

BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

SUPPLEMENTARY INSPECTION CHANGE OF MANAGEMENT (Independent Higher Education)

INSTITUTION: Mountbatten Institute

ADDRESS: 99 Grays Inn Road
3rd Floor
London
WC1X 8TY

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Mr Tim Ellis

ACCREDITATION STATUS: Accredited

DATE OF INSPECTION: 8 April 2020

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Continued accreditation, 16 July 2020

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

Mountbatten Institute (the Institution) is the trading name for Mountbatten Programs Limited, a not-for-profit limited company that provides postgraduate business-related courses in partnership with the University of Chester and St Mary's University, Twickenham.

The Institution has offices in London and New York. However, BAC accreditation only applies to the London operation. In May 2019, the London offices moved to Grays Inn Road, close to the main teaching base in Central London.

Mountbatten Institute's aim is to foster international and cross-cultural understanding through experiential education, practical training and residential periods abroad, and to provide opportunities for personal growth and professional development.

The Institution is led by the Managing Director, supported by senior staff covering marketing, recruitment, academic matters, student support, information technology and business development. A New York-based Board of Trustees oversees strategic direction and operational matters.

Mountbatten Institute was founded in 1984 as a non-governmental organisation by its current Director General who is based in New York. Teaching and internships take place in London. In 2008, a collaborative agreement was signed with St Mary's University, Twickenham. As a result, a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in International Business Practice was validated by St Mary's. Since 2014, a collaborative partnership agreement has also been in place with the University of Chester, which enables students to enrol for a Master of Arts (MA) in Entrepreneurial Management and a Postgraduate Certificate (PGC) in International Business. Teaching and internships take place in London.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The Institution offers a 12-month paid training internship programme for citizens of the United States of America (USA) and international students. Alongside their internships, the students study on a full-time basis for the MBA in International Business Practice with St Mary's University or the MA in Entrepreneurial Management with the University of Chester. A further option is that they can undertake a part-time PGC in International Business with the University of Chester.

All three courses offer a mixture of evening and weekend face-to-face sessions, complemented by structured activities taken as part of the students' work experience.

At the time of the inspection, 45 students were enrolled in London. The majority of the students are from the USA and are female and aged between 21 and 23. There are no students under the age of 18. Other countries represented are Bahrain, Brazil, Canada, Columbia, India, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Serbia and Zimbabwe. There is no fixed capacity for the number of students as the Institution has flexible arrangements with its facilities managers, so that enrolments can be adjusted up or down according to demand.

There are two start dates for the courses, in August and March. Applications are made online, with closing dates approximately five months prior to the intended start date. Each course lasts one year. The Institution works with its partners to provide internships, but the number available depends on the prevailing business and economic factors. The prospective student should be a non-European Economic Area (EEA) citizen, a graduate with a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0, and have at least six months of full-time professional experience.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was carried out by one inspector during April 2020. The inspection took place online. The inspector had discussions with the London Operations Director, Academic Director and Programme Manager. Further e-mail correspondence took place with the Academic Director and Programme Manager. The inspector scrutinised various documentation covering key aspects of the inspection. The Institution cooperated fully with the inspection.

4. Background to the supplementary inspection

The inspection was required because of changes in senior management at the London operation, specifically the appointment of a current Board Director to the role of London Operations Director, and the appointment of a new Academic Director in March 2020.

5. Inspection history

Inspection type	Date
Full Accreditation	7, 10, 12 & 15 April 2013
Interim	25 June 2014
Spot Check	12 April 2016
Re-accreditation	10, 16 & 20 May 2017
Interim/Supplementary	20 August 2019

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. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

1.1 Governance, Strategy and Financial Management (full inspection)

The numbers below refer to the standards as presented in the Independent Higher Education scheme document and main full inspection report.

1. The institution is effectively and responsibly governed

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|-----|--|---|---|
| 1.1 | The overall organisational structure, including the role and extent of authority of any owners, directors or governing body, is clearly defined, documented and effectively communicated to stakeholders, including governors, management, staff and students. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.2 | There is an identified senior committee, with decision-making authority on academic matters, in order to protect the integrity of academic freedom. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.3 | The link between governance and management is clearly articulated and documented. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.4 | Internal stakeholders develop and implement policy through appropriate structures and processes while involving external stakeholders. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.5 | An explicit procedure for risk assessment is implemented, producing a risk assessment statement, which is regularly reviewed and updated. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.6 | Effective action is taken, by the governing body and senior managers, in response to the outcomes of regular risk assessments. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.7 | All relationships with other educational organisations are defined formally and are fully transparent with those organisations' requirements. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 1.8 | There are clear channels of communication between the governing body, the executive, academic management, staff, including those working remotely, students and other stakeholders. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution's organisational structure is clearly defined, documented and well established. A small team of highly qualified staff effectively manages the strategic direction and operation of the Institution. The Institution is overseen by an effective and experienced Board of Trustees.

