

BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

Independent Higher Education (IHE) Reaccreditation Inspection

INSTITUTION: The Institute of Economic and Political Studies

ADDRESS: 18 Balderton Street
London
W1K 6TG

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Mr John C Gough

DATE OF INSPECTION: 19 and 26 October 2016

ACCREDITATION STATUS AT INSPECTION: Accredited

DECISION ON REACCREDITATION:

- Reaccreditation awarded for the full four-year period.
- Decision on reaccreditation deferred.
- Award of reaccreditation refused.

Date: 15 Dec 2016

1. Background to the institution

The Institute of Economic and Political Studies (INSTEP) commenced teaching students from American universities in 1979 in London and from its Cambridge site in 1986. The major aim of INSTEP has been to work with a consortium of American universities, to provide second and third year undergraduates with the opportunity to spend one or two semesters studying in London and Cambridge. The process reflects the practice of many UK and American universities in offering credit rated study abroad opportunities at overseas universities. The justification for such programmes is to broaden the experience for participants in respect of the academic courses which would not normally be on offer in their home universities and to permit students to experience different cultural environments.

INSTEP is a company limited by shares and was incorporated in the state of Delaware in 1995. It has seven directors. The President is supported by centre managers and academic directors in London and Cambridge and the Director of the company's United States (US) office.

At the time of the interim inspection in 2015 the London centre was at Lower Grosvenor Place. By the time of this inspection, the centre had re-located to Balderton Street. The teaching and administrative space is licensed from the St Nicholas Training Centre for the Montessori Method of Education Ltd. Balderton Street is located in Central London, just south of Oxford Street and close to Bond Street underground station. Additional teaching space is also available at 45 Russell Square. There have been no changes to the teaching and residential centres in Cambridge.

2. Brief description of the current provision

Courses offered at the London centre include Law and Society, Contemporary Britain and The New Europe. Cambridge offerings include International Economic Issues, Geopolitics in the 21st Century and Economic Theory: The Cambridge Tradition. The courses are taught by academics from Cambridge and London universities, who have significant research and publication profiles.

The American academic tradition prevails in the delivery and assessment of each programme. There is no requirement for external moderation of student work nor second internal marking, which are features that are embedded in the United Kingdom (UK) higher education system. To be eligible to participate in this study abroad programme, students must have a minimum grade point average of 3.0. Students must enrol for five courses, each of which carries three credits. Students therefore receive a maximum of fifteen credits on successful completion of their studies. These credits contribute towards their overall degree classification in their home university. Teaching is normally provided in small groups.

There are currently ten American universities that are members of the INSTEP consortium including Tulane, Wake Forest and Arizona State. Courses are mainly in aspects of international relations, politics and economics. The college of record in America is Tulane University in New Orleans.

All students on INSTEP programmes are second or third year undergraduates aged 20 or over. Each of the UK centres caters for relatively small numbers of students. For the Fall semester 2016, there are nine students studying in London and five in Cambridge. Students can apply throughout the calendar year for admission to the Fall and Spring semesters. The closing date for acceptance for admission is approximately three months prior to the semester commencement date. For the Spring semester 2017 the closing date was October 2016. The Cambridge programme is full for Spring 2017 but the INSTEP website indicates that places are still available in London, despite the official closing date for applications being past. The centres also offer summer programmes.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was carried out by one inspector and a student representative. One day was spent at each centre, in London and Cambridge. Prior to the visits, the institution's self evaluation report and other relevant documentation were considered. Each centre has a resident Centre Manager and an Academic Director. Meetings were held with these key personnel and also with students at each centre. Academic staff delivering courses on the day of each visit were also interviewed. One class at each centre was observed. Student accommodation at Cambridge was also visited. Additional documentation was scrutinised during the inspection.

4. Inspection history:

Inspection type	Date
Full Accreditation	17-18 November 2008
Supplementary	28 May 2009
Interim	24 March 2010
Re-accreditation	12/29 November 2012
Interim	29 January 2015

PART B - JUDGEMENT AND EVIDENCE

The following judgements and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector(s) during the inspection and from documentation provided by the institution.

INSPECTION AREA - GOVERNANCE, STRATEGY AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

1. The institution is effectively and responsibly governed

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| 1.1 | The organisational structure, including the role and extent of authority of any owners, directors or governing body, is clearly defined, documented and understood by stakeholders. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 1.2 | The head of the institution, directors and other relevant persons are suitably qualified and experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying them out. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 1.3 | Policies, procedures and systems linking governance and management are well documented and effectively disseminated across the institution. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 1.4 | The institution engages in appropriate risk management planning, which is administered and monitored by named individuals. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 1.5 | The head of the institution, directors and other relevant persons are suitably qualified and experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying them out. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 1.6 | The governing body conducts regular risk assessment exercises in all areas of the institution's provision. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 1.7 | All relationships with other educational institutions and organisations are defined formally and are fully transparent, with institutions compliant with partner or parent institutions' requirements, where applicable. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

The institution is effectively and responsibly governed and has been operating for 36 years in London and 30 years in Cambridge. The management team is comprised of the President, Director of the US office and the academic directors and centre managers at London and Cambridge. All parties involved in the management of the institution understand their roles and responsibilities. There is an effective management structure.

