



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

Independent Higher Education (IHE) Full Inspection

NAME OF INSTITUTION: St Stephen's House

ADDRESS: 16 Marston Street
Oxford
OX4 1JX

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: The Revd Canon Dr Robin Ward

DATE OF INSPECTION: 26–28 April 2023

ACCREDITATION STATUS AT INSPECTION: Not accredited

DECISION ON ACCREDITATION:

- Accreditation awarded for the full four-year period
- Probation accreditation
- Decision on accreditation deferred
- Award of accreditation refused

DATE: 21 July 2023

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

St Stephen's House (SSH/the Institution) is an Anglican theological college offering qualifications in theology via the Common Awards contract of the Church of England with the University of Durham. SSH was incorporated as a guaranteed limited company in 2018 and is registered as a United Kingdom (UK) charity.

St Stephen's House is located in East Oxford and, since 1980, has occupied the former monastery complex of the Society of St John the Evangelist. The site includes three large accommodation blocks, teaching and office rooms, two chapels and one large Grade 1 listed college church with cloisters.

The Institution's main objectives are to further the education and training of graduates of universities, including Oxford and Cambridge, and to prepare them for mission work and other ministerial work within the Church of England and its associated churches. SSH aims to provide ongoing theological formation and education to ordained and lay students.

The governing body, known as the House Council, consists of three life-appointment trustees and up to six other appointed trustees who, together, oversee the work of the Institution. The Principal is supported by the Vice-Principal, who is also Director of Pastoral Studies, and the Senior Tutor.

The Institution is also licensed as a Permanent Private Hall (PPH) within the University of Oxford, enrolling ordinands and ministers of religion on University of Oxford theology degrees. The University of Oxford theology provision does not form part of the BAC accreditation.

The College was founded in 1876 by members of the Oxford Movement and occupied two other sites in Oxford before resettling in east Oxford in 1980. SSH has expanded its provision through offering online access to its courses via the Edward King Centre online hub at St Stephen's House, often through synchronous teaching sessions.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The Common Awards qualifications offered by SSH are taught both online and in person. The undergraduate programmes include the Common Awards at Foundation (Level 4), Certificate (Level 5), Diploma (Level 5) and Bachelor of Arts (BA) (Hons) in Theology, Ministry and Mission (Level 6), with the online provision being publicised through the Edward King Centre which forms a part of SSH.

The graduate qualifications are a Graduate Certificate and Diploma at Level 6, Postgraduate Certificate Diploma and Master of Arts (MA) in Theology, Ministry and Mission (Level 7).

At the time of the inspection, no students were registered on the Foundation and Certificate Award or the Graduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate in Theology, Ministry and Mission.

The Institution had 17 students enrolled at the time of the inspection, six studying full time on site and 11 studying part time online. The students are aged between 22 and 52 years, and the majority are male. Students are mostly from the UK, but the cohort also includes one student from South America, who lives in the UK. The Institution does not recruit students under 18 years of age.

Students are enrolled at the start of the academic year in October. All entry requirements for the individual programmes are clearly published on the SSH website, including required English language proficiency for overseas students.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was carried out by a Lead Inspector and a Student Inspector over three days. The first two days were conducted on site, and the third day was conducted online. Meetings were held with the Principal, the Vice-Principal, the Senior Tutor and the Bursar, as well as with teaching and administrative and support staff. Teaching observations were completed, and meetings were held with undergraduate and postgraduate students. Teaching areas and accommodation were inspected, as well as areas used for meals and social activities. A wide range of documentation was scrutinized. The Institution co-operated very positively with the inspection process.

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.

1. The institution is effectively and responsibly governed

1.1	The overall organisational structure, including the role and extent of authority of any owners, directors or governing body, is clearly defined, documented and communicated effectively to stakeholders, including governors, management, staff and students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
1.2	There is an identified senior committee, with decision-making authority on academic matters, in order to protect the integrity of academic freedom.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
1.3	The link between governance and management is clearly articulated and documented.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
1.4	Internal stakeholders develop and implement policy through appropriate structures and processes while involving external stakeholders.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
1.5	An explicit procedure for risk assessment is implemented, producing a risk assessment statement, which is regularly reviewed and updated.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
1.6	Effective action is taken by the governing body and senior managers in response to the outcomes of regular risk assessments.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
1.7	All relationships with other educational organisations are defined formally and are fully transparent with those organisations' requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
1.8	There are clear channels of communication between the governing body, the executive, academic management, staff, including those working remotely, students and other stakeholders.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution has a clear organisational structure that is detailed in the SSH handbook, along with information about the role of the House Council as the governing body. Handbooks are made available to staff and students, and the organisation's structure and key roles are also covered as part of the staff and student induction programmes. This ensures the effective communication of information about key roles and responsibilities.

A clear committee structure diagram and terms of reference provide appropriate information on the responsibilities and decision-making roles of each committee, including the House Council as the senior body. The Academic and House Committee, along with the House Council, have clear roles to play in protecting the integrity and the academic freedom of the Institution. The links between management and governance are also appropriately articulated in the St Stephen's Articles of Association.

The Institution makes appropriate use of the policies and procedures of its partner university, particularly in relation to academic management and student welfare and support. Appropriate internal policies are developed with reference to student and staff needs and are discussed at committees that include student representation. This supports the aim of ensuring that the student voice informs developments. Policy development is also appropriately informed by the regulatory requirements of the University of Durham, as well as relevant statutory requirements.

The procedure for the identification and management of risk is clear and includes recommended actions from periodic external reviews, as well as risks identified in relation to physical infrastructure and financial analysis. The Institution produces a clear risk assessment plan that is regularly reviewed by senior managers and the Trustees to evaluate the effectiveness of the actions. In addition, the Bursar ensures that clear and appropriate risk assessments are undertaken relating to premises, including the financial costs of projects, which are considered by the Trustees.

The validation agreement with the University of Durham for the Common Awards is clear and appropriate and sets out the expectations, duties and responsibilities of both parties. This ensures that there is mutual understanding of the relationship.

Effective channels of communication between the House Council and senior managers are supported by regular meetings. The membership of the House Council includes the Principal, staff and student representatives, which ensures that the Trustees receive appropriate information and that decisions are clearly communicated.

The appropriate policies, procedures and communication of information effectively support the good governance of the Institution effectively.

2. The institution has a clear and achievable strategy

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 2.1 | The institution has a clear strategy for the development of its higher education provision, which is supported by appropriate implementation plans and financial management and takes into account the quality of the student experience. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2.2 | There is provision for stakeholder input, including governors, management, staff and students, to inform the strategic direction of the institution. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2.3 | The strategy is well communicated to all stakeholders within and outside the institution. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2.4 | The governing body and senior management conduct a regular and systematic review of their own performance and the institution's overall performance and each is measured against strategic targets. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution is currently reviewing its strategic plan to reflect its future priorities and its plans to expand its range of provision. The Institution has an appropriate interim strategic plan which includes financial planning and ensuring the quality of the student learning experience.

