



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

SUPPLEMENTARY INSPECTION END OF PROBATION

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: Probation Accreditation

DATE OF INSPECTION: 7 & 25 September 2017

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION ON ACCREDITATION AND DATE: Accredited 19 October 2017

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

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.

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'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.

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.

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 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.

2. Brief description of the current provision

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 510 students studying on the University's programmes. All students are over 18 years of age and are predominantly located in the Caribbean. Other geographical areas represented are Asia, Middle East, Africa, the USA and Europe.

There are six enrolment points annually and students can enrol for a minimum of one course, called a module and a maximum of two or 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 addition of this to its provision would need to be the subject of an additional inspection

3. Inspection process

This second supplementary inspection was carried out by the original lead inspector over a two-day period. It involved a desk-based review of responses made by the University to the report of the first supplementary inspection and email correspondence with the University

4. Inspection history

Accreditation inspection: 21 & 22 October 2016

Supplementary: 27- 28 February 2017

5. Background to supplementary inspection

The University was subject to its first accreditation inspection in October 2016. The inspection team's 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. The University provided responses and associate documentation which resulted in the first supplementary inspection which took place in February 2017 via a desk-based review. This inspection concluded that whilst some actions had been addressed satisfactorily, one had not been met and some had been addressed only partly which gave rise to some new actions.

Following consideration of the report of this supplementary inspection, the Accreditation Committee conferred accreditation for a six-month period subject to the provision of an action plan and monthly reports to be made on progress in addressing the outstanding actions of the supplementary inspection. It also proposed that a second supplementary inspection should take place at the end of the six-month period to consider Charisma's progress. This took the form of a second desk-based review of responses and additional evidence as provided by Charisma.

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:

9.8 27.7 The University must articulate clearly in writing its internal and external post assessment moderation process which clearly states who will moderate (internally and externally), what is to be moderated (modules, level, 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

The University has articulated its process for internal and external moderation within its Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS). This includes clear requirements for internal moderation including the size and nature of the sample selected for moderation and also provides for other ways of quality assuring the marking process to include second and double marking. It makes clear reference to the approach to be taken where there are disparities between the first marker and second marker or moderator. It also includes arrangements for moderating presentations and practical work. The written process could be enhanced, however, through an indication of who the moderators can be and how they are selected.

The IQAS also makes clear reference to the arrangements for external moderation and has articulated its external examiner system. It has clearly set out the criteria and process for the appointment of external examiners together with their roles and responsibilities. The 3-year tenure is quite short and the University may wish to monitor this. External examiners are required to provide quarterly reports. The University may wish to monitor how the provision of quarterly report works in practice.

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

4.5 The University must indicate where, within its committee structure, assessment decisions are approved or ratified

The University has provided its committee structure which includes three committees: Academic Council, Executive Leadership and the IQAS Team. For assessment decisions, the University states that this is the responsibility of the Dean of Assessment who considers assessment decisions in conjunction with a representative from each committee and considers progress, approves or ratifies assessment outcomes and determines final awards. This does not meet with accepted practice throughout UK higher education where assessment decisions regarding the passing, failing or referring of modules, progression to the next stage of study and final awards are made by a formally-constituted committee with external examiners present.

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.

The University has provided a completed template which it is using to formally record its meetings. This template includes reference to the agenda items, the discussions and the actions arising out of the meeting. This will enable the University to monitor required actions from one meeting to another.

7.6 The University must confirm the matter of jurisdiction so that an assessment can be made as to whether it has met the action

The University has addressed this action and has clarified that staff based in the Turks and Caicos Islands fall within the jurisdiction of Turks and Caicos whilst those residing elsewhere, fall within US jurisdiction. It does acknowledge, that legal issues are considered on a case-by-case basis.

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

The University has developed a comprehensive periodic review process which is articulated within its IQAS and which provides for the review of clusters of programmes on a five-year cycle. Its periodic review process aims to provide a 'checks and balance' approach to the maintenance of standards and enhancement of quality. It is not a revalidation process per se, but the University recognises that this could on occasion be the recommended outcome of a periodic review. The aims of the process are clearly related to quality and standard and the safeguarding of students' interests. It also seeks to assess programmes in terms of the overall strategic objectives of the University. Reviews are formally constituted with the establishment of a panel which includes external academics and students. The University has clearly taken cognisance of periodic review processes which take place across UK higher education and it has met this action in terms of the design of the process.

25.7 The University must indicate its arrangements for the use of external academic input to its periodic review process

In responding to the action above for 25.6, it has also met the action for 25.7

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

The University has provided a paper titled 'Assessment Process' in which it has set out the key performance indicators against which it will draw conclusions about student performance. These include enrolment, retention, graduation and employment and as such represent the indicators used throughout UK higher education to assess performance standards. It is not clear how the use of this data is embedded within the annual monitoring process.

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

The University's processes for internal and external moderation have been addressed as above in its response to 9.8 and 27.7. It has also articulated its periodic review process. Charisma has not, however, addressed the requirement for the articulation of its validation and revalidation process, although it is acknowledged that its periodic review process does, where relevant, provide for the identification of a need to revalidate. Also, there is some implicit reference to validation and approval throughout the IQAS document. However, there needs to be an explicitly documented validation and approval process.

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

It is recommended that 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.

This has been addressed through the inclusion of a diagram in the IQAS document together with information on the terms of reference of the committees and reporting relationships.

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

This recommendation cannot be addressed until 2018.

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

The University has provided a paper titled Website Quality Assurance in which it states that final decisions about website content are made by the University Chancellor.

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 and action planning and the setting of targets.

Reference to this has now been included within the IQAS document.

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 the actions and recommendations from the previous report and in doing so has satisfactorily addressed the actions in all but two cases. It has addressed three out of the four recommendations with one recommendation not due for action until 2018.

It has met the one high priority action (9.8 & 27.7) and its response has given rise to a new recommendation. Of the seven priority actions points it has met four in full (25.6; 4.6; 7.6; 25.7). It has failed to meet one (4.5) and this remains as an action although this has been re-worded to provide clarity to the University about what is expected. Of the remaining two, one (27.2) has been met and the response has given rise to a recommendation whilst the other (27.8) has been partly met and the area which remains unmet has given rise to an action.

ACTIONS STILL REQUIRED FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION	Priority H/M/L
4.5 The University must indicate the specific committee where assessment decisions are approved/ratified and provide terms of reference and constitution for this committee	H
27.8 The University must articulate within its IQAS document its process for programme validation and revalidation	M

ACTIONS REQUIRED FROM THIS INSPECTION	Priority H/M/L
None	

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT
It is recommended that the University provides clarity within its IQAS document about the process for the appointment of internal moderators
It is recommended that the University makes clear reference within its IQAS document as to how the key performance indicators for student performance are considered within the annual monitoring process.