



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

Independent Higher Education (IHE) Re-accreditation Inspection

NAME OF INSTITUTION: Maryvale Institute

ADDRESS: Maryvale House
Old Oscott Hill
Kingstanding
Birmingham
B44 9AG

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Dr Birute Briiliute

DATE OF INSPECTION: 27, 28 & 30 September 2021

ACCREDITATION STATUS AT INSPECTION: Accredited

DECISION ON ACCREDITATION:

- Re-accreditation awarded for the full four-year period
- Probation accreditation
- Decision on accreditation deferred
- Award of accreditation withdrawn

DATE: 25 November 2021

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

Maryvale Institute (the Institution) is an educational institution that is part of the Roman Catholic Church. It was established in 1980 with the aim of running part-time courses and programmes in Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) relating to the Catholic faith.

The Institution is based in Maryvale House in Birmingham in the United Kingdom (UK). Its principal objective is the advancement and maintenance of the Roman Catholic religion through the education of the clergy and laity. Maryvale House dates back to 1752 and has been associated with the Archdiocese of Birmingham since the mid-eighteenth century. It has been used by several religious orders and was, at one time, an orphanage. The buildings have been altered and expanded within the limits allowed by its Grade II listed status.

The Institution is a recognised Higher Institute of Religious Sciences (HIRS). It is validated by the theology faculty of the École Cathédral in Paris, on behalf of the Congregation for Catholic Education in Rome. It is currently the only such institute in the English-speaking world to be approved by the Catholic Church to award Bachelor degrees and Licentiate degrees, which are at postgraduate level, in Divinity.

The Institution is managed through a Senior Management Board (SMB) and the Academic Board, which both report to the Maryvale Council, which in turn reports to the Diocesan Board of Trustees. The Maryvale Council acts as the governing body for the Institution under powers delegated by the Diocesan Board of Trustees. The SMB's membership comprises the Academic Registrar, the Director of the HIRS and Bachelor of Divinity programme, and the Academic Dean. The Institution's finance and estates are managed by the Diocesan Finance and Estates team.

There is a small team of eight permanent academic staff, four of whom are part time. The delivery of the provision is supported by a pool of 90 associate lecturers drawn from academic institutions and the Catholic Church in the UK and overseas.

It is planned that the Institution will move out of Maryvale House into other accommodation as the Archdiocese intends to renovate the building and extend its use for other purposes. At the time of the inspection, the building was still in use by the Institution.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The Institution offers 18 programmes from FE level to Doctor of Philosophy in subjects relating to the Catholic faith. These comprise two undergraduate programmes, three postgraduate programmes and 13 FE certificate courses. The Institution also enables FE programmes through independent distance learning study. The FE programme is undergoing a complete review, resulting in a new and revised offer through the newly established Catechetical Centre.

The Institution's HE provision is currently covered by three partnership agreements. The first partnership is with the Faculté Notre Dame (FND) at the École Cathédral in Paris. The second partnership is with the Open University and the third with Liverpool Hope University. The Institution is in the process of negotiating new validation agreements with Newman University and Saint Mary's University in the UK. These new agreements will replace the one with the Open University, which covers the MA in Catholic Applied Theology and the BA (Hons) in Philosophy and the Catholic Tradition as well as the agreement with Liverpool Hope University, which relates to the postgraduate research programmes.

The new validation negotiations have been necessitated due to the changing policy of one of the universities which is reducing its partner institution validations, and also in the interests of achieving economic efficiency for the Institution.

Programme delivery is normally through a mixture of distance learning, supported by residential weekend teaching and study days. The same staff normally teach the online delivery, as well as providing in-person teaching. Currently, all teaching is delivered online and the Institution's staff have endeavoured to replicate the residential experience online as far as possible.

At the time of the inspection, there were a total of 310 students enrolled, of whom the majority are female. All students are part time and over the age of 18. The majority of students are aged between 22 and 65 and are from the UK and Ireland. The Institution also has enrolled students from Singapore, Macau, Nigeria, the United States of America, Canada, Hong Kong and Australia.

The postgraduate research programme has two enrolment points, one in October and the other in February. The remaining HE programmes have one enrolment point each year in October. The FE programmes have continual enrolment throughout the year. Enrolment prerequisites are in line with normal FE and HE requirements.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was carried out online over three days by a lead inspector and a student inspector. Meetings were held with the Chair of Maryvale Council, the Director of the HIRS, the Academic Dean, Academic Registrar, Chair of the Academic Board, Diocesan Finance Manager, Diocesan Head of Property, Diocesan Human Resources Manager, Estates Assistant, Programme Directors, Director of Catechetical and Adult Formation, Marketing Manager, Accessibility Co-ordinator, Librarian, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Manager, administrators for undergraduate, postgraduate and FE programmes and the Examinations Secretary. Meetings were also held with a representative group of teaching staff and students. Various documentation was scrutinised and a virtual tour of the premises was carried out. A variety of teaching sessions were reviewed. The staff co-operated fully with the inspection.

4. Inspection history

Inspection type	Date
Full Accreditation	20–21 March 2009
Interim	28 May 2010
Re-accreditation	1–2 March 2013
Interim	16 April 2015
Re-accreditation	5–6 April 2017
Interim	5 March 2019

PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

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

INSPECTION AREA – GOVERNANCE, STRATEGY AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

1. The institution is effectively and responsibly governed

1.1	The overall organisational structure, including the role and extent of authority of any owners, directors or governing body, is clearly defined, documented and effectively communicated to stakeholders, including governors, management, staff and students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
1.2	There is an identified senior committee, with decision-making authority on academic matters, in order to protect the integrity of academic freedom.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
1.3	The link between governance and management is clearly articulated and documented.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
1.4	Internal stakeholders develop and implement policy through appropriate structures and processes while involving external stakeholders.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
1.5	An explicit procedure for risk assessment is implemented, producing a risk assessment statement, which is regularly reviewed and updated.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
1.6	Effective action is taken, by the governing body and senior managers, in response to the outcomes of regular risk assessments.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
1.7	All relationships with other educational organisations are defined formally and are fully transparent with those organisations' requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
1.8	There are clear channels of communication between the governing body, the executive, academic management, staff, including those working remotely, students and other stakeholders.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The organisational structure is fully documented and is very clear. It is appropriate for the size of the Institution. The membership of the Maryvale Council and details of the executive staff are provided on the website. As a result, stakeholders are clear as to the Institution's structure and management arrangements.

There is an appropriate committee structure. The SMB is responsible for the operational management of the Institution, as well as strategy development. The Academic Board, which includes external membership, has appropriate decision-making authority on all academic matters. Consequently, appropriate academic freedom is upheld.

The relationship between governance and management is clearly identified within the structure, providing for effective and efficient governance and direction. There is a clear separation between strategic academic decisions and governance. An Academic Standards Committee reports to the Academic Board and both operate independently of the Diocese. Strategic and academic planning are all addressed internally by the Institution and outcomes are reported to the Maryvale Council.

Internal and external stakeholders are involved in policy development through the committee structure. There is student representation on the Maryvale Council, SMB and Academic Board, as well as the Programme, Research and Student Appeals Committees. The student representative on the Student Appeals Committee is never the student making the appeal. Consequently, the student voice is well represented in policy decision-making.

There is an appropriate risk management process that incorporates regular risk assessments. The Institution has a major incident procedure that includes action from the Diocese as necessary, particularly in response to media enquiries. Reports are made to the Maryvale Council on a regular basis. Senior management mitigates risk by taking

appropriate action when a potential risk is identified and assessed. As a result of the risk assessment processes, the Institution is able to identify and mitigate risks effectively.

