students enables constant checks on their experience and welfare to take place.

Students' learning and academic progress are monitored rigorously, and thorough records are maintained. The programme is also monitored and reviewed by a wide range of boards and regulators, including the Academic Board, the Faculty Advisory Board, the Middlebury College UK Trust Board and the CMRS Board.

End-of-semester reports provide regular reviews of the Institution's performance. Annual reports include analysis of year-on-year results on student satisfaction, retention, achievement and completion rates, and include action-planning for improvement.

Action plans are implemented and regularly reviewed by managers to ensure that actions are taken forward. The action points are not always very detailed and don't always have timelines for achievement and reviews of progress do not form part of the regular management meeting, which would enhance the review process.

INSPECTION AREA – TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

9. Academic management is effective

9.1	There is a suitably qualified manager with experience in online, distance and blended learning who has responsibility for teaching, learning and assessment and management of the teaching staff.	☒ Yes	☐ No
9.2	Classes are timetabled and rooms allocated appropriately for the courses offered.	☒ Yes	☐ No
9.3	The allocation of teachers to classes provides for a consistent learning experience.	☒ Yes	☐ No
9.4	There is an appropriate policy and effective procedures for the acquisition of academic resources.	☒ Yes	☐ No

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

Comments

Senior managers are extremely highly qualified and have experience of managing ODBL successfully. The Senior Tutor, the Assistant Senior Tutor, together with the Principal, contract and manage tutorial staff very effectively, and monitor student progress and feedback to ensure that every student has an enriching learning experience.

Tutors are highly qualified, with specialisms in the particular areas of interest of the students. Timetabling and room allocation are appropriate for the learning programmes and needs of the students.

Academic management is extremely effective in ensuring that every student has a learning programme tailored to their needs and that academic rigour is maintained. Part of the strength of the Oxford tutorial system is the variety of learning styles and approaches employed by different tutors. To facilitate quality control, criteria for tutorial courses have been produced to provide a consistent standard against which to measure expectations. This is shared with both tutors and students, and managers consistently gather informal feedback from students to monitor the quality of students' experience and progress.

There are effective procedures for the acquisition of academic resources, and extensive library facilities. This, together with the opportunities provided through Oxford University to access primary sources, provide a rich academic experience for the students.

10. The courses are planned and delivered in ways that enable students to succeed

10.1	Courses are designed and delivered in ways that allow students to develop the knowledge and skills that will be required for final examinations or assessments.	☒ Yes	☐ No
10.2	Programme designers make effective use of appropriate teaching aids and learning resources.	☒ Yes	☐ No
10.3	Lessons and assessments maintain an appropriate focus on any assessment objectives or statement of learning outcomes established by the awarding body.	☒ Yes	☐ No
10.4	Formative assessments appropriately reflect the nature and standards of summative examinations.	☒ Yes	☐ No
10.5	Students are encouraged and enabled to develop independent learning skills.	☒ Yes	☐ No
10.6	Any required coursework and revision periods are scheduled in advance.	☒ Yes	☐ No
10.7	The academic backgrounds and particular needs of students are taken into account in the classroom delivery of the course.	☒ Yes	☐ No
10.8	The institution uses appropriate and readily accessible technology to optimise interaction between the institution and the student and enhance instructional and educational services.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met
Comments

All courses are well designed and delivered in ways that enable students to develop the knowledge and skills they will require to complete their final degrees. This includes reading and writing skills and honing their argumentative and persuasive abilities.

Students have very individualised study programmes and benefit from the rich resource of primary sources at Oxford University to which they have access. All lessons and assessments maintain an appropriate focus on the learning outcomes as stated not only by M-CMRS, but also by Middlebury College in the USA, which is the awarding body.

Students are assessed through written papers and essays, together with their spoken contributions in tutorials and seminars. Academic rigour is demonstrated throughout, and students are supported to develop independent learning skills through study skills sessions, the one-to-one tutorial system and the academic papers they are required to produce.

All required essays and papers are scheduled in advance and publicised on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) platform used by the Institution.

