



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM INSPECTION (College ODBL)

INSTITUTION:	Harvest Bible College
ADDRESS:	179 Shettleston Road Parkhead Glasgow Scotland G31 5JL
HEAD OF INSTITUTION:	Mr Robert Kelly
ACCREDITATION STATUS:	Accredited
DATE OF INSPECTION:	12 September 2023
ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE:	Continued accreditation, 25 January 2024

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

Harvest Bible College (HBC/the Institution) is the national bible college of the United Pentecostal Church of Great Britain and Ireland (the Church). It is owned by the Church, which is a United Kingdom (UK) charity.

HBC offers Certificate and Diploma courses in Theology. These courses are accredited by the Northern Council for Further Education (NCFE) at Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) Levels 3 and 4 respectively.

The Institution is located on the outskirts of Glasgow city centre. It is housed in two buildings that the Church owns.

HBC's mission is to provide biblically grounded teaching and training for effective Christian service and mission. It aims to integrate academic excellence with godliness and practical training for the ministry of the Church.

The head of HBC, who is also the Principal, and the Registrar and Academic Dean are responsible for the academic, administrative, pastoral and spiritual leadership of the Institution. The Principal reports to the governing board of Church trustees based in London. The Institution's senior managers are supported by the approximately 18 part-time members of teaching staff. There are also, in addition to the senior team, five administrative staff who support the running of the Institution.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The Institution offers a 10-month certificate in Theology, which is accredited by NCFE at RQF Level 3. This course has been taught since 2002. At present, it is being delivered through online distance learning. Since September 2016, the Institution has also offered a 10-month, second-year Diploma course, which has an emphasis on practical ministry. Both courses are free-standing and entry to year 1 does not presuppose progression to year 2, although that is possible.

The Diploma course is primarily an internship, with an academic component incorporated in it. It is offered through a partnership agreement with Urshan College in Missouri in the United States of America (USA). The internship involves on-site, practical ministry development, with students assigned to various approved churches. Although these are predominantly in the UK, they could be worldwide, apart from North America.

The scope of the Diploma course may include initiating a new ministry in a church or enhancing a current established ministry. The academic component of the course is undertaken through distance learning and consists of three segments. These units are Explore Apostolic Missiology, Analysis of Personal Spiritual Formation, and Analyse Conflict Management and Resolution.

Alongside their religious studies, students can also take part in study options that include missions, pastoral ministry, Christian education and music. Upon completion, students receive a Diploma in Theology accredited by NCFE at RQF Level 4.

The Institution also offers an unaccredited, part-time course which some students use as an introduction to study and also as a feeder course into the Certificate programme.

All the provision continues to be delivered online. There are plans to continue with on-site provision in the next academic year which will begin in September 2024.

At the time of the inspection, there were 27 students attending the Institution, with 21 enrolled on the Certificate course and six on the Diploma course. All students are over the age of 18 years, and most are female. Some of the students come from outside the UK, including Malaysia, Turkey, Norway and the USA.

Courses run for ten months from September. In preparation for enrolment at the Institution, potential students' suitability for the course is assessed. They must demonstrate an established spiritual commitment to the Church and ministry. They require a letter of recommendation from their pastor. Their English language ability is also assessed. All students need to demonstrate a sufficient level of education that is equivalent to the successful completion of secondary school. A prerequisite of attending the Institution is that students accept the principle of ministry.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was conducted in person over one day by one Inspector. During the inspection, the Inspector observed recordings of online classes and held discussions with the Principal, the Registrar and the Academic Dean, together with the Admissions Tutor and the Promotions Director. The Inspector undertook a tour of the premises and the residential accommodation. The Inspector scrutinised documentation and viewed information on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), the online administration process and the Institution's website. The Inspector also viewed other resources and learning materials in the library. The Institution co-operated very well with the inspection process.

4. Inspection history

Inspection type	Date
Full Accreditation	13–14 January 2009
Supplementary	11 May 2009
Interim	19 April 2010
Re-accreditation	26–27 March 2013
Interim	14 April 2015
Re-accreditation	22–23 March 2017
Interim	17 April 2019
Re-accreditation	8 & 10 June 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 Academic Dean is relatively new to the role and replaces the previous dean, who left the Institution in 2021.