Given the small scale nature of the institution, there is ongoing risk assessment of all aspects of INSTEP's work. If the primary teaching accommodation should for any reason be unavailable, then classes can be held in other designated venues in Russell Square in London and tutor's rooms in Cambridge.

Should tutors be unable to deliver a teaching session, there is enough flexibility in the weekly timetable for missed classes to be held in later weeks.

2. The institution has a clear and achievable strategy

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| 2.1 | The institution has a clear strategy for the development of its higher education provision which is supported by appropriate financial management. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 2.2 | There is provision for stakeholder input to inform the strategic direction of the institution. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 2.3 | The strategy is well communicated to all stakeholders within and outside the institution. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 2.4 | The governing body and senior management conduct a regular and systematic review of their own and the institution's overall performance and measure this performance against strategic targets. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

INSTEP has a good working relationship with its partner universities. The major strategic aim for all members of the consortium is to seek to ensure that students have an excellent learning experience and succeed at the highest level academically.

The academic courses offered in London and Cambridge are approved by the American universities and must complement the academic content of the degree programmes for which the students are registered in the US.

3. **Financial management is open, honest and effective**

3.1 The institution conducts its financial matters transparently and with appropriate probity. Yes No

3.2 The institution's finances are subject to regular independent external audit. Yes No

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

Comments

The Institute takes its financial responsibilities seriously and has submitted management accounts to December 2015.

3.2 There is no legal requirement for INSTEP's accounts to be externally audited as they are classified as a small company.

INSPECTION AREA - ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

4. **The institution is effectively managed**

4.1 The management structure is clearly defined, documented and understood by all stakeholders including governors, management, staff and students. Yes No

4.2 The head of the institution and other senior managers are suitably qualified and experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying them out. Yes No

4.3 There are clear channels of communication between management, the governing body, staff, students and other stakeholders. Yes No

4.4 There are clearly delineated responsibilities and reporting arrangements at institutional, faculty, departmental, programme and course levels. This should include provision for academic leadership at programme and individual course level. Yes No

4.5 There is an effective committee structure with appropriate reporting lines which informs management decision-making and provides feedback to stakeholders. Yes No

4.6 Committees and other meetings have clear and appropriate terms of reference, are scheduled to meet regularly and are minuted accurately. Yes No

4.7 There is a set of comprehensive policies, regulations and procedures for staff and student conduct. Yes No

4.8 Management ensures that all information, internal and external, including publicity material, is accurate and fit-for-purpose. Yes No

4.9 A policy exists and is administered effectively regarding collection of and refund of student fees. Yes No

4.10 Management compiles reports at least annually presenting the results of the institution's reviews and incorporating action plans. Reports include analysis of year-on-year student satisfaction, retention and achievement, staff performance (including research and other forms of scholarship) and a review of resourcing issues. Yes No

4.11 Action plans are implemented and reviewed regularly, with outcomes reported to management and subsequently to the governing body. Yes No

4.12 Management monitors and reviews academic and administrative staff performance through a clearly documented and transparent appraisal system. Yes No

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

Comments

4.7 There are no comprehensive policies and procedures for staff and student conduct. These must be developed and

published, preferably as a standalone document for the benefit of all members of the INSTEP community. Consideration should also be given to developing a social media policy, to be included in such a document.

5. Academic management is effective

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| 5.1 | There are appropriate procedures for the proposal, design and validation of programmes of study which take cognisance of the mission of the institution, national imperatives, market demand and resource issues and reflect international norms. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| 5.2 | Management ensures that the stated curricula are delivered as presented in the prospectus and other related documentation, and that requirements from professional or other relevant bodies are met. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| 5.3 | There are regular scheduled and minuted meetings of academic staff to review academic programmes. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| 5.4 | There is an appropriate policy and effective procedures exist for the acquisition of academic resources to support programmes. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| 5.5 | Appraisal of academic staff includes regular classroom observation which is used for the dissemination of good practice. | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |
| 5.6 | Academic staff are supported in their continuing professional development and enabled to develop further pedagogic techniques to enhance the learning of students. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

Academic management is regarded as self management and feedback from students clearly indicates that they are satisfied with the academic experience they receive at each of the two centres. Self management in this context refers to the US approach where individual tutors are responsible for managing all aspects of their courses, without direct involvement from external examiners.

