Academic Management Review Report 2014-15

BTEC

Visit Details	
Academic Management Reviewer	Ken Crafer
AA Number	513805
Reviewer email address	ken@crafer.co.uk
Date of review visit	09/03/15
Time started	10:30
Time completed	16:45
Name and designation of people involved in the review	Mark Mabey, Principal. Richard Poole, Director of Studies. Barbara Morris, Director of Quality Fahmida Khan, Lead Internal Verifier

Essential Actions and Recommendations Review		
Essential Actions from previous report		
Continue and finalise policy and procedures update ensuring annual review programme is put in place		
Progress Made		Resolved?
Annual review is in place, supporting a major review of the policies file. Actions confirmed to Dave Roberts in Aug 2014		Resolved
Recommendations from previous report		
None within the previous report		
Progress Made		Resolved?
		Please select

Instructions for Academic Management Reviewers
Please submit your completed report to amr@pearson.com within 10 days of your visit.

You must use the following file naming protocol: "AMRreport[centre number].doc", e.g. "AMRreport98765.doc".

1. Centre details and management

Centre Details	
Centre name	The London College, UCK
Centre number	11242
Principal / Head of Centre	Mark Mabey
Centre email address	m.mabey@lcuck.ac.uk
Centre telephone number	0207 243 4000
If the Principal / Head of Centre name, centre email address or centre telephone number are incorrect, please instruct the centre to contact: ukvqapproval@pearson.com	
Quality Nominee	Dr Barbara Morris
Quality Nominee email address	b.morris@lcuck.ac.uk
Quality Nominee telephone number	0207 243 4000
If the Quality Nominee name, email address or telephone number are incorrect, please instruct the centre to update them on Edexcel Online	
Centre type	Private College
Is this centre in its first year of delivery?	No
Number of subsites at centre	0
If subsites exist, please provide full address details of all subsites below:	
Are there any collaborative, sub-contracting, partnership or consortia arrangements in place with other centres?	No
Does the centre operate any distance learning?	No
Does the centre operate any overseas provision?	No
If collaborative, sub-contracting, partnership, consortia, distance learning or overseas arrangements exist, please provide full details below:	
N/A	

	Quality Objective	
1. Your organisational structure is clearly defined and complies with Pearson approval requirements.		
Quality Measures	Details	Is there sufficient evidence that all quality processes are in place and effective?
1.1	Pearson centre approval and recognition requirements are complied with fully.	Yes
1.2	Collaborative arrangements with other sites, centres or organisations are approved by Pearson and appropriately recorded on Pearson systems, including: • Subsites. • BTEC consortia. • Sub-contracting. • Other collaborative partnerships.	N/A: no collaborative
1.3	There is an organisation chart, providing clear reporting relationships, which is communicated to all members of the organisation, ensuring that they understand what their responsibilities are and know to whom they are accountable.	Yes

	If 'No' for any quality measures above, an Essential Action is required* Recommendations may be made at any time	
Essential Action		
Recommendation		
Comments:		
The college offers a broad range of HND programmes as part of its suite of qualifications. Pearson courses have approval. The college does not operate any subsite or sub-contracts any work to other organisations. As part of future development plans there is a formal arrangement in place with the University of Derby but this has no impact on the functioning of Pearson qualifications. Documentation to assist the visit was well presented and included an organisational chart- demonstrating clear reporting structures and accountabilities. Changes within the senior management team structure were reflected within this documentation.		

