Higher Education Review of University of Winchester

February 2016

Contents

About this review

This is a report of a Higher Education Review conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at the University of Winchester. The review took place from 15 to 19 February 2016 and was conducted by a team of four reviewers, as follows:

- Professor Susan Blake
- Mr Matthew Kitching (student reviewer)
- Professor Hastings McKenzie
- Ms Gillian Simpson.

The main purpose of the review was to investigate the higher education provided by the University of Winchester and to make judgements as to whether or not its academic standards and quality meet UK expectations. These expectations are the statements in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code)[1] setting out what all UK higher education providers expect of themselves and of each other, and what the general public can therefore expect of them.

In Higher Education Review, the QAA review team:

- makes judgements on
  - the setting and maintenance of academic standards
  - the quality of student learning opportunities
  - the information provided about higher education provision
  - the enhancement of student learning opportunities
- provides a commentary on the selected theme
- makes recommendations
- identifies features of good practice
- affirms action that the provider is taking or plans to take.

A summary of the findings can be found in the section starting on page 2. Explanations of the findings are given in numbered paragraphs in the section starting on page 6.

In reviewing the University of Winchester the review team has also considered a theme selected for particular focus across higher education in England and Northern Ireland.

The themes for the academic year 2015-16 are Student Employability and Digital Literacy,[2] and the provider is required to select, in consultation with student representatives, one of these themes to be explored through the review process.

The QAA website gives more information about QAA and its mission.[3] A dedicated section explains the method for Higher Education Review[4] and has links to the review handbook and other informative documents. For an explanation of terms see the glossary at the end of this report.

---

[1] The UK Quality Code for Higher Education is published at:
www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code.
[2] Higher Education Review themes:
www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=2859.
[3] QAA website: www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us.
[4] Higher Education Review web pages:
www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews-and-reports/how-we-review-higher-education/higher-education-review.

Key findings

QAA's judgements about the University of Winchester

The QAA review team formed the following judgements about the higher education provision at the University of Winchester.

- The setting and maintenance of the academic standards of awards **meet** UK expectations.
- The quality of student learning opportunities **meets** UK expectations.
- The quality of the information about learning opportunities **meets** UK expectations.
- The enhancement of student learning opportunities is **commended**.

Good practice

The QAA review team identified the following features of **good practice** at the University of Winchester.

- The extensive range of volunteering opportunities available to students, which enhance employability skills and career prospects (Expectations B4 and Enhancement).
- The widespread opportunities for students to engage in decision making through the Student Academic Council (Expectations B5 and Enhancement).
- The strength of partnerships between staff and students within the Student Fellows Scheme and its effective contribution to enhancing the wider student experience (Expectations B5 and Enhancement).
- The wide engagement of students and staff in the University's structured and value-driven approach to the enhancement of students' learning opportunities (Enhancement).

Recommendations

The QAA review team makes the following **recommendations** to the University of Winchester.

By June 2016:

- establish robust processes to ensure comparability of standards across similarly titled awards (Expectations A3.2, A3.4, B6, B7 and B10)
- ensure explicit reference to including external scrutiny in processes for approval of changes to award titles (Expectations B8 and A3.4)
- in respect of collaborative provision, ensure that degree certificates and/or records of academic achievement state the principal language of instruction where this is not English and the name and location of the provider involved in the delivery of the programme (Expectation B10).

By September 2016:

- ensure transparency of entry criteria to programmes that entail competence in a language other than the main language of instruction (Expectation B2 and B10)
- strengthen oversight of processes delegated to partner institutions for moderation of assessment tasks (Expectations B10, B6 and B7).

Theme: Student Employability

The University places considerable emphasis on securing the employability of its students and has established a variety of processes with a view to monitoring and strengthening activity towards this goal. It is an explicit element of the Learning and Teaching Strategy of the University to further student development and achievement, with employability being one of its four Academic Development Themes. The University has clear and effective processes for embedding these themes in planning and practice.

The Careers Service provides a range of support activities for students with a view to furthering their employability, particularly during its annual Employability and Skills Week. Many students take advantage of these opportunities and express positive views about the quality of support offered to them.

The University's portfolio of programmes includes a number that have direct links with employers or opportunities for work experience, and a significant proportion of the University's degree programmes are vocational in design and focus. A number of departments offering vocational courses have strong links with employers. The review team heard numerous examples of employers' involvement in programme and curriculum design, and in validation and revalidation. Although some departments have employer advisory groups, practice in engagement with employers does not follow a standard model across the University.

The University regards its volunteering scheme as supporting its institutional values. Students were very positive about the experience provided by the volunteering module, which they believed helped them to develop skills relevant to employment. Many local employers and other organisations have worked with the University for a number of years in providing work placements and volunteering opportunities for students. Representatives of such organisations expressed very positive views about these relationships.

Overall, students saw the development of employability as an important aspect of their university experience, and were very positive about the range of opportunities open to them. Students confirmed that employability was incorporated into programmes, and most had taken part in at least one of the employability opportunities offered, generally finding it to be a very useful experience, despite the difficulty of finding appropriate work experience in some areas.

Further explanation of the key findings can be found in the handbook available on the QAA webpage explaining [Higher Education Review](#).

About the University of Winchester

The title of the University of Winchester was conferred in 2005, following the conferment of taught degree awarding powers in 2004; subsequently, research degree awarding powers were conferred in 2008. The University is active in exploring the contemporary significance and meaning of its Christian foundation as the Winchester Diocesan Training School. It aspires to be world leading in delivering values-led higher education, and bases its activities on values deriving from its foundation: intellectual freedom; social justice; diversity; spirituality; individuals matter; and creativity.

The University's two campuses, the King Alfred Campus and West Downs, lie near the centre of the city of Winchester. In 2014-15 it had 7,487 students, including 5,856 undergraduates, 1,416 students on postgraduate taught programmes and 160 postgraduate research students. Its nine collaborative partners offer programmes leading to awards of the University to a total of 544 associate students.

The University was the subject of a QAA Institutional Audit in 2009, the outcomes of which were positive. The audit report contained one advisable and three desirable recommendations: the review team considered the progress made by the University in implementing the recommendations and concluded that they have all been satisfactorily addressed. The Institutional Audit report also identified four features of good practice. The review team concludes that the areas of good practice have been consolidated and further embedded within the University's practice.

Since the 2009 Institutional Audit, the University has undertaken a considerable investment in its physical infrastructure by renovating existing, and creating new, teaching and learning space. The estates master-plan foresees further investment in the period until 2025, including a major expansion of learning and teaching space.

Explanation of the findings about the University of Winchester

This section explains the review findings in more detail.

Terms that may be unfamiliar to some readers have been included in a brief glossary at the end of this report. A fuller glossary of terms is available on the QAA website, and formal definitions of certain terms may be found in the operational description and handbook for the review method, also on the QAA website.

1 Judgement: The setting and maintenance of the academic standards of awards

Expectation (A1): In order to secure threshold academic standards, degree-awarding bodies:

a) ensure that the requirements of *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) are met by:

- **positioning their qualifications at the appropriate level of the relevant framework for higher education qualifications**
- **ensuring that programme learning outcomes align with the relevant qualification descriptor in the relevant framework for higher education qualifications**
- **naming qualifications in accordance with the titling conventions specified in the frameworks for higher education qualifications**
- **awarding qualifications to mark the achievement of positively defined programme learning outcomes**

b) consider and take account of QAA's guidance on qualification characteristics

c) where they award UK credit, assign credit values and design programmes that align with the specifications of the relevant national credit framework

d) consider and take account of relevant Subject Benchmark Statements.

Quality Code, *Chapter A1: UK and European Reference Points for Academic Standards*

Findings

1.1   The University has a focus on meeting threshold standards, and on the currency of its portfolio. The programme specification for each programme is subject to initial approval and to revalidation at intervals of six years, and maps the award to the FHEQ, following a template layout. Programme learning outcomes that must be achieved for an award to be made are set on validation, and all qualifications are aligned with the relevant national credit framework. The number and level of learning for credits is tested on validation and revalidation, except for some postgraduate programmes which lack a credit framework.

1.2   Qualification and grade descriptors are set out in the Assessment Regulations. For postgraduate research degrees these are in the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes and in the Programme Outlines.

1.3   QAA guidance on qualification characteristics is taken into account on approval and revalidation of degrees at all levels. Subject Benchmark Statements are taken into account whenever applicable in programme design, and are tested on validation and revalidation: revised Subject Benchmark Statements are distributed internally by the Director of Academic Quality and Development as they appear. Qualifications are named in accordance with the FHEQ and the suitability of the award name is considered as part of validation approval.

1.4   In addition to the University's own oversight of its requirements through programme validation and revalidation processes, external examiners are specifically asked to confirm

alignment with Subject Benchmark Statements and relevant national standards in their reports.

1.5   The University's policies and processes, if appropriately implemented, would enable the Expectation to be met.

1.6   The team met a range of academic and professional staff who had been involved in programme approval and revalidation, and read a range of documentation in relation to programme design and the University's policies and procedures.

1.7   Documentation relating to a wide range of programme approvals and revalidations consistently shows appropriate engagement with all aspects of the FHEQ, the national credit framework and relevant Subject Benchmark Statements. In addition, a range of programme specifications shows similarly appropriate engagement with the FHEQ. External examiners' reports confirm alignment with Subject Benchmark Statements and national standards across all types of provision offered by the University.

1.8   Members of academic staff show awareness of the importance of FHEQ requirements and Subject Benchmark Statements, and of their use in setting learning outcomes and appropriate credit levels.

1.9   Effective processes are in place to secure academic standards, and are well understood and followed. The Expectation is met and the level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A2.1): In order to secure their academic standards, degree-awarding bodies establish transparent and comprehensive academic frameworks and regulations to govern how they award academic credit and qualifications.

Quality Code, *Chapter A2: Degree-Awarding Bodies' Reference Points for Academic Standards*

Findings

1.10   While Senate has ultimate responsibility for academic governance, its subcommittee, the Senate Academic Development Committee (SADC), has the major central role as regards oversight of quality and standards. The academic standards of research programmes are overseen by the Research Degrees Quality Committee (RDQC), which is a subcommittee of SADC. The Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedure Committee is a subcommittee of SADC with responsibility for the development and revision of formal regulations and policies.

1.11   The University has four faculties with17 academic departments. The four Faculty Academic Development Committees (FADC) have similar roles so that the committee structure is largely aligned at faculty and University level. All programmes come within the remit of a Programme Committee, which reports to the relevant FADC. Programme committees meet at least three times per year, and are responsible for programme development, amendment and review, considering matters such as Annual Programme Evaluations (APE) and student feedback. All programme committee meeting minutes are received by the relevant FADC, which is responsible for ensuring programme committees are appropriately constituted and discharge their responsibilities properly.

1.12   Support for quality assurance processes is provided by the Quality Office and Learning and Teaching Development Unit, which are combined together as the Academic Quality and Development Department.

1.13   The regulations for all credit-bearing programmes and qualifications are contained in the Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes and the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes, together with the Assessment Regulations. Any exemptions from, or additions to, regulations must be approved by the Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures Committee, and set out in the relevant programme specification. The Conduct of Exam Boards for Taught Programmes provides guidelines for the conduct of examination boards including those run at collaborative partners.

1.14   The committee framework at University and faculty level is clear, and appropriate regulations and procedures are in place, which would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.15   The team met staff who were members of the governance committees at University and faculty level. In addition, they read a range of committee papers and other documentation relating to the University's academic framework and regulations.

1.16   The University regards its academic committee structure as being clear and effective, and believes that the alignment of committees at faculty and University levels has provided a good line of sight between University and programme levels. A review of the effectiveness of the SADC concluded that it works well not only in providing oversight but also in enabling consultation and information exchange, both upwards and downwards. Staff of the University characterised the structure and focus of the committees as aligning quality and standards with learning and teaching, thus supporting enhancement. The composition of many committees centrally and at faculty and programme levels includes staff from

professional services, who confirmed that the committee structure assists them in working effectively. The review team also heard that students find that the committee structure is effective, especially as regards the work of programme committees. Committee agendas, papers and minutes show an appropriate range of business being properly conducted, with proper consideration of issues and setting and monitoring of actions.

1.17   Staff and students showed familiarity with academic and assessment regulations which are available electronically and which are appropriate for their purpose.

1.18   The University has a clear and effective academic governance structure which is embedded in an appropriate academic and regulatory framework. The Expectation is met and the risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A2.2): Degree-awarding bodies maintain a definitive record of each programme and qualification that they approve (and of subsequent changes to it) which constitutes the reference point for delivery and assessment of the programme, its monitoring and review, and for the provision of records of study to students and alumni.

Quality Code, *Chapter A2: Degree-Awarding Bodies' Reference Points for Academic Standards*

Findings

1.19   The programme specification for each taught programme is prepared using a template, and the resulting document is subject to approval on validation and on revalidation. In addition, a module specification template is used for the approval or re-approval of any module leading to the award of credit. These specifications include statements on content, learning outcomes, and teaching and assessment strategies. The Quality Office is responsible for providing support to academic staff and to committees in respect of approval processes.

