

updated accreditation handbook contains new criteria

Once an independent college of further or higher education learns about the benefits of BAC accreditation, it is not long before they are asking, "What do we have to do to get that?"

To make things easy for those contemplating an application for accreditation, we have produced a new "Accreditation Handbook" - an advisory document which contains an application form. Institutions considering applying for accreditation should initially contact the BAC office, and we will issue them with a copy of the Accreditation Handbook. Alternatively, copies may be downloaded from the BAC's website (potential applicants should note that there is one version of the handbook for institutions based in the United Kingdom, another for those based overseas).

Our inspection procedure for new applicants has two main purposes:

- to allow for a thorough assessment of applicants;
- to provide a filtering mechanism which identifies elements that might prevent the award of accreditation, so enabling applicants to avoid the cost of a full inspection until they have rectified them.

As the new Accreditation Handbook explains, there are three stages to the inspection process:

- *Stage 1 - scrutiny of documentation;*
- *Stage 2 - inspection focussing upon compliance with statutory requirements and BAC's minimum standards. Initial accreditation may be awarded after this stage for a period of up to six months.*
- *Stage 3 - inspection focussing on educational provision and the institution's procedures to monitor and enhance the quality of its provision. Full accreditation may be awarded at this stage.*

This procedure will be normal for all new applicants, although where a college is clearly well established, it may be acceptable to combine stages 2 and 3 in a single full inspection.

In addition to meeting BAC's own requirements, accredited institutions are required to satisfy BAC inspectors that they fully observe statutory requirements in areas such as health and safety, employment, copyright protection, discrimination, observance of visa regulations and child protection. Accreditation will only be awarded to institutions which meet those requirements.

congratulations to the latest accredited colleges

We are pleased to announce that the following institutions have recently achieved BAC accreditation, and we welcome them to our growing network of accredited colleges throughout the UK and overseas:

Cambridge College of Learning
www.camcollege.co.uk

London Training College
www.londontrainingcollege.co.uk

The Management School
www.themanagementschool.com

Scotts College London
www.scottscollegelondon.com

Hammersmith Management
www.hmclondon.com

London Westminster College
www.lwconline.co.uk

Pitman Training
www.pitman-training.co.uk

Whitechapel College
www.whitechapelcollege.com

We will be listing the names and contact websites of newly accredited colleges and other institutions in each edition of our regular newsletter.

IHMES International Hotel School

Our newsletter will profile educational establishments enjoying BAC accreditation. First in the spotlight is IHMES - the International Hotel School, situated on the Isle of Man.

Established over 20 years ago, IHMES is located in a safe island environment, which is just a short flight from mainland UK cities, making it ideal for student work placements.

IHMES focusses exclusively on hospitality management. It is well established internationally, attracting a large number of students from Asia and the Far East, with many arriving on recommendation from former students who have gone on to successful careers within the industry.

The experienced staff at IHMES have good contacts for student work placement, including international chains. Its association with the British Accreditation Council is long established and highly valued.

Alan Glass, Director of IHMES, said, "The certification steps and interim visits required for BAC accreditation ensure that the college remains at the centre of best practice. The recent visit by Dr Stephen Vickers from the BAC was very helpful to our organisation. Not only did we discuss the regular quality and process issues as part of an inspection visit, but we also discussed education trends and options. This forward-looking dialogue ensures that the college remains aware of future developments that could be of benefit to our students."



International students at IHMES on the Isle of Man

"We appreciate the role of the BAC in ensuring that only reputable colleges are certified. This makes marketing the college easier as prospective students have the reassurance of knowing that they're dealing with a bona fide institution."

OnRecord integrated electronic registration

Recently-introduced Home Office (IND) Regulations require colleges to maintain more stringent records of student attendance. As part of its range of services to accredited colleges, the BAC would like to suggest practical responses to these requirements, which we hope will help to throw light on some of the key issues.

One potential solution, which is attracting favourable attention from many quarters is the installation of mechanised readers which record students' presence on campus or their absence from college. A number of vendors are competing for contracts to supply and maintain this kind of equipment. Among these is London Systems, whose OnRecord range of products is pressing to be considered the leading card and fingerprint solutions for colleges in the UK.

Most of the staff at London Systems have previously worked in education and bring a wealth of experience to this burgeoning field.

Specialising in electronic registration systems, cashless catering, access control, print control and other useful card or biometric based systems, London Systems was one of the first companies to offer the fingerprint reader registration and Mifare® proximity reader solutions to the education sector, with great flexibility and value.

OnRecord is a completely integrated electronic registration, cashless catering, access control, ID printing and print control system that is suitable for installation in school and college environments. It can interface (read/write) with most existing MIS systems and can be installed for classroom usage on laptops and PCs, where teachers record student attendance on the database through user-friendly web pages.

We will be covering a range of products and services in this field, which we hope will prove of interest and use to accredited colleges.

UKCOSA - The Council for International Education

Through its regular newsletter, the BAC hopes to promote relationships with complementary organisations in the UK and beyond. One such organisation is UKCOSA - The Council for International Education.

