



## **BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT**

### **INTERIM INSPECTION (International HE)**

**INSTITUTION:** IMI International Management Institute

**ADDRESS:** Seeacherweg 1  
6047 Kastanienbaum  
LUZERN  
Switzerland

**HEAD OF INSTITUTION:** Professor Theodore Benetatos (Academic Dean)

**Accreditation status:** Accredited

**Date of inspection:** 17 February 2016

**ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION ON ACCREDITATION:** 14 April 2016

## PART A - INTRODUCTION

### 1. Background to the institution.

IMI was established in 1991 and moved to its current location on the outskirts of Luzern, close to Lake Luzern, in August 1997. The composition of staff members is international, with many educated in the UK or USA. Similarly, the student body composition is international with a particularly significant number from south and south-east Asia. Programmes have a significant practical component which requires most students to spend periods of time in paid work-placements, in Switzerland or abroad. Teaching is conducted in English.

### 2. Brief description of the current provision

IMI has three collaborative partners, the Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality (CTH), Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) and Oxford Brookes University (OBU). The provision is designed to facilitate student progression from a starting point on IMI's own Level 3 Certificate in International Hotel and Tourism Management through a range of linked Diploma, Higher Diploma and Bachelor programmes, to MBA level. Students may exit with the relevant qualification at any of the stages. The final (Bachelor) stage of the MMU awards offers students the opportunity to pursue one of five specialisations. IMI also offers two MBAs, one in conjunction with MMU and one in conjunction with CTH; the latter is labelled as the Luzern MA (LMBA). At the time of the inspection there were 234 students enrolled, 52 of whom were on work-placements in Switzerland and 43 on work placements abroad.

### 3. Inspection process

The inspection was conducted by one inspector in half-a-day. During the inspection the inspector met senior management and teaching staff, the inspector also toured the premises and learning facilities. The institution approached the inspection in a cooperative and professional manner. All requests for information were met promptly and efficiently.

### 4. Inspection history

<b>Full inspection:</b>	6 and 7 April 2009
<b>Interim inspection:</b>	21 June 2010
<b>Full inspection:</b>	15 and 16 April 2013

## **PART B – JUDGEMENTS 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. Significant changes since the last inspection**

IMI has changed its registered name to IMI International Management Institute Switzerland Ltd in order to broaden its range of programmes beyond hospitality and tourism, and include business management. A CEO, appointed in January 2014 to develop IMI's business profile resigned in 2015. This, together with the retirement of the Academic Dean led to a managerial reorganisation. There are currently 3 directorships; 1. Operations, Human Resources and Partner Schools, 2. International Business Development and 3. A newly appointed Academic Dean who has responsibility for IMI's academic provision.

In 2014 a partnership with Sheffield Hallam University to deliver two masters programmes was established, however, this was terminated in 2015 when it failed to recruit sufficient student numbers. MMU programmes were revalidated in 2015. Since the last inspection IMI has entered in to a partnership with Oxford Brookes University to deliver culinary arts programmes. Plans for 2016 include increased staff development activities focusing on pedagogical and research issues.

The WiFi, and IT provision more generally, has been upgraded, and electronic systems, such as a Virtual Learning Environment and Office 365 have been introduced to enhance communications. A new website is under development and due to be operational in April 2016. Student residential accommodation was refurbished in 2015 and in 2016 there are plans to replace windows for better comfort and heating efficiency – it is reported by IMI that many of these windows have already been replaced.

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

The previous re-accreditation report contained no action points but nine recommendations.

*IMI should consider making peer classroom observation part of its annual appraisal procedures.*

This has been addressed. Annual classroom observations are now a formal part of staff appraisal. In addition, if student feedback indicates a cause for concern the relevant line-manager interviews the teacher to discuss any issues. If issues continue, formal classroom observations are undertaken by the line manager and any necessary follow-up actions taken.

*Consideration should be given to raising the profile of the Student Council, further clarifying its actual role in the organisation and considering whether it can assume a larger role in the IMI's strategic and management planning.*

This has been reviewed. The Student Council now meets senior management once or twice a semester before scheduled programme committees, to 'clear the air' and help inform discussion at committees. Minutes of these meetings are kept but it does not constitute a formal communications channel. In addition, the Council has become more active in organising student social events.

*Any late starters should be provided with a similar induction experience to those present at the outset of the induction programme.*

This has been addressed. In response to student feedback the induction programme has been extended to cover a whole week (the 'Big Week'). It is now more comprehensive, and supported by enhanced documentation, to

help new students integrate and understand what is expected of them at programme and institutional level. IMI has sought to limit the number of late arrivals but, where necessary, programme leaders are required to provide individual inductions.

*IMI might consider creating its own teaching methodology programme for academic staff consistent with developments in UK higher education.*

This is underway. Staff development has been identified as a priority by the new Academic Dean. In conjunction with MMU, IMI has hosted a workshop on developing staff research and is currently seeking to develop a teaching qualification course for its staff.

*Concurrent updating of hardcopy and on line-prospectus material is recommended.*

IMI has moved to replace hardcopy material by the use of electronic material. Where hardcopy material is produced care is taken to ensure that it is current.

*Consideration should be given to the most effective way of communicating management's responses to student issues back to the student fraternity.*

This has been addressed. All information, including external examiners' reports and programme committee minutes, is uploaded to Moodle for ease of student access. In addition, general announcements, including responses to student issues, are placed on relevant notice boards.

*A policy statement should be generated relating to student use of laptops during lectures.*

This has been done. Students are not allowed to take laptops in to class unless specifically required for classroom activities. This information is contained in the on-line Student Handbook.

*Staff currently identified as having roles in the event of a fire should be formally designated as Fire Wardens.*

This has been done. Individual responsibilities are stated clearly in the IMI Fire Organisation Chart.

*The comprehensive, but lengthy, student handbook could be made more user-friendly by being subdivided into four separate documents.*

This has been done, although the handbook is now made available in electronic, rather than hardcopy, form. It is easily navigable and allows students to search and retrieve the specific information they seek easily.

### 3. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements – spot check

#### 3.1 Management, Staffing and Administration

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
<b>Comments</b> Staff are well-qualified and have a good understanding of the requirements of UK higher education.				

#### 3.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
<b>Comments</b> Minutes of meetings indicate that students are, in the main, happy with this aspect.				

#### 3.3 Student Welfare

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
<b>Comments</b> The improvements to students' residential accommodation demonstrate IMI's commitment to student welfare.				

#### 3.4 Premises and Facilities

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
<b>Comments</b> There has been a considerable upgrading of the IT infrastructure. Student residential accommodation has been refurbished and improvements are continuing.				

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

**Institution’s strengths**

The institution is well-managed by appropriately qualified and experienced staff.  
There is openness to external scrutiny and a clear commitment to enhancement.  
The programmes are well-designed to offer clear progression routes for students.  
The practical components of programmes, including the compulsory paid work-placement element, ensure that students are well-prepared for their eventual careers.  
The location is highly appropriate for the provision and the premises provide a well-maintained, light and airy learning environment.  
A friendly and industrious ethos pervades the institution.

<b>Actions required</b>	<b>Priority H/M/L</b>
None	

**COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.	<b>YES</b>
Further comments, if applicable	