1.20   It is a standing condition of validation and revalidation that the programme leader produces a definitive version of programme and module documentation. A definitive document containing the programme specification and related module specifications is stored in the Quality Office's Common Folders. Work is currently taking place to put these documents onto a shared web-based platform to allow direct access for staff and students. Previous versions of specifications are retained in electronic form.

1.21   There are three procedures for the approval of amendments to programme documents: the Process and Procedures for Programme Amendment, applies to all provision other than collaborative provision and programmes undergoing institutional monitoring, for each of which there is a distinct procedure. As a support to central processes of version control, APEs and Faculty Annual Academic Development Reports are required to record all amendments approved in the course of the academic year, so that annual updates include all approved changes.

1.22   PhD Programme Outlines and Regulations are approved by Senate, retained centrally, and are made available on the Postgraduate Research Degrees section of the University website.

1.23   All student data and marks are entered into a common electronic student record management system, including data in relation to students at collaborative partners. These student records are used as the basis for records of study.

1.24   The design of documents, approval and re-approval processes, and the maintenance of a central database of records of student progression and achievement would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.25   The team read a range of documentation relating to programmes and procedures, and met academic and professional staff engaged in programme approval and review processes.

1.26   Programme approval and revalidation documents show that definitive programme and module specifications were confirmed as part of the process. Members of staff showed an understanding of the importance of creating and maintaining definitive documentation, confirming that a single version of the programme specification was used for all purposes.

Staff also confirmed that up-to-date versions are held by the Quality Office, with hyperlinks to the central version for online course documents and handbooks.

1.27 In expressing the view that there are only minor differences between them, members of staff showed a clear understanding of the three different processes for amending programme documentation and confirmed that the updating of specifications is checked each year as part of APE. A significant level of amendment to a programme specification may nevertheless trigger an early revalidation. Students confirmed that they have access to up-to-date programme and module specifications.

1.28 Definitive programme documents are approved, processes for amendment are followed, and current versions of documents are stored centrally. The Expectation is met and the risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.1): Degree-awarding bodies establish and consistently implement processes for the approval of taught programmes and research degrees that ensure that academic standards are set at a level which meets the UK threshold standard for the qualification and are in accordance with their own academic frameworks and regulations.

Quality Code, *Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards*

Findings

1.29   The process of new programme validation requires programmes to specify and map programme learning outcomes and individual module learning outcomes against the FHEQ, Subject Benchmark Statements, and other relevant reference points. A panel, including independent external academic and professional representatives and a minimum of one student member, tests proposed new programmes against threshold academic standards, and provides a written report to the SADC which forms the basis for the Committee's decision on whether to approve the programme. The University's regulations for taught programmes, including regulations for the award of qualifications and credit and the Process and Procedures for Programme Approval and Withdrawal, provide a comprehensive framework for ensuring that its awards meet UK threshold standards. These procedures, if implemented effectively, would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.30   The review team examined the documentation requirements, templates and pro forma to be completed for new programmes proposed for approval, and associated guidance on how these should be completed, together with the documentation provided for a sample of validation events, event reports, and committee minutes. The review team also explored the validation process and supporting guidance through discussions with senior academic managers, and staff, students and employers with experience of the validation process.

1.31   The University's process for the design and approval of a new programme requires that it has appropriate aims, learning outcomes, and standards, is aligned with the FHEQ, and takes account of relevant Subject Benchmark Statements and other reference points including requirements of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs), as well as relevant University policies, strategies and procedures. The programme specification and module descriptors are scrutinised through the approval process and become the definitive record of the programme.

1.32   Validation panels, which include two external members (one academic and one professional/practitioner) and at least one student, test whether these requirements have been met. Appropriate training to support panel members in their role is offered.

1.33   FADCs are responsible for approving the proposal and documentation that will be considered at the validation event. The outcome of the validation, which may be subject to conditions or recommendations, is finally approved by the SADC on the basis of the report of the validation event.

1.34   The criteria and processes for the design and approval of new programmes apply to all taught programmes including collaborative provision. Additional requirements that apply to the approval of new collaborative programmes only are detailed in the Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision Policy, which sets out the stages in the approval process including procedures for institutional approval and for programme validation. These procedures form a robust approach to the development and approval of collaborative provision.

1.35   The Senate Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee gives permission to approved subject areas to recruit postgraduate research students, using criteria set out in the Policy for Approval of New Subject Areas. These criteria are appropriate in focusing on the extent of experience of research supervision, the depth of a research culture and the sufficiency of research and knowledge exchange expertise within the subject area concerned.

1.36   The University's procedures for design and approval of new programmes take appropriate account of its own regulations, national qualifications and credit frameworks, and Subject Benchmark Statements when setting academic standards. Expectation A3.1 is met and the risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.2): Degree-awarding bodies ensure that credit and qualifications are awarded only where:

- **the achievement of relevant learning outcomes (module learning outcomes in the case of credit and programme outcomes in the case of qualifications) has been demonstrated through assessment**
- **both UK threshold standards and their own academic standards have been satisfied.**

Quality Code, *Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards*

Findings

1.37   The University publishes Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes and Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes, which detail programme structures and the credits required to achieve an award. Assessment Regulations govern the award of credit for taught programmes and modules based upon the completion of assessed work. All taught provision at collaborative partners adheres to the rules for progression and award as governed by the University's Academic Regulations.

1.38   Further information on programme structures and assessments is contained in module descriptors and programme specifications which map module outcomes to programme-level outcomes with respect to knowledge and skills.

1.39   Assessed work for on-campus provision is internally verified and moderated by programme teams. Practice with partner institutions varies, but is summarised in an annually updated Operational Handbook for each partner; these arrangements are described in Expectation B10.

1.40   An Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy articulates the University's commitment to accessible and inclusive learning and teaching for all students. Support is provided by Student Services to make reasonable adjustments under this policy for students with recognised needs, and guidelines are available for the production of Learning Agreements.

1.41   Examination boards act on behalf of Senate in accordance with the University's Conduct of Exam Boards for Taught Programmes including Collaborative Partners - Guidelines. Through the confirmation of module marks, the boards confirm the achievement of learning outcomes resulting in the award of credit. Although failed modules may be compensated, an examination board must satisfy itself that in such circumstances the student has achieved the learning outcomes for that level of study. The University's most recent programme specification template has been designed to assist in this process through the explicit mapping of module learning outcomes against programme learning outcomes.

1.42   The External Examiners of Taught Programmes - Policy and Procedures was compiled with reference to *Chapter B7* of the Quality Code and defines the role of external examiners, who scrutinise samples of assessed work in order to verify standards and attend examination boards with a view to confirming that assessment and examination procedures have been fairly and properly implemented. At departmental level an examination board confirms module marks and grades and makes recommendations regarding progression or award for each student. At faculty level the examination board confirms the decisions regarding progression or award for each student.

1.43   The Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes set out the criteria for the award of research degrees. An internal examiner and an external examiner are present during viva voce examinations in order to confirm that these criteria are met and that the requisite standards are achieved.

1.44   The University's policies and procedures are sufficient, if implemented, to allow the Expectation to be met.

1.45   The review team tested the Expectation by considering documentation setting out relevant policies and procedures and by meeting members of staff, students, employers and alumni of the University.

1.46   The regulatory framework and the use of internal and external examiners are effective in maintaining threshold standards of on-campus provision for taught degrees, professional doctorates and research degrees. Through the use of an identical regulatory framework for its collaborative partners the University's processes ensure that awards made through its UK collaborative partners, also meet threshold standards. In respect of students with disabilities, reasonable adjustments are made where required and the University encourages a practice referred to as mainstreaming, which attempts to avoid the need for reactive, one-off measures.

1.47   The processes for ensuring standards at the University's partner institution in Greece, the International College of Business Studies (ICBS), are described in Expectation B10. The verification of draft assessments for the eight undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in business, marketing and accounting programmes offered across the three campuses of ICBS takes the form of email exchanges between, on the one hand, the teaching team and the Academic Liaison Officer (ALO) based at ICBS and, on the other, the Senior ALO based on-campus. The process of draft assessment verification at the University for all programmes precludes involvement of external examiners. Assessed work is subsequently internally moderated prior to moderation by an external examiner.

1.48   The University offers similarly titled programmes in the fields of business and marketing at ICBS and on campus, specifically an MBA and a BA (Hons) Marketing. The versions of these programmes at ICBS are structured differently from the corresponding on-campus versions, and are delivered independently and in a different language. The system of verification of draft assessments at ICBS and the University's practice of retrospective external moderation risks a potential variance of standards across similarly titled awards. The review team **recommends** that the University should establish robust processes to ensure comparability of standards across similarly titled awards.

1.49   The University's processes for the award of credit and for securing standards are generally sound: the Expectation is met. However, the lack of safeguards to ensure that the standards of similarly titled awards are comparable constitutes a shortcoming in terms of the rigour with which its procedures are applied. The level of risk is moderate.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Moderate

Expectation (A3.3): Degree-awarding bodies ensure that processes for the monitoring and review of programmes are implemented which explicitly address whether the UK threshold academic standards are achieved and whether the academic standards required by the individual degree-awarding body are being maintained.

Quality Code, *Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards*

Findings

1.50   Taught programmes are monitored annually through the completion by the programme team of an APE, which is informed by reflection on the maintenance of academic standards, supported by a common template and the availability of data on student entry qualifications, progression and achievement, external examiners' reports and the results of student module evaluations. APE reports, with associated action plans, are considered at the relevant Programme Committee Meetings and FADC. The reports also inform the Faculty Annual Academic Development Report, which is in turn considered by SADC.

1.51   Programmes that have adopted a credit framework, including professional doctorates, are revalidated every six years in line with the Process and Procedures for Programme Approval and Withdrawal, which requires that the programme is aligned with the FHEQ and takes due account of relevant Subject Benchmark Statements.

1.52   The University's procedures to monitor explicitly alignment with threshold standards on an annual basis, together with the arrangements for the systematic periodic review of the cumulative effect of ongoing monitoring during the six-yearly revalidation cycle, provide a framework for securing and maintaining the threshold standards of awards. This framework, if implemented, would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.53   The review team explored the APE and periodic review processes through consideration of guidance documentation, scrutiny of documentation for, and the outcomes of, APE and revalidation, reports and minutes of relevant committees, and discussions with senior academic managers, teaching staff, students and employers with experience of the monitoring and review processes.

1.54   APE reports inform the Faculty Annual Academic Development Report which is then considered by SADC, thereby providing oversight across faculties. If a risk to threshold academic standards is identified by FADC or SADC, the latter may place a programme under institutional monitoring, involving a procedure set out in the Process and Procedures for Programme Approval and Withdrawal.

1.55   Programmes are revalidated every six years to confirm that they continue to meet threshold academic standards. The process, detailed in Process and Procedures for Programme Approval and Withdrawal, requires that a panel, including independent academic, professional and student representatives, considers a range of information to test whether the programme continues to meet the threshold academic standards set at validation. The information considered by the panel includes a mapping of programme learning outcomes and individual module learning outcomes against the FHEQ, statistical data on student achievement of the intended learning outcomes and external examiners' reports, which include a commentary on whether threshold academic standards have been met.

1.56   Programme staff at collaborative partners complete an APE, using the same template as for other University programmes, which is considered by the relevant FADC. Such programmes are revalidated every six years in accordance with the Process and Procedures for Programme Approval and Withdrawal. In addition, the existing Institutional Approval of partners is considered for renewal prior to revalidation, in line with the Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision Policy.

1.57   An annual report on postgraduate research provision is prepared by RDQC, and considered and approved by SADC. Professional doctorates are reviewed every six years following the process set out in Processes and Procedures for Programme Approval and Withdrawal.

1.58   The University's procedures for programme evaluation and revalidation take appropriate account of the FHEQ and Subject Benchmark Statements. In particular, the revalidation process considers alignment with academic and professional benchmarks when recommending continued approval of programmes. The Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.4): In order to be transparent and publicly accountable, degree-awarding bodies use external and independent expertise at key stages of setting and maintaining academic standards to advise on whether:

- **UK threshold academic standards are set, delivered and achieved**
- **the academic standards of the degree-awarding body are appropriately set and maintained.**

Quality Code, *Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards*

Findings

1.59   The University appoints external examiners with a view to verifying academic standards in accordance with the External Examiners of Taught Programmes - Policy and Procedures. Each external examiner is required to produce an annual report to confirm programme standards and is asked to comment on whether recommendations raised in previous reports have been satisfied. Issues that require institutional attention are drawn from these reports by the Quality Office and collated into an action plan that is overseen by the SADC.

1.60   Details of external examiners are published on programme Learning Network or Canvas pages. The student intranet offers access to external examiners' reports, along with the response from the relevant programme team.

1.61   Research degrees are examined by at least two examiners, one of whom is external to the University. Criteria for their appointment are stipulated in a document entitled Form J - Intention to Submit and Examination Arrangements; nominations are subject to approval by the RDQC. The Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes detail requirements for the examination of a thesis and the criteria against which a doctoral or master's degree is awarded. The reports prepared by external examiners in respect of each examination are collated annually into a report received by the RDQC.