Academic staff meetings are difficult to organise because tutors are working for their respective universities and are rarely at the centres at the same time. However, academic courses are annually reviewed and, when necessary, content is updated by the subject tutors. This is in keeping with good practice in the US.

5.5 Regular classroom observations are not carried out and must be introduced to assist in the dissemination of good pedagogic practice.

6. The institution is effectively administered

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| 6.1 | Administrators are suitably qualified and experienced and understand their specific responsibilities and duties. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| 6.2 | The size of the administrative team is sufficient to ensure the effective day-to-day running of the institution. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| 6.3 | The administrative support available to the management is clearly defined, documented and understood and appropriately focused to support its activities. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| 6.4 | Policies, procedures and systems are well documented and disseminated effectively across the institution. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| 6.5 | Data collection and collation systems are effective and accurate. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| 6.6 | Classes are timetabled and rooms allocated appropriately for the courses offered. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| 6.7 | Comprehensive administrative records are organised and stored efficiently, easily accessed and used effectively. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

Centre managers are very experienced, having been associated with the programmes for several years. They handle all administrative matters for the small number of students in London and Cambridge. In particular students paid tribute to

the help and assistance they received prior to coming to the UK and also the clarity of the information on the INSTEP website.

Students are provided with useful handbooks containing important information regarding their academic studies, housing, security and medical needs.

7. The institution employs appropriately qualified and experienced managerial and administrative staff

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| 7.1 | There are appropriate policies and effective procedures for the recruitment and continuing employment of suitably qualified and experienced staff. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 7.2 | There are effective procedures for the induction of all staff. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 7.3 | There is a transparent and well-documented appraisal system for all staff. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 7.4 | There are clear and appropriate job specifications for all staff. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 7.5 | All staff are treated fairly and according to a published equality and diversity policy. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |
| 7.6 | The institution has a clear policy regarding the handling of legal issues relating to the employment of staff. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 7.7 | Staff have access to a complaints and appeals procedure. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 7.8 | Opportunities are provided for the continuing professional development of administrative and managerial staff. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

All staff are self employed and have been associated with the INSTEP programme for a number of years. Therefore, they are very well qualified to deliver a high level of service to students. Students paid tribute to the commitment of all the administrative staff associated with the programmes and the quality of the teaching.

The inspector judged that a formal appraisal system is not required given the small size of the organisation. There is formal and informal feedback given to staff and provides the basis for academic and administrative staff performance assessment.

7.5 No staff raised any concerns regarding fair treatment, however, there is no published equality and diversity policy.

INSPECTION AREA - TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

8. Academic staff are appropriately qualified and effective in facilitating student learning

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| 8.1 | Academic staff are appropriately qualified in terms of subject knowledge, pedagogic and communicative skills, and experienced for the courses to which they are allocated. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 8.2 | The programmes and their constituent courses are delivered and assessed in ways that enable students to succeed by developing the knowledge and skills which will be required for final examinations or assessments. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 8.3 | Learning outcomes for all programmes are articulated and are publicly available. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 8.4 | Academic staff are effective in recognising individual learning needs and preferred learning styles and adapting their delivery to meet these. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 8.5 | Academic staff ensure the active participation of all students in class activities. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 8.6 | Academic staff use a mixture of large and small group and individual activities, to encourage and support students' learning. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 8.7 | Academic staff supply students with access to any additional learning materials as appropriate to support student learning. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 8.8 | Academic staff produce schemes of work and detailed lesson plans and lodge these with the administration. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 8.9 | Academic staff draw upon current research in their teaching. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 8.10 | Students are encouraged and enabled to develop independent learning skills. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 8.11 | Where appropriate, students are given the opportunity to obtain relevant workplace experience. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/> NA |
| 8.12 | Students have access to teaching staff outside teaching and learning sessions. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 8.13 | The institution provides students and academic staff with access to appropriate resources and materials for study and encourages and supports their use of these. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

Students have achieved excellent results in their final assessments.

Staff deliver courses utilising small group teaching techniques, which students have found both stimulating and enjoyable.

The academic staff have significant research and publications profiles and, in a number of cases, international as well as national reputations for academic and professional excellence.

Staff make available learning materials used in seminars to students. INSTEP may wish to consider the creation of an intranet system where all student learning materials provided by staff could be deposited at the outset of the courses.