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2. Student recruitment, registration and certification

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">2a. Audit of student records
The Reviewer must select a minimum of 3 students. If there are programmes that have claimed certificates, this must include at least one student who has been certificated.</td></tr>
</table>

Student 1 name	Juma'In Nooratika	**Programme**	HNC Business
Enrolment date	30/9/13	Registration date	30/9/13
Timetable seen?	Yes	Accurate and complete attendance records seen?	Yes
Accurate and complete assessment records seen?	Yes	Accurate and timely IV records seen?	Yes
Accurate and timely certification process seen?	Yes	Issues identified?	No
Comments:	Certificate claimed 1/9/14		

Student 2 name	Robert Rycerz	**Programme**	HND Construction
Enrolment date	30/9/13	Registration date	30/9/13
Timetable seen?	Yes	Accurate and complete attendance records seen?	Yes
Accurate and complete assessment records seen?	Yes	Accurate and timely IV records seen?	Yes
Accurate and timely certification process seen?	N/A	Issues identified?	No
Comments:	No issues, all appropriate documentation is in place and available to view during the visit.		

Student 3 name	Iziegbe Blessing Itua	**Programme**	HND Health & Social Care
Enrolment date	30/9/13	Registration date	30/9/13
Timetable seen?	Yes	Accurate and complete attendance records seen?	Yes
Accurate and complete assessment records seen?	Yes	Accurate and timely IV records seen?	Yes
Accurate and timely certification process seen?	Yes	Issues identified?	No
Comments:	claimed 22/8/2014, collected by learner 8/9/14		

If extra students are required to be audited, please include them below:

Student 4 name	Emily Namugere	Programme	HND Health & Social Care
Enrolment date	30/9/13	Registration date	30/9/13
Timetable seen?	No	Accurate and complete attendance records seen?	No
Accurate and complete assessment records seen?	No	Accurate and timely IV records seen?	No
Accurate and timely certification process seen?	N/A	Issues identified?	No
Comments:	Learner has deferred- centre has evidence tracking communication and progress.		

Student 5 name		Programme	
Enrolment date		Registration date	
Timetable seen?	Please select	Accurate and complete attendance records seen?	Please select
Accurate and complete assessment records seen?	Please select	Accurate and timely IV records seen?	Please select
Accurate and timely certification process seen?	Please select	Issues identified?	Please select
Comments:			

Student 6 name		Programme	
Enrolment date		Registration date	
Timetable seen?	Please select	Accurate and complete attendance records seen?	Please select
Accurate and complete assessment records seen?	Please select	Accurate and timely IV records seen?	Please select
Accurate and timely certification process seen?	Please select	Issues identified?	Please select
Comments:			

2b. Quality Objective		

2. Your administrative processes and procedures ensure that recruitment, registration and certification processes:
- are accurate and timely.
- are auditable.
- reflect a student's course of study, time spent on programme and level of achievement.
- provide safe and accurate certification.

Quality Measures	Details	Is there sufficient evidence that all quality processes are in place and effective?
2.1	Suitable processes are in place to assure the integrity of student recruitment onto the centre's L4 -7 provision.	Yes
2.2	The centre publishes information that is accurate and provides students with a basis for making an informed choice about enrolment decisions.	Yes
2.3	There is a student recruitment process that enables the applicant to discuss learning needs, additional help that might be required on programme, and takes account of progression aspirations.	Yes
2.4	There is a procedure for the timely and accurate registration of students that is operational and monitored and is compliant with awarding organisation and regulatory requirements.	Yes
2.5	There is a mechanism for checking the accuracy of student registrations.	Yes
2.6	Accurate and up-to-date records of attendance are kept for every student, showing appropriate time spent on programme in relation to the qualification guided learning hours.	Yes
2.7	There is a procedure which ensures timely and accurate certification claims that are checked and verified against assessment records.	Yes
2.8	There is a procedure for checking certificates received against assessment records, prior to issue.	Yes
2.9	The centre will investigate and report to us all inaccurate, early/late and fraudulent registrations or certification claims, via internal senior management.	Yes
2.10	The centre provides unit certification claims for students where appropriate.	Yes

If 'No' for any quality measures above, an Essential Action is required* Recommendations may be made at any time	
Essential Action	
Recommendation	
Comments:	

The majority of learners are UK or EU based. Recruitment is via college open days and via UCAS. The college also features on internet sites such as Hotcourses.
Entry information is available via many of these sources but entry requirements are also published on the college website. Students receive individual interviews to review their options and to help advise on the most appropriate course. International students, unable to attend interview are interviewed via Skype.