The governing body and senior management team conduct regular risk assessments, as required by the constitution of the Institution, and appropriate actions are taken in response to the outcomes of these.

There are strong relationships with the validating partners, St Mary's University and the University of Chester. The MBA programme, which is validated by St Mary's University, was revalidated in August 2019. Both partners conducted an annual audit which was thorough and well managed.

The Institution is completing the current MBA programme with St Mary's University and migrating the programme to the University of Chester, to enable it to be more closely aligned to and to share modules with the existing PGC and MA courses.

There are clear and effective channels of communication between the Board of Trustees, London-based directors, the academic team, administrative staff, tutors, students, partner universities and employers.

2. The institution has a clear and achievable strategy

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| 2.1 | The institution has a clear strategy for the development of its higher education provision, which is supported by appropriate implementation plans and financial management and takes into account the quality of the student experience. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2.2 | There is provision for stakeholder input, including governors, management, staff and students, to inform the strategic direction of the institution. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2.3 | The strategy is well communicated to all stakeholders within and outside the institution. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2.4 | The governing body and senior management conduct a regular and systematic review of their own performance and the institution's overall performance and each are measured against strategic targets. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution's development of its higher education provision is influenced by its long-standing focus on experiential education, practical training and residence abroad, combined with opportunities for personal growth and professional development.

There is appropriate provision for input from stakeholders, including trustees, management and staff, to inform the strategic direction of the Institution.

The Institution has strong relationships with a range of employers who provide internships. These links are used to inform the Institution's current focus on the continued growth of current provision and consideration of new subjects, such as Business Analytics and Digital Marketing, based on future market demand.

The Board of Trustees and senior management team conduct a regular and systematic review of their own and the Institution's performance. This contributes well to the production of annual development plans. The annual review and development processes are effective and contribute effectively to performance improvement.

3. Financial management is open, honest and effective

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| 3.1 | The institution conducts its financial matters professionally, transparently and with appropriate probity. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3.2 | The institution's finances are subject to regular independent external audit. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution conducts all financial matters in a professional and transparent way. Annual financing and budgeting are overseen by the Board of Trustees.

The Institution's finances are externally and independently audited.

1.2 General and Academic Management and Administration (full inspection)

The numbers below refer to the standards as presented in the Independent Higher Education scheme document and main full inspection report.

4. The institution is effectively managed

4.1	The management structure is clearly defined, documented and understood by all stakeholder groups including governors, management, staff and students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4.2	There are clearly delineated responsibilities and reporting arrangements at institutional, faculty, departmental, programme and course levels.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4.3	There is an appropriate and effective committee structure, with appropriate reporting lines to inform management decision-making.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4.4	Committees have clear and appropriate terms of reference and meet regularly. The meetings are accurately recorded with clear action planning.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4.5	The institution has formal mechanisms to monitor the information it provides internally and externally and to make any enhancements deemed necessary to ensure that it is accurate and fit for purpose.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The day-to-day management structure is clearly defined and effective.

The Institution works closely with its validating higher education institutions (HEIs) through a committee structure of Programme Boards and Academic Boards. Annual reports are also made to the Institution's Board of Trustees.

Minutes from Board meetings and external examiner reports show that the Institution's academic management reflects the requirements of the partner HEIs. This includes formal committee structures, clear terms of reference, and an annual process of performance review and action planning. These structures and processes are used effectively to influence the management of the Institution, for example in planning changes to course structure.

5. The institution is administered effectively

5.1	The size of the administrative team is sufficient to ensure the effective day-to-day running of the institution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.2	The administrative support available to the management is clearly defined, documented and understood and appropriately focused to support its activities.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.3	Administrative policies, procedures and systems are well documented and disseminated effectively across the institution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.4	Classes are timetabled and rooms allocated appropriately for the courses offered.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.5	Data collection and collation systems are well documented, accurate and effectively disseminated.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.6	Comprehensive administrative records are organised and stored efficiently, easily accessed and used effectively.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.7	Students' records are sufficient, accurately maintained and up to date.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.8	Staff records are sufficient, accurately maintained and up to date.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.9	The institution has a robust security system and policies in place for protecting the data of its students and staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.10	The institution has processes, through which the institution verifies that the student who registers on the programme is the same student who participates on the course and completes and receives the credit.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

5.11	There are secure and efficient procedures for the administration of examinations and other means of assessment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.12	There are effective procedures for internal and external moderation at pre- and post-assessment stages.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.13	The institution makes student records and transcripts available to its students in a timely manner.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.14	There is a policy on the collection of and refund of students' fees which implemented effectively.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

All staff are involved in administration because of the small size of the London team.

The administrative policies, procedures and systems are clear, well documented and shared effectively across the Institution.

Classes are timetabled and rooms are allocated on a twice-yearly basis by the Programme Manager, in consultation with the Facilities Managers. These processes are conducted in a timely and effective manner.

The computer-based student records system has improved the accuracy and effectiveness of data collection and collation. Student records are well organised, accurately maintained and up to date.

The Institution has a rigorous and robust system for maintaining and protecting the data of students and staff.

The Institution tracks the identities of all students for visa purposes from initial application through to graduation. This process includes checking references, transcripts and sponsoring employers' records.

There are efficient procedures for the administration of examinations and other assessments. Partner universities ensure that there are appropriate and effective procedures for internal and external moderation.

The Institution makes student records and transcripts available to its students in a timely manner, and in accordance with the timelines required by St Mary's University and the University of Chester.

A clear and transparent policy for the collection or refund of students' fees works effectively and efficiently.

6. The institution employs and continues to support appropriately qualified and experienced staff

6.1	There are appropriate policies and effective procedures for the recruitment and continuing employment of suitably qualified and experienced staff, which is designed to ensure the safety of the learners.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.2	All staff are suitably qualified and experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying them out.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.3	There are clear and appropriate job specifications for all staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.4	There are effective procedures for the induction of all staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.5	All staff are treated fairly and according to a published equality and diversity policy.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.6	Staff have access to an appropriate complaints and appeals procedure.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.7	Management monitors and reviews the performance of all staff, through a clearly documented and transparent appraisal system which includes regular classroom observations of teaching staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

6.8 The professional development needs of staff are identified through appraisal and other means, and measures are taken to support staff to address these and gain additional qualifications, where relevant. Yes No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution has effective policies and procedures for the recruitment and employment of suitably qualified and experienced staff which ensures the safety and positive learning experience of all students.

There are clear and appropriate job specifications for all staff as well as effective procedures for their induction.

An up-to-date staff handbook details policies and procedures covering conditions of employment, equality and diversity, appeals and complaints. All staff have been provided with a copy of the handbook.

The Institution has developed templates for a staff appraisal system, including classroom observation.

6.7 The appraisal system has not yet been implemented for either academic or administrative staff.

There is good practice in the support of professional development, for example in supporting staff who wish to study for additional qualifications, or to study with a partner university.

7. Academic management is effective

7.1 There are appropriate procedures for the proposal, design and validation of programmes of study, which take account of the mission of the institution. Yes No

7.2 Intended learning outcomes for all programmes are clearly articulated, understood by students and are publicly available. Yes No

7.3 There are regularly scheduled and recorded meetings of academic staff where academic programmes are reviewed. Yes No

7.4 There is an appropriate policy and effective procedures for the acquisition of academic resources to support programmes. Yes No

7.5 Commissioning of course materials is managed effectively and materials and the budget are checked to ensure standardisation and consistency across the provision. Yes No

7.6 Students are encouraged to take an active role in the development of the academic provision to ensure student-centered learning. Yes No NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Programmes are developed with and validated by the partner HEIs. This assures the quality of programme delivery and resourcing and ensures that students experience high-quality postgraduate study.

Intended learning outcomes for all programmes are clearly set out on the Institution's website and in the detailed programme specifications that accompany each course.

The academic team convenes meetings on a regular basis and there are face-to-face and online meetings between the Institution's academic staff and the HEIs. Programme Boards and Academic Boards monitor courses during the year, record student progress, and ensure that the acquisition of course materials is managed effectively and consistently across the provision as a whole.

The Institution elicits feedback from each student for each module taught across all programmes. The outcomes of this process are used in an ongoing process of course review to ensure the provision delivers student-centred learning.

8. The institution takes reasonable care to recruit and enrol suitable students for its courses

8.1	Entry requirements for each programme are set at an appropriate level and are clearly stated in the programme descriptions seen by prospective students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.2	Students are informed as to the necessary language requirements for entry on to programmes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.3	A formal application process ensures that students meet the entry requirements and any claimed qualifications are verified.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.4	All students' application enquiries are responded to promptly and appropriately.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.5	Prospective students are properly briefed on the nature and requirements of the programme(s) in which they are interested and provided with advice on choosing their programme.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.6	Students receive a proper initial assessment, which includes language ability, to confirm their capability to complete the programmes on which they are enrolling.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.7	The institution makes it clear to applicants that they are responsible for checking that they have the skills and knowledge required to study on the chosen course.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.8	The institution has a clear policy on the accreditation of prior learning and prior experiential learning, which is brought to the attention of prospective students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
8.9	Any recruitment agents are properly selected, briefed, monitored and evaluated.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution uses an effective student recruitment and admissions process. The materials provided to applicants are clear and appropriate and cover the expected areas of detail. Entry requirements for each programme are approved by the partner HEIs and are clearly stated in the programme details on the Institution's website.

Applications to the Institution's programmes are made exclusively online. All applicants must confirm they have the skills and knowledge necessary to study on their chosen course, provide evidence of how they meet the eligibility criteria and include a personal statement.

The admissions process is well administered and staff keep prospective students informed of progress. The recruitment process includes an interview with the Operations Director, who is based in London, in conjunction with the employers who provide the internships.

Clear policies and procedures for the accreditation of prior learning are set by the validating universities.

9. The institution encourages and supports its staff to undertake research and other forms of scholarship and to engage in other professional activities

9.1	The institution encourages academic staff to undertake research in relevant fields and to publish their findings.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
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|-----|--|---|--|-----------------------------|
| 9.2 | Academic staff are encouraged to engage in research and/or scholarship which informs their teaching. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 9.3 | There is a fair and transparent procedure for staff to seek financial support for their research and other professional development activities. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 9.4 | The institution provides time for staff to meet regularly to share and discuss current research activities and, if appropriate, invites external speakers. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |

This standard is judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

Most academic staff are research active as part of their employment with other institutions within the United Kingdom (UK) higher education sector.

9.1 However, academic staff are not encouraged or required to undertake research in their relevant fields.

Academic staff are encouraged to engage in courses of study and other professional development activity, which informs their teaching.

Staff are encouraged and supported to engage in additional study.

9.4 Specific time is not made available for staff to meet regularly to share and discuss current research and scholarship activities.

10. Publicity material, both printed and electronic, gives a comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate description of the institution and its curriculum

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|------|---|---|-----------------------------|
| 10.1 | Text and images provide an accurate depiction of the institution’s location, premises, facilities and the range and nature of resources and services offered. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10.2 | Information on the programmes available, and their assessment and progression, is comprehensive, accurate, readily accessible and up to date. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10.3 | There are effective procedures to update information on a regular basis to ensure its relevance and accuracy. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10.4 | The information provided ensures students are well informed of the status of the qualifications offered, including the awarding body and level of award. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10.5 | Students are informed of the full cost of all programmes, including costs of assessments, activities and any required materials. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The material that is provided to prospective students in advance of their enrolment is clear and accurate, and provides an effective overview of the Institution’s facilities, resources, services and programmes.

Publicity material is reviewed regularly by academic and marketing staff to ensure it remains relevant.

The information provided ensures that students are well informed of the status of qualifications, including the awarding body and level of award, and are fully informed about the cost of courses, including materials.

1.3 Compliance Declaration

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated. Yes No

PART C – SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS

The Institution is effectively managed by an experienced Board of Trustees and senior management team.

Academic Managers have a close and effective working relationship with the Institution’s validating universities.

The Institution has strong links with a network of industry and sector contacts, including employers who provide successful internships for students.

The recruitment and enrolment processes are thorough and well organised, and ensure prospective students have the information, knowledge and skills to meet the demands of the programme.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

6.7 The Institution must implement an appraisal system for all staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
9.1 The Institution must encourage academic staff to undertake research in relevant fields and to publish their findings.	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
9.4 The Institution must provide time for staff to meet regularly to share and discuss their research activities.	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low

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

None

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS - FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE