



## BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

### INTERIM INSPECTION (College)

<b>INSTITUTION:</b>	College of Central London
<b>ADDRESS:</b>	Tower Bridge Business Centre 3rd Floor 46–48 East Smithfield London
<b>HEAD OF INSTITUTION:</b>	Mr Nicholas Kailides
<b>ACCREDITATION STATUS:</b>	Accredited
<b>DATE OF INSPECTION:</b>	8 September 2020
<b>ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE:</b>	Continued accreditation, 26 November 2020

## **PART A – INTRODUCTION**

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

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The College of Central London (the Institution/the College) is established as a private limited company. In November 2015, it moved to new premises in a modern serviced office block, a short distance from Tower Hill and Aldgate East underground stations in east London.

The Institution aims to provide high standards of teaching in an environment that encourages academic achievement alongside personal development, while students experience the culture and life of London. Originally, the Institution specialised in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses, but later diversified into Business, Computing, Management, Facilities Management, Shipping and Logistics courses.

The proprietor is also the Principal of the College and is supported by three Course Leaders, who work on a freelance basis to manage the core curriculum programme areas offered by the College.

The Institution was originally established in 1968 as Saint Patrick’s College and was renamed the College of Central London in 1996. All students were initially from overseas, but more recently recruitment has focused on local students. As a result of changes in student numbers, delivery modes have been adapted to include distance and blended learning.

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

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The Institution offers Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) accredited Diploma courses in Business, Management and Computing from Levels 3 to 7 on the United Kingdom (UK) Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) as part-time day courses. In addition, the Institute of Workplace and Facilities Management (IWFM) accredited courses in Facilities Management are offered at Levels 3 to 6 and are delivered on a part-time basis in the evenings. The Association of Business Managers and Administrators (ABMA) accredited Level 4 course in Shipping and Logistics is also offered as a part-time day course only.

Students are able to attend in person and blended and online learning options are also offered for some of the BTEC and IWFM courses. The large majority of the courses are currently being delivered online.

The numbers in the class groups range from one to ten students. The Institution does not recruit students under the age of 18.

At the time of the inspection, 27 students were enrolled on daytime, evening and blended learning courses. There is a diverse mix of students on most courses of whom a small majority is male. Most students are British and a small minority have European, Middle Eastern or Indian backgrounds.

All students enrol as individuals, with most students living locally and already working in a relevant sector. Enrolment takes place at different points in the year, depending on when courses start and the individual needs of the students.

The entry requirements for courses follow the relevant awarding bodies’ entry criteria. For all courses except the BTEC National Diploma Level 3, a score of 5.5 or equivalent is required in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

### **3. Inspection process**

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The inspection was carried out in one day by one inspector via a series of online video meetings that included a virtual tour of the premises. Meetings were held with the Principal, teaching staff and students. Online BTEC and IWFM classes were observed via online video-conferencing applications, and resources available on the virtual learning environment (VLE) were reviewed. A wide range of documentation was scrutinised. The Institution supplied all the documentation requested and co-operated fully with the inspection process.

#### 4. Inspection history

<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Date</b>
Full Accreditation	5-6 October 2004
Supplementary	14 December 2004
Interim	28 February 2008
Re-accreditation	7-8 October 2009
Supplementary	22 January 2010
Supplementary	14 October 2011
Supplementary	16 December 2011
Interim	17 April 2013
Supplementary	17 April 2013
Re-accreditation	1-2 April 2014
Supplementary	1 December 2015
Interim	6 February 2017
Re-accreditation	14-15 March 2018

## **PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE**

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*The following judgements 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 Institution now offers an additional IWFM course in Facilities Management at Level 6.

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

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*8.2 The College must develop and implement a formalised and documented approach to the recording and monitoring of year-on-year results on student satisfaction, retention, achievement and completion rates in order to identify trends and to assist with continuous improvement.*

The Institution has formalised an appropriate approach to obtain documented feedback from its students and has a supportive approach to ensure learning is on target. Additional teaching and tutorial support are offered to all students to facilitate the achievement of qualifications. Although the Institution has developed some good methodologies to record data and support students, the data is not formally reviewed on a regular basis to identify specific trends and ensure continuous improvement of the provision.

*11.3 The College must implement a regular and fit-for-purpose observation programme linked to appraisal to support improvements in teaching and learning.*

Observations are conducted annually for teaching staff who deliver face-to-face sessions. The feedback from the observations has been used as a discussion point in the staff appraisal process and actions plans developed where necessary to improve delivery methods. A strategy to observe teaching regularly on different courses, including online sessions, has not been developed.