UKCOSA is the UK's national advisory body serving the interests of international students and those who work with them. It does so through research, print and web-based publications, a national training programme, dedicated advice lines for students and advisors, and liaison and advocacy for institutions, agencies and government. Its members include all UK universities, those further and higher education colleges which are active internationally, and a range of specialist and representative bodies.

UKCOSA promotes and facilitates international student mobility to and from the UK, in order to help students (and others involved in international education) develop a global perspective and to contribute to human development, political stability, economic prosperity, international peace and greater intercultural understanding.

The key aims of UKCOSA are

- *to increase support for international education and raise awareness of its values and benefits;*
- *to promote opportunities for - and reduce obstacles and barriers to - greater student mobility;*
- *to encourage best practice, professional development and the highest standards of institutional support for international students throughout the education sector.*

UKCOSA publishes A-Z Guides in three editions: London, Scotland and Wales. These 84-page booklets contain a wealth of information for international students covering useful topics such as banking, housing, health insurance, festivals, sightseeing, safety and transport, to name but a few.

The British Accreditation Council is a member organisation of UKCOSA, and is proud to be associated with its work.

For more details and information, visit UKCOSA's website: www.ukcosa.org.uk

International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

Many important issues are raised by the globalisation of education and employment, and the increasingly free movement of people across national boundaries. Among these issues, testing the English language skills of students is becoming increasingly significant.

Thousands of educational institutions, government agencies and professional organisations around the world recognise IELTS as a trusted and valid indicator of ability to communicate in English. IELTS - the International English Language Testing System - assesses the English language ability of people who want to study or work where English is the language of communication.

Since 1989, IELTS has pioneered English language testing, measuring communication in English across the skills of listening, reading, writing and speaking, building on several decades' work.

Every aspect of IELTS - from test design and administration to marking and reporting results - is subject to the highest controls and security procedures. Its integrated system of recruitment, training, benchmarking, certification and monitoring for examiners ensures they are fully qualified, experienced and effective, and provides a standardised testing and assessment system. IELTS's rigorous marking system is proven by half a million tests conducted annually.

The International English Language Testing System is jointly owned by the British Council, IDP; IELTS Australia and University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations.

Visit www.ielts.org to obtain more detailed information on all aspects of IELTS, including: registration procedures; test dates; the analysis of test data including test-taker performances; a global database of those organisations which recognise IELTS, and the range of services which are available to them.

Other means are available for measuring the English language skills of students and workers; future BAC newsletters will feature these systems.

To find out how we can help you, contact:
The British Accreditation Council
44 Bedford Row, London WC1R 4LL
phone 020 7447 2584 fax 020 7447 2585 email info@the-bac.org
visit our website: www.the-bac.org

Goodbye and good luck Sarah!

Sarah Richmond, who started work as an Administrative Secretary with the British Accreditation Council in May 1994, has left to take up the position of PA to the Principal at the large and prestigious independent college, Davies, Laing & Dick.

During her 12 years with BAC, Sarah has witnessed many changes, including the increase in the number of accredited colleges in the UK from 90 to over 200; the accreditation of overseas colleges; relocation, from the Methodist Church on Marylebone Road, to Westminster Central Hall, Manchester Street, and finally to the BAC's present auspicious premises in Bedford Row. She has enjoyed working with a wide range of people as the personnel of the British Accreditation Council has changed and grown, while she herself was promoted to Senior Administrator, then to the position of Head of Administration.

Sarah's duties have included managing the BAC's income and expenditure, the arrangement of inspections and the organisation of committee meetings. She says that she has immensely enjoyed her time at BAC and will miss the office staff, as well as the Board Members, the Inspectors and the College Principals who have all added to the variety she has enjoyed, and support she has received, since 1994.

Cardiff-born Sarah married Duncan, who hails from Lanarkshire, in 1996. They continue to live in wedded bliss with their cat in West Kensington. Duncan combines a managerial position at an independent hospital in Harley Street with that of bassist in a punk band.

Sarah's own hobbies and interests include music, yoga, films and literature. She graduated from Birkbeck, University of London,



Sarah Richmond, who has left BAC after 12 years

with an Upper Second in English in 2004, and thanks the BAC for the support she received during "those tough four years".

Sarah wishes the BAC all the best for the future: "I hope that BAC will continue to improve and enhance the standards of independent further and higher educational institutions and grow from strength to strength."

Disability Discrimination Act

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA 2005) applies to all employers, and everyone who provides a service to the public, except the Armed Forces. It is a law designed to end discrimination against disabled people. It builds on and extends earlier discrimination legislation, principally the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. It affects the way colleges and other educational institutions (as employers) treat their staff and job applicants. For more details, visit www.dwp.gov.uk/employers/dda

Updates for visa staff

As part of our continuing effort to improve our service to colleges, students and other relevant stakeholders, the BAC would like to make visa staff at UK embassies and High Commissions more aware of who we are and what we do, and help them understand what it means when a college or other educational institution achieves BAC accreditation. We would be obliged if accredited colleges would let us have the email addresses of visa staff with whom they work, and we will keep them updated.

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