Each programme is individualised and tailored to the specific needs and interests of the student. As a result, students develop academic skills, make excellent progress and are very satisfied with their learning.

Technology is used effectively to maximise interaction between students and the Institution and includes remote lectures, the VLE and social media groups. Consequently, teaching and learning are excellent, and students are supported to succeed.		

11. Teachers are suitable for the courses to which they are allocated and effective in delivering them

11.1	Teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced.	☒ Yes ☐ No
11.2	Teachers have a level of subject knowledge and pedagogic and communicative skills that allows them to deliver the content of courses effectively.	☒ Yes ☐ No
11.3	The allocation of teaching staff to courses provides for a consistent learning experience and delivery is monitored to ensure consistency.	☒ Yes ☐ No
11.4	Delivery methods are sufficient to attain the stated programme objectives and intended learning outcomes; suitable supplementary study aids have been considered where appropriate, whether via investment in technology, additional teaching staff support, issuing extra study materials or offering face-to-face learning sessions.	☒ Yes ☐ No
11.5	Teachers have an understanding of the special challenges and demands of online, distance and blended learning.	☒ Yes ☐ No
11.6	The appraisal procedures for teaching staff incorporate regular monitoring of teacher feedback.	☒ Yes ☐ No
11.7	Teachers are supported in their continuing professional development and enabled to develop further pedagogic techniques to enhance the learning of students.	☒ Yes ☐ No
11.8	Teaching staff are properly and continuously trained with respect to provider policies, student needs, instructional approaches and techniques, and the use of appropriate instructional technology.	☒ Yes ☐ No
11.9	Teachers respond to different learning needs of students where appropriate, taking various learning styles into account in their planning and delivery of lessons.	☒ Yes ☐ No
11.10	Teachers employ effective strategies to involve all students in active participation and to check their understanding of concepts and course content.	☒ Yes ☐ No

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

Comments

Teachers are extremely well qualified and very experienced. Most tutors are faculty, or advanced graduate students, at the University of Oxford. They have the specialised subject knowledge and pedagogic and communication skills that allow them to deliver the content of courses effectively, together with experience of the academic demands of the programme. The individualised nature of the courses requires the allocation of tutors with specific expertise, who have one-to-one tutorials with their students. Consistency of delivery is effectively monitored through constant informal student feedback to senior managers, the quality of work students produce, and the progress they make. The vast majority of teaching and learning is delivered in person. When ODBL is used, currently for one lecture a week, teachers understand the special demands and challenges. Teachers' feedback to students is regularly and effectively monitored to ensure that students are progressing. Tutors' written feedback on student papers is very detailed and specific and this is enhanced by spoken feedback in one-to-one tutorial sessions every week. As a result, students have a very clear idea of what they need to do to improve. Tutorial staff are asked to provide information on student learning and progress, and this forms part of management oversight. Any issues are dealt with in the Academic Committee and minutes are taken of actions agreed. The Academic Board, which includes external experts, also provides quality assurance.

Teaching staff are supported in their Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Each member of the academic staff is given time and financial resources to support them in their academic development. They are encouraged to further develop their subject knowledge and are supported to formalise their status with Advance HE and to develop further pedagogical techniques. Self-employed tutors can receive teaching awards that can assist them in their development. Regular mid-semester tutor meetings enable effective sharing of best practice to enhance student learning.

Teachers respond very well to the different learning needs of students by accommodating their particular interests and learning styles in their planning and delivery. This is apparent in the one-to-one tutorials from which students benefit twice a week. Students actively participate, and tutors monitor and challenge the depth and range of their understanding very effectively.