*18.8 Staff must be trained so that they are aware of the issues connected with radicalisation and extremism.*

All the current teaching staff scheduled to deliver face-to-face and online sessions have completed appropriate training that ensures they can identify potentially extremist views and understand how to report them in order to safeguard others.

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

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*The College should document administrative procedures to allow for someone else to provide administrative cover, if necessary.*

A folder containing key written administrative procedures, policies, information about systems access and contacts has been produced. This provides relevant information to facilitate effective administrative cover if needed.

*The College should follow up on references of any newly appointed staff.*

Written references are requested for newly appointed staff, which are documented and appropriately stored.

*The College should ensure the updated website is launched as soon as possible.*

The Institution's website is clear and functional. Information about the Institution and the courses, fees and start dates is accurate. As a result, it provides a good overview for potential students. The website also has a link for registered students to access the VLE.

*The College should gather learner feedback more systematically during their course of study and ensure the questions are relevant and will support improving standards of the provision.*

The Institution has developed an appropriate feedback questionnaire, which is emailed to students at the end of their course. Feedback is collated for each course and all comments from students are responded to by the Principal.

*The College should consider formalising action planning to support a better understanding of the needs of the College.*

Student feedback and lesson observations are reviewed to consider where relevant changes need to be made and whether any support can be provided. A formal action plan is developed and actioned to ensure continuous improvement of teaching and learning.

*It is recommended that the College includes checking of individual learning more frequently in lessons and considers different ways that this might be achieved to ensure all students understand and are fully engaged.*

Teaching staff check orally that learning is taking place in lessons and regularly ask students additional questions or set homework tasks to ensure appropriate understanding of the subject.

#### **4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements**

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

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

#### **Comments**

The Institution is effectively managed with a clear organisational structure. The Principal manages the day-to-day operations and administration of the College. This ensures a consistent approach to the management of the Institution.

Responsibility for the delivery and management of each curriculum area is allocated to three of the four members of teaching staff who are Course Leaders for their respective subjects. In addition, there is also an Assessor who is responsible for academic support and assessment of the IWFM courses. Communication is effective. Staff have regular one-to-one meetings with the Principal and frequent e-mail communications, which are well documented.

The administration of the Institution is carried out effectively by the Principal, who has over 30 years of experience in managing the College. There are suitable policies in place, and these are available for staff and students to access through the VLE. This approach is effective and suitable for the size of the Institution.

There are policies in place that provide details of the recruitment procedures. These procedures ensure that staff are suitably qualified for their respective roles. An annual appraisal system is in place, which allows for formal feedback to be provided.

A formal application process is in place to recruit students, which includes an initial application, interview with the Principal and submission of qualifications to ensure they meet the awarding bodies' entry requirements. Personal details, including emergency contacts, and individual learning needs are provided during the registration process and are stored electronically. This process is effective in ensuring that students are enrolled on a suitable course and are aware of the study commitments and the assessments required for each course.

A clear attendance and punctuality policy is in place, which is highlighted in the student handbook. A daily register is taken for each class and any absences are followed up by the Principal to identify any potential problems and provide support for students where necessary.

The Institution has developed an appropriate feedback questionnaire that is e-mailed to students at the end of their course. Feedback is collated for each course and all comments from students are responded to by the Principal. However, there is no mechanism for reporting actions taken by the Institution, so current and potential students cannot see the response that has been made to their feedback.

There are effective systems in place to record student satisfaction, course results, retention data and teaching and learning.

8.2 Although student feedback and course data are regularly recorded, they are not compiled and reviewed on an annual basis to identify specific trends and ensure continuous improvement of the provision.

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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**

Each course has a dedicated tutor and a timetable that is tailored to meet the individual requirements of students who often have work or family commitments. All the teaching staff are highly experienced and have appropriate subject expertise and qualifications in the areas they teach. As a result, staff can effectively relate theories and concepts to industrial applications.

Every course has clear lesson plans, which include specific course objectives, content and criteria from the relevant awarding body's specifications. Assessment schedules, classes and tutorials are tailored to individual students' requirements. They are planned in advance and information is sent to students to encourage effective planning and time management.

Classes that have been adapted for online delivery are used effectively to deliver the course content, with appropriate resources and further reading available on the VLE or sent directly via e-mail. This is sufficient to allow students to attain the course objectives and the intended learning outcomes.

Students normally provide their own laptop for their studies and access resources and documentation online. However, relevant books and other resources are also available on loan from the Institution to facilitate access to alternative sources of research.

