# BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

## College Re-accreditation Inspection

**INSTITUTION:**        Cambridge Seminars College

**ADDRESS:**        Logic House
143-147 Newmarket Road
Cambridge
CB5 8HA

**HEAD OF INSTITUTION:**    Professor Stuart Wall

**DATE OF INSPECTION:**    25-26 January 2018

**ACCREDITATION STATUS AT INSPECTION:**  Accredited

**DECISION ON ACCREDITATION:**

○ Re-accreditation to be awarded for the full four-year period.

◉ Probation accreditation.

○ Decision on accreditation deferred.

○ Accreditation to be withdrawn.

Date: 22 March 2018

## 1. Background to the institution

Cambridge Seminars College (the College) was established in 1981 to order to offer short courses and private tuition to students taking General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and Advanced level (A level) qualifications. Foundation programmes, which are based on A level and Advanced Subsidiary level (AS level) subjects and the specifications of the content are also offered so that the provision can be extended to international students, who wish to gain entry to United Kingdom (UK) higher education institutions.

The College aims to provide personal attention and individual support to students, and to enable them to meet their education and aspirations for their future careers.

The College is established as a private limited company. It is owned by two individual shareholders and the Cambridge International Education Centre (CIEC), which was founded by the Principal of the College. CIEC owns the majority of shares in the College and the Principal is a minority shareholder and is a Director of the College.

The College is based in a modern building with eight teaching rooms, which is situated close to the centre of Cambridge.

## 2. Brief description of the current provision

The College offers courses at Foundation, pre-Masters and pre-Doctoral level as well as teaching English as a second or other language. The English language provision is designed to enable students to take proficiency tests, including the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). The pre-Masters programme offers a wide range of subject areas covering arts, humanities, pure science, engineering and social and political sciences. The pre-Doctoral provision is tailored to meet individual students' progression requirements around specific research interests, strengthening academic writing and pre-doctoral skills including the preparation of research proposals. In addition, support is provided with writing doctoral submissions.

The Foundation programmes are based on the A level and Advanced Subsidiary level (AS level) subjects that are offered by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA), Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR) and Edexcel. The delivery follows the schemes of work recommended by these awarding bodies. The provision includes Foundation and A levels in humanities, law, art and design, pure science engineering and social and political sciences. The Foundation programme certificates are accepted by a range of universities as meeting their entrance requirements.

Teaching on all programmes is in small groups. The majority of classes have less than ten students. In some cases, students are taught in groups of two or three students, particularly on pre-Masters and pre-Doctoral preparation provision.

At the time of the inspection, the College had 64 students, 61 of whom were studying on full-time programmes. The Foundation Programmes had the largest enrolment with 40 students studying across 14 Foundation Programmes, of which Mathematics, with 11 students, was the largest group. Six full-time and three part-time students were studying on A level programmes and 15 students on the English Language programmes. The College has more male than female students and eight students were aged under 18 years. Countries of origin that were represented include Angola, China, Egypt, Kazakhstan, Libya, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Spain, Saint Kitts, Syria, Thailand, Tunisia and the UK.

Of those students who completed their studies in 2016 to 2017, the vast majority progressed to higher education studies, a minority progressed to work and a very small minority either withdrew or are continuing their studies.

The College operates four intake dates across the year to accommodate students wishing to start higher education in the September or January semesters. Entry requirements for postgraduate programmes are a mininun of a second class honours degree, and a postgraduate degree for the pre-Doctoral programme. Postgraduate courses are run according to demand.

## 3. Inspection process

The inspection was conducted by one inspector and took place over two days. It included a tour of the premises and facilities. Meetings were held with the Principal, the Director of Business, Development, Marketing and Finance, the Director of Studies, the Admissions and Compliance Manager, the Head of Recruitment, the Finance Manager and the Welfare and Accommodation Officer. Separate meetings were held with a group of ten students and with a

representative group of teaching staff. Lesson observations were also carried out.

**4. Inspection history:**

| Inspection type | Date |
| --- | --- |
| Full Accreditation | 19-21 November 1991 |
| Interim | 3 May 1994 |
| Re-accreditation | 27-28 February 1997 |
| Re-accreditation | 8-9 November 2004 |
| Interim | 21 February 2008 |
| Re-accreditation | 16-17 March 2010 |
| Interim | 4 February 2013 |
| Re-accreditation | 3-4 December 2013 |
| Interim | 24 February 2016 |

**PART B - JUDGEMENT 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.

**INSPECTION AREA - MANAGEMENT, STAFFING AND ADMINISTRATION**

1. **The institution is effectively managed**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1.1 | The management structure is clearly defined, documented and understood, including the role and extent of authority of any owners, trustees or governing body. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No |
| 1.2 | The head of the institution and other senior managers are suitably qualified and experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying them out. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No |
| 1.3 | There are clear channels of communication between the management and staff. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No |

**This standard is judged to be:**    ⦿ Met    ◯ Partially Met    ◯ Not Met

**Comments**

The College has a clearly defined management structure and a Board of Governance, with members nominated by the two main shareholders. The Board meets regularly and maintains effective oversight of the strategic development of the College. Meetings are minuted and circulated to the membership of the Board so that they area aware of developments within the College.

The head of the College is a very experienced academic and all other senior managers are well qualified and have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Given the small size of the College, communications are largely conducted verbally through a series of informal meetings. The key outcomes of the meetings and other guidance are effectively communicated by the Director of Studies or other senior managers.

The clear structure and defined roles along with the experienced staff ensure that the management of the College is effective. The regular meetings between staff and students supports effective communications. Notes of Board of Governance meetings further support ongoing oversight and the effective strategic development of the College.

