

LTC13D033

Title: Report of the Institutional Review of City College Norwich

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Report of the Institutional Review of City College Norwich

Issue

Attached at Appendix 1 is the report of the Institutional Review of City College Norwich which took place on 3 December 2013.

Recommendation

The Learning and Teaching Committee is invited to recommend to the Senate of the University of East Anglia that City College Norwich be re-approved as a partner institution of the University for a period of up to five years commencing December 2013.

Resource Implications

Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity

Not applicable.

Further Information

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University of East Anglia

Report of the Institutional Review of City College Norwich 3 December 2013

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 An institutional review panel met at City College Norwich (CCN) on 3 December 2013 to consider the re-approval of CCN as a partner institution of the University of East Anglia (UEA). Membership of the Institutional Review panel is shown in Appendix A.
- 1.2 The panel met with a range of CCN staff and a group of students from a broad range of programmes at CCN (as listed in Appendix B). Separate meetings took place with the Principal and Deputy Principal, academic and administrative staff from the School of Higher Education, and with students.
- 1.3 Discussions were informed by an evaluative report on the operation and management of the partnership produced by UEA and a self-evaluation document prepared by CCN, accompanied by a range of supporting documentation.

2. Summary of Discussions

Tour of Facilities

- 2.1 The panel was provided with a tour of facilities including teaching rooms in St Andrew House and teaching areas, the library, student common room, wet area room and tutorial/break out rooms at Norfolk House.

As a result of the tour, and from feedback from discussions throughout the day, the Panel had concerns about some of the facilities and equipment at Norfolk House which are detailed in paragraph 2.5 below and form Panel requirement 1.

Higher Education Strategy and Relationship with UEA

- 2.2 The Panel discussed the strategic vision of CCN and the development of the College and Higher Education strategies. The Principal stated that both strategies were in the process of being updated and that the College Strategy would shortly be sent to stakeholders for consultation by gauging feedback on a set of 35 questions. The responses to these questions would help to build a strategic framework for the two strategies and it was hoped that these would be published by April 2014.
- 2.3 The Panel heard that with respect to the curriculum offer of the College, the priorities were the provision of niche curriculum areas and programmes that reflected the requirements of employers. The College had aspirations to grow students numbers steadily and the focus of the College was to continue to recruit from the local area and Eastern region. The College had been successful in recruiting nationally and had recruited a small number of international students but this was not centrally important to the strategic vision. The Principal noted that the aim of the College was to work with UEA to provide opportunities for all students within East Anglia and to

ensure that the provision provided by the College was complementary but not competitive to UEA.

Recommendation: To consult and work collaboratively with the university when finalising the College Strategy and Higher Education Strategy to ensure that they continue to be complimentary.

- 2.4 When asked about the relationship with UEA, the Panel heard from academic and administrative staff that the relationship had matured into a supportive one. Academic Links continued to be an effective resource for advice and guidance and opportunities for using the Links in a wider variety of ways was currently under consideration. The Panel noted that CCN staff had benefitted from continuing professional development (CPD) activities but there was a desire for further partnership working with respect to research opportunities. The discussion resulted in a sense that there was a desire on both the part of the University and the College for developing further opportunities for collaborative partnership working.

Recommendation: To consult and work collaboratively with the University on developing CCN's higher education strategy.

Norfolk House

- 2.5 Following a tour of Norfolk House the Panel was keen to gather feedback from students and staff on their experience of Norfolk House as a learning environment. The Panel heard from students that in their view the decoration of Norfolk House was incomplete, the IT facilities and furniture in teaching spaces were not considered adequate and the library had not been established when teaching commenced in September 2013. Students continued to be able to access library facilities at St Andrews House and Ipswich Road campuses, and at UEA. Students stated that the large open plan teaching spaces where two or three lessons could be running at the same time made concentrating difficult because of the volume of noise in the space. The Panel noted that a number of students had requested that their classes be relocated to St Andrews House and that this had been achieved in a number of cases where possible.
- 2.6 Students stated that there appeared to be a lack of communication when Norfolk House was being prepared for teaching and that initially they were not updated on how the issues they had raised were being resolved.
- 2.7 Staff gave a more positive view of the situation at Norfolk House but also commented on the need for further improvements. The Panel noted that teaching staff were working together to negotiate how lesson plans could be altered or classes could be relocated for part of a lesson to help minimise noise disruption in the open plan teaching spaces. The staff stated that where possible the timetables had been adjusted so that only two classes were taking place in the teaching areas instead of three which had improved matters.
- 2.8 The Panel noted that IT provision was being increased, including for the small tutorial/group rooms on the ground floor. The library provision was also being enhanced with the recent appointment of an additional staff member, an increase in the library opening hours and consideration of how the book resources could be better used by increasing the use of e-books and considering options for short term loans and reference only copies and class core texts.

