

# Review for Specific Course Designation by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

## **St Mellitus College Trust**

November 2013

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## Key findings about St Mellitus College Trust

As a result of its Review for Specific Course Designation carried out in November 2013, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the standards of the programme(s) it offers on behalf of Middlesex University.

The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the quality and enhancement of the learning opportunities it offers on behalf of this awarding body.

The team considers that reliance **can** be placed on the information that the provider produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers.

### Good practice

The team has identified the following **good practice**:

- the comprehensive system of student support which is highly responsive to individual needs (paragraph 2.9)
- effective integration of placement supervisors in enhancing student learning opportunities (paragraph 2.11)
- wide range of communication mechanisms employed between the College and its stakeholders which underpin the overall student experience (paragraph 3.4).

### Recommendations

The team has also identified a number of **recommendations** for the enhancement of the higher education provision.

The team considers that it is **advisable** for the provider to:

- review the terms of reference for all committees and meetings, ensure minutes fully reflect discussions and actions are monitored effectively (paragraphs 1.4 and 2.5)
- engage all staff in the systematic development and use of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education within College policies and procedures (paragraph 1.6)
- develop a formal policy for the monitoring and approval of all public information (paragraph 3.7).

The team considers that it would be **desirable** for the provider to:

- fully implement the peer review process, link outcomes to staff appraisal and staff development and systematically record training to support the sharing of good practice (paragraphs 2.13 and 2.14)
- review the College website and information provided to students to fully reflect the relationship with the awarding body (paragraph 3.1)
- negotiate with the University to make external examiner reports available to all students (paragraph 3.5).

## About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Specific Course Designation](#)<sup>1</sup> conducted by [QAA](#) at St Mellitus College Trust (the College), which is a privately funded provider of higher education. The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the provider discharges its stated responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes of study that the provider delivers on behalf of Middlesex University (the University). The review was carried out by Dr Brian Giddings, Mr Matthew Kitching and Dr Frances Wiles (reviewers) and Mrs Suzanne Richardson (Coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the [Review for Educational Oversight \(and for specific course designation\): Handbook, April 2013](#).<sup>2</sup> Evidence in support of the review included confirmed validation reports, Academic Board terms of reference and minutes of meetings. Also provided were the Annual Monitoring reports and programme self-evaluation reports, responses to external examiners, student feedback and written submissions. In addition the Staff Development Plan, student and Middlesex University handbooks, and meeting notes reflecting discussions held with staff and students were made available during the review.

The review team also considered the provider's use of the relevant external reference points:

- Ministry Division of the Church of England
- the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code)
- the regulations and guidelines of Middlesex University
- the Qualifications and Credit Framework.

Please note that if you are unfamiliar with any of the terms used in this report you can find them in the [Glossary](#).

St Mellitus College Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee. The Board comprises ten trustees appointed by the Bishops of London and Chelmsford as joint Chairs of the Board with one of those members appointed by the General Synod of the Church of England. The College is a result of two existing institutions merging in September 2007: the North Thames Ministerial Training Centre and St Paul's Theological Centre. It provides ministry training for ordination within the Church of England, trains students for licensed lay ministry, and provides training for other lay people for church leadership and 'independent' (non-ordinand) students including youth ministry.

The main campus is in London with other study centres in Chelmsford Cathedral and a new one at Liverpool Cathedral which opened in September 2013. Residential weekends and weeks are held in Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire and the Maison Diocésaine d'Accueil in Merville, near Lille in France. In 2011-12 the total number of higher education students was 199, in 2012-13 this increased to 226 and for 2013-14 increased again to 332 which includes approximately 50 students on non-accredited awards.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/designated-providers/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/designated-providers/Pages/default.aspx)

<sup>2</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/REO-designated-providers-handbook-13.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/REO-designated-providers-handbook-13.aspx)

At the time of the review, the provider offered the following higher education programmes, listed beneath their awarding body with student numbers in brackets:

### **Middlesex University**

- MA Christian Leadership (28 part-time)
- BA (Hons) Theology and Youth Ministry (33 full-time)
- BA (Hons) Theology and Ministry Level 6 only (23 full-time and 4 part-time)
- FdA Contextual Theology (33 full-time and 38 part-time)
- FdA Theology and Ministry (42 full-time)
- FdA Theology (78 part-time)

### **The College's stated responsibilities**

The College is responsible for curriculum development including programme specifications and intended learning outcomes, setting and first and second marking of assessments, providing feedback to the students, academic tutorial support, and progression information. The College also has responsibility for providing staff development opportunities and supporting staff to achieve higher qualifications. Library and learning resources and collation and analysis of student feedback are also within its remit.