All students are given basic skills tests as part of the interview and recruitment process. Sampling of current learners at the college highlighted a timely recruitment and registration system across programmes.

The college has an established system for ensuring learner details are accurate; all students are required to bring identification evidence such as passports to validate their details at entry. Details are kept on a centralised system (along with a photograph). Student details are checked and countersigned by the learner as a check in the system to help prevent errors.

The college keeps up to date registers of attendance (using a biometric system) - profiles of attendance were sampled as part of the visit. The college was also able to supply personal timetables for the learners sampled.

There has been an increase in the staffing relating to quality standards and certification. A double check system is in place prior to claiming for learner achievement, certificates are also checked for accuracy. The college also retains information as to when certificates were collected by the learner.

The college's systems and policies relating to inaccurate or fraudulent claims were also reviewed as part of the visit.

While not a common occurence, the college is in a position to give unit certification should the need arise.

3. Managing assessment and verification

Quality Objective

3. Your assessment strategy, processes and management underpin an assessment and internal verification system that:
- confirms authenticity of student evidence.
- delivers valid and reliable assessment outcomes.
- follows Pearson regulations and requirements.
- reflects national standards.
- enables internal verification to drive and maintain assessment standards.
- leads to the safe certification of student achievement.

Quality Measures	Details	Is there sufficient evidence that all quality processes are in place and effective?
3.1	All higher level qualifications have an accurate Programme Specification, as defined by the QAA Quality Code, which includes clear requirements for authenticity of student evidence.	Yes
3.2	There are clearly defined assessment procedures that are operational and auditable at all assessment locations and for all assessors, units and students.	Yes
3.3	Assessment recording documentation is clearly understood by assessors and students and is used consistently across the centre and all assessment locations.	Yes
3.4	Assessment methodology leads to valid and reliable assessment outcomes against national standards, which are in line with regulatory and standards setting body requirements.	Yes
3.5	There is open and equal access to fair assessment for all students, including any students with particular needs.	Yes
3.6	The internal verification process is compliant with awarding organisation and regulatory requirements and ensures that: • assessment instruments are fit for purpose. • assessment outcomes are valid, reliable and to national standards.	Yes
3.7	There are processes for dealing with weaknesses in assessment, whether highlighted internally or externally.	Yes
3.8	The centre utilises the outcomes of Pearson's external monitoring to improve internal systems, processes and assessment.	Yes

If 'No' for any quality measures above, an Essential Action is required*	
Recommendations may be made at any time	
Essential Action	
Recommendation	
Comments:	

Current programme specifications are in place for programmes in line with the QAA Quality Code- last review September 2014. Staff have had training on the Quality code within a staff training day on 7th March 2015 (notes for the day seen during the visit)
There has been a refinement of policies relating to assessment procedures within the past academic year allied to the appointment of a new role; Director of Studies, who works alongside the Director of Quality.
There is a clear explanation of assessment procedures; featuring within both the staff and

student handbooks. An overview of the learner work demonstrated that this is the process that is functioning within the college.

The Director of Studies and Director of Quality are assisted by an experienced Lead Internal Verifier who is able to explain the implementation of processes within the college. The Lead Internal Verifier is also a BTEC Standards Verifier (as indeed is another subject leader), meaning the centre has access to view best practice from other organisations too.

The college has developed policies to cover access to assessment and equality of opportunity within assessment. This has been reviewed within the past year, in line with the review of all college documentation.

Internal Verification is timely and reviewed by the Lead Internal Verifier. The Internal Verification role is increasingly a shared role amongst experienced team members- helping to develop best practice and also providing continuity if key staff are unavailable in the future.