- 2.9 The Panel noted students' comments that the situation at Norfolk House had improved since September 2013 and the College was taking their feedback on board. The School had established the School Development Group, with staff and student representation, to identify areas of concern and appropriate action to develop Norfolk House as a learning environment. A meeting had been scheduled for 16 December 2013 for staff and students to plan how the ground floor should be best utilised and it was agreed that a representative from the Partnerships Office would attend that meeting.

Requirement: That CCN produce a strategy and detailed action plan following the meeting with their staff and students on 16 December 2013, to resolve the issues raised at Institutional Review with respect to the Norfolk House building. These documents will need to address the following areas of concern:

- i) the suitability of the learning environments of the open plan teaching spaces, both for staff and students;*
- ii) access to, and availability of, IT equipment, for both staff and students;*
- iii) the plans for the ground floor, taking into account the view of the School Development Group and the students at the review; and*
- iv) the opening hours, access to professional librarians and amount of learning resources available in the library.*

These documents must be provided to the University by the 21 February 2014, for consideration by the Chair of the Institutional Review Panel who will decide what further action will need to be taken by CCN and any associated deadlines. This action may include inter alia consideration of the strategy and action plan at the Joint Board of Study on 7 March 2014, further review visits to Norfolk House and further meetings with staff and students as appropriate.

Staff Development and the Promotion of Scholarly Activity

- 2.10 The Panel was keen to explore the plans for staff development and the promotion of scholarly activity at CCN and whether there were opportunities for joint working with UEA. The College recognised the importance and benefits of CPD and scholarly activity, to both staff and students, and were actively encouraging staff to undertake further study and seek membership of the Higher Education Academy. The College were also represented on a working group at UEA which was considering the development of a professional development framework programme which recognised the expertise of long standing teaching staff. The Panel noted that participation in the staff development programme at UEA by CCN staff could be increased and access to the MA in Higher Education Practice at UEA should also be reviewed.
- 2.11 All staff were encouraged and supported to continue their professional development which was confirmed by staff who cited examples of undertaking Masters level study, attending conferences and giving lectures at other higher education institutions. The Panel noted that the establishment of the new School of Higher Education had provided an opportunity for reviewing the resource allocation for CPD activity. Staff could access funds and/or hours for specific CPD activity and where possible staff were allocated more tutorial hours compared to taught hours to help support this activity.

Recommendation: To continue to support and encourage academic and administrative staff to engage in continued professional development (CPD) and scholarly activity, and where possible, to allocate funding and/or time to pursue these important activities. A regular report on CPD and scholarly activity should be provided to the Joint Board of Study.

National Student Survey

- 2.12 The background documentation provided to the Panel for the purpose of the Institutional Review indicated that a requirement from the previous Institutional Review around improving the response rate and satisfaction score for the National Student Survey (NSS) required further action. The Panel noted the College's concerns around the satisfaction score for NSS which was not reflective of the positive feedback from student module evaluations or External Examiner reports. The Panel noted the possible issues for the College with respect to some students returning the NSS on behalf of UEA and some on behalf of CCN, including how this would be communicated to students and what the impact might be.
- 2.13 The Panel heard that the College had identified specific issues from the previous academic year which would inform the development of an action plan for improving NSS scores this academic year. The Planning and Performance team at the College were responsible for undertaking a deeper analysis of the data for dissemination to Programme Managers and tutors. The College also had plans to deliver workshops and tutorials to those students undertaking the survey to ensure that they understood the nature of the questions and the importance of completing the survey. Consideration was also being given to running an internal version of the survey in the future.
- 2.14 The Panel acknowledged the difficulties the College faced with the NSS and noted that the College was in contact with relevant staff at UEA for further advice and guidance.

Requirement: That CCN produce a detailed strategy outlining plans for increasing both the response rate and student satisfaction scores of the National Student Survey, both across higher education at CCN and on individual programmes.

This strategy must be provided to the University by the end of January 2014 and following sign off by the Chair of the Institutional Review Panel, a further update must be provided to the Joint Board of Study on 7 March 2014.

