



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM INSPECTION (Short Course Provider)

ORGANISATION: Opportunity Education Services

ADDRESS: The Studio
Winters Hill Hall
Southampton
SO32 2AL

HEAD OF ORGANISATION: Mr Thomas Saunders

Accreditation status: Accredited

Date of inspection: 22 August 2016

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: 13 October 2016

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the organisation

Formed in 2014, Opportunity Education Services (OES) is a company limited by shares. OES provides short courses in the south of England. They have two broad types of course, firstly those focussing on enterprise development for university students and secondly English language for a range of clients, primarily school aged children from China. Some of the English courses are combined with specialisms in drama, sports or deeper cultural immersion activities. Courses take place in rooms rented within a school in Bournemouth, a college in the New Forest and university in Southampton; with participants staying either in accommodation linked to the teaching locations or in home stay arrangements with local families.

2. Brief description of the current provision

OES operates an enterprise boot camp for university students, currently partnered with one university, but with the intention of expanding the provision to other Institutions in the future. This summer they have also offered a number of English Language focussed residential camps, primarily for Chinese school aged students. The recruitment process takes place mainly via two agents who operate under a clear contractual arrangement. The English course recruited well with around 400 students over the summer, and programmes linking English and drama (11 students in one cohort); or a cultural immersion programme (29 students in 3 cohorts) also recruited, although with much smaller numbers. There has been no uptake of the football related course offered this year.

OES has increased its staffing recently and now, alongside the Director and Operations Manager, there are two full time administrative staff, alongside the seasonal staff focussed on the English courses in the form of a Camp Director, Assistant Camp Director and Home Stay Coordinator. A team of short contract and freelance teaching staff, approximately 43 in number, supports these.

3. Inspection process

One inspector carried out the inspection over half a day. The inspector met with the Company Director and the Operations Manager. There was no teaching taking place during the inspection and therefore no other staff or students were available. All relevant paperwork was made available to the inspector and scrutinised. This inspection report is in relation to the provider's provision in the United Kingdom only.

4. Inspection history

Short Course Provider Full inspection:

9 - 10 May 2015

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 provider

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

OES has expanded its provision in 2016 and has introduced two additional course variations building from their English language provision. Firstly, an English course with additional drama activity and the other an English course with an additional cultural immersion programme. OES has added two additional venues for this summer's courses, these were not seen during the inspection. These new sites are at Talbot Heath School in Bournemouth and Brockenhurst College in the New Forest. OES has also introduced home stay residential provision which is supported by a dedicated member of staff and detailed policies.

OES are also considering closer links with the Advanced International Academy UK (AIA), a Global company who provide cultural and exchange opportunities, that OES already work with. A potential outcome being that the AIA deliver the English Language Courses rather than OES, allowing OES to focus on the enterprise courses and more specialist consultancy provision. This potential change in relationship has the opportunity for the English programmes aimed at Chinese students to be delivered through AIA in future years, allowing OES to focus on the specialist and niche markets. The nature and detail of any future arrangement is still under consideration but may include OES becoming a shareholder in AIA.

2. Response to actions points in last report

The actions required in the full inspection report were:

Clear requirements for attendance must be included in the literature provided for the students applying for the enterprise courses.

OES has included a clear statement that '100% attendance is required on the enterprise course' in the email sent to enquirers showing interest in the course, therefore applicants apply having been fully informed. This action point has therefore been met.

OES should develop a board of trustees or similar body to offer oversight and provide an objective point of reference.

A group of individual advisors (approximately 5 people including local business and community leaders including a former university Deputy Vice-Chancellor) have been recruited by OES. Regular dialogue (through email, telephone and face to face meetings) has been underway throughout 2016, which was evidenced during the inspection by meeting records and notes. There is the intention of having a meeting and formalising these advisors roles in some form of a board during the autumn or winter of 2016. The action to address this point is therefore in progress.

OES should provide access to flip charts or a whiteboard so that students' input can be more easily captured and shared during the training.

The Director confirmed that appropriate flip charts or whiteboards were in place in all teaching rooms, in most cases these were permanent fixtures in the new locations being used by OES. This action point has therefore been met.

Additionally, a number of areas of ongoing development and planned actions were identified within the comments sections of the full inspection report that included:

Regular team meetings take place. The first whole team meeting is scheduled for September 2015. Much informal communication is undertaken.

Communication continues to be effective within the small team and regular meetings are now held and notes are taken.

An appraisal system has been created but not yet tested.

The appraisal scheme has not yet been implemented, as permanent staff have only recently been employed and not reached a term of office where this would be appropriate. Two appraisals are planned for the autumn of 2016. However, OES does undertake regular observations of teaching and feedback meetings are scheduled and records kept which is considered appropriate for the nature of the provision and staff involved.

Appropriate plans have been established to review performance. This includes an annual review team meeting, annual programme monitoring reports and an external moderator checklist. The template for the monitoring reports is comprehensive and includes responses to issues raised in earlier reports, main issues raised by students, feedback analysis, identification of good practice, proposed changes, peer observation and an agreed action plan. However, it is too early for any of these procedures to have been implemented.

OES continues to undertake an effective review of its provision. Feedback is sought, collated, analysed and appropriate actions are implemented.

A pre-departure guide will be sent out a month before the programme and a student handbook sent out a week before the start date. The agents will distribute these. On arrival, an appropriate induction covers the essential information required for a successful visit.

OES has developed material and continues to provide clients with the necessary information ahead of and at the start of their course.

3. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

3.1 Management, Staffing and Administration (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments The management, staffing and administration continue to be appropriate. OES has developed an effective set of policies and practices to ensure the quality of the provision. The staff employed are appropriately qualified and supported by the management to develop the provision. The OES management team are reflective and developmental in their approach and are trying to further enhance and expand the provision, whilst ensuring the standard of the programmes delivered.				

3.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments No teaching was observed during the interim inspection. The feedback reviewed and notes on teaching observations both provide continued confidence that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment undertaken are appropriate.				

3.3 Participant Welfare (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments The policies in place to support student welfare matters remain effective. The introduction of home stay arrangements has been significant and these are supported by comprehensive paperwork and checks. There is a dedicated member of staff overseeing these arrangements and there is a 24-hour helpline available to all participants. The arrangements outlined during the short courses and the staffing in place continue to give confidence that welfare matters are given appropriate priority and are managed effectively by OES.				

3.4 Premises and Facilities

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments OES has used two additional sites during the summer of 2016 in the form of Talbot Heath School in Bournemouth and Brockenhurst College in the New Forest. These sites were not visited during the inspection, but information provided during the inspection, on the OES and also the venue providers' web sites, together with inspection reports on the establishments by either the Independent School Inspectorate or Ofsted support the view that the premises and facilities are in good order and appropriate for the purposes for which they are used.				

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

Institution’s strengths

Opportunity Education Services continue to demonstrate strong and effective management and administration, with carefully thought through policies and procedures to support the range of courses provided and accommodation and welfare needs of participants.

Courses continue to be well planned, appropriate course handbooks are in place and suitable staff are employed through appropriate recruitment processes and are supported in the delivery of programmes.

OES is expanding its provision and accompanying staffing as needed and developing relationships with new facility providers and home stay providers to meet the growing demands.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	

Recommendations

OES should finalise the development of a board of trustees or similar body to offer oversight and provide an objective point of reference.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.	YES
Further comments, if applicable	