

# BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

## INTERIM AND SUPPLEMENTARY INSPECTION NEW / ADDITIONAL PREMISES (College)

**INSTITUTION:** OLC (Europe) Ltd incorporating EETTEC Ltd

**ADDRESS:** 66 Castle Street  
Bolton  
BL2 1AE

**HEAD OF INSTITUTION:** Dr Chris Bamber

**ACCREDITATION STATUS:** Accredited

**DATE OF INSPECTION:** 1 April 2019

**ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE:** Probation accreditation, 23 May 2019

## **PART A – INTRODUCTION**

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### **1. Background to the institution**

The Organisational Learning Centre (Europe) (OLC/the Institution) was established in 1998 and became a limited company in 2002. The Institution has premises in Bolton, Manchester and London. The main administration offices are based in Bolton. Training takes place in all three locations. The OLC aims to help students achieve qualifications but also to raise their aspirations and self-esteem.

The senior leaders of the OLC are a Managing Director, a Director of Academic Affairs and an Operations Director. An Academic Manager, an Operations Manager, a Sales Manager and a Campus Manager in London support the Directors.

The current curriculum is focused on courses in Business and Finance, Hospitality and Healthcare Practice. The full-time Higher National Certificate (HNC) and Higher National Diploma (HND) courses are provided through partnership collaboration agreements with the University Centre Colchester (UCC) and Sunderland College, whilst the top-up degree courses in Business and Hospitality are run in partnership with the University of East London (UEL).

### **2. Brief description of the current provision**

The Institution delivers full-time HNC and HND courses in Business and Healthcare Practice, which are accredited by Pearson. All HNC and HND Business students are enrolled with UCC and study at one of the OLC campuses in Bolton, London or Manchester. Students on HNC and HND courses in Healthcare Practice are enrolled with Sunderland College and complete their studies at the Bolton or Manchester premises. In addition, the OLC has part-time students, who are staff studying for a Level 5 Diploma in Teaching and Learning (Staff Development). A small minority of part time students are undertaking Chartered Institute of Credit Management (CICM) qualifications.

At the time of the inspection, 319 students were studying full-time HNC and HND and degree courses. Thirty-seven students were studying part-time on Teaching and Learning Diploma and CICM programmes. All students are UK residents and over the age of 18. The majority are female. The very large majority are from minority ethnic backgrounds. In Manchester and Bolton, a majority of students have a south Asian heritage while, in London, the majority of the students are of African heritage. Students are enrolled at various times throughout the year with approximately three intakes per year

### **3. Inspection process**

The inspection was carried out by one inspector over one day at the Institution's new premises in Manchester. The inspection included scrutinising documentation, meetings with students and tutors, meetings with administrators and the Managing Director. A tour of the premises also took place. All staff cooperated well with the inspection and the information required was clearly presented.

### **4. Inspection history**

Stage 2	22 July 2009
Stage 3	22 December 2009
Interim	16 August 2011
Supplementary	9 October 2012
Re-accreditation	15-16 October 2013

Supplementary

6 February 2014

Interim

13 November 2015

Re-accreditation

11-12 July 2017

## **PART B – JUDGMENTS AND EVIDENCE**

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*The following judgments and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector during the inspection and from documentation provided by the institution.*

### **1. Significant changes since the last inspection**

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The managers have signed a ten-year lease on new premises in the Ardwick area of Manchester. Learners on HNC and HND courses in Business and Healthcare Practice moved into the new premises at the end of January 2019. At the time of inspection, students studying on the UEL accredited degree programmes are continuing their studies at the Express Networks premises in Manchester's Northern Quarter, until the lease on these premises expires in May 2019. Continuing students will then move to the new Ardwick premises.

Since the previous inspection, a small number of new teaching, administration and student welfare staff appointments have been made.

### **2. Response to actions points in last report**

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*18.7 Students must receive training on issues relating to the risks of radicalisation and extremism.*

All students are informed about the general risks of radicalisation, extremism and the government's Prevent strategy, including the Channel support programme, during their induction to the Institution. Standardised induction materials highlight the key points of the strategy and the links to fundamental British values. These core values are reinforced throughout the premises in each of the classrooms.

*20.3 Students must be made aware of BAC's own complaints procedure.*

The Institution's Academic Policies guide has been updated and now includes a brief summary, and link, to the BAC complaints procedure. However, the link is included in the appeals section of the policy document, not in complaints, and therefore, this could be confusing to students. The policies document is made available to students through the website but the link goes through to an outdated version, February 2017, which does not include the relevant BAC procedure.