## 2. The administration of the institution is effective

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2.1 | Administrators are suitably qualified or experienced and understand their specific responsibilities and duties. | ◉ Yes ○ No |
| 2.2 | The size of the administrative team is sufficient to ensure the effective day-to-day running of the institution. | ◉ Yes ○ No |
| 2.3 | The administrative support available to the management is clearly defined, documented and understood. | ◉ Yes ○ No |
| 2.4 | Policies, procedures and systems are well documented and effectively disseminated across the institution. | ○ Yes ◉ No |
| 2.5 | Data collection and collation systems are effective. | ◉ Yes ○ No |

**This standard is judged to be:**  ○ Met   ◉ Partially Met   ○ Not Met

**Comments**

The administrators are well qualified. The Admissions and Compliance Manager has significant experience of working in the higher education sector, and understands the need for accurate data management and student records.

The size of the administration team is appropriate for the small size of the College, and roles are clearly set out in job descriptions and understood by the small management team. Students are able to approach both academic and administrative staff with any questions and support needs they may have, as confirmed in the meeting with students and through student surveys.

The administrative procedures operated by the College are clear and meet requirements. The College has a range of policies and procedures, which are well documented and copies are available to staff and students in common room areas.

2.4 Not all students are aware of the policies and procedures, particularly those relating to complaints and academic appeals.

Student data is collected and stored securely in electronic format, to enable checks to be made and information to be retrieved effectively and in accordance with data protection legislation. Information is made available to senior managers as needed.

3. **The institution employs appropriate managerial and administrative staff**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3.1 | There are appropriate policies and effective procedures for the recruitment and continuing employment of suitably qualified and experienced staff. | ⦿ Yes ○ No |
| 3.2 | Experience and qualifications claimed are verified before employment. | ⦿ Yes ○ No |
| 3.3 | There is an effective system for regularly reviewing the performance of staff. | ⦿ Yes ○ No |

**This standard is judged to be:** ⦿ Met ○ Partially Met ○ Not Met

**Comments**

The College has a very stable base of staff, which includes both academic and support staff who are appropriately experienced and qualified. Appropriate additional roles have been created to support the expansion of the College. These have been approved by the owners, based on strategic growth requirements. The experience and qualifications of new staff are verified to ensure they meet the job descriptions.

A staff appraisal system has been introduced by the College for all staff, including those academic staff who are on contracts with the College. The associated documentation is clear and well understood by managers and staff. Appraisals are undertaken annually.

The procedures for the recruitment of staff are clearly set out in policies and procedures. This has resulted in well qualified staff being employed. The most recent appointments, for marketing administrative roles, have utilised the services of a specialist recruitment agency. Staff performance is monitored to ensure that the student recruitment and subsequent learning experience is effectively managed.

The procedures for the recruitment of staff are clear and well understood. All staff engage with the performance reviews and indicate that they are of value.

4. **Publicity material, both printed and electronic, gives a comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate description of the institution and its curriculum**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 4.1 | Text and images provide an accurate depiction of the institution's location, premises, facilities and the range and nature of resources and services offered. | ⦿ Yes ○ No |
| 4.2 | Information on the courses available is comprehensive, accurate and up to date. | ⦿ Yes ○ No |

**This standard is judged to be:** ⦿ Met ○ Partially Met ○ Not Met

**Comments**

The website provides students with a good range of information. Relevant and accurate information is also provided through a hard copy prospectus. The course information is detailed and clear including key subject content and explanation of course recognition by universities. The information available to prospective students includes a clear description of the curriculum focus, entry requirements and the admissions process.

The College also provides individual advice and guidance on the admissions process, and in particular in relation to visa applications. This ongoing support and guidance ensures that the information available to students effectively supports their understanding of both the application process and their expectations of the course.

The course information provided to prospective students and other stakeholders is reviewed at least annually, to ensure its currency. Additional information relating to visas and international student admissions requirements is kept under ongoing review by the senior management. The processes ensure the currency of information to meet applicants and students needs.

5. **The institution takes reasonable care to recruit and enrol suitable students for its courses**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 5.1 | Entry requirements for each course are set at an appropriate level and clearly stated in the course descriptions seen by prospective students. | ● Yes ○ No |
| 5.2 | A formal application process ensures that students meet the entry requirements and any claimed qualifications are verified. | ● Yes ○ No |
| 5.3 | Students are properly briefed on the nature and requirements of the courses for which they apply, and all application enquiries responded to promptly and appropriately. | ● Yes ○ No |
| 5.4 | Any overseas recruitment agents are properly selected, briefed, monitored and evaluated. | ● Yes ○ No ○ NA |
| 5.5 | Students receive a proper initial assessment which includes language ability to confirm their capability to complete the courses on which they are enrolling. | ● Yes ○ No |

**This standard is judged to be:**    ● Met    ○ Partially Met    ○ Not Met

**Comments**

Entry requirements are clearly set out in the prospectus and course information is available through the website.

Students are required to disclose details of previous qualifications and, where relevant, evidence of English language proficiency at the level appropriate to the programme applied for. Students also have an initial English language test as part of the induction process to ensure they are able to effectively engage with the teaching and learning requirements.

Students confirm that they had find the information related to the programmes and the College location and facilities helpful and accurate. Inspection findings confirm this view.

Overseas agents are provided with official college documentation to use to recruit students. Their performance is monitored by means of the quality of applications and through asking students about their experiences as part of the admissions system.

The clear admissions information and procedures demonstrate a rigorous and appropriate process, which ensures that only suitable students are recruited. It also ensures that the students are clear about the required skills to support their achievement and success.

