

BAC Consultation

International Centre Scheme Updated Standards



Inspection area – governance, management, staffing and administration

1	The institution 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, advisers or governing body.
1.2	Those responsible for governance understand the institution’s strengths and weaknesses and support and provide appropriate challenge to senior managers and hold them to account for improving the quality of learning.
1.3	The head of the institution and other senior managers are suitably qualified and experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying them out.
1.4	There are clear channels of communication between the management and staff, including those working at the delivery venue or remotely.
1.5	The institution 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.
1.6	The institution has a written risk management strategy which includes financial planning and is effectively implemented and regularly reviewed.
1.7	The institution conducts its financial matters professionally, transparently, and with appropriate probity.
2	
	The administration of the institution is effective
2.1	Administrators are suitably qualified or experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and duties, and are effective in carrying them out.
2.2	The size of the administrative team is sufficient to ensure the effective day-to-day running of the institution.
2.3	The administrative support available to the management is clearly defined, documented and understood.
2.4	Administrative policies, procedures and systems are up to date, thorough, well-documented and effectively disseminated across the institution.
2.5	Data collection and collation systems are effective in supporting the administration of the institution.
2.6	Learners’ and teachers’ personal records are sufficiently detailed and regularly updated.
2.7	The institution has a robust security system with policies in place for protecting the data of its learners and teachers.
3	
	The institution 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.
3.2	Experience and qualifications are appropriately checked and verified before recruitment and records are accurately maintained.
3.3	The recruitment process for teachers working remotely includes a face-to-face online interview.
3.4	There is an effective system for regularly reviewing the performance of all staff, which, for teachers, includes regular, scheduled course delivery observations.
3.5	All staff are treated fairly as per the institution’s own published policies and they have access to an appropriate complaints and appeals procedure.
3.6	Managerial and administrative staff are appropriately supported in their continuing professional development.
4	
	Publicity materials, both printed and online, provide a comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate description of the institution and its courses

4.1	Text and images provide an accurate depiction of the institution's location, premises, facilities and the range and nature of resources and services offered.
4.2	Information on the courses available is comprehensive, accurate, readily accessible and up to date.
4.3	Learners are informed of the full cost of all courses, including costs of assessments, activities, and any required materials prior to enrolling at the institution.
4.4	The information provided ensures that learners are well informed of the status of the qualifications offered, including the awarding body and level of award.
4.5	The institution's key policies are accessible through the website.
5 The institution takes reasonable care to recruit and enrol suitable learners for its courses	
5.1	The institution ensures that the specific courses on which learners are registered are likely to meet the learners' expectations and needs.
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 learners.
5.3	A formal application and selection process ensures that learners meet the entry requirements and any claimed qualifications are verified.
5.4	Learners receive a proper initial assessment which includes language ability to confirm their capability to complete the course on which they are enrolling.
5.5	Applicants are provided with sufficient information to enable them to make a judgment on the suitability of the courses and their delivery methods and can discuss any concerns before registration.
5.6	The institution 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 courses.
5.7	International recruitment agents are properly selected, briefed, monitored and evaluated.
6 There is an appropriate policy on learner attendance and punctuality and effective procedures and systems to enforce it	
6.1	There is a clear policy on learner attendance and punctuality, which is communicated to all learners and other stakeholders.
6.2	Accurate and secure records of attendance and punctuality at each session are kept for all learners, collated centrally and regularly reviewed.
6.3	Learner absences are followed up promptly and appropriate action taken.
7 The institution 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 institution's performance.
7.2	The institution has effective mechanisms for obtaining feedback from learners and other stakeholders, such as staff, partners and employers, on all aspects of the institution's provision, including formal learner representation where appropriate.
7.3	Feedback is obtained, recorded and analysed on a regular basis.
7.4	The feedback is reviewed by management and appropriate action is taken.
7.5	There is a mechanism for reporting to the learners what the institution has done in response to their feedback.

7.6	Reports are compiled at least annually, which include the results of the institution's performance reviews, an analysis of appropriate data, including learners' progress and achievement rates, learner and other stakeholder feedback, and action plans.
7.7	Action plans, including those for enhancement, are implemented and regularly reviewed with outcomes reported to management.
7.8	Good practice is effectively identified and disseminated across the institution.