There is now an updated list of expectations that the Institution has of students. This includes a minimum requirement for technological and internet connections and speeds to ensure that students can benefit from online learning. Prospective students who do not have access to the required technology are not admitted to the Institution.

There is a new Admissions Tutor who is an alumna of the Institution and provides support to prospective and present students. There is now a requirement that all prospective students will be interviewed by the Admissions Tutor so that they understand the academic standards and personal and study skills required by the Institution.

The Admissions Tutor has also taken over responsibility for the library and for cataloguing the book collection. The intention is that this will become a valuable resource for students when they return for in-person learning.

2. Response to action points in last report

25.4 Sign-in procedures need to be systematically enforced, and visitors need to sign out when they leave the building.

There is now an effective sign-in and sign-out process in place at the main entrance to the Institution's premises. All visitors are required to use this process. This ensures that the building is secure and that, from a health and safety aspect, everyone in the building is accounted for. This is particularly important for student safety and security when students are back on the premises.

3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

It is recommended that the transfer of all policies, procedures and other documentation to the electronic platform be completed as quickly as possible.

The Institution has now migrated all its policies, procedures and other documentation to the electronic platform. This means that all documentation is readily available and easy to find.

The Institution's website should provide more information on its activities, including more detailed descriptions of the courses, use of dedicated areas on the website for alumni, chat functions and other online functions.

The Institution's website has been brought up to date. It looks uncluttered and accessible. Students can now apply to the Institution and pay fees through the website. They can also buy lanyards and laminated identification cards through the website. The website includes clear information to prospective students regarding the content of the programmes of study, and more online functions are being used. The Institution plans to extend the use of its website so that students and alumni can log into more areas to help and support them in their study and ministry.

It is recommended that the Institution establishes a written self-assessment process. This would help the Institution to be more structured in recording its quality improvement processes.

The regular team meetings include quality improvement discussions among the staff and senior team. Issues and problems are brought to the meetings and resolutions are identified. The minutes of team meetings provide a good record of the identification of areas for improvement and the progress made against these. There is no organisation-wide written self-assessment process to provide a more structured approach to quality improvement planning.

It is recommended that the good practice by teachers in the inclusion of learning objectives in teaching sessions be shared and that all teachers include these in their planning.

The value of providing learning objectives is recognised by the Academic Dean, and all study plans for lessons now contain these. Students are directed to the learning objectives throughout their course and are expected to revisit them when they are revising and planning future study of their next module. Teachers address the learning objectives in their lessons to remind students of the development of their learning and how their present learning links with previous and future study.

4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

4.1 Management, Staffing and Administration (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The management of the Institution is appropriately carried out by the senior team of the Principal, the Registrar and the Academic Dean. These senior staff members work well as a team. They are well qualified for their roles and carry out their duties well.

The members of the senior team have continued to develop their understanding of distance learning and want to continue the development of the curriculum through the lessons learned in the delivery of distance learning. This will support the Institution in the future development of appropriate learning opportunities.

The administration of the Institution is primarily carried out by the Registrar. Other senior colleagues also support HBC's effective administration. The size of the administration team is adequate for the current smooth running of the Institution.

The administrative support and processes that are available to the management are clearly defined, documented and understood. The new Academic Dean has made a substantial contribution to the process of updating the Institution's administration processes.

The Institution now uses secure, online administration systems to manage student information and learning resources efficiently. All the student activity, from admission to graduation, is now recorded electronically. It is well organised and easy to follow.

Some online lectures are available to view at any time, and others have set times for attendance. Attendance at lectures is compulsory, and there is usually full attendance.

The Institution has a strong focus on maintaining high-quality provision. All aspects of the Institution's operation are reviewed by the senior team in its regular weekly meetings. These meetings ensure that the Institution can respond to issues in a timely manner. They also function as quality improvement meetings. This means that all issues can be dealt with in a timely manner.

