

# BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

## END OF PROBATION REVIEW (College)

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

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

**HEAD OF INSTITUTION:** Dr Chris Bamber

**ACCREDITATION STATUS:** Probation accreditation

**DATE OF INSPECTION:** 25 October 2019

**ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE:** 30 January 2020

## **PART A – INTRODUCTION**

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

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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, who also acts as the College Principal, a Director of Academic Affairs, the Operations Director and the London Campus Director.

The curriculum is focused on courses in Business, Hospitality and Healthcare Practice. The full-time Higher National Certificate (HNC) and Higher National Diploma (HND) courses are currently provided through partnership collaboration agreements with the University Centre Colchester (UCC) and Sunderland College, whilst the BA (Hons) in Hospitality is run in partnership with the University of East London (UEL). The partnership agreements with UCC and UEL will not be renewed and courses are currently being taught out. Since the last inspection, three academic programme managers have left the institution and have been replaced by existing tutors.

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

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The Institution delivers full-time, face-to-face HNC and HND courses in Business and Healthcare Practice, which are accredited by Pearson. All HNC and HND Business students are currently 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. A small number of students are completing their studies on the Hospitality degree course accredited by UEL. 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, 349 students were studying full-time HNC, HND and degree courses. There were 22 students studying part-time on Teaching and Learning Diploma and CICM programmes. All students are United Kingdom (UK) residents, over the age of 18. The majority are female.

Students are enrolled at various times throughout the year with approximately three intakes per year.

### **3. Inspection process**

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The inspection was carried out by one inspector over one day at the Institution's premises in Manchester. The inspection included scrutinising documentation, meetings with senior managers and the Managing Director. A tour of the premises also took place. No teaching and learning sessions were taking place on the day of the inspection. All staff cooperated well with the inspection and the information required was clearly presented.

#### 4. Inspection history

<b>Inspection Type</b>	<b>Date</b>
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 & 17 February 2014
Interim	13 November 2015
Re-accreditation	11-12 July 2017
Interim and Supplementary	1 April 2019

## **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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Since the previous inspection, OLC has been notified that its partnership with the UEL will end in 2021. The programme agreement with UCC will also be discontinued from August 2020. The current group of UEL and UCC students represent the last cohorts on these programmes and are following teach-out arrangements.

All course delivery has ceased at the Express Networks premises in Manchester's Northern Quarter and moved to the premises in the Ardwick area of Manchester. Three academic programme managers have left the organisation and their roles have been replaced from the existing team of tutors. A number of management directorates have been restructured and realigned to better meet the needs of the current business.

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

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*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.*

The academic policy has been updated and now includes a link to the BAC complaints procedure. The policy is made available to students via the Institution's website. Students are also informed of the policy and the BAC complaints procedure during induction.

*The website must be fully updated, to reflect the location of the new Manchester premises and accurately represent the facilities available.*

The website has been updated and now accurately reflects the location of the Manchester premises and the facilities available.

*Students must have access to sufficient, relevant course materials, including textbooks, journals and electronic resources.*

Students at the Manchester campus have access to over 380 hard copy books covering the range of academic courses currently offered. A number of books are limited to onsite reference only, to ensure availability. However, the majority of book titles are quite dated. Students also have access to academic databases and resources through the franchise partner instructions. HNC and HND students have access to course specific online resources through an online platform provided by an internationally renowned educational publisher. As a result, of the nature of the electronic resources, students have access to sufficient relevant course materials.

*Managers must ensure a Prevent risk assessment is carried out to inform the action plan, to mitigate the risk of a student being radicalised.*

The Director of Quality and Standards has produced an annual organisational Prevent risk assessment which considers the risk of learners being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. The assessment considers a number of appropriate risk areas, and the associated control measures undertaken by the Institution, including student welfare, the curriculum, organisational culture, information technology and online safety.

*27.4 Students must have access to storage for personal possessions where appropriate.*

The student welfare room has been made available for the secure storage of student's personal belongings.

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

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

Students are provided with clear and specific details of how to apply for a student identification card from the franchise partner instructions. Guidance includes a direct point of contact and the information they need to submit to successfully apply.

*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.*

Student induction processes have been sufficiently enhanced to provide students with more specific details on how to register and 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.*

Managers confirm that students receive detailed information on how to use and access the virtual learning environment (VLE) to support their studies. VLE access is covered in the student induction and individual course tutors have the rights needed to monitor data on students' access of the VLE resources. This is so that they can identify and support those students who are not actively participating in accessing resources and online activities.

*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.*

A fire safety review was conducted by an appropriate external contractor in August 2019. The review identified a number of moderate risk actions and recommendations to be carried out. The review has been supplemented by an additional internal assessment conducted by the Managing Director. The necessary actions identified are yet to be completed in line with the report findings.

### 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**

Since the last inspection, senior leaders have undertaken a full review and audit of student information and data collection systems to address concerns raised by some partner institutions over the accuracy of student attendance records and management of student intermissions and withdrawals. The audit identified a number of recommended actions required to ensure that data collection systems were enhanced and fit for purpose.

