



## **BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT**

### **INTERIM INSPECTION (College)**

<b>INSTITUTION:</b>	Oxford House College
<b>ADDRESS:</b>	24 Great Chapel Street London W1 8FS
<b>HEAD OF INSTITUTION:</b>	Mr Tim Matthew
<b>ACCREDITATION STATUS:</b>	Accredited
<b>DATE OF INSPECTION:</b>	12 March 2021
<b>ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE:</b>	Continued accreditation, 27 May 2021

## **PART A – INTRODUCTION**

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

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Oxford House College (OHC/the Institution) is a privately owned institution which was established in 1974. The Institution offers English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses to international students. In 2010, the Australian Holmes Education Group acquired Oxford House College Group, of which OHC is a part. In 2015, Teaching House (TH), the teacher-training part of OHC, was set up as an independent entity.

The OHC Group delivers English language courses in 16 schools in Ireland, the United States of America, Canada and Australia, as well as the United Kingdom (UK), in central London and Stratford-upon-Avon. It is the college in central London only that is subject to accreditation by BAC. OHC is co-located with TH in a converted Victorian school.

OHC aims to provide a high-quality learning experience and to ensure that all students gain maximum enjoyment and benefit from their courses.

The OHC Group is overseen by a Board of Governors. The Board works with the Proprietor/Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the group, who in turn works in close co-operation with the management at OHC. The management team includes the Principal and the Academic Manager.

In response to a change in demand in the last year, there have been changes in student numbers and numbers of staff.

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

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OHC offers face-to-face general English courses, from levels A1 to C1 on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The classes focus on International English Language Testing System (IELTS), B2 First, formerly known as Cambridge English: First, or FCE, and C1 Advanced, formerly known as Cambridge English: Advanced, or CAE, examinations. OHC also provides courses in Business English and pronunciation. Bespoke one-to-one courses are also available for general English and other specialist EFL areas.

Since March 2020, the Institution has been offering EFL classes remotely at different levels, ranging from A1 to B2+ on the CEFR. Courses run for any length of time, but for a minimum of one week. Full-time courses are timetabled for three hours a day over five days.

At the time of the inspection, 46 students were enrolled, all of whom are following general English courses. One student was under the age of 18. There are slightly more male than female students. There were students from 14 countries, with most coming from Brazil, Japan, Kuwait and Turkey.

Enrolment takes place every Monday. Students are assessed prior to enrolment and placed in an appropriate class.

### **3. Inspection process**

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The inspection was conducted remotely by one inspector over half a day. Meetings were held with the Principal, the Academic Manager, the Welfare Officers, teachers and students. Part of a lesson was observed online. Documentation was scrutinised. Staff at OHC responded promptly to all requests for information.

### **4. Inspection history**

<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Date</b>
Full Accreditation	11 October 2005
Interim	1 December 2008
Re-accreditation	26–27 October 2010

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Supplementary	29 November 2013
Re-accreditation	8–9 June 2015
Interim	11 January 2017
Re-accreditation	10–11 December 2018

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

*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**

In response to a significant reduction in the numbers of students in the last year, there has been a major restructure relating to administrative and teaching staff. Teaching staff who are still employed are frequently deployed to teach on programmes in other parts of Holmes Education Group.

The programmes have become more flexible in terms of the breadth of the definition of language level required by the students to join a course. This has been done in order to accommodate the changed environment with fewer classes.

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

There were no action points identified in the last inspection report.

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

*It is recommended that management strengthen the data analysis process through formalising trend analysis to gain a deeper understanding of trends.*

Performance trends are now formally reviewed on a monthly basis and the information is suitably collated for ease of understanding by management. However, the scope of the data collected is currently insufficient and this has limited the depth of understanding of the performance of the provision. As a result, the trend analysis has been insufficient to be used effectively to make robust judgments about what is going well and what needs to be improved.

*The Institution should consider ways in which technology could be used in the delivery of lessons to further support learning.*

Since the last inspection, the Institution has adapted its teaching and learning to a virtual environment. This has been undertaken successfully using the expertise of staff at TH, who were already delivering courses online. TH has trained OHC teachers effectively to use an online platform for the delivery of classes. Other online tools are also used for elements of the delivery, for example collaborative writing. There is an increased focus on the use of students' own devices to facilitate this way of working. Consequently, the use of technology in the delivery of lessons has been successfully introduced to support learning.