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12.   The institution provides students and teachers with access to appropriate resources and materials for study

12.1	Appropriate resources and materials for study are available to the students and teachers.	☒ Yes ☐ No
12.2	Commissioning of course materials is managed effectively, and materials are checked to ensure standardisation and consistency across the provision.	☒ Yes ☐ No
12.3	Course materials are designed for a specific and clearly stated level of study and include appropriate support when necessary.	☒ Yes ☐ No
12.4	Course materials are appropriately presented and sufficiently comprehensive to enable students to achieve the programme objectives.	☒ Yes ☐ No
12.5	Course materials are accurate and reflect current knowledge and practice and are regularly reviewed and revised.	☒ Yes ☐ No
12.6	The institution makes effective provision for students to access conventional and online resources.	☒ Yes ☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met
Comments

Tutors and students are provided with access to a very rich collection of resources that they need for study. M-CMRS has its own library, containing 17,000 volumes, and more are regularly acquired. Students also have access to Keble College Library and are provided with Bodleian Library readers' cards. Other materials are provided as appropriate, and the Institution benefits from a wide range of primary sources though its links with Oxford University.

Course materials are very relevant to the appropriate level of study, and tutorials provide an extremely high level of support. The nature of the course demands that students access appropriate learning materials themselves, with support from their tutors. This enables them to achieve the programme objectives.

Reading lists, which play an important role in students' academic study, are carefully monitored and reviewed to ensure these are valid and up to date. Students are provided with excellent access to written resources and historical artefacts, as well as online materials and the VLE. Lectures are accompanied with extremely clear, well-presented and informative slides to reinforce student learning.

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13.   Students receive appropriate assessment and feedback on their performance and progress, which are effectively monitored

13.1	Courses are planned to include a schedule of assessments, the procedures and criteria for which are available in writing and in advance to students and teachers.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
13.2	Assessment outcomes are monitored to enable the identification of students who are not making satisfactory progress and prompt intervention where appropriate.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
13.3	Students are made aware of how their progress relates to their targeted level of achievement.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

13.4	The institution takes appropriate steps to identify and discourage cheating and other misdemeanours, and to penalise offenders.	☒ Yes ☐ No
13.5	Additional support or advice on alternative courses is provided to students who are judged not to be making sufficient progress to succeed.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA
13.6	Oral and written feedback is given to individual students on a regular basis, tailored to meet their specific needs and constructive in its nature and delivery.	☒ Yes ☐ No
13.7	Students have appropriate access outside class time to teachers or personal tutors for academic support.	☒ Yes ☐ No

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

Comments

Course planning includes a schedule of assessments involving written papers and spoken contributions in tutorials and seminars. The criteria are made clear in advance to students and tutors in writing.

Students are assessed through set essays and participation in seminars in compliance with the requirements of the awarding body. Formal assessed work is double marked to ensure fairness and to moderate results; it is triple marked if necessary. All set questions, grades and scores are reviewed by the Academic Committee. Students can appeal against their grades, using the appeals procedure in the student handbook.

Assessment outcomes are carefully monitored. Staff are fully aware of the progress of every student and ensure that students receive the support they need to improve. The small, intimate nature of the Institution means that students who are not making satisfactory progress are easily identified, and prompt intervention can be made. Student progress is then formally reviewed at the end of each course.

Students are made aware of how they are progressing, and challenged to improve further, in the tutorial sessions every week. There is a well-implemented anti-plagiarism policy, and cheating is actively discouraged.

Feedback to students on their progress is constructive, detailed and specific, both on their written work and on their contributions in tutorials and seminars. As a result, students know how they are achieving and what they need to do to improve.

Students are able to access tutor support outside class time and, in addition, there are set times advertised when the Senior Tutor, Assistant Senior Tutor and Principal are available to talk and provide extra help.

Excellent monitoring of students' assessment, performance and progress ensures they receive the support they need to deepen their thinking and make very effective progress.

14.	The institution offers courses leading to accredited awards granted by recognised awarding bodies wherever appropriate		
14.1	For courses leading to the award of a UK degree, the institution has a formal agreement with a recognised UK degree-awarding body.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA	
14.2	For courses leading to other UK awards, the awarding body is recognised by the relevant regulator.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA	
14.3	For courses leading to the award of an overseas degree, the institution has a formal partnership agreement with the overseas degree-awarding body, which is itself accredited by a recognised national agency.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA	

This standard is judged to be:　　☒ Met　　☐ Partially Met　　☐ Not Met　　☐ NA

Comments

M-CMRS offers courses that lead to accredited awards granted by a recognised awarding body in the USA. This is done by means of a partnership agreement with Middlebury College, which has degree-awarding powers.