All relationships with other academic bodies through validations are carefully negotiated and closely managed through formal agreements, ensuring that they operate effectively and in the best interests of students. The careful and considered way in which validating partners' conditions and recommendations are addressed by the Institution is testimony to its commitment to satisfying its obligations to its students.

The communication between governance and the SMB and Academic Board is provided by cross-membership and through appropriate dissemination of meeting minutes. Weekly online meetings of programme leaders and administrative support staff are recorded and made available as appropriate. The increase in online meetings has enabled greater participation in discussion by remotely located associate lecturers. The recordings of staff meetings provide a clear record of proceedings and a documented basis for decisions. Student representation on the SMB and Academic Board provides for the student voice to be clearly heard and appropriately considered in policy and strategy decisions.

2. **The institution has a clear and achievable strategy**

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| 2.1 | The institution has a clear strategy for the development of its higher education provision, which is supported by appropriate implementation plans and financial management and takes into account the quality of the student experience. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2.2 | There is provision for stakeholder input, including governors, management, staff and students, to inform the strategic direction of the institution. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2.3 | The strategy is well communicated to all stakeholders within and outside the institution. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2.4 | The governing body and senior management conduct a regular and systematic review of their own performance and the institution's overall performance and each is measured against strategic targets. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The strategic plan was revised in September 2020 and is set within a three-year cycle, with three main strands covering Adult Formation, Higher Education and Building.

The Adult Formation strand addresses appropriate areas, such as the way in which adults interact with the Church, use of resources available to the Diocese and the Institution's engagement with its own and other diocesan audiences. The Higher Education strand seeks to ensure that all academic programmes are financially viable, appropriately managed and that the Institution remains independent in its decision-making. The Building strand seeks to ensure that Maryvale House is used to the greatest benefit for the Diocese and that the library and academic teaching facilities for the use of the Institution are of an appropriate standard.

Strategy is set by members of the SMB in consultation with the Academic Board members and agreed by the Maryvale Council. Input to its development comes through the various committees, most specifically the SMB and Academic Board. This enables appropriate stakeholder input into strategic decision-making. The student voice on these committees enables the quality of the student experience to be appropriately considered.

There is external input into the strategic planning process from the Catholic community at large, including taking into account the needs of other dioceses. There is currently no specific input into strategic thinking from outside the Catholic faith in order to ensure that strategic development takes account of the needs of the wider community.

The strategy is available on the website. As a result, it is effectively communicated both within and outside the Institution.

There are procedures for senior managers to conduct a regular and systematic review of their own performance and that of the Institution. This is provided by an annual institutional review, which draws on the annual monitoring reports produced for each programme. The review incorporates measurements of the achievement of previously identified targets and comments on issues that need to be addressed in the future. The effect of this is that the Institution constantly assesses its performance towards meeting its set objectives.

3. Financial management is open, honest and effective

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| 3.1 | The institution conducts its financial matters professionally, transparently and with appropriate probity. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3.2 | The institution's finances are subject to regular independent external audit. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

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

Comments

The Institution's finances come under the auspices of the Diocese and are conducted with appropriate probity and professionalism. The financial statements are subject to annual external audit.

INSPECTION AREA – GENERAL AND ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

4. The institution is effectively managed

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| 4.1 | The management structure is clearly defined, documented and understood by all stakeholder groups, including governors, management, staff and students. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.2 | There are clearly delineated responsibilities and reporting arrangements at institutional, faculty, departmental, programme and course levels. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.3 | There is an appropriate and effective committee structure, with appropriate reporting lines to inform management decision-making. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.4 | Committees have clear and appropriate terms of reference and meet regularly. The meetings are accurately recorded with clear action-planning. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.5 | The institution has formal mechanisms to monitor the information it provides internally and externally and to make any enhancements deemed necessary to ensure that it is accurate and fit for purpose. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

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

Comments

The management structure is clearly defined and communicated to stakeholders via the website. Academic matters are managed by the Academic Dean and administrative affairs are addressed by the Academic Registrar. The role of senior staff is well defined, articulated in comprehensive job descriptions and communicated throughout the Institution, with reporting arrangements clearly set at all levels.

The senior staff are well qualified for their roles and have appropriate decision-making authority on all administrative matters through the operation of the SMB. The clearly defined structure sets out effective reporting arrangements at all levels, which enables stakeholders to understand where responsibilities lie within the institutional hierarchy.

The committee structure operates effectively. It is comprehensive and reporting lines are effectively established and fully operational, enabling management decision-making to be carried out in an informed manner. There is cross-representation between the SMB and the Academic Board. The committee structure is formally reviewed for effectiveness through an in-depth survey that is completed by all committee members. This is carried out every three years and changes are made as appropriate. In addition, the terms of reference of each committee are reviewed at the beginning of each academic year to ensure that they remain relevant and fit for purpose. This provides the Institution

with the opportunity to amend its structures to meet the changing needs of the Institution in the dynamic environment in which it operates.

There is student representation on the Maryvale Council, SMB and Academic Board, as well as on the programme committees. The Programme Directors' Committee acts as a forum for sharing good practice and ensures that consistency of approach is achieved in delivery. The committees are all provided with appropriate terms of reference and their regular meetings are suitably recorded, with action logs providing deadlines that are reviewed at the start of each meeting. This provides appropriate follow-up to decisions made and actions approved.

The information provided internally and externally is reviewed by each programme team on an annual basis and refreshed as appropriate. This ensures that the information provided is current and meets the needs of the stakeholders for which it is intended.

5. The institution is administered effectively

5.1	The size of the administrative team is sufficient to ensure the effective day-to-day running of the institution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.2	The administrative support available to the management is clearly defined, documented and understood and appropriately focused to support its activities.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.3	Administrative policies, procedures and systems are well documented and disseminated effectively across the institution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.4	Classes are timetabled and rooms allocated appropriately for the courses offered.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.5	Data collection and collation systems are well documented, accurate and effectively disseminated.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.6	Comprehensive administrative records are organised and stored efficiently, easily accessed and used effectively.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.7	Students' records are sufficient, accurately maintained and up to date.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.8	Staff records are sufficient, accurately maintained and up to date.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.9	The institution has a robust security system and policies in place for protecting the data of its students and staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.10	The institution has processes, through which the institution verifies the student who registers on the programme is the same student who participates on and completes and receives the credit.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.11	There are secure and efficient procedures for the administration of examinations and other means of assessment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.12	There are effective procedures for internal and external moderation at pre- and post-assessment stages.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.13	The institution makes student records and transcripts available to its students in a timely manner.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.14	There is a policy on the collection of and refund of students' fees which is implemented effectively.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The size of the administrative team is sufficient for the effective day-to-day administration of the Institution, with dedicated administrators for each of the programme areas. There is also additional administrative support available at times when there is a particularly high workload. Administrative support is set out in the structure diagram and is effective in supporting programme directors to deliver their programmes to the required standards.

The main policies and procedures are accurate, detailed and thorough. They are available on the website and are also set out in the staff and student handbooks, providing new staff and students with helpful information. The regular administrative team meetings help to enable the effective sharing of best practice and inform changes to policy and

procedures. A minority of the policies have passed their review dates as a result of unusual heavy work pressures on the administration function.

There are currently no in-person classes scheduled. The scheduling of online classes is effective.

Records of each student's personal and academic details are maintained on the database. Information on next of kin will be collected when residential teaching resumes. The Institution has moved from paper to online records. An adapted school records system has been implemented as a database. The database is not performing in accordance with expectations and leads to some administrative inefficiency. It is under review with the intention of replacing it. Despite the shortcomings of the current database system, student records are accurate and up to date. Each staff member is identified in an electronic file that is securely managed by the Academic Dean and Academic Registrar.

