



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM VISIT (Short Course Provider)

PROVIDER: Cambridge International Academy

ADDRESS: 20 Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2JD

HEAD OF PROVIDER: Dr Jonathan Fearon-Jones

DATE OF VISIT: 10 September 2018

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Continued accreditation 29 November 2018

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the provider

Cambridge International Academy (CamIntAc/the Provider) is a private limited company, established on 30 June 2015, by the current Director and Project Director. Both Directors have experience of introducing British education to international markets and their learners. They also have considerable experience in relation to setting up educational projects in China and the United Kingdom (UK).

The Provider's registered address is a business centre in Cambridge, which is also its mailing address. However, the Provider runs a virtual office with staff working off-site in different locations. Accommodation is rented at the business centre as and when required. The Provider has temporary access to Clare College, University of Cambridge for the duration of its programme of studies.

The Provider aims to offer courses which enable its participants to gain an insight into what it is like to study at one of the world's leading universities and to help them make informed choices about what and where they would like to study at university.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The Provider offers short courses of between 14 and 18 days in length for international participants. These courses are divided into the 15+ Oxbridge Candidates Course, which includes modules on admissions to Oxford and Cambridge Universities and the 15+ Aspiring Candidates Course for participants planning to apply to study at other leading universities.

The courses include modules on Public Speaking, British Parliamentary Debating and taster sessions from a selection of subjects. These include the History of Art, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Computer Science, Economics, Film Studies, Geology, Mathematics, Media Studies, Natural Sciences, Philosophy, Psychology and Sociology. Taster Sessions are timetabled in accordance with the choices indicated on the participants' application forms and are designed to replicate studying at a British university.

CamIntAc delivered courses in February and August 2018. Fifty-eight participants attended in total, nine in February and 49 in August. All participants were under the age of 18. A small minority of participants were 15 years old and the majority were female. All participants were Chinese. No courses were running at the time of the inspection.

3. Inspection visit process

The inspection took place over half a day and was carried out by one inspector. A meeting was held at the Provider's registered office with the Director and Project Director. The availability of the information and documentation provided to the inspector was good and the management team co-operated fully throughout the inspection.

4. Inspection history

Stage 2 inspection: 13 April 2017

Stage 3 inspection: 16-17 August 2017

PART B – JUDGMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgments and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector(s) during the inspection and from documentation provided by the provider

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

The Provider has confirmed that home-stays will not be offered on future courses. The course held in August 2018 utilised accommodation in hotels during the excursions and student rooms in Clare College during the training element of the course. The accommodation provided in August was found to be more suited to the needs of the participants as they could spend more of their free time together. Participants shared twin rooms with en suite facilities.

2. Response to action points in last report

3.3 The Provider must set up a formal system for reviewing the performance of its staff given its planned growth in staff.

This point has not been actioned. The Provider is presently designing a staff appraisal system which will suit the seasonal provision CamIntAc offers. The Provider plans to introduce this system during its 2019 provision.

3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

It is recommended that the Provider adds a question to the application form to ask if participants have any specific learning needs so that information can then be shared with the academic staff to ensure that appropriate additional support is provided.

A question asking participants to disclose any specific learning needs has now been added to the Provider's enrolment form. All members of the management and academic staff are informed about learners with specific learning needs to ensure that appropriate support is provided.

It is recommended that the Provider develops a brief guide, written from a participant's perspective, so that participants are better informed about what to expect when they arrive in the UK regarding their accommodation and British customs.

CamIntAc sends a guide to its agents in China and participants undergo training to ensure that they are informed about the course content, accommodation and British culture prior to their arrival in the UK. Past attendees of the Provider's programmes have also become ambassadors for its courses. They have given presentations and have attended question and answer sessions in Beijing and Shanghai as part of CamIntAc's academic roadshows in March 2018. The roadshows allow interested participants the opportunity to experience CamIntAc's provision prior to enrolling on its courses, giving presentations and question and answer sessions in Beijing and other cities where students are being recruited.