Student Experience

- 2.15 The Panel met with students from a wide range of programmes at CCN and explored a number of issues including student support, student engagement and the student voice and preparation for employment. The Panel heard that students received excellent support from their tutors and individual help within modules when it was

required. The Panel noted that the College provided the students with the skills required for higher education level study, including those students that were returning to study. One example of good practice included a two day pre-study course which prepared students on what would be expected of them and formed part of their College induction. Students confirmed that they enjoyed the range of learning styles delivered at the College, particularly the seminars. Students also commented that the taught contact time of one or two days per week suited them because most students had work commitments outside of College.

Commendation: The supportive environment and personal learning experience provided by programme tutors.

- 2.16 When asked how prepared the students were for employment following completion of the course the responses were rather varied. Some students cited specific examples of guest lecturers, attendance at conferences and CV writing as examples of how they were informed of employment opportunities and had direct contact with potential employers. Other students considered that opportunities for employer engagement were not as embedded into their programmes. The meeting with staff confirmed that more focus on employer engagement had been included in programmes that had been revalidated recently but that other programmes required more employer input. Students commented that their use of the internal careers service provided by the Advice Shop at the College was limited and many students chose to access external careers advice.

Recommendation: To ensure that all programmes include employability as a key theme by utilising the good practice already evident in some programmes. The Joint Board of Study will discuss, if appropriate, how the modules might be amended and updated outside the revalidation schedule.

Recommendation: To consider how the internal careers service provided by the Advice Shop can be enhanced to ensure that guidance is appropriate to the whole range of higher education students at CCN.

- 2.17 The students also gave varied comments on the distinctiveness, usefulness and purpose of some of the core Foundation Degree modules with some students commenting that the content appeared to overlap in some cases. The Panel noted that the College was aware of this issue and was considering the review of these modules.

Recommendation: To review the Foundation Degree core modules; Skills for Work 1, Skills for Work 2, Advanced Higher Learning Skills and Advanced Higher Learning and Research Skills, to ensure that they are distinctive and fit for purpose.

- 2.18 Students described to the Panel the effective structures and opportunities for the student feedback at the institution. The Panel heard that the HE Student Forum was an effective way for students to give feedback to Senior Management on a wide range of issues and that issues were resolved quickly where possible. The students stated that the School listened to the student voice. The Panel also noted that students had been engaged with quality assurance processes including being represented at revalidation panels and the Joint Board of Study, and focus groups had also been established so that students could input into policy and other changes at the College.

Commendation: The continued engagement of students in quality assurance processes at CCN and the effective student voice.

Quality Assurance

- 2.19 The Panel was interested to learn from staff and students what the impact of the development of the Achievement Tracking System (ATS) had been for them. Students commented on the ease of accessing marks and feedback, which was detailed and helpful, submitting work and tracking progress. Students commented that the system included all of the relevant information for their programmes and that this was easy to find. Staff stated that ATS was a transparent and accessible system that allowed all users (academic and administrative staff, students and External Examiners) to access all of the information they required quickly and easily. Assessment Board procedures were much improved and the system was constantly being reviewed and updated following feedback from users.

Commendation: The development of, and ongoing enhancement to, the Achievement Tracking System.

- 2.20 The Panel asked staff how the mapping to the QAA UK Quality Code was being undertaken by the College. The staff described the process of Curriculum Programme Managers working with members of course teams to map all published sections of the Code. The aim was that course team members would then disseminate the action and requirements to colleagues. This process had resulted in the mapping being owned by practitioners as well as managers and a number of areas of good practice had been identified and shared across disciplines.

Commendation: The effective process adopted by CCN to facilitate mapping against the QAA UK Quality Code which is engaging a wide range of managers and academics.

Engagement with UEA

- 2.21 The Panel discussed with the senior management team and staff within the School of Higher Education how they engaged with colleagues at UEA. Academic Links were utilised well and were a good source of academic advice and guidance and it was hoped that initiatives from next academic year including a start of year meeting for all Links and engagement with Course Committees would help to enhance their role. With respect to the management of the partnership, the College stated that there were good working relationships and good sharing of information with colleagues in the Partnerships Office and Planning Office. The Institutional Review provided a useful opportunity for both the College and UEA to reflect on opportunities for further collaboration including, further academic engagement including identifying research opportunities, sharing good practice in teaching and learning, sharing of management information and opportunities for CPD and other scholarly activity.

Recommendation: That the Joint Board of Study agenda includes a standing item for discussion on developments of, and opportunities for, CCN and the University to work together collaboratively.