Access to student and staff information is tightly controlled in accordance with the data protection policy. The access procedures include a hierarchy of permissions protocol. There is a comprehensive data protection privacy statement that is applicable to all students and staff. Students are required to complete a form that requires their written consent to the Institution holding personal data.

Anti-virus software is installed on the Institution's systems and an external company provides network engineering support and security. A regular firewall is in operation through the routers. Online protection for staff logging in from home is secured through the Institution's systems.

Student applicants are required to submit two photographs and two character references and are interviewed by the programme directors in advance of enrolment. Authentication of the students is achieved through their participation in online teaching and when they undertake examinations, some of which are oral. Classes tend to be small and so the lecturing staff become familiar with the individuals attending classes and assessments, thus enabling the effective verification of students' identity.

Examinations are now carried out in timed open-book style or in oral form, as approved by the Institution's validating partners. Open-book examination stationery and question papers are effectively managed and student answers are downloaded securely. Internal and external moderation of pre- and post-assessment stages are in accordance with the validating partners' requirements and appropriately audited, which ensures that the procedures carried out by the Institution are robust. Students receive transcripts at the end of each award level.

The Institution's policy on student fees states the payment terms and is available on the website. With regard to refunds, if there are extenuating circumstances, such as illness, each individual case is considered on its merits and a refund may be made.

5.14 However, there is no indication of this in the student fees policy.

Overall, the administration of the Institution is efficient, and students confirmed that they receive appropriate administrative support that enables them to concentrate effectively on their studies. Inspection findings confirm this view.

6. The institution employs and continues to support appropriately qualified and experienced staff

6.1	There are appropriate policies and effective procedures for the recruitment and continuing employment of suitably qualified and experienced staff, which is designed to ensure the safety of the students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.2	All staff are suitably qualified and experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying them out.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.3	There are clear and appropriate job specifications for all staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.4	There are effective procedures for the induction of all staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.5	All staff are treated fairly and according to a published equality and diversity policy.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.6	Staff have access to an appropriate complaints and appeals procedure.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

6.7	Management monitors and reviews the performance of all staff, through a clearly documented and transparent appraisal system that includes regular classroom observations of teaching staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.8	The professional development needs of staff are identified through appraisal and other means, and measures taken to support staff to address these and gain additional qualifications, where relevant.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

All staff are recruited and appointed in accordance with the diocesan robust human resources and safer recruitment policies. These include key role specifications, review of curricula vitae and references. The procedures include interviews that ensure that staff are appropriately qualified and experienced.

All staff are suitably qualified for their roles and carry them out effectively, providing students with a fulfilling academic experience. All permanent staff are issued with detailed job specifications. Associate lecturers are provided with appropriate job descriptions.

New staff undertake an appropriate induction programme. The process includes the completion of a comprehensive checklist and a detailed induction plan. The comprehensive approach to induction enables each staff member to integrate more speedily with the work of the Institution and to contribute effectively.

The equality and diversity policy is available on the website and on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and is appropriately applied in ensuring fair treatment for all staff. The staff handbook sets out the policy and rigorous procedures for handling complaints and appeals. This enables complaints and appeals to be handled efficiently and fairly.

All permanent staff receive an annual appraisal in which continuing any personal and professional development needs are identified and addressed. Associate teaching staff also have access to an appropriate appraisal process. Staff prepare for their appraisal by making use of guidance available within the staff appraisal procedure. The appraisal of academic staff includes consideration of classroom observations. Following observation of both in-person and online teaching delivery, feedback is provided to the academic staff member concerned.

The staff appraisal procedures are thorough and provide all staff with the opportunity to present their achievements and identify areas where performance may be improved with additional support and guidance. The system provides for future objectives and appropriate financial support to be identified. The process ensures that academic staff are able to provide students with a rewarding experience and administrative staff are equipped to give strong support to academic staff and students.

Staff development needs are identified through the staff appraisal process. A staff development budget is provided to fund external courses and attendance at seminars and conferences. All staff are therefore encouraged to undertake professional development and to enhance their skills and capabilities to enrich their service delivery and enhance their job satisfaction.

7. Academic management is effective

7.1	There are appropriate procedures for the proposal, design and validation of programmes of study, which take account of the mission of the institution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.2	Intended learning outcomes for all programmes are clearly articulated, understood by students and are publicly available.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.3	There are regularly scheduled and recorded meetings of academic staff where academic programmes are reviewed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.4	There is an appropriate policy and effective procedures for the acquisition of academic resources to support programmes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

7.5	Commissioning of course materials is managed effectively and materials and the budget are checked to ensure standardisation and consistency across the provision.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.6	Students are encouraged to take an active role in the development of the academic provision to ensure student-centered learning.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Programmes are designed to take into account the local, national and international needs of the Church. The Institution uses or adapts Open University processes for proposing, designing and preparing FE and HE programmes for validation. The proposals, including due diligence on prospective validating partners, are reviewed by the Academic Board and the SMB prior to development. After development has been approved, the relevant programme director establishes a team for its progression comprising Institution staff, external advisers and students. This ensures that the system of programme design and development follows appropriate and robust practice.

The programme specifications, that detail the aims, objectives, learning outcomes, module names and assessment methods, are available on the website. Each programme is supported by a committee that reviews its outcomes and feedback and makes recommendations for improvement. There is therefore a rigorous system in place to develop and review programmes.

Academic standards are monitored by the Academic Standards Committee and the Academic Board. These committees meet each term to review the programmes' operation and proposals for development. The regularity of the meetings ensures that committee members are kept fully aware of any issues arising and enables these to be addressed promptly.

Appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the acquisition of academic resources to support programmes. The relevant programme director manages the resources for their programme within the budget allocation provided. Resource requests outside the budget allocation are subject to approval by the SMB.

Programme Committees include programme staff and students. They meet bi-annually. Students feed suggestions to these committees through their representatives. The students are fully encouraged to be active in developing modules and programmes and to embrace student-centred learning, which is a central aim running through all programmes. Moving to delivery online has enhanced the opportunity for students to engage fully in their own student-centred learning, through one-to-one feedback and advice offered by academic staff.

8. The institution takes reasonable care to recruit and enrol suitable students for its courses

8.1	Entry requirements for each programme are set at an appropriate level and are clearly stated in the programme descriptions seen by prospective students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.2	Students are informed as to the necessary language requirements for entry on to programmes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.3	A formal application process ensures that students meet the entry requirements and any claimed qualifications are verified.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.4	All students' application enquiries are responded to promptly and appropriately.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.5	Prospective students are properly briefed on the nature and requirements of the programme(s) in which they are interested and provided with advice on choosing their programme.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.6	Students receive a proper initial assessment, which includes language ability, to confirm their capability to complete the programmes on which they are enrolling.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.7	The institution makes it clear to applicants that they are responsible for checking that they have the skills and knowledge required to study on the chosen course.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

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| 8.8 | The institution has a clear policy on the accreditation of prior learning and prior experiential learning, which is brought to the attention of prospective students. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 8.9 | Any recruitment agents are properly selected, briefed, monitored and evaluated. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Entry requirements are set at an appropriate level. Applicants to the undergraduate and FE programmes have to submit a 500-word personal statement, provide two references as well as evidence of satisfactory English language capability. Admission to postgraduate programmes is restricted to those applicants holding a relevant degree or equivalent and who have a satisfactory level of English language ability. These entry requirements are appropriate for the programmes offered by the Institution.

