



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM INSPECTION (College)

INSTITUTION:	Cambridge Muslim College
ADDRESS:	14 St Paul's Road Cambridge CB1 2EZ
HEAD OF INSTITUTION:	Timothy Winter (Abdal Hakim Murad)
Accreditation status:	Full accreditation
Date of inspection:	25 June 2014

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION ON ACCREDITATION: Accreditation continued 10 July 2014

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

The Cambridge Muslim College (CMC or the College) was established in 2009 and became a registered charity in 2010. The College was originally established with the intention of providing Islamic studies for mainly UK-based students, with the larger aim of training locally-based Imams and Muslim community leaders. It started with four students in the first year and its current enrolment is 18 students (including 15 from the UK and individual students from Canada and Spain (one, the latter having been brought up in the UK; the Canadian student has a Tier 5 visa). All students are over 18. Male and female students attend classes, pray and take meals in the same rooms, but on separate sides. All the students live in four separate residential accommodation sites. The accommodation premises are leased, but the CMC owns the three-floor mansion in which the teaching and administration take place, in addition to the adjacent buildings and woodland site to the rear. On the ground floor there are two lecture rooms, a reasonably big office/reception, a kitchen, a refectory and a men's bathroom with two toilets and ablution facilities. The first floor, connected to the ground floor with two stairways, comprises a large landing with two study rooms, a library, a sitting room which is used as a boys' common room, and also as a comfortable space in which to receive guests, the Dean's office, a good-sized prayer room and a women's bathroom with two toilets and ablution facilities. There is another study room on the top floor and a women's common room. The CMC has no full-time teaching staff. Approximately 70, mainly external, lecturers take part in delivering the one-year course, alongside the full-time Academic Director.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The College at present offers its internal unaccredited Diploma in Contextual Islamic Studies and Leadership. According to the CMC literature, the Diploma course has three inter-related aims:

1. To enable students to understand and engage with contemporary debates about the role of religion in general, and Islam in particular, in modern society;
2. To encourage the students to be compassionate and reliable spiritual and pastoral advisors to Muslims and others;
3. To equip students with practical skills to make them more effective leaders of Muslim institutions and to enhance their prospects for further education and work.

Each term the College invites leading scholars and practitioners to take part in covering the six modules (out of 18 in a year) such as: Science in the World Today, Introduction to Western Intellectual History, Islam and Religious Pluralism, Sacred Art and Architecture of the World, Modern Religious Thinkers, Introduction to Astronomy, Introduction to World Religions, Inter-Faith Dialogue, and Effective Community Leadership.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was carried out over one half-day by one inspector. A meeting was held with the Academic Director and also the College Co-ordinator. A tour of the premises and adjacent buildings was conducted, the Dean met very briefly and a conversation held with two students. A number of documents were examined, along with the College website and scrutiny of both student and staff files.

The full inspection of 2013 identified a number of actions required as well as a number of recommendations for action. The 2013 inspection report stated " following the inspection, the College provided documentary evidence to demonstrate that high action points have been met and accreditation was awarded on 20 June 2013". This interim inspection re-visited all of the action points and recommendations made at the time of the June 2013 full inspection to ensure continuing compliance.

4. Inspection history

Full inspection: 12 and 13 February 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

There have been no significant changes since the last inspection.

2. Response to actions points in last report

The College must clarify in writing its philosophy, and its policies and procedures for staff and students.

The College continues to meet this action with clear evidence on the website of this, including in-depth consideration of the underlying philosophy behind its Diploma course. The prospectus also refers. Policies have been circulated to all staff and included in staff and student handbooks.

The College must devise and apply a proper staff record system. Photocopies kept in staff files of their qualification certificates must be initialled and dated to confirm that the originals have been seen.

Examination of staff files shows that the College continues to meet this requirement.

The section on student attendance in the Student Handbook must be amended to specify a minimum level of attendance (e.g. 80%) and to describe the procedures that will be followed if attendance drops below this level. A written absenteeism and punctuality system must be set up and implemented.

The College continues to meet this requirement. Attendance records are kept.

The College must establish a written system or mechanism for reporting its responses to feedback to the student body.

The College meets this requirement. Formal feedback procedures operate twice per year. Designated student leaders feedback to their student houses on College actions taken in response to student representation. One result of College action in response to student representation is a speeding up of the turnaround time for student work to be marked, so aiding follow-up improvement work.

The prospectus should provide a clear idea of the present situations of the College's former students and possible future progression routes for potential applicants.

The College meets this requirement. There are now details on the College website and in wider College publicity material containing details of progression routes for students and where past students are now.

External moderators and examiners must be appointed. Sample double marking of assessed assignments must be carried out to ensure students are treated fairly and consistently.

The College continues to meet this requirement. Evidence was provided that staff members of the University of Leeds act as double markers, sample work and report back on their findings to the College. The system works well with gradings very close between internal and external markers.

The College must revise the Student Handbook and website to include extended information about travelling and living in the UK for students coming from abroad.

This requirement is not relevant. The College does not recruit in an overseas market and the one Tier 5 visa student is a rare exception. The College stated that they have no intention of recruiting in markets outside the UK, because the course provision is geared only to students progressing to the College from previous UK educational experiences.

A hazardous wooden bulge under the stairs near the reception area must be dealt with.

This has been done.

The College must place a better and clearer signage system throughout the buildings, indicating the rooms and facilities on the upper floors.

This has been done.

A tidier and safer way to organise the computer cables on the floor of the main lecture room must be set up to ensure the safe movement of the lecturers and students in the room.

The College continues to meet this requirement.

The College should provide lockers or pigeon-holes for students and staff.

There is good storage facility for students and staff at the College.

Recommendations from the full inspection of 2013:

Show in its literature and website a list of the modules to be delivered in each term and, if available, who will be delivering them.

This is now completed.

Develop a written policy regarding student welfare.

Welfare support provision is good and recorded.

Develop a written policy for student accommodation and include in its literature more information, supported by pictures, of its residential buildings.

This is included in information available on the College website.

Expand the number of full-time staff.

This is not feasible. The College currently calls upon the expertise of many outside staff who would not wish to work full-time at the College. There is no evidence that this recommendation is needed.

Introduce an observation, appraisal and professional development system for academic staff.

This is not feasible. Most of the academic staff come from the University of Cambridge and will not submit themselves for observation, appraisal or professional development. Some of the staff are very eminent in their fields.

Allocate the important post of Health and Safety Officer to a named person.

This has been done and the Academic Director is the named person.

Establish a system of student files.

This has been done.

Adopt a comprehensive written policy of qualifications, certificates and/or experience required in recruiting new students.

This has been done. The admission requirement is simply that students are graduates of a UK seminary and have completed the Darse Nizami.

Include in its literature more information regarding some of the important facilities it provides, such as the four residential accommodation sites, the daily hot meal offered to students and staff; as well as the adjacent premises the College owns as an essential feature for future extension of building and resources.

Information is now provided on the College website.

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	✓			
Comments				

3.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
The one class being held was not formally observed but two students were spoken to about their learning and assessment.				

3.3 Student Welfare

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
Standards of student support and welfare are high.				

3.4 Premises and Facilities

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments The College continues to refurbish its premises and adjacent buildings and has created a very welcoming learning environment and place for reflection, thought and contemplation.				

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

<p>Institution's strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and focused management pursuing a clear mission whilst implementing the College values • Excellent premises. • Good administrative support and back up • Use of highly esteemed teaching staff • Clear policies and procedures in documents and handbooks • Excellent library facilities.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.	YES
<p>Further comments, if applicable</p> <p>None</p>	