



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM AND SUPPLEMENTARY INSPECTION NEW / ADDITIONAL PREMISES (College)

INSTITUTION:	College of International Education
ADDRESS:	Bocardo House 24b St Michael's Street Oxford OX1 2EB
HEAD OF INSTITUTION:	Ms Irma Banyte-Kelly and Mr John Hudson
ACCREDITATION STATUS:	Accredited
DATE OF INSPECTION:	2–3 August 2023
ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE:	Continued accreditation, 30 October 2023

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

The College of International Education (CIE/the Institution) is a privately owned organisation based in Oxford in the United Kingdom (UK). It offers a range of short courses in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) as well as EFL combined with subject-specific elements to students from the UK and other countries.

The Institution was founded in 1974. Its year-round premises are a former residential property in a quiet street in the centre of Oxford, where the administrative offices and limited teaching accommodation are located. Classrooms are hired on University of Oxford college premises when additional teaching space is required, particularly for sizable closed-group courses. Since 2022, the premises of a local independent school have been used to deliver summer courses for junior students. Residential accommodation is arranged with Oxford colleges and local home-stay providers.

CIE is the trading name of a UK-registered company called United Travel Study Service (UK) Limited. The owner is based in Japan but maintains a close interest in the Institution. CIE collaborates with its Japanese sister company United Travel Services (UTS), which is under the same ownership. UTS assists in the recruitment of students in Japan. The Institution has always had strong links with Japanese schools and universities, for which it provides courses to closed groups that are formed by the client organisation.

The aim of CIE is to enhance the academic and social potential of students, while promoting their understanding and appreciation of the diversity of their various cultural traditions.

CIE has two Co-Principals, one of whom oversees the Institution's day-to-day operations. The other Co-Principal works part time and has an advisory role as well as undertaking teaching duties. Administrative support is provided by the Finance Manager and the Accommodation Officer. A temporary, part-time assistant is employed when required. The Director of Studies (DoS) and Assistant Director of Studies (ADoS) support course delivery. The ADoS takes on the role of DoS for the Junior Summer School and is based at the summer school premises during that period. A permanent member of the teaching staff is also responsible for student welfare and social activities.

2. Brief description of the current provision

CIE offers courses in EFL, including preparation for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) examination, and a range of short Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) courses combining EFL with academic subjects, study skills and components relating to the cultural and community context of Oxford. EFL courses are offered throughout the year to students from around the world and to individuals already resident in Oxford. These courses are open to students aged 15 years and above.

Closed EFL courses are run at any time during the year and often include a specific focus, such as practice for Cambridge or Trinity EFL examinations, English for work or English culture. Closed-group courses are offered to students aged ten years and above. The large majority of students are from Japanese schools and universities. They attend bespoke CLIL programmes. Japanese university students may obtain academic credit from their home institution for completing their course at CIE.

Courses are mainly delivered in person, with additional, online study materials provided on the Institution's learning portal. Once students have completed their in-person course, they have the option of taking further lessons online, either one to one or in small groups. Year-round EFL courses are delivered at the CIE premises, with capacity for up to 37 students.

Dates for closed groups are responsive to demand. Summer courses for up to 300 students are delivered in hired premises. A Junior Summer School course for students aged 10 to 17 years is delivered at the premises of

Wychwood School, to the north of central Oxford. Female students are accommodated on site at the school, and male students use the nearby residential accommodation of Jesus College.

At the time of the inspection, there were 92 students enrolled, the majority of whom were female. Approximately half were attending junior programmes. Most students were under the age of 18. The main nationality groups were Hong Kong Chinese, Lebanese, Argentinian, Chinese and Japanese.

Enrolment is continuous, and students can join at the beginning of each week. Placement in classes is determined by the outcome of initial assessment.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was conducted on site by one inspector over one and a half days. Meetings were held with the Co-Principals, the DoS and ADoS, members of the administration team, a group of teachers and a group of students. Documents and electronic records were reviewed. The inspector observed a sample of lessons across the curriculum and conducted a full inspection of the premises, including the main CIE site, Wychwood School and its boarding accommodation, Jesus College residential accommodation and hired classrooms in the Oxford Union. The Institution responded to requests for information promptly and co-operated fully with the inspection process.