Inspection area – academic management

8	Academic management is effective
8.1	There is a suitably qualified and/or experienced academic manager or academic management team with responsibility for teaching, learning and assessment.
8.2	The curriculum effectively supports good student outcomes represented by data on students' progress from their starting points, course completion rates, achievement rates in line with published national averages, where available and students' destinations.
8.3	The curriculum offered meets the needs of a range of relevant stakeholders, such as employers and members of the wider community, such as local business or government groups and charitable organisations, where applicable.
8.4	Classes are timetabled and rooms allocated appropriately for the courses offered.
8.5	The allocation of teachers to classes provides a consistent learning experience and delivery is monitored to ensure consistency across all provision.
8.6	The commissioning of individual course materials is managed effectively and the content and style of the materials are checked to ensure standardisation across the provision.
8.7	There are appropriate policies and procedures for the acquisition of teaching and learning resources, which ensure that all teachers have access to the appropriate quantity and quality of resources on the day(s) of the course for the benefit of the learners.
8.8	Teachers are supported in their continuing professional development and are enabled to develop further pedagogic techniques to enhance the learning.

Inspection area – teaching, learning and assessment

9	The courses are planned and designed in ways that enable learners to succeed
9.1	The courses' design and content reflect current knowledge and practice, are regularly reviewed and revised and take into account input from relevant stakeholders
9.2	Courses are designed in ways that allow students to develop the knowledge and skills required to meet the course learning outcomes, in the case of vocational courses, to develop the behaviours and attitudes required for employment and to be successful in any final examinations and/or assessments, whichever are applicable.
9.3	Course materials are designed for a specific and clearly stated level of study and include appropriate support material.
9.4	Course materials are appropriately presented and sufficiently comprehensive to enable learners to achieve the course objectives.
9.5	Teaching sessions maintain an appropriate focus on any assessment objectives or statement of learning outcomes established by the awarding and/or examination body.
9.6	Ongoing assessments appropriately reflect the content and standards of final assessments.
9.7	The courses are designed so that learners are encouraged and enabled to develop independent learning skills.
9.8	The academic and/or professional backgrounds and particular support needs of learners are taken into account in the planning and design of the course.

10	Teachers are suitable for the courses to which they are allocated and are effective in their delivery
10.1	Teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced.
10.2	Teachers have a level of subject knowledge and pedagogic and communication skills which allow them to deliver courses effectively.
10.3	Teachers respond to the different backgrounds and particular support needs of learners in their delivery of the teaching sessions.
10.4	Teachers employ effective strategies to involve all learners in active participation and to check their understanding of concepts and course content.
11	Learners receive appropriate assessment and feedback on their performance and progress, both of which are effectively monitored
11.1	Learners and teachers are provided with a written schedule of assessments, as well as coursework submission dates and revision periods, in advance.
11.2	Assessment strategies are relevant to the content and nature of the courses and focused on measuring learners' achievement of the intended learning outcomes.
11.3	Learners' progress and assessment outcomes are monitored to enable the identification of learners who are not making satisfactory progress and prompt intervention takes place if required.
11.4	Additional support or advice on alternative courses are provided to learners who are judged not to be making sufficient progress to succeed.
11.5	Learners receive regular detailed and supportive oral and written feedback on their assessments and overall performance and progress, which are effectively monitored.
11.6	The feedback provided to individual learners is tailored to meet their specific needs and is constructive in its nature and delivery.
11.7	Learners have appropriate access to teachers and/or personal tutors, outside the scheduled course delivery time.
11.8	The institution takes appropriate steps to identify and discourage cheating and plagiarism and penalises offenders.
11.9	Prompt action is taken when learners miss deadlines or when the work submitted is not of a satisfactory standard.
11.10	There are clear policies and procedures for learners to claim mitigating circumstances and to appeal against marks awarded.
12	The institution offers courses leading to accredited awards granted by recognised awarding bodies
12.1	For courses leading to awards from the institution's country of domicile, the awarding body is recognised by the relevant regulator.
12.2	For courses leading to an award from an international educational institution that is authorised to operate in its country of domicile, the institution has a formal agreement in place with the international institution.
13	There is a clear rationale for courses leading to internal awards i.e. awards that are made on the basis of the outcomes of formal internal assessment methods
13.1	There is a clear statement of the level claimed relative to the relevant national qualifications framework, and evidence that learners who receive the award meet the stated requirements for that level.
13.2	There is evidence of the extent to which the awards are accepted for the purposes of employment or further study.
13.3	There is appropriate input to the assessment process from objective specialists who are external to the institution.
14	There are satisfactory procedures for the administration of examinations and other means of assessment
14.1	The institution complies with the requirements of the relevant awarding bodies in terms of examination security and administration.
14.2	For internal awards, there are effective systems in place for examination security and administration.