The University has responsibility for the oversight of the quality and review of all higher education which includes responding to the Annual Review initially prepared by the College. The College and the University share responsibility for strategic development, moderation of assessment, monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and of public information including the website and prospectus.

There is also an ongoing relationship with King's College, London in respect of a few ordinands who already have a degree in theology. These students may choose to do a Master's in Theology and Ministry through King's College, London as part of their training. They apply directly to King's College, London, who assesses their application. St Mellitus College Trust has no responsibility for lecturing or supervising these students. The Ministry Division of the Church of England tasks St Mellitus College Trust to offer formational and vocational training alongside the master's being undertaken at King's College. This results in some ordinands doing a master's award through King's College and also undertaking some modules from the other awards validated by the University. These modules are not taken for credit, and are not formally assessed, but students are provided with feedback as an important part of the ordinand's vocational training.

### **Recent developments**

The College relocated to new facilities in the Autumn of 2012. This involved a significant refurbishment project which included an £8 million overhaul to create dedicated teaching space, a new digital library system, catering facilities, seminar and lecture rooms, and staff offices. Also included are communication and media technology which enables good quality recording of lecturers and live streaming. The new building was formally opened in November 2012 and at the same time the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England gave its approval for the College to offer its programmes from a campus based at Liverpool Anglican Cathedral - St Mellitus College North West. The MA in Christian Leadership also started in 2012.

## **Students' contribution to the review**

Students studying on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the review team. Three senior students were involved in developing the student submission which was prepared by them following consultation with the student body. The College offered support and provided details of student feedback to assist the process but the students were given complete editorial control. Students were present at both the preparatory meeting and during the review visit and the team found their views helpful in informing their discussions.

## Detailed findings about St Mellitus College Trust

### 1 Academic standards

#### How effectively does the College fulfil its responsibilities for the management of academic standards?

1.1 The College is effective in meeting its responsibilities for managing academic standards. Responsibilities are clearly defined in the partnership agreement and the College works proactively with the awarding body to ensure these are well managed and that staff fully understand their requirements. Academic programmes are offered in partnership with Middlesex University (the University) and the College is well supported by the University in the setting and monitoring of academic standards.

1.2 A number of committees oversee the management of standards with Academic Board having overall responsibility for standards, developments and providing the strategic direction of the College. This is supported by a Board of Studies, whose membership includes staff, the University link tutor and students from each campus. This meets twice per year. Student feedback provides an effective oversight of academic standards at programme level. The Board gives detailed consideration to quality assurance with the link tutor providing advice and guidance where necessary. The minutes indicate that programme management is considered in a thorough and inclusive manner with the involvement of all stakeholders, although it is too early to confirm this for the Liverpool site.

1.3 An Annual Review is produced by the College and takes place in line with University procedures. This is undertaken thoroughly and effectively at programme level with detailed action planning. The Church of England provides an additional mechanism for the support of students who undertake training for ordination. The Trustees monitor finances and review major risks. There are clear procedures for the review of programmes that lead to an improvement in academic standards.

1.4 The Assessment Board and Board of Studies report directly to Academic Board and the weekly staff team meetings report to the Board of Trustees with minutes evidencing the actions to be taken. The agenda items at Academic Board do not relate entirely to the terms of reference for this Board, making transparency of the discussions difficult and tracking unclear. Minutes of both staff meetings and the Academic Board are brief with limited evidence of discussions or monitoring of actions agreed. The roles of each need to be further developed and clarified to provide strategic direction for addressing cross-college issues, to identify good practice and set clear actions which can then be monitored. It is **advisable** for the College to review the terms of reference for all committees and meetings, ensure minutes fully reflect discussions and actions are monitored effectively.

#### How effectively does the College make use of external reference points to manage academic standards?

1.5 External reference points are used effectively in the development, delivery, monitoring and management of academic standards. The College has adopted the assessment regulations of the University and reflects appropriate aspects of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code). A rigorous validation process which follows the University's process ensures that external reference points are incorporated into the development and approval of all programmes. The process ensures that each qualification is at the appropriate level and meets the requirements of the Quality Code.