All courses are taught in English. English language requirements are stated on the Institution's website and in application forms.

The application process is rigorous and varies across different programmes in accordance with the requirements of the validating partner. Applications for postgraduate study require evidence of previous qualifications. Appropriate agencies are used to authenticate non-UK qualifications. Students agree that applications are responded to promptly and appropriately and inspection findings confirm this.

Telephone and visual electronic means are used by programme directors to provide information to prospective applicants. The comprehensive application pack also provides information to help applicants make their selection of programmes.

The programme directors consider all applications. In the case of programmes validated by the FND, applications are considered by the FND applications committee. The Institution ensures that applicants are made aware that it is their responsibility to check they have the appropriate skills and knowledge to study on the programme.

There is a comprehensive policy on Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) and Accredited Prior Experiential Learning (APEL). Applications claiming APL or APEL are considered by the programme director in discussion with the applicant. Evidence of APL or APEL must be supplied. Where the evidence submitted is insufficient for a clear judgment to be made, the candidate making an APL or APEL claim may be required to undertake a specific assessed task or a viva, which will provide an indicator of the applicant's potential to fulfil the objectives of the programme.

The Institution applies robust policies and procedures to ensure that students recruited are suitable for the programmes on which they enrol.

9. The institution encourages and supports its staff to undertake research and other forms of scholarship and to engage in other professional activities

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|-----|--|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 9.1 | The institution encourages academic staff to undertake research in relevant fields and to publish their findings. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 9.2 | Academic staff are encouraged to engage in research and/or scholarship that informs their teaching. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 9.3 | There is a fair and transparent procedure for staff to seek financial support for their research and other professional development activities. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 9.4 | The institution provides time for staff to meet regularly to share and discuss current research activities and, if appropriate, invites external speakers. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

The Institution has developed an ethos of research-based teaching. Teaching staff are provided with a minimum of two weeks of paid leave a year to engage in research and scholarly activity. The effect of this is that teaching staff feel supported in developing their research and scholarly activity, which enhances their teaching delivery. The Institution has set up a research centre for academic staff and is in the process of developing a forum for research students where they can present papers moderated by academic staff.

The Institution promotes national and international research by organising virtual and, when possible, in-class academic forums. In addition, a biennial research publication entitled the Maryvale Book is produced. This is the main vehicle for the publication of research and is now in its fourth volume, with peer review sought for 2022. Research students are able to publish a chapter of their work in this publication after graduation. The Maryvale Book supports the broadening of the Institution's collaboration and co-operation with other HE institutions in the fields of theology, Catholic social sciences, philosophy and religious education.

Other regular forums are offered to encourage discussion of pedagogical research and its practical application. Membership of Advance HE is encouraged among academic staff, with several permanent and associate staff members having achieved fellowship.

10. Publicity material, both printed and electronic, gives a comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate description of the institution and its curriculum

10.1	Text and images provide an accurate depiction of the institution's location, premises, facilities and the range and nature of resources and services offered.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
10.2	Information on the programmes available, their assessment and progression is comprehensive, accurate, readily accessible and up to date.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
10.3	There are effective procedures to update information on a regular basis to ensure its relevance and accuracy.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
10.4	The information provided ensures students are well informed of the status of the qualifications offered, including the awarding body and level of award.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
10.5	Students are informed of the full cost of all programmes, including costs of assessments, activities and any required materials.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The text and images on the Institution's website provide an accurate and fair description of the Institution's location, premises, facilities, resources and programme offers. The information on the availability, assessment and development of programmes offered is accurate and easily obtained from the website, enabling prospective students to gain an appropriate insight into what the Institution has to offer.

Programme specifications are reviewed annually and amendments are uploaded on the website. Other material is reviewed and updated by each programme team on an annual basis to ensure its continued currency. This ensures that the reader is well informed of the programmes offered, their status and level, and the identity of the validating partner.

The full cost of programmes is available on the website and in application documentation. Scholarships are available for the Bachelor programmes and are promoted online and through social media.

INSPECTION AREA – TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

11. Academic staff are effective in facilitating student learning

11.1	Lecturers have the required subject knowledge, and pedagogic and communicative skills and experience to teach both the course content and level of course to which they are allocated.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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11.2	The allocation of teaching staff to courses provides for a consistent learning experience and delivery is monitored to ensure consistency.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
11.3	The programmes and their constituent courses are delivered and assessed in ways that enable students to succeed by developing the knowledge and skills that will be required for final examinations or assessments.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
11.4	Teaching sessions are appropriately informed by module descriptors and relate to defined intended learning outcomes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
11.5	Academic staff are effective in recognising individual learning needs and preferred learning styles and adapting their delivery to meet these.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
11.6	Academic staff use a mixture of group and individual activities, to encourage the active participation of all students and support their learning.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
11.7	Students are encouraged and enabled to develop independent learning skills.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
11.8	Students and academic staff have access to appropriate learning and study materials as well as other resources and the institution encourages and supports their use.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Teaching staff are very well qualified and experienced and are suitably equipped with pedagogic and communicative skills to provide effective delivery at the required level. The Institution's reputation and connections in the Catholic community enable it to attract high-profile visiting and guest lecturers. New academic staff are subject to a thorough recruitment and induction process.

The appropriate allocation of permanent and associate teaching staff, along with visiting lecturers, provides students with a consistent and effective learning experience. The performance of all academic staff is appropriately reviewed and the permanent staff are appraised annually. Feedback from students and peer observation also informs the appraisal process. The students' feedback is shared with teaching staff to enable them to improve their performance where appropriate. The whole process of review ensures a consistent learning experience that is monitored through a range of quality assurance mechanisms, which include peer observation.

The Institution employs a rigorous process for determining appropriate delivery methods and assessment, which is approved by its validating partners. The Institution has enhanced the interactivity of learning materials since adopting more online delivery methods and has adapted assessment methods by introducing oral and time-constrained examinations, so maintaining a high-quality learning experience and protecting academic standards.

The teaching delivery encourages students to be self-motivated and to become reflective practitioners. It encourages a student-centred approach to learning. The assessment of module components is compatible with the teaching delivered. The assessments are internally and externally moderated, ensuring that they are of an appropriate standard for the level of the programme.

Programme specifications and module descriptors provide detailed curriculum mapping, which includes clear identification of learning outcomes and assessment. This enables students to understand what is expected to be achieved within the module and how it relates to the programme overall. Study and research skills and, where appropriate, examination preparation are incorporated into module delivery, which helps students maintain confidence in their ability to complete their programmes successfully.

Reflection by academic staff on delivery is carried out, usually in preparation for the annual monitoring reviews on the programmes, and changes made as necessary. More space for such reflection by academic staff, including consideration of enhancing ways to demonstrate to students how module content relates to learning outcomes, could be made available at the conclusion of each teaching session. This would enable the reflection to be current and less reliant on memory.

Teaching staff use a variety of delivery methods to encourage inclusion across different learning needs and styles. These include seminars, group work, workshops, group discussion, peer commentary on presentations and interactive communication between students on different programmes and levels. This wide range of delivery methods not only addresses different learning styles, but also provides appropriate variety in delivery, which encourages participation and stimulates student interest.

Inherent in distance learning is the need to motivate students to be independent students. Course materials, handbooks, study guides, dissertation guidance, tutorial advice and commentary on marked work all effectively encourage students to learn independently.

All students and associate lecturers, as well as permanent teaching staff, have access to module workbooks and the VLE, which contains study materials. The VLE has a dedicated study skills section and a student support section with pages on accessibility, examinations, finance and library policies. The Institution has invested in further Information Technology (IT) support and has developed digital literacy guidance for students.