15.	There is a clear rationale for courses leading to unaccredited or internal awards	
15.1	There is a clear statement of the level claimed relative to the RQF and evidence that students who receive the award meet the stated requirements for that level.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
15.2	There is evidence of the extent to which the awards are accepted for the purposes of employment or further study.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
15.3	External moderators are involved in the assessment process where appropriate.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

This standard is judged to be:　　☐ Met　　☐ Partially Met　　☐ Not Met　　☒ NA

Comments

16.	There are satisfactory procedures for the administration of examinations and other means of assessment	
16.1	The institution complies with the requirements of the relevant awarding bodies in terms of examination security and administration.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
16.2	For internal awards, there are effective systems in place for examination security and administration, and clear procedures for students to appeal against their marks.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

This standard is judged to be:　　☐ Met　　☐ Partially Met　　☐ Not Met　　☒ NA

Comments

17.	There is appropriate provision of advice for students intending to proceed to employment or higher/further education	
17.1	Students have access to advice from an appropriate staff member on further study and career opportunities.	☒ Yes ☐ No

17.2	If the institution offers courses preparing students for higher education, they have access to prospectuses and to advice from a designated staff member both on selecting courses and institutions and on the application process.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA

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

Comments

Students receive appropriate support and advice on future study opportunities, particularly in the UK. Middlebury College in the USA provides further career and study advice as part of its full course at students' home university.

INSPECTION AREA – STUDENT WELFARE

18.   Students receive pastoral support appropriate to their age, background and circumstances

18.1	There is at least one named staff member responsible for student welfare who is suitably trained, accessible to all students and available to provide advice and counselling.	☒ Yes ☐ No
18.2	Students receive appropriate advice before arrival.	☒ Yes ☐ No
18.3	Students receive an appropriate induction and relevant information upon arrival.	☒ Yes ☐ No
18.4	Instructions and suggestions on how to study and how to use the tutorial materials are made available to assist students to learn effectively and efficiently.	☒ Yes ☐ No
18.5	Students are issued with a contact number for out-of-hours and emergency support.	☒ Yes ☐ No
18.6	The institution has policies in place to avoid discrimination and a published procedure for dealing with any abusive behaviour.	☒ Yes ☐ No
18.7	Effective safeguarding arrangements are in place and are regularly reviewed to keep all students safe.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA
18.8	Effective arrangements are in place to protect students from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.	☐ Yes ☒ No
18.9	The institution ensures that students understand any system requirements and have access to appropriate technical advice to assist with technological problems that are the institution's responsibility.	☒ Yes ☐ No
18.10	The institution supports and encourages peer interaction through a variety of communication channels, including social media.	☒ Yes ☐ No

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

Comments

The Principal is the named person responsible for student welfare, supported by a trained counsellor and the members of the senior management team, who are all accessible to students. There is an open-door policy, as well as the well-publicised set times when they are available to support students and offer help and advice. Excellent support is available on a range of issues, including mental health.

Students receive appropriate advice and guidance before they arrive, through e-mails, the student handbook, the website and pre-departure meetings in the USA. On arrival, there is a comprehensive induction, which includes academic and pastoral matters, and information on health and safety and local issues.

Information on study skills and tutorials are provided for students at orientation, together with the opportunity to attend a more detailed study skills course that enables them to fully benefit academically from the opportunities provided.

Students are given emergency contact numbers. These include the number for Keble College porters' lodge at weekends, and the number for the two Junior Deans, who live in the residences and are on duty from 5pm to 9am daily to provide any necessary emergency support and assistance.

M-CMRS has appropriate policies to avoid discrimination and deal with abusive behaviour. These are found on the website and in the student handbook.

Arrangements to protect students from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism include a policy and a risk assessment.

18.8 Staff and tutors have not received suitable training on how to mitigate risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.