3. Summary of Conclusions

- 3.1 The Institutional Review Panel resolved to recommend to the Senate of the University of East Anglia that City College Norwich be re-approved as a partner institution of the University for a period of up to five years commencing December 2013 subject to the following requirements and recommendations. The action plan is included in Appendix C.

3.2 Requirements:

1. That CCN produce a strategy and detailed action plan following the meeting with their staff and students on 16 December 2013, to resolve the issues raised at Institutional Review with respect to the Norfolk House building. These documents will need to address the following areas of concern:
 - i) the suitability of the learning environments of the open plan teaching spaces, both for staff and students;
 - ii) access to, and availability of, IT equipment, for both staff and students;
 - iii) the plans for the ground floor, taking into account the view of the School Development Group and the students at the review; and
 - iv) the opening hours, access to professional librarians and amount of learning resources available in the library.

These documents must be provided to the University by the 21 February 2014, for consideration by the Chair of the Institutional Review Panel who will decide what further action will need to be taken by CCN and any associated deadlines. This action may include *inter alia* consideration of the strategy and action plan at the Joint Board of Study on 7 March 2014, further review visits to Norfolk House and further meetings with staff and students as appropriate.

2. That CCN produce a detailed strategy outlining plans for increasing both the response rate and student satisfaction scores of the National Student Survey, both across higher education at CCN and on individual programmes.

This strategy must be provided to the University by the end of January 2014 and following sign off by the Chair of the Institutional Review Panel, a further update must be provided to the Joint Board of Study on 7 March 2014.

3.3 Recommendations (to be responded to at the Joint Board of Study meeting on 7 March 2014):

1. To review the Foundation Degree core modules; Skills for Work 1, Skills for Work 2, Advanced Higher Learning Skills and Advanced Higher Learning and Research Skills, to ensure that they are distinctive and fit for purpose.
2. To ensure that all programmes include employability as a key theme by utilising the good practice already evident in some programmes. The Joint Board of Study will

discuss, if appropriate, how the modules might be amended and updated outside the revalidation schedule.

3. To consider how the internal careers service provided by the Advice Shop can be enhanced to ensure that guidance is appropriate to the whole range of higher education students at CCN.
4. To continue to support and encourage academic and administrative staff to engage in continued professional development (CPD) and scholarly activity, and where possible, to allocate funding and/or time to pursue these important activities. A regular report on CPD and scholarly activity should be provided to the Joint Board of Study.
5. To consult and work collaboratively with the University on developing CCN's higher education strategy.
6. That the Joint Board of Study agenda includes a standing item for discussion on developments of, and opportunities for, CCN and the University to work together collaboratively.

3.4 Commendations

The review Panel commended CCN on:

1. The supportive environment and personal learning experience provided by programme tutors.
2. The development of, and ongoing enhancement to, the Achievement Tracking System.
3. The effective process adopted by CCN to facilitate mapping against the QAA UK Quality Code which is engaging a wide range of managers and academics
4. The continued engagement of students in quality assurance processes at CCN and the effective student voice.

3.5 Deadline for responses to recommendations

A response to the recommendations should be submitted to the Secretary of the Joint Board of Study by 21 February 2014, for consideration by the Joint Board of Study on 7 March 2014.

Appendix A

Panel Membership

Professor Ian Dewing, Academic Director of Partnerships, UEA (Chair)

Dr Frank Haddleton, Director of Academic Quality Assurance, University of Hertfordshire

Professor Nicola Spalding, Deputy Head of the Schools Nursing Sciences and Rehabilitation Sciences, UEA

Mr Steve Guratsky, Head of Sixth Form Centre, CCN

Mr Grant Murray, 3rd year students, BA (Hons) Leadership in Public Services, CCN

Mrs Sally Walker, Head of Partnerships, UEA

Mrs Hannah Jackson, Partnerships Manager, UEA (Secretary)

Appendix B

Members of CCN Staff Involved in Discussions with the Panel

Ms Corrienne Peasgood, Principal

Mr Jerry White, Deputy Principal

CCN Higher Education Academic and Administrative Staff

Mr Lawrence Britt, Curriculum Programme Manager

Mr Andy Chappel, Curriculum Programme Manager

Mrs Clare Holmes-Urquhart, Curriculum Programme Manager

Mrs Fern Farr, Planning and Performance Programme Manager

Ms Carol Fells, Academic Staff

Ms Tina Fuller, Senior Academic Administrator, HE Office

Mr Chris Pretty, Academic Staff

Ms Samantha Ratcliffe, Academic Staff

Mrs Jacky Sturman, Executive Office Manager

Mrs Claire Turner, Head of School of Higher Education

CCN Students Involved in Discussions with the Panel

Mr Tendai Chizengeni, 1st year, BA (Hons) Hospitality, Tourism and Event Management