4.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The recently appointed Academic Dean is well qualified and has excellent knowledge of online learning and the administration of learning programmes. The process of work-shadowing the previous Academic Dean was very effective in managing a smooth transition. She manages the teaching, learning and assessment records well and there is an effective system in place that is intuitive and easy to interrogate.

All lectures are recorded and are accessible to senior staff. This helps in the review and evaluation of courses, teachers and the progress of students. Senior academic staff are very aware of the content of every lesson and how the curriculum is delivered. Although the classes are taught by a wide range of teaching staff, there is a unity and coherence in content and delivery. It was clear in watching a selection of online classes that students enjoy their classes and the interaction with each other and their teachers.

Lessons are well planned and structured. Students are encouraged to actively engage in the classes, and their contributions are treated with respect by the teachers and other students. Students' interactions are used by the teachers to support the content of their lessons and to deepen understanding. This deep learning experience, which relates students' own practical experience to theoretical concepts, also helps to develop their higher order thinking skills. This was clearly seen in the online classes observed.

Learning objectives are made clear, not only in lessons, but also in the learning resources that students receive. It was clear in the online lesson observed that this helped the students to focus on their learning both in the preparation for their lessons and during their classes. Alongside their academic study of the Bible, students are set learning goals for their engagement in their local churches.

Students are kept fully informed about the requirements related to the submission of coursework and are given schedules at the start of the course regarding submission dates.

Students have personalised and differentiated learning sessions in their individual, fortnightly tutorial meetings. In these meetings, any academic issues or difficulties are addressed, as well as more pastoral concerns. Students receive additional pastoral support from the Admissions Tutor. Any identified learning needs from these sessions are fed back to teachers to ensure classroom delivery continues to meet all students' needs.

The teaching staff are well qualified and experienced. Most teachers have worked with the Institution for a long period of time and are highly committed to the Institution and its aims and objectives. They have been selected for their specific expertise and communication skills. They are considered by the Church community to be experts in their field and believe that part of their ministry is to support the work of the Institution and the education of its students.

The institution provides students and teachers with access to appropriate resources and materials for study. All learning materials are digitised, and all lectures are recorded for accessibility. There is a good selection of online materials, including books and other relevant course materials. Owing to the donation of a significant number of books, there is a well-stocked library resource that students will use when in-person courses resume.

Students are provided with reading lists and other learning materials, such as videos and pre-recorded lectures, that support their studies effectively. All teaching materials provide appropriate teaching and learning opportunities at an appropriate level.

Students receive appropriate assessment and feedback on their performance and progress, which are effectively monitored. Students are provided with the schedule and criteria for the assessment of the course modules at the beginning of the module.

Students are well supported in relation to HBC's academic requirements by teachers and senior staff. Appropriately high expectations are set regarding the presentation of students' work. The monitoring of students' performance and progress is good. Students discuss their progress in their tutorial sessions and receive differentiated support to enable them to achieve at the level required.

The Institution makes it clear that cheating and similar misdemeanours are incompatible with being students of the Institution. To underline this, there is an honesty and integrity policy that has been updated to include the inappropriate use of Artificial Intelligence in assessments. The basic tenet, which the Institution expects students to conform to, is that they join the course because they wish to further their Christian mission and are fully committed to completing and succeeding in this work.

4.3 Student Welfare (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Students receive pastoral support appropriate to their age, background and circumstances. Although overall responsibility for student welfare lies with the Principal, all senior staff at the Institution see their interactions with students as primarily pastoral. All staff are charged with supporting the emotional and spiritual lives of their students. As a result, the pastoral support is of a high quality.

Students receive appropriate advice before arrival. The website has been updated and provides clear information to prospective and current students, as well as providing support and opportunities for discussion with alumni. In addition, prospective students receive in-depth, age-appropriate pastoral support throughout the enrolment process from the Admissions Tutor, who is the principal point of contact for students prior to the commencement of the course and during the course.

There is a comprehensive induction programme that effectively introduces students to their programme of study. The induction includes information about the way in which the programmes are delivered and useful advice about how to study. Students also receive support on how to develop their ideas of ministry and how the course will help them in this. As a result, students understand the expectations and requirements of being a student at HBC very well.