4. Background to the supplementary inspection

This interim inspection included a supplementary inspection of premises as there has been a change in venue for the Junior Summer School. Since summer 2022, CIE has used the premises of Wychwood School as a base for delivery of the summer school.

5. Inspection history

Inspection type	Date
Full Accreditation	8 December 2004
Supplementary	1 February 2006
Supplementary	20 November 2006
Supplementary	1 February 2007
Re-accreditation	3 September 2007
Re-accreditation	6 March 2008
Interim	4 February 2010
Re-accreditation	1 February 2012
Interim	15 July 2014
Re-accreditation	20–21 September 2016
Interim	12 June 2018
Re-accreditation	10 & 12 March 2021

PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

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

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

The Junior Summer School is no longer delivered at Bocardo House, but instead at the premises of Wychwood School. Summer school students, who are aged between ten to 14, use the residential accommodation of Wychwood School and Jesus College rather than being placed with host families. This allows for effective delivery to larger groups and for the future expansion of the Junior Summer School. Students aged between 15 to 17 have a choice of residential or homestay accommodation. The Senior Summer School for students above the age of 15 is now delivered at Bocardo House instead of one of Oxford University's colleges.

The management structure has been enhanced since the previous inspection. The role of DoS is no longer covered by one of the Co-Principals. A full-time DoS was appointed in February 2022, enabling the full-time Co-Principal to focus on strategic and operational management. In January 2023, a full-time ADoS was appointed. This role was previously combined with the role of Welfare Officer. Responsibility for student welfare has been taken on by a member of the permanent teaching staff.

These changes have been positive, with sufficient senior staff available at times of peak enrolments to ensure the smooth running of courses at all sites. All appointments were of suitably qualified and experienced individuals within the existing staff, resulting in a smooth transition.

2. Response to action points in last report

8.2 The Institution must further develop its annual report to evaluate the success of all areas of provision, consistently supporting judgements by reference to data and other sources of evidence.

The developed annual report is suitably comprehensive. It clearly identifies strengths and areas for development, with judgments supported by reference to data and other appropriate evidence. Judgments are linked to actions that drive improvements in all areas of the provision.

3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

It is recommended that teachers provide further opportunities for students to apply their learning during virtual classes.

Online teaching is now offered only to students who have completed their in-person programmes. Take-up of this provision is limited. Online classes are delivered by teachers who are suitably experienced in virtual delivery. In the online class observed during the inspection, teaching was highly interactive, and students were asked to apply their learning to a range of tasks at different stages of the lesson. This allowed the teacher to assess the learning effectively and provide immediate feedback to the students.

The Institution should consider transferring the home-stay records currently held in hard copy to electronic files, so that all necessary information is collated in one location.

Home-stay records are held on a database from which they can be readily accessed by permitted staff.

The Institution is recommended to redesign and refurbish the toilets if and when finances permit.

For financial reasons, this recommendation has not yet been addressed.

4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

4.1 Management, Staffing and Administration (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met

Partially Met

Not Met

Comments

Management, staffing and administration are effective. The new management structure is clearly defined and understood by all staff. Communication throughout the Institution is good. Regular staff meetings ensure that all staff are kept informed of developments and have opportunities to discuss issues and share suggestions.

Staffing is a strength of CIE. The majority of management and administrator roles are held by long-term staff, providing continuity. Staff at all levels understand their roles and demonstrate commitment to the aims of the Institution. Staff recruitment procedures follow national safeguarding guidelines. All necessary checks, including enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, are made prior to appointment. Checks are systematically recorded on a single central record of appointments, with evidence kept in well-maintained staff files. These procedures support the effective safeguarding of minors at the Institution.

Student records are appropriate. All data is held securely, in line with the Institution's robust data protection policy and procedures.

An appropriate attendance and punctuality policy is shared with students and staff at induction. Students clearly understand what action they must take in the event of their absence from classes. Registers are well maintained. Staff intervene promptly in cases of repeated lateness, but recently, oral warnings have not been recorded on student files. This could lead to difficulties if a written warning should become necessary. Overall attendance levels are high.

CIE uses feedback from students and other stakeholders effectively to improve provision. This is reflected in recent changes to the junior courses, including the doubling of time allocated for project work.