The Trustees are responsible for agreeing the strategic plan, which is developed by senior managers and is informed by the views of students and staff through discussion at committee and staff meetings as well as at House Council meetings. The current overarching aims are available to staff, students and governors through the SSH handbook, the Articles of Association and the SSH website.

The senior management and the Trustees meet regularly to review the performance of the Institution. External reviews are also conducted by the Church of England Ministry Council, with outcomes articulated through periodic external review reports.

An annual external quality Report is produced by an independent quality adviser. All reports are considered by committees and the House Council and discussed in relation to strategic targets. External reports inform the systematic review of the Institution's performance and the identification of priorities and action-planning effectively.

The clear procedures for consultation with stakeholders, including staff, students and Trustees, inform the development of the strategic direction of the Institution effectively.

3. Financial management is open, honest and effective

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| 3.1 | The institution conducts its financial matters professionally, transparently and with appropriate probity. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3.2 | The institution's finances are subject to regular independent external audit. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution's finance committee has appropriately articulated responsibilities for the management and monitoring of fiscal considerations. Clear oversight is maintained by the House Council, which receives regular reports and updates from the finance and general purposes committee.

External accountants are employed to transparently audit the accounts annually and to provide reports to the House Council.

The financial management of the Institution is clear and appropriate.

INSPECTION AREA – GENERAL AND ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

4. The institution is effectively managed

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|-----|---|---|
| 4.1 | The management structure is clearly defined, documented and understood by all stakeholder groups, including governors, management, staff and students. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.2 | There are clearly delineated responsibilities and reporting arrangements at institutional, faculty, departmental, programme and course levels. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.3 | There is an appropriate and effective committee structure, with appropriate reporting lines to inform management decision-making. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.4 | Committees have clear and appropriate terms of reference and meet regularly. The meetings are accurately recorded with clear action-planning. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.5 | The institution has formal mechanisms to monitor the information it provides internally and externally and to make any enhancements deemed necessary to ensure that it is accurate and fit for purpose. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

A clear organisational structure diagram is made available to all stakeholders, including trustees, staff and students, and is supported by a clear committee structure. Responsibilities are well defined for individual postholders through detailed job descriptions that include reporting lines and that are clearly understood by the small team of staff.

All committees have appropriate terms of reference and membership responsibilities. A schedule of committee meetings is published, and minutes are taken and circulated, with actions followed up and evaluated. The roles of committees and senior managers are also articulated in the SSH handbook, which is provided to all staff, students and trustees. This effectively informs their understanding of the deliberative structure.

Information provided to stakeholders through the website and through handbooks is reviewed annually to ensure its accuracy and currency. It is approved by the Principal. The academic team reviews the curriculum content and development in conjunction with the Common Awards team at the University of Durham to ensure its currency.

Programme information is published in module handbooks that are regularly reviewed and updated by the Senior Tutor. Course descriptors are accessible through links provided to the University of Durham website for access by applicants and existing students. Module handbooks are made available to existing students through the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

The clear and appropriate management and committee structures are communicated well to all stakeholders and support the effective management of the Institution.

5. The institution is administered effectively

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| 5.1 | The size of the administrative team is sufficient to ensure the effective day-to-day running of the institution. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 5.2 | The administrative support available to the management is clearly defined, documented and understood and appropriately focused to support its activities. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

5.3	Administrative policies, procedures and systems are well documented and disseminated effectively across the institution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5.4	Classes are timetabled and rooms allocated appropriately for the courses offered.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5.5	Data collection and collation systems are well documented, accurate and effectively disseminated.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5.6	Comprehensive administrative records are organised and stored efficiently, easily accessed and used effectively.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5.7	Students' records are sufficient, accurately maintained and up to date.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5.8	Staff records are sufficient, accurately maintained and up to date.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5.9	The institution has a robust security system and policies in place for protecting the data of its students and staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5.10	The institution has processes through which the institution verifies that the student who registers on the programme is the same student who participates on and completes it and receives the credit.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5.11	There are secure and efficient procedures for the administration of examinations and other means of assessment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5.12	There are effective procedures for internal and external moderation at pre- and post-assessment stages.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5.13	The institution makes student records and transcripts available to its students in a timely manner.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5.14	There is a policy on the collection and refund of students' fees that is implemented effectively.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Administrative support within the Institution is sufficient to ensure the effective management of the provision. The administrative roles are clearly documented through job descriptions and also articulated in the SSH and staff handbooks. The content of the documented administrative roles provide staff and students with well-defined information, supporting their understanding of the allocation of administrative duties and responsibilities.

Administrative policies and procedures are appropriate, clearly documented and available through the website, the VLE and the staff portal. Staff and students confirmed that they understand the support available to them, which works well.

Classes are timetabled to appropriate rooms, including rooms fitted with technology to support synchronous, online and in-person teaching. The classrooms provide spacious accommodation suitable for a range of teaching activities.

Data collection and collation systems are appropriately documented and managed by the College Secretary in accordance with appropriate data protection regulations to ensure their security. Staff and student records are regularly updated to reflect assessment results, professional development and other relevant information.

Records that are stored electronically are password protected with limited access, and the hardcopy files are stored in locked cabinets in the administrator's office and are only available to authorised staff in line with the SSH's suitable data protection policy.

The identity of students is checked at enrolment and the Senior Tutor verifies all allocation of credit, which is also checked and verified by the partner university to ensure the appropriate awarding of certificates.

Clear and appropriate arrangements for the management of examinations and assessments are documented and implemented in accordance with partner university requirements. The SSH handbook sets out clear procedures for the internal and external moderation of assessments, which supports awareness and consistency of practice.

Student transcripts are maintained up to date and made available to students via the VLE and are password protected. Students can also request transcripts through the College Secretary's office. Students confirm that they have access to accurate and timely updates on their progress.

To date, the fees of all students have been covered by bursaries or grants from the Church of England or associated churches. From October 2023, students studying online who do not have bursaries or sponsorship will be required to pay fees, as published on the website. An appropriate fees and refunds policy has been developed and is made available to applicants.

The clear and appropriate administrative policies and procedures support the administration of the Institution effectively.

6. The institution employs and continues to support appropriately qualified and experienced staff

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| 6.1 | There are appropriate policies and effective procedures for the recruitment and continuing employment of suitably qualified and experienced staff, which is designed to ensure the safety of the students. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 6.2 | All staff are suitably qualified and experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying them out. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 6.3 | There are clear and appropriate job specifications for all staff. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 6.4 | There are effective procedures for the induction of all staff. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 6.5 | All staff are treated fairly and according to a published equality and diversity policy. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 6.6 | Staff have access to an appropriate complaints and appeals procedure. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 6.7 | Management monitors and reviews the performance of all staff through a clearly documented and transparent appraisal system that includes regular classroom observations of teaching staff. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 6.8 | The professional development needs of staff are identified through appraisal and other means, and measures are taken to support staff to address these and gain additional qualifications, where relevant. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Clear and appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the effective recruitment and employment of suitably qualified and experienced staff. Detailed job descriptions provide clear information about qualifications and experience and the requirements, along with the duties and responsibilities, of the postholder.