14.3	For internal awards, there are clear procedures for learners to appeal against their marks.
15	There is appropriate provision of advice for learners intending to proceed to employment or continued education
15.1	Learners have access to impartial advice and guidance from an appropriate staff member on further study and career opportunities.
15.2	If the institution offers courses preparing learners for higher/further education, they have access to advice from a designated staff member both on selecting courses and institutions and on the application process.

Inspection area – learner welfare

16	Learners receive welfare support appropriate to their age, background and circumstances
16.1	There is at least one named staff member responsible for learner welfare who is suitably trained and/or experienced, accessible to all learners and available to provide advice.
16.2	Learners receive appropriate information, advice and guidance before the start and throughout their course of study.
16.3	Learners receive an appropriate induction and relevant information at the start of the course.
16.4	Learners receive appropriate information on the pastoral support available to them, including the provision of emergency support and appropriate signposting to external specialists in connection with learners' mental health and well-being.
16.5	The institution has effective systems to identify learners who have special educational needs and disabilities requiring additional learning support or other assistance.
16.6	The institution has policies to avoid discrimination and a published procedure for dealing with abusive behaviour, including cyberbullying, and these are effectively implemented.
16.7	Effective safeguarding arrangements are in place for learners under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults, which are regularly reviewed.
16.8	Effective arrangements, including a policy, risk assessment and staff training, are in place to protect learners from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.
16.9	There is an e-policy in place that references any existing staff and learner codes of conduct and covers learners' on-site use of social media and devices such as mobile telephones, tablets and cameras.
16.10	The institution collects contact details for learners and their emergency contact and appropriate staff can access the information quickly and easily, in and out of normal operating hours.
17	International learners are provided with specific advice and assistance (if applicable)
17.1	International learners receive appropriate advice before their arrival on travelling to and living in their host country.
17.2	International learners receive an appropriate induction upon arrival covering issues specific to the local area.
17.3	Information and advice specific to international learners, continue to be available throughout their course of study.
17.4	Provision of support takes into account cultural and religious considerations.
18	The fair treatment of learners is ensured
18.1	Learners apply for and are enrolled on courses under fair and transparent contractual terms and conditions, which include appropriate refund arrangements and a cooling-off period.
18.2	Learners have access to a fair complaints procedure of which they are informed in writing at the start of the course.
18.3	Learners are advised of BAC's complaints procedure.
19	Residential accommodation that is directly managed by the institution is fit for purpose, well maintained and appropriately supervised (if applicable)
19.1	Any residential accommodation is clean, safe and of a standard which is adequate to meet the needs of learners.

19.2	Any residential accommodation, where learners under the age of 18 are accommodated, is open to inspection by the appropriate authorities, where applicable.
19.3	Clear rules regarding fire safety and other health and safety procedures are in place and appropriate precautions are taken for the security of learners and their property.
19.4	A level of supervision is provided which meets the needs of learners.
19.5	Appropriate measures are in place to ensure that learners under the age of 18 and those over the age of 18 are separated when allocating accommodation.
20 The welfare of learners in homestay accommodation is ensured and the institution's relationship with the hosts is properly managed (if applicable)	
20.1	Due care is taken in selecting home-stay accommodation which provides a safe and comfortable living environment for learners and is appropriately located for travel to the institution and back.
20.2	Any home-stay accommodation is inspected before learners are placed and is subject to regular re-inspection by a responsible representative or agent of the institution.
20.3	The institution has appropriate contracts in place with any hosts, clearly setting out the rules, terms and conditions of the provision.
20.4	Appropriate advice and support are given to both hosts and learners before and during the homestay placement.
20.5	Clear monitoring procedures are in place with opportunities for learner feedback and prompt action taken in the event of problems.
21 Learners have access to an appropriate social programme and information on leisure activities in the local area (if applicable)	
21.1	Learners are provided with appropriate information on opportunities for participation at events and other leisure activities which may be of interest.
21.2	The social programme is responsive to the needs and wishes of learners.
21.3	Any activities within the social programme have been chosen with consideration of their affordability for the majority of learners.
21.4	The activities organised by the institution are supervised by a responsible adult representative with suitable qualifications and/or experience.
21.5	Off-site social activities are subject to an appropriate risk assessment and suitable safeguards are put in place as a result.