Internal Verification forms are supportive, evidence of actions for Assessors were also seen. Reviews from external agencies are incorporated into the organisation's practice. There is a committee structure to enable these finding to be formally considered and actions minuted. (Minutes of meetings viewed during the visit).

4. Staff resources

Quality Objective
4. The delivery and assessment of your Level 4-7 qualifications is enhanced by an appropriate programme team that: • is appropriately qualified in the skill of teaching and assessment. • is vocationally competent to teach and assess the subject. • has sufficient time to effectively fulfil all aspects of the role. • views quality and improvement as an inherent part of their job role. • is supported by a formal programme of continuous professional development.

Quality Measures	Details	Is there sufficient evidence that all quality processes are in place and effective?
4.1	There are fit-for-purpose staff job descriptions providing details of duties for all roles.	Yes
4.2	Staffing on Level 4-7 programmes is continuously monitored in order to maintain adequate numbers of appropriately qualified and vocationally experienced personnel.	Yes
4.3	There is an effective recruitment and selection process which ensures the maintenance of adequate and appropriate staffing.	Yes
4.4	Teaching and assessing staff are given sufficient time for programme planning, delivery, assessment, verification and evaluation activities.	Yes
4.5	Any external experts who deliver and assess on programmes are familiar with the specification and able to conduct appropriate and accurate assessment.	Yes
4.6	There are suitable programmes of induction and development for the centre's L4 -7 provision to assure that staff are in step with national standards, business trends and developments in teaching, assessment and learning.	Yes
4.7	There is an ongoing and formally recorded programme of continuous professional development for staff to ensure that knowledge, skills and qualifications are appropriate and up to date.	Yes

If 'No' for any quality measures above, an Essential Action is required* Recommendations may be made at any time	
Essential Action	
Recommendation	
Comments:	

Job descriptions are in place for staff- highlighting roles, responsibilities and expectations, Some of these themes are also continued through within the staff handbook.
There has been a review of staffing- a migration towards less reliance on part time staff.
Staff have appropriate qualifications and are enrolled on teaching qualifications if required, although most new staff are recruited with the appropriate teaching qualification.
Staff are included in an annual review system looking at performance and workload. The strategic planning of the college also reviews the availability of resources. Staff timetables allow for assessment and verification. A new initiative- the development of assessment and standards weeks within the college year will also assist in this respect.
External experts (and visits) form part of many courses. It is recognised that while there

can be input from these industry experts, they are not familiar with the qualification standards and therefore do not carry out any formal assessment; this aspect is undertaken by college staff.

The college has an established induction system for new staff- the small departmental teams help to ensure the new entrant is suitably mentored. The lesson observation and internal verification systems also account for new and inexperienced team members.

Staff are all included in corporate CPD events- the college bringing in awarding body experts for briefing and training sessions. CPD records are kept for all staff.

Some staff in very specialist areas also have their own business interests outside the college, although safeguards are in place to prevent conflict of interest.

5. Physical resources

Quality Objective

5. There is adequate provision of physical resources that will:
- support general learning and assessment at Level 4-7.
- enhance subject specific and technical learning and assessment at Level 4-7.
- ensure student and staff safety.

Quality Measures	Details	Is there sufficient evidence that all quality processes are in place and effective?
5.1	There are suitable specialist and general resources available that are sufficient for student volumes.	Yes
5.2	There are the required facilities and resources required by Pearson for the conduct of external assessment, where this forms part of a BTEC programme.	Yes
5.3	The centre monitors all resources regularly to ensure they are fit for purpose and safe to use.	Yes
5.4	The centre considers the sufficient provision of general and subject specific resources when planning the introduction of new programmes.	Yes
5.5	When used, external resources are contractually available, fit for purpose, appropriate and safe.	Yes
5.6	There are appropriate and fair access arrangements for all enrolled students regardless of ability, disability or other protected characteristics.	Yes

If 'No' for any quality measures above, an Essential Action is required* Recommendations may be made at any time	
Essential Action	
Recommendation	
Comments:	

Rooms and facilities were reviewed as part of the visit and meet the needs of the current provision. The college has developed timetabled solutions for areas where resources are limited (science lab). The solution is acceptable and workable.

