



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

SUPPLEMENTARY INSPECTION NEW/ADDITIONAL PREMISES (Short Course Provider)

PROVIDER: IFSA UK

ADDRESS: 59–61 South Molton Street
London
W1K 5SN

HEAD OF PROVIDER: Dr Niki Sol

ACCREDITATION STATUS: Accredited

DATE OF INSPECTION: 28 August 2023

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Continued accreditation, 22 February 2024

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the provider

The Institute for Study Abroad United Kingdom Limited (IFSA UK/the Provider) is a non-profit institution. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Institute for Study Abroad Incorporated (IFSA/parent institution) based in Indiana in the United States of America (USA). The Provider is registered in the UK as a private limited company, with three Company Directors.

IFSA (UK) is based in London in the United Kingdom (UK) and offers semester-long and summer modules to participants of universities based in the USA. The courses cover topics in politics, economics, business, communications, life sciences, and social and environmental issues. The Provider has just started to offer a three-week programme in Edinburgh, Scotland to students from Pomona University in California, USA. It is the provision in Edinburgh that is the subject of this supplementary inspection.

IFSA UK aims to foster the development of critical perspectives, knowledge and skills essential for participants to further their future development.

The three Company Directors are the President, the Chief Finance Officer and the Regional Director of Operations of IFSA. IFSA UK is managed by the Director for England and Wales, who is supported by an Academic Programmes Manager, an Operations Manager and the Director of Scotland Programmes.

The Director of Scotland Programmes is supported by two Student Experience Co-ordinators, one full time and one part time. The Director IFSA UK reports to IFSA's Regional Director of Operations for Europe and reports to senior management in the USA, who in turn report to the Board of Trustees.

2. Brief description of the current provision

IFSA UK currently offers three programmes of study as part of its study abroad curriculum in London and has just started a new programme in Edinburgh. All the programmes are delivered in person. The first programme is called Grinnell College in London. Working in partnership with Grinnell College in the USA, IFSA UK delivers a collaborative, semester-long programme with a blend of Grinnell College courses delivered on IFSA UK premises by visiting Grinnell College faculty, as well as elective IFSA UK courses taught by IFSA UK faculty.

The second programme is called IFSA Study in London. This programme allows participants to select five elective classes, all delivered in IFSA UK's premises by IFSA UK faculty. The electives include Contemporary British Politics, Fantasy in the Real World: Literature through the Sociological Lens, Performing Arts and Social Change in London, Trends Start Here: New Media and Behaviour, Urban Identities: Gender, Race and Class in London, Sustainability and the Global City, Software Engineering, Social Psychology, Intercultural Communication for the Global Workplace, and Introduction to Artificial Intelligence.

The third programme is called IFSA Study in London Plus. This allows participants to select elective classes from both IFSA UK and a participating UK university.

Only the Grinnell College in London and the IFSA Study in London programmes are part of the provision currently accredited by BAC.

The Provider introduced a programme in August 2023 that is delivered in Edinburgh, Scotland. This programme is called the Pomona Core Course and it is delivered in partnership with Pomona College in the USA. The three-week programme for Pomona College students is taught by IFSA UK faculty.

Pomona students participate in the three-week course before moving on to the **IFSA** Edinburgh Fall 2023 programme, which is offered to students enrolled in classes at the University of Edinburgh. This latter programme is designed to introduce students to the history and culture of Scotland from 1707 to the present day.

All the programmes offered by the Provider have been evaluated and approved by IFSA's long-term partner, Butler University, a higher education institution in Indiana in the USA that is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the USA. Grades achieved while studying IFSA UK courses are submitted to Butler University's Registrar, resulting in a Butler University transcript that is shared with participants and their home university in order to be incorporated into participants' overall achievement profile.

At the time of the inspection, there were eight participants in Edinburgh on the Pomona Core Course. All participants were over 18 years of age and were American nationals studying at Pomona College. The majority of the participants were female.

The Pomona Core Course course takes place twice a year, in April and October. Participants must have a specific minimum grade point average. They must be at least 18 years of age and currently attending or recently having graduated from a community college in the USA or Canada, as part of a two-year college, four-year college or four-year university programme. Participants must have completed at least one semester at their home institution.

3. Inspection process

This was an online inspection undertaken by one Inspector over one half-day. The Inspector met with the Director for Scotland. The Inspector observed a lesson and met with participants. A video and photographic evidence relating to the premises were provided, along with relevant documentation. IFSA UK co-operated fully with the inspection.

4. Background to the supplementary inspection

IFSA UK has recently expanded its provision to include courses to be run in Edinburgh, Scotland.

5. Inspection history

Inspection type	Date
Stage 2	18 February 2020
Stage 3	7, 9 & 10 2022
Supplementary	3–4 April 2023

PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgements and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector during the inspection and from documentation provided by the provider.

1. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

1.1 Premises and Facilities (full inspection)

The numbers below refer to the standards as presented in the short course provider scheme document and main full inspection report

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

22.1 The provider has formal arrangements in place that mean it has possession of and/or access to suitable premises. Yes No

22.2 The provider has access to suitable external premises of a temporary or occasional nature for training purposes. Yes No NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

IFSA UK has appropriate arrangements in place that give it sole use of suitable premises.

IFSA UK currently hires one suitable training room in the centre of Edinburgh in a shared-use facility rented from a well-known, established provider of workspace. Additional rooms are available for hire in the same building should the need arise.

The room is currently used as a training room in the mornings and as an office in the afternoons. This is appropriate for the current level of activity.

IFSA UK does not need external premises for the courses it offers.