4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

4.1 Management, Staffing and Administration (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be		✓		
Comments				
<p>The management team is highly experienced and well established. The size of the organisation ensures that communication between its members is immediate and comprehensive and that any issues are resolved in a timely manner.</p> <p>3.3 The Provider is presently designing a staff appraisal system which will suit the seasonal provision CamIntAc offers. The management will introduce a staff appraisal system for administration and academic staff working on CamIntAc's 2019 courses. The Provider employs additional administrative and academic staff during its summer courses. The academic staff are employed in universities in the Cambridge area and are subject to the appraisal systems of their employers.</p> <p>Effective data collection and collation systems are in place. Information is stored securely by the management team and is used well to inform CamIntAc's programme of studies.</p> <p>The Provider's publicity materials and website are professional and accurate, with both giving clear, detailed information about the courses on offer and what Participants can expect when studying with CamIntAc.</p> <p>The Provider obtains feedback from all its stakeholders and this is used appropriately to inform its programme of studies and operations.</p>				

4.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
<p>Participants are provided with all the course resources they require to successfully complete their programme of study. They also receive detailed oral and written feedback on their performance and progress while they are on the course. Their strengths are recognised and areas for further development are clearly identified and suggestions are made by the trainers about how these areas can be addressed.</p> <p>Trainers have a wide range of teaching experience in a number of disciplines, including Science, Geography, Mathematics, Study Skills, Debating, Interview Skills and training for university admissions. Many of the trainers are also studying on doctoral degree programmes at universities in the UK. Most of the trainers employed by the Provider are employed by, and undergo training at, other educational institutions.</p>				

4.3 Participant Welfare (spot check)

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

Participants are provided with the contact details of all of CamIntAc’s staff at the beginning of the course. The Provider also uses a Chinese social media application to create a supportive community for the participants and their families, while the participants are studying in the UK.

CamIntAc’s staff have received training in safeguarding as well as how to protect participants from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. All the staff have undergone the appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. Participants also have access to staff who speak other languages such as Cantonese and Mandarin.

During the August 2018 course, participants stayed in hotels or residential accommodation at Clare College, University of Cambridge. Participants shared twin rooms with en suite facilities. Female participants stayed in one wing of Clare College and male participants stayed in another. A member of CamIntAc’s staff and the Chinese group leaders also stay on site and were available to provide support 24 hours per day.

4.4 Premises and Facilities (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
<p>The Directors confirmed that, upon arrival in August 2018, participants spent the first few days staying at a Holiday Inn hotel in London, while they visited University College London, Imperial College London, the London School of Economics, the University of Oxford, Loughborough University and the University of Nottingham. Participants also went sightseeing in London, visited the Harry Potter studios and took part in an outdoor teambuilding weekend.</p> <p>During its 2018 programme, in addition to utilising a number of well-equipped training rooms in Clare College, CamIntAc used the College’s Elton Bowring Room in the Gillespie Centre, with a seating capacity of 150 people, for presentations and lectures.</p> <p>At the time of the inspection, CamIntAc was making use of offices in a business centre in the centre of Cambridge. The Provider books rooms for meetings as and when required. It maintains a virtual office when courses are not in progress.</p>				

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS
The Provider benefits from the leadership of a well experienced management team.
The recruitment and enrolment procedures are very well organised and carefully managed.
The trainers on the programme are highly qualified, experienced academics who are able to provide the participants with the authentic experience of studying at a British university.
The programme of studies is responsive to the needs of participants attending the courses and the content is closely related to the specialist areas they wish to study in future.
Participants are well supported by CamIntAc staff during their stay in the UK.

ACTIONS REQUIRED	Priority H/M/L
3.3 The Provider must set up a formal system for reviewing the performance of its staff given the planned growth in staff for its seasonal programme of studies.	M

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT
None

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	
Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.	YES
Further comments, if applicable	