The library is central to the college, has long opening hours, and is a useful study hub. The location of the college means that the British Library is in close vicinity if specialist documents are needed. The centre provides access to online journals and publications as part of the student package upon enrolment.

The college, sited within one building, has a variety of rooms for different purposes and is able to conduct external examinations to the requirements of awarding bodies.

The management structure and reporting systems provide a mechanism for the review of resources. The college is aware of the level of intensity of the use of current facilities and is continuing to look at alternative sites. The current central location however is favoured by learners in student feedback forums.

An extension into the offering of courses on Saturdays has increased the capacity within the college as well as meeting the needs of a specific sector of learners.

The provision of programmes is linked to the availability of resources and the course offer is under review as a result.

The building is leased on a long term basis and therefore provides security for the college. There are no current lease arrangements for additional sites.

The building layout does present some limitations to access which cannot be changed in a reasonably practicable way. The college has plans to change the use of the floor plan this summer to improve efficiency. While lifts are not available on site the timetabling of sessions could be achieved onto a single level with access to all appropriate ancillary facilities too.

The College has a well developed equality and diversity policy to help support appropriate decision making.

6. Assessment tracking, recording and reporting

Quality Objective		
6. You record assessment decisions in a way that: • is clearly measured against recognised, regulated standards. • allows student progress to be accurately tracked. • allows the assessment process to be reliably verified. • provides clear evidence of the safety of certification.		
Quality Measures	Details	Is there sufficient evidence that all quality processes are in place and effective?
6.1	All assessment records are stored securely and safely.	Yes
6.2	Up to date records of student achievement are maintained and are regularly reviewed and tracked accurately against recognised, regulated standards.	Yes
6.3	Assessment records are retained for centre and awarding organisation scrutiny for a minimum of three years following certification.	Yes
6.4	All current student evidence is available for centre and awarding organisation verification processes.	Yes
6.5	All current records of assessment feedback are available for awarding organisation verification processes.	Yes

If 'No' for any quality measures above, an Essential Action is required Recommendations may be made at any time	
Essential Action	
Recommendation	The current MIS systems are fit for purpose but there is considerable work in pulling together information relating to a learner and their achievement. Effective introduction of the new software across the whole college will help prevent issues.
Comments:	

Student work is submitted online, and allows learners to check work against anti-plagiarism software prior to submission. Work is also assessed online and comments added in electronic format. Work is stored on secure server and retained for a minimum of three years.
The college keeps up to date records of student achievement (timeliness of the updating process checked as part of the visit). Student work was readily available to view.
The online system also contains Assessor feedback to the learner.

7. Policies and procedures

Quality Objective		
7. You have effective systems and procedures developed and agreed by managers, which cover Level 4-7 assessment processes and are: • regularly reviewed and updated. • readily available to all staff and students. • operational throughout the organisation.		
Quality Measures	Details	Is there sufficient evidence that all quality processes are in place and effective?
7.1	There are centre-wide quality assurance procedures for Level 4-7 provision, that: • are supported by appropriate policies. • are appropriate to centre size and the qualification requirements. • are supported by senior managers and implemented by assessment and delivery teams • manage and report on academic standards. • include quality standards documentation and working practices suitable for higher education. • embrace the precepts contained in the QAA Quality Code. • have continuous compliance with our published policies, procedures and regulatory requirements.	Yes
7.2	Policies and procedures are in place for managing: • equality and diversity. • health and safety. • special consideration & reasonable adjustments. • recognition of prior learning. • assessment, internal verification. • student/staff malpractice, including plagiarism. • student appeals. • distance/flexible learning and assessment, if relevant.	Yes
7.3	Centre policies and procedures are reviewed and evaluated annually, incorporating student feedback, improvement planning and actions.	Yes
7.4	The accuracy and consistency of internal and external communications are effectively managed to ensure the timely dissemination of correct key messages to all stakeholders.	Yes
7.5	There is a means for ensuring all students and staff are aware of: • what constitutes an appeal and what is considered assessment malpractice. • the related processes for instigating an appeal or investigating malpractice. • the possible outcomes that may be reached. • the consequences of both internal and external outcomes. • the process that exists to enable students to make an appeal to Pearson. • how the potential for any assessment malpractice informs programme planning and delivery.	Yes
7.6	There are robust systems for recording and managing all assessment appeals and malpractice, including plagiarism.	Yes
7.7	There is a process for reporting serious assessment malpractice to Pearson.	Yes