1.62   The Process and Procedures for Programme Approval and Withdrawal stipulate that panels for the approval of new programmes, whether for on-campus or for collaborative provision, should include a subject specialist and an industry representative from a career indicative of the type graduates might aspire to enter.

1.63   Amendments to modules for on-campus or collaborative programmes are sent by the Quality Office to the relevant external examiners for review and comment prior to formal approval. For programmes with recognition by a PSRB, the Quality Office takes responsibility for informing the PSRB of any proposed amendments.

1.64   Changes to award titles are subject to approval by the University Management Group (UMG) using a form published in the Process and Procedures for Programme Approval and Withdrawal.

1.65   The University's policies and procedures are sufficient, if implemented, to allow the Expectation to be met.

1.66   The review team tested the Expectation by considering documentation setting out relevant policies and procedures and by meeting members of staff, students, employers and alumni of the University.

1.67   The University has robust processes and procedures for nominating and appointing external examiners and takes care to appoint suitably qualified and independent subject experts. Although arrangements for gaining assurance that threshold standards are met would be strengthened by requiring external examiners to comment on or to verify all draft assessment tasks in advance, the University's processes allow it to ensure that standards are achieved. External examiners' reports form an active part of the process for APE, and issues raised by external examiners are routinely considered through the University's deliberative processes. The use of external examiners for research degree examination is thorough and their reports receive appropriate consideration.

1.68   The lack of processes to ensure comparability in the external examining of similarly-titled programmes offered on campus and at ICBS contributes to the recommendation in Expectation A3.2 that the University should establish robust processes to ensure comparability of standards across similarly titled awards.

1.69   The processes for approval for amendments to programmes and modules are coordinated by the Quality Office and make adequate use of external input and expertise. However, the formal process for the amendment of programme titles follows a more streamlined process, requiring only formal approval by the UMG and without a requirement for any external commentary. This contributes to the recommendation in Expectation B8 that the University should ensure explicit reference to including external scrutiny in processes for approval of changes to award titles.

1.70   The University's procedures for securing external and independent expertise in setting and maintaining academic standards are generally sound. The Expectation is met. While shortcomings exist, they are limited in extent and there is no evidence that they have put standards at risk. The level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

The setting and maintenance of the academic standards of awards: Summary of findings

1.71   In reaching its judgement, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published handbook. All of the Expectations for this judgement area have been met. The associated level of risk was judged to be low, except for Expectation A3.2 for which the level of risk was judged to be moderate.

1.72   The University has processes for securing academic standards for its on-campus provision that are effective and well understood by its staff. It has transparent and comprehensive frameworks to ensure that standards are set at appropriate levels within institutional frameworks and that the definitive record of each programme is used to govern the award of academic credit and qualifications.

1.73   However, the lack of safeguards to ensure that the standards of similarly titled awards arising from programmes delivered at collaborative partners and on-campus are comparable constitutes a shortcoming in terms of the rigour with which its procedures are applied, and led to the single recommendation relating to this judgement area.

1.74   On the basis of the documentation provided and meetings with staff and students, the review team concludes that the maintenance of the academic standards of awards at the University **meets** UK expectations.

2　Judgement: The quality of student learning opportunities

Expectation (B1): Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes.

Quality Code, *Chapter B1: Programme Design, Development and Approval*

Findings

2.1　The University's processes for programme design, development and approval address academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, including resources, available to students. The University has in place procedures, guidelines and templates for the design and approval of new modules and programmes that address the relevant aspects of the Quality Code.

2.2　In respect of collaborative provision, the University's processes for programme approval are supplemented by additional principles for the approval of collaborations and by the process for institutional approval of new partners detailed in the Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision Policy. These require systematic consideration of standards and the quality of the learning opportunities, to ensure that new programmes meet UK thresholds and benchmarks, as well as the University's own requirements.

2.3　New professional doctorate programmes are approved following the University's normal processes of programme approval. Research degrees that do not follow a modular structure are approved by Senate Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee as part of the approval of a subject area as suitable for offering research degrees.

2.4　The policies and procedures in place would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.5　The review team examined the University's guidance for the validation of new programmes and sampled documentation submitted for validation, reports of validations and revalidations, and minutes of committees where validations were considered or reported. It also explored the validation process and supporting guidance through discussions with senior staff, teaching staff, students and staff from professional services.

2.6　In accordance with the approach set out in the Process and Procedures for Programme Approval and Withdrawal, new taught programmes are approved in two stages, ensuring that the academic and business cases for proposals are considered separately.

2.7　The criteria for the validation of new programmes are clear, and include appropriate reference to the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy as well as to external reference points. Support is provided at an early stage for staff designing new programmes. The completed and approved Academic Resources Form is made available to validation panels to provide assurance that resourcing for the programme has been fully considered and agreed.

2.8　Following internal scrutiny, a range of documentation is put forward for consideration by a panel. The membership of validation panels is appropriate, including an academic independent of the subject team, a representative from a profession appropriate to the anticipated career direction of graduates and at least one student member. The responsibilities of those involved in the approval process are clear and suitable training is provided. Student membership of validation panels is a recent development; students who

had participated in validation events confirmed that they had been well prepared for it, and that their views had been heard within the panel.

2.9 The University evaluates its processes for programme approval using evaluation pro formas, which panel members and programme proposers are invited to complete following the validation event. Completed evaluations are collated annually, the outcomes being considered at SADC and used to inform updates to the process.

2.10 The University's processes for the design, development and approval of new programmes are robust. The validation process makes relevant use of externality, including academic and professional benchmarking, and of student views. Decisions from validation are reported through the deliberative committee structure, where final approval is conferred, providing opportunities to review and evaluate the approval process. The Expectation is met and the level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B2): Recruitment, selection and admission policies and procedures adhere to the principles of fair admission. They are transparent, reliable, valid, inclusive and underpinned by appropriate organisational structures and processes. They support higher education providers in the selection of students who are able to complete their programme.

Quality Code, *Chapter B2: Recruitment, Selection and Admission to Higher Education*

Findings

2.11   The University operate two policies relating to admissions: the Admissions Policy for Taught Programmes and the Postgraduate Research Programmes - Admissions Policy, both of which are approved by Senate. The University's detailed Admissions Policy for Taught Programmes is built upon the institution's vision and contains an explicit commitment to widening participation. Responsibility for admissions is delegated to the Director of Student Recruitment and Dean of Admissions. The policy specifies the institution's approach to entry requirements, which are detailed on the University website and in the relevant prospectus. Responsibility for research degree admissions lies with the RDQC. Criteria for admitting students onto programmes taught by collaborative partners are detailed in programme validation documentation. Responsibilities of the University and its partners are also set out in memoranda of agreement, which govern the operation of individual partnerships.

2.12   The University provides training for staff on recruitment, selection and admission, including guidance on how to interview applicants emanating from its Policy for Interviewing Student Applicants. The University appoints agents to recruit international students; the policy that guides this work is supported by a programme of training for agents.

2.13   The University has in place an Appeals by Student Applicants Policy, which affords prospective students the right to challenge an admissions decision if they are not satisfied. The policy details clear grounds for appeal and the timescales under which submissions will be considered. This policy is available to applicants and other stakeholders on the website.

2.14   The team found that the University's comprehensive policies, its documented arrangements governing admission to collaborative partners and its appeals policy, together with staff training on admissions within the University's staff development programme, would enable the Expectation to be met.

2.15   The team tested the Expectation by meeting staff and undergraduate and postgraduate students. In addition, the team scrutinised a range of documentation including the Admissions Policy for Taught Programmes, the Postgraduate Research Programmes Admissions Policy, the Annual Operating Statement, committee minutes and other relevant documentation.

2.16   Students spoke positively about their experience of the admissions process, confirming that information produced by the University is accurate and helps them to make informed decisions. Training for staff members with responsibility for recruitment and admissions at undergraduate and postgraduate levels is effective. The Director of Student Recruitment and Dean of Admissions operates a briefing programme in advance of University Open Days, which helps to ensure that all staff are equipped to provide applicants with the information they require.

2.17   The team found that the University maintains clear processes for the appointment of recruitment agents and that references are sought on a routine basis. The Director of

Student Recruitment and Dean of Admissions is responsible for briefing and overseeing the work of agents and for scrutinising and monitoring the information they produce for dissemination to students.

2.18   The University adopts a risk-based approach to overseeing the admissions process for collaborative provision. The ALO samples admissions decisions made directly by the partner institution, with the exception of applications for accreditation of prior learning, which are considered directly by the relevant ALO. While this aligns with the University's policies in relation to the majority of its partners, in respect of ICBS practice differs from the approach set out in the Operational Handbook for that partnership, which states that the ALO approves all admissions decisions rather than adopting a sampling approach.

2.19   Students studying at ICBS are admitted under entry criteria that do not contain any English language requirements. While programmes at ICBS are delivered in Greek, reading lists for students contain English sources. Staff and students expressed the view that the English language competency of students at ICBS enables them to engage adequately with these sources. Nevertheless, without specified entry requirements relating to language competency, variability in students' competence in English has the potential to impact on student achievement. The team therefore **recommends** that the University ensures transparency of entry criteria to programmes which entail competence in a language other than the main language of instruction.

2.20   The University has processes in respect of recruitment, selection and admission which are comprehensive and transparent. The single shortcoming relates to a need to amend documentation and will not require major operational change. The Expectation is met and the level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B3): Higher education providers, working with their staff, students and other stakeholders, articulate and systematically review and enhance the provision of learning opportunities and teaching practices, so that every student is enabled to develop as an independent learner, study their chosen subject(s) in depth and enhance their capacity for analytical, critical and creative thinking.

Quality Code, *Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching*

Findings

2.21 The University's Learning and Teaching Strategy 2015-18 is underpinned by four academic development themes - student engagement, design and innovation, technology, and employability. These themes are intended to aid the promotion of a shared understanding of strategic focus among staff and students.

2.22 Progress in the four academic development themes is considered and measured through APEs, annual faculty learning and teaching reports, and the Annual Academic Development Report for Faculties. Examples of good practice from APEs are identified and disseminated via the SADC. The themes are also considered during learning and teaching training events, including Learning Lunches, the Annual Learning And Teaching Conference, and the Annual Student Fellows Conference.

2.23 The Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy, supported by Student Services, encourages what the University refers to as 'mainstreaming', whereby reasonable adjustments to enable the participation of disabled students are made proactively with the aim of avoiding, where possible, one-off reactive measures. The University remains committed to making reasonable adjustments as needed, including for MPhil/PhD viva.

2.24 Academic staff are encouraged to reflect on and develop their teaching practice through a number of initiatives. The University's Inspire Quality Scheme for continuing professional development is accredited by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and is mapped to the UK Professional Standards Framework. Members of academic staff are strongly encouraged to apply for HEA fellowship and are required to complete an annual learning and teaching survey to chart their participation in enhancement activities, identify innovative practice, and raise any problematic experiences. Additionally, an annual Research and Knowledge Exchange survey of academic staff facilitates reflection on the extent to which research has informed teaching. These returns are compiled into a Research and Knowledge Exchange Annual Report.

2.25 Peer observation of teaching takes place in alternate years and applies to all members of academic staff. Newly appointed teaching staff, other than those who have suitable previous experience as teachers, take the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, provided by the Academic Quality and Development department and available also to teaching staff from collaborative partners. The Certificate is in turn embedded within an overarching MA in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, available to staff who wish to develop their pedagogical practice further.

2.26 Outcomes of the National Student Survey and Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education data are routinely used to reflect on the effectiveness of teaching and learning: programme and faculty responses are considered annually by the SADC and by Senate with input from the UMG.

2.27 An Academic Resources Form is used during the approval process to confirm resource needs for new programmes, and is subject to approval by the UMG. Concerns

regarding physical and online learning resources can also be raised in APEs and in Faculty Annual Academic Development Reports.

2.28   The Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) Advisory Group and the Distance and Flexible Learning Advisory Group (DaFL) both work to support and enhance the learning and teaching environment of students on campus and those studying on distance learning programmes. Expectations for the support of students on work placements are set out in the Work-based Learning and Placements - Approved Procedures.

2.29   The University's policies and procedures are sufficient, if implemented, to allow the Expectation to be met.

2.30   The review team tested the Expectation by considering documentation setting out relevant policies and procedures and by meeting members of staff, students, employers and alumni of the University.

2.31   The University reflects on the effectiveness of its resourcing for learning and teaching through the APE process and the monitoring of national survey responses. Staff and students consistently expressed an understanding of the four themes of the learning and teaching strategy - academic staff drew attention to a wide variety of activities in support of the strategy. The TEL and DaFL groups are active in developing and enhancing the students' learning and teaching environment. The Academic Resources Form process is also effective in ensuring that new developments, such as the recent validation of a programme in Forensic Studies, are adequately resourced prior to commencement of delivery.

2.32   The Inspire Quality Scheme and the Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education provide an effective framework for supporting teaching staff in developing their teaching practice and for progression to Fellowship of the HEA. The annual learning and teaching survey and the Research and Knowledge Exchange survey encourage reflection on research and pedagogy. These responses support staff development reviews and an overview is reported to the SADC for further actions as necessary.