In addition, students and staff have access to the Institution's library and the resources provided by the validating partners. Students are well supported with online materials in pursuing their studies. Study of such material is integral to the programmes in advance of teaching sessions as it is referred to by academic staff during online delivery.

12. Assessment is fair and appropriate for the level and nature of the courses, and students receive timely and supportive feedback on their work

12.1	Students are provided with an assessment schedule, in which required coursework and revision periods are detailed in advance with clear submission dates.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
12.2	Assessment strategies are relevant to the content and nature of the courses and focused on measuring students' achievement of the intended learning outcomes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
12.3	Assessment tasks are clearly written, indicating what students need to do to meet stipulated levels of achievement.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
12.4	Students receive detailed and supportive verbal and written feedback on their assessments and overall performance and progress, which are effectively monitored.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
12.5	The institution takes appropriate steps to identify and discourage cheating, including plagiarism and other misdemeanours, and to penalise offenders.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
12.6	There are clear policies and procedures for students to claim mitigating circumstances and to appeal against marks awarded.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

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

Comments

Students are provided with comprehensive annual assessment and work schedules, including submission dates in the student handbook and calendars contained in the VLE. Since moving to online delivery only, the Institution has provided additional assessment instructions and ensured that relevant staff are available to provide assistance to students as necessary.

Assessment strategies focus specifically on measuring students' achievement of the intended learning outcomes. Curriculum mapping is employed to show how learning outcomes are met through the assessments, and marking is undertaken using a grid to demonstrate individual student achievement. This provides the Institution with a clear benchmark to assess the effectiveness of the teaching and assessment methodology employed. Good practice is apparent, for example in the adaptation of assessments from written to oral examinations to reflect the probable future needs of students who are likely to progress to the ministry on completing their programmes and will need to deliver talks to a wide variety of audiences.

Assessment tasks are clearly written and directed towards the achievement of intended learning outcomes. Academic staff devise assessments in line with learning outcomes, which are internally and externally moderated. The external examiners' reports on the effectiveness of assessment are considered within the Institution's committee structure as

well as by the validating partners. Marking criteria are set out in student handbooks and specific sessions are held with students to consider possible approaches to completing assignments. This helps them to be confident in their ability to meet the specified learning outcomes.

Explicit written feedback on assessments is provided to students. The learning, teaching and assessment strategy includes a specific statement that academic staff must ensure that they are aware of the level, nature and extent of assessment feedback required. Marking is monitored through moderation. Oral feedback is provided in one-to-one tutorials. Teaching staff have been commended by external examiners on the thoroughness of their feedback. Inspection findings confirm this commendation. The feedback provided helps students to improve their performance in subsequent assessments and encourages them to widen the scope of their study around a subject area.

Student handbooks provide detailed guidance on how to avoid plagiarism and misconduct and the potential penalties that may be applied. HE assignments are submitted via plagiarism detection software and students are able to view similarity reports. Instances where plagiarism is suspected or found are reported to the Academic Registrar and the process of investigation initiated.

Policies for mitigating circumstances and appeals are set out clearly. An academic appeals policy is included on the website, as well as a template for students to use when submitting an appeal. The validating partners have a role in academic appeals. However, this is not explicitly identified in the policy or on the website to better enable students to recognise the interconnectedness between the Institution and its validating partners in the consideration of appeals.

13. Student materials are appropriate to the medium of delivery and are effective

13.1	Course materials are designed for a specific and clearly stated level of study.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
13.2	Course materials are appropriately presented and sufficiently comprehensive to enable students to achieve the programmes' objectives.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
13.3	Course materials are accurate and reflect current knowledge and practice and are regularly reviewed and revised.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
13.4	Programme designers make effective use of appropriate teaching aids and learning resources.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
13.5	The institution makes effective provision for students to access all resources.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Programme materials are designed in accordance with the appropriate programme-level requirements and clearly state the level of study. The producers of module materials work closely with the programme directors to ensure that resources meet the requirements of the programme objectives and intended learning outcomes.

Programme teams operate a rolling schedule to ensure that material is regularly updated and revised, including on revalidation. This ensures that it maintains its currency. The Institution's librarian ensures that changes in reading requirements are reflected in the resources as necessary.

Programme staff work with expert designers to increase the interactivity of the teaching aids and learning resources and to provide greater stimulation to students. All materials are available through the VLE. This allows students access at any time and therefore provides them with the flexibility to study at times that are convenient.

INSPECTION AREA – STUDENT SUPPORT, GUIDANCE AND PROGRESSION

14. Students receive pastoral support appropriate to their age, background and circumstances

14.1	There are appropriate staff members responsible for student welfare, who are accessible to all students and available to provide advice and counselling.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
14.2	Students are given an induction to the institution, their programme of study and guidance on the use of facilities such as the library and IT provision.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

14.3	Students receive appropriate information on the pastoral support available to them, including for the provision of emergency support.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
14.4	The institution has policies to avoid discrimination and a published procedure for dealing with any abusive behaviour.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
14.5	Staff are available to assist students to resolve issues of a general and/or technological nature. All enquiries from students are handled promptly and sympathetically.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
14.6	There are effective systems to communicate with students out of class hours.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
14.7	Effective safeguarding arrangements are in place and are regularly reviewed to keep all participants safe.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
14.8	Effective arrangements are in place to protect participants from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Effective student pastoral care is addressed by all staff. The teaching staff includes priests and there is a disability co-ordinator, wardens when students are resident on site, and programme directors. All these staff are engaged in supporting student welfare. Staff are effectively trained in student welfare matters. As a result, the Institution's pastoral care has been commended by validating partners. Inspection findings confirm this.

Students receive a comprehensive induction programme. This includes study skills, accessing library resources, regulatory information, particularly relating to complaints and appeals, plagiarism avoidance, safeguarding and use of the Institution's IT equipment. The student handbooks provide details of how to obtain pastoral support.

There is a clear policy on equality and diversity. Appropriate anti-bullying and harassment policies are included in the staff handbook and the Institution is in the process of putting these on the website.

Staff, including academic staff who are becoming increasingly proficient in IT matters, are available to assist students with any technical issues. Administrators are also available to provide advice to students on issues of a general administrative nature. Inspection findings confirm that students receive excellent technical and administrative support.

There are effective means to communicate with students out of class hours. The communication processes are efficient, using mainly e-mail and the VLE portal.

A thorough safeguarding policy that includes and identifies risks associated with radicalisation and extremism is in operation and a risk assessment has been carried out. In addition, there is a detailed one-to-one tutorial protocol that provides guidance on the safeguarding arrangements that need to be in place. A suitable process is in place for raising issues of a safeguarding nature or relating to extremism and radicalisation. All staff undertake safeguarding training as well as training on preventing radicalisation and extremism.

15. Students receive appropriate academic support and guidance

15.1	Students have appropriate access to teaching staff outside teaching and learning sessions.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
15.2	Students have access to appropriate support to enable the regular review of their academic progress.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
15.3	Assessment outcomes are monitored to enable the identification of students who are not making satisfactory progress and prompt intervention is made, where appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
15.4	Academic support, advice and guidance on alternative programmes are provided to students who are judged not to be making sufficient progress and/or who wish to change their pattern of study.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

15.5	Students have access to appropriate advice and guidance on careers and further study and any professional body exemptions that may be available.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
15.6	The institution has a fair complaints procedure that includes an external adjudicator, for example, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) in the UK, and students are informed of how to submit a complaint.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
15.7	Students are advised of BAC's complaints procedure.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
15.8	Instructions and suggestions on how to study are made available to assist students to learn effectively and efficiently.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
15.9	Students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are identified so that appropriate support can be provided.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Students receive appropriate academic support and guidance. In addition to tutorials, students have access to programme directors, academic staff and administrators via telephone, e-mail, the VLE and by using proprietary telecommunication applications. The provision of one-to-one tutorials has increased with the introduction of online delivery and has allowed students to discuss their progress individually with academic staff.