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| 9. | Assessment is fair, well-organised and appropriate for the level and nature of the courses, and students receive timely and supportive feedback on their work | |
| 9.1 | Students are provided with an assessment schedule in which required coursework and revision periods are detailed in advance with clear submission dates. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 9.2 | Assessment strategies are relevant to the content and nature of the courses and focused on measuring students' achievement of the intended learning outcomes. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 9.3 | Assessment tasks are clearly written, indicating what students need to do to achieve stipulated levels of achievement. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 9.4 | Students receive detailed and supportive oral and written feedback on their assessments and overall performance and progress, which are effectively monitored. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 9.5 | There are secure and efficient procedures for the administration of examinations and other means of assessment. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 9.6 | The institution takes appropriate steps to identify and discourage cheating, including plagiarism and other misdemeanours, and to penalise offenders. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 9.7 | There are clear policies and procedures for students to claim mitigating circumstances and to appeal against marks awarded. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 9.8 | There are effective procedures for internal and external moderation at pre- and post-assessment stages. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |
| 9.9 | The institution makes student records and transcripts available to its students in a timely manner. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

The US model for higher education teaching puts the onus on the individual tutors to ensure that all students are treated fairly throughout their period of study.

Results are reported back to the home universities. Students have the right to challenge academic decision-making through university procedures although it is rare for results to be contested.

Students receive detailed feedback on their academic performance. However it is recommended that INSTEP ensures that all written feedback should be at the very least word processed.

9.8 External moderation is not a requirement, nor is it appropriate for INSTEP, therefore, the inspector judges the overall standard to be met.

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| 10. | The institution encourages and supports its staff to undertake research and other forms of scholarship and to engage in other professional activities | |
| 10.1 | Academic staff are encouraged and supported to undertake research in relevant fields and to publish their findings. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 10.2 | Academic staff contracts require academic staff to engage in research and/or scholarship relevant to their teaching and other duties. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |
| 10.3 | The institution encourages and supports staff to obtain additional qualifications. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |
| 10.4 | There is a fair and transparent procedure for staff to seek financial support for their research and other professional development activities. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |
| 10.5 | The institution provides time for staff to meet regularly to share and discuss current research activities and, if appropriate, invites external speakers. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

Academic staff are invited to teach on the courses because of their existing impressive qualifications, research and publications records. Support for such activities comes from their universities rather than from INSTEP. Academic staff have taught their subject specialisms for many years.

10.2, 10.3, 10.4 and 10.5 is not relevant as all staff are self-employed with INSTEP and are predominantly employed by

their host university.

All staff, teaching the INSTEP courses, already possess Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and/or Masters (MA, LL.M, MSc, MEcon) qualifications. A number also have professorial status. Therefore, there is no need for INSTEP to encourage staff to obtain additional qualifications.

Any financial support for research and related activities would come from the staffs' respective universities.

Staff visit INSTEP to carry out their teaching duties. Research discussion and activities are centred on their respective universities and therefore it is unnecessary to make time available at INSTEP. The inspector judges the overall standard to be met.

INSPECTION AREA - STUDENT RECRUITMENT, SUPPORT, GUIDANCE AND PROGRESSION

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

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| 11.1 | Text and images provide an accurate depiction of the institution's location, premises, facilities and the range and nature of resources and services offered. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 11.2 | Information on the programmes available is comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 11.3 | There are effective procedures to update information on a regular basis. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 11.4 | Students are informed of the status of the qualifications offered, including the awarding body and level of award. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 11.5 | Students are given some indication of the type of careers graduates may follow and any professional body exemptions that may be available. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |
| 11.6 | Students are informed of the full cost of all programmes, including costs of assessments and any required materials. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 11.7 | Students are informed as to the necessary English language requirements for entry on to programmes. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 11.8 | The institution has a clear policy on the accreditation of prior learning and prior experiential learning which is brought to the attention of prospective students. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

Students commented favourably about the information available to them, both prior to leaving the US and once they had arrived in the United Kingdom. However, they did feel that the appearance of the website was dated, although they had no complaints about the accuracy of the information. It is recommended that INSTEP reviews how it presents information on the website and considers whether this needs to be more interactive.

The degrees are awarded by the US universities and the INSTEP courses contribute up to 15 credits towards the total needed to graduate.

11.5 Careers advice is not offered by INSTEP as students will be returning to the US to complete their degrees and contemplate careers in their home country, therefore the inspector judges the overall standard to be met.

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

- 12.1 Entry requirements for each programme are set at an appropriate level and clearly stated in the programme descriptions seen by prospective students. Yes No
- 12.2 A formal application process ensures that students meet the entry requirements and any claimed qualifications are verified. Yes No
- 12.3 Prospective students are properly briefed on the nature and requirements of the programme(s) in which they are interested and provided with advice on choosing their programme. Yes No
- 12.4 All application enquiries are responded to promptly and appropriately. Yes No
- 12.5 Any recruitment agents are properly selected, briefed, monitored and evaluated. Yes No NA
- 12.6 Students receive a proper initial assessment, which includes language ability, to confirm their capability to complete the programmes on which they are enrolling. Yes No
- 12.7 Students with special needs are identified so that appropriate support can be provided. Yes No
- 12.8 Entry on the basis of accreditation of prior learning and prior experiential learning is subject to a rigorous process and is clearly documented. Yes No

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

Comments

Applications for places on the United Kingdom (UK) programmes are managed through INSTEP's office in the US, with Tulane University as INSTEP's school of record. Students must be in the second or third year of their undergraduate studies and, at the time of applying, have a minimum grade point average of 3.0.

All students are English speakers.

The current cohort of students confirmed that the study abroad teams, in their various universities, were extremely helpful and supportive. They were also very complimentary about the role of the INSTEP representative in the US in providing detailed briefings when responding to queries.

Students with certain special needs can be accommodated and this must be identified during the initial recruitment process.

13. **Students receive pastoral support appropriate to their age, background and circumstances**

- 13.1 There is at least one named staff member responsible for student welfare who is suitably trained, accessible to all students and available to provide advice and counselling. Yes No
- 13.2 Students receive an appropriate induction and information on the pastoral support available to them. Yes No
- 13.3 Students are issued with a contact number for out-of-hours and emergency telephone support. Yes No
- 13.4 The institution has policies to avoid discrimination and a published procedure for dealing with any abusive behaviour. Yes No
- 13.5 There are effective systems to communicate with students out of class hours. Yes No

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

Comments

The Centre Managers are the first point of contact for dealing with any student welfare issues that arise. Students are mandated to attend a two day induction programme prior to the commencement of their academic programmes. Feedback on the latest induction course was extremely positive. Out of hours contact is via e-mail and mobile telephone.

13.4 There are no formal policies regarding the avoidance of discrimination and dealing with abusive behaviour.

14. Students receive appropriate guidance

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| 14.1 | Students are given an induction to the institution, their programme of study and guidance on the use of facilities such as the library and IT. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| 14.2 | Additional support or advice on alternative programmes is provided to students who are judged not to be making sufficient progress to succeed. | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |
| 14.3 | Students have access to a fair complaints procedure of which they are informed in writing at the start of the course and offered guidance in submitting a complaint. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| 14.3 | Students have access to careers advice and guidance, including progression to further study, from a designated and suitably qualified and experienced member of staff. | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |
| 14.3 | Students have access to careers information including prospectuses for further study. | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

14.1 Students receive an appropriate induction to the institution. It does not include guidance on the use of facilities such as a library and IT because there is no library or information technology (IT) provision. However, students do receive guidance on how to register at highly regarded libraries associated with London and Cambridge Universities.

14.2 Additional academic support is provided if any student is deemed to have underperformed. There is no advice provided on alternative programmes as students are invariably only at the centres for one semester.

As a result of the small number of students, if a student wishes to raise any issue or make a complaint, they can go directly to the Centre Manager, Academic Director or tutor. If a member of staff cannot resolve the issue then the student handbook states that the complaint should be put in writing and submitted to the relevant Centre Manager. However while the procedure states who may deal with such a complaint, it does not make it clear how the complaint will be resolved and within what time frame. INSTEP may wish to consider clarifying this in future handbooks.

14.4, 14.5 Careers advice and further study opportunities are provided by the home universities.

15. Student progress is measured and recorded regularly on the basis of adequate and explicit data and effective remedial action taken where necessary

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| 15.1 | Assessment outcomes are monitored to enable the identification of students who are not making satisfactory progress and there is prompt intervention where appropriate. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| 15.2 | There is a clear and published policy on required student attendance and punctuality, with effective procedures and systems to enforce it. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| 15.3 | Accurate and secure records of attendance and punctuality at each session are kept for all students, collated centrally and reviewed at least weekly. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| 15.4 | Student absences are followed up promptly and appropriate action taken. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| 15.5 | Students are each allocated a personal tutor who is responsible for the regular review of students' progress. | <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

Any unauthorised student absence is quickly followed up. Attendance sheets are completed by the academic tutors.

15.5 There is no need for a personal tutoring system, given the low numbers of students and the fact that students are in everyday contact with academic and administrative staff, therefore, the inspector judges the overall standard to be met.

16. **International students are provided with specific advice and assistance**

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| 16.1 | Before their arrival, international students receive appropriate advice on travelling to and living in the country or location. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 16.2 | On arrival, international students receive an appropriate induction in issues specific to the local area. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 16.3 | Information and advice specific to international students continue to be available throughout their time at the institution. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 16.4 | Provision of support takes into account cultural and religious considerations. Where possible, students have access to speakers of their own first language. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

Students emphasised the help and support they received from their home universities and INSTEP prior to arrival. They also expressed satisfaction with the two day orientation programme.

Study Abroad fairs are held annually at Tulane and other US universities and additional information is obtainable from specific university or INSTEP's own websites and advisors associated with the scheme. Students expressed satisfaction with the process.