Mr Harry Da'Silva, 1st year, BA (Hons) Hospitality, Tourism and Event Management

Mr Kristian Dyer, 2nd year, FdSc Sport, Health and Exercise

Mr Marit Harbak-Tettey, 2nd year, FdA Business Management

Mr Daniel Hawcroft, 2nd year, FdA Business Management

Ms Sally Henwood, 2nd year, FdSc Health Studies

Mr Geoff Mayers, 1st year, BA (Hons) Hospitality, Tourism and Event Management

Mr Robbie Powell, 2nd year, FdSc Sport, Health and Exercise

Ms Rosanna Sing, 1st year, BA (Hons) Hospitality, Tourism and Event Management

Mr Joseph Small, 2nd year, FdA Business Management

Ms Anna Southward, 2nd year, FdSc Health Studies

Mr Edmund Watts, 2nd year, FdA Public Services

**Institutional Review Outcomes Action Plan
City College Norwich
3 December 2013**

The Institutional Review Panel resolved to recommend to the Senate of the University of East Anglia that City College Norwich (CCN) be re-approved as a partner institution of the University for a period of up to five years commencing December 2013 subject to the following requirements and recommendations.

| Outcomes | | | | College Response |
|----------|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Type | No | Details | Deadline | |
| Req | 1. | <p>Produce a strategy and detailed action plan following the meeting with their staff and students on 16 December 2013, to resolve the issues raised at Institutional Review with respect to the Norfolk House building. These documents will need to address the following areas of concern:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) the suitability of the learning environments of the open plan teaching spaces, both for staff and students; ii) access to, and availability of, IT equipment, for both staff and students; iii) the plans for the ground floor, taking into account the view of the School Development Group and the students at the review; and iv) the opening hours, access to professional librarians and amount of learning resources | 21 February 2014 | |

Appendix C

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|-----|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| | | <p>available in the library.</p> <p>These documents must be provided to the University by the 21 February 2014 for consideration by the Chair of the Institutional Review Panel who will decide what further action will need to be taken by CCN and any associated deadlines. This action may include <i>inter alia</i> consideration of the strategy and action plan at the Joint Board of Study on 7 March 2014, further review visits to Norfolk House and further meetings with staff and students as appropriate.</p> | | | |
| Req | 2. | <p>That CCN produce a detailed strategy outlining plans for increasing both the response rate and student satisfaction scores of the National Student Survey, both across higher education at CCN and on individual programmes.</p> <p>This strategy must be provided to the University by the end of January 2014 and following sign off by the Chair of the Institutional Review Panel, a further update must be provided to the Joint Board of Study on 7 March 2014.</p> | 31 January 2014 | | |
| Rec | 1. | <p>To review the Foundation Degree core modules; Skills for Work 1, Skills for Work 2, Advanced Higher Learning Skills and Advanced Higher Learning and Research Skills, to ensure that they are distinctive and fit for purpose.</p> | 21 February 2014 for report to JBOS on 7 March 2014 | | |
| Rec | 2. | <p>To ensure that all programmes include employability as a key theme by utilising the good practice already</p> | 21 February 2014 for | | |

Appendix C

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| | | evident in some programmes. The Joint Board of Study will discuss, if appropriate, how the modules might be amended and updated outside the revalidation schedule. | report to JBOS on 7 March 2014 | | |
| Rec | 3. | To consider how the internal careers service provided by the Advice Shop can be enhanced to ensure that guidance is appropriate to the whole range of higher education students at CCN. | 21 February 2014 for report to JBOS on 7 March 2014 | | |
| Rec | 4. | To continue to support and encourage academic and administrative staff to engage in continued professional development (CPD) and scholarly activity, and where possible, to allocate funding and/or time to pursue these important activities. A regular report on CPD and scholarly activity should be provided to the Joint Board of Study. | 21 February 2014 for report to JBOS on 7 March 2014 | | |
| Rec | 5. | To consult and work collaboratively with the University on developing CCN's higher education strategy. | 21 February 2014 for report to JBOS on 7 March 2014 | | |
| Rec | 6. | That the Joint Board of Study agenda includes a standing item for discussion on developments of, and opportunities for, CCN and the University to work together collaboratively. | 21 February 2014 for report to JBOS on 7 March 2014 | | |