2.33   The University has effective systems for supporting students' learning. The system for determining and making reasonable adjustments for students with individual learning needs is effective. Students confirmed that while they have ready access to, and good support from, personal tutors, they also feel able to approach any member of staff, should they wish to do so.

2.34   The University has effective processes to review and enhance the provision of learning opportunities and teaching practices. The Expectation is met and the risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B4): Higher education providers have in place, monitor and evaluate arrangements and resources which enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.

Quality Code, *Chapter B4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement*

Findings

2.35   Student development and achievement at the University is influenced by a number of strategies including the Learning and Teaching Strategy, the Employability Strategy, and the Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning Strategy. Annual operating statements of central departments and faculties map their action planning against the strategic priorities in order to monitor the progress made. However, the APE process is considered the primary tool for enabling monitoring and reflection on issues that affect student learning and development. The process is overseen and kept under review by the SADC.

2.36   The University promotes Higher Education Achievement Reports (HEAR) as a method by which students can demonstrate their achievement and their engagement with the University and the wider community. As such, the HEAR provides evidence of the student's academic attainment and details of employability-related activity that has been verified by the University, including University-based activities such as service on programme approval panels and volunteering.

2.37   The Student Charter is approved annually by the Student Academic Council (SAC) and clarifies what is expected of students with respect to their learning and what they can expect in return. Students also receive a Student Handbook or a Postgraduate Research Student Handbook that details study support arrangements. All students experience an induction programme upon joining to support their transition into higher education study, and many programmes also run pre-induction activities. Student Services also run Back to Study sessions for mature students.

2.38   Various initiatives are aimed at personal development and the development of skills related to student employability. These include a Graduate Intern scheme, an optional University-wide volunteering module for undergraduate students, the Student Fellows Scheme, in which students lead on an enhancement project in partnership with a member of staff, and the Winchester Research Apprentice Programme, in which students can work closely with academic staff on a research project.

2.39   The University operates a departmentally based personal tutoring system for undergraduate students in accordance with published guidelines. The guidelines set the baseline requirements that departments can supplement with additional measures. Implementation of the system is monitored and evaluated by the Student Experience Committee.

2.40   Staff from professional services, including Information Technology Services and the library, are represented on committees with key roles in respect of the student learning experience, including the SADC, the TEL and the DaFL - the compositions of the latter two also include representation from Student Services. Professional services staff also periodically attend Programme Committee meetings to advise programme teams on resource-related concerns and take feedback.

2.41   The Careers Service offers advice and guidance to help students determine a career of interest or a further course of study; their services continue to be available until one year after graduation. The service produces an annual report and organises an annual

Employability and Skills Week to raise the profile of employability development among students.

2.42   The University's policies and procedures are sufficient, if implemented, to allow the Expectation to be met.

2.43   The review team tested the Expectation by considering documentation setting out relevant policies and procedures and by meeting members of staff, students, employers and alumni of the University.

2.44   The process for identifying and requesting learning resources using the Academic Resources Form commences prior to the academic validation of new programmes. It is well understood by staff and provides a proactive system for the approval and provision of resources in support of learning.

2.45   Students at the University may access information about the University and their studies in a variety of ways. Students confirmed that they had been provided with student handbooks and are aware of the Student Charter, available on the Learning Network. This network is accessible to students prior to enrolment for pre-induction courses and activities and is complemented by the University's use of social networks.

2.46   Along with career and further study advice, the Careers Service offers advice on completing application forms and compiling curricula vitae, and provides opportunities for students to practise their interview skills. Its services are supported by the annual Employability and Skills Week, which offers a range of employability-related events including leadership skills, advice on specific careers and the promotion of volunteering opportunities. The University-wide volunteering module is offered on all undergraduate programmes that have optional modules. The Careers Service Annual Report from 2014-15 identifies a 55 per cent increase in uptake in students taking the accredited volunteering module over the previous year. It also identifies a significant overall growth in the number of students undertaking volunteering-related activities, which can include accredited and non-accredited activities, and volunteering with the Students' Union (SU), to well over 1,000 students. In this way the value of, for example, volunteering in the community, for a charity, or as student representative is recognised. The encouragement and support provided to students who carry out volunteering activities is a practical expression of the University's values-led approach to higher education. The extensive range of volunteering opportunities available to students, which enhance employability skills and career prospects, is **good practice**.

2.47   In addition to volunteering, the Graduate Intern scheme, the Student Fellows Scheme, and the Winchester Research Apprentice Programme make effective contributions to the development of personal and professional skills. The Student Fellows Scheme enables students to lead on enhancement projects in partnership with members of staff; these projects are often of direct benefit to students and the value of the scheme was recognised by both staff and students.

2.48   The University has embedded processes that support student learning and academic, professional and personal achievement with a strong emphasis on employability. The Expectation is met and the risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B5): Higher education providers take deliberate steps to engage all students, individually and collectively, as partners in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience.

Quality Code, *Chapter B5: Student Engagement*

Findings

2.49   The University maintains a Student Charter, which is revised annually in partnership with the SU. The Charter outlines the key University mechanisms for student engagement, which include surveys, elected student academic representatives known as StARs, participation in University committees and in programme validation and revalidation. It also includes provision for representation of students through the SU. The Charter is owned by the Student Academic Council, a body which is designed to give students direct access to University staff and which is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor. Of the Council's 38 members, 27 are students, including representatives from each academic department together with representatives of mature, international, part-time and postgraduate students.

2.50   Students' Union officers are represented on a wide range of University committees including Senate and the SADC. Postgraduate student engagement arrangements are detailed in the Postgraduate Research Student Handbook and include student participation in the RDQC.

2.51   Student representatives receive training for their role from the SU, with the exception of those at collaborative partners who receive training locally. Similarly, students appointed as members of validation and revalidation panels receive training and are remunerated for their contribution. The University also works to enable effective participation of students in University decision-making structures; for instance, where courses involve distance learning, programme committees take place online.

2.52   The University has appointed a Head of Student Engagement to support its efforts to remain a sector leader in respect of its student engagement work. The University has recently been awarded funding from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to run a project on Realising Engagement through Active Culture Transformation (REACT), in a joint collaboration with London Metropolitan University and the University of Exeter. This project is designed to investigate the impact that a variety of forms of student engagement have on different aspects of the student experience, such as retention and attainment. In particular, the project considers strategies for the involvement of groups of students less likely to participate in student engagement activity, such as mature and international students. The University was chosen to participate based on its Student Fellows Scheme which partners students and staff to research specific aspects of the student experience and propose remedies and enhancements.

2.53   All programmes are subject to annual evaluation, and summary findings are discussed at meetings of programme committees whose composition includes student representation. Annual progress reports provide the equivalent opportunity for postgraduate research students to comment on their experience. Central services such as ITS and the library run annual surveys and also work with the SU to hold feedback forums with student representatives. The SADC holds responsibility for reviewing the University's student engagement mechanisms and their effectiveness.

2.54   The team found that the University's strategic emphasis on student engagement, supported by its clear policy framework and wide range of feedback mechanisms for students, together with the clear training materials and participation in the management of sector-wide student engagement projects would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.55   The team tested the Expectation by meeting students and staff and by scrutinising student handbooks, the Student Charter and the constitution, and minutes of University committees, including the Student Academic Council. In addition, the team viewed training materials for student representatives, the Student Representation Policy, information about the SU awards and the student submission.

2.56   The Student Academic Council is a valued and important forum for student engagement within the institution. Students speak highly about the direct access that it offers to senior staff and that its annual budget of £50,000 is designed to support the enhancement of the student experience. The Council has, for instance, worked to establish the Student Led Teaching Awards and Student Fellows Scheme, and has provided funding to extend the Research Apprenticeship Programme and discussed the expansion of library opening hours. The Student Academic Council has been successful in bringing together a broad cross-section of the student body to discuss key aspects of the student experience with University staff. The widespread opportunities for students to engage in decision making through the Student Academic Council is **good practice**.

2.57   Training for student representatives, provided by the SU, is effective, and representatives consider that it prepares them satisfactorily for their role. Support materials are available through the virtual learning environment (VLE) for representatives unable to attend the training and for student representatives on distance learning programmes. Students are routinely included as members of validation and revalidation panels; training and advice for this role is provided collaboratively by the SU, the Quality Office and staff involved in the particular process. Students who had participated in these events, including students on distance learning programmes, confirmed that they are well prepared and expressed positive views about the extent to which the University values input from its students.

2.58   Students are represented on a wide range of University committees. Positive developments which had arisen from, and also been guided by, student participation at University committees include an increased printing allowance for students, increased library opening hours and the introduction of incentives for Winchester graduates to enrol on postgraduate programmes.

2.59   The Student Fellows scheme enables students to suggest or contribute to projects designed to enhance the student experience. Projects can be identified by students or staff; students report that their contribution is both sought and welcomed by staff. An application process is in place for the scheme and fellowship is co-funded by the University and the SU. The team found numerous examples of projects that had produced positive outcomes, including projects in relation to the experience of commuting students, to the effectiveness of learning outcomes and to research into the pilot of the University's new VLE. Outcomes from the scheme are disseminated through an annual conference and a dedicated website and are reported to SADC to enable it to exercise oversight of the conduct of the scheme. The strength of partnerships between staff and students within the Student Fellows Scheme and its effective contribution to enhancing the wider student experience is **good practice**.

2.60   The University has recently revised its module feedback arrangements to ensure that mid-module feedback is captured effectively and enables programme teams to take corrective action, where necessary, during delivery of the module itself rather than at the end of each academic year. Programme teams also detail any changes and action taken to enhance modules in the following year's online module information; students confirmed that they find this to be beneficial.

2.61   The University has a clear and effective approach to student engagement and its practice is coherent and includes innovative features. The Expectation is met and the level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B6): Higher education providers operate equitable, valid and reliable processes of assessment, including for the recognition of prior learning, which enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification being sought.

Quality Code, *Chapter B6: Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning*

Findings

2.62   The University has clear and comprehensive regulations, policies and procedures governing assessment, including the recognition of prior learning, penalties for academic misconduct and the conduct of examination boards. Assessment design is considered in the validation process for new programmes and then reviewed and enhanced through the APE and revalidation processes, which are informed by comments from external examiners. These processes are subject to regular review to enhance their effectiveness. Students receive clear information on assessment and are encouraged to engage in the enhancement of assessment design and practice. This framework would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.63   The review team scrutinised relevant regulations, policies and procedures, module descriptions, programme specifications, boards of examiners' statistical reports and minutes, staff development relating to assessment, a range of validation and revalidation documents including event reports, and external examiner reports. It explored assessment design and practice through discussions with senior managers, staff and students.

2.64   The regulatory framework for assessment includes Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes and Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes, Assessment Regulations, and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy, the Conduct of Exam Boards for Taught Programmes including Collaborative Partners - Guidelines and External Examiners of Taught Programmes - Policy and Procedures. Grade Descriptors for Levels 3-7 are set out in Appendix 2 in the Assessment Regulations, and for Level 8 in the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes. The Academic Misconduct Policy covers both the definitions of academic misconduct and the approved processes for identifying and responding to it.

2.65   Assessment strategies and design are scrutinised during programme approval and are monitored through APE and revalidation. The approval process includes a check on whether the programme has an assessment strategy designed to measure effectively the student's attainment of the learning outcomes. The programme specification and module descriptions, which include information on the type and weighting of assessments, and which are required to demonstrate compliance with the academic framework and regulations, are scrutinised through the validation process and become the definitive record of the programme. Specific exemptions or additions to regulations requested by programmes must be approved by Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures Committee, and are recorded in the programme specification. A register of approved exemptions is maintained.

2.66   A range of management information related to assessment is reviewed during APE to evaluate assessment practices, including data on student progression and achievement, external examiners' reports, and the results of student module evaluations. It is a requirement that all revalidating programmes undergo the process of Transforming the Experience of Students through Assessment (TESTA), involving reflection on the experience of assessment reported by final year students on the programme to review the programme's assessment strategy. The self-evaluation considered by revalidation panels is required to

evidence discussion and reflection on the TESTA process. These processes provide assurance that the assessment strategy approved at validation continues to be appropriate.

2.67   The University offers programmes leading to awards with similar titles delivered on-campus and at ICBS. Despite similar or identical titles, these programmes have distinct assessment strategies and have not been benchmarked against each other during the University's approval processes to ensure comparability of standards. The lack of a process to ensure comparability of standards between such programmes contributes to the recommendation in Expectation A3.2.

2.68   At enrolment, new students on taught programmes are provided with the Student Handbook; new research students receive the Postgraduate Research Student Handbook. These cover key regulations and policies on assessment for undergraduate, postgraduate and research students. Programme and module handbooks provide detailed information on individual assessments. Academic regulations and associated policies and procedures have been brought together on the University website at a single location, to ensure transparency and ease of access for students and staff. The Award and Classification Rules and Credit Framework Summary details the processes that relate to calculation methods for final degree results in a succinct, accessible format, which supports transparency and effective communication around assessment, regulation and achievement.