The Institution ensures that students understand the system requirements and can access technical advice as necessary. As well as in-house expertise, M-CMRS can call on its contracted external technical services firm, and experts in Keble College and Middlebury. Peer interaction is encouraged through various channels, including social media groups.

19. International students are provided with specific advice and assistance

19.1	International students receive appropriate advice before their arrival on travelling to and staying in the UK.	☒ Yes	☐ No
19.2	International students receive an appropriate induction upon arrival covering issues specific to the local area.	☒ Yes	☐ No
19.3	Information and advice specific to international students continue to be available throughout the course of study.	☒ Yes	☐ No
19.4	Provision of support takes into account cultural and religious considerations.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met   ☐ NA

Comments

All M-CMRS students are international students and are offered appropriate advice in pre-departure meetings before travelling to the UK. This is reinforced on the website, and in pre-course information, and enables prospective students to make informed choices.

Students also receive an induction covering issues specific to the local area and the University of Oxford. This includes associate member arrangements with Keble College, and information on health and safety issues, how to access appropriate medical advice and other support.

Appropriate information, advice and support continue to be available throughout the course of study through tutors and senior managers. Cultural and religious considerations are taken into account, and students are advised about local provision and services.

20. The fair treatment of students is ensured

20.1	Students apply for and are enrolled on courses under fair and transparent contractual terms and conditions.	☒ Yes	☐ No
20.2	Students have access to a fair complaints procedure of which they are informed in writing at the start of the course.	☒ Yes	☐ No
20.3	Students are advised of BAC's own complaints procedure.	☒ Yes	☐ No

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

Comments

Students are always treated fairly. They apply for, and are enrolled on, courses under fair and transparent contractual terms and conditions, which are made clear on the website.

They have access to a fair complaints procedure of which they are informed in writing in the student handbook. Students are also advised of BAC's own complaints procedure.

21.	**Where residential accommodation is offered, it is fit for purpose, well maintained and appropriately supervised**		
21.1	Any residential accommodation is clean, safe and of a standard that is adequate for the needs of students.	☒ Yes ☐ No	
21.2	Any residential accommodation is open to inspection by the appropriate authorities, including Ofsted where students under 18 are accommodated.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA	
21.3	Clear rules and fire, health and safety procedures are in place, with appropriate precautions taken for security of students and their property.	☒ Yes ☐ No	
21.4	A level of supervision is provided that is appropriate to the needs of students.	☒ Yes ☐ No	
21.5	Separate accommodation blocks are provided for students under 18.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA	

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met   ☐ NA
Comments

Accommodation is well located and fit for purpose. All M-CMRS students live in residential accommodation organised by the Institution in the centre of Oxford. This is suitable for the needs of the students and enables them to benefit from agreements with partner organisations such as Keble. The accommodation is clean, safe and well maintained. Housekeepers are employed, and they ensure that high standards are maintained.

The accommodation is open to inspection by the appropriate authorities. Suitable health and safety procedures are in place, together with well-implemented policies to mitigate the risks of fire, infection and other hazards. Effective security measures are in place to maximise the safety of students and their property.

Junior Deans are in residence to provide any necessary supervision and emergency support for students. All students are over 18 years of age.

22.	**Where home-stay accommodation is organised, the welfare of students is ensured and the institution's relationship with hosts is properly managed**	
22.1	Due care is taken in selecting home-stay accommodation that both provides a safe and comfortable living environment for students and is appropriately located for travel to the institution and back.	☐ Yes ☐ No
22.2	Any home-stay accommodation is inspected before students are placed and is subject to regular re-inspection by a responsible representative or agent of the institution.	☐ Yes ☐ No
22.3	The institution has appropriate contracts in place with any hosts, clearly setting out the rules, terms and conditions of the provision.	☐ Yes ☐ No
22.4	Appropriate advice and support are given to both hosts and students before and during the placement.	☐ Yes ☐ No
22.5	Clear monitoring procedures are in place with opportunities for student feedback and prompt action taken in the event of problems.	☐ Yes ☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☐ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met   ☒ NA
Comments