*It is recommended that a female is identified as part of the welfare team so that female students have the option of consulting either a man or woman if they have a personal issue.*

The Student Services Manager has had student welfare responsibilities added to her role. Consequently, students have an appropriate choice of female or male staff member to consult if they have a personal issue.

### **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 management structure is clearly defined and documented, so allowing for easy understanding by the staff. Senior managers are suitably experienced in the education sector and carry out their duties effectively, resulting in a well-run operation. They are effective in leading the Institution.

Clear channels of communication between management and staff support a shared understanding of the business.

The size of the administrative team has been reduced. However, the changes in roles and responsibilities that have been introduced allow for the effective day-to-day running of OHC. This is understood by all staff.

A wide variety of appropriate policies and procedures are effectively disseminated across the Institution. However, they are not regularly reviewed to ensure they remain suitable on an ongoing basis in the future.

An appropriate annual system of appraisal and professional development interviews is in place. However, in the last year, staff have not been appraised. As a result, how well staff are currently performing is unclear.

There are no entry requirements for OHC's courses, which run at a variety of levels. Language level is assessed prior to or on arrival. A member of staff has a short interview with students on arrival to ascertain their spoken language level. This assessment supports the appropriate placing of students in classes. Flexibility in the system allows for students to change class, if necessary.

Frequent feedback is gained from students. As return rates are low compared with other colleges in the group, OHC is trialling a new system of feedback in an attempt to increase return rates. Data gained is collated and reviewed, and prompt action is taken to address any issues, thereby improving the quality of the provision.

The self-development plan was recently reviewed. This is effective in indicating how success in specified aspects of the provision is measured, with targets identified on an annual basis. Consequently, the Institution is easily able to assess its own performance on the specified criteria.

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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**

A suitably qualified and experienced Academic Manager is responsible for course delivery. This, together with his knowledge of EFL, enables him to exercise effective oversight of the provision.

Classes are all delivered via an online platform, for which each student needs log-in details.

The curriculum is based on a coursebook, which is mapped to a syllabus developed by the Institution. As a result of changes in the provision in the last year, OHC has made changes to its interpretation of English language levels and there are now fewer, broader levels. This has successfully enabled flexibility in moving to online teaching and continuity in delivery of the curriculum.

Students are encouraged to develop independent learning skills effectively, through group work and also through tasks set using different online tools.

Teachers all have a minimum EFL qualification supporting them to deliver classes successfully. Less experienced teachers receive good support through effective mentoring.

The system of appraisals incorporates classroom observations. In the last year, observations have not been consistently undertaken for all teachers, so reducing opportunities for enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.

The development of online delivery presented challenges to teaching staff. They were assisted by the excellent training they received, which helped them to achieve an effective transition from face-to-face to online delivery.

Students have high levels of access to teachers outside class time, which is helpful in supporting them in their studies.

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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**

Two named staff members are available to provide advice and counselling. This, together with high levels of support offered by teachers, results in effective support for students.

Prior to arrival, students are sent information about their course. As a result, they are appropriately briefed.

At the start of their course, students receive an online induction, together with a suitable student pack. This helps them settle into their course quickly.

Students are issued with an out-of-hours phone number to ensure that they are well supported in the case of an emergency.

Details of whom to approach if a student has a complaint are included in the student pack. This includes the BAC complaints procedure.

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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 use of the premises has not changed significantly since the last inspection, when the premises were inspected. Compliance is based on the outcomes of the previous inspection and no contrary indicators were noted during the current inspection.

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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**

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**STRENGTHS**

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Positive relationships between staff are successfully maintained and support the provision effectively.

The smooth transition to online learning has effectively allowed ongoing delivery of the curriculum.

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**ACTIONS REQUIRED**

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The Institution must ensure that all staff are regularly appraised and are provided with support to enhance their professional development.

High     Medium     Low

Lesson observations must be undertaken regularly, including for online delivery.

High     Medium     Low

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

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The Institution should consider widening the scope of the data collected for trend analysis.

OHC should review all policies and procedures regularly to ensure their ongoing suitability.

It is recommended that the process for giving students details for entering online classes is reviewed to ensure that they receive these details in a timely manner and before the classes start.

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

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