2.69   The University operates a two-tier system of examination boards. Marks and the award of credit for modules are confirmed at departmental boards, while awards are confirmed at faculty boards. Annual training events are held each year for academic members of staff who chair examination boards.

2.70   The University's Assessment Regulations include clear and thorough baseline requirements for the moderation of assessed work. External examiners' reports confirm that marking is carried out impartially and consistently and that marking criteria are effective in discriminating between levels of attainment. In respect of collaborative provision, Memoranda of Agreement and Operational Handbooks set out the responsibilities of the University and each of its collaborative partners in terms of assessment, and the University's scrutiny of curricula vitae is intended to ensure that teaching staff at its partners have the appropriate expertise to teach and assess students. At ICBS, student work is marked and moderated by ICBS staff, with no requirement that University staff take part in moderation. The lack of oversight by staff of the University of marking and moderation contributes to the recommendation in Expectation B10 in respect of processes delegated to partner institutions for moderation of assessment tasks.

2.71   The University has comprehensive and thorough assessment regulations, policies and processes that support students to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for modules and programmes. The clarity of guidance related to assessment ensures that the requirements are widely understood by staff and students. The Expectation is met and the level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B7): Higher education providers make scrupulous use of external examiners.

Quality Code, *Chapter B7: External Examining*

Findings

2.72   The University appoints a minimum of one external examiner for each programme or group of cognate programmes in accordance with the External Examiners of Taught Programmes - Policy and Procedures, and certain programmes may require multiple external examiners to cover a range of teaching specialisms. Their duties include external moderation of assessments and attendance at departmental examination boards, although they are specifically not requested to approve draft student assessments. Faculty external examiners, appointed from the pool of programme examiners for each faculty, attend faculty examination boards.

2.73   External examiners cover all credit-bearing taught modules. While these include the taught elements of professional doctorate programmes, the thesis produced at the end of these programmes is examined by a team approved by RDQC in accordance with the practice established for its MPhil and PhD research degrees.

2.74   New external examiners are nominated by programme teams while their appointment, or extensions of appointments, is approved and confirmed by the SADC. Two induction events each year are arranged by Academic Quality and Development for newly appointed external examiners. Where programmes share external examiners the allocation of specific modules is detailed at the point of nomination and appointment. Appointment letters also make clear which programmes and awards the external examiner is responsible for externally examining. The appointment of external examiners for collaborative provision remains the responsibility of the University as is set out in Memoranda of Agreement with partners.

2.75   External examiners are asked to identify areas of good practice in their annual reports and to make recommendations for enhancing the quality of the learning opportunities offered to students. An annual summary of the University-wide points raised by the external examiners' reports is compiled by the Quality Office and considered by the SADC in order to inform the sharing and dissemination of good practice.

2.76   The University's policies and procedures are sufficient, if implemented, to allow the Expectation to be met.

2.77   The review team tested the Expectation by considering documentation setting out relevant policies and procedures and by meeting members of staff, students, employers and alumni of the University.

2.78   The process for the nomination and appointment of external examiners is robust. Subject-specialist Greek-speaking external examiners are appointed to oversee its collaboration with ICBS. Care is taken to ensure that the role of examiner does not become onerous: if the duties of the single faculty external examiner appointed to attend faculty exam boards are burdensome then the faculty may appoint a deputy faculty external examiner to share responsibilities. Newly appointed external examiners are supported by induction events where topics covered include an overview of institutional policies and regulations, the learning and teaching culture at the University, and procedural training on completing the Annual Report form. Time is also made available for externals to meet programme leaders in order to be briefed on programme-specific matters.

2.79   The system of reporting and responding to reports is effective. Each external examiner receives a response from the programme team, which subsequently includes the report and response as part of APE. The identities of external examiners and their annual reports are routinely provided to students online.

2.80   The annual Learning and Teaching Survey asks academic staff to provide information on their external examining of taught and research provision elsewhere. This data is collated into individual faculty reports to record and recognise the external examination activity of academic staff.

2.81   External examiners are asked not to approve draft coursework assignments, and hence provide only a retrospective commentary on standards of assignments. The University's rationale is that it is confident in its assessment practices and the ability of its staff to set and maintain appropriate standards; as external examiners are able to moderate assignments retrospectively, an external judgement on assessment standards constitutes a part of the process. The internal and external scrutiny of assessment tasks and examinations during the validation and revalidation of programmes is seen as a further check on standards. However, when the drafting of assessments is delegated to a partner institution then the rationale for the absence of prior external verification is less clear. This contributes to the recommendation in Expectation B10 that the University should strengthen oversight of processes delegated to partner institutions for moderation of assessment tasks.

2.82   The University's external examiners for ICBS are unique to the College and do not examine any of the University's on-campus programmes, despite the delivery of similarly titled programmes at ICBS and on-campus. The University does not regard it as necessary to take steps to establish the comparability of standards between the three campuses of ICBS and between ICBS and the University, citing the desirability of being able to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes in different ways and the differing assessment strategies in place at ICBS and for on-campus provision. The lack of a process to ensure comparability of standards of similarly-titled provision contributes to the recommendation in Expectation A3.2.

2.83   The University's procedures for ensuring that external examiners contribute effectively to maintaining standards are broadly adequate allowing the Expectation to be met. However, they place insufficient emphasis on assuring standards in respect of some collaborative provision. The level of risk is moderate.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Moderate

Expectation (B8): Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective, regular and systematic processes for monitoring and for review of programmes.

Quality Code, *Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring and Review*

Findings

2.84   The University's procedures for APE and for periodic revalidation are set out in the Annual Programme Evaluation Guidance and the Processes and Procedures for Programme Approval and Withdrawal respectively. Implementation of these processes includes consideration of evidence from cohort performance data, external examiners' reports and student module evaluations in order to initiate reflection on academic standards and quality of learning opportunities. Reports arising from APEs and revalidations are received and considered by FADCs and SADC respectively. This framework, if implemented, would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.85   The review team examined the University's guidance for APE and revalidation, sampled reports from these processes and examined the minutes of committees where the reports were received and considered. The team also held discussions with academic managers, and staff, employers and students with experience of revalidation.

2.86   To ensure that programmes do not depart from what was approved at validation or revalidation, the University has established processes restricting the scale of changes made outside the six-yearly revalidation cycle. The process, which is detailed in the Process and Procedures for Programme Amendment makes it clear that amendments may not alter the overall aims and learning outcomes of the programme. The procedure for collaborative programmes, and for programmes that are under institutional monitoring procedures, is similar, with some additional requirements.

2.87   University guidance on programme amendment permits a maximum of 25 per cent of the programme to be amended: FADCs are responsible for considering and approving proposals for amendment up to 25 per cent. The continuing relevance of module learning outcomes is considered through a review of proposed amendments to module specifications and includes consultation with external examiners and students, with a view to ensuring that curricula do not overly depart from that approved at the previous validation or revalidation. The Quality Office maintains the definitive list of approved annual programme amendments.

2.88   The interim validation process may be used between revalidations to give approval to amendments of up to 50 per cent of a programme, and to review any programme identified through APE or other quality processes as being potentially at risk. Interim validation requires consideration of a range of documentation including a rationale for the programme and revised programme and module specifications by a panel, including a student representative and the external examiner and/or an external academic. Reports of interim validation events show evidence of a suitable evaluative consideration of the rationale for revalidated programmes and of their curricula and approaches to learning, teaching and assessment.

2.89   Proposals for a change of award title originate from the programme leader and are subject to approval by the relevant Head of Department and Dean of Faculty before being considered for final approval by the UMG. The pro forma that supports a proposal does not call for reflection on the continuing appropriateness of learning outcomes in relation to the new title or on any implications for the continued relationship of the programme to external reference points. There is no requirement for change of title proposals to include evidence of

external academic consultation. Examples of recent changes of title failed to show explicit reference to external academic consultation by the UMG. The review team **recommends** that the University ensures explicit reference is made to including external scrutiny in processes for approval of changes to award titles.

2.90　　Programmes leading to a professional doctorate prepare an APE report in a manner similar to that used for the taught modules in the programme. These reports are approved by the appropriate FADC. RDQC prepares an Annual Report on Postgraduate Research provision, which includes an annual review of data on research student progression and achievement. The report is considered and approved by the SADC.

2.91　　Support is provided for staff involved in annual monitoring and periodic review, including workshops on writing APEs and training events for programmes that are coming up for revalidation. Completion of the TESTA process, which supports the enhancement of assessment design based on a detailed evaluation of the experience of current students, is a formal requirement for all programmes preparing for revalidation.

2.92　　The APE process is reviewed regularly by SADC in consultation with staff and students. The University evaluates its processes for programme approval by inviting participants, both panel members and programme proposers, to complete evaluation pro formas. Completed evaluations are collated annually, and a report on outcomes and an action plan based on them is considered at SADC.

2.93　　The University has comprehensive and thorough processes for the monitoring and review of programmes, which are effective, regular and systematic, and which support the continuing approval and amendment of provision. Outcomes of APE and revalidation are reported through the University's deliberative committee structure, which provides opportunities to review and evaluate both processes. Students participate effectively and engage in both APE and revalidation. The single shortcoming will not require major procedural change. The Expectation is met and the level of risk is low.

Expectation:　Met
Level of risk:　Low

Expectation (B9): Higher education providers have procedures for handling academic appeals and student complaints about the quality of learning opportunities; these procedures are fair, accessible and timely, and enable enhancement.

Quality Code, *Chapter B9: Academic Appeals and Student Complaints*

Findings

2.94   The University's approach to handling academic appeals is governed by the Academic Appeals Regulations. The regulations set out deadlines to which the University adheres in processing appeals and allow for a further appeal against the outcome of an appeal. Students are provided with information about the process when they receive the letter detailing their assessment outcome following the Faculty Examination Board, and also through the University website and Student Handbook. Similarly, postgraduate research students are sent a letter detailing the corresponding information when they upgrade to PhD.

2.95   The Director of Academic Quality and Development is responsible for overseeing academic appeals. Although training takes place for staff handling appeals, the University is considering strengthening support further by encouraging staff to attend external events, such as sessions on how to resolve student complaints and appeals in higher education skilfully and effectively. Through the Students' Union Vice-President (Education), the Quality Office maintains a dialogue with the SU with a view to exploring ways of ensuring a good understanding of the appeals process within the student body.

2.96   Students at collaborative partners are entitled to make use of the University's appeals process, as set out in the Memorandum of Agreement with each partner.

2.97   Complaints are governed by the University's Complaints Policy, which has been created with reference to the Quality Code and revised with reference to the Code and to the Good Practice Framework of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. The policy covers key criteria including its scope, timelines for handling complaints and details of who can access the policy.

2.98   The University's Ombudsman has worked to increase awareness of the Complaints Policy among students and has delivered training for staff, including new employees. Support arrangements for students submitting a complaint are detailed in the Complaints Policy. Students are informed that they may access support from Registry, the SU or their programme if they decide to submit an academic appeal.

2.99   Appeals are monitored through an annual summary compiled by the Quality Office, which is reviewed at Senate and the SADC. The Ombudsman's annual report is received by the Student Experience Committee, Student Academic Council and Senate among others. Student representation on these bodies enables regular and structured student involvement in the consideration of reports on both academic appeals and complaints.

2.100   The formal decision letter details students' options for appeal, which are dealt with in accordance with the Academic Appeals Regulations. The number of appeals submitted and any lessons learned from such appeals is reported and reflected on in the annual report of RDQC and in the annual summary of appeals received by SADC. Information relating to appeals is contained in both the Postgraduate Research Student Handbook and the Postgraduate Research Supervisor Handbook. The University's Complaints Policy covers postgraduate research students; information relating to the Complaints Policy is contained in both handbooks.

2.101 The team found that the University's policies for academic appeals and complaints, alongside the support provided for staff and students, are sufficient to enable the Expectation to be met.

2.102 The team tested the Expectation by meeting students and staff and by considering documentation including the University's Academic Appeals Regulations, the Complaints Policy and training materials for staff. In addition, the team examined letter templates, information provided to students about complaints and appeals and committee minutes.

2.103 The University's arrangements are clear and effective. Students expressed satisfaction that they know how to submit a complaint or appeal should the need arise, confirming that they would use the Student Charter and would consult programme administrators to guide them in this respect. Students studying on programmes at ICBS confirmed that they are aware of the complaints process - the ICBS website informs students that they may access the University's Complaints Policy once they have exhausted the College's process. The current version of the policy has not yet been translated into Greek but is on the University's schedule for translation in due course.

2.104 The University produces monitoring reports based on the outcome of complaints and appeals which are considered by SADC. Careful and active attention is given to these outcomes as shown, for instance, by the consideration given to the need for timely addressing of the learning needs of students with disabilities, to which the Complaints Report for 2013-14 drew attention. The University also makes use of these reports at programme level and to inform enhancement, as shown by its decision, arising again from the Complaints Report for 2013-14, to offer more self-managed learning activity after scheduled summative assessment.

2.105 The University has clear and comprehensive policies for academic appeals and complaints, provides appropriate information and support for students and implements robust monitoring procedures. The Expectation is met and the level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B10): Degree-awarding bodies take ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, irrespective of where these are delivered or who provides them. Arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with organisations other than the degree-awarding body are implemented securely and managed effectively.