The student handbook provides detailed information about the course and a range of policies and expectations, including an academic honesty and integrity agreement and a policy on discrimination and abusive behaviour. In addition, the arrangements for pastoral support include regular review sessions between students and a member of the senior team acting as a mentor to the student.

Effective arrangements are in place to protect students from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. All full-time staff have received appropriate training in the risks posed by radicalisation and extremism. The Institution has an appropriate policy on preventing radicalisation and extremism and carries out appropriate risk assessments.

During induction, all students are given appropriate advice on the technological requirements for completing the course and how to deal with any technical issues. Students are encouraged to interact with staff and each other through a variety of appropriate communication channels. These include informal contact through social media, and discussions prior to and following lectures and study of the Bible. Consequently, students get to know each other and the staff well and work effectively together, both academically and socially.

The residential accommodation is clean, safe and of a good standard. Student accommodation is in dormitories. Female accommodation is in the main building and male accommodation is in an adjoining building. When students are on campus, there is appropriate live-in support for both male and female students. All accommodation is inspected by the relevant statutory authorities. Clear rules and fire, health and safety procedures are in place, with appropriate precautions taken for the security of the students and their property. Fire extinguishers are in place and there are well-signed emergency routes and fire exits.

The Institution provides an appropriate social programme for students. HBC organises online social events for students once a term. There are also opportunities for online chat groups and other forms of contact through closed, secure webpages and through the website.

4.4 Premises and Facilities (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The premises are owned by the Church and therefore there is secure tenure.

There is a sign-in book in the reception area, and all visitors are required to sign in and out of the building. Visitors are brought into the building by members of the Institution and are supervised during their visit. As a result, the premises are appropriately restricted and secure.

The premises are maintained in a good state of repair, decoration and cleanliness. When students are in attendance on the premises, they have a responsibility for keeping the premises clean and tidy. There is a cleaning rota and all parts of the premises are inspected on a regular basis. Therefore, items or areas that require attention are dealt with promptly. As a result, the premises are clean and in a good state of repair.

Signage is clear, both inside and outside the building. There are notice boards that display general information. There is a spacious reception area and the circulation space is generous in size. The toilet facilities are of an appropriate number and level of cleanliness. All rooms have central heating radiators and windows that open either to the outside or onto a central atrium area. Therefore, they are well ventilated and of an appropriate temperature.

Classrooms and other learning areas are adequate in size. Some are very spacious for the number of students likely to use the space. There is a church hall where religious services and learning and social activities can take place.

Students have access to sufficient space and suitable facilities for private study, including library resources. There are dedicated student areas in the accommodation blocks where students can carry out quiet study or relax and socialise. Since the previous inspection, the library has been augmented by a significant donation of books. The Admissions Tutor has widened her role to include the responsibilities of a librarian and she is creating a comprehensive resource that will be very useful to students when they return to studying on the campus.

Teaching staff have the use of a small flat, where they can mark work, prepare lessons and relax. There is also a dining room that is available to staff and students and where snacks and drinks are available. There is adequate space to store possessions safely and securely. The administrative and staff areas include a suitable meeting space and provide an appropriate working environment for the permanent staff.

4.5 Compliance Declaration

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.

Yes No

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS

The Institution is very professionally managed by a committed and experienced senior team whose members have a range of strengths and skills and work well together to provide a high-quality experience for students.

The management of the Institution is enhanced by the online administration functions, which are clear, accessible and well organised.

The personal development of students is effectively enhanced by the way in which their ideas and experiences are appreciated and recognised in lessons.

All staff maintain a role in pastoral support, including for providing effective counselling and guidance, to ensure that students effectively engage with and enjoy their learning.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

None

High Medium Low

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

The Institution is recommended to implement its plans to extend the use of its website so that students and alumni can log into more areas to help and support them in their study and ministry.

It is recommended that the Institution establishes an organisation-wide written self-assessment process.

HBC should review the Admissions Tutor's job role to address her widened remit and the increase in her responsibilities.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS – FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE

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The inspection was carried out by:

Markham May

Lead Inspector