Inspection area – premises and facilities

22 The institution has secure possession of and access to its premises	
22.1	The institution has formal arrangements in place that mean it has possession of and/or access to suitable premises.
22.2	The institution has access to suitable external premises of a temporary or occasional nature for academic or non-academic purposes.
23 The premises provide a safe, secure and clean environment for learners and staff	
23.1	Access to the premises is appropriately restricted and secured.
23.2	The premises are maintained in an adequate state of repair, decoration and cleanliness.
23.3	There are specific safety rules in hazardous areas, for example, science laboratories, which are readily accessible to learners, staff and visitors.
23.4	General guidance on health and safety is made available to learners, staff and visitors.
23.5	There is adequate signage inside and outside of the premises and facilities for the display of general information.
23.6	There is adequate circulation space for the number of learners and staff accommodated, and a suitable area in which to receive visitors.
23.7	There are toilet facilities of an appropriate number and level of cleanliness.

23.8	There is adequate heating and ventilation in all rooms.
24 Classrooms and other learning areas are appropriate for the courses offered	
24.1	Classrooms and other learning areas provide adequate accommodation for the teaching sessions allocated to them.
24.2	Classrooms and any specialised learning areas, for example laboratories, workshops and studios, are equipped to a level which allows for the effective delivery of each course.
24.3	There are facilities suitable for conducting the assessments required on each course.
25 There are appropriate additional facilities for learners and staff	
25.1	Learners have access to sufficient space, which could include a library and suitable Information Technology (IT) facilities so that they can carry out their own private work/and or study.
25.2	Teachers have access to sufficient personal space for preparing teaching sessions, marking work and relaxation.
25.3	Learners and staff have access to space and facilities suitable for relaxation and the consumption of food and drink, including facilities that are located outside the premises.
25.4	There are individual offices or rooms in which teachers and senior management can hold private meetings and a room of sufficient size to hold staff meetings.
25.5	Administrative offices are adequate in size and are resourced for the effective administration of the institution.

Inspection area – online, distance and blended learning component (if applicable)

26 Management, staffing and administration of online, distance and blended learning is effective	
26.1	Senior managers have an understanding of the specific requirements of online, distance and blended learning.
26.2	Data collection and collation systems include the logging of teacher and learner submissions and interaction, and appropriate action is taken if the timeliness of these falls below expectations.
26.3	There are established processes which enable the institution to verify that the learner who is registered on the programme is the same person who attends, completes the programme and receives any programme credit.
26.4	Staff monitor the online activity of learners and teachers and take action immediately if there are concerns about cyberbullying or other online risks to learners.
27 Online course management is effective	
27.1	There is a suitably qualified manager or management team with experience of online, distance and blended learning, who have responsibility for course delivery and the management of the teachers.
27.2	The institution has a sufficient number of qualified online teachers to give individualised instructional service to each learner.
27.3	The allocation of online teachers to courses provides a consistent learning experience and delivery is monitored to ensure consistency.
27.4	Online delivery methods are sufficient to attain the stated course objectives and intended learning outcomes.
27.5	Online programme designers make effective use of appropriate teaching aids and learning resources.
27.6	Suitable additional study aids are provided through investment in technology and/or issuing supplementary study materials.
28 Teachers have an adequate level of technical knowledge	
28.1	Teachers demonstrate an understanding of the special challenges and demands of online, distance and blended learning.
28.2	Online teachers are properly and continuously trained with respect to institution policies, learner needs, instructional approaches and techniques and the use of appropriate instructional technology.
28.3	Performance review procedures for online teachers incorporate regular monitoring of their feedback to learners.

29	The enrolment process is comprehensive, transparent, and supportive to applicants
29.1	Learners are made aware of the necessary level of digital literacy required to follow the stated courses.
30	Online services provided meet the reasonable needs of learners
30.1	Instructions and suggestions on how to study and how to use the learning materials are made available to assist learners in learning effectively.
30.2	Staff are available to assist learners to resolve issues of a general and/or technical nature and all enquiries from learners are handled promptly and sympathetically.
30.3	The institution ensures that learners understand any system requirements and have access to appropriate technical advice to assist with technological problems which are the institution's responsibility.
30.4	The institution supports and encourages peer interaction through a variety of channels such as social media and virtual learning environment platforms.
31	The technology used to deliver the courses is fit for purpose and effective
31.1	The institution uses appropriate and readily accessible technology to optimise the interaction between the institution and the learner and to enhance instructional and educational services.
31.2	The institution has access to the services of an experienced IT technician who can ensure that systems are operative at all times and provides appropriate support to teachers and staff working remotely.