



## BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

### SUPPLEMENTARY INSPECTION CHANGE OF MANAGEMENT/STAFFING (Short Course Provider)

**PROVIDER:** Capernwray Bible School

**ADDRESS:** Capernwray Hall  
Carnforth  
Lancashire  
LA6 1AG

**HEAD OF PROVIDER:** Mr Brian Wickens

**ACCREDITATION STATUS:** Accredited

**DATE OF INSPECTION:** 25 July 2022

**ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE:** Continued accreditation, 24 November 2022

## **PART A – INTRODUCTION**

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### **1. Background to the provider**

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Capernwray Bible School (CBS/the Provider) offers short courses in theology accredited by Northern Council for Further Education at Regulated Qualifications Framework Level 3.

The Provider is located in Capernwray Hall, a former manor house set within farmland and landscaped gardens in North Lancashire in the United Kingdom (UK).

CBS has an interdenominational Christian ethos. It aims to provide biblical teaching and practical training that benefits participants and the community of the Church. Its objectives are to develop participants spiritually, academically, personally and socially so that they can play their full part in Christian life.

CBS is operated by the Capernwray Missionary Fellowship of Torchbearers (the Fellowship). The Fellowship is a part of Torchbearers International, a network of Bible schools and conference centres. The Fellowship is both a charitable organisation and a company limited by guarantee registered in England.

The Board of Trustees of the Fellowship (the Board) has overall responsibility for CBS. The Fellowship's Managing Director (MD) administers CBS on behalf of the Trustees and is head of the Provider. The CBS Principal supports the MD and works with other members of the Senior Management Team (SMT), including the Operations Manager and Finance and Facilities Manager, to fulfil CBS's aims and objectives.

CBS offered its first short-term Bible course in 1949 for participants from the UK and overseas and it retains its early emphasis on attracting participants from a wide range of countries.

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

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CBS provides two courses. One is a ten-week Spring Bible School course on Principles in Christian Life and Service, which commences in April each year. The second is a 22-week Winter Bible School course on Foundations in Christian Life and Service, which commences in September each year. Participants may take the two courses sequentially. Both courses are full time, delivered in person and are residential in nature.

Lectures are the primary teaching method, with tutorials, seminars and small group work also used. Teaching takes place in the mornings and evenings, with afternoons free for other activities. Participants are also involved in the activities of local churches, youth groups and school assemblies in the community.

There were no participants at the time of the inspection as the spring course for 2022 had ended and the winter course for 2022–23 had not yet commenced. The winter course for 2021–22 had 97 participants and the spring course for 2022 had 109 participants.

The majority of participants were female. Participants on both courses are drawn from a wide range of countries, including the United States of America (USA), Canada and Germany. The Provider had 109 participants enrolled on the Winter 2022–23 course and 41 on the Spring 2023 course at the time of the inspection, as participants are able to enrol throughout the year. All the participants are over 18 years of age, as this is a requirement of the Provider.

There are no formal academic or language entry requirements: the key admission criteria are an applicant's intent to deepen their Christian discipleship, spiritual growth and Biblical knowledge.

### **3. Inspection process**

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An online inspection was undertaken by one inspector over half a day. Interviews were conducted with the MD, Operations Manager, Female Dean of Students/Trainer, the manager responsible for Information Technology

(IT), and former participants. The inspector scrutinised relevant documentation. The Provider fully co-operated with the process. Information required was promptly made available and clearly presented.

#### 4. **Background to the supplementary inspection**

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A new MD was appointed following advertisement and open competition in November 2021 and took up post in March 2022.

#### 5. **Inspection history**

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<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Date</b>
Full	28 & 29 May 2019
Interim	20 October 2020

## PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgements and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector during the inspection and from documentation provided by the provider.