Assessment outcomes are monitored. Failure to meet submission deadlines is initially followed up by administrators and referred to programme directors where necessary. The programme directors are able to offer advice and agree extensions on request from students when they are experiencing difficulties in meeting the assessment deadlines.

Appropriate advice and guidance are provided by academic staff to students who are judged not to be making sufficient progress in their studies. Transfer to alternative programmes offered by the Institution for such students is facilitated if appropriate.

While few students enrol on the Institution's programmes to enhance their career prospects, programme directors are able to provide information on roles to which alumni have progressed on completion of their programmes.

The complaints and appeals procedure is available on the Institution's website, along with BAC's complaints procedure. The procedure is fair and includes information about how to submit a complaint. At present, the scope of complaints that are identified in the procedure relates to complaints against members of staff. It does not include the escalation of complaints, relating to awards, to the validating partner in the event that these are not resolved satisfactorily through the Institution's procedures.

Study skills sessions are made available to students, in particular during induction, and other support materials are available on the VLE. Advice is also available from programme directors and other teaching staff. This support helps students to manage their study and to prepare for assessments effectively.

The application form enables prospective students to declare any disabilities. This is reviewed by the Accessibility Co-ordinator, who makes contact with the applicant to discuss reasonable adjustments that can be made to aid learning.

Students are clear that they receive strong support and guidance from the staff of the Institution. This helps them to manage their studies and achieve their intended goal of completing the programme successfully. Inspection findings confirm this.

16. International students are provided with specific advice and assistance

16.1	Before their arrival, international students receive appropriate advice on travelling to and living in their chosen country of study.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
16.2	On arrival, international students receive an appropriate induction on issues specific to the local area.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA

16.3	Information and advice, which are specific to international students, continue to be available throughout their time at the institution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
16.4	Provision of support takes into account cultural and religious considerations.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
16.5	Where possible, students have access to speakers of their own first language.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA

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

Comments

When relevant, detailed information is provided to international students before and on arrival at the Institution and remains available during their stay.

The information provided takes into account cultural and religious considerations, given the nature of the programmes offered by the Institution. Advice to all students continues to be available throughout the programme.

Dissertation students, who source information in their own native language, are provided with two supervisors, one who speaks their own language and the other from the Institution.

17. Student attendance is measured and recorded regularly and effective remedial action taken where necessary

17.1	There is an appropriate, clear and published policy on required student attendance and punctuality.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
17.2	There are effective procedures and systems to enforce attendance and punctuality.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
17.3	Accurate and secure records of attendance and punctuality, at each session, are kept for all students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
17.4	Data on attendance and punctuality is collated centrally and reviewed regularly and absences are followed up promptly.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA

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

Comments

Student attendance at online sessions is recorded in the student database and e-mail contact is made where absence has been noted.

In terms of online delivery, attendance and engagement with the class are observable, and access to recorded lectures is monitored through the VLE. It is expected that students will have accessed the recordings before attending the live tutorials online.

Data on attendance and punctuality in joining the online teaching is maintained and reviewed. Regular absences are followed up. Normally, absence is by prior agreement or is unavoidable due to illness.

18. Where residential accommodation is offered, it is fit-for-purpose, well maintained and appropriately supervised

18.1	Any residential accommodation is clean, safe and of a standard that is adequate for the needs of students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
18.2	Any residential accommodation is open to inspection by the appropriate authorities.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
18.3	A level of supervision is provided that is appropriate to the needs of students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
18.4	Students are provided with advice on suitable private accommodation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA

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

Comments

No residential accommodation is now made available and nor is it intended to provide any in the future.

19. The institution provides an appropriate social programme for students and information on activities in the locality

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| 19.1 | Students are provided with appropriate information on opportunities for participation in social events and other leisure activities that may be of interest. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 19.2 | The social programme is responsive to the needs and wishes of students and activities have been chosen with consideration of their affordability. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 19.3 | Any activities organised by the institution are supervised by a responsible representative with suitable qualifications and/or experience. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 19.4 | Students are encouraged to develop and participate in extramural activities and, when studying remotely, the activities include appropriate use of online forums or channels. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 19.5 | The institution supports and encourages peer interaction through a variety of channels, e.g. social network forums and channels. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

Although all provision is currently delivered online, programme teams have offered evening leisure activities online, such as quizzes and shared prayer time.

An interactive online Christmas Advent service took place in which students gave readings and the resident religious order led the singing of hymns from the chapel.

Students have indicated that what they most miss is the sharing in prayers and it is proposed that live streaming from the chapel will be established, allowing access to this prayer time online.

Online forums provide for student exchange and each programme has a dedicated social media page monitored by the programme administrator.

INSPECTION AREA – PREMISES, FACILITIES AND LEARNING RESOURCES

20. The institution has secure possession of and access to its premises

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| 20.1 | The institution has secure tenure on its premises. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 20.2 | The institution has the legal right to use these premises for the delivery of higher education. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 20.3 | Where required, the institution has access to suitable external premises for academic or non-academic purposes of a temporary or occasional nature. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution has secure tenure on its premises and has a legal right to use them for higher educational purposes.

21. The premises provide a safe, secure and clean environment for students and staff

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| 21.1 | Access to the premises is appropriately restricted and secured. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 21.2 | The premises are maintained in an adequate state of repair, decoration and cleanliness. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

21.3	There are specific safety rules in areas of particular hazard (e.g. science laboratories) which are brought to the attention of students, staff and visitors.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
21.4	General guidance on health and safety is made available to students, staff and visitors.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
21.5	There is adequate signage inside and outside the premises and general information is displayed effectively.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
21.6	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	
21.7	There are toilet and hand-washing facilities of an appropriate number and acceptable level of cleanliness.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
21.8	There is adequate air conditioning, 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 NA

Comments

Access to, and exit from the premises are controlled by key-coded doors. The codes are known only to staff and are changed frequently.

The on-site Estates Assistant monitors the building, making minor repairs as necessary, and referring major repairs to the Diocese. Cleanliness is maintained by the Estates Assistant.

There is a detailed health and safety policy in operation. Health and safety precautions are made clear to staff and visitors. Students in residence receive health and safety guidance at the beginning of their stay. Where teaching activities are provided on site, students attending receive guidance on health and safety as part of their induction.

Signage within the building is adequate and the Diocese arranges regular fire and health and safety inspections.

Circulation space is sufficient. Suitable toilet facilities are available and these will be renovated as part of the building work. Heating and ventilation systems are adequate.

22. Classrooms and other learning areas are appropriate for the programmes offered

22.1	Classrooms and other learning areas provide adequate accommodation in size and number for the classes (e.g. lectures, seminars, tutorials) allocated to them.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
22.2	Classrooms and any specialised learning areas (e.g. laboratories, clinics, workshops, studios) are equipped to a level that allows for the effective delivery of each programme.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
22.3	There are facilities suitable for conducting assessments such as examinations.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

The learning areas are adequate for the delivery of day sessions and for holding meetings. All assessment is conducted online.