*23.2 OLC must develop an appropriate social programme for students attending the Bolton and Manchester campuses.*

Managers have developed an appropriate social programme of events and activities for students attending the Bolton and Manchester campuses. Events include charity fundraisers, visits from inspirational speakers, employer presentations, culture share activities and end-of-term celebration events. Students interviewed during the inspection felt very welcome at the Institution and appreciated the range of enrichment activities available and the opportunities for socialising with other students. Inspection findings support this view.

### **3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report**

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There were no recommendations in the last report.

#### 4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

##### 4.1 Management, Staffing and Administration (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met

Partially Met

Not Met

##### Comments

The Institution continues to operate effective management and administrative processes. Regular Assessment Boards and Academic Committee meetings are undertaken to monitor the quality of education and ensure compliance with the required academic regulations. HNC and HND courses are franchised by Further Education (FE) accreditation partners who carry out their own quality assurance monitoring processes. Quality assurance activities, undertaken by quality managers from UCC in January 2019, include direct observation of teaching and learning sessions and meetings with students and staff. Managers use this feedback effectively to review and evaluate the quality of provision.

Students on HNC and HND programmes are registered with the franchise FE partner, as well as completing an application for OLC. Processes for obtaining an identity card for Business students registered with UCC are clear and effective. However, students studying on courses in Healthcare Practice through Sunderland College are not clear on the arrangements to register for a Sunderland College identification card. Managers acknowledge that the process needs greater clarity and better promotion, to ensure students can access the relevant identification cards and apply for national student union discount cards.

A number of new teaching, administration and student welfare appointments have been made since the last inspection. Scrutiny of Curriculum Vitae (CVs) identifies that staff are appropriately experienced and qualified to carry out their respective roles. Teaching staff have relevant teaching qualifications and higher-level subject qualifications in their respective disciplines.

The website does not include accurate details of the new Manchester campus.

A Course Representative system is in place to systematically gather the views of students. Managers are quick to respond to areas of improvement identified, where appropriate. For example, managers responded quickly to student concerns over the speed and reliability of the wireless internet connection. Students also raised concerns over parking at the new site. Managers have responded effectively by arranging daily parking supervision to increase the availability of parking spaces.

##### 4.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met

Partially Met

Not Met

##### Comments

Students interviewed during the inspection were very satisfied with the standard of education they are receiving. They appreciate the small group sizes and the support available from friendly and accessible tutors. Inspection activities confirmed this view. Students benefit from guest speaker visits from industry experts to help them apply theory into professional practice.

Students have access to a virtual learning environment (VLE) where they can download key resources to support their studies and to discuss key concepts with their peers. However, scrutiny of monitoring data identified that a significant minority of students never access these online resources. At the new Manchester premises, students have access to a limited range of hard copy books and journals, although many texts are very outdated. Managers have identified the need to improve the range of learning resources available to students through the library and via online access. As students of partner franchise colleges, HNC and HND students also have access to online resources at UCC and Sunderland College. However, not all students are clear on how to access these resources easily. OLC managers agree that clarity over resource access is an area that needs to be more effectively communicated to students.

Plagiarism detection software is used routinely to check formal assessment submissions for authenticity and originality. Tutors make good use of a range of assessment methods that discourage plagiarism and ensure that students are developing the required knowledge and practical skills, for example, oral questioning.

#### 4.3 Student Welfare (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met  Partially Met  Not Met

##### Comments

Dedicated staff at the Manchester campus provide effective welfare support to students, in collaboration with academic tutors. Students benefit from an extended registration and induction period, where their needs in numeracy, literacy and Information Communication Technology (ICT) are fully assessed. Students have access to study skills support classes, to nurture and develop their confidence and academic writing skills. Students confirmed that their needs were well met by centre staff. They felt they received effective information, advice and guidance from centre staff to make an informed choice about their studies and the curriculum provided. Inspection findings support this view.

The link to BAC's complaint's procedure is included in the appeals section of the up-dated Institution's Academic Policies guide and not under complaints and, therefore, this could be confusing to students. The policies document is made available to students through the website but the link goes through to an outdated version, February 2017, which does not include the relevant BAC procedure.

