



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

ADDITIONAL PREMISES INSPECTION

INSTITUTION:	QA Higher Education
ADDRESS:	110 Middlesex Street London E1 7HT
HEAD OF INSTITUTION:	Julie Noone, Managing Director
Type of accreditation:	Independent Higher Education
Accreditation status:	Accredited
Date of inspection:	15 December 2015

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: 28 January 2016

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

QA Higher Education Ltd (QAHE), formerly QA Business School, is part of QA Ltd (formerly QA-IQ Ltd), a training company. There were significant mergers, acquisitions and rationalisations after the company was established, in 1983. There are currently two centres: Birmingham, which also acts as the main administrative centre, and London, which has the majority of students. The centres are separately accredited by BAC.

QA Business School (QABS) was established and incorporated in October 2010. At the time of a supplementary inspection in April 2011, course provision was HND level in Business and in Computing, the Advanced Diploma in Management Studies from Edexcel, and the Association of Business Executives Diploma in Integrated Management. Early stages of recruitment were in hand at that time for the delivery of University of Ulster franchised programmes, and the first students enrolled in September 2011.

In January 2013 a 10-year agreement was signed by QA Business School and the University of Ulster, confirming QABS as an affiliate college. The London and Birmingham centres were later designated as branch campuses of the University. Formal programme recognition agreements were signed (in January, May and September 2013 and January 2014) covering levels 3, 6 and 7 courses. In July 2014 QABS changed its name to QA Higher Education - its mission described as the delivery of high quality vocationally-orientated programmes to support the development of student knowledge and professional skills, preparing students for the world of work and continuing professional development. A London campus of Northumbria University was opened in partnership with QA Higher Education in September 2014.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The additional premises are modern, comprising a basement, ground and three upper floors. The accommodation is located in the City of London, well served by public transport and close to Liverpool Street Station. The modern building is well appointed and in an excellent state of decoration, is currently shared with other businesses. Two arms of QA are active in the Middlesex Street at present: QA Higher Education, and QA Learning (a training company). QA Higher Education on Middlesex Street is and will continue to be devoted to delivery of franchised provision in collaboration with Northumbria University; QA Learning classes were in progress during the inspection; but it was indicated that QA Learning will, as anticipated expansion of QA Higher Education provision comes on stream, be moved to other QA Learning accommodation.

Northumbria programmes currently delivered on the QA Higher Education campus are: BSc Applied Computing, MA Applied Project Management, Graduate Certificate/Diploma/BA Hons (top up) in Business, MSc Business with Financial Management, MSc Business with International Management, MSc Business with Marketing Management, MSc Cyber Security, MSc Mass Communications Management, BSc (Hons) Professional Practice in Tennis Coaching Mgt and MSc Web and Mobile Development Technologies.

3. Inspection process

The inspector visited the new premises during one half day, meeting with the Head of Quality Assurance and the Campus Manager. The inspection included a tour of the premises, where classes were in progress and the administration was active.

4. Inspection history

Full Accreditation:	7 December 2010
Supplementary:	7 April 2011
Supplementary:	24 August 2011
Interim:	19 March 2012
Reaccreditation:	9 and 10 March 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 institution.

INSPECTION AREA – PREMISES AND FACILITIES

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

1.1	The institution has secure tenure on its premises			YES	
1.2	Where required, the institution has access to suitable external premises for academic or non-academic purposes of a temporary or occasional nature.			YES	
		Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
This standard is judged to be		✓			
Comments					
1.1. The lease runs until September 2019.					
1.2. The QA group has, should the need arise, other accommodation in London on which to draw.					

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

2. The premises provide a safe, secure and clean environment for students and staff					
2.1	Access to the premises is appropriately restricted and secured.			YES	
2.2	The premises are maintained in an adequate state of repair, decoration and cleanliness			YES	
2.3	There are specific safety rules in areas of particular hazard (e.g. science laboratories), made readily available to students, staff and visitors.			YES	
2.4	General guidance on health and safety is made available to students, staff and visitors.			YES	
2.5	There is adequate signage inside and outside of the premises and notice boards for the display of general information.			YES	
2.6	There is adequate circulation space for the number of students and staff accommodated, and a suitable area in which to receive visitors.			YES	
2.7	There are toilet facilities of an appropriate number and level of cleanliness.			YES	
2.8	There is adequate heating and ventilation in all rooms.			YES	
		Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
This standard is judged to be		✓			
Comments					
As more than one business occupies the building the landlord coordinates safety provision through a Building Manager. It was reported by the QA Campus Manager that induction includes guidance on safety provision. There is a Fire Marshall on site and there are clearly signed emergency exits.					
2.3. The Inspector was able to see fire and general risk assessment reports following recent assessments by external consultants. It was recommended that the points summarised for attention in each of the reports should be expressed as an action plan - specifying individuals responsible, deadlines and a review mechanism.					

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

3.1	Classrooms and other learning areas provide adequate accommodation in size and number for the classes allocated to them.			YES	
3.2	Classrooms and any specialised learning areas (e.g. laboratories, workshops, studios) are equipped to a level that allows for the effective delivery of each course.			YES	
3.3	There are facilities suitable for conducting the assessments required on each course.			YES	
		Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
This standard is judged to be		✓			
Comments					
3.1. It was indicated that scope for expansion of student numbers on the Northumbria London campus was					

under review by the joint senior management team and that plans were likely to be firmed up early in the new year. Meanwhile, the accommodation appeared capable of more intensive use and, as indicated in Part A, above, further space can be freed up within the building.

4. There are appropriate additional facilities for students and staff

4.1	Students have access to sufficient space and suitable facilities for private study, including library and IT resources.	YES
4.2	Teaching staff have access to sufficient personal space for preparing lessons, marking work and relaxation.	YES
4.3	Students and staff have access to space and facilities suitable for relaxation and the consumption of food and drink where appropriate.	YES
4.4	Students and staff have access to storage for personal possessions where appropriate.	NO
4.5	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
4.6	Administrative offices are adequate in size and resources for the effective administration of the institution.	YES

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
This standard is judged to be		✓		

Comments

4.1. Classrooms are clearly signed when available for study use. In addition to IT laboratories some classrooms are permanently equipped with laptops, which are charged during storage. There is a large and well-furnished common room with a separate quiet study room. No library was seen on these premises and the inspector did not visit the Roseberry Avenue study centre.

4.4. There are no lockers on this site at present. Such provision would appear to require reassignment of classroom space. Students are currently advised not to leave bags in the building at lunchtime. This is a topic that could be monitored through existing student union arrangements.

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

Institution's strengths

The additional premises are well designed for the delivery of higher education using excellent teaching facilities and generous provision of relaxation, refreshment and quiet study.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
4.4 The institution must gather student and staff feedback on the question of storage for personal possessions and action as appropriate	L

RECOMMENDATIONS, IF APPLICABLE

The points summarised for attention in risk assessment reports should be expressed as an action plan - specifying individuals responsible, deadlines and a review mechanism.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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