The Institution's annual report has been expanded to cover all areas of provision. It is evaluative, with data and other evidence used to support judgements. Action-planning from regular meetings and from the Institution's annual review is effective and results in CIE striving to continuously improve its provision.

4.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met

Partially Met

Not Met

Comments

Teaching, learning and assessment are effective. Academic managers are well qualified and suitably experienced for their roles.

Course provision is well designed to meet the learning goals of a wide range of students. Certain courses have been successfully modified to follow a task-based approach, with greater emphasis on developing communication skills. Students state that they appreciate this. Courses are appropriately resourced.

The management of temporary teaching staff is efficient. Teachers state that they feel well informed and supported in their work. Inspection findings confirm this view. Formal observation of teaching is highly effective. Observation reports provide clear, well-focused feedback, with appropriate targets for development. Teachers confirm that it is a positive process. Classroom observations inform the timely provision of relevant Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions.

Overall, teaching is of a high standard. The Institution has access to a pool of specialist teachers for adult groups and recruits suitable staff to deliver junior programmes. Lessons are generally well planned and have clear objectives, which are achieved. Knowledgeable teachers make good use of questioning to engage students and assess learning. The best lessons are characterised by detailed planning and careful attention to students' correct use of new structures and vocabulary.

Teachers ensure that all students participate actively throughout the lesson. Students confirm that teachers are responsive to their particular interests. They are happy with their courses and very pleased with the progress they are making. These views are supported by inspection findings.

4.3 Student Welfare (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The provision of student welfare is effective. Students receive appropriate information before arrival and a thorough induction on their first day at CIE. As a result, they quickly settle into their courses and know whom to contact with any concerns. They demonstrate good awareness of the Institution's code of conduct, which incorporates appropriate policies on discrimination, bullying and harassment. They are also clear about health and safety procedures.

The Institution has robust procedures in place for safeguarding students aged under 18 years, which follow government guidelines. It also has an appropriate policy to address the risks posed by radicalisation and extremism, together with a suitable risk assessment. All staff are appropriately trained in relation to this issue and in safeguarding. Relationships among students and between students and staff are positive. As a result, students feel safe and welcome at CIE.

Accommodation for students is well managed. Students on junior programmes stay in residential accommodation, the girls using Wychwood School boarding facilities, while the boys use the nearby Jesus College residence. Both are regularly inspected by appropriate external bodies. The accommodation is pleasant, clean, safe and of a good standard. High levels of supervision are provided by CIE staff and group leaders. Consequently, students are comfortable and well supported in the residences.

The Institution manages its own home-stay provision. Appropriate procedures are in place for recruiting hosts and regularly reviewing the quality of the accommodation. The Institution ensures that all necessary checks are in place, including enhanced DBS checks for all relevant members of families hosting students aged under 18. Hosts are required to undertake suitable training in safeguarding and awareness of radicalisation and extremism. Home-stay records are well maintained and stored electronically, allowing them to be accessed remotely by permitted staff.

4.4 Premises and Facilities (supplementary inspection)

The numbers below refer to the standards as presented in the college scheme document and main full inspection report

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

24.1 The institution has secure tenure on its premises. Yes No NA

24.2 Where required, the institution has access to suitable external premises for academic or non-academic purposes of a temporary or occasional nature. Yes No NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution has an appropriate tenancy agreement for its main premises and hires suitable additional premises as required for the Junior Summer School and for the delivery of other courses in periods of high enrolments.

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

25.1	Access to the premises is appropriately restricted and secured.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
25.2	The premises are maintained in an adequate state of repair, decoration and cleanliness.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
25.3	There are specific safety rules in areas of particular hazard (e.g. science laboratories) that are made readily available to students, staff and visitors.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA
25.4	General guidance on health and safety is made available to students, staff and visitors.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
25.5	There is adequate signage inside and outside the premises and notice boards for the display of general information.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
25.6	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
25.7	There are toilet facilities of an appropriate number and level of cleanliness.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
25.8	There is adequate 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

Comments

Access to all premises used by CIE is suitably restricted and secured. Buildings are accessed with key codes, and entry points are monitored. All premises are adequately maintained and regularly cleaned.