23.	The institution provides an appropriate social programme for students and information on leisure activities in the area		
23.1	Students are provided with appropriate information on opportunities for participation at events and other leisure activities that may be of interest.	☒ Yes	☐ No
23.2	The social programme is responsive to the needs and wishes of students.	☒ Yes	☐ No ☐ NA
23.3	Any activities within the social programme have been chosen with consideration for their affordability by the majority of students.	☒ Yes	☐ No ☐ NA
23.4	Any activities organised by the institution are supervised by a responsible representative with suitable qualifications and experience.	☒ Yes	☐ No ☐ NA

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met   ☐ NA

Comments

Students receive information on appropriate opportunities and leisure events in Oxford. M-CMRS has an agreement with Keble College, and students become members of the JCR in Keble, which allows them to eat in the college, access the library, and take part in its social programme, sports and activities. Full information is provided as part of orientation where students have one-to-one meetings to ascertain their interests and to connect them with relevant opportunities. There is also a Keble representative to help students connect with life in Oxford. Students can choose what they wish to attend.

Many activities are free, and others are subsidised to make them affordable. The Institution organises activities such as field trips, with suitable risk assessments, which are aligned to students' academic interests and are supervised by M-CMRS staff. Overall, student access to social and leisure activities is excellent.

INSPECTION AREA – PREMISES AND FACILITIES

24.	The institution has secure possession of and access to its premises		
24.1	The institution has secure tenure on its premises.	☒ Yes	☐ No ☐ NA
24.2	Where required, the institution has access to suitable external premises for academic or non-academic purposes of a temporary or occasional nature.	☒ Yes	☐ No ☐ NA

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

Comments

M-CMRS has secure tenure on its premises. The St Michael's Hall building is held on a 150-year lease. The lease on the Queen Street side of the building is currently being renewed. M-CMRS is secure in tenure, under English law, until a new lease is agreed.

The Institution has access to extra residential accommodation to ensure students do not have to share a room and to minimise the risks of infection.

25.	The premises provide a safe, secure and clean environment for students and staff		
25.1	Access to the premises is appropriately restricted and secured.	☒ Yes	☐ No
25.2	The premises are maintained in an adequate state of repair, decoration and cleanliness.	☒ Yes	☐ No
25.3	There are specific safety rules in areas of particular hazard (e.g. science laboratories), made readily available to students, staff and visitors.	☒ Yes	☐ No ☐ NA
25.4	General guidance on health and safety is made available to students, staff and visitors.	☒ Yes	☐ No

25.5	There is adequate signage inside and outside the premises and notice boards for the display of general information.	☒ Yes ☐ No
25.6	There is adequate circulation space for the number of students and staff accommodated, and a suitable area in which to receive visitors.	☒ Yes ☐ No
25.7	There are toilet facilities of an appropriate number and level of cleanliness.	☒ Yes ☐ No
25.8	There is adequate heating and ventilation in all rooms.	☒ Yes ☐ No

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

Comments

The premises provide a safe, clean and secure environment for students and staff. Access to the premises is restricted and appropriately secured, with only staff and students having keys, and a buzz-in system for external visitors.

The premises are maintained in a good state of repair, decoration and cleanliness. There are specific safety rules relating to areas of particular hazard, such as the plant room, which houses the boilers.

General guidance on health and safety is available to staff, students and visitors as appropriate. Suitable adjustments have been made to minimise infection risks, including hand sanitisation dispensers and screens throughout the premises.

There is adequate signage inside and outside the premises. Notice boards contain a range of general information, including on health and safety, first aid, the counselling service, medical information and leisure opportunities.

There is adequate circulation space and suitable areas in which to receive visitors. Toilet facilities are clean and of sufficient numbers and there is adequate heating and ventilation.

The Institution provides a good environment in an excellent location for students in the centre of Oxford.

