Quality Improvement and Enhancement Strategy

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Introduction

UKCBC is committed to the continuous improvement of its performance by raising standards of teaching, learning, and student outcomes across its provision for the benefit of its students and the communities they come from. UKCBC’s Quality Framework has been developed to facilitate transparent operations throughout the college and it has been established on the following principles

- Quality improvement is the responsibility of all staff within UKCBC
- Self-assessment processes are used to improve quality throughout the college, using both internal targets and external measures as metrics
- Appropriate mechanisms are continually developed to capture the views, and address concerns of, the student body
- The sharing of good practice is encouraged and promoted both within and external to the organisation to influence college wide practice
- Ensuring the curriculum portfolio consistently evolves to support areas of growth and remains responsive to the employment needs of the students and the communities they come from.

Links to QAA Quality Code and other external benchmarks

This document is designed to underpin the culture of quality improvement and enhancement through deliberate collaboration with the staff and student of the college. In doing so it takes reference from the Quality Code expectation 2.1 and B8

In order to secure their academic standards, degree-awarding bodies establish transparent and comprehensive academic frameworks and regulations to govern how they award academic credit and qualifications. A2.1

Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective, regular and systematic processes for monitoring and for review. B8

UKCBC takes reference from several additional external benchmarks in addition to QAA including:

- ISO 9001
- OIA
- Matrix
- CMA
- Awarding Organisation requirements
- Subject benchmarks
Links to other policies

The remainder of this policy will relate to the Improvement of Quality and Enhancement of the services and opportunities available for student at UKCBC. UKCBC recommends that this policy is understood in the context of the wider maintenance of quality and standards, and stakeholder engagement and particularly in relation to the following policies:

- Quality Manual
- Student Engagement, Retention and progression Policy
- Committee Structure and Remit Statement

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Quality Manual which sets out all of the activities and systems which contribute to the management, review and improvement of quality within UKCBC and those that support the achievement of the UKCBC’s strategic objectives and mission.

Enhancement Strategy

Purpose and definition

*Enhancement refers to the Deliberate steps taken at UKCBC level to improve the quality of students' learning opportunities."

*UKCBC’s* systematic and deliberate approach to enhancing the student learning experience by improving the quality of provision student development activities and strategic development of the Institution by maintaining high quality standards and compliance. UKCBC aims to achieve its medium-term goal of achieving a private University status.

Principles

UKCBC aims to achieve its development and growth objectives by means of adopting the following principles. The college aims to achieve its strategic goals through implementation of the stated principles that govern the strategic direction, implementation of Quality and enhancement initiatives for value addition at each stage.

(i) Student focused approach for Improved quality of teaching and learning
(ii) Continuously develop various learning resources that are cost effective and user friendly
(iii) Establish a strong Board of Governors to provide strategic direction to UKCBC in its journey to achieving a University status
(iv) Self-assuring Quality Assurance and compliance to standards
(v) Providing value for money to students and achieving higher levels of student success and satisfaction by means of providing them vocational and skills-based teaching and learning
(vi) Improved levels of student destinations in terms of continuing to higher education and/or achieving a better/higher employment, as an outcome of the study at UKCBC
(vii) Extending the provision of cost effective and qualitative programmes to students through overseas provision
The Process

1. Enhancement through Governance
2. Internal Quality Assurance processes for Self-Assuring Quality and Compliance
3. Ensuring value for money through Enhancement initiatives in development of sector driven vocational and skills-based learning
4. Enhancement of student support systems including U learn, electronic resources and experienced support teams
5. Student enrichment, Career oriented professional development to equip students with better skills and entrepreneurial acumen
6. Effective processes for Monitoring and Review

Scope and definition of Quality Improvement and Enhancement

At UKCBC, Quality Improvement is understood to be the considered advancement of regulatory documentations and actions as the college strives for a consistently fair system that maintains and promotes the academic standards of the programmes available throughout the college.

Enhancement is related to this in that it is the deliberate steps taken at by UKCBC management to improve the quality and learning opportunities of all learners (QAA). These deliberate steps are taken with the strategic willingness to identify areas for improvement and support to implement changes to policy, process or practice across the UKCBC.

As such Quality Improvement and Enhancement are critical to the student experience being consistently fair and good. This results in meaningful outcomes in terms of achievement of awards, personal development and employability, whilst ensuring the academic standards are fully maintained. Therefore, all members of the UKCBC community: staff, management and governors, partners and students are to play a proactive role in this function.