6. **There is an appropriate policy on student attendance and effective procedures and systems to enforce it**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 6.1 | There is a clear and published policy on student attendance and punctuality, requiring that they attend at least 80% of their scheduled classes. | ● Yes ○ No ○ NA |
| 6.2 | Accurate and secure records of attendance and punctuality at each session are kept for all students, collated centrally and reviewed at least weekly. | ● Yes ○ No ○ NA |
| 6.3 | Student absences are followed up promptly and appropriate action taken. | ● Yes ○ No ○ NA |

**This standard is judged to be:**    ● Met    ○ Partially Met    ○ Not Met

**Comments**

Students are provided with very clear information on attendance requirements in the College Handbook.

Accurate records are kept on student attendance, including the recording of students arriving late for class. Students are expected to attend all classes, and any unexplained absences are effectively followed up. Any attendance issues are discussed with students and tutors, as appropriate. Issues related to absences are noted in the students' Individual Learning Plans. Where a student is absent due to ill health, they must inform the College who will check that appropriate medical advice has been sought.

The clear and regular monitoring of student attendance ensures that student absences are effectively monitored and followed up as needed.

| 7. | **The institution regularly obtains and records feedback from students and other stakeholders and takes appropriate action where necessary** | |
|---|---|---|
| 7.1 | The institution has effective mechanisms for obtaining feedback from students and other stakeholders (such as staff, partner institutions and employers) on all aspects of the institution's provision, including formal student representation where appropriate. | ○ Yes  ● No |
| 7.2 | Feedback is obtained, recorded and analysed on a regular basis. | ○ Yes  ● No |
| 7.3 | The feedback is reviewed by management and action is taken where necessary. | ● Yes  ○ No |
| 7.4 | There is a mechanism for reporting on the institution's response to the feedback to the student body. | ○ Yes  ● No |

**This standard is judged to be:**  ○ Met  ● Partially Met  ○ Not Met

**Comments**

Students are asked to complete surveys towards the end of their programme of study only. The results are reviewed and shared with senior managers and help inform future developments.

7.1 The College does not have any mechanisms for consulting with other institutions or with staff or parents, and there is no formal student representative group to represent the student voice on committees or at meetings.

7.2 Although student feedback is obtained and used effectively to make improvements, no evidence was seen of the systematic and regular analysis of student feedback. Such analysis would inform strategic improvements to the delivery and resourcing of the provision.

7.4 The College has no formal mechanism for reporting on the College's responses to issues raised by students in the feedback surveys.

| 8. | **The institution has effective systems to review its own standards and assess its own performance with a view to continuing improvement** | |
|---|---|---|
| 8.1 | There are effective systems for monitoring and periodically reviewing all aspects of the institution's performance. | ○ Yes  ● No |
| 8.2 | Reports are compiled at least annually which present the results of the institution's reviews and incorporate action plans. Reports include analysis of year-on-year results on student satisfaction, retention, achievement, examination results and completion rates. | ○ Yes  ● No |
| 8.3 | Action plans are implemented and regularly reviewed, with outcomes reported to the management. | ○ Yes  ● No |

**This standard is judged to be:**  ○ Met  ○ Partially Met  ● Not Met

**Comments**

The College has clear and appropriate mechanisms for the management of academic quality through the regular monitoring of teaching and individual student progress reviews. This ensures that the students have access to a good quality learning experience, individual support and ongoing advice and guidance, which supports high levels of achievement.

8.1 The College has no formal systems in place for the periodic review of it performance across all the aspects of its operation.

8.2 Only one annual report has been compiled which was for the academic year 2014 to 2015. This report usefully brought together consideration of student feedback, external reports, staff and student performance, student achievement and progression, staff continuing professional development and a College Development Plan. Subsequent annual reports have not been produced. As a result no comparative analysis of year on year performance has been undertaken.

8.3 The College does not make effective use of action plans at programme or institution level in order to inform a programme of continuing improvements.

**INSPECTION AREA - TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT**

9.     **Academic management is effective**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 9.1 | There is a suitably qualified and experienced academic manager or academic management team with responsibility for teaching, learning and assessment. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No |
| 9.2 | Classes are timetabled and rooms allocated appropriately for the courses offered. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No |
| 9.3 | The allocation of teachers to classes provides for a consistent learning experience. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No |
| 9.4 | There is an appropriate policy and effective procedures for the acquisition of academic resources. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No |

**This standard is judged to be:**     ⦿ Met      ◯ Partially Met      ◯ Not Met

**Comments**

The College has effective academic management procedures in place. All academic and academic management staff are suitably qualified with previous teaching experience. All academic staff hold degrees in their specialist subject areas and appropriate teaching qualifications.

Students are taught in small groups, which range in size from under five students to ten students. As a result, students receive appropriate individual support. The classrooms are suitable for the group sizes and the quality of teaching delivery is effectively monitored through observations, progress reviews and informal feedback from the Director of Studies.

For modest resource purchases, the acquisition process is managed informally, with academic staff informing the Director of Studies of required resources and materials needed to support curriculum delivery. For expensive purchases, the Director of Studies forwards the request to the owners for their approval. The ability to respond quickly to resource needs further supports the effective management of the academic quality.