	If 'No' for any quality measures above, an Essential Action is required Recommendations may be made at any time
Essential Action	
Recommendation	The development of a revised induction system, based upon the experiences from the University of Derby courses would help embed issues such as referencing more effectively into HND programmes.
Comments:	

There is a centre-wide quality assurance procedure implemented; supported by a range of relevant policies. These are communicated to those that need to know in a variety of ways, most notably via student and staff handbooks and via the college VLE (Moodle).

Senior Management are conversant with their content and it is clear that documented structures and committees are effective in allowing change.

The College operates an Academic Standards Committee which reviews all learner awards and also acts as the focus for mitigating circumstances submissions and any subsequent appeals. The grounds for applying for mitigating circumstances (and assignment extensions) are well laid out within the learner handbook.

As part of the review visit, policies and procedures were examined and appear to be fit for purpose, unified in the message to each target group and updated on an annual basis.

Issues such as what constitutes assessment malpractice is identifed; students given additional assistance to prevent inadvertent plagiarism.

Student documentation outlines the appeals process and the opportunity to refer a decision to the awarding body. Anecdotal evidence from within the staff team suggest this process has not been needed, any query regarding assessment being dealt with in less formal preliminary communications, and indeed with the aim of reducing further by effective Assessor feedback within the assignments themselves.

The college is aware of its responsibilities to record and deal with issues of plagiarism and other forms of malpractice, together with its duty to report these to the awarding body in the case of serious offences.

General Comments
The London College UCK was founded around 70 years ago as a not for profit College serving students within the HE sector.   The college has around 1000 FTE learners; the significant majority from the UK and EU. Approximately 10% of learners are from outside the EU, the college has tier 4 accreditation and highly trusted status with the UKBA. The college offers a a wide range of level 4 - 7 courses, mainly HNC/D, with progression opportunities validated by the University of Derby. It has good links with some prestigious employers who have sponsored students on programmes for a number of years. The centre has a mature and established management team who have a good understanding of the sector and the pressures upon it. This knowledge is embedded within the strategic plan for the college which seeks to develop further progression routes at degree level. Since the last report the college has created a new role; a Director of Study. The

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postholder, recruited from a respected awarding body brings an additional depth of knowledge on the management of programmes. It is clear that the 'direction of travel' in processes is appropriate for the needs of a dynamic sector and the size and stage of development of the college.

The college has purchased new MIS software (Pro-solution), the implementation of this will help reduce the complexities of running a number of other systems in parallel, enable a greater integration of learner information and aid in strategic decision making.

The depth of knowledge within the team should be highlighted- their prior knowledge and experience assisting in the strategic development of the college. This is an ongoing process; a number of staff members actively involved in standards monitoring for other organisations. These experiences help to refine the processes within their own college environment.

The level of organisation in preparation for the visit day is particularly of note. The Centre Engagement Document was supplied well ahead of the visit and completed with a lot of detail. Staff were available on the day to answer any questions and provide any documentation needed.

Areas of Exemplary Practice

PEARSON USE ONLY		
Reporting Outcome		
No Actions Required		
Name	Designation	Date
Sally Peacock	Head of Centre Management	17th April 2015