All references are checked, and all shortlisted applicants are interviewed by a panel of senior staff. All successful applicants are required to have appropriate pre-employment checks to ensure the safety of staff and students. The clear recruitment process ensures that all staff understand their roles and are able to carry them out effectively and efficiently.

The induction process for staff is detailed and clearly set out, with an appropriate checklist to ensure staff have been provided with all key information, including policies and procedures. The Institution has clear and appropriate equality and complaints policies that are available to staff both online and as part of the induction. Staff confirm that they are treated fairly, in line with published policies. Inspection findings support this view.

An appropriate performance appraisal procedure and documentation ensure that staff are appraised annually by their line managers who review key goals and identify areas for development based on performance criteria. Academic staff appraisal includes consideration of the outcomes of lesson observations. The appraisal process enables staff to understand what they do well and what they need to do to improve, as well as the outcomes of student survey feedback. However, observations of all teaching staff do not always take place sufficiently frequently.

Where development needs are identified either through appraisal or ongoing performance monitoring, staff receive appropriate support for their Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Academic staff have access to an agreed individual annual budget to support their CPD as well as an entitlement to sabbatical time to support their research

and professional interests. As a result, staff feel well supported and fairly treated. Non-academic staff are supported to gain additional qualifications and to attend training events.

The well-qualified staff are appropriately supported to undertake their roles.

7. Academic management is effective

7.1	There are appropriate procedures for the proposal, design and validation of programmes of study that take account of the mission of the institution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
7.2	Intended learning outcomes for all programmes are clearly articulated, understood by students and publicly available.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
7.3	There are regularly scheduled and recorded meetings of academic staff where academic programmes are reviewed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
7.4	There is an appropriate policy and effective procedures for the acquisition of academic resources to support programmes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
7.5	Commissioning of course materials is managed effectively, and materials and the budget are checked to ensure standardisation and consistency across the provision.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
7.6	Students are encouraged to take an active role in the development of the academic provision to ensure student-centred learning.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution has a validation agreement with the University of Durham that sets out clear terms and conditions for the approval and validation of programmes. The Common Awards clearly reflect the mission of SSH as a Church of England theological college or Theological Education Institution (TEI), as defined by the University of Durham.

All modules have clearly set out learning outcomes, which are provided to students via links to the University of Durham website and through the VLE. Learning aims and outcomes are further explained to students as part of module delivery to support their understanding of the learning and assessment requirements. Students confirm that they understand their learning outcomes and how these are assessed, and inspection findings confirm this to be the case.

Regular staff meetings are scheduled each term, with minutes recording outcomes, including consideration of student progress and matters associated with programme delivery and review. Meeting outcomes also support the development of the annual self-evaluation for the University of Durham, which includes student feedback to inform further enhancements.

Updated reports are also presented to the academic committee, which includes student representatives who are able to provide additional input based on their cohort's views on curriculum delivery and development. This effectively supports a student-centred learning approach to academic management and development.

The commissioning of materials and the purchase of academic resources follow a clear resources policy that includes checks by senior academics and the Senior Tutor to ensure standardisation across programmes. Procedures also comply with the partner university's regulations and support the acquisition of resources to support programme delivery effectively.

Students are encouraged to provide feedback to their tutors as well as to senior staff through student representatives who attend committee meetings. The President of the Student Common Room meets with the Principal weekly and is able to discuss matters raised by the students, which appropriately informs the management of student-centred learning.

The policies and the opportunities for student views to be taken into consideration inform academic management well.

8. The institution takes reasonable care to recruit and enrol suitable students for its courses		
8.1	Entry requirements for each programme are set at an appropriate level and are clearly stated in the programme descriptions seen by prospective students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
8.2	Students are informed as to the necessary language requirements for entry on to programmes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
8.3	A formal application process ensures that students meet the entry requirements and any claimed qualifications are verified.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
8.4	All students' application enquiries are responded to promptly and appropriately.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
8.5	Prospective students are properly briefed on the nature and requirements of the programme(s) in which they are interested and provided with advice on choosing their programme.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
8.6	Students receive a proper initial assessment, which includes language ability, to confirm their capability to complete the programmes on which they are enrolling.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
8.7	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.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
8.8	The institution has a clear policy on the accreditation of prior learning and prior experiential learning, which is brought to the attention of prospective students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
8.9	Any recruitment agents are properly selected, briefed, monitored and evaluated.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Entry requirements for programmes are published on the website, with programme descriptors and including clear information as to the level of the individual course and learning outcomes.

8.1 However, information in printed publicity materials does not include entry requirements. As a result, some students may not be completely clear about all the course requirements.

Information on English language requirements has been added to the website to provide clear information for international applicants. Applicants are also able to gain additional information about the necessary English language proficiency requirements from SSH directly as part of the application process. This ensures that English language proficiency levels are clearly understood.

Students submit an online application form and, if they meet the criteria, are interviewed by the Principal, the Director of Pastoral Studies and one other member of staff depending on the pathway. The Institution then liaises with the University of Durham to gain approval of applications.

Application enquiries are responded to promptly in accordance with the admissions policy. Students also confirmed that they received a very prompt response from SSH staff as part of their application experience.

Interviews are used, together with responses to informal queries from applicants, to ensure that students are properly briefed about the nature and requirements of the programme they are considering.

The Institution has a robust process for assessing language competency through interviews and checking relevant certificates and previous qualifications undertaken in the English language or qualifications studied in English.

The interview process, together with informal queries during the application phase, are used to make it clear that students are responsible for checking that they have the skills and knowledge required to study on the chosen course.

The Institution has an Accreditation of Prior Learning policy (APL), which permits students on University of Durham Common Awards to seek appropriate APL credits for any Common Award programme. This policy is outlined on relevant programme pages on the SSH website.

St Stephen's House does not make use of recruitment agents.

Recruitment policies and procedures support the effective recruitment of students to all programmes.

9. The institution encourages and supports its staff to undertake research and other forms of scholarship and to engage in other professional activities

- 9.1 The institution encourages academic staff to undertake research in relevant fields and to publish their findings. Yes No NA
- 9.2 Academic staff are encouraged to engage in research and/or scholarship that informs their teaching. Yes No NA
- 9.3 There is a fair and transparent procedure for staff to seek financial support for their research and other professional development activities. Yes No NA
- 9.4 The institution provides time for staff to meet regularly to share and discuss current research activities and, if appropriate, invites external speakers. Yes No NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

All academic staff are encouraged and appropriately supported to undertake research and to publish their findings. Staff have large, private studies and access to a wide range of resources, both through the University of Oxford libraries and online resources through e-library subscriptions. Staff can also draw on the substantial resources and materials of the Church of England online hub.