26. Classrooms and other learning areas are appropriate for the courses offered

26.1	Classrooms and other learning areas provide adequate accommodation in size and number for the classes allocated to them.	☒ Yes ☐ No
26.2	Classrooms and/or any specialised learning areas (e.g. laboratories, workshops, studios) are equipped to a level that allows for the effective delivery of each course.	☒ Yes ☐ No
26.3	There are facilities suitable for conducting the assessments required on each course.	☒ Yes ☐ No

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

Comments

There are sufficient classrooms and other learning areas which are appropriate for the courses offered. There is a suitable lecture hall and seminar rooms which are well equipped with tables with see-through screens to minimise risks of infection, suitable chairs and whiteboards and flip charts. Facilities enable the effective delivery of each course and for all necessary assessments to take place.

M-CMRS provides a suitable environment that is conducive to learning.

27. There are appropriate additional facilities for students and staff

27.1	Students have access to sufficient space and suitable facilities for private study, including library and IT resources.	☒ Yes ☐ No
27.2	Teaching staff have access to sufficient personal space for preparing lessons, marking work and relaxation.	☒ Yes ☐ No

27.3	Students and staff have access to space and facilities suitable for relaxation and the consumption of food and drink where appropriate.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
27.4	Students and staff have access to storage for personal possessions where appropriate.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
27.5	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.	☒ Yes ☐ No
27.6	Administrative offices are adequate in size and resources for the effective administration of the institution.	☒ Yes ☐ No

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

Comments

In addition to their study bedrooms, students have access to other areas for private study, including library and IT resources and locations in Oxford, including at Keble College.

Teaching staff have sufficient personal space for preparation and marking. Most tutors prefer to prepare at home. There are suitable facilities for relaxation and the consumption of food and drink, and secure lockers are provided for the storage of personal possessions.

There are individual offices in which academic staff can hold private meetings, and larger rooms for staff meetings. Offices are adequate in size, and resources are sufficient for the effective administration of the Institution.
Facilities for students and staff enable the efficient running of the Institution and provide a good learning environment for students.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated   ☒ Yes   ☐ No

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

Numbering of action points aligns with that of the minimum standards

MANAGEMENT, STAFFING AND ADMINISTRATION

Institution's strengths

The excellent commitment and team working of the staff ensures that students receive a high-quality learning experience.

The very good relationships between staff and students enable informal feedback and inform actions for improvement.

Excellent communication from management enables the smooth running of the study programmes and results in an enriching experience for students.

There are very high levels of student satisfaction with the help and support they receive and the academic rigour of the programme.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
3.4 M-CMRS must reinstate formal appraisals to provide an opportunity for an overall review of staff performance and goals.	☐ High ☒ Medium ☐ Low

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Institution's strengths

An excellent, academically rigorous programme of study benefits each student individually, while providing a unique opportunity for students to experience Oxford University life.

Study programmes are individually tailored to the specific interests of students, supported by experts in their fields, enabling deep and specific engagement with the subject.

Excellent, detailed and constructive feedback on students' work helps them improve and widen their perspectives.

There is an excellent focus on spoken contributions and the development of thinking and argument in one-to-one tutorials and seminars.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

STUDENT WELFARE

Institution's strengths

Strong welfare frameworks support students, including a counselling service and mental health support.

Very good and effective informal feedback ensures student welfare and progress on an ongoing basis.

Excellent practical health and safety measures limit the transmission of infection, including single-room provision, see-through screens and hand sanitisers throughout the premises.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
18.8 M-CMRS must ensure that staff and tutors receive suitable training on the prevention of radicalisation and extremism.	☐ High ☒ Medium ☐ Low

PREMISES AND FACILITIES

Institution's strengths

The Institution's excellent location in the heart of Oxford effective links with the University of Oxford.

Students gain access to a wide range of activities and privileges through Keble College, including dining, sports and social activities.

Students have excellent access to a wide range of primary sources, including at the Bodleian Library.

There is excellent provision of books and resources through the librarian at M-CMRS.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

To be reviewed at the next inspection

It is recommended that teaching observations are recorded to encourage in-depth reflection on strengths and areas for development.

M-CMRS should implement plans to collect and analyse student feedback at an earlier point in the course to facilitate data analysis and timely responses to students.

The Institution should maximise the impact of action-planning for improvement by ensuring that action points are specific with timelines and regularly reviewed.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS