

Review for Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of UCK Ltd t/a The London College, May 2014

Section 1: Outcome of the monitoring visit

1 From the evidence provided in the annual return and at the monitoring visit the review team concludes that UCK Ltd t/a The London College (the College) has made commendable progress with continuing to monitor, review and enhance its higher education provision since the April 2013 [monitoring visit](#).

Section 2: Changes since the last QAA monitoring visit

2 The College has 1,025 higher education students, which is 170 fewer than at the April 2013 monitoring visit. The College reports that this is the result of students' financial difficulties. It now employs 33 full-time staff and 32 on part-time contracts.

3 The agreement with the University of Derby (the University) to deliver seven final-year undergraduate degrees commenced in September 2013 and recruited 112 students. Most students at the College are studying on Pearson Ltd Higher National Certificate or Diploma programmes.

Section 3: Findings from the monitoring visit

4 The College is making commendable progress in further embedding the good practice identified in the 2012 review. The student magazine, seen at the 2013 monitoring visit, is now written and designed entirely by students, with production support from the College. The Students' Union continues to grow. Staff and students contribute to a successful Student Council which reports its actions on posters throughout the College. Student representatives continue to make an effective contribution to College committees. Students complete questionnaires regularly, providing informative feedback on modules and facilities. The College encourages student involvement in events organised by the University, which students report favourably on. Students praise the College's response to the issues raised by delays in payment of student loans. Students also express appreciation of the staff open-door policy in providing pastoral and academic support.

5 The College has made commendable progress in completing the recommendations in the action plan and further developing these to enhance the provision. Internal verifiers continue to be fully involved in all aspects of assessment and the effectiveness of their role has been commended by the external verifiers.

6 An annual meetings calendar underpins the committee structure and senior staff produce reflective and evaluative minutes which support further action. The annual review of programmes continues to identify areas for improvement and good practice, and continuously enhances the quality of learning opportunities.

7 The College has extended the use of plagiarism-detection software since the 2013 monitoring visit. Students on the degree programmes submit their assessments electronically through the University's virtual learning platform which automatically scans the work for plagiarism. Similarly, students on the postgraduate programmes submit their assessments through the College's plagiarism-detection software.

8 The College has further enhanced staff development opportunities. Its staff are supported in engaging with the Higher Education Academy through fellowship applications. The Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector programme has assisted staff to develop students' higher level skills during classroom sessions.

9 The College is developing the vocational element of the programmes through greater involvement with the professional bodies. The Institute of Civil Engineers and the Institute of Engineering and Technology are engaging with the College and supporting students with accreditation, membership, sourcing of placements and attendance at conferences.

Section 4: Progress in working with the external reference points to meet UK expectations for higher education

10 The College works closely with the relevant professional bodies to ensure that assessments and case studies reflect current practice as well as meeting the requirements of the awarding organisations. Staff work with *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* to ensure that delivery and assessment is at appropriate levels. The Academic Management Review visit by Pearson provided positive feedback and staff found it a supportive experience.

11 Recent validation and accreditation events with the University have resulted in the College delivering the final year of undergraduate degrees under the requirements and regulations of the University. The College is considering how this model can be extended across all provision to provide a single consistent system, which would also satisfy the requirements of all its awarding bodies.

12 The College has mapped policies and procedures against the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code). The most recent draft of the Quality Manual includes explicit references to the Quality Code. Staff have attended workshops to familiarise themselves with the Quality Code, and the College plans to continue these to further raise staff awareness.

Section 5: Background to the monitoring visit

13 The monitoring visit serves as a short check on the provider's continuing management of academic standards and quality of provision. It focuses on progress since the previous review. In addition, it provides an opportunity for QAA to advise the provider of any matters that have the potential to be of particular interest in the next monitoring visit or review.

14 The monitoring visit was carried out by Catherine Fairhurst (Coordinator) and Sue Miller (Reviewer) on 1 May 2014.

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Southgate House, Southgate Street, Gloucester GL1 1UB

Tel 01452 557000
Email enquiries@qaa.ac.uk
Web www.qaa.ac.uk

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