17. **Where residential accommodation is offered, it is fit-for-purpose, well maintained and appropriately supervised**

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|------|---|--|
| 17.1 | Any residential accommodation is clean, safe and of a standard which is adequate for the needs of students. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 17.2 | Any residential accommodation is open to inspection by the appropriate authorities. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> NA |
| 17.3 | A level of supervision is provided appropriate to the needs of students. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 17.4 | Students are provided with advice on suitable private accommodation. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

In London, most residential accommodation consists of shared rooms in centrally located self catering apartments. The apartments have lounge, kitchen and bathroom facilities. Bedclothes and linen are provided.

In Cambridge, the current cohort of students live in a town house some 15 minutes walk from the Cambridge Union Society, where many of the classes are held. The building also contains the INSTEP Cambridge office. The majority of rooms are for double occupancy but single rooms are available. The house has its own fully furnished kitchen, living room with television and shower rooms.

18. **The institution provides an appropriate social programme for students and information on activities in the locality**

- 18.1 Students are provided with appropriate information on opportunities for participation at events and other leisure activities which may be of interest. Yes No
- 18.2 The social programme is responsive to the needs and wishes of students. Yes No
- 18.3 Any activities within the social programme have been chosen with consideration of their affordability by the majority of students. Yes No
- 18.4 Any activities organised by the institution are supervised by a responsible representative with suitable qualifications and experience. Yes No
- 18.5 Students are encouraged to develop and participate in extra-mural activities. Yes No

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

Comments

Students are encouraged to participate in activities offered by Cambridge University societies. There is an end of semester dinner at Jesus College. Students indicated that their chances of joining such societies might be improved if they were able to obtain a cambridge.ac.uk e-mail address. However Inspectors were informed that at present such an e-mail address was only available to students registered at Cambridge University. London students were less concerned about social events, given the wide range of social activities available to them across the city.

INSPECTION AREA - PREMISES, FACILITIES AND LEARNING RESOURCES

19. **The institution has secure possession of and access to its premises**

- 19.1 The institution has secure tenure on its premises. Yes No
- 19.2 The institution has the legal right to use these premises for the delivery of higher education. Yes No
- 19.3 Where required, the institution has access to suitable external premises for academic or non-academic purposes of a temporary or occasional nature. Yes No NA

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

Comments

20. **The premises provide a safe, secure and clean environment for students and staff**

- 20.1 Access to the premises is appropriately restricted and secured. Yes No
- 20.2 The premises are maintained in an adequate state of repair, decoration and cleanliness. Yes No
- 20.3 There are specific safety rules in areas of particular hazard (e.g. science laboratories) which are brought to the attention of students, staff and visitors. Yes No NA
- 20.4 General guidance on health and safety is made available to students, staff and visitors. Yes No
- 20.5 There is adequate signage inside and outside the premises and notice boards for the display of general information. Yes No
- 20.6 There is adequate circulation space for the number of students and staff accommodated, and a suitable area in which to receive visitors. Yes No
- 20.7 There are toilet and hand-washing facilities of an appropriate number and acceptable level of cleanliness. Yes No
- 20.8 There is adequate air conditioning, heating and ventilation in all rooms. Yes No

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

Comments

Seminar teaching in Cambridge takes place at the Cambridge Union Society and supervision sessions are held in tutors' rooms at various Cambridge colleges. In London, courses are delivered either at Balderton Street or at the Anglo Study Centre in Russell Square. Students expressed satisfaction with the learning environment in each city.

21. **Classroom and other learning areas are appropriate for the programmes offered**

- 21.1 Classrooms and other learning areas provide adequate accommodation in size and number for the classes (e.g. lectures, seminars, tutorials) allocated to them. Yes No
- 21.2 Classrooms and any specialised learning areas (e.g. laboratories, clinics, workshops, studios) are equipped to a level which allows for the effective delivery of each programme. Yes No
- 21.3 There are facilities suitable for conducting assessments such as examinations. Yes No

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

Comments

Classrooms at INSTEP centres are of adequate size and fit for purpose. A large room, capable of seating approximately 20 students, is used at the Cambridge Union Society. In London the seminar room will seat approximately 16 students.

22. **There are appropriate additional facilities for students and staff**

- 22.1 Students have access to sufficient space and suitable facilities for private individual study and group work. Yes No
- 22.2 Academic staff have access to sufficient personal space for preparing lessons, marking work and consultations with students. Yes No
- 22.3 Students and staff have access to space and facilities suitable for relaxation and the consumption of food and drink where appropriate. Yes No
- 22.4 Students and staff have access to secure storage for personal possessions where appropriate. Yes No
- 22.5 There are individual offices or rooms in which academic staff and senior management can hold private meetings and a room of sufficient size to hold staff meetings. Yes No
- 22.5 Administrative offices are adequate in size and suitably resourced for the effective administration of the institution. Yes No

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

Comments

Students can use their laptops at each venue. Wireless IT access is also provided at the student accommodation. Students are encouraged to register at the Marshall Library in Cambridge and the London University Senate House library. Private discussions between tutors and students can be held at the Cambridge Union Society or tutor's room in their respective colleges.