Appropriate health and safety information is included in staff and student inductions and communicated to visitors on arrival. There are no areas of particular hazard.

Signage at all premises is suitable. The Institution is clearly identified by a sign at the entrance to Bocardo House, and temporary signs are installed at relevant points in hired premises. Safety signage is appropriate at all sites. Notice boards are well located and display a range of useful information.

All premises have adequate circulation space for the number of users and a suitable area in which to receive visitors.

Toilet facilities are clean and adequate in number at all sites. The toilets at Bocardo House have been recently redecorated but would benefit from additional refurbishment.

All premises have sufficient opening windows for ventilation and appropriate provision for heating as required.

Overall, the premises provide a suitable environment for teaching and learning.

26. Classrooms and other learning areas are appropriate for the courses offered

26.1	Classrooms and other learning areas provide adequate accommodation in size and number for the classes allocated to them.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
26.2	Classrooms and/or any specialised learning areas (e.g. laboratories, workshops, studios) are equipped to a level that allows for the effective delivery of each course.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
26.3	There are facilities suitable for conducting the assessments required on each course.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Classrooms are appropriate for the courses offered. The classrooms at Bocardo House are adequate for small, year-round classes of up to 11 students. Larger groups, including those in the Junior Summer School, are accommodated in classrooms of suitable size on hired premises.

All classrooms are well equipped with Information Technology (IT) facilities and have good internet access. A set of tablet computers is available for use in lessons. Furniture can be moved to suit the requirements of different types of lesson. There are no specialised learning areas.

CLIL students deliver a final presentation, which is assessed. This takes place in the university teaching rooms hired for the course, which are suitable for this use.

27. There are appropriate additional facilities for students and staff

27.1	Students have access to sufficient space and suitable facilities for private study, including library and IT resources.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
27.2	Teaching staff have access to sufficient personal space for preparing lessons, marking work and relaxation.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
27.3	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
27.4	Students and staff have access to storage for personal possessions where appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA
27.5	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
27.6	Administrative offices are adequate in size and resources 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

Additional facilities are appropriate and enable effective study or work to be carried out at the Institution.

Students have access to classroom computers for private study outside lesson times. Bocardo House has a small library, and additional practice materials are available online. This is sufficient to meet demand. Summer school students attend a full programme of activities outside lessons. They also have access to a small library of graded English language readers, books for teenagers and English language games.

Teachers prepare for lessons in the staff rooms at each site, which are suitably equipped.

At Bocardo House, a kitchen is available to students and staff, with free facilities for making hot drinks, and access to a microwave oven and a refrigerator. A central area providing access to all rooms on the first floor is used as a common room, which is a pleasant space for students and staff to relax in and consume food and drink.

Wychwood School has a range of suitable facilities for students' relaxation, including lawns, a tennis court and comfortably furnished interior common areas. Staff have use of a large staff room. The school has a bright, spacious and well-equipped canteen where all meals are served. The canteen offers a good selection of healthy, freshly cooked food, salads and fresh fruit, with menus thoughtfully designed to meet students' preferences and dietary requirements.

Students and staff keep their personal possessions with them and there is no need for the storage of personal possessions at the teaching facilities on either site.

The Co-Principals' room is suitable for private meetings, while larger meetings can be held in a classroom. Meetings can also be held in the ADoS' office.

Administrative offices are adequate in size and resources for the effective administration of the Institution. Academic administration is completed in the suitably equipped ADoS' office, while other types of administration take place at CIE premises.

4.5 Compliance Declaration

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.

Yes No

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS

Action-planning is highly effective and results in the timely development of provision.

Course provision is of a high quality and offers a range of approaches that meet the interests of students of different ages and backgrounds.

Teachers are well matched to the courses they deliver, and standards of teaching are high, promoting an enriching student experience.

The range of premises used by CIE supports the effective delivery of different types of course and contributes to a positive experience of Oxford for students of all age groups.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

None

High

Medium

Low

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

The Institution is recommended to reinstate the practice of recording formal oral warnings to students regarding attendance or punctuality.

The Institution is recommended to redesign and refurbish the toilets at Bocardo House as soon as finances permit so that these match the good standard of the rest of the premises.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS – FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE
