



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

SUPPLEMENTARY INSPECTION FOLLOWING A DEFERRAL

INSTITUTION:	Charisma University
ADDRESS:	30 Sandcastle Road Suites 214 and 215 Neptune CT Grace Bay, Providenciales Turks and Caicos Islands
HEAD OF INSTITUTION:	Dr PeterChris Okpala
TYPE OF ACCREDITATION:	Independent Higher Education with Online Provision
ACCREDITATION STATUS:	Accreditation deferred
DATE OF INSPECTION:	27 - 28 February 2017

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION ON ACCREDITATION AND DATE: Accredited 23 March 2017

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution (taken from the previous report)

Charisma University (the University) was originally established in the Philippines in 2011 to deliver online higher education programmes to students around the world. Whilst the Ministry of Education permitted the University to commence delivery, a moratorium in place at the time prevented the conferment of formal recognition to deliver higher education provision. Given that, as an online institution, location was not critical, the University relocated to the Turks and Caicos Islands in 2014. It acquired recognition from the Turks and Caicos Ministry of Education to operate as a degree-awarding institution. Since then, it has been delivering solely online higher education programmes.

The online nature of delivery means that there is no physical campus. There is a small suite of offices, on Providenciales Island, Turks and Caicos, where a Registrar and an Information Technology (IT) Support Officer are based. Senior staff visit the offices periodically, as do other staff, as required. The premises include three offices, a reception area, kitchen and toilet facilities on the first floor of a small building. An annual awards ceremony takes place in Turks and Caicos, which some students attend.

Management and teaching staff reside in locations around the world and communicate electronically on a day-to-day basis. All communication with students, learning support and access to learning resources is online.

The University's mission confirms its commitment to training students to become highly skilled professionals in business and in the other industries, for which Charisma University provides relevant programmes. The University aims to ensure its graduates are competent, caring and qualified professionals.

Charisma University is established as a private not-for-profit company. It has a governing body, which consists of a number of directors including the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who provides a link between this body and the academic management of the University. The CEO, who reports to the Chancellor, is part of a senior team, which includes Senior Vice Presidents responsible for human resources, student affairs and counselling, enrolment and quality. In addition, each of the University's six schools, which are Business, Education, Psychology and Religion, Psychology and Behavioural Sciences, Law and Health Sciences are led by a Dean to whom teaching staff report.

The University has achieved recognition for its business programmes from the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programmes (ACBSP), which is based in the United States of America (USA). It has also secured articulation agreements with a number of universities in the USA and Mexico, which enable its students to progress to these institutions' programmes.

2. Brief description of the current provision (taken from the previous report)

The University offers a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in the areas of business, hospitality, health sciences, education, law, theology, religion and philosophy. In addition, it offers doctoral programmes in business administration, cyber security administration, theology, education, sacred music, psychology and public health. Not all the programmes had students studying on them at the time of the inspection.

Currently, there are approximately 570 students studying on the University's programmes. All students are over 18 years of age and are predominantly located in Asia, Africa, Middle East, North America and Europe. The majority of students are female.

There are six enrolment opportunities during a year and students can enrol for a minimum of one course, called a module, and a maximum of three courses, over an eight-week semester.

Whilst this inspection considered the University's online provision, exclusively, the inspection team was informed that the University had received permission from the Turks and Caicos Ministry of Education to deliver

on-campus programmes. The planning for this is in the very early stages and the University was informed that any additions to its provision would need to be the subject of an additional inspection.

3. Inspection process

The supplementary inspection involved a desk-based review of responses made by the University to the actions arising from the initial inspection. These responses were considered along with a range of supplementary evidence provided by the University in support of these responses. Much of the supplementary evidence contained new policies and procedures which the University is planning to implement. The supplementary inspection was carried out by the lead inspector from the initial inspection.

4. Inspection history

Full inspection:	21 – 22 October 2016
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5. Background to supplementary inspection

The University was subject to its first accreditation inspection in October 2016. The report contained a significant number of actions and some recommendations. The Accreditation Committee felt that the most appropriate outcome was to defer accreditation and provide the University with the opportunity to respond to the actions and recommendations. It proposed that a supplementary inspection be carried out by the original lead inspector. This took the form of a desk-based review of additional evidence as outlined above.

PART B – JUDGMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgments and comments are based upon the additional evidence provided by the institution and seen by the inspector:

1. Response to high priority action points in the previous report, including areas still to be addressed:

4.6 The University must articulate the terms of reference for each of its committees and ensure that the minutes clearly indicate required actions

The University has developed a document entitled Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) in which it makes detailed reference to various committees, which have been established. These include the Executive Leadership Committee (ELC), which oversees the academic operations of the University and, in particular, is made aware of any proposals which impact on resources. The Advisory Committee (AC) has responsibilities for compliance with policy, grievance and staff training. The Internal Quality Assurance Committee deals with areas such as programme planning and academic standards. The University has addressed the requirement of articulating terms of reference for each of its committees. However, it is recommended that it reviews the operation of its committee system, after one year, to assess its effectiveness and in particular any overlaps between the committees.

With regard to minutes, the University's response indicates that it plans to ensure meetings of the committees are taken. Minutes will be routinely reviewed by the office of the President to ensure that actions have been taken. However, this does not fully address this aspect of the action. To provide for an assessment as to whether the University has met the requirements of this action, it should provide either a set of minutes from a recent meeting or a template which it plans to use for its minutes.

9.8 The University must design and implement an internal and external post assessment moderation process

The information, within the IQAS document, about the University's plans to internally and externally moderate. Is confusing. It does not clearly indicate how the processes will work. For example, it is unclear who undertakes the internal moderation, what is to be moderated, the size of the sample and the recording process. For external moderation, the document does not state who it plans to appoint as external assessors, the criteria for appointment and the recording process. Therefore, the University must design and implement an internal and external post assessment moderation process, which clearly states who will internally and externally moderate, what is to be moderated, for example modules, level and size of sample, how this is recorded, the criteria for the appointment of external assessors and the recording and reporting process for the external assessment process.

4.10 4.11 27.2 28.4 29.3 29.4 The University must formalise its review process to include the development and use of performance indicators

The University has developed an appropriate annual monitoring process. The process requires programme-level reports which require reflection on the previous year's report. The reports are submitted to the Dean who compiles an action plan. An overarching report is then compiled and considered by the Advisory Council. Issues arising may then be taken to senior management particularly if required actions have resource implications. The only weakness is the lack of explicit reference to the kinds of data which will be used, the specific key performance indicators (KPI) regarding student performance and the benchmarks which will be used to evaluate this performance.

27.3 27.4 27.5 The University must ensure that its quality assurance system provides for the production of programme reports, which consider comparative data, make reference to enhancement and which are considered by relevant management, staff and students across the University

The University has indicated the route which programme reports take and this confirms its intention to ensure all relevant parties have access to the report. The University has thus met the requirements of this action.

27.8 The University must articulate the various processes which are contained within its quality assurance system

The University has provided its IQAS document. The document would benefit from a more effective structure, with the information contained under headings for each quality assurance process. It covers annual monitoring explicitly. It covers aspects such as the role of programme learning outcomes, student feedback, assessment methods, teaching and delivery methods, features of programme development and design and resources. It omits explicit reference to internal and external moderation, programme validation and approval and periodic review. Therefore, the University must remedy these gaps.

2. Response to medium priority action points in the previous report, including areas still to be addressed:

4.5 The University must progress the implementation of its committee structure and state the reporting lines of the structure

The University has stated that it has three committees, which will be implemented over the next six months. These include the Internal Quality Assurance Committee, the Executive Leadership Committee and the Advisory Council. There is, however, no reference to an assessment committee or board which considers student progress and approves or ratifies assessment outcomes and final awards.

Information is provided about reporting lines which indicates that the three committees mentioned above report to the Board of Directors, although the reporting lines between committees remains unclear.

7.6 The University must ensure that its recruitment policy and processes make explicit reference to legal requirements

The Charisma University Faculty Handbook includes reference to the American Disability Act, Affirmative Action Policy, Sexual Harassment and Gender Discrimination. It also states that reference to Turks and Caicos jurisdictional and legal employment requirements is included in the handbook, although this was not actually in the version of the handbook provided. Therefore, the University must confirm the matter of jurisdiction so that an assessment can be made as to whether it has addressed this action.

13.3 The University must implement a process through which it formally approves website information and regularly checks the website to ensure that information is up to date

The University has developed a quality assurance process for the website, which has the potential to ensure that it does not contain erroneous information. This process could, however, be enhanced through the identification of a single person to make final decisions about website content.

16.7 The University must review the complaints policy to ensure its includes time lines and opportunities for recourse to an independent adjudicator

The University has revised its complaints policy and it is included in its Standard of Conduct document. It includes clear reference to timelines and an independent adjudicator. The University has thus addressed this action.

25.3 25.4 The University must implement an internal annual monitoring process which includes a requirement for reporting and monitoring at programme level

The University has introduced a new Annual Internal Programme Assessment Report, which is drawn up by the relevant department head. These reports will be presented at the faculty meeting in September, with subsequent actions monitored and discussed at the annual strategy meeting held each January. This process will be implemented with effect from August 2017. The template for the report requires detailed analysis of student data including performance. It does not, however, include reference to student and staff feedback or feedback from external moderators and assessors. Nor does it provide for the setting of required actions and targets.

The University has thus met the action but its process could be enhanced through more explicit reference to student and staff feedback, feedback from external assessors and the requirement for action planning and targets.

25.6 The University must implement a periodic review process through which the University regularly reviews its provision

This action has not yet been addressed.

25.7 The University must ensure external academic input to the University's procedures for validation and approval, periodic review and assessment.

The University plans to involve externals in the validation and revalidation of its programmes. It has not responded appropriately to the action concerning periodic review, as mentioned in relation to indicator 25.6.

For assessment, the University plans to implement an external assessment scrutiny and moderation process. Therefore, the University has addressed the action with regards to validation and assessment but not with regards to periodic review. This has therefore given rise to a new action in which the University is required to indicate its arrangements for the use of external academic input to periodic review.

27.7 The University must ensure that external assessors are consulted when it periodically reviews its programmes

The University's IQAS document includes reference to the role of external assessors although, as with those responsible for external assessment moderation, it has not indicated the criteria for these. It is likely that this would be the same as for external assessment assessors. Therefore, in addressing the new action under 9.8, the University would also meet this action.

3. Response to low priority action points in the previous report, including areas still to be addressed:

10.5 The University must provide opportunities for the sharing of current research activities amongst its staff and consider the benefits of using external speakers

The University has stated that it will utilise its on-line Centre for Teaching and Learning for this. External speakers are to be invited bi-annually.

15.4 The University must review its policies to ensure they make relevant reference to cyber bullying

The University has developed a Cyber Bullying Policy, which is robust and is provided on its website. It has thus met the requirements of this action.

4. Response to recommended areas for improvement in the previous report:

The University has not responded to the recommendations from the previous report.

PART C – CONCLUSION, INCLUDING ANY ACTIONS OR RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THIS INSPECTION OR STILL REQUIRING ATTENTION FROM THE PREVIOUS INSPECTION

The University has provided responses to all of the actions of the previous report and in some areas, it has made progress, particularly in articulating in writing some of its existing and new procedures. It is not possible to assess the effectiveness of these new policies and procedures and any future inspection should include such an assessment.

ACTIONS STILL REQUIRED FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION	Priority H/M/L
25.6 The University must implement a periodic review process through which the University regularly reviews its provision.	M

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION
<p>Ensure that staff have access to the University's policies and procedures through the provision of the Faculty and Staff Handbooks.</p> <p>Formalise the opportunities staff have to share their research interests and outputs.</p> <p>Consider more varied and engaging visual learning resources within the on-line modules.</p> <p>In reviewing the website, consider enhancing the careers information provided as well as that relating to professional body exemptions.</p> <p>Consider introducing a requirement on the application form for students to declare any specific learning needs.</p> <p>Consider enhancing the student induction process.</p> <p>Ensure that students are routinely and formally informed of the outcomes of their feedback.</p>

ACTIONS REQUIRED FROM THIS INSPECTION	Priority H/M/L
4.5 The University must indicate where, within its committee structure, assessment decisions are approved or ratified.	M
4.6 The University must provide either a set of minutes from a recent meeting or a template which it plans to use for its minutes.	M
7.6 The University must confirm the jurisdiction, under which its recruitment policy and processes are carried out.	M
9.8 27.7 The University must clearly articulate its internal and external post assessment moderation process so that it states who will internally and externally moderate, what is to be moderated, how this is recorded, the criteria for the appointment of external assessors and the recording and reporting process for the external assessment process.	H
25.7 The University must indicate its arrangements for the use of external academic input to its periodic review process.	M
27.2 The University must clearly indicate, within its annual monitoring information in the IQAS, the specific data on which student performance will be assessed, the associate key performance indicators and the benchmarks which will be used to evaluate this performance.	M
27.8 The University must address the gaps in its articulation of its quality assurance processes in particular to include the details of its processes for validation, revalidation, periodic review and internal and external moderation.	M

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

It is recommended that the University depict the reporting lines for its committee structure as a diagram for inclusion in its IQAS document which also indicates the reporting relationships between the IQA and ELC and the AC.

It is recommended that the University reviews the operation of its committee system after one year to assess its effectiveness and in particular any overlaps between IQA and ELC.

It is recommended that the University considers the identification of a single person to make final decisions about website content.

It is recommended that the University considers including, within its annual monitoring process, a requirement for evaluation of student and staff feedback, feedback from external assessors, action planning and the setting of targets.