### 1. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

#### 1.1 Management, Staffing and Administration (full inspection)

The numbers below refer to the standards as presented in the short-course provider scheme document and main full inspection report

#### 1. The provider is effectively managed

- |     |  |   |                             |
|-----|--|---|-----------------------------|
| 1.1 | The management structure is clearly defined, documented and understood, including the role and extent of authority of any owners, trustees or governing body.                                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.2 | The head of the provider and other senior managers 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 |
| 1.3 | There are clear channels of communication between the management and staff, including those working at the delivery venue or remotely.   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.4 | The provider has a written statement of its mission and goals that effectively guides its activities, is communicated to all stakeholders and is effectively implemented and regularly reviewed. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.5 | The provider has a written risk management strategy, which includes financial planning and is effectively implemented and regularly reviewed.  | <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, documented and understood, and can be found in handbooks, the terms of reference of the Board of Trustees and in job descriptions. The Board is responsible for the oversight of the Provider and for determining and progressing strategy. The MD liaises with and reports to the Board of Trustees. CBS has advertised for additional trustees to expand the range of skills and experience available to the Provider.

The new MD, who is also head of the Provider, has very relevant qualifications in management and finance and extensive corporate experience at senior level. The Principal and other members of the Provider's management team are also well qualified and experienced in their fields. They understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying these out. As a result, the management staff provide knowledgeable and competent leadership to CBS.

There are clear channels of communication between management and staff. There are weekly meetings of the SMT. In addition, a weekly term-time all-staff meeting is followed by a staff bulletin that is emailed to all staff. The bulletin is used effectively to communicate key points. The MD is also having a series of one-to-one meetings with staff to discuss their experiences over the period of the pandemic and its impact on them. These communication methods support effective communication and cohesive management.

The Provider's spiritual and educational mission and goals effectively guide its activities. Its ethos and values are clearly communicated to job applicants, in the participant and course handbooks, and in the employee handbook. These are effectively implemented through the management of the organisation and in the courses it delivers. The Provider's educational goals are regularly reviewed by the Board and SMT to ensure continuing feasibility and relevance.

The Provider has recently revised its risk and compliance policy. Risk and compliance are standing items on the weekly SMT agenda and a monthly SMT meeting is dedicated to these subjects. Risks are captured, scored and monitored in a risk register and calendar. The MD will share high risks with the Board to ensure their awareness and obtain feedback. This supports the effective identification and mitigation of organisational risk.

**2. The administration of the provider is effective**

2.1	Administrators are suitably qualified and/or experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and duties and are effective in carrying them out.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2.2	The size of the administrative team is sufficient to ensure the effective day-to-day running of the provider.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2.3	The administrative support available to the management is clearly defined, documented and understood.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2.4	Administrative policies, procedures and systems are up to date, thorough, well documented and effectively disseminated across the provider.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2.5	Data collection and collation systems are effective in supporting the administration of the provider.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2.6	Participants' and trainers' personal records are sufficiently detailed and regularly updated.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2.7	The provider has a robust security system, with policies in place for protecting the data of its participants and trainers.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met     Partially Met     Not Met

**Comments**

Administrators are well qualified and experienced, and their specific responsibilities are clearly defined in job descriptions and carried out effectively.

The size of the team ensures the effective running of the Provider. Where pressure points are identified, action is taken to address these through reconfiguration or additional recruitment. An example is the recent addition of more pastoral support for female participants.

Administrative support is clearly defined and documented in job descriptions. A comprehensive staff handbook and induction support staff in understanding their roles and responsibilities. Information on the website about staff and their roles at CBS promotes widespread understanding across the Provider and its stakeholders.

Administrative policies, procedures and systems are clear, current and comprehensive. They are effectively disseminated through the website, induction and staff and participant handbooks. They provide a robust framework for effective administration.

The participant database has been upgraded to a new bespoke system. The database enables more effective handling of applicants' information and increased analysis and reporting capacity than before the upgrade. The Human Resources (HR) systems are bespoke and tailored to the particular needs of a non-profit organisation.

Personal records and are detailed and regularly updated with relevant information to ensure currency.

Policies are in place to protect data. General data protection policies are included on the website and in the staff handbook. Protocols are in place that restrict access to sensitive data to a small number of senior managers. Data collection and collation systems support effective administration.

