



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM VISIT (College)

INSTITUTION: Docklands Academy London

ADDRESS: 11 Selsdon Way
London
E14 9GL

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Mrs Aysegul Yesildaglar

Accreditation status: Accredited

Date of visit: 3 October 2016

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Continued accreditation 15 December 2016

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

Docklands Academy (the Academy) is a private not-for-profit limited company. It offers a range of courses in business, strategic management, hospitality management, travel and tourism and catering and restaurant management. The courses are accredited by Pearson and the Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality (CTH). The Academy was originally established in Aston, Birmingham in 2010. The decision was made to move its operations to London because the current East London location, in Docklands, was judged as be more attractive to students from other European countries. The Academy aims to provide high quality education for future leaders in business.

The Academy is a trading division of Simply Alliance Limited. It was founded by its current Managing Director. He sits on the newly formed Board of Governance along with three other main directors. The day to day management of the Academy is delegated to the Principal and Academic Head. The Board of Governance is supported by a Quality Committee, an Academic and Advisory Board, which includes the student representatives as full members and an Assessment Committee. There is also a separate student committee. Some recent staff changes have taken place in the marketing and academic areas.

The Academy's Tier 4 sponsor licence was revoked in March 2015. Therefore, the Academy's current target markets for its students are the United Kingdom (UK) and countries of the European Union (EU).

2. Brief description of the current provision

The Academy continues to offer the same programmes, as at the time of the previous inspection, in business, strategic management, hospitality management, travel and tourism and catering and restaurant management from levels 4 to 7. These are accredited by Pearson and CTH. It also offers English courses, which are accredited by the British Council. Therefore, these courses do not form part of BAC's accreditation. Students on the academic courses, however, are able, if required, to attend the English classes to improve their assignment writing and levels of understanding of English. The Academy's mission statement emphasises a priority on the academic content of courses being matched to work experience and work placements are, therefore, arranged where possible to facilitate this aim. The Academy also offers short non-accredited courses, such as a new bespoke programme in Gastronomy and Culinary Arts.

The previous partnership with the University of South Wales was terminated in January 2015 as no students were recruited on to the proposed programmes.

At the time of the inspection, 12 students were enrolled at the Academy. All students are over the age of 18, with the average age being mid-twenties. There is an even mix of male and female students. The very large majority are from European countries, namely Bulgaria and Italy.

The Academy operates on a continuous enrolment basis. Enrolment is on the basis of previous learning and work experience. Students undertake a placement test and an online interview. For accredited programmes, the Academy follows the awarding bodies' requirements.

3. Inspection visit process

The inspection was conducted over half a day by one inspector. Meetings were held with the Principal, the Academic Head and a group of students. A tour of the premises was carried out and the website and various documentation were scrutinised. The information required was readily provided and the institution co-operated well with the inspection process.

4. Inspection history

Stage 2 inspection:	11 August 2010
Supplementary inspection:	20 July 2011
Stage 3 inspection:	5 September 2011
Interim inspection:	11 March 2013
Re-accreditation inspection:	14-15 October 2014

PART B – JUDGMENTS AND EVIDENCE

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

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

A new Marketing Manager was recruited in February 2016 and the Marketing Executive left in June 2016. An additional member of staff helps with the marketing on a part-time basis. The previous marketing strategy targeted Tier 4 students but the focus has shifted to students from the UK and the European Union. In addition, the Programme Manager left and a new one was recruited in early 2015. An existing member of staff was promoted to the role of Head of Administration. The administration team has changed although the size of the team remains the same. There are also fewer self-employed teachers and more full-time teachers, who can more easily attend meetings, including committee meetings and get involved in social activities.

A new Board of Governance was set up in March 2015. It meets four times a year. Its role is to input to the Academy's strategy and bring fresh perspectives and help with decision-making. The members include the Directors and representatives from higher education.

2. Response to actions points in last report

4.1 4.2 The review and update of the Academy website must be completed to ensure that all information is accurate and up-to-date and all links are populated. The Academy must ensure that the lack of access for wheelchair users to the main part of the premises is clearly stated within the website information.

The inspector was advised that work to improve the original website took place. However, since August 2015, they have been developing a new website, which has yet to be completed. As a result, it does not yet contain all the necessary information on the courses, for example, entry requirements. Students have wheelchair access to the ground floor of the premises, which has appropriate toilet facilities, a cafeteria and classrooms. The new website does not yet include any information about the extent of the wheelchair access.

3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

Within teaching and learning, PowerPoint slides should not be read out, but rather used as the starting point for further explanation.

The Academic Head has run a staff development day on the effective use of slides to support teaching and learning. He also carries out lesson observations and makes very good suggestions on improvements. Students confirm that teachers do not simply read out the slides. It was not possible to observe any teaching as part of this interim visit.

Classroom management should be improved to ensure full student participation and clearer explanations given in answer to students' questions.

The Academic Head has run workshops to address weaknesses in the teaching and learning. He also carries out lesson observations and makes very good suggestions on improvements, including in relation to the teachers' interaction with the students. The students say that the teaching is good and makes effective use of interesting materials and varied activities to ensure full participation. It was not possible to observe any teaching as part of this interim visit.

4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

4.1 Management, Staffing and Administration (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be		✓		
Comments				
<p>The online systems for managing initial enquires and admissions are effective and comprehensive.</p> <p>Courses are regularly reviewed by the awarding bodies and suggestions to improve are taken on board and acted upon.</p> <p>The new website does not yet include all the necessary information.</p>				

4.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
<p>Students interviewed say that they get very good individual help and support and that the teachers are highly knowledgeable.</p>				

4.3 Student Welfare (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
<p>Students say they are very well supported.</p>				

4.4 Premises and Facilities (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
<p>None</p>				

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS
An excellent range of policies and procedures, which are regularly reviewed, and a well-defined committee structure help to ensure the effective running of the organisation.

ACTIONS REQUIRED	Priority H/M/L
The website must be completed so that it contains comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date information on the courses.	M

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT
Appropriate and accurate information about wheelchair access to the premises should be included on the website so that prospective students are aware of this.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	
Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.	YES
Further comments, if applicable	
None	