23. The premises provide a safe, secure and clean environment for participants and staff

23.1 Access to the premises is appropriately restricted and secured. Yes No

23.2 The premises are maintained in an adequate state of repair, decoration and cleanliness. Yes No

23.3 There are specific safety rules in hazardous areas, for example, science laboratories, which are readily accessible to participants, staff and visitors. Yes No NA

23.4 General guidance on health and safety is made available to participants, staff and visitors. Yes No

23.5 There is adequate signage inside and outside the premises and notice boards for the display of general information. Yes No

23.6 There is adequate circulation space for the number of participants and staff accommodated, and a suitable area in which to receive visitors. Yes No

23.7 There are toilet facilities of an appropriate number and level of cleanliness. Yes No

23.8 There is adequate heating and ventilation in all rooms. Yes No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The premises are safe, secure and clean. Access to the premises is appropriately limited to a single front door that is opened through use of a security code. In addition, the entrance is supervised by a receptionist and covered by security cameras. All staff, participants and visitors are required to sign into and out of the premises. Consequently, the premises are secure.

The premises are maintained in a good state of repair, decoration and cleanliness. All the available training rooms and common areas are very well decorated and have natural daylight. The premises are cleaned daily by a professional team of cleaners. As a result, staff and participants work in a suitably agreeable environment.

IFSA UK does not make use of any hazardous areas.

Appropriate general guidance on health and safety is made available to all those visiting the premises on arrival. Additional guidance is prominently displayed on health and safety posters in the corridors and training room.

Conspicuous signage outside clearly identifies the premises. The address and telephone number are clearly visible from the street. Signage inside the premises is used well to indicate the location of the various rooms and common areas. Notice boards at reception and in the common areas are suitable for the display of useful general information.

Stairwells, corridors and common areas are spacious. Consequently, circulation space is good. An appropriate inclined platform lift and an elevator provide access to the premises for those with mobility issues. Visitors can be received in numerous suitable spaces, including the office and the common rooms.

Well-kept toilet facilities, including wheelchair accessible toilets, are conveniently located on each floor. These are sufficient in number for the Provider's purposes. The cleaning team regularly cleans the toilet facilities.

All rooms have appropriate heating and ventilation. Each room has full temperature control with controllable air conditioning. Windows can also be opened to increase ventilation if required. Consequently, the classrooms are maintained at a comfortable temperature.

24. Training rooms and other learning areas are appropriate for the courses offered

24.1 Training rooms and other learning areas provide adequate accommodation for the teaching/training sessions allocated to them. Yes No

24.2 Training rooms and any specialised learning areas, for example, laboratories, workshops and studios, are equipped to a level that allows for the effective delivery of each course. Yes No

24.3 There are facilities suitable for conducting the assessments required for each course. Yes No NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Training rooms are large and provide suitable accommodation for the teaching sessions allocated to them. The premises provide a wide choice of differently sized rooms. IFSA UK currently uses a training room that provides very good capacity to meet the Provider's needs.

The training rooms are furnished in such a way that they can be easily set up in different layouts, including cabaret or a traditional classroom layout. As a result, the training rooms can be easily adapted to meet the particular needs of the lesson.

The training rooms are appropriately equipped with a projector and a whiteboard, both of which support the effective delivery of the courses. Pens and paper are also supplied.

The courses are not assessed.

25. There are appropriate additional facilities for participants and staff

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| 25.1 | Participants have access to sufficient space, which could include a library and suitable Information Technology (IT) facilities so that they can carry out their own private work and/or study. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 25.2 | Trainers have access to sufficient personal space for preparing teaching/training sessions, marking work and relaxation. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 25.3 | Participants and staff have access to space and facilities suitable for relaxation and the consumption of food and drink, including facilities that are located outside the premises. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 25.4 | There are individual offices or rooms in which teachers/trainers 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 |
| 25.5 | Administrative offices are adequate in size and are resourced for the effective administration of the provider. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Participants confirm that they have access to appropriate space for personal study or recreation. There are various small, comfortably furnished common rooms throughout the premises. All participants have suitable access to digital resources via the in-house digital learning system. Consequently, participants are able to carry out their own private study effectively.

Members of the faculty have access to suitable space for the preparation and marking of work and for relaxation. They also have access to the common areas located in various places within the premises and are able to use the classroom before or after the lesson.

Faculty, staff and participants have access to comfortably furnished, shared common rooms for relaxation and for the consumption of light refreshments. Complimentary tea and coffee facilities are provided. The training rooms contain water coolers, giving participants access to free water.

The premises are conveniently located in the centre of Edinburgh and are within easy walking distance of numerous retail outlets and eateries for the purchase of food and drink. Consequently, participants have good access to food and drink facilities to accommodate their individual preferences.

The premises have a wide variety of differently sized rooms that range in size from a capacity of four to a capacity of 120 people. These rooms can be booked in advance and are suitable for private meetings and staff meetings. In addition, the small common rooms can be used for meetings.

The training room, that is specifically hired by the Provider, is currently only being used as a classroom in the mornings, so it is available after that time for other uses. It is sufficiently large to be used for full staff meetings. It is also used for one-to-one meetings with participants, and as a study space and an administrative area.

A wide range of administrative resources, including for scanning and printing documents, is available from the main reception desk in the building. This appropriately supports the effective administration of the courses.

1.2 Compliance Declaration

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.

Yes No

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS

The premises are very secure to ensure that participants, faculty and staff can work in a safe environment.

The premises are very well maintained and decorated and provide a suitable and comfortable environment for teaching, learning and working.

The premises are very conveniently located in the centre of the city and are within easy walking distance of numerous places to purchase food.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

None

High Medium Low

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

None

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS – FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE

--

THE INSPECTION WAS CARRIED OUT BY:

John Rooney

Lead Inspector