**3. The provider recruits appropriate staff**

3.1	There are appropriate policies and effective procedures for the recruitment of suitably qualified and experienced staff which include, for self-employed staff, the development of a signed performance service level agreement.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3.2	Experience and qualifications are appropriately checked and verified before recruitment and records are accurately maintained.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3.3	The recruitment process for trainers working remotely includes a face-to-face online interview.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
3.4	There is an effective system for regularly reviewing the performance of all staff, which, for trainers, includes regular, scheduled course delivery observations.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3.5	Managerial and administrative staff are appropriately supported in their continuing professional development.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

There are appropriate policies and effective procedures for the recruitment and continuing employment of suitably qualified and experienced staff. Staff are recruited through advertisements on the CBS website and subject-specific recruitment websites. Applications are assessed against the job description and key requirements.

All candidates are interviewed, references are taken up and qualifications are verified. Records are securely maintained on the HR database. Guest lecturers and seminar speakers are volunteers who give freely of their time, so no service level agreements are required.

There is regular, informal feedback to staff and a formal documented annual appraisal process for all staff. This includes teaching observation for training staff. The employee and the line manager complete appraisal forms that include objectives for evaluation at the next appraisal. This supports effective staff review.

Management and administrative staff are supported in undertaking relevant short courses to support their personal development and organisational performance. For example, two members of staff recently undertook mental health first-aid training to increase their capacity to identify and respond to participants' needs in that area.

**4. Publicity materials, both printed and online, provide a comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate description of the provider and its courses**

4.1	Text and images provide an accurate depiction of the provider's location, premises, facilities and the range and nature of resources and services offered.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4.2	Information on the courses available is comprehensive, accurate and up to date.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4.3	The provider's key policies are accessible through the website.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

Text and images on the website accurately represent the Provider's location, premises, facilities, resources and services.

Detailed information on courses is available on the website by means of the Provider's brochure, which is comprehensive, accurate and current. Key policies are accessible through the website.

The publicity materials therefore provide all relevant information on CBS and its courses for potential applicants and staff.

**5. The provider takes reasonable care to recruit and register suitable participants for its courses**

5.1	The provider ensures that the specific courses on which participants are registered are likely to meet the participants' expectations and needs.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5.2	Entry requirements for each course, including those relating to language ability, where applicable, are set at an appropriate level and clearly stated in the course descriptions read by prospective participants.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
5.3	A formal application and selection process ensures that participants meet the entry requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
5.4	Applicants are provided with sufficient information to enable them to make a judgement on the suitability of the courses and their delivery methods and can discuss any concerns before registration.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5.5	The provider replies to all application enquiries in line with its appropriate target response times and all stakeholders are briefed properly on the nature and requirements of its programmes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5.6	Overseas recruitment agents are properly selected, briefed, monitored and evaluated.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA
5.7	The provider has effective systems to identify participants who have special educational needs and/or disabilities requiring additional learning support or other assistance.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

**This standard is judged to be:**

Met  Partially Met  Not Met

**Comments**

Courses are designed to meet the needs of participants who share the Provider's ethos and values and wish to deepen their theological knowledge and understanding. This approach is clearly specified on the website, where videos of CBS lectures are available. Courses can be discussed with a member of staff if a prospective participant is uncertain about its suitability for them. The Provider therefore ensures that courses meet participants' expectations and needs.

Entry requirements are specified on the website. CBS states that particular academic qualifications are not required, as courses emphasise spiritual development over academic attainment. The requirements are commitment and a capacity to achieve the desired outcomes, and the Provider makes this clear.

The application process ensures that participants meet the entry requirements. Prospective participants complete an application form. The first point of contact, the Admissions and Administration Officer, will promptly communicate with the applicant through email, telephone calls or video meetings. References are also taken up.

The website specifies that a good level of English proficiency is required, and the Provider will discuss this with the applicant if either party has concerns. The electronic application system enables the stages of the process to be monitored. Former participants confirmed the efficiency of the application process and inspection findings confirm this.

The comprehensive information on the website and the application process provide applicants with sufficient information about the nature and requirements of the courses to evaluate course suitability. Applications and queries are responded to promptly.

Special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified during the application process and discussed to assess what further support might be provided. A former participant confirmed that they had been offered all the support they needed for their particular educational need.