In London, space is available for private conversations at the two locations in Balderton Street and Russell Square.

In both Cambridge and London, key texts are available on site. In the former the book room is located in the basement at 9 Walkworth Street and in London at Balderton Street.

22.2 Academic staff do not need to utilise INSTEP premises for the preparation of lessons or marking student assignments as they have full access to these resources required at their home universities.

23. **The library is appropriately stocked and provides a fit-for-purpose learning resource for the student body**

- 23.1 The library is adequately staffed with appropriately qualified and experienced staff. Yes No
- 23.2 The library has sufficient space for student independent study and group working. Yes No
- 23.3 There is sufficient provision of learning materials including books, journals and periodicals and online materials. Yes No
- 23.4 There is a well-organised lending policy. Yes No
- 23.5 There are clear, systematic and effective means of ensuring the adequacy and currency of library stock to reflect staff and student needs. Yes No
- 23.6 Library opening times are sufficient to encourage and support student independent learning. Yes No

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

Comments

Students have internet access to their home universities' on-line learning resources in addition to local library facilities. They have access to the University of London Senate House library and the Marshall Library in Cambridge as well as local libraries. The students expressed themselves satisfied with the arrangements.

24. **The information technology resources are well managed and provide a fit-for-purpose learning resource for the student body**

- 24.1 There are sufficient computers of the necessary specification to meet student and staff needs. Yes No
- 24.2 There is provision of appropriate, up-to-date, software which reflects the needs of the programmes. Yes No
- 24.3 There is an effective means of ensuring the renewal of hardware and software to ensure efficiency and currency. Yes No

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

Comments

24.1 24.2 24.3 Students use their laptops and there is wireless IT provision at the teaching centres as well as at the student accommodation. INSTEP does not provide IT resources such as computer laboratories.

INSPECTION AREA - QUALITY MANAGEMENT, ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

25. **The institution has effective systems to review its own standards and assess its own performance**

- 25.1 The institution undertakes regular and systematic monitoring of its operations. Yes No
- 25.2 The institution conducts periodic reviews of all aspects of its performance against clearly specified and appropriate performance indicators. Yes No
- 25.3 The nominated leader for each course produces an end of-session (semester or year) report which includes measures of student satisfaction, completion rates and achievement levels. Yes No
- 25.4 The nominated programme leader, drawing upon reports from its constituent courses, produces an annual programme report which includes analysis of year-on-year results on student satisfaction, achievement levels, completion rates and progression to further study or employment. Yes No
- 25.5 Reports, which present the results of the institution's reviews, evaluate its performance and incorporate action plans, are compiled at least annually. These are considered by senior management and the board of trustees and, where appropriate, shared with all stakeholders. Yes No
- 25.6 All programmes are subject to annual review and to full revalidation every five years. Yes No
- 25.7 Annual review and revalidation of programmes involve external assessors. Yes No
- 25.8 All quality management policies and procedures are clearly documented, for example in a quality manual or similar, and brought to the attention of staff and, where appropriate, students and other stakeholders. Yes No
- 25.9 Particular attention is paid to the quality of the student learning experience and to ensuring there is fair treatment of all students. Yes No

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

Comments

INSTEP forwards its academic results to its US office which then sends them on to the appropriate US universities at the end of each semester. In addition, it invites academic staff to review and update their courses on an annual basis. Courses have to be approved by the affiliate universities so that they reflect the academic programmes for which the students are enrolled in the US. Therefore, the courses are re-approved on an annual basis although there is no requirement for full revalidation every five years.

25.4 There is no overall programme leader and each tutor is responsible for the effectiveness of his or her course.

25.7 Following the US higher education model, there are no external assessors associated with these programmes.

26. The institution regularly obtains and records feedback from students and other stakeholders and takes appropriate action where necessary

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| 26.1 | Views of all stakeholders, including academic staff and students, partner institutions and employers, are canvassed and recorded regularly through various means, including face-to-face meetings, feedback questionnaires and, where appropriate, formal student representation. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 26.2 | The views of stakeholders are considered objectively, evaluated thoroughly and, where necessary, appropriate action is taken. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 26.3 | There are effective means of responding to stakeholders' opinions and keeping them informed of any actions taken and reasons for no action being taken, through formal feedback mechanisms. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 26.4 | Key performance indicators will include analysis of student outcomes in terms of the current year and year-on-year performance and any significant variations in student achievement between different programme components. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 26.5 | The institution engages with the wider community, such as employers and its alumni, in a formal and systematic manner in order to obtain feedback on the relevance of its provision and to identify areas for development. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

Feedback is obtained from students after the orientation programme has been completed and at the end of the semester. The latter feedback covers the academic courses and whether the whole programme has matched the students' expectations.