1.6 The College recognises the importance of the Quality Code and staff show understanding when discussing its role in the development of the programmes and in the management of academic standards. There are further opportunities for a more detailed use of the Quality Code in the evaluation of College practice and policies against the guidance to ensure maximum benefit is achieved and expectations fully met. It is **advisable** for the College to engage all staff in the systematic development and use of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education within College policies and procedures.

1.7 Academic standards are assured through effective review processes by the University and the Ministry Division of the Church of England. The Ministry Division of the Church of England reviews the fitness of the College to ensure quality management and enhancement of the College in preparing candidates for ordination. This process has changed recently to an annual self-evaluation supported by six yearly inspections to be more aligned to the University's processes. A review of each pathway contributes to an overall self-evaluation with areas for improvement incorporated into the Annual Monitoring report of the University.

### **How does the College use external moderation, verification or examining to assure academic standards?**

1.8 The moderation of student work is thorough, fair and effective. Assignments are checked by the external examiner, prior to distribution, to ensure relevance to learning outcomes and to the level of study. Students are provided with full assessment schedules at the start of the academic year. The assessment process includes internal and external moderation. Internal moderators provide helpful comments to the original markers on the student work and sometimes indicate possible changes to marks which then form the basis of an agreed mark. External examiners' reports confirm that the internal verification process works well.

1.9 The College engages well with its external examiners and Annual Monitoring reports confirm that the College meets the requirements of the University, its awarding body. External examiners' reports confirm that academic standards and student achievement are comparable to those at other similar institutions. Progress on actions is developed and monitored at the Board of Studies as part of the Annual Review process where the College evaluates and develops its processes for managing academic standards in relation to moderation and examining.

The review team has **confidence** in the provider's management of its responsibilities for the standards of the programmes it offers on behalf of its awarding body.

## **2 Quality of learning opportunities**

### **How effectively does the College fulfil its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities?**

2.1 The College has sound mechanisms to implement its delegated responsibilities for managing and enhancing learning opportunities. Overall responsibility lies with the Academic Board informed by reports from the Board of Studies, the Assessment Board and the external examiner and is as described in paragraphs 1.1 to 1.4.

2.2 The College prepares the awarding body's Annual Monitoring report which includes student feedback and data relating to admissions, progression and achievement. Actions

resulting from the Annual Monitoring report incorporating the external examiner's recommendations are considered by the Assessment Board and reported to the awarding body in the subsequent Annual Monitoring report. The link tutor from the University has oversight of this process.

2.3 The College has implemented enhancements in response to Annual Monitoring report recommendations, particularly in relation to processes for marking and providing feedback to students. The effective management and enhancement of learning opportunities is evidenced by positive Annual Monitoring reports, recent external examiner affirmation of a good standard of marking and feedback and student satisfaction with the quality of the learning environment, teaching and resources.

**How effectively does the College make use of external reference points to manage and enhance learning opportunities?**

2.4 The extent and nature of the use of the Quality Code to manage and enhance learning opportunities is the same as described in paragraphs 1.5 to 1.7.

**How does the College assure itself that the quality of teaching and learning is being maintained and enhanced?**

2.5 The College provides effective teaching and learning with a useful range of mechanisms for students to provide feedback including the Board of Studies and elected student representatives. The twice yearly Board of Studies provides the opportunity for student representatives to meet with core academic staff and give detailed consideration to student feedback and to reports from the external examiner and module leaders. There is communication between the Board of Studies and Academic Board but this is not always transparent or clear with limited evidence of full discussions of any points raised and actions taken. The feedback loop between the Board of Studies and the weekly staff meeting enables certain issues to be considered and acted upon promptly but the minutes are unclear and difficult to monitor effectively any follow up to actions agreed. It is **advisable** for the College to review the terms of reference for all committees and meetings, ensure minutes fully reflect discussions and actions are monitored effectively.

2.6 A key strength in maintaining good communication between the College and the student body is the election of a senior student for each site, in addition to student representation for every level and mode of delivery across all awards. Senior students are elected by the student body and have a responsibility to be a leader for all students, to act as the key point of communication between students and the College and have regular meetings with senior staff. One senior student is a member of Academic Board. The College may wish to consider formalising representatives' training, support and feedback arrangements which have the potential to enhance the student experience for all cohorts.