Academic staff receive a book allowance each year to support their research and their teaching, and all full-time academic staff are also entitled to take a sabbatical term, as set out in the staff handbook. These resources and time allowances support research and curriculum development activities effectively.

Non-academic staff's professional development needs are identified through appraisal or through discussions with their line manager and are also appropriately supported.

An academic staff colloquium has been introduced, which provides good opportunities for staff to discuss their research activities. Staff are also supported to attend external conferences and events, as appropriate, to further both their research and pedagogy.

The opportunities provided for staff to engage in research, scholarship and professional activities support their ongoing development effectively.

10. Publicity material, both printed and electronic, gives a comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate description of the institution and its curriculum

- 10.1 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
- 10.2 Information on the programmes available, their assessment and progression is comprehensive, accurate, readily accessible and up to date. Yes No
- 10.3 There are effective procedures to update information on a regular basis to ensure its relevance and accuracy. Yes No
- 10.4 The information provided ensures students are well informed of the status of the qualifications offered, including the awarding body and level of award. Yes No
- 10.5 Students are informed of the full cost of all programmes, including costs of assessments, activities and any required materials. Yes No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Text and images on the Institution’s website and other publicity material provide an accurate depiction of SSH’s location, premises, facilities and resources and support students in making the choice to study at SSH. However, the information about the qualifications provided through the Edward King Centre, as detailed on its website, could be clearer and more explicit to include more information on how courses are delivered with reference to synchronous teaching.

Information provided on all programmes, including assessments, is clear and detailed, regularly updated and easily accessible. The information is effective in supporting current and prospective students in choosing programmes that will meet their needs and supporting their understanding of the learning outcomes.

The Institution has clear mechanisms for the review and updating of the information it publishes on its provision. The academic team regularly reviews the information provided and liaises with the partner university to ensure any updates are reflected as appropriate. This ensures students are provided with clear and up-to-date information.

Information provided to prospective and current students includes clear reference to the awarding body and level of the qualifications being offered, including signposting to the University of Durham Common Awards where relevant.

Until recently, students have not been required to pay fees, as the Church of England has paid for their studies. However, as the Institution has expanded the range of its provision and the delivery modes associated with its programmes, it has become necessary that programme fees are made clear to applicants who are not being supported by the Church of England.

10.5 Whilst information about fees is clear on the website materials, printed booklets do not consistently provide students with information about the full cost of all programmes, including the costs of assessments, activities and any required materials. As a result, students may not be clear about all study costs.

INSPECTION AREA – TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

11. Academic staff are effective in facilitating student learning

11.1	Lecturers have the required subject knowledge, and pedagogic and communicative skills and experience to teach both the course content and level of course to which they are allocated.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
11.2	The allocation of teaching staff to courses provides for a consistent learning experience, and delivery is monitored to ensure consistency.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
11.3	The programmes and their constituent courses are delivered and assessed in ways that enable students to succeed by developing the knowledge and skills that will be required for final examinations or assessments.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
11.4	Teaching sessions are appropriately informed by module descriptors and relate to defined intended learning outcomes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
11.5	Academic staff are effective in recognising individual learning needs and preferred learning styles and adapting their delivery to meet these.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
11.6	Academic staff use a mixture of group and individual activities to encourage the active participation of all students and to support their learning.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
11.7	Students are encouraged and enabled to develop independent learning skills.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
11.8	Students and academic staff have access to appropriate learning and study materials as well as other resources, and the institution encourages and supports their use.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Staff profiles and teaching observations demonstrate that staff have the required subject knowledge, and pedagogic and communication skills and experience to teach both the course content and level of course to which they are allocated, which supports student learning. Inspection findings confirm this.

The Institution makes significant use of part-time, visiting lecturers, who bring in module-specific knowledge and expertise. Effective mechanisms ensure that full- and part-time lecturers are allocated to suitable modules and the process is overseen by the Senior Tutor. Student feedback and achievements are also monitored by the Academic Board and discussed at staff meetings to ensure the consistency of the student learning experience.

Staff use a wide range of teaching and learning methods, as evidenced in lesson plans and confirmed by teaching observations. This ensures that a range of learning styles are catered for, using methods including presentations, group work and an individual reflective practice element. Assessment is similarly varied and includes reflective journals, portfolios, assessed conversations or written assignments and other tasks that are clearly linked to learning outcomes to support student achievement.

Comprehensive module handbooks are made available to students via the VLE and through the partner university website. The module handbooks include detailed module descriptors and learning outcomes to support students' understanding of knowledge and assessment requirements.

Staff are effective in recognising individual learning styles and use a variety of delivery activities to engage students. The small size of classes also helps staff to develop detailed understanding and rapport with their students and to tailor delivery accordingly. The use of small-group and individual activities supports active learning, as detailed in lesson plans. Teaching observations confirmed this to be the case.

Students are encouraged to develop independent learning skills, in line with their level of study, and this is reinforced through study skills sessions. Formative assessment activities further support the development of independent learning skills.

The Institution has its own library with approximately 15,000 texts, as well as providing access to a wide range of suitable electronic resources, including through the Common Awards Hub. Students are actively encouraged to access a range of resources to broaden their understanding of module content, including through access to the Bodleian Library in Oxford.

The active learning approaches and a wide range of resources facilitate student learning effectively.

12. Assessment is fair and appropriate for the level and nature of the courses, and students receive timely and supportive feedback on their work

12.1	Students are provided with an assessment schedule in which required coursework and revision periods are detailed in advance with clear submission dates.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
12.2	Assessment strategies are relevant to the content and nature of the courses and focused on measuring students' achievement of the intended learning outcomes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
12.3	Assessment tasks are clearly written, indicating what students need to do to meet stipulated levels of achievement.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
12.4	Students receive detailed and supportive verbal and written feedback on their assessments and overall performance and progress, which are effectively monitored.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
12.5	The institution takes appropriate steps to identify and discourage cheating, including plagiarism and other misdemeanours, and to penalise offenders.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
12.6	There are clear policies and procedures for students to claim mitigating circumstances and to appeal against marks awarded.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Module handbooks are made available to students at the start of their programme and clearly set out assessment schedules, including revision periods and submission dates. Students are able to discuss their work programme in person with the Course Director, which supports their understanding of assessment requirements effectively. Students also receive reminders of formative and summative assignment submission dates from module lecturers and from the Academic Secretary.