Quality Code, *Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others*

Findings

2.106   The University has carried out a considerable realignment of collaborative provision in the period since 2009, scaling back provision so as to have a smaller number of partners which it identifies as being aligned to institutional values and strategy. Recently, approval has been given for postgraduate research provision at Sarum College, an existing partner, from 2016-17, but the University envisages no further significant expansion of collaborative provision. Both collaborative provision and placements are identified as risks to be managed under the University's Risk Management Policy. Risk assessment in relation to a partner is also part of APE. There is one overseas partner, the International College of Business Studies (ICBS) in Greece.

2.107   Institutional oversight of quality and standards in collaborative provision is carried out through SADC, with oversight of the provision offered with each partner based within a relevant faculty. In 2009-10 the Policy for the Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision was extensively rewritten, and it continues to be evaluated by SADC.

2.108   An Institutional Approval Panel considers the fit of any proposed new partner with the University's Strategic Plan, the business case for the collaboration, and any risks associated with the proposal together with the robustness of risk mitigation. Due diligence is carried out by relevant professional support services. Institutional approval and revalidation events are normally held at the place of delivery, and the suitability of resources is considered on approval through an Academic Resources Form, with a site visit where relevant. Memoranda of Agreement set out the resources and opportunities available to students. The Memorandum of Agreement with an approved partner sets out the resources and opportunities available to students; resource provision is subsequently monitored as part of the APE. Details of responsibilities of each party are set out in an Operational Handbook. Collaborative programmes are subject to the same revalidation processes as other University programmes and undergo a renewed Institutional Approval prior to programme revalidation.

2.109   Programme approval takes places separately from institutional approval and follows the same process as for on-campus provision. There is an enhanced process for programme amendment in relation to collaborative provision, including the use of comments from external examiners. For each programme there is an ALO based in the relevant faculty of the University. For programmes at ICBS there are two ALOs, a Senior ALO based on-campus and an ALO at ICBS itself.

2.110   Annual programme evaluation (APE) at partners largely follows the same process as for on-campus provision. Additionally, provision at partners is subject to annual review by SADC and, in the final year of a period of approval, to institutional review. These processes allow the University to review risks, as well as the partner's financial health, resources and admissions processes. APE is carried out by partner staff supported by the faculty-based ALO with responsibility for the programme concerned - evaluations are approved by the relevant FADC, with any issues relating to a collaborative partner separately reported in the Faculty Annual Academic Development Report.

2.111   All collaborative provision is subject to the University's Assessment Regulations and Academic Regulations for Taught programmes and associated policies. The Academic Misconduct Policy for Taught Programmes takes into account implementation in relation to collaborative provision. The University follows its normal procedure in appointing external examiners for collaborative programmes, with an enhanced set of criteria for appointment.

2.112   Responsibility for admissions is set out in operational handbooks. Where admissions decisions are delegated to a partner, it is required to follow the criteria agreed on validation and is subject to risk-based oversight by the University. University staff provide advice to partners on non-standard applications for admission and on all applications for accreditation of prior learning. All partner students are enrolled at the University, which maintains detailed records in relation to each.

2.113   Requirements for the approval of teaching staff at partners are set out in each Memorandum of Agreement and applications for approval take place using the Approved Tutor Status Application Form and Notes. Staff are approved on validation or revalidation, or by the dean of the relevant faculty at other times. The Quality Office organises development events for collaborative partners, who may attend any relevant University event. From 2015-16 partner staff are eligible to take part, at no cost, in the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education at the University. ALOs and tutors have a duty to support the academic development of partner staff.

2.114   Collaborative partners are bound by the University's Protocol for Marketing and Publicity with responsibilities in relation to publicity and information set out in the Memorandum of Agreement and the Operational Handbook; compliance is monitored by the Quality Office.

2.115   The authority for awarding all certificates and transcripts rests with the University. Collaborative students (with the exception of CGI-sponsored programmes) receive a European Diploma Supplement.

2.116   Following the realignment of collaborative provision, the University's decision to terminate some programmes was implemented with regard to the needs of students affected, by making arrangements to keep students informed of impending changes and by ensuring alternative arrangements for the completion of their programmes.

2.117   As part of its Internationalisation Strategy the University offers study abroad opportunities to its students. The Student Exchange and Short Term Study Abroad - Approved Procedures provides for the proposal and approval of study abroad partners, and memoranda of agreement cover credit-bearing exchanges other than those within an Erasmus+ programme. The recognition of the award of credit is covered by the Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes. Information is available to students in course prospectuses and on webpages, as well as in the Study Abroad Handbook.

2.118   The University offers a range of work placements, and its Work-based Learning and Placement Learning - Approved Procedures sets out expectations for student support and requirements for due diligence. Agreements with placement providers are formed using a standard pro forma. Information for students and for employers about work placements is provided in programme-level handbooks. With a view to ensuring appropriate standards in assessed placement provision, the External Examiners' Annual Report Form invites examiners to comment on standards achieved in modules delivered through placements or by work-based learning. Collaborative partners that set up placements or work-based learning are expected to adhere to the University procedures. Arrangements for the quality assurance of placements or work-based learning are aligned with other University procedures and are tested within validation, revalidation and APE.

2.119   Policies and procedures for managing collaborative provision are generally sufficient to allow the Expectation to be met but there are shortcomings in terms of the rigour of oversight of processes for the quality assurance of assessment.

2.120   The team met a range of academic and professional staff concerned with the approval, oversight and running of collaborative provision. The team also met students studying at collaborative partners, students who had undertaken placements, and employers who provide placements, as well as reading documents relevant to all aspects of collaborative provision.

2.121   Following the realignment of collaborative provision over the past few years, staff expressed confidence in the view that the University now has a limited number of partners offering provision linked to the University's values and aligned to its strategic aims.

2.122   Academic and professional staff showed a good understanding of relevant University processes and responsibilities, for example noting the importance of a supervisor drawn from the staff of the University being part of the supervisory team for PhD programmes offered through collaborative provision. ALOs described links with staff at partner institutions, which were close and effective in ensuring the smooth operation of the partnership.

2.123   Reports of the approval events for new collaborative partners show that processes are followed in relation to approval of partner organisations. Memoranda of Agreement and Operational Handbooks show an appropriate allocation of responsibilities, though the team heard that in practice the University adopts a risk-based approach to operational matters by accepting some flexibility, for example regarding the level of detail in which admissions were monitored.

2.124   Papers and reports relating to programme approval at collaborative partners show that the process is carried out with proper consideration of criteria for approval, and that the same holds true in relation to revalidation of programmes. Staff confirmed that the Quality Office provides support for the approval process, and that documentation works well. APE reports regarding collaborative programmes show an approach and level of detail similar to those relating to programmes delivered by the University on campus, and were appropriately considered by the relevant FADC.

2.125   The University offers some on-campus support to staff and students of its partners. Partner staff may attend a range of staff development activities at the University. Students at collaborative partners confirmed that they have full access to programme documentation, including programme specifications, handbooks and external examiners' reports, and that they were satisfied with resources and other support available to them, including online access to University library resources.

2.126   Students at partner institutions confirmed that they have opportunities to participate in quality assurance activities by completing module and programme evaluations, and through student representation on programme committees. The evidence available indicates that students at partner institutions are engaged in a meaningful way in programme evaluation and development.

2.127   Staff confirmed that all assessment at partner institutions takes place in accordance with University regulations and processes, except where there are special requirements, for example in relation to a School-Centred Initial Teacher-Training programme. External examiners' reports include widespread confirmation of the standards and rigour of assessment, and show that suggestions for improvement are acted upon, typically through the APE process. Although assessment tasks are subject to prior approval by faculty staff, they are not subject to prior approval by an external examiner.

2.128   Some aspects of assessment are delegated to partner institutions, in particular the moderation of marking, which nevertheless has to follow University processes. The team heard that standards are ensured due to the involvement of the ALO and sign-off of the outcomes of moderation by external examiners, and that the University's risk-based approach enables it to take closer oversight of moderation if issues arise.

2.129   The system of assessment verification is not underpinned by on-campus subject specialists who are fluent in the language of delivery in respect of all partners. Although University staff are involved in the approval of assessment tasks prior to delivery, there is no detailed formal system for doing so. External examiners moderate assessed work, but this moderation is retrospective. The devolution of marking and of moderation, and the retrospective nature of assessment tasks sign-off and of moderation outcomes, gives rise to risks at a partner that might be identified only after the event. The review team **recommends** that the University strengthens oversight of processes delegated to partner institutions for approval and moderation of assessment tasks.

2.130   The collaborative arrangement with ICBS includes programmes delivered on three separate campuses in Greece and is distinctive in that they are delivered and assessed in the medium of the Greek language. The University is aware of risks as regards distance and language, and has taken a number of steps to mitigate these risks. It has appointed two ALOs, one being bilingual and based in Greece, who have a specific role in maintaining the alignment of programmes delivered at ICBS with UK expectations. All teaching staff at ICBS speak English in addition to Greek and all business dealings are conducted in English. Annual visits to ICBS by staff of the Quality Office and periodic visits of ICBS staff to the University enable regular checks on compliance with the requirements of the Operational Handbook. All relevant programme materials and University policies have been translated into Greek, for the benefit of students. APE is carried out in English, with a meeting at ICBS to consider its outcomes and actions. Students at ICBS confirmed that they regard teaching, staff support, learning resources and the provision of information to be appropriate, and that they have opportunities to participate in quality management through programme meetings, which are conducted in Greek.

2.131   Although programmes at ICBS are taught and assessed in Greek, module reading lists include, to a significant extent, texts in English. Staff and students expressed no concern about this, saying that students were able to understand English sufficiently, that English language tuition is available, and that texts would be translated if the students requested it. However, familiarity with English is not explicit as an admission requirement, and there is a risk that students without sufficient familiarity might be disadvantaged. This conclusion contributes to the recommendation in Expectation B2 that the University ensures transparency of entry criteria to programmes that entail competence in a language other than the main language of instruction.

2.132   Assessment strategies for programmes at ICBS include greater use of examinations than is common on other programmes of the University. Assessment questions are approved in advance by the ALO. External examiners, who are appointed with a view to fluency in Greek, attend the examination board, which takes place at ICBS and which is conducted in English. External examiners' reports and APEs consistently confirm the achievement of appropriate standards.

2.133   ICBS offers some programmes with titles and coverage similar to programmes offered at the University's own campus. These programmes have been separately approved and have distinct programme specifications, with a view to putting material in the context of the economy and business culture of the country of delivery. The University does not regard it as necessary to take steps to establish the comparability of standards between such programmes. The lack of a consistently-used process for comparison of standards and

student achievement between programmes with similar titles delivered on-campus and at partners leads to the risk of variance in standards across such programmes, and gave rise to the recommendation in Expectation A3.2 that the University should establish robust processes to ensure comparability of standards across similarly titled awards.

2.134   The University provides all degree certificates and appropriate transcripts for students. However, degree certificates do not routinely state the place of study or the language of instruction; although transcripts of marks state the language of instruction they do not state the place of study, which appears only in the programme specification. The review team **recommends** that in respect of collaborative provision the University should ensure that degree certificates and/or records of academic achievement state the principal language of instruction where this is not English, as well as the name and location of the provider involved in the delivery of the programme.

2.135   In relation to distance learning at collaborative partners, both staff and students described a good level of online support. Students confirmed that they feel well supported through induction to the programme, and that they have access to teaching which is often thorough, as well as to events on campus. A small number of students expressed the view that they would value more opportunities for on-campus activities. Students confirmed that they feel that they have a voice, and welcomed the creation of social space for students coming from a distance.

2.136   Clear and effective arrangements are in place for students undertaking placements. University staff spoke of the importance of the placement experience in their educational offering, and the importance of choosing partners for placements with care. Students expressed very positive views about the value of placements to them, and confirmed that helpful guidance is in place, while noting also that there are occasionally pressures of time in respect of completing placements and programme-based course work. Employers, including some who had worked with the University over several years, spoke of the value of placements, and were of the view that students were well supported by the University. Students confirmed also that they have opportunities to provide feedback leading to the development of placement arrangements.

2.137   The University's policies and procedures for managing the academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities of its collaborative provision contain shortcomings which have given rise to risks which the University appeared not to recognise, including risks to the comparability of standards between different institutions and to the robustness of the verification of standards of assessments carried out at partner institutions. The Expectation is not met. Insufficient emphasis given to assuring standards and shortcomings in the rigour with which procedures are applied means that the level of risk is moderate.

Expectation: Not Met
Level of risk: Moderate

Expectation (B11): Research degrees are awarded in a research environment that provides secure academic standards for doing research and learning about research approaches, methods, procedures and protocols.
This environment offers students quality of opportunities and the support they need to achieve successful academic, personal and professional outcomes from their research degrees.

Quality Code, *Chapter B11: Research Degrees*

Findings

2.138   The RDQC is charged with oversight of postgraduate research within the University. The procedures for doing so are contained in the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes, supplemented by the Postgraduate Research Student Handbook, the Postgraduate Research Supervisor Handbook and the Postgraduate Research Programmes - Admissions Policy.