2.7 Student feedback on the quality of teaching is positive, and there are examples of the College implementing enhancements in response to their suggestions such as providing feedback forms earlier. Students testify to the responsiveness of the College to issues raised and provided examples where their comments had improved their learning experience such as reviewing and amending the structure of a programme and through the development of an optional module to include an extended essay.

2.8 Teaching staff are professionally qualified and experienced with new staff and external consultants being well supported.

## **How does the College assure itself that students are supported effectively?**

2.9 The College provides a highly supportive environment for the students. New students are invited to an induction day which orients them to College processes and academic requirements. Integrated into the curriculum is a comprehensive system of support for students' academic and pastoral needs. Each student is allocated to a 'Formation Group' which supports the spiritual aspects of all programmes but also provides the students with informal opportunity for additional support between peers. The group is led by a 'Personal Tutor', who is the contact point for individual needs and who meets individually with students on a regular basis. Assessment and additional support is provided including support for disabled and dyslexic students, arranged through the Academic Administrator. The comprehensive system of student support which is highly responsive to individual needs is **good practice**.

2.10 Academic support is provided by programme tutors. The College also provides a system of study skills support, comprising scheduled sessions during the induction period, optional sessions during the residential/study weeks, and written individual guidance. An annual residential week is held in France for all those training for ordained ministry in the Church of England with independent students taking part in intensive non-residential study weeks. These are opportunities for consolidation of learning, development and individual support for study skills and reflection of both academic and formational aspects. Unlimited access to personal advice and guidance on a range of matters is provided. An optional study skills module supports students who are new to higher education. Students value the College's academic, pastoral and professional support, and also appreciate the accessibility and helpfulness of tutors.

2.11 All students benefit from blended learning which combines classroom delivery, residential/study weeks and work placements in a professional environment. Students valued the support provided by the College during the placements and are very appreciative of this mixed mode approach, which enables them to gain supervised professional and highly practical experience. The College makes a particular effort to integrate placement supervisors into the curriculum, providing detailed information, training and support, an annual supervisor day, and regular visits by College staff. The College has recently introduced a termly email update for supervisors, enhancing the communication process and sense of collegiality. The effective integration of placement supervisors in enhancing student learning opportunities is **good practice**.

2.12 Further professional development for students is supported by visiting consultants who are people with significant experience of church ministry who meet students on a regular basis. In addition, students appreciate the significant involvement of their families in college life which includes involvement during induction, inclusion at residential events and weekend services at the College. This wider participation, reflecting the vocational nature of education for those seeking ordination, reinforces the supportive ethos of the College.

## **How effectively does the College develop its staff in order to improve student learning opportunities?**

2.13 The College actively encourages and supports its staff to undertake a range of development activities which enhance the delivery of learning opportunities. All staff are encouraged to engage in continuing professional development and many undertake scholarly activity with several having recently submitted doctoral theses. Staff attend an annual seminar dealing with aspects of academic development and professional training. The College also provides regular assessment workshops, which have enabled staff to improve the quality of assessment feedback in response to the external examiner

recommendations. The College offers staff the opportunity to take a sabbatical every four years, enabling them to pursue doctoral studies, research and academic writing which enhance teaching practice. Although a range of development opportunities are available, and experience is shared at staff meetings, training activities are not systematically recorded and good practice not always recognised and shared.

2.14 There is a peer review process which includes a teaching observation, resulting in a written report and feedback, but this is not used consistently for all staff. The College is implementing a plan to improve the consistency and regularity of this opportunity. At present, there are no formalised systems for linking peer review with staff appraisal and the identification of staff developmental needs, nor for the dissemination of good practice. It would be **desirable** for the College to fully implement the peer review process, link outcomes to staff appraisal and staff development and systematically record training to support the sharing of good practice.

**How effectively does the College ensure that learning resources are accessible to students and sufficient to enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes?**

2.15 Students have access to appropriate and sufficient learning resources, and recent staff appointments and technological enhancements will improve the consistency of experience across sites. The sufficiency and quality of resources are routinely monitored by the Academic Board with resources also being ratified at programme validation by the University. The College provides students with accessible and well-equipped teaching rooms, a library and spaces for informal study and socialising. Innovative use of teaching and learning technology enables students in Liverpool and Chelmsford to participate in lectures in addition to on-site teaching.