Responsibilities

As stated above all groups of stakeholders of UKCBC have a role in contributing to Quality Improvement and Enhancement.

Governors seek to oversee the quality of teaching and learning at UKCBC through various reports and minutes submitted to the Board of Governors and other working groups constituted by the Board of Governors. Governors are able to provide contextualisation to UKCBCs strategy, mission and operation though their external observations and Higher Education Environmental experiences. The Board of Governors will advise the Board of Directors in the strategic development and enhancement of teaching and learning opportunities at UKCBC.

The UKCBC Senior Management Team is able to direct the operation and evaluation of particular functional areas subject to scrutiny. The SMT may consider external benchmark data that is publicly available such as HESA data sets. The key channels of operation and evaluation will be through the Operations Management Committee and the Academic Standards and Quality Committee. Where appropriate task groups may be convened for specific activity, however it is envisioned that existing committees and teams will support all Quality Improvement and Enhancement activity.
Furthermore, the SMT will consider the resourcing implications of operational and policy changes whilst ensuring there is no deterioration of the student experience.

**Student Services (administration) and Academic Staff** are fundamentally the primary means in delivering any operational improvements and provide initial feedback on the success of the interventions. This could include new mechanisms of providing timetabling information to students or changes in the way Moodle presents assessment feedback to the students. Communication is expected to be 2-way incorporating both formal communication channels (departmental/campus meetings) but also ad hoc, informal conversations within professional limits.

UKCBCs students are in legal terms consumers of the education services provided at UKCBC. However, the college considers them as joint partners in ensuring the provision is effective and sustainable. Students are expected to fully engage with the teaching, learning and assessment opportunities available throughout the student lifecycle. This includes participation in class and tutorial commitments and engaging with self-directed study. However, UKCBC recognises that the student body is central to defining new activity to improve or enhance the student experience as they have unique expectations. As such UKCBC welcomes input and feedback into new interventions through the formal committee structure including Student Experience and Campus Committees and input within the Academic Standards and Quality Committee. Additionally, the Student Representatives within each class are a valuable source of intelligence and a vital 2-way communication channel.

**Functions and Processes Enabling Quality**

It is understood that “quality” does not just happen, but rather it has to be considered and nurtured. As such UKCBC operates a system of delegated authority whereby departments lead by directors or heads of department are empowered to deliver the functions of that department. In turn these departments or functional areas report into a number of committees who monitor the effectiveness of the activity in line with college mission and vision. As stated earlier, the Senior Management Team directs the operational activity of the college under the strategic oversight of the Board of Governors. Reporting lines are to be established through the Committee Structure and Remit leading to reports and action plans being cascaded throughout the college. The key body for operational delivery of quality is the Academic Standards and Quality Committee.

The operation of delivering credible and efficient teaching, learning and assessment services to the student body is supported by the policies and processes for all relevant functions. This ensures that the experience of the students is consistent across programmes, campuses and years of enrolment and meets the expectations of the awarding body.

UKCBC has identified the key delivery and student support quality documents that directly affect the learning experience and/or contribute to the delivery of teaching and support as presented in the UKCBC Quality Framework as presented in the Quality Manual. This framework ensures efficient management and operational consideration is afforded to the key elements of its operation without unnecessary duplication or avoidable contradictions. These regulatory documents are available for all student functions from admissions and induction, through teaching, learning and assessment leading to certification where an award is achieved. These are
complemented by a series of regulatory documents that support staff in the implementation of their professional services.

The UKCBC Quality Framework is developed to ensure consistency within its operation, but also takes reference from relevant QAA Quality Code Expectations, Awarding Body regulatory expectations, national legislation and sector guidance and best practice. The framework is communicated to staff, governors and students via various channels including Moodle, and is the reference point for all student focussed activity.

The development and evaluation of these processes is discussed below, however it is expected that they are collaborative and receive the comments of various stakeholders within the organisation.

**Management of Quality Development**

UKCBC is fully committed to accuracy and consistency within the management of quality as demonstrated throughout its documentation. This is to ensure that all guidance, policy, process and strategic documents relating to college operation enhance the student experience and maintenance of the academic standards of the college.

**Access to Policy and Procedures**

All policies are accessible to all staff on the e-learning site (Moodle) and Staff Handbook where relevant.

All polices relevant to the Student lifecycle prior to and whilst studying at UKCBC will be available to students on the UKCBC e-learning site (Moodle) and also on the website where relevant. A summary of significant policy provision is available within the Student Handbook.

Policies remain current until a new version is published following authorisation through the Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC).

Policies are reviewed on a 1 to 3-year cycle dependent on the significance of the remit of the policy on the student experience and also on maintenance of standards. However, policies may be reviewed mid-cycle upon analysis of college feedback or developments within the external HE environment. Where possible all Policy development/reviews are completed by August to enable implementation in the new Academic year from September. Where a policy must be implemented mid-term, the student body and all relevant staff will be informed through all practical communication channels of the reasons and circumstances necessitating the implementation of the amendment.
Process of Policy Approval

The Director of Quality, Enhancement and Development is responsible for the maintenance of the Policy review and development cycle, collaborating with relevant departments and the student body to ensure operational worthiness.

1. Policies will be amended/drafted with relevant input/collaboration.
2. Draft versions of the policy will be confirmed by nominated members of staff.
3. The nominated members of staff notifies the Academic Standards and Quality Committee of the new version.
4. The Director of Quality, Enhancement & Development leads a discussion on presented draft regulatory documents as presented to the ASQC. Discussion results in one of the following outcomes:
   i. Fully approved regulatory document
   ii. Non-approved regulatory document that is returned to nominated member of staff for re-development with the relevant department
   iii. Partial approval subject to further details or amendment (to be confirmed through “chairs action” and reported at future meetings)
5. The College Management Committee is notified of the development accordingly.

Version Control

For the purposes of ensuring continuity and accuracy the following protocol will be followed:

- Version 0.1 – Draft version without amendments
- Version 0.2-9 – Sequential draft versions following collaboration & stakeholder feedback
- Version 1.1 – first published version
- Version 1.2-9 – sequential amendments during a review process
- Version 2.1 – second published version
- Version 2.2-9 – sequential amendments during a review process
- Version 3.1 – third published version
- etc etc

Additional details include reviewer and approving officer, and dates.

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Timeline of Managing Quality Development

Currency, accuracy and dissemination of UKCBCs Quality Framework (UQF) is a collaborative activity under the guardianship of the Director of Quality, Enhancement and Development. The UQF reflects the critical functions within the college from engaging with prospective students to authorising certification for students who have achieved their qualification.

As stated earlier, all relevant quality documents are to be reviewed and refreshed by August. To facilitate the successful progress of this development, it is envisaged that intelligence is gathered across the college community throughout the academic year, including:

- Programme Management & Standardisation Committee minutes
- Academic Standards and Quality Committee minutes
- Assessment Standards Board minutes
- College Management Committee minutes
- Student Experience Committee minutes
- Campus Committee minutes
- External Examiners’ comments
- External environmental or regulatory changes

The analysis of the intelligence is expected to commence in May, with relevant quality documents being identified and scheduled for review and refreshment over the following months including timely approval by the Academic Standards and Quality Committee. Consideration for the scheduling of the production is also made within the timeline.

Evaluation of Quality within UKCBC Operations

Reviews and evaluations at UKCBC include consideration of the physical and human resources development within the college and its immediate operational environment. Therefore, where a development need has been identified, this can be recorded and will inform the professional development and training of an individual or group of stakeholders. This supports the college’s clearly defined procedures for selection, recruitment and appraisal of staff and as an equal opportunities employer.

Annual Programme Monitoring and Review (APMR)

The primary review is the UKCBC Annual Programme Monitoring and Review (APMR) that considers each of the programmes delivered across the college following the conclusion of the academic year. This is the result of a cyclical evaluation process throughout the college and overseen by the Director of Quality, Enhancement and Development. The AMR produces the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) that contains actions do be undertaken during the following academic year as approved by the College Management Committee.

Programme teams are also responsible for the production of an informative Course Self Evaluation Document (CSED) that considers quantitative and qualitative performance of the students and teaching teams. The CSEDs incorporate comments (where appropriate) from external examiners (EE/EVs) on programme specific recommendations. Additionally observations from the 5 stages of internal quality assurance (IQA) process for each programme are included.
into the CSEDs and any relevant action plans. This is scheduled to include the analysis of regular Assessment and Standards Boards and