Managers and tutors are aware of the risks of radicalisation and extremism. A detailed Prevent policy is in place. Most staff have undertaken online Prevent training. The Institution's Prevent policy makes reference to the need for appropriate risk assessment to inform the Institution's action plan to mitigate and minimize any risks to students. However, senior managers acknowledge that risk assessments in this area have not been carried out recently and there is currently no Prevent action plan in place to safeguard students in this area.

#### 4.4 Premises and Facilities (full inspection)

*The numbers below refer to the standards as presented in the college scheme document and main full inspection report*

##### 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

Senior managers have signed a ten-year lease agreement on the new premises, with the option to review arrangements every five years.

There is no use of other external premises of a temporary or occasional nature.

##### 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.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> 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.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA
25.4	General guidance on health and safety is made available to students, staff and visitors.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
25.5	There is adequate signage inside and outside of the premises and notice boards for the display of general information.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> 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.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
25.7	There are toilet facilities of an appropriate number and level of cleanliness.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
25.8	There is adequate heating and ventilation in all rooms.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

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

**Comments**

The premises are secure and the Institution is the sole user of the building.

Managers have made a number of enhancements to the structure and layout of the premises since the tenancy began in October 2018. All areas of the Institution are appropriately heated, lit and ventilated.

Students and staff have access to sufficient washroom facilities, including an accessible toilet available on the ground floor.

Signage, including that related to health and safety, is appropriate.

Appropriate guidance on health and safety is provided to students.

**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.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
26.2	Classrooms and/or any radicalized learning areas (e.g. laboratories, workshops, studios) are equipped to a level which allows for the effective delivery of each course.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
26.3	There are facilities suitable for conducting the assessments required on each course.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

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

**Comments**

Students have access to eight classrooms of varying sizes. All are appropriately equipped with computers and audio-visual equipment. Facilities and equipment are appropriate to meet the requirements of HNC and HND Business and Healthcare courses, including assessments.

**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.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
27.2	Teaching staff have access to sufficient personal space for preparing lessons, marking work and relaxation.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
27.3	Students and staff have access to space and facilities suitable for relaxation and the consumption of food and drink where appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA

- |      |   |   |  |                             |
|------|---|---|--|-----------------------------|
| 27.4 | Students and staff have access to storage for personal possessions where appropriate.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> 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. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No            |                             |
| 27.6 | Administrative offices are adequate in size and resources for the effective administration of the institution.  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No            |                             |

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

**Comments**

Students have access to two computer rooms, a library, a relaxation area and a common room. Hot drinks and snacks are available to purchase from vending facilities, which are externally maintained.

27.4 There is no storage available for students' personal possessions.

Teaching and administrative staff have access to appropriate accommodation to meet the requirements of their roles, including preparing lessons and marking work. A large conference room is available to hold the necessary meetings.

4.5 Compliance Declaration

**Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.**  Yes  No



## PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

### STRENGTHS

The Institution recruits well qualified and experienced professionals who use their expertise to develop students' vocational knowledge and skills.

### ACTIONS REQUIRED

20.3 Managers must ensure students are fully aware of the BAC complaints procedure by updating the relevant policy and making this available to all students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
The website must be fully updated, to reflect the location of the new Manchester premises and accurately represent the facilities available.	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
Students must have access to sufficient, relevant course materials, including textbooks, journals and electronic resources.	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
Managers must ensure a Prevent risk assessment is carried out to inform the action plan, to mitigate the risk of a student being radicalised.	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
27.4 Students must have access to storage for personal possessions where appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low

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

Managers and tutors should ensure that all students are clear on arrangements to register for student identification cards with franchise partner instructions.

The Institution should consider enhancing course induction arrangements to ensure that all students are registered to, and have the knowledge and confidence to, access the learning resources provided by partner colleges.

It is recommended that all students are encouraged to access learning resources on the Institutions' virtual learning environment, to better support their studies and independent learning skills.

The Institution should consider the use of external professionals to complete a full fire risk assessment of the premises, to identify any appropriate actions and recommendations in ensuring the safety of all centre users.

### COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS - FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE

During the tour of the premises, two emergency exits were bolted from the inside. One exit was via a steep staircase which was not adequately lit. Centre staff must ensure that emergency exits are unlocked and appropriately lit when the centre is occupied, to ensure all staff, students and visits can exit the building quickly and safely in the event of an emergency.

Managers have identified the benefit of having an external professional complete a full fire risk assessment on the premises, now that internal works are almost fully complete.