Assessment strategies are relevant to the content and nature of the courses. Students are provided with the detailed Common Awards assessment criteria, which make clear what they need to achieve in order to secure grades at the various levels. Assessment tasks are clearly written, providing guidance on the grading criteria evidence requirements, which students confirm supports their understanding of assessments.

Students receive clear, timely and constructive oral and written feedback on their formative and summative assessments, which supports their understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement of their work. Tutorials further support students to review their progress, and this is clearly noted and monitored. Students confirmed that they find the feedback they receive helpful.

Robust arrangements for the managing of academic misconduct are set out in policies and in the student handbook, including appropriate reference to the regulations and policies of the partner university. Students are made aware of plagiarism penalties at the start of their programme, with regulations also highlighted as part of formative feedback, as appropriate, to support students' understanding.

Students are made aware of the mitigating circumstances procedures and the appeals policy as part of their induction. Policies are accessible through the VLE and the website, as well as being outlined in the student handbook. Requests for appeal through mitigating circumstances are handled through Durham University procedures and students are able to receive help as needed from the Academic Secretary.

Appropriate policies and procedures support the management of assessment and feedback effectively.

13. Student materials are appropriate to the medium of delivery and are effective

13.1	Course materials are designed for a specific and clearly stated level of study.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
13.2	Course materials are appropriately presented and sufficiently comprehensive to enable students to achieve the programmes' objectives.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
13.3	Course materials are accurate and reflect current knowledge and practice and are regularly reviewed and revised.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
13.4	Programme designers make effective use of appropriate teaching aids and learning resources.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
13.5	The institution makes effective provision for students to access all resources.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Course materials are designed for a specific and clearly stated level of study and are effectively aligned to learning outcomes. As a result, the materials support students with the completion of their studies well.

A wide range of course materials are used by staff as part of their teaching, and additional materials are made available to students on the VLE as well as being signposted in module and assessment reading lists. Reading lists are regularly reviewed and updated as part of end-of-module reviews to provide students with current, peer-reviewed resources and recent publications. This supports their learning.

SSH classrooms benefit from high-quality audio-visual resources, which ensure that classes delivered in a blended delivery mode are effective. The resources also enable students learning remotely to interact with those learning in the classroom in a seamless manner.

Students confirmed that the Institution ensures that students can access all necessary resources through the VLE, online libraries and the Church of England Hub. This meets their study needs.

The provision of study materials is appropriately managed to support students' studies.

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

14.1	There are appropriate staff members responsible for student welfare, who are accessible to all students and available to provide advice and counselling.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
14.2	Students are given an induction to the institution, their programme of study and guidance on the use of facilities such as the library and IT provision.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
14.3	Students receive appropriate information on the pastoral support available to them, including for the provision of emergency support.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
14.4	The institution has policies to avoid discrimination and a published procedure for dealing with any abusive behaviour.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
14.5	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.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
14.6	There are effective systems to communicate with students out of class hours.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
14.7	Effective safeguarding arrangements are in place and are regularly reviewed to keep all participants safe.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA
14.8	Effective arrangements are in place to protect participants from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

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

A range of staff provide student welfare support, including Course Directors, the Disability Adviser and, as appropriate, the Principal and Vice-Principal. Students confirm that they have sufficient access to staff who support student welfare.

The Institution has a comprehensive induction programme that introduces students to their programme content, study skills and pastoral and welfare support, library resources, Information Technology (IT) support, and social and recreational activities. This induction helps students to settle in to SSH quickly.

Students are also provided with handouts on personal and pastoral support, and information is also displayed around campus. In emergencies, students can contact their Emergency Pastoral Tutor or College Adviser, which ensures that support is available as needed.

Information about policies on dealing with discrimination and abusive behaviour is provided in the SSH handbook. Codes of conduct are covered as part of induction, providing clear and appropriate information to students.

The Institution has recently outsourced its IT support. Staff and students confirm that this has led to higher levels of service and responsiveness, resulting in students feeling well supported.

Students are able to contact staff outside class hours through email and through regular social interaction in the daily life of SSH, in particular during shared mealtimes, which serve as an opportunity to interact on academic and social matters.

Effective arrangements are in place to protect students from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. A prevention of radicalisation and extremism policy, an appropriate risk assessment and associated training for staff are in place.

Pastoral and welfare support provision meets the needs of the student body.

15. Students receive appropriate academic support and guidance

15.1	Students have appropriate access to teaching staff outside teaching and learning sessions.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
15.2	Students have access to appropriate support to enable the regular review of their academic progress.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

15.3	Assessment outcomes are monitored to enable the identification of students who are not making satisfactory progress and prompt intervention is made, where appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
15.4	Academic support, advice and guidance on alternative programmes are provided to students who are judged not to be making sufficient progress and/or who wish to change their pattern of study.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
15.5	Students have access to appropriate advice and guidance on careers and further study and any professional body exemptions that may be available.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
15.6	The institution has a fair complaints procedure that includes an external adjudicator, for example, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) in the UK, and students are informed of how to submit a complaint.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
15.7	Instructions and suggestions on how to study are made available to assist students to learn effectively and efficiently.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
15.8	Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified so that appropriate support can be provided.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Students have appropriate access to teaching staff outside the teaching sessions, including during shared mealtimes and in scheduled tutorials. In addition, students are able to contact their lecturers and tutors by email. Students confirm that staff are accessible and provide them with appropriate support for their studies. Inspection findings confirm this view.

Students are able to access support from Course Directors and an assigned College Advisor to gain effective review of their academic progress.

Assessment outcomes are regularly monitored as part of the academic review process. Students making insufficient progress are identified at an early stage by individual members of the teaching staff and are provided with appropriate support. Where students have missed an assessment deadline, they receive a letter from the Senior Tutor or the Course Directors. Appropriate pastoral and academic interventions are provided as needed to support students to make the required progress.

Academic reviews are conducted halfway through each term. Student matters and issues, including for any students making insufficient progress, are also discussed at fortnightly staff meetings. This ensures pastoral care and student well-being are integrated parts of the student support process. Students who wish to change their programme or mode of study are provided with clear support and guidance to enable them to make informed decisions.

Students referenced the highly vocational nature of their programmes as guiding the approach to career support. They also cited several instances where senior SSH staff have helped students to make suitable connections to assist with post-study destinations.

The Institution has an appropriate complaints policy in place, which is included in the student handbook. This clearly outlines the types of student complaint and the procedures for submitting a formal complaint. Students confirmed that the complaints process is clearly explained. Students also have a right to refer their complaint to the awarding body if they remain dissatisfied with the Institution's resolution.

A series of study skills workshops are provided in the first term. These support students in developing their study skills. Workshop topics include producing bibliographies, reading effectively, footnotes, plagiarism and taking notes. In addition, there is a range of study skills material available on the VLE, which students confirm they are able to access as needed.

Students are encouraged to declare any disabilities or learning difficulties as part of their application so that appropriate support can be provided. Students have access to a Disability Co-ordinator, who is supported by a Disability Adviser, who can provide appropriate advice and liaise with staff to ensure appropriate support is provided.