23. There are appropriate additional facilities for students and staff

23.1	Students have access to sufficient space and suitable facilities for private individual study and group work.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA
23.2	Academic staff have access to sufficient personal space for preparing lessons, marking work and consultations with students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
23.3	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

23.4	Students and staff have access to secure storage for personal possessions where appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA
23.5	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 <input type="checkbox"/> NA
23.6	Administrative offices are adequate in size and suitably resourced 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

Most student activity is provided online and the majority of study is conducted in the home environment. Similarly, academic staff prepare lessons, mark work and meet with students remotely and therefore there is little need for personal space to be provided on the premises.

There is currently sufficient office space available for all staff needs and it is proposed that, following renovation, there will be adequate shared space for the programme directors and administrators. It is expected that access to the dining hall, kitchenette and grounds will still be available.

All users of the building are responsible for their own possessions and office users will have lockable drawers available for their use. Most meetings are now held by electronic means, but some meeting space will be retained.

There is adequate accommodation for academic staff to work on site or hold meetings should they need to. Administrative staff work both online from home and in Maryvale House. The administrative office space is adequate for the effective administration of the Institution.

24. The library is appropriately stocked and provides a fit-for-purpose learning resource for the student body

24.1	There is sufficient provision of learning materials including books, journals and periodicals and online materials.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
24.2	There are clear, systematic and effective means of ensuring the adequacy and currency of library stock to reflect staff and student needs.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
24.3	The library has sufficient space for student independent study and group working.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
24.4	There is a well-organised lending policy.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
24.5	The library is adequately staffed with appropriately qualified and experienced staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
24.6	Library opening times are sufficient to encourage and support students' independent learning.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The library is well stocked with hard-copy and online learning materials. Access to the virtual library is available at all times. Students or staff wishing to enter the physical library are able to do so when the librarian is in attendance. The part-time librarian is normally in the library building twice a week, while also providing services to students remotely.

The librarian discusses resource needs with the programme directors annually. The majority of the library budget is currently spent on providing electronic resources, which satisfies students' needs in undertaking private study.

The library has sufficient space for independent study, but most students' access to the facilities is remote.

There is a well-established and secure lending policy in operation through the VLE that includes the provision of postal loans.

The Librarian is appropriately qualified and experienced. Access to the library is available through the VLE at any time.

25.	The information technology resources are well managed, effective and provide a fit-for-purpose learning resource for the student body	
25.1	There is appropriate technological access and sufficient connectivity to enable students to study flexibly.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
25.2	Students have effective online resources that assist with their learning, optimise interaction between the institution and the student and enhance instructional and educational services.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
25.3	There is provision of appropriate, up-to-date software and virtual learning environments that reflect the needs of the programmes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
25.4	There is an effective means of ensuring the renewal of hardware and software to ensure efficiency and currency.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
25.5	The institution has access to the services of an experienced Information Technology (IT) technician who can ensure that systems are operative at all times and provide support to students, academic staff, and students and staff working remotely.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
25.6	The institution makes effective provision for students to access conventional and online resources.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

There is appropriate provision for effective flexible study to be undertaken by students. There are sufficient and robust online resources to facilitate learning and to support interaction between students and the Institution.

The IT services are managed by an appropriately qualified and experienced ICT Co-ordinator, assisted by the Registry Assistant. Service contracts with an external IT consultancy firm for the maintenance of the system network and hardware and also for the website are in operation.

Software is up to date and the Institution operates an effective VLE system. Academic resources are administered through the librarian and ICT Co-ordinator. The highly qualified ICT Co-ordinator prioritises service requests for computer hardware and software. This process provides for the effective support for programmes, with appropriate resources to encourage student engagement and learning.

Hardware and software renewal is a major element of the Institution's strategic plan. Suitable budget allocations support any renewal requirements.

Conventional and online resources are accessed through the library via the VLE. The VLE provides much of the online material necessary for students to progress their studies. Provision for access to the necessary resources is appropriate for the needs of students and enables them to progress in their studies effectively.

INSPECTION AREA – QUALITY MANAGEMENT, ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

26.	The institution regularly obtains and records feedback from students and other stakeholders and takes appropriate action where necessary	
26.1	The views of all stakeholders are canvassed and recorded regularly, considered objectively, analysed and evaluated thoroughly and, where necessary, appropriate action is taken.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
26.2	Student feedback is obtained through appropriate formal student representation mechanisms.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
26.3	The institution has appropriate formal feedback mechanisms to inform all stakeholders of any action taken as a result of their views.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The views of all stakeholders are regularly obtained, recorded and analysed through the various committees in accordance with the quality assurance cycle. This includes the views of external parties, including external examiners, members of the Diocese and validating partners, as well as students. Where necessary, action is taken and recorded.

Students' views are formally expressed through regular module and programme evaluation surveys. This includes dissertation preparation and supervision and is undertaken at the end of each academic year and at the conclusion of the online activities that have replaced the former residential provision. Student representatives sit on programme committees, the HIRS and the Academic Board. In addition, informal feedback is provided throughout the duration of the course, mainly through discussions with lecturing staff.

Stakeholder feedback is considered by programme committees and if action is needed, it is included within the annual action plan. The Institution provides feedback to students on what it has done in response to their feedback in briefing sessions during study days and through an appropriate online communication process.

The Institution has appropriate mechanisms for obtaining stakeholder feedback and acts upon it where necessary. The mechanisms in place ensure that students are provided with the opportunity to state their own views and to benefit from the perceptive observations of external commentators.

27. The institution has effective systems to review its own standards and assess its own performance

27.1	All quality management policies and procedures are clearly documented and are brought to the attention of staff and, where appropriate, students and other stakeholders.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
27.2	The institution's quality assurance policies and procedures appropriately inform its strategic management.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
27.3	The principles of quality assurance are embedded throughout the institution to ensure a quality ethos.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
27.4	The institution undertakes regular and systematic monitoring of its operations and reviews all aspects of its performance against clearly specified and appropriate performance indicators.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
27.5	Management compiles regular reports that present the results of the institution's reviews and incorporate action plans.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
27.6	Particular attention is paid to the quality of the student learning experience and to ensuring that there is fair treatment of all students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
27.7	The nominated course leader produces an end-of-session, end-of-semester or end-of-year course report that includes measures of student satisfaction, completion rates and achievement levels.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
27.8	The nominated programme leader, drawing upon reports from its constituent courses, produces an annual programme report, which includes analysis of year-on-year results on student satisfaction, achievement levels, completion rates and progression to further study or employment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
27.9	Key performance indicators include an analysis of student outcomes in terms of year-on-year performance, which highlights any significant variations.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
27.10	General performance reports include an analysis of year-on-year data, including on student satisfaction, retention and achievement, staff performance (including research and other forms of scholarship) and a review of resourcing issues.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
27.11	Review and revalidation of programmes on a regular basis involve external assessors as appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
27.12	Institutional systems ensure the effective consideration of programme reports and that appropriate actions are incorporated into action-planning.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

An explanation of the Institution's quality systems is available in each programme's handbook and made available on the appropriate areas of the registry folders on the VLE. The Institution's policies and systems are robust, rigorously followed by programme staff and form part of the annual quality assurance cycle.

The Institution comprehensively and regularly monitors its own performance against relevant performance indicators. This is integrated with the Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs) on each programme that are provided to the validating partners. There is a comprehensive annual quality assurance process, which includes a review of the actions identified in the previous AMRs, student evaluation and proposals for change to the programmes, including identification of necessary physical resources.

The AMRs are considered by the relevant programme committee, the Academic Standards Committee and finally the Academic Board prior to submission to the relevant validating partner. This ensures that the issues identified in the quality assurance processes are brought to the attention of senior management, enabling them to take strategic decisions as appropriate.