2.16 The College has invested in new library stock, including remote access to core texts, an online catalogue, and access to online journal collections for students on accredited awards. The College pays for full access to the King's College, London theological library for all students. Students confirmed that they were satisfied with the level of resources provided but as all students at the main campus are timetabled mostly on the same day, the College has indicated it will keep the sufficiency of resources under review should student numbers increase. Students particularly appreciated the number of guest lecturers and organised residential weekends. They feel confident in making proposals for enhancement, knowing that these will be considered seriously.

2.17 Students submit assignments using plagiarism detection software, but at present they do not receive a report which highlights possible errors or similar text. The College may wish to consider offering students the opportunity to view the reports produced and discuss these with a personal tutor as part of their academic development.

The review team has **confidence** that the provider is fulfilling its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of the intended learning opportunities it provides for students.

### 3 Information about learning opportunities

#### How effectively does the College communicate information about learning opportunities to students and other stakeholders?

3.1 The College produces an appropriate and comprehensive range of public information for potential and current students, staff and other stakeholders. Students informed the team that information about learning opportunities is communicated effectively and delivered to students through a varied range of mechanisms. Students can access a comprehensive range of information before and during their programme through the website, attendance at a welcome day, during induction and from the welcome pack, student handbook and module guides, as well as marketing materials. The review team found that website information was not entirely clear who the awarding body was with potential for confusion. It would be **desirable** for the College to review the website and information provided to students to fully reflect the relationship with the awarding body.

3.2 The College commenced delivery at Liverpool Anglican Cathedral in September 2013 and has started to use online video streaming of live lectures in London to support this. Recorded content is also made available to all students electronically to further support their studies and to ensure a consistent experience for all students at any campus. The team considered this a positive development and it is clearly valued by the students. Students would like to see a broader range of recordings made available electronically and the College may wish to explore the feasibility of this further.

3.3 The student handbook and module guides are broadly comprehensive and provide students with detailed information. The Handbook follows a template provided by the University and includes information about the admissions process, study time, contact hours and assessment schedule. The College is aware that students feel there is too much information contained within the Handbook and as part of Annual Review it has taken steps to make key information more readily accessible for students and for policies and procedures to be made available in one section of the website.

3.4 Students receive routine correspondence via an email from the Dean which is considered valuable and informative and reinforces the vocational aspects and developmental opportunities available to them as well as occasions for families to get together. Clear and well detailed information is provided to students and placement supervisors. This includes details about the expected frequency of meetings, topics for exploration and about supervisor induction events held at the College. Students confirmed the value of including families throughout College life and as an important aspect in improving their overall student experience. The wide range of communication mechanisms employed between the College and its stakeholders which underpin the overall student experience is **good practice**.

3.5 External examiner reports are discussed at the Board of Studies and with student representatives. At present the full reports are not made accessible to the whole student body but discussions are taking place between the College and the University as to how these could be made available. It would be **desirable** for the College to negotiate with the University to make external examiner reports available to all students.

#### How effective are the College's arrangements for assuring that information about learning opportunities is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy?

3.6 There are arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of information the College has responsibility for publishing and although there is no formal policy the

information seems fit for purpose, is accessible and trustworthy. Under the agreement with the University, the College is responsible for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of published information with the University having oversight and final approval. Students are largely very pleased with the information they received, but are not involved in checking accuracy or completeness.

3.7 Public information responsibilities are assigned, delegated and reviewed by the Dean with day-to-day management responsibility resting with the Academic Manager. At present there is no policy for the management of public information and the College is aware that there has been no systematic mapping against the Quality Code requirements. The College's written guidance regarding responsibility for public information is brief and did not reference the role or responsibility of the University or the involvement of students in reviewing this information. It is **advisable** for the College to develop a formal policy for the monitoring and approval of all public information.

The team concludes that reliance **can** be placed on the information that the provider produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers.