Students provided the inspection team with examples of where they had declared a disability and had received appropriate support.

The student handbook includes a comprehensive section on disability support, including staff contact information and information on the provision of a student support plan, adding additional clarity for students.

The clear policies and procedures operated by the Institution ensure that students receive appropriate academic support and guidance.

16. International students are provided with specific advice and assistance

16.1 Before their arrival, international students receive appropriate advice on travelling to and living in their chosen country of study. Yes No NA

16.2 On arrival, international students receive an appropriate induction on issues specific to the local area. Yes No NA

16.3 Information and advice that are specific to international students continue to be available throughout their time at the institution. Yes No NA

16.4 Provision of support takes into account cultural and religious considerations. Yes No NA

16.5 Where possible, students have access to speakers of their own first language. Yes No NA

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

Comments

At the time of the inspection, the Institution did not recruit international students for its Common Awards programmes.

17. Student attendance is measured and recorded regularly and effective remedial action taken where necessary

17.1 There is an appropriate, clear and published policy on required student attendance and punctuality. Yes No NA

17.2 There are effective procedures and systems to enforce attendance and punctuality. Yes No NA

17.3 Accurate and secure records of attendance and punctuality, at each session, are kept for all students. Yes No NA

17.4 Data on attendance and punctuality is collated centrally and reviewed regularly, and absences followed up promptly. Yes No NA

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

Comments

A clear attendance policy is made available to students in the student handbook, along with advice and guidance on punctuality and reporting absences, along with the procedure for applying for an agreed absence. Both online and in-person students confirm that the advice is clear. The inspection findings confirm this to be the case.

The data on attendance and punctuality at all sessions is recorded and centrally collated so that any patterns of absence are quickly identified and followed up by the tutors. Where appropriate, additional advice, guidance and support are provided to support student engagement.

Attendance and punctuality policies and procedures are clear and managed effectively to support student engagement.

18. Where residential accommodation is offered, it is fit for purpose, well maintained and appropriately supervised

- | | | |
|------|--|---|
| 18.1 | Any residential accommodation is clean, safe and of a standard that is adequate for the needs of students. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 18.2 | Any residential accommodation is open to inspection by the appropriate authorities. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 18.3 | A level of supervision is provided that is appropriate to the needs of students. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 18.4 | Students are provided with advice on suitable private accommodation. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

The residential accommodation for staff and students forms part of the SSH premises and is open to inspection by appropriate local and education authorities.

The accommodation is of a good standard and its location allows students easy access to all SSH facilities.

All students are aged over 18 years and supervision is appropriate to meet adult learner needs very well. The premises are secure, and staff and students are provided with access codes to external doors and to the car park.

Where needed, students are able to access advice on suitable private accommodation through the student services offices.

Residential accommodation is well maintained and fit for purpose.

19. The institution provides an appropriate social programme for students and information on activities in the locality

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| 19.1 | Students are provided with appropriate information on opportunities for participation in social events and other leisure activities that may be of interest. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 19.2 | The social programme is responsive to the needs and wishes of students, and activities have been chosen with consideration of their affordability. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 19.3 | Any activities organised by the institution are supervised by a responsible representative with suitable qualifications and/or experience. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 19.4 | Students are encouraged to develop and participate in extramural activities and, when studying remotely, the activities include appropriate use of online forums or channels. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 19.5 | The institution supports and encourages peer interaction through a variety of channels, e.g. social network forums and channels. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

Students have access to a wide-ranging social programme that is principally organised through the student Common Room Committee. The Common Room provides a community area and facilities and is run by students, for students, and elects a range of officers from within the student body. These posts include the President, Secretary and Treasurer, a Domestic Officer and a Social Secretary. Activities include fundraising events, music, sports, cinema trips and meals, including picnics and formal dinners.

The programme is responsive to students' needs, with activities organised and run by the students themselves and subsidised by SSH in the case of formal dinners and some organised trips.

The Common Room ensures that there is suitable supervision at sporting events and organised trips to meet the needs of the students attending.

Effective use is made of online channels, including social media platforms to facilitate interaction between those students who are learning online and those who are resident at SSH, including, as appropriate, online discussion groups.

Social activities are appropriately promoted through a range of social media channels and through notice boards for on-campus students, which ensures that all students have clear access to information and to opportunities for participation.

Social activities are organised by the students and communicated effectively to encourage participation.

INSPECTION AREA – PREMISES, FACILITIES AND LEARNING RESOURCES

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

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

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution has secure tenure of its premises, which it owns and which are approved for use by the local authority as education premises. This ensures the security and continuing delivery of the education provision.

The Institution does not use external premises for its provision.

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

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

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

Access is appropriately secure and restricted, with entry codes needed to gain access to buildings and the car park. These systems provide good levels of security for staff and students.

The premises are well maintained, with the Bursar and Facilities Manager undertaking regular inspections and putting forward programmes of maintenance that are approved by the finance and general purposes committee and the House Council. The regular cleaning of the premises is overseen and checked by the Housekeeper.

The Institution does not deliver teaching in any areas of particular hazard.

General guidance on health and safety is provided as part of the induction for staff and students. Additional guidance is displayed appropriately on notice boards and brought to the attention of visitors as appropriate.

Premise signage is clear, and appropriate general information is displayed in general circulation areas to assist students and staff in finding their way around the campus.

The SSH premises provide good circulation spaces appropriate to the number of staff and students, and these meet their needs well. A number of suitable areas are available for receiving visitors, including common rooms and individual offices.

The toilet and handwashing facilities are appropriate for the number of staff and students and are cleaned daily.

All rooms have adequate heating and ventilation and provide a comfortable environment for students and staff.

The SSH premises overall provide a safe and comfortable environment.

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

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

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

The classrooms are of an appropriate size for the numbers of students. Classrooms are appropriately allocated, including rooms that support online students joining sessions. This allows lecturers to bring together the students in larger groups and supports both modes of learning effectively.

Teaching rooms are appropriately equipped with tables, chairs and IT equipment to support the delivery of presentations and synchronous in-person and online teaching as well as seminar and discussion sessions.

Suitable facilities are available for examinations and for other modes of assessment, including group work and presentations.

The teaching and learning areas provide appropriate accommodation for the programmes offered.

23. There are appropriate additional facilities for students and staff

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

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Students have access to appropriate library areas to support individual and group study, as well as individual study bedrooms for those who are full-time resident students. Facilities provide appropriate study environments for students.

Staff have sufficient space for undertaking their teaching preparation and marking of students' work in their spacious studies, where they are also able to meet with students individually or in small groups to provide additional support as required as well as tutorial sessions.

The common room, the dining room and other circulation spaces, including the gardens and cloisters, provide attractive and comfortable areas for relaxation and the consumption of meals and refreshments for both staff and students.

