

Annex 1: Kaplan International College Bournemouth

Introduction and background

Kaplan International College Bournemouth (KICB) currently differs from other KIC pathway colleges in that, while relationships with Bournemouth University are close and of increasing significance, it is not a fully embedded organisation. This college is, in fact, two business units: pathways and English Language Training. It offers closely integrated programmes in a range of academic subject areas and in general English. This meets the needs of a variety of students. A number of successful students pass from English Language Training to pathway programmes, and subsequently on to higher education programmes at Bournemouth University, but such students may also move on to a wide range of programmes at other universities, supported in this by KIC's University Placement Service, which has its origins in KICB. In 2010-11, the pathways college unit enrolled around 280 students; 1,135 students enrolled in the English Language Training unit at KICB. On average, students on general English programmes study at the college for six weeks.

KICB offers the following pathway programmes and awards:

Programme	Level	Award
Bournemouth University International Foundation Certificate	FHEQ 3	Bournemouth University
Certificate of Higher Education in Business and Management	FHEQ 4	

Public information

Reliance can be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that KIC is responsible

2 One pathway programme, the Pre-Master's, falls outside this framework, with successful students receiving a KIC Award only. Because of the possible changes to KICB's relationship with Bournemouth University, systems in support of the programme's academic standards do not currently fully meet the provisions of KIC's revised Academic Standards and Quality Manual. One important area for attention is the appointment of an external examiner for this programme. This is of greater concern given the level of study for which the programme is designed. KIC was aware of this weakness and it was intended to address it as a matter of priority. The review team confirmed that it was advisable for KIC and KICB to provide a dimension of external assurance for the Pre-Master's programme, in accordance with KIC's revised Academic Standards and Quality Manual.

How effective is the management of student assessment?

3 Assessments for the two validated pathway programmes are subject to appropriate assessment procedure agreed with the universities. The Pre-Master's assessments are managed exclusively by KICB.

4 The review team noted that external examiners had identified instances of a mismatch between assessment feedback to students and the grades awarded on the University of Wales Diploma Programme.

How effectively are responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities fulfilled?

8 The students' written submission prepared for this review and their comments to the QAA review team suggests that learning opportunities at KICB are well managed and effective. The College's Structured Study Centre is well used and provides particularly strong support for language students, but also opportunities for pathway programme students to consolidate their English language. The College has also negotiated access for students to Bournemouth University facilities. However, the use of KIC's virtual learning environment is relatively limited in the student learning experience.

How effectively are external reference points used in the management and enhancement of learning opportunities?

9 The validation by Bournemouth University and the University of Wales of KICB programmes ensures that external reference points are appropriately accommodated within these curricula.

How effectively do KIC and KICB assure themselves that the quality of teaching and learning is being maintained and enhanced?

10 KICB follows KIC's expectations for appropriate processes in support of the recruitment, induction, development and appraisal of staff. Similarly, processes are in place for the collection of feedback from students on their learning experience, which, in turn, informs annual programme reports and impacts on the quality of teaching and learning.

How effectively is student feedback used to assure and enhance the quality of learning opportunities?

11 In accordance with the expectations of the KIC quality assurance framework, there are clear systems for gathering student feedback, particularly through an effective system of student representatives. Responses and consequent action by KICB are well documented and referenced appropriately in annual programme reports. Opportunities that are available for the training of student representatives at both Bournemouth University and the University of Wales have been taken up by KICB students. The student engagement with quality assurance at KICB represents good practice.

How effectively do KIC and KICB assure themselves that students are supported effectively?

12 KIC's strong emphasis on effective student services and tutorial support for students is well demonstrated within KICB. Students showed a high level of satisfaction with the support that they received. The cross-fertilisation between the general English and pathway programmes is well managed and welcomed by students.

13 There is particularly clear evidence at KICB of the effectiveness of KIC's University Placement Service in assisting the progression of students to university study.

How effectively does KICB manage the recruitment and admission of students?

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