The whole process is geared towards embedding a quality ethos throughout the Institution and ensuring that students receive a high-quality experience. The programme directors, working with the administrators, ensure that the high standards are maintained. Constructive self-reflection and feedback are embedded in the processes of the quality assurance system and focus on the enhancement of the delivery of the provision.

Each programme director produces an AMR that is measured against appropriate performance indicators, drawn from module reports. The AMRs include details on enrolments, completion rates including year-on-year comparisons, an analysis of student, staff and external examiner feedback and an action plan for continuing improvement and development. Student satisfaction information is also provided, along with feedback on comments made by students on programme structure, content and delivery.

The Institution uses subject benchmark statements to ensure that learning outcomes are at the right level. In addition, the Institution benchmarks its students' performance with those of its validating partners and with national student achievement data, as presented in Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data.

The AMRs provide a comprehensive review of each programme and are produced in accordance with the requirements of the validating partners. The feedback to external examiners on their comments, which is included in the AMR is comprehensive.

In addition, the Institution produces an annual institutional review, in accordance with procedures required by one of its validating partners. This comprehensive institutional review consolidates the contents of the AMRs so as to provide an overall evaluation of the Institution's performance across all its programmes. The impact of this is that the Institution is clearly and systematically reviewing its performance, submitting to external scrutiny and reporting in accordance with its obligations to its validating partners. This is for the benefit of students in ensuring they receive a high-quality learning experience.

The comprehensive annual report to the validating partners provides details of student satisfaction, retention and achievement rates, and staff performance, including research output. The report also provides information on proposed developments and action plans, including resourcing issues to enhance future delivery.

Year-on-year analysis of student outcomes is provided within the annual reports, enabling comparisons to be made, variations investigated and action taken as necessary.

Each programme is subject to a quinquennial review to ensure that it is up to date. The review team for HE programmes includes external examiners and representatives from the relevant validating partner. This ensures that

there is outside expertise brought into the review and that the programme in question continues to meet the validating partner's requirements.

The quality assurance system is driven by the need to meet the demands of the validating partners. It has the advantage that it ensures the quality of programme delivery and encourages good practice, which contributes towards providing a rewarding experience for students.

28. The institution has a strong commitment to, and procedures that facilitate, continuing enhancement of its provision

28.1	Good practice is effectively identified and disseminated across the institution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
28.2	End-of-session course and annual programme reports include improvements and ongoing developments made and identify further areas requiring enhancement.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
28.3	Action plans for enhancement are implemented and reviewed regularly within the institution's committee structure.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

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

Comments

Good practice is shared through the programme committees and administrative team meetings. It is also identified in individual programme AMRs and shared through discussion at the Academic Standards Committee and the Academic Board. This includes the sharing of good pedagogical practice and feeds back to the programme committees.

Each AMR and the overview review report incorporate a reflection on the previous year's action plans and how issues identified were addressed. The reports also include a forward-looking plan to determine what needs to be done in the following academic year to enhance delivery. The effect of this is that the programmes are continuously being developed, with action plans drafted, reported and subsequently reviewed.

The action plans contained in annual reports to validating partners are reviewed through the quality assurance cycle by programme committees and the Academic Board. Action taken on the previous year's plan is presented in the next annual report to the validating partner, thereby providing external scrutiny of the action taken by the Institution in enhancing the quality of its provision.

INSPECTION AREA – ONLINE, DISTANCE AND BLENDED LEARNING

29. The institution has suitable staff to ensure the successful delivery of online and distance learning

29.1	Staff have an understanding of the specific requirements of online, distance and blended learning.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
29.2	Academic staff are properly and continuously trained with respect to provider policies, student needs, instructional approaches and techniques and the use of appropriate instructional technology.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
29.3	Tutors have an understanding of the special challenges and demands of online, distance and blended learning.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
29.4	Staff ensure students are made aware of the necessary level of digital literacy required to follow the stated programmes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
29.5	Instructions and suggestions on how to study and how to use the online tutorial materials are made available to assist students to learn effectively and efficiently.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA

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

Comments

Staff have a clear understanding of the requirements that are specific to online learning. External training on how to expand interactivity in teaching delivery has been provided. Students commented positively on the support they receive from academic and administrative staff in enabling them to access their study material effectively. Inspection findings confirm this view.

The training of permanent and associate staff has ensures that they are familiar with policies relating to online delivery, as well as enabling students to access study materials efficiently. In addition, guidance on instructional approaches and techniques is obtained from a wide variety of sources, including the validating partners. The programme directors have experience of the requirements of the mode of delivery to ensure that it is fit for purpose and effective. All new academic staff are provided with guidance on the delivery method and on writing programme materials. The support from the in-house IT staff has been instrumental in enabling the swift transition to online delivery from in-person teaching.

Academic staff recognise the challenges posed by online delivery, particularly in respect of conducting online assessments. Academic and support staff are proactive in ensuring that programmes run efficiently online, thus ensuring that a high-quality experience for students is maintained.

Students are advised in detail of the level of digital literacy required to successfully follow the programmes at the interview stage prior to enrolment. Administrators provide guidance for students in the period leading up to the online delivery that has replaced the residential provision. Students undertake mock online vivas and oral examinations in order to practise for their actual online assessments.

The librarian and IT Manager each deliver guidance to students on how to study effectively online and provide advice through the VLE portal. Comprehensive tutorial materials are also made available online through the VLE, and additional advice and guidance are available from academic and support staff as needed.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated

Yes No

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

The numbering of action points aligns with that of the minimum standards.

GOVERNANCE, STRATEGY AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Institution's strengths

The Institution has a clear and well-organised management structure, supported by effective Boards, which provides for strong guidance.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

GENERAL AND ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Institution's strengths

Academic management and administration are effective in enabling programmes to run efficiently and provide students with a high-quality learning experience.

Staff appraisal and development processes are thorough and effective in enabling staff to identify strengths and where performance may be enhanced.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
5.14 The Institution must include an explanation in its student fees policy of how it addresses requests for refunds.	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Institution's strengths

Teaching staff are committed, well prepared and supportive of students.

Research and scholarly activity is effectively promoted and supported, which enables academic staff to maintain currency in their subject knowledge and delivery.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

STUDENT SUPPORT, GUIDANCE AND PROGRESSION

Institution's strengths

The administrators, library and ICT staff provide excellent support to academic staff and students, enhancing access to study materials and technology to aid delivery and student learning.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

PREMISES, FACILITIES AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Institution's strengths

The very good library and IT resources effectively support and enhance student-centred learning.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

QUALITY MANAGEMENT, ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

Institution's strengths

Quality management systems are effective in ensuring that the requirements of validating partners are met and students receive a high-quality learning experience.

The quality assurance procedures are robust and ensure that a quality ethos is embedded throughout the Institution.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

ONLINE, DISTANCE AND BLENDED LEARNING

Institution's strengths

Teaching staff are continually developing their online delivery skills, which ensures that they are up to date with technological developments in order to improve their pedagogy.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

It is recommended that strategic planning takes into account the views of the wider community as well as those relating to members and institutions of the Catholic faith.

It is recommended that policies are examined and revised in accordance with their review dates.

It is recommended that the Institution continues with the replacement of its current database.

The Institution should reflect on how to create space for academic staff to reflect on teaching delivery in a timely fashion.

It is recommended that the Institution amends its Academic Appeals Policy to incorporate the role of its validating partners.

The Institution should widen the scope of its published guidance on complaints and include reference to the validating partners as appropriate.

It is recommended that the Institution reviews its attendance policy in preparation for the resumption of residential delivery.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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