



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM VISIT (College)

INSTITUTION: Wallace College

ADDRESS: 12 George IV Bridge
Edinburgh
EH1 1EE

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Lily Crawford

Accreditation status: Accredited

Date of inspection: 5 May 2016

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: 14 July 2016

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

Wallace College was established in 1972, as a tutorial college aiming to prepare foreign students and students from the United Kingdom (UK) for university entrance. At that time, it had premises both in Edinburgh's New Town and nearby East Lothian. BAC first awarded accreditation in 1988, however the college identified a high demand for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses and consequently expanded its provision into this area, allowing its BAC accreditation to lapse.

The College now focuses on flexible study provision, plus holiday tuition courses. Its stated mission is to provide an alternative to school. This can be for independent learners or for students who, for a variety of reasons, are unable to benefit from mainstream provision. There has been an increase in adult learners at the School, who now comprise around 25 per cent of the student body.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The College offers tuition on a one-to-one or small group basis in a range of subjects examined by various awarding bodies such as Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), Pearson Edexcel and Cambridge International Examinations (CIE).

Subjects offered include English, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Computing, History of Art, Business Studies, Economics and Modern Studies. The College is a recognised centre for all UK examining boards and is inspected every year by Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) inspectors.

3. Inspection visit process

This was a half day inspection visit conducted by a single inspector. The inspector met with the Proprietor and Director of Studies and reviewed the documentation produced in response to the recommendations of the previous inspection report.

4. Inspection history

Full inspection: 16 and 17 March 2015

PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

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

1. Significant changes since the last inspection visit

Since the last inspection, the number of students has doubled to 28. The proportion of adult students has increased and currently stands at 25 per cent of the total student population. Three additional tutors have been recruited in Geography, Biology and Mathematics/Physics.

2. Response to actions points in last report

2.4 - The employee handbook should be revised to more realistically reflect procedures in a small organisation

The handbook has been simplified to remove irrelevant material and to incorporate information to protect students from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.

5.1 - The College should explain in publicity material the process for determining the most appropriate course level for students

Recommended entry requirements are now stated clearly in written publicity material and on the website.

6.1 - The College must state its attendance policy clearly and include it in the student handbook

The student handbook now states that students are required to attend all lessons. Any absence is reported by email to the students' parents, except in the case of adult students. Poor attendance would not necessarily have disciplinary consequences, but would lead to a formal conversation about the underlying reasons for absence, with the view to better support the specific needs of the student concerned. However, from the attendance records, the College has few problems with attendance.

6.2 - Attendance data must be collated and included in the student records database

The College now has a database to record both attendance and results.

7.2, 7.4 - Written feedback must be obtained regularly from students and parents, and client satisfaction levels calculated and included in an annual report

Feedback is obtained from each student once a term and written summaries are kept by the Director of Studies. At the end of the programme of study, each parent is given a 4-question questionnaire to complete. While the annual report includes a summary of feedback from students and parents and the actions identified in response, it does not yet collate questionnaire responses.

8.1, 8.2, 8.3 - The College must produce a brief annual report summarising performance in respect of student and parent satisfaction, retention and completion, examination results and achievement of individual objectives and setting out key actions for quality improvement

The college produced an annual report for 2015, which included data for 2012-13 and 2013-14 to allow for comparisons over time. The section on exam results focuses on percentage completion of academic targets by students, which is the key performance measure, especially for stakeholder consumption. However, it would be useful to provide the actual results data, perhaps in an appendix. Also, as the college recognises, meeting academic targets as a standard is quite demanding, as students may simply be setting targets based on what

they need to achieve for university entrance. The college might want to also measure results against realistic estimates of likely achievement, based on previous performance and initial assessment. The annual report also includes a narrative account of student and parent feedback and a clear set of action points. Overall, the report is simple and effective. However, it could be further strengthened by a quantitative summary of customer satisfaction and data on student progression to next level of study.

11.3, 11.4 - The College must introduce a system of classroom observation, performance review and CPD, appropriate to its circumstances

Classroom observations have been conducted with all 12 tutors and generally found to have been useful. It will now be repeated each year. The feedback from classroom observations is felt by the College to be a satisfactory form of performance review. Continuing professional development consists mainly of ensuring that tutors are kept up-to-date with curriculum changes and the Director of Studies takes responsibility for meeting this need. Overall, these measures are satisfactory for an institution the size of Wallace College.

18.5 - The policy and procedures for dealing with discrimination and abuse must be made more explicit and included in the student handbook and revised employee handbook

The employee handbook now has clear statements of policy and procedures in respect of discrimination and abuse. At the time of the inspection visit, the student handbook had only a one-line statement to say that bullying or abuse would not be tolerated. The inspector recommended that a fuller statement for students should be developed, this has now been completed and evidenced to the inspector.

20.2 - The College must develop a complaints procedure and advise students of the BAC's complaints procedure

The student handbook now sets out a simple complaints procedure and includes reference to BAC's procedure.

25.8 - The College must ensure an adequate level of heating in the winter months

Six new heaters have been installed.

3. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements – spot check

3.1 Management, Staffing and Administration

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments The management team (Proprietor and Director of Studies) are very thorough and conscientious, as shown by their very satisfactory response to inspection visit recommendations.				

3.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments The new system of classroom observation has both confirmed that teaching is generally good and identified some areas for improvement, e.g. in the need to check student understanding.				

3.3 Student Welfare

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				

3.4 Premises and Facilities

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

Institution's strengths

Conscientious management team focusing on quality improvement.
Orientation to meeting individual needs.
Close relationships with parents as well as students.
Good academic results.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	

Recommendations

The School is recommended to collate and analyse student and parent feedback questionnaire responses to aid its assessment of the School's performance.

The School is recommended to include, in the annual report, a quantitative summary of customer satisfaction and data on student progression to the next level of study.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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