2.139   The Postgraduate Research Programmes - Admissions Policy incorporates requirements for admission to research programmes as well as to professional doctorate programmes, and includes reference to the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy. This and additional relevant guidance is made available to prospective students on the University's webpages, in addition to programme specifications and programme outlines for professional doctorates and research programmes respectively. Guidance on the University's Ethics Policy and Procedures is available on a general information webpage for postgraduate research students. The conduct of research activity and supervision is further supported by a Research Code of Practice and a Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers: Action Plan.

2.140   The University participates in the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey and holds its own internal survey in intervening years. Analysis of the survey results is received by the RDQC in addition to an annual digest of external examiners' reports from viva voce examinations. This informs its Annual Report on Postgraduate Research to SADC. Each professional doctorate programme carries out an APE to cover its taught modules; these evaluations follow the conventional taught programme route with initial approval by the respective FADCs.

2.141   Each faculty has either a Faculty Postgraduate Research Student Coordinator or a Faculty Head of Research and Knowledge Exchange who bears the responsibility of Postgraduate Research Student Coordinator. Part of their responsibility is to act as personal tutor to all of the faculty's postgraduate research students. They also prepare the faculty's Annual Research and Knowledge Exchange Report, which comments on the research environment and student support.

2.142   All postgraduate research students are interviewed prior to entry in accordance with the Postgraduate Research Programmes - Admissions Policy. Students are required to attend an induction event held twice a year for new students. Professional doctorate inductions take place separately at programme level.

2.143   Supervisory teams are identified by the Faculty Head of Research and Knowledge Exchange or the Faculty Postgraduate Research Student Coordinator and confirmed at interview. Normally the team comprises a Director of Studies and a second supervisor, with the option to appoint a third supervisor and/or adviser; at least one member of each team must have supervised a student previously to the point of completion as detailed in the Postgraduate Research Supervisor Handbook. Directors of Studies assume overall

responsibility for the supervision of postgraduate research students and mentor those new to supervision within the team.

2.144   Postgraduate research students and supervisors are required to submit an annual progress report before the end of May each year. The report comprises two elements completed independently by the student and by the supervisory team. As part of the process an action plan is also agreed between the student and the Director of Studies. These progress reports are received and scrutinised by the RDQC. The option to terminate the candidature of a postgraduate research student is defined in the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes.

2.145   Research skills training is compulsory for postgraduate research students. All must undertake the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Skills unless they have already developed sufficient and appropriate skills via an alternative route verified through the recognition of prior learning. A 30-credit module is available from the MA Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, intended to prepare students for teaching in higher education. While the credits from this module do not contribute to the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Skills, upon completion students can attain Associate Fellow status of the HEA. Students wishing to teach in the second year of their programme are also required to pass the module Engaging Students with Learning.

2.146   The assessment of postgraduate research degrees is detailed in the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes supported by forms made available online. The taught modules of professional doctorate programmes are assessed according to the University's Assessment Regulations; the RDQC then oversees arrangements for the Transition to Thesis Viva. The committee also oversees arrangements for the assessment of MPhil/PhD students upgrading to PhD study.

2.147   Internal and external examiners of research theses are required to submit independent reports before the viva voce examination. After the examination the examiners form a shared judgement and submit a joint report, specifying any changes that may need to be made to the submitted thesis along with a timeframe.

2.148   The University's policies and procedures are sufficient, if implemented, to allow the Expectation to be met.

2.149   The review team tested the Expectation by considering documentation setting out relevant policies and procedures and by meeting members of staff, students, employers and alumni of the University.

2.150   The annual report of the RDQC on postgraduate research reflects on student progression data, completion rates, and appeals and complaints received. It includes an action plan focused on assuring and enhancing the postgraduate research student experience and is a comprehensive document incorporating APEs for the PG Cert Research Skills and PG Cert in Research Degree Supervision. Research students routinely attend Faculty Research and Knowledge Exchange and RDQC meetings and are aware of this annual monitoring process.

2.151   To enable research students to plan their time effectively a three-year plan is agreed with supervisors, with clear expectations and goals. Students whom the team met find this approach helpful, and they positively reported that support from, and communication with, supervisors was equally effective for both full-time and part-time students. Research students are further supported and encouraged in their study by two annual Postgraduate Research Student Symposia that enable students to present their work in a conference setting. There is also a competitive process of annual Excellence Awards, which can reward recipients with a reduction in tuition fee.

2.152   Research supervisors take annual self-tests focused on the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes and *Chapter B11* of the Quality Code. Completion of the test is mandatory and is monitored by the Research and Knowledge Exchange Centre, which also keeps a record of those attending Supervisor Development and Enhancement events. Supervisors are required to attend two of these events per year, which provide guidance regarding changes to University regulations and policies and facilitate the exchange of good practice in supervision, support and examination.

2.153   Research students confirmed that they are content with the advice and guidance that they have received. Those studying via distance learning feel that they are part of the University due to the level of support with which they are provided. Students are aware of training opportunities open to them, including the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Skills and training sessions on useful applications, generic research training sessions, careers advice, seminars, symposia and occasions for postgraduate research students to share their developing research with each other.

2.154   A recent growth in full-time research students at the University has been driven in part by the offering of 175th anniversary scholarships across all four faculties. Students expressed the view that this expansion has not been without costs to the quality of learning opportunities. They drew attention to a lack of desk space and of space to conduct investigative work, but emphasised that compromise solutions are always found. In addition, availability of places on the University's Engaging Students with Learning module is limited; some students expressed the view that the recent growth in numbers of research students meant that some students who wished to teach could not readily get access to this module and accordingly were not permitted to take teaching roles. Nevertheless, the supportive environment for the University's research students is a positive aspect of the provision and the University is alert to the need to resource the recent growth in student numbers more fully.

2.155   The University has recently extended its collaboration with Sarum College to include support for the enrolment of research students. Sarum College currently offers four postgraduate taught programmes in spirituality, leadership, liturgy and theology, validated by the University. The University's intention, subject to scrutiny in the course of 2015-16, is to enrol research students on the basis that those students are principally supervised by the University and that their progress is governed by the University's processes and regulations.

2.156   The University has clear and effective procedures for securing the standards of its research degrees and a robust system of regulation of research degrees, and for staff training and student support. The Expectation is met and the level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

The quality of student learning opportunities: Summary of findings

2.157   In reaching its judgement, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published handbook. One Expectation (B10) is not met. The level of risk is judged to be low except for Expectations B7 and B10, for which the level of risk is judged to be moderate.

2.158   There are three features of good practice in this judgement area, relating to the extensive range of volunteering opportunities available to students, the opportunities for students to engage in decision making through the Student Academic Council, and the partnerships between staff and students within the Student Fellows Scheme.

2.159   The review team makes four recommendations in respect of the quality of student learning opportunities. The first relates to the transparency of entry criteria for programmes delivered in a language other than the main language of instruction. The second follows from the lack of formalised policy for securing external input for approval of changes in titles of awards. The third is in relation to oversight of assessment processes delegated to partner institutions. The fourth arises from the fact that degree certificates and records of achievement in respect of collaborative provision do not state the language of instruction or the location of the delivery of the programme.

2.160   The review team concludes that the quality of student learning opportunities at the College **meets** UK expectations.

3 Judgement: The quality of the information about learning opportunities

Expectation (C): UK higher education providers produce information for their intended audiences about the higher education they offer that is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy.

Quality Code, Part C: Information about Higher Education Provision

Findings

3.1   The University details its expectations in relation to the management of information in its Information about Higher Education Provision Policy. This includes a detailed breakdown of management responsibilities for the main items of information produced by the institution.

3.2   The University's public webpages contain accessible information on its mission, vision and governance structure. Information for applicants is housed on the 'Study Here' section of the website. International students benefit from dedicated webpages with information about UK entry requirements, tuition fees and accommodation. The Quality Office pages on the Intranet hold important information for staff in relation to quality assurance and enhancement including the Quality and Standards Handbook.

3.3   The website contains detailed programme pages, which include details of programme content, entry criteria, assessment information and links to the key information set for undergraduate provision. Programme specifications are also publicly available online. Electronic materials are supplemented by printed materials at open days. Open day events are themselves a useful source of information with prospective students able to access indicative teaching sessions and the VLE.

3.4   The detailed Student Handbook is augmented by programme handbooks, whose core content is specified by the SADC and which are audited by the relevant FADC.

3.5   The team found that the University's written policy detailing responsibility for the production and management of information, clear materials provided to students, comprehensive and accessible website and information for staff surrounding quality assurance and enhancement is sufficient to enable the Expectation to be met.

3.6   The team tested this Expectation by viewing the University's website, strategic plan, prospectus and Student Handbook. The team also examined the VLE, quality assurance information provided for staff and information produced for applicants, international students and students studying at collaborative partners. In addition, the team viewed the University's Information about Higher Education Provision Policy and met staff and students of the University.

3.7   The Quality Office holds responsibility for the approval of programme information including handbooks, which are compiled in accordance with an institution-wide framework. FADCs assume a responsibility for monitoring information, including handbooks provided for current students, and executes this by sampling materials to ensure that they meet institutional requirements. These arrangements are effective and well understood by staff.

3.8   Students were largely positive about the information provided to them by the University. They find that the range of handbooks provides comprehensive information about their programmes of study. As noted under Expectation B5, the University communicates to students any changes since the module was last delivered. Students informed the team that

this provides them with a real sense of how their modules and programme are being enhanced.

3.9 Students taking part in the pilot of the University's new VLE were positive about its inception and the extent to which it enables effective communication. The University has recently instituted minimum threshold standards for programme content on the VLE. Students reported that despite this being a new development they have observed an increase in the extent of coverage and comprehensiveness of information.

3.10 Although students recognise that the HEAR has only recently been introduced and is not yet fully in use, they believe that not all students are yet aware of it or of the benefits it can offer. Students were accordingly of the view that the institution could better communicate the role of the HEAR in recording achievement.

3.11 The responsibility for monitoring information produced by collaborative partners is delegated to the Senior Quality Officer for Academic Provision. Memoranda of Agreement with each collaborative partner include a schedule relating to requirements for marketing and publicity of programmes; the Director of Academic Quality and Development is responsible for checking that the schedule is followed and for making random checks on partners' websites.

3.12 Information for students at ICBS is translated into Greek and is subject to an audit by a Greek-speaking member of the University's staff to ensure that it remains in line with expectations. Completion of an ongoing schedule for translation will ensure that all relevant University policies and procedures in relation to ICBS are available.

3.13 There are high levels of student satisfaction regarding the availability and suitability of information; there is a clear policy framework and well understood responsibilities for the creation of materials, and clear arrangements for monitoring and approval. The Expectation is met and the level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

The quality of the information about learning opportunities: Summary of findings

3.14   In reaching its judgement, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published handbook. The University effectively manages its responsibilities for the production of information for its various audiences. The Expectation for this judgement area is met and the associated level of risk is low.

3.15   The University provides accessible and clear information about its higher education provision. Students express a high level of satisfaction in respect of the availability and suitability of information provided for them; there is a clear policy framework and well understood responsibilities for the creation of materials, as well as clear arrangements for monitoring and approval.

3.16   The review team therefore concludes that the quality of the information produced about learning opportunities at the University **meets** UK expectations.

4 Judgement: The enhancement of student learning opportunities

Expectation (Enhancement): Deliberate steps are being taken at provider level to improve the quality of students' learning opportunities.

Findings

4.1 The University aspires to be a world leader in delivering values-led higher education, exploring the significance and meaning of its Christian foundation through the contemporary values of intellectual freedom, social justice, diversity, spirituality, individuals matter and creativity through the strategic plan and associated strategies. The Learning and Teaching and the Employability Strategies are key to the enhancement of the student experience. The current Learning and Teaching Strategy is promoted in four recognisable academic development themes: Student Engagement, Design and Innovation, Technology, and Employability, which are the focus of engagement with the Learning and Teaching Strategy across the University.

4.2 Following a successful pilot in faculties in 2010-11, the University has taken deliberate steps to align its structures for quality assurance and enhancement at institutional and faculty levels with the aim of ensuring that quality assurance processes and enhancement activities focused on learning and teaching work effectively together to maximise the impact of the University's enhancement agenda. At faculty level the responsibilities of Faculty Learning and Teaching Committees and Faculty Quality Committees have been brought together in a single FADC covering both remits. At University level, the SADC has brought together the Senate Learning and Teaching Committees and Academic Standards Committee. To support the new committee structure the University has combined the Quality Office and the Learning and Teaching Development Unit into a single department, Academic Quality and Development, which is headed by the Director of Academic Quality and Development, who also chairs SADC. This framework would allow the Expectation to be met.

4.3 The review team examined appropriate documentation, including the Quality and Standards Handbook, APE reports, validation and revalidation documentation and reports, strategies, action plans, and reports covering a range of enhancement initiatives. The team held meetings with senior management, academic staff, employers, students and student representatives, including Students' Union Sabbatical Officers.