Most students are residents in the college and are able to store their personal possessions in their lockable study bedrooms. Non-residential students are able to leave personal possessions securely in the administration offices as needed.

Staff have access to classrooms when these are not in use, along with their private studies, both of which provide appropriate space for larger and smaller staff meetings.

Administrative offices are of a sufficient size and suitably equipped to support the effective administration of the Institution.

The Institution provides appropriate working, meeting and learning facilities for students and staff.

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

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

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The library is well resourced, with over 15,000 theological books and pamphlets and is equipped with computers to provide access to online resources available via the Church of England's Hub and other online library subscriptions. Wireless internet connection is also provided. The facilities in the library, and through online access, provide sufficient resources to support students' studies effectively.

Library resources are kept under review, and staff and students are able to request additional resources as needed. Resource acquisition is managed effectively in line with the available budget and course development priorities. This is overseen by the Senior Tutor and the Principal.

The library provides sufficient space for individual private study and an area in which group work can be undertaken. This, along with the private study bedrooms and online access to a wider range of resources, meets students' independent learning requirements.

The library has a well-organised lending system, and students are provided with clear guidance on this as part of induction. Library staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. Students report them to be approachable and helpful in providing appropriate advice and guidance.

The library is accessible to resident students at all times, with students and staff being provided with key-code access.

The online and library stock provides appropriate resources to support student learning.

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

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

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Students have access to an IT helpdesk email service that provides timely and helpful support, including support with connectivity issues. Full- and part-time students have access to a wide range of learning materials through the VLE, with links to external resources provided by tutors. The VLE is managed by the Academic Secretary, who is available to help and support students as appropriate.

The Academic Secretary is also able to liaise with the Church of England helpdesk as needed for training and updating purposes, including on the use of updated systems. The broad range of support is effective in securing access to online materials and delivery.

The House Council and the finance and general purposes committee ensure that resources are made available to support the efficiency and currency of IT hardware and software. These are kept under regular review.

The IT services helpdesk and the use of external IT consultants ensure that the online systems are well maintained and accessible to support student learning. Students confirm that they receive timely support to access materials and to resolve access or other IT problems.

IT is managed effectively and provides appropriate resources to support learning and teaching.

INSPECTION AREA – QUALITY MANAGEMENT, ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

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

26.1	The views of all stakeholders are canvassed and recorded regularly, considered objectively, analysed and evaluated thoroughly and, where necessary, appropriate action is taken.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| 26.2 | Student feedback is obtained through appropriate formal student representation mechanisms. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 26.3 | The institution has appropriate formal feedback mechanisms to inform all stakeholders of any action taken as a result of their views. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Student feedback is gathered each term through the completion of anonymous, online module surveys. Students are also asked to provide feedback on their overall learning experiences, both formally in meetings and informally through interactions with staff. However, on occasions response rates to module surveys have been low.

Responses to surveys are collated and discussed at staff meetings and appropriate action plans are drawn up and implemented, with the impact evaluated at subsequent meetings.

Student groups also meet with the academic Course Directors as part of the self-assessment process of the partner university. Students and staff also meet with external reviewers as part of the Church of England review.

Student representatives are part of the academic committee and are able to take part in discussions and provide feedback to their groups on curriculum developments and other actions, which ensures students are kept informed. Minutes of meetings are accessible to staff and to the Trustees to inform them of actions taken in response to feedback received by SSH.

Academic staff provide termly curriculum review feedback to their students. Key updates are also posted to the VLE to ensure all staff and students have access to information about the actions taken in response to feedback and other developments.

Appropriate mechanisms ensure that feedback from stakeholders is collected and information on actions taken in response is consistently communicated back to them.

27. The institution has effective systems to review its own standards and assess its own performance

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| 27.1 | All quality management policies and procedures are clearly documented and are brought to the attention of staff and, where appropriate, students and other stakeholders. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 27.2 | The institution's quality assurance policies and procedures appropriately inform its strategic management. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 27.3 | The principles of quality assurance are embedded throughout the institution to ensure a quality ethos. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 27.4 | The institution undertakes regular and systematic monitoring of its operations and reviews all aspects of its performance against clearly specified and appropriate performance indicators. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 27.5 | Management compiles regular reports that present the results of the institution's reviews and incorporate action plans. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 27.6 | Particular attention is paid to the quality of the student learning experience and to ensuring that there is fair treatment of all students. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 27.7 | The nominated course leader produces an end-of-session, end-of-semester or end-of-year course report that includes measures of student satisfaction, completion rates and achievement levels. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 27.8 | The nominated programme leader, drawing upon reports from its constituent courses, produces an annual programme report, which includes analysis of year-on-year results on student satisfaction, achievement levels, completion rates and progression to further study or employment. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| 27.9 | Key performance indicators include an analysis of student outcomes in terms of year-on-year performance, which highlights any significant variations. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

27.10	General performance reports include an analysis of year-on-year data, including on student satisfaction, retention and achievement, staff performance (including research and other forms of scholarship) and a review of resourcing issues.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
27.11	Review and revalidation of programmes on a regular basis involves external assessors as appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
27.12	Institutional systems ensure the effective consideration of programme reports and that appropriate actions are incorporated into action-planning.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Well-defined quality assurance policies and processes are clearly documented through links to the University of Durham website and are appropriately applied by the Institution. This includes the ongoing monitoring of student achievement and internal verification of assessed work. Staff and students are made aware of quality monitoring procedures as part of their induction. As a result, the quality assurance ethos is embedded throughout provision management and review and informs SSH strategic management and planning effectively.

The Trustees receive regular updates on quality management through reports provided by the Principal. These include points arising from academic committee meetings. Key priorities for improvement are appropriately identified, including recommendations from the External Examiner's reports. Actions are noted and progress is evaluated at subsequent meetings of committees and the House Council to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is maintained.

The Institution reviews its performance through clear monitoring of its operations and student performance. The Senior Tutor produces a report on academic quality assurance, which is considered by the Board of Examiners and includes year-on-year student performance. Student satisfaction is monitored termly in curriculum development meetings, and appropriate actions are noted and followed up.

The Institution produces an annual self-evaluation (ASE) report using the University of Durham template. This report considers a range of factors, including teaching, student feedback and the External Examiner's feedback. The report is evaluated by the partner university, and the Institution takes forward an action plan to support ongoing developments and enhancements. Progress on action plans is monitored by the senior management team, with key outcomes and priorities shared with the House Council so that these inform strategic and operational priorities and the review of institutional performance against strategic indicators.

Biannual periodic external reviews are conducted by the Ministry Council of the Church of England, and key recommendations are included in action-planning to further secure and enhance the management and quality of the student learning experience. SSH also employs an external quality adviser to produce an annual report that reviews individual programme performance, student feedback, pastoral support and new developments. The range of quality review reports ensures that standards and quality are effectively reviewed and appropriate action plans are developed.