**10.** **The courses are planned and delivered in ways that enable students to succeed**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 10.1 | Courses are designed and delivered in ways that allow students to develop the knowledge and skills which will be required for final examinations or assessments. | ⦿ Yes ○ No |
| 10.2 | Lessons and assessments maintain an appropriate focus on any assessment objectives or statement of learning outcomes established by the awarding body. | ⦿ Yes ○ No |
| 10.3 | Formative assessments appropriately reflect the nature and standards of summative examinations. | ⦿ Yes ○ No |
| 10.4 | Students are encouraged and enabled to develop independent learning skills. | ⦿ Yes ○ No |
| 10.5 | Full-time courses requiring students to attend for 15 hours or more per week are time tabled over at least three days. | ⦿ Yes ○ No |
| 10.6 | Any required coursework and revision periods are scheduled in advance. | ⦿ Yes ○ No |
| 10.7 | The academic backgrounds and particular needs of students are taken into account in the classroom delivery of the course. | ⦿ Yes ○ No |

**This standard is judged to be:**    ⦿ Met    ○ Partially Met    ○ Not Met

**Comments**

All qualifications are delivered in accordance with awarding bodies' requirements and to enable students to successfully pass the final examinations. All learning outcomes are covered, and students undertake appropriate formative assessments. The management of the end of programme assessment is also reviewed and monitored to ensure compliance with regulations.

Formative assessment are used to monitor student progress and to encourage students to develop independent learning skills. In the case of A levels and the Foundation programmes, formative assessments are based on past papers issued by the awarding bodies.

All classes are timetabled to encourage students to be in the College at least three days per week. Course work and revision periods are set out in schemes of work.

Where students have additional support needs, these are recorded in Individual Learning Plans and teachers and the Director of Studies closely monitor and review progress. The clear planning of teaching, formative assessment, individual support and learning plans support students to develop the knowledge and skills and to make the transition to their next level of higher education or to develop the language skills needed to support their employability and progression.

11. **Teachers are suitable for the courses to which they are allocated and effective in delivering them**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 11.1 | Teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced. | ⦿ Yes  ○ No |
| 11.2 | Teachers have a level of subject knowledge, pedagogic and communicative skill which allows them to deliver the content of courses effectively. | ⦿ Yes  ○ No |
| 11.3 | The appraisal procedures for teaching staff incorporate regular classroom observation. | ○ Yes  ⦿ No |
| 11.4 | Teachers are supported in their continuing professional development and enabled to develop further pedagogic techniques to enhance the learning of students. | ⦿ Yes  ○ No |
| 11.5 | Teachers respond to different learning needs of students where appropriate, taking various learning styles into account in their planning and delivery of lessons. | ⦿ Yes  ○ No |
| 11.6 | Teachers employ effective strategies to involve all students in active participation and to check their understanding of concepts and course content. | ⦿ Yes  ○ No |

**This standard is judged to be:**   ○ Met   ⦿ Partially Met   ○ Not Met

**Comments**

All teachers are well qualified and have appropriate levels of subject knowledge and expertise. Many are very experienced teachers and familiar with supporting students to meet A level type programme outcomes and the requirements of postgraduate study.

All teaching staff are observed at least annually as part of the quality assurance process.

11.3 The outcomes of teaching observations are not included in the annual appraisal of academic staff. Reference to the outcomes of teaching observations would usefully inform the performance review for academic staff and could be linked to support both individual development and the broader standard of teaching and learning.

Academic staff are able to attend suitable staff development and Continuing Professional Development events through their work with other institutions. There are no formal opportunities for sharing of this information. Academic staff are supported to attend external events where these relate to course requirements, changes in specifications and regulations. It is not clear how the resulting information is disseminated or learning cascaded to the rest of the teaching staff.

Teachers deliver to students in small groups. This allows them to interact with individual students and to support their learning needs and styles. Teachers deliver interactive teaching using a variety of techniques to ensure differentiated learning styles are effectively accommodated. Students confirm that they feel well supported.

The well qualified and experienced staff provide an effective learning experience supported by individualised support for students to effectively promote achievement.

12. **The institution provides students and teachers with access to appropriate resources and materials for study**

**This standard is judged to be:**   ⦿ Met   ○ Partially Met   ○ Not Met

**Comments**

The College provides students with appropriate key texts to support their studies as well as access to additional material through online links and handouts. Additional teaching resources are kept in subject teaching rooms and students can access these during teaching time.

There are additional books in the student common room, which students are able to borrow. As there is no library on the premises, students are supported in joining the local libraries, which they reported were both accessible and well resourced.

13. **Students receive appropriate assessment and feedback on their performance and progress, which are effectively monitored**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 13.1 | Courses are planned to include a schedule of assessments, the procedures and criteria for which are available in writing and in advance to students and teachers. | ○ Yes ● No |
| 13.2 | Assessment outcomes are monitored to enable the identification of students who are not making satisfactory progress and prompt intervention where appropriate. | ● Yes ○ No |
| 13.3 | Students are made aware of how their progress relates to their targeted level of achievement. | ● Yes ○ No |
| 13.4 | The institution takes appropriate steps to identify and discourage cheating and other misdemeanours, and to penalise offenders. | ● Yes ○ No |
| 13.5 | Additional support or advice on alternative courses is provided to students who are judged not to be making sufficient progress to succeed. | ● Yes ○ No |
| 13.6 | Oral and written feedback is given to individual students on a regular basis, tailored to meet their specific needs and constructive in its nature and delivery. | ○ Yes ● No |
| 13.7 | Students have appropriate access outside class time to teachers or personal tutors for academic support. | ● Yes ○ No |

**This standard is judged to be:**    ○ Met    ● Partially Met    ○ Not Met

**Comments**

Students are provided with information in the course descriptors. This information clearly sets out the assessment strategies and requirements of individual programmes in line with external awarding body requirements. For the postgraduate provision, content is based on university curricula and key learning and knowledge requirements. Students are made aware of the main assessment methodologies and academic regulations, including those associated with academic malpractice, through the College Handbook.