**6. There is an appropriate policy on participant attendance and punctuality and effective procedures and systems to enforce it**

6.1	There is a clear policy on participant attendance and punctuality, which is communicated to all participants and other stakeholders.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.2	Accurate and secure records of attendance and punctuality at each session are kept for all participants, collated centrally and regularly reviewed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
6.3	Participant absences are followed up promptly and appropriate action is taken.	<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**

An appropriate attendance and absence policy is included in the course handbook and, therefore, it is clearly communicated to all participants.

A register is taken for each class and entered on the participant database. This enables CBS to monitor individual and class attendance and identify any patterns that require action.

Any unexplained absence is promptly followed up by the Dean for male and female participants respectively. The attendance and absence policy makes it clear that sanctions will apply if a participant does not comply with the policy. Former participants confirmed that this system is implemented.

The policy, systems and procedures are therefore appropriate and effective and support high levels of participant attendance.

**7. The provider has effective systems to monitor its own standards and assess its own performance with a view to continuous improvement**

7.1	There are effective systems for monitoring and periodically reviewing all aspects of the provider's performance.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.2	The provider has effective mechanisms for obtaining feedback from participants and other relevant stakeholders, such as staff, partners and employers, on all aspects of the provider's provision, including formal participant representation where appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.3	Feedback is obtained, recorded and analysed on a regular basis.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.4	The feedback is reviewed by management and appropriate action is taken.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.5	There is a mechanism for reporting to the participants what the provider has done in response to their feedback.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.6	Reports are compiled at least annually, which include the results of the provider's performance reviews, an analysis of appropriate data, including participant feedback, and action plans.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.7	Action plans are implemented and regularly reviewed, with outcomes reported to management.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

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

**Comments**

The Board of Trustees's meetings monitor and regularly review all aspects of the Provider's performance. The meetings are attended by the MD, and by other senior managers as appropriate. The MD and managers provide a written report to each Board meeting. Minutes are comprehensive and record discussions, decisions and actions to be taken. This is an effective system for evaluating and enhancing performance.

CBS has effective mechanisms for obtaining, reviewing and acting on feedback from participants. Participants are assigned to family groups that meet weekly with their group leaders, who are members of staff. These



meetings provide an opportunity for participants to informally raise issues of interest or concern. CBS surveys its participants each term about their experience. It then holds a termly student voice session where participant representatives meet the MD, Principal and other senior managers to discuss the views received.

An action plan to address emergent issues is drawn up. This is presented to the whole student body at a subsequent meeting with the Principal. All participants are therefore aware of action taken or planned in response to their feedback. The former participants confirmed that the Provider listened and responded to their views.

In addition to weekly all-staff meetings, the staff voice system solicits feedback from staff after each course. Each member of staff is asked to provide written feedback about their experiences and positive and negative aspects of provision. The feedback is analysed by the SMT and presented to an all-staff meeting. The presentation and subsequent discussion focus on actions taken and planned in response to feedback. Subsequent all-staff meetings provide updates on progress. The system means that the Provider listens to and responds to staff views and informs them of resultant actions.

The SMT reviews performance, data, feedback and action plans at its regular meetings. A review process takes place after every course and results are reported to the Board. The Principal makes an annual written report to the Board that analyses performance, data and feedback and includes actions. This enables CPS to monitor changes, and effectively plan for the future. However, risk analysis and mitigation are not routinely included in the annual report to ensure that this important element of review is readily available.

Action plans are included in SMT meeting notes, where responsibility for the action is clearly assigned. Records of Board meetings include actions delegated by the Board to named members of the SMT. This supports a common understanding of the actions that are to be taken and enables effective monitoring.

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## 1.2 Compliance Declaration

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

Yes     No

**PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS**

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**STRENGTHS**

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The well-qualified, experienced and enthusiastic MD leads a high-quality SMT, providing effective leadership.

Clear channels of communication support effective teamwork.

An exemplary risk management system effectively supports good practice.

**ACTIONS REQUIRED**

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None

High     Medium     Low

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

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CBS should consider integrating relevant risks into the Principal’s annual report to the Board to promote synergy and strengthen organisational review.

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

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