The academic committee meetings and the ASE both include consideration of student feedback and performance as part of the monitoring of the quality of the student learning experience, and action plans are developed and reviewed to support enhancements. Clear policies and procedures ensure that all students receive fair treatment, including the provision of additional support to meet individual learning needs where appropriate.

An overall undergraduate and postgraduate end-of-year report is produced by the Senior Tutor and shared with the Board of Examiners. This overarching report includes completion rates and achievement levels, along with consideration of good practice and areas for development. The document has a table attached showing year-on-year comparison data of achievement.

End-of-term and end-of-year reports are produced by course directors which include information on student achievement and student feedback and satisfaction. These course reports inform the clear Senior Tutor's annual report on the Theology, Ministry and Mission qualifications, which includes year-on-year consideration of achievement.

The annual evaluation report required by the University of Durham includes the evaluation of student feedback.

27.8 However, consideration of student feedback and satisfaction is not part of the Senior Tutor's annual report.

As all current and past students are members of the clergy, progression to further study or employment has not been formally monitored to inform further development of provision and guidance.

The ASE enables the Institution to systematically review its quality and standards against key indicators and for variations to be identified and action plans to be compiled. Reports include consideration of student performance and feedback, as well as resources, and they also identify good practice and areas for development.

The Senior Tutor report clearly includes analysis of student outcomes and year on year variations in performance, which are used to inform further resource and curriculum support as appropriate.

Programmes are reviewed on a regular basis in accordance with the requirements of both the partner university and the Common Awards framework. Internal programme reviews include consideration of reports produced by course directors and the Senior Tutor and are discussed by the academic committee. Key reports are also discussed at staff meetings. Identified actions are systematically monitored to support the enhancement of provision and student learning and achievement as well as the impact of research on the quality of provision delivery.

The Institution has a range of effective mechanisms that allow it to monitor and review its own standards and performance.

28. The institution has a strong commitment to, and procedures that facilitate, continuing enhancement of its provision

- | | | |
|------|--|---|
| 28.1 | Good practice is effectively identified and disseminated across the institution. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 28.2 | End-of-session course and annual programme reports include improvement and ongoing developments made and identify further areas requiring enhancement. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 28.3 | Action plans for enhancement are implemented and reviewed regularly within the institution's committee structure. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Good practice is identified effectively and highlighted as part of the teaching observation process, as well as by the External Examiner and Course Director reports. Key points are shared through staff meetings and through the academic committee and House Council meetings, which include student representatives. Records of good teaching practice are maintained by the Academic Secretary and disseminated to academic staff to inform the ongoing improvement of teaching.

End-of-session Course Director reports and end-of-year Senior Tutor reports include areas for development as well as progress made on previously identified areas for improvement. The House Council and academic committee receive reports that inform their prioritisation of actions and developments for the enhancement of provision.

Appropriate action plans linked to the ASE and External Examiner's reports are monitored by the House Council, the Principal, the Senior Tutor and the academic committee. Progress is monitored effectively to evaluate the impact of actions taken against identified enhancement objectives and the results are shared at the regular staff meetings.

Clear procedures and the sharing of action plans and progress support the Institution's commitment to the ongoing enhancement of its provision.

INSPECTION AREA – ONLINE, DISTANCE AND BLENDED LEARNING

29. The institution has suitable staff to ensure the successful delivery of online and distance learning

29.1	Staff have an understanding of the specific requirements of online, distance and blended learning.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
29.2	Academic staff are properly and continuously trained with respect to provider policies, student needs, instructional approaches and techniques and the use of appropriate instructional technology.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
29.3	Tutors have an understanding of the special challenges and demands of online, distance and blended learning.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
29.4	Staff ensure students are made aware of the necessary level of digital literacy required to follow the stated programmes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
29.5	Instructions and suggestions on how to study and how to use the online tutorial materials are made available to assist students to learn effectively and efficiently.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

Academic staff have a clear understanding of the requirements of online learning and support. Appropriate training is provided in engaging and supporting students who are studying remotely. Staff also have access to a wide range of resources through the VLE, including training materials, articles and other publications, which informs their support of online students effectively and represents good practice. Consequently, lecturers have a good understanding of challenges and demands of online, distance and blended learning and are able to provide the support required.

Lecturers ensure students are able to fully engage, including in synchronous teaching sessions with on-campus students. Online students confirmed that the teaching approaches allowed them to fully engage with teaching and to interact with tutors and peers. Inspection findings confirm this view.

Students are made aware of the level of digital literacy required to study the online courses both through the Edward King section of the website, which forms the online learning centre, and as part of the interview process. Module handbooks and other resources available on the VLE provide further support and resources for students.

Students are appropriately supported in developing their study skills through online study skills sessions, tutor support and study guides. Online students confirmed that they feel appropriately supported.

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

GOVERNANCE, STRATEGY AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Institution's strengths

The clear and detailed SSH and staff handbooks, which provide comprehensive information about governance, committee roles and senior staff responsibilities and effectively support staff and students' understanding of institutional management.	
Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

GENERAL AND ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Institution's strengths

The clear and effective administrative support provided to staff and students ensures that programmes are managed effectively.	
Actions required	Priority H/M/L
8.1 The Institution must ensure that all information on programmes, including in hard copy, contains the programme entry requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
10.5 SSH must ensure all students are routinely informed about the full cost of all programmes, in the printed course leaflets.	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Institution's strengths

There is good use of technology to support students who are studying remotely to participate in the same sessions as on-campus students and in promoting broader student interaction.	
Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

STUDENT SUPPORT, GUIDANCE AND PROGRESSION

Institution's strengths

Clear information on pastoral and academic support is provided to students, which supports student engagement and progression effectively.	
The significant contribution of the student Common Room to the life and community of the Institution supports students to fully integrate effectively.	
Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None.	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

PREMISES, FACILITIES AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Institution's strengths

The range of attractive and comfortable areas for socialising and relaxation is confirmed by students as providing a positive sense of community.

The wide range of learning resources supports both online and residential students to engage with their module learning outcomes and assessment effectively.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

QUALITY MANAGEMENT, ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

Institution's strengths

The sharing of identified good practice through staff meetings supports the ongoing improvement of teaching delivery.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
27.8 End-of-session Senior Tutor reports must include consideration of measures of student satisfaction.	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

ONLINE, DISTANCE AND BLENDED LEARNING

Institution's strengths

The wide range of resources available on the VLE is effective in supporting staff training to teach online and the ongoing development of pedagogical practices.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The Institution is recommended to review the cycle of teaching observations to ensure all teaching staff have sufficiently regular observations.

It is recommended that the website includes more information on how courses are delivered with reference to synchronous teaching.

The Institution should consider ways of encouraging students to complete end-of-module feedback.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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