13.1 However, students do not have handbooks for each programme, which sets out the key learning outcomes or the associated assessment and grading criteria. The development of programme handbooks would support consistency of understanding and the rationale behind the marks awarded.

The monitoring of the final grading of student work and the quality standards of the provision is carried out by the Director of Studies. This provides a clear and consistent overview of student progress. Individual progress reviews ensure that students, who are not making satisfactory progress, are quickly identified. Meetings with the Director of Studies make students aware of their level of progress. Students also have access to teachers as part of class-time and, if requested, outside of class for additional academic support.

13.6 Whilst students receive individual oral feedback on their assessed work, the quality of written feedback provided lacks consistency. It varies from very brief annotations on scripts to detailed and constructive feedback on both good aspects of work, and guidance on how work can be improved. The development of front sheets for assessed work would help support both the clarity and consistency of written feedback.

Students have a good level of individual support as a result of the small class sizes. Students also have regular individual reviews with the Academic Director who effectively monitors their progress.

14. **The institution offers courses leading to accredited awards granted by recognised awarding bodies wherever appropriate**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 14.1 | For courses leading to the award of a UK degree, the institution has a formal agreement with a recognised UK degree-awarding body. | ○ Yes ○ No ◉ NA |
| 14.2 | For courses leading to other UK awards, the awarding body is recognised by the relevant regulator. | ◉ Yes ○ No ○ NA |
| 14.3 | For courses leading to the award of an overseas degree, the institution has a formal partnership agreement with the overseas degree-awarding body, which is itself accredited by a recognised national agency. | ○ Yes ○ No ◉ NA |

**This standard is judged to be:**　◉ Met　○ Partially Met　○ Not Met　○ NA

**Comments**

The majority of the courses are certificated, with the exception of the A level programmes and English Language test preparation. The College is recognised by AQA as a centre and has regular visits from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) to ensure its compliance with regulations.

15. **There is a clear rationale for courses leading to unaccredited or internal awards**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 15.1 | There is a clear statement of the level claimed relative to the NQF/QCF and evidence that students who receive the award meet the stated requirements for that level. | ◉ Yes ○ No ○ NA |
| 15.2 | There is evidence of the extent to which the awards are accepted for the purposes of employment or further study. | ◉ Yes ○ No ○ NA |
| 15.3 | External moderators are involved in the assessment process where appropriate. | ○ Yes ○ No ◉ NA |

**This standard is judged to be:**　◉ Met　○ Partially Met　○ Not Met　○ NA

**Comments**

The Foundation programmes have been written based on A level subject specifications. They are offered as six month or twelve month programmes of study, but are not formally accredited by any awarding body.

The students, who complete the Foundation programmes, have been successful in meeting university entry requirements and gaining places on their chosen degree programmes through recognition by universities of the foundation programmes. The data indicates that most students progress directly to university. Whilst the College does not have progression agreements with universities, it has good higher education connections which are used to ensure that the programmes delivered meet progression requirements.

The Foundation programmes, pre-masters and pre-doctoral programmes are based on external specifications and requirements but are not formally accredited. They are not subject to external moderation.

**16.** **There are satisfactory procedures for the administration of examinations and other means of assessment**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 16.1 | The institution complies with the requirements of the relevant awarding bodies in terms of examination security and administration. | ⦿ Yes ○ No ○ NA |
| 16.2 | For internal awards, there are effective systems in place for examination security and administration, and clear procedures for students to appeal against their marks. | ⦿ Yes ○ No ○ NA |

**This standard is judged to be:**     ⦿ Met     ○ Partially Met     ○ Not Met     ○ NA

**Comments**

The conduct of examinations complies with the awarding body regulations. Examinations are conducted in accordance with the College's Public Examinations Contingency Policy and the Examinations Appeals Policy, which reflect the requirements of the A level awarding bodies. They are verified by external visits from JCQ.

The College has also served as an examination centre for external students who need to sit their A level exams. The effective management of assessments, including examinations, demonstrates a clear understanding of, and compliance with, awarding body requirements and the need to manage assessments consistently.

**17.** **There is appropriate provision of advice for students intending to proceed to employment or higher/further education**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 17.1 | Students have access to advice from appropriate staff member on further study and career opportunities. | ⦿ Yes ○ No |
| 17.2 | If the institution offers courses preparing students for higher education, they have access to prospectuses and to advice from a designated staff member both on selecting courses and institutions and on the application process. | ⦿ Yes ○ No ○ NA |

**This standard is judged to be:**     ⦿ Met     ○ Partially Met     ○ Not Met

**Comments**

Students receive clear individual advice and guidance about progression to further study at universities, for undergraduate and postgraduate provision. Students on Foundation programmes are assisted with the completion of their Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) forms and advised as to entry requirements to individual programmes.

All students are supported, on an individual basis, with university applications and are provided with access to prospectuses from a variety of universities.

**INSPECTION AREA - STUDENT WELFARE**

18.  **Students receive pastoral support appropriate to their age, background and circumstances**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 18.1 | There is at least one named staff member responsible for student welfare who is suitably trained, accessible to all students and available to provide advice and counselling. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No |
| 18.2 | Students receive appropriate advice before arrival. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No |
| 18.3 | Students receive an appropriate induction and relevant information upon arrival. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No |
| 18.4 | Students are issued with a contact number for out-of-hours and emergency support. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No |
| 18.5 | The institution has policies in place to avoid discrimination and a published procedure for dealing with any abusive behaviour. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No |
| 18.6 | Effective safeguarding arrangements are in place and are regularly reviewed to keep all students safe. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No ◯ NA |
| 18.7 | Effective arrangements are in place to protect students from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. | ◯ Yes ⦿ No |

**This standard is judged to be:**    ◯ Met    ⦿ Partially Met    ◯ Not Met

**Comments**

Students receive appropriate individual support, which is recorded in their Individual Learning Plan. Appropriate staff are available to provide pastoral advice to students. Students requiring welfare advice have good access to the Welfare Officer.