### Action plan<sup>3</sup>

St Mellitus College Trust action plan relating to the Review of Specific Course Designation December 2013						
Good practice	Intended outcomes	Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes	Target date(s)	Action by	Reported to	Evaluation (process or evidence)
The review team identified the following areas of <b>good practice</b> that are worthy of wider dissemination within the College:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the comprehensive system of student support which is highly responsive to individual needs (paragraph 2.9)</li> </ul>	<p>Formation Group system continues to provide a good environment for student support</p> <p>St Mellitus North West campus develops integrated student support system</p> <p>High quality feedback from students</p>	<p>Draw up a generic list of topics to be covered in Formation Groups each year</p> <p>St Mellitus College North West to elect senior student representative</p> <p>Develop more effective and focused student feedback plan</p>	<p>May 2014</p> <p>September 2014</p> <p>September 2014</p>	<p>Assistant Dean (AE)</p> <p>Director of St Mellitus College North West</p> <p>Academic Manager</p>	<p>Staff meeting</p> <p>Staff meeting</p> <p>Staff meeting and Board of Studies</p>	<p>List produced and followed by Formation Group tutors. Noted at staff meeting</p> <p>St Mellitus College North West senior student representative present at meetings with senior staff team</p> <p>Feedback logged, main points discussed at staff meeting</p>

<sup>3</sup> The College has been required to develop this action plan to follow up on good practice and address any recommendations arising from the review. QAA monitors progress against the action plan, in conjunction with the College's awarding body.

						and registered in minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>effective integration of placement supervisors in enhancing student learning opportunities (paragraph 2.11)</li> </ul>	Supervisors' information shaped to help them play their role more effectively	Annual feedback form developed for supervisors to monitor their experience of the training and their role within it	June 2014	Academic Manager	Assistant Dean	Feedback form designed, distributed by start of June 2014. Conclusions collated and implemented for next year's programme
	Supervisors sharing good practice among themselves	At supervisors' day - session on sharing good practice from experienced Supervisors	September 2014	Assistant Dean	The Dean	Session built into supervisor's day programme - to be agreed at staff meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wide range of communication mechanisms employed between the College and its stakeholders which underpin the overall student experience (paragraph 3.4).</li> </ul>	Regular communication with students and spouses	Dean's Executive Assistant to ensure regular production of Dean's email, in consultation with Dean. Keeping 'Dean's email' file, containing Dean's emails	April 2014	Dean's Executive Assistant	The Dean	Each one kept in 'Dean's email' file
	Supervisors' email gives wide range of information about College life and events	Supervisor's email includes information about College events and how they can join in	April 2014	Academic Manager	Assistant Dean	Logged in list of supervisors' emails

Advisable	Intended outcomes	Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes	Target date(s)	Action by	Reported to	Evaluation (process or evidence)
The team considers that it is <b>advisable</b> for the College to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review the terms of reference for all committees and meetings, ensure minutes fully reflect discussions and actions are monitored effectively (paragraphs 1.4 and 2.5)</li> </ul>	<p>Each committee understanding its own clear terms of reference</p> <p>Minutes of meetings track ongoing discussion of issues</p> <p>Action points are identified and fully implemented</p>	<p>'Terms of Reference' document to be drawn up for each regular College committee</p> <p>Minutes of meetings to include basic points of discussion</p> <p>Each meeting include 'Action Points' column and reviews action points from previous meetings</p>	<p>End of academic year - end of June 2014</p> <p>Weekly (staff meetings), termly for others as appropriate</p> <p>Weekly (staff meetings), termly for others as appropriate</p>	<p>The Dean</p> <p>Minute takers for all meetings</p> <p>Minute takers for all meetings</p>	<p>Executive Committee</p> <p>Assistant Dean</p> <p>The Assistant Dean</p>	<p>Logged in minutes of Executive Committee</p> <p>Logged in minutes</p> <p>Registered in minutes of regular College committees</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>engage all staff in the systematic development and use of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education within college policies and procedures (paragraph 1.6)</li> </ul>	All staff are aware of and engaged with the Quality Code	Hold a staff training day which looks at the Quality Code and how it can enhance our operations and learning opportunities	May 2014	The Dean	Academic Board	Registered in Academic Board minutes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop a formal policy for the monitoring and approval of all public information (paragraph 3.7).</li> </ul>	All public information (web, publications, and so on) is regularly monitored and checked for accuracy and fullness	<p>Develop the College's existing document on monitoring of public information into a formal policy</p> <p>Identify a staff member responsible for web information</p>	May 2014	The Director of Dispersed Learning	The Dean	Registered in staff meeting minutes
<b>Desirable</b>	<b>Intended outcomes</b>	<b>Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes</b>	<b>Target date/s</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Reported to</b>	<b>Evaluation (process or evidence)</b>
The team considers that it is <b>desirable</b> for the provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fully implement the peer review process, link outcomes to staff appraisal and staff development and systematically record training to support the sharing of good practice (paragraphs 2.13 and 2.14)</li> </ul>	<p>Peer review process working regularly and effectively, so that all staff receive regular peer review input and that this is fed into annual staff reviews</p> <p>Staff development needs identified and addressed through staff appraisal system</p> <p>Good practice in teaching disseminated among other staff</p>	<p>The peer review system to be actively promoted and checked by the Academic Administrator</p> <p>Staff appraisal to include input from peer review process - documents sent to line managers to be discussed in staff review interviews, and staff development needs addressed</p> <p>Staff meeting agenda to occasionally include an item on 'Peer Review'. Academic Administrator to write brief report on examples of especially</p>	<p>End April 2014</p> <p>End April 2014</p> <p>June 2014</p>	<p>Academic Administrator</p> <p>Academic Administrator</p> <p>Academic Administrator</p>	<p>Tutor for Assessment</p> <p>The Dean</p> <p>The Dean</p>	<p>List of peer reviews held by Academic Administrator</p> <p>Evidence in Annual Review reports on staff</p> <p>Recorded in staff meeting minutes</p>

