



Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of Kaplan International Colleges UK Ltd, Glasgow International College, February 2022

The impact of COVID-19

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the review of Kaplan International Colleges UK Ltd, Glasgow International College, ability of students. A risk assessment was carried out prior to the review to identify and mitigate any potential

Outcome of the monitoring visit

1 From the evidence provided in the annual return and at the monitoring visit, the review team concludes that Kaplan International Colleges UK Ltd, Glasgow International College (GIC; the College) is making acceptable progress with continuing to monitor, review and enhance its higher education provision since the [February 2021 Higher Education Review \(Alternative Providers\)](#).

Changes since the last QAA review

2 Glasgow International College (GIC; the College) offers a range of programmes at foundation certificate and pre-master's levels. Subject areas include Arts and Humanities; Science and Engineering; Law and Social Sciences; Business, Economics and Finance; and Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences. GIC's primary relationship remains with the University of Glasgow (UoG) and programmes are specifically designed in collaboration with the University to prepare international students to succeed in UK higher education.

3 There have been no changes since the last review in 2020. The College had 22 full-time students enrolled with additional intakes due in spring 2022. There are 28 full-time and 86 part-time (26.6 full-time equivalent) academic staff, 19 management staff and three part-time non-academic staff.

Findings from the monitoring visit

4 The overall outcome of this monitoring visit was determined by reading the Annual Monitoring Process Annual Return Form, the Annual Data Return Form, reviewing documentary evidence provided by the College, and conducting online meetings with a

range of staff and students. The College continues to enhance the student experience through collaboration with both the University of Glasgow and with Kaplan International Colleges UK. Findings indicate that the College has made acceptable progress in demonstrating that it meets the mandatory Core and Common practices set out in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code).

Overview of progress against the Action Plan

5 The College is currently operating flexibly to accommodate its international students from a number of different countries and regions of the world. At the time of the HER(AP) visit in February 2021, the College had no students being taught on campus. Due to lockdown restrictions, all provision was being delivered remotely, whether to students isolating in Glasgow or resident internationally. By February 2022, 50% students are in Glasgow and 50% are attending remotely, from various countries. The College is running a parallel operation, with online sessions offered to fit with varied international time zones, and with on-campus activity running all day. All staff are provided with individual licences for video conferencing software.

6 Students consider that their studies have not been disrupted significantly and that they have been well supported during periods of COVID-19 lockdown, self-isolation or quarantine. The College undertakes regular welfare checks for students, as well as weekly meetings with advisors for students not in attendance on campus. As the College is currently operating with a mixture of on-campus and remote learning, all work is routinely posted onto the virtual learning environment (VLE), including presentations, slides and recordings. Virtual laboratories have been included for engineering subjects, and these are greatly appreciated by students. If required, additional academic help is readily available, whether on campus or online. Students confirmed that tutors, welfare advisers and college services staff are very responsive by email.

7 The College has established a range of means for the student voice to be heard. There is an established system of student representation. Students are invited to submit an expression of interest to become a representative, and students reported that online training is provided through the VLE. Representatives attend programme committee meetings throughout the year, and are helped to understand the paperwork. Meetings focus on what is working and what is not working. Matters raised at meetings are actioned by staff, and students are then provided with a note of what has been done. Students cited examples of issues with time-zone differences and punctual starts of synchronous online classes. Programme committee meetings are all minuted, and the minutes and outcomes are uploaded to the VLE for all students to access. Student representatives attend the College Support Forum, which deals with non-academic matters. The College also has a Student Forum for the wider student body and actions from this are recorded and reported back to students or to programme committees through a detailed tracker. Student representatives discuss minutes of formal meetings with the wider student community.

8 The College has built on its good practice of allocating Advisors, formerly referred to as Learning Advisors, to all students, and they are now allocated to each student during Welcome Week. Students feel that they are well supported by Advisors, that they are very accessible and play a valuable role. Good practice in induction is shared between all advisors. Although the college system requires that Advisors meet with students four times per term for 30 minutes, students reported that, in practice, the system is more variable, with meetings often taking place more frequently. Advisors discuss a range of topics with students, from project work and essays to general welfare. The role has been extended to include helping to monitor a personal development e-

9 All students at the College are affiliated with the University of Glasgow, and have access to its facilities. As building work is being undertaken to extend the College, more classes are scheduled to take place at the University. Students now have access to a new learning hub, which provides quiet study spaces and bookable rooms for group work. Outside of specific college-to-university transition activities, students report a variety of activities where they meet UoG staff, including specific visa information sessions, option courses,

of students reaching the threshold for an unconditional offer from the University, rising from 75% over the previous three academic years to 92% of all students starting the programme in the 2020-21 academic year. It is considered that this improvement is the result of curriculum changes brought in as part of the Kaplan-wide Product Review, and also through the University's increased flexibility due to the difficulty in judging language attainment during the pandemic. Achievement against original English language progression requirements reduced slightly to 90% in 2020-21, and can be attributed to the University modifying their

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procedures for the checking of examination scripts, and the need to increase levels of support for second-marking due to increased student numbers within certain subject areas such as the Foundation Certificate for Science and Engineering.

21 Students were clear about the use of marking criteria, double-marking by tutors and the role of feedback. However, not all were clear about the processes for moderation, including the role of subject moderators from the University, or the existence and role of the external examiner. Some of the students met by the team were not aware that external examiner reports are available on the VLE. Prior to COVID-19 restrictions, student representatives met with external examiners annually, and raised awareness of the availability of external examiner reports to the wider student community.

Background to the monitoring