The College ensures that students are provided with clear materials on the approved accommodation in advance of their arrival. International students are also provided with essential guidance to living in the UK, registration with health care services, travel and other advice and guidance in advance of their arrival. Appropriate information and advice are available to all students throughout their programme of study.

The College has clear safeguarding arrangements for the small numbers of students, who are under the age of 18 and who are studying on the Foundation programmes. Students aged under 18 are placed with host families who have had appropriate checks, unless parents declare that they wish them to stay in other accommodation that they have identified themselves. Where requested and where possible, students are placed with families of the same cultural and religious backgrounds. Students are provided with out-of-hours contact numbers for emergency support. Staff have undertaken appropriate safeguarding training.

The College has clear anti-discrimination and harassment policies for dealing with any kind of abusive, discrimination or behaviour of a radical nature. These policies are embedded in handbooks and form part of the induction. Extremism and radicalisation form part of the bullying and harassment policy, and staff are made aware of the risks.

18.7 No formal training for staff on the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism has been conducted and no risk assessment has been completed.

Students do not have identity cards and expressed the view that they would like them to be issued.

## 19. International students are provided with specific advice and assistance

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 19.1 | International students receive appropriate advice before their arrival on travelling to and staying in the UK. | ◉ Yes ○ No |
| 19.2 | International students receive an appropriate induction upon arrival covering issues specific to the local area. | ◉ Yes ○ No |
| 19.3 | Information and advice specific to international students continues to be available throughout the course of study. | ◉ Yes ○ No |
| 19.4 | Provision of support takes into account cultural and religious considerations. Where possible, students have access to speakers of their own first language. | ◉ Yes ○ No |

**This standard is judged to be:**   ◉ Met   ○ Partially Met   ○ Not Met   ○ NA

### Comments

Clear and appropriate advice is provided to international students in advance of their taking up a place at the College and travelling to the UK. The College will also make arrangements for students to be met at the airport or in Cambridge as needed. Students are provided with key information on living in the UK in advance of travelling to the UK. On arrival, and as part of induction, students are given information, including through the Student Handbook, on locations of key facilities including medical centres, libraries and banks.

Clear and effective mechanisms are available to support international students throughout both the application process and during their period of study. The Director of Studies ensures that all students are well supported, and students are able to gain individual help and guidance on a range of matters as needed.

Students have appropriate access to speakers of their own first language.

## 20. The fair treatment of students is ensured

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 20.1 | Students apply for and are enrolled on courses under fair and transparent contractual terms and conditions. | ◉ Yes ○ No |
| 20.2 | Students have access to a fair complaints procedure of which they are informed in writing at the start of the course. | ◉ Yes ○ No |
| 20.3 | Students are advised of BAC's own complaints procedure. | ○ Yes ◉ No |

**This standard is judged to be:**   ○ Met   ◉ Partially Met   ○ Not Met

### Comments

Students are provided with clear terms and conditions of study and registration as part of their enrolment procedures. They are provided with copies of the terms and conditions of enrolment, and are made aware of all relevant requirements, for example relating to attendance and the need to notify the College of any absences.

The College publishes an appropriate complaints procedure in its Policies and Procedures Manual and references to the complaints procedures are made in the student handbook.

20.3 The College complaints procedure does not make reference to the BAC complaints procedure.

21. **Where residential accommodation is offered, it is fit for purpose, well maintained and appropriately supervised**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 21.1 | Any residential accommodation is clean, safe and of a standard which is adequate to the needs of students. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No | |
| 21.2 | Any residential accommodation is open to inspection by the appropriate authorities, including Ofsted where students under 18 are accommodated. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No ◯ NA | |
| 21.3 | Clear rules and fire, health and safety procedures are in place, with appropriate precautions taken for security of students and their property. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No | |
| 21.4 | A level of supervision is provided appropriate to the needs of students. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No | |
| 21.5 | Separate accommodation blocks are provided for students under 18. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No ◯ NA | |

**This standard is judged to be:**     ⦿ Met     ◯ Partially Met     ◯ Not Met     ◯ NA

**Comments**

The residential accommodation has recently been refurbished to a high standard. It is inspected by Cambridge authorities to ensure it meets residential standards.

Students' safety and well-being are effectively managed through appropriate accommodation arrangements. The arrangements comply with local authority regulations. Students receive clear guidance on the available accommodation and associated behavioural expectations.

The residential accommodation is only available to students who are aged over 18 years. Students under the age of 18 are expected to live with host families, unless parents make alternative arrangements. Any such arrangements must be notified to the College.

22. **Where home-stay accommodation is organised, the welfare of students is ensured and the institution's relationship with hosts is properly managed**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 22.1 | Due care is taken in selecting home-stay accommodation which both provides a safe and comfortable living environment for students and is appropriately located for travel to the institution and back. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No |
| 22.2 | Any home-stay accommodation is inspected before students are placed and is subject to regular re-inspection by a responsible representative or agent of the institution. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No |
| 22.3 | The institution has appropriate contracts in place with any hosts, clearly setting out the rules,terms and conditions of the provision. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No |
| 22.4 | Appropriate advice and support is given to both hosts and students before and during the placement. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No |
| 22.5 | Clear monitoring procedures are in place with opportunities for student feedback and prompt action taken in the event of problems. | ⦿ Yes ◯ No |

**This standard is judged to be:**     ⦿ Met     ◯ Partially Met     ◯ Not Met     ◯ NA

**Comments**

The College has clear procedures to ensure that home-stay accommodation is suitable. The home-stay accommodation is located within a short travel distance from the College and is regularly inspected by College staff to ensure the accommodation is clean, comfortable and meet the cultural and religious preferences expressed by students and their families. All families are provided with clear guidance on the requirements of hosting an international student.