There are recruitment policies in place to ensure that teaching staff are suitably qualified to deliver the course at the level that they will be teaching. Qualifications and references of newly appointed staff are sought before any teaching commences. All staff are involved in an annual appraisal process and most have had a lesson observation, which can be used to support the review of staff performance.

11.3 A schedule or documented strategy to regularly observe staff teaching on different courses has not been developed. This should also include the online classes and tutorials sessions to ensure all teaching staff are regularly observed.

All teaching staff are involved in teaching at other institutions, which supports their Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and also ensures that they are very effective in adapting teaching strategies to support individual learning needs.

Assessment strategies, schedules and criteria are clearly set out for each course and are discussed with the student in advance. All the relevant course documentation is e-mailed directly to the student and can also be accessed remotely through the VLE.

All assessments are assignment or coursework based. Students' work is assessed by a teacher or assessor, with written feedback and provisional grades provided to all students on a regular basis.

The students commented that they frequently request additional tutorials to support their studies and that staff are always flexible and supportive of their needs. The provision of additional advice and guidance about further studies and potential work or study opportunities is facilitated effectively by the teaching staff.

The teaching staff use their private e-mail addresses for communicating with students and to log into online video applications that are used for teaching. This approach limits effective access to enable the senior staff to monitor e-mail communication with students and the online lessons.

External examiners are involved in the grading and verification process. Each awarding body regularly reviews the Institution to ensure regulatory compliance and accurate assessment against the associated grading criteria.

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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

The Principal is responsible for student welfare and all students are provided with good information in the course handbooks on how to access support. The handbooks are accessible on the VLE. Additional information is also provided in the induction programmes that are delivered before teaching commences.

The induction programmes are tailored for each individual course and cover key issues, policies, health and safety, support and the course structure. The information is appropriate and enables students to understand the Institution's expectations. However, the content of the various induction programmes is not standardised to ensure consistency.

Although the Institution does not currently have any international students registered on its courses, additional information and guidance are available to support these students effectively.

The Institution has appropriate policies relating to various areas including attendance, protecting students from radicalisation and extremism, and appeals and complaints, including details of the BAC complaints process. A risk assessment relating to preventing radicalisation and extremism has been produced to ensure compliance with requirements to safeguard staff and students. The Institution's policies are available for staff and students to access through the VLE.

Trips to museums and industrial organisations are offered for some courses as appropriate. The vast majority of students are working professionals from London and the surrounding area and they do not require a social programme.

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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

The Institution has an ongoing contract relating to its premises within a managed office block at the Tower Bridge Business Centre. The premises are accessed with security cards, which are provided to all staff and students. The Institution's premises consist of a dedicated office and a classroom on the third floor.

Classes are often held in the evening, so the security cards issued to staff and students to access the building do not have any time-based restricted access. Therefore, there is potential for staff or students to access the premises overnight or at the weekend when nobody else is in the building with a potential risk to their health and safety whilst in the building alone.

The building is clean and provides a good environment for staff and students. It has a ground-floor reception that is managed during daytime office hours. Each floor has its own toilet facilities and access to a communal kitchen area. The building has good signage, health and safety notices and fire extinguishers, which are checked regularly.

The classroom can accommodate up to 14 students at once and is adequate for the number of students enrolled on each course. Staff and students can use the classroom for study or work purposes. Additional meeting rooms, offices and break-out spaces are available on the fifth floor.

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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 STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

### STRENGTHS

The Principal is very experienced in running the Institution and ensures a consistent approach to the operational management of the provision.

Teaching staff are appropriately qualified in their specialist subject areas and also have relevant industrial experience.

Course content and class schedules can be adapted to suit the individual needs of a student or their working environment.

Additional one-to-one tutorials are available upon request and provide students with additional opportunities for individual learning support when necessary.

### ACTIONS REQUIRED

8.2 The Institution must formally review its data on a regular basis to identify specific trends and ensure continuous improvement of the provision.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
11.3 The Institution must implement a strategy to observe teaching staff in online and face to face classes regularly.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
The Institution must develop a mechanism for reporting any actions it has taken following student feedback, so current and potential students can see how the Institution responds to student feedback.	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low

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

The Institution should consider implementing centralised e-mail addresses for the teaching staff to facilitate effective monitoring of communications with students and the use of video applications.

It is recommended that the Institution develops a standardised induction programme for all courses.

It is recommended that the Institution takes steps to see whether restrictions can be applied to security cards in order to limit access to the building out of normal business hours.

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

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