Senior leaders have responded positively to the review outcomes, restructuring a number of senior management functions and clarifying areas of responsibility for each directorate in a bid to improve individual accountability and organisational culture. Attendance collection processes have been enhanced to ensure that data accurately reflects those students attending individual classes and not just those arriving on campus. Senior managers have introduced new electronic data systems to reduce the opportunities for human error through data transfer. Senior leaders are committed to ensuring all the recommended areas for improvement, identified through the audit of information systems, are fully implemented to ensure student record systems are fully accurate and robust.

However, the revised attendance monitoring procedures have not yet been updated in the relevant policy and procedure documents.

A clear and appropriate process for staff appraisal and development is in place. Staff are encouraged to reflect on their main achievements, skills development and areas for further enhancement and improvement. Line managers identify areas of good practice and signpost specific development activities and professional development opportunities for their staff.

Senior managers have introduced comprehensive weekly operational meetings to review academic quality assurance matters, student attendance figures, mitigating circumstances requests and student welfare issues. A record of emerging actions and associated key lines of responsibility are provided. However, actions from the meeting often lack specific details or a precise date for monitoring and review.

A system of regular observations of teaching is implemented. Teachers receive a written evaluation of their practice, including strengths, good practice and areas for development. Formal observations by line managers are supplemented by peer observations, to support the sharing of best practice.

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

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**The standards are judged to be:**  Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

Students continue to benefit from face-to-face class teaching on the Manchester campus. Teachers make use of interactive projection facilities in classrooms to show video clips and presentations. Students receive hard copy handouts to support their units of study, supplemented by online resources available through the VLE. A range of study skills sessions are organised to help students develop their referencing skills and use of information sources to support their assignments. Students have access to a library and hard copy book stock to support their learning. A number of core books are provided as reference only. However, comments from student programme committee meetings identifies that students would benefit from additional copies of key texts.

Teachers use a wide variety of assessment methods to engage students and promote participation, including reflective journals and logs, discussions, role plays and observation of workplace practice. Healthcare practice students participate in regular work placements to consolidate and apply the skills learnt in the classroom. The prevention of plagiarism remains a key focus and students' understanding of malpractice is outlined as part of induction and orientation, as well as ongoing support provided in group support sessions and tutorials.

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#### 4.3 Student Welfare (spot check)

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**The standards are judged to be:**  Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

A team of student support staff continues to provide students with information and advice on guidance related to their studies and the Institution. A dedicated student welfare room is available for students to discuss more personal and confidential matters with staff.

Students are encouraged to engage with a variety of social events and fundraising activities. For example, healthcare students at the Manchester campus helped to organise a down syndrome awareness day and stress awareness events.

The views of students are regularly sought by managers through staff-student meetings and termly programme committee meetings (PCM). Where students would like further resources or facilities to support their studies, these are carefully considered by managers, and actions put in place where possible,

for example, additional study support sessions before key assessment dates and improvements to information technology (IT) facilities. Managers produce a summary of student requests and the organisation's response, so they are clear on how their feedback has been received and acted upon.

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#### 4.4 Premises and Facilities (spot check)

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**The standards are judged to be:**

Met     Partially Met     Not Met

**Comments**

Students have access to a good range of spacious and appropriately furnished classrooms to support their studies. Heating, lighting and ventilation are all appropriate.

Emergency lighting has now been installed to illuminate a key emergency escape route and staircase. A campus entry procedure has been strengthened to ensure that fire door bolts are removed when staff and students are in the building.

In response to student feedback, a number of computers have been replaced to ensure more reliable and accessible equipment is available to support students' research and assignment work.

An accessible toilet facility is available on the ground floor of the Manchester campus. Classrooms on the ground floor are also wheelchair accessible. Car parking is available at the rear of the building.

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#### 4.5 Compliance Declaration

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**Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.**

Yes     No

**PART C – SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

**FURTHER WORK TO MEET OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

None	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
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**FURTHER WORK TO MEET OUTSTANDING RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

None
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**ADDITIONAL ACTIONS REQUIRED**

Managers must ensure that quality policies and procedures are updated to accurately reflect the revised systems for managing student registration information and attendance.	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
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**ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT *(to be reviewed at the next inspection)***

<p>It is recommended that the book stock at the Manchester campus is reviewed and refreshed to give students access to additional, more up-to-date information sources to support their studies.</p> <p>It is recommended that the effectiveness of student information systems is routinely checked, and quality assured, to ensure they are sufficiently robust to provide consistently accurate data.</p> <p>The minutes of weekly operational meetings and associated action plans should be enhanced to provide a clear, detailed and specific record of follow-up actions to facilitate ongoing monitoring and improvement.</p>
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**COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS - FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE**

A fire safety review identified a number of moderate risk actions and recommendations which are yet to be carried out.
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