Students are given clear guidance about the accommodation and know how to report any concerns. Feedback is sought from students on their accommodation, and where an individual student is not happy, other alternatives are identified and the student relocated as quickly as possible. Host families and students are issued with contracts that clearly reflect the appropriate terms, conditions and rules.

Accommodation arrangements systems are clear and well organised, and students confirm that they had access to clear and sufficient information, and the College is responsive to any concerns and requests.

23. **The institution provides an appropriate social programme for students and information on leisure activities in the area**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 23.1 | Students are provided with appropriate information on opportunities for participation at events and other leisure activities which may be of interest. | ⦿ Yes  ◯ No |
| 23.2 | The social programme is responsive to the needs and wishes of students. | ⦿ Yes  ◯ No  ◯ NA |
| 23.3 | Any activities within the social programme have been chosen with consideration for their affordability by the majority of students. | ⦿ Yes  ◯ No  ◯ NA |
| 23.4 | Any activities organised by the institution are supervised by a responsible representative with suitable qualifications and experience. | ⦿ Yes  ◯ No  ◯ NA |

**This standard is judged to be:**   ⦿ Met   ◯ Partially Met   ◯ Not Met   ◯ NA

**Comments**

A good range of social activities is arranged by the College. Management takes good account of the students' views to inform the programme. Costs are kept affordable for students.

Good information on the social programme is made available to students and academic and support staff are well informed about events and are able to talk to students about the activities.

**INSPECTION AREA - PREMISES AND FACILITIES**

24. **The institution has secure possession of and access to its premises**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 24.1 | The institution has secure tenure on its premises. | ⦿ Yes  ◯ No  ◯ NA |
| 24.2 | Where required, the institution has access to suitable external premises for academic or non-academic purposes of a temporary or occasional nature. | ⦿ Yes  ◯ No  ◯ NA |

**This standard is judged to be:**   ⦿ Met   ◯ Partially Met   ◯ Not Met

**Comments**

The College has a lease on its current premises that is due to expire in 2019. The College is working with Cambridge City Council to locate alternative premises, and is also having discussions with the current landlord about the renewal of the lease.

Where additional teaching accommodation is needed, appropriate rooms are available to rent locally.

**25.** **The premises provide a safe, secure and clean environment for students and staff**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 25.1 | Access to the premises is appropriately restricted and secured. | ◉ Yes ○ No |
| 25.2 | The premises are maintained in an adequate state of repair, decoration and cleanliness. | ◉ Yes ○ No |
| 25.3 | There are specific safety rules in areas of particular hazard (e.g. science laboratories), made readily available to students, staff and visitors. | ◉ Yes ○ No ○ NA |
| 25.4 | General guidance on health and safety is made available to students, staff and visitors. | ◉ Yes ○ No |
| 25.5 | There is adequate signage inside and outside of the premises and notice boards for the display of general information. | ◉ Yes ○ No |
| 25.6 | There is adequate circulation space for the number of students and staff accommodated, and a suitable area in which to receive visitors. | ◉ Yes ○ No |
| 25.7 | There are toilet facilities of an appropriate number and level of cleanliness. | ◉ Yes ○ No |
| 25.8 | There is adequate heating and ventilation in all rooms. | ◉ Yes ○ No |

**This standard is judged to be:**     ◉ Met     ○ Partially Met     ○ Not Met

**Comments**

The current premises are well maintained with a good level of cleanliness, decoration, heating and lighting. They provide adequate teaching accommodation for the current numbers of students. Access to the building is restricted to entry through the reception area and students and visitors sign in on arrival.

Signage around the College is clear, including in the laboratory to support the safe management of the environment. Notice boards and posters display key information, and all students are briefed on health and safety matters as part of induction.

The accommodation provides a good environment to facilitate teaching and includes space for students to socialise when not in class.

The College owners continue to invest in the premises to ensure they are well maintained and provide a good learning environment.

**26.** **Classrooms and other learning areas are appropriate for the courses offered**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 26.1 | Classrooms and other learning areas provide adequate accommodation in size and number for the classes allocated to them. | ◉ Yes ○ No |
| 26.2 | Classrooms and any specialised learning areas (e.g. laboratories, workshops, studios) are equipped to a level which allows for the effective delivery of each course. | ○ Yes ◉ No |
| 26.3 | There are facilities suitable for conducting the assessments required on each course. | ◉ Yes ○ No ○ NA |

**This standard is judged to be:**     ○ Met     ◉ Partially Met     ○ Not Met

**Comments**

Classrooms vary in size. Some are very small. However, as a number of student groups are very small, rooming arrangements are appropriate. The rooms also lend themselves to being used for assessments including examinations.

26.2 The laboratory areas are equipped to meet essential teaching requirements. However, the Information Technology (IT) systems are limited. Classrooms do not have projectors, though some do have televisions and video players. The computer laboratory does not provide access to modern computers, which are capable of running a wider range of software, and students report that the internet connection is frequently slow.