		good practice from peer review system, to be discussed at the meeting				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review the College website and information provided to students to fully reflect the relationship with the awarding body (paragraph 3.1)</li> </ul>	College website has appropriate recognition of awarding University	<p>Ensure Middlesex logo is placed on key pages of the site</p> <p>Explanation of relationship with awarding university placed on 'Courses' page of website</p>	May 2014	Media Coordinator	Director of Dispersed Learning	Shown on College website
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>negotiate with the University to make all external examiner reports available to all students (paragraph 3.5).</li> </ul>	All students who wish to, to have access to main content of external examiner reports	Discussion with Middlesex University over the best way to achieve this	May 2014	Academic Administrator	Academic Board	Academic Board minutes

## About QAA

QAA is the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. QAA's mission is to safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK higher education.

QAA's aims are to:

- meet students' needs and be valued by them
- safeguard standards in an increasingly diverse UK and international context
- drive improvements in UK higher education
- improve public understanding of higher education standards and quality.

QAA conducts reviews of higher education institutions and publishes reports on the findings. QAA also publishes a range of guidance documents to help safeguard standards and improve quality.

More information about the work of QAA is available at: [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk).

More detail about Review of Courses Specifically Designated can be found at: [www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/designated-providers/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/designated-providers/Pages/default.aspx).

## Glossary

This glossary explains terms used in this report. You can find a fuller glossary at: [www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary). Formal definitions of key terms can be found in the [\*Review for Educational Oversight \(and for specific course designation\): Handbook, April 2013\*](#).<sup>4</sup>

**academic quality** A comprehensive term referring to how, and how well, higher education providers manage teaching and learning opportunities to help students progress and succeed.

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

**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).

**awarding organisation** An organisation authorised to award a particular qualification; an organisation recognised by Ofqual to award Ofqual-regulated qualifications.

**differentiated judgements** In a Review for Specific Courses Designation, separate judgements respectively for the provision validated by separate awarding bodies.

**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 QAA's review processes.

**external examiner** An independent expert appointed by an institution to comment on student achievement in relation to established academic standards and to look at approaches to assessment.

**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*.

**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 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).

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<sup>4</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/REO-designated-providers-handbook-13.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/REO-designated-providers-handbook-13.aspx)

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

**operational definition** A formal definition of a term, which establishes 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.

**provider(s) (of higher education)** Organisations that deliver higher education. In the UK they may be a degree-awarding body or another organisation that offers programmes of higher education on behalf of degree-awarding bodies or awarding organisations. In the context of Review for Specific Course Designation the term means an independent college.

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

**quality** See **academic quality**.

**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. Internal reference points may be used by providers for purposes of self-regulation; external ones are used and accepted throughout the higher education community for the checking of standards and quality.

**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.

**threshold academic standards** 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 for higher education qualifications** and **subject benchmark statements**. See also **academic standards**.

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

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