INSTEP's American based representative ensures there is strong and effective communication between the UK centres and Tulane University in New Orleans.

26.5 Engagement with the wider community such as employers is not relevant.

27. The institution has a strong commitment to, and procedures that facilitate, continuing enhancement of its provision

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| 27.1 | All stakeholders are invited and encouraged to make suggestions for enhancement. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 27.2 | In their annual appraisal, all staff are required to identify where they have facilitated enhancement and to identify further areas requiring enhancement. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 27.3 | End-of session course and annual programme reports should include enhancements made and identify further areas requiring enhancement. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| 27.4 | Action plans are implemented and reviewed regularly within the institution's committee structure. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |
| 27.5 | Staff professional development needs are identified through appraisal and other means, and measures taken to support staff to address these. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |
| 27.6 | The institution has formal mechanisms to monitor the information it provides internally and externally and to make any enhancements deemed necessary. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |

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

Comments

The institution, through its annual review of courses, determines which should be offered for the following year. This information is placed on the INSTEP website.

27.4 There is no committee structure in place because of INSTEP's small size and scope.

27.5 Staff are professionally supported at their universities.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.

Yes No

PART C - SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

Numbering of action points aligns with that of the minimum standards

GOVERNANCE, STRATEGY AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Institution's strengths

Continuity of academic and administrative staff.

Excellent working relationships fostered over thirty years with American university partners.

Sound financial management.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	<input type="radio"/> High <input type="radio"/> Medium <input type="radio"/> Low

ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Institution's strengths

Experienced centre managers.

Good communication channels with American universities.

Positive student feedback on all aspects of the study abroad programme.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
4.7 The institution must compile a comprehensive document containing principles and policies relating to student and staff conduct, discrimination, anti-bullying, harassment and equal opportunities and diversity and make this available to all members of the INSTEP community.	<input type="radio"/> High <input checked="" type="radio"/> Medium <input type="radio"/> Low
5.5. Regular classroom observations must be introduced to assist in the dissemination of good pedagogic practice.	<input type="radio"/> High <input checked="" type="radio"/> Medium <input type="radio"/> Low
7.5 Written policy and procedures must to be created in relation to equality and diversity.	<input type="radio"/> High <input checked="" type="radio"/> Medium <input type="radio"/> Low

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Institution's strengths

Academic staff have good national and international reputations, together with excellent publications and research records.

Excellent academic results

Small class sizes.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	<input type="radio"/> High <input type="radio"/> Medium <input type="radio"/> Low

STUDENT RECRUITMENT, SUPPORT, GUIDANCE AND PROGRESSION

Institution's strengths

Excellent selection processes in place in the partner American universities.

Pre-departure briefings deemed to be very good by the present cohort of students.

Students are complimentary about the INSTEP orientation programme.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
13.4 The institution must develop and publish policies to avoid discrimination and abusive behaviour.	<input type="radio"/> High <input checked="" type="radio"/> Medium <input type="radio"/> Low

PREMISES, FACILITIES AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Institution's strengths

Well located premises in both Cambridge and London.

Access for students to the Marshall Library in Cambridge and the London University Senate House library.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	<input type="radio"/> High <input type="radio"/> Medium <input type="radio"/> Low

QUALITY MANAGEMENT, ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

Institution's strengths

Courses reviewed and updated annually by tutors.

Feedback obtained from students after orientation and at the end of each semester.

Good quality feedback from tutors to students both orally and in writing.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None.	<input type="radio"/> High <input type="radio"/> Medium <input type="radio"/> Low

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

It is recommended that INSTEP should create a social media policy.

The institution should consider the creation of an intranet system onto which academic tutors could place learning materials, thus making them accessible to students at all times and in particular prior to the commencement of classes.

It is recommended that the institution should ensure that all written feedback should at the very least be in word processed form.

It is recommended that INSTEP develop effective procedures for internal moderation to further enhance the quality of its provision.

It is recommended that the institution should update the appearance of its website in order to make it a more interactive experience for prospective students.

It is recommended that INSTEP may wish to clarify, in future student handbooks, how and within what time frame any written complaints will resolved.

It is recommended that the Cambridge centre manager investigates whether it will be possible in the future for INSTEP students to acquire cambridge.ac.uk e-mail addresses to assist in gaining access to university societies and clubs.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

INSTEP rents space at both its London and Cambridge centres from larger organisations. The primary risk assessment and health and safety compliance obligations rest with those organisations. No contrary indicators were noted at either location during the inspection. The Cambridge residential accommodation also houses the office of the centre manager, who will communicate if necessary, any compliance deficiencies to the licensor.