4.4 The four academic development themes - Student Engagement, Design and Innovation, Technology, and Employability are presented to staff and students as the focal points for enhancing learning and teaching. The University chose to prioritise four themes to ensure that the Learning and Teaching Strategy's key enhancement priorities are memorable and accessible, and therefore easier to embed across the University community, promoting a shared understanding of the Learning and Teaching Strategy and facilitating a wider range of enhancement activity across the University. The four academic development themes are well known and understood by staff and students, hence establishing a shared understanding of enhancement and encouraging an inclusive approach, which appears to help to develop wide-ranging engagement with enhancement activities by staff and students.

4.5 Quality assurance processes are used to stimulate and identify enhancement in a systematic way. The four academic development themes are embedded in programme approval, monitoring and review as key criteria for programmes to address. Programmes undergoing validation or revalidation include in their rationale or self-evaluation document

details of how they have engaged with the University's mission statement, strategic values and Learning and Teaching Strategy.

4.6   Monitoring and review processes have a role in the identification and sharing of good practice, and in enhancement through consideration of academic development themes. Good practice in programmes is highlighted by faculties in their Annual Academic Development Reports, which are disseminated through the SADC review of the reports. An annual summary of the commendations arising from revalidations and validations is received by the SADC and disseminated. The annual monitoring process has a thematic component, with programmes asked to reflect on enhancement around a particular topic; for example, in their APEs in 2013-14 programmes mapped their practice to the Academic Development Theme of Student Engagement.

4.7   There are several examples of practice that have been stimulated by the University in line with the Learning and Teaching Strategy and University values. These include the promotion of volunteering as an aspect of the curriculum, the ongoing support for enhancing the student voice represented by the Student Academic Council, and the Student Fellows Scheme, which has been successful in engaging students in a wide range of enhancement projects.

4.8   The establishment by the University, in line with its values, of an institution-wide volunteering module available to undergraduate students, contributes to the example of good practice identified in Expectation B4.

4.9   The Student Academic Council includes a body of student representatives, including one student from each academic department. From its establishment in 2012-13 by the Vice-Chancellor and the SU, it has grasped opportunities for dialogue between students and the Senior Management Team and for identifying and carrying out enhancement activities. The work of the Council contributes to the example of good practice identified in Expectation B5.

4.10   The Student Fellows Scheme, now in its third year of operation, was established as a joint SU and University initiative. Staff and students from a variety of departments and faculties expressed familiarity with the scheme and with a number of specific projects, confirming that the scheme is well known and valued across the University. The effective management of this scheme contributes to the good practice identified in Expectation B5.

4.11   The University has identified the development of technology to support learning and teaching as a theme in the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy and has established the TEL to pursue this theme. The work of the TEL has included the pilot of Canvas, a scheme intended to evaluate possible successors to the University's current VLE.

4.12   In order to achieve a strategic goal of supporting the experience of distance learning students, the University has established the DaFL, which has led a revision to the Distance Learning Policy and advanced support for students through admission and induction.

4.13   Staff and students are directly involved in shaping enhancement initiatives at different levels of the University. This has supported the development of a shared understanding of the University's strategic and educational values and goals. The wide engagement of students and staff in the University's strategic and value-driven approach to the enhancement of students' learning opportunities is **good practice**.

4.14   The University takes deliberate steps at provider level to improve the quality of students' learning opportunities. The Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

The enhancement of student learning opportunities: Summary of findings

4.15   In reaching its judgement, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published handbook. The University takes deliberate steps at provider level to improve the quality of students' learning opportunities. The single Expectation for this judgement area is met and the associated level of risk is low. There are no recommendations in this judgement area. There is one example of good practice in relation to the wide engagement of students and staff in the University's strategic and value-driven approach to the enhancement of students' learning opportunities. The Expectation also contributes to the examples of good practice identified in Expectations B4 and B5 regarding the Student Fellows Scheme, the Student Academic Council and the range of opportunities for volunteering.

4.16   The University's Learning and Teaching Strategy is based on the values of the institution and it, together with the Employability Strategy, forms key components in the enhancement of the student experience. The University's four academic development themes are well known and understood by staff and students, hence establishing a shared understanding of enhancement and encouraging an inclusive approach which appears to help to develop wide-ranging engagement with enhancement activities by staff and students. Examples of practice established in line with the Learning and Teaching Strategy and the University's values demonstrate the successful implementation of its strategies for enhancement.

4.17   Student engagement in the management of enhancement is widespread and supported, and the management of students' needs is a clear focus of the University's strategies and policies. The enhancement of student learning opportunities at the University is **commended**.

5   Commentary on the Theme: Student Employability

Findings

5.1   The University places considerable emphasis on securing the employability of its students and has established a variety of processes with a view to monitoring and strengthening activity towards this goal. It is an explicit element of the Learning and Teaching Strategy of the University to further student development and achievement, with employability being one of its four academic development themes. This vision is captured in an Employability Statement, and the Employability Strategy includes aims and objectives towards meeting strategic priorities; progress in fulfilling the strategy is considered by the Employability Strategy Working Group. Faculty employability action plans and targets support University-level strategy and are reviewed each year by the UMG. Regular updates to Senate in relation to employability include reports from faculties with data from the survey of Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education. These reports inform APEs, whose key performance indicators are monitored by Senate. The institutional approach to employability is also taken forward by, for example, the Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning Strategy.

5.2   The annual report of the Careers Service describes the range of advice and support that it offers. The provision of more focused careers advice at faculty level has been strengthened by the recent appointments of two Employability Advisers based in faculties but reporting to the Careers Service. In addition to core careers services the University provides a range of employment-related activities, particularly during an Annual Employability and Skills Week. Workshops, lectures and advice on enterprise activities such as setting up a business are provided. Staff of the service, while noting that further work was called for with a view to securing higher rates of employment for students completing postgraduate programmes, drew attention to advice and support provided by the service for students considering options for their futures. Many students whom the team met had taken advantage of opportunities available to them in respect of the development of their employability, and they expressed very positive views about the quality of support offered.

5.3   The University's portfolio of programmes includes a number which have direct links with employers or opportunities for work experience. It regards apprenticeship degrees as an important component of its provision and is developing further such programmes. An employer partner in an apprenticeship degree programme expressed positive views about her involvement, and a graduate of the programme spoke highly of the quality of her experience in enabling her to develop relevant skills in a work environment with good support. Those programmes that include a work placement year publicise their work placement opportunities on webpages. The industry skills module in the Business, Law and Sports Faculty enables students to network with employers. A portfolio of professional doctorates has been developed to enable professional practice and career development to be underpinned with research.

5.4   The University regards its volunteering scheme as supporting its institutional values. The volunteering module is open to students on any undergraduate programme that offers option choices and is overseen by a single coordinator. Students are very positive about the experience provided by the volunteering module, which they believe helps them to develop skills relevant to employment. In addition to this module, the Winchester Hub on campus helps students to contribute to the work of local charities.

5.5   The University makes use of its links with employers to inform the development of its taught provision. The Director of Employer Engagement is expected to work closely with employers in securing their involvement in curriculum development and delivery. A number of departments offering vocational courses have strong links with employers, and numerous

programmes have relevant PSRB recognition. In discussion with employers, the review team heard a variety of examples of employers' involvement in programme and curriculum design, and in validation and revalidation. Although some departments have employer advisory groups, practice in engagement with employers does not follow a standard model across the University, and employers expressed no awareness of regular meetings of employer forums.

5.6   Many local employers and other organisations have worked with the University for a number of years in providing work placements and volunteering opportunities for students. Representatives of such organisations expressed very positive views about these relationships, confirming that relevant protocols and online information were in place and that the University responds positively to feedback. Students also confirmed the quality of information provided for them.

5.7   The University funds a range of other initiatives that support student employability. The Winchester Research Apprenticeship Scheme enables students to work closely with a member of academic staff on a research project. Opportunities for work experience within the University itself are available through the Graduate Internship Scheme. The Frontrunner scheme enables selected students to develop leadership skills by meeting leaders and gaining experience in leading teams in a variety of external professional settings.

5.8   The University has implemented the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR), and the HEAR Working Group is responsible for establishing its use. Although students were aware of the potential relevance of HEAR, they expressed mixed views on how best use might be made of it and on its potential relevance to them.

5.9   Overall, students saw the development of employability as an important aspect of their university experience, and were very positive about the range of opportunities open to them. Students confirmed that employability was incorporated in programmes, and most had taken part in at least one of the employability opportunities offered, generally finding the experience to be beneficial despite the difficulty of finding appropriate work experience in some areas.

Glossary

This glossary is a quick-reference guide to terms in this report that may be unfamiliar to some readers. Definitions of key operational terms are also given on pages 30 to 33 of the Higher Education Review handbook.

If you require formal definitions of other terms please refer to the section on assuring standards and quality: www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality

User-friendly explanations of a wide range of terms can be found in the longer **Glossary** on the QAA website: www.qaa.ac.uk/Pages/GlossaryEN.aspx

Academic standards
The standards set by **degree-awarding bodies** for their courses (programmes and modules) and expected for their awards. See also **threshold academic standard**.

Award
A qualification, or academic credit, conferred in formal recognition that a student has achieved the intended **learning outcomes** and passed the assessments required to meet the academic standards set for a **programme** or unit of study.

Blended learning
Learning delivered by a number of different methods, usually including face-to-face and e-learning (see **technology enhanced or enabled learning**).

Credit(s)
A means of quantifying and recognising learning, used by most institutions that provide higher education **programmes of study**, expressed as numbers of credits at a specific level.

Degree-awarding body
A UK higher education provider (typically a university) with the power to award degrees, conferred by Royal Charter, or under Section 76 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, or under Section 48 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992, or by Papal Bull, or, since 1999, granted by the Privy Council on advice from QAA (in response to applications for taught degree awarding powers, research degree awarding powers or university title).

Distance learning
A course of study that does not involve face-to-face contact between students and tutors but instead uses technology such as the internet, intranets, broadcast media, CD-ROM and video, or traditional methods of correspondence - learning 'at a distance'.
See also **blended learning**.

Dual award or double award
The granting of separate awards (and certificates) for the same **programme** by two **degree-awarding bodies** who have jointly delivered the programme of study leading to them. See also **multiple award**.

e-learning
See technology enhanced or enabled learning.

Enhancement
The process by which higher education providers systematically improve the quality of provision and the ways in which students' learning is supported. It is used as a technical term in our review processes.

Expectations
Statements in the **Quality Code** that set out what all UK higher education providers expect of themselves and each other, and what the general public can therefore expect of them.

Flexible and distributed learning
A programme or module that does not require the student to attend classes or events at particular times and locations.
See also **distance learning**.

Framework
A published formal structure. See also **framework for higher education qualifications**.

Framework for higher education qualifications
A published formal structure that identifies a hierarchy of national qualification levels and describes the general achievement expected of holders of the main qualification types at each level, thus assisting higher education providers in maintaining academic standards. QAA publishes the following frameworks: *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and *The Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland* (FQHEIS).

Good practice
A process or way of working that, in the view of a QAA review team, makes a particularly positive contribution to a higher education provider's management of academic standards and the quality of its educational provision. It is used as a technical term in QAA's audit and review processes.

Learning opportunities
The provision made for students' learning, including planned study, teaching, assessment, academic and personal support, and resources (such as libraries and information systems, laboratories or studios).

Learning outcomes
What a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completing a process of learning.

Multiple awards
An arrangement where three or more **degree-awarding bodies** together provide a single jointly delivered **programme** (or programmes) leading to a separate **award** (and separate certification) of each awarding body. The arrangement is the same as for **dual/double awards**, but with three or more awarding bodies being involved.

Operational definition
A formal definition of a term, establishing exactly what QAA means when using it in reviews and reports.

Programme (of study)
An approved course of study that provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification.

Programme specifications
Published statements about the intended **learning outcomes** of programmes of study, containing information about teaching and learning methods, support and assessment methods, and how individual units relate to levels of achievement.

Public information
Information that is freely available to the public (sometimes referred to as being 'in the public domain').

Quality Code
Short term for the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, which is the UK-wide set of **reference points** for higher education providers (agreed through consultation with the higher education community, and published by QAA), which states the **Expectations** that all providers are required to meet.

Reference points
Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured.

Subject Benchmark Statement
A published statement that sets out what knowledge, understanding, abilities and skills are expected of those graduating in each of the main subject areas (mostly applying to bachelor's degrees), and explains what gives that particular discipline its coherence and identity.

Technology enhanced or enabled learning (or **e-learning**)
Learning that is delivered or supported through the use of technology.

Threshold academic standard
The minimum acceptable level of achievement that a student has to demonstrate to be eligible for an academic **award**. Threshold academic standards are set out in the national **frameworks** and **Subject Benchmark Statements**.

Virtual learning environment (VLE)
An intranet or password-only interactive website (also referred to as a platform or user interface) giving access to **learning opportunities** electronically. These might include such resources as course handbooks, information and reading lists; blogs, message boards and forums; recorded lectures; and/or facilities for online seminars (webinars).

Widening participation
Increasing the involvement in higher education of people from a wider range of backgrounds.