**27.  There are appropriate additional facilities for students and staff**

| | |
|---|---|
| 27.1 Students have access to sufficient space and suitable facilities for private study, including library and IT resources. | ○ Yes  ● No |
| 27.2 Teaching staff have access to sufficient personal space for preparing lessons, marking work and relaxation. | ● Yes  ○ No |
| 27.3 Students and staff have access to space and facilities suitable for relaxation and the consumption of food and drink where appropriate. | ● Yes  ○ No  ○ NA |
| 27.4 Students and staff have access to storage for personal possessions where appropriate. | ○ Yes  ● No  ○ NA |
| 27.5 There are individual offices or rooms in which academic staff and senior management can hold private meetings and a room of sufficient size to hold staff meetings. | ● Yes  ○ No |
| 27.6 Administrative offices are adequate in size and resources for the effective administration of the institution. | ● Yes  ○ No |

**This standard is judged to be:**   ○ Met   ● Partially Met   ○ Not Met

**Comments**

The range of non-teaching facilities for teaching staff and students is limited, due to the size of the building. There are no catering facilities and space for teaching staff to engage in any non-teaching activities is limited to the staff kitchen.

27.1 The College currently has no library or quiet study area for students. Where possible, students access empty classrooms to undertake private study. As this is limited, many students go off site to study. Students indicate that they would value a library space with access to resources and a quiet area for private study. Inspection findings confirm this view.

Teachers are employed on part-time contracts. Academic preparation and marking is undertaken in the teacher's own time off-site. Alternatively, they may be able to locate an empty room in which to work. As a result, teachers have few opportunities to meet and to exchange ideas and practices which could support pedagogy enhancement.

Students are provided with a common room area equipped with drink making facilities and a microwave. This meets requirements.

27.4 The College has no secure lockers or other storage spaces. This means that both staff and students must take all work home with them. Students, particularly those on the Art and Design programme, indicated that locker or other storage space would be an advantage as they could leave ongoing pieces of work in College and not risk damaging the work by transporting it to and from College. Inspection findings support this view.

The office space is appropriate for the small size of the College. Meetings are held in empty classrooms as needed or in office space for smaller meetings.

**COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

| | |
|---|---|
| Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated. | ● Yes  ○ No |

## PART C - SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

*Numbering of action points aligns with that of the minimum standards*

### MANAGEMENT, STAFFING AND ADMINISTRATION

**Institution's strengths**

Clear structures and job descriptions, which provide clarity to the management of the provision.

| Actions required | Priority H/M/L |
|---|---|
| 2.4 Policies which affect student learning must be more effectively disseminated to students. | ○ High ● Medium ○ Low |
| 7.1 More formal gathering of feedback, including from staff and parents, must take place and be used to better inform enhancement to the quality of the student learning experience, and ensure that provision is effectively reviewed to meet changing requirements. | ○ High ● Medium ○ Low |
| 7.2 The College must undertake a systematic and regular analysis of student feedback to inform improvements to delivery of provision and resources. | ○ High ● Medium ○ Low |
| 7.4 The College must develop appropriate systems to enable it to report to the students on appropriate actions taken to in relation to their feedback. | ○ High ● Medium ○ Low |
| 8.1 The College must implement formal systems for the periodic review of its performance across all aspects of its operation. | ● High ○ Medium ○ Low |
| 8.2 Regular reports, linked to annual monitoring, must be produced to include year on year analysis of student satisfaction, retention, and achievement rates. | ○ High ● Medium ○ Low |
| 8.3 Action plans must be implemented and regularly reviewed with reports sent to senior managers. | ○ High ● Medium ○ Low |

### TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

**Institution's strengths**

Small class sizes which provide individual students with appropriate individual support.

Individual lesson plans are used well to record individual students' needs and progress.

Students demonstrate excellent progression rates from Foundation programmes to undergraduate study at a wide range of universities.

| Actions required | Priority H/M/L |
|---|---|
| 11.3 The College must include consideration of teaching observations in its appraisal system for academic staff. | ○ High ● Medium ○ Low |
| 13.1 Students must be provided with programme handbooks which detail learning outcomes and assessment and grading criteria to support consistency of understanding. | ○ High ● Medium ○ Low |
| 13.6 The development of mechanisms to support both the clarity and consistency of written feedback must be introduced. | ○ High ● Medium ○ Low |

**STUDENT WELFARE**

**Institution's strengths**

| Clear advice, information and guidance which assists students to select the right degrees to meet their progression goals. |
| --- |

| Actions required | Priority H/M/L |
| --- | --- |
| 18.7 The College must introduce training for staff on the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism and carry out appropriate risk assessments. | ● High  ○ Medium  ○ Low |
| 20.3 The College must ensure that reference is made to the BAC complaints procedure in its complaints procedure. | ○ High  ● Medium  ○ Low |

**PREMISES AND FACILITIES**

**Institution's strengths**

| Clean and modern premises which support small group teaching. |
| --- |

| Actions required | Priority H/M/L |
| --- | --- |
| 26.2 The College must review its IT facilities and update the computers used in classrooms and in the computer laboratory. | ○ High  ● Medium  ○ Low |
| 27.1 The College must establish a discrete library within the College to provide greater access to a wider range of materials, and a quiet study space for students. | ○ High  ● Medium  ○ Low |
| 27.4 The College must provide locker or other storage space for students to store their practical work to avoid damage. | ○ High  ● Medium  ○ Low |

**RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT** (to be reviewed at the next inspection)

| The College is recommended to consider the introduction of an internal programme of teaching staff development, which would ensure that information is exchanged and best practice is effectively shared.<br><br>The College should consider the introduction of a system of student identity cards.<br><br>The College is recommended to review future options for providing a teaching staff room to facilitate greater sharing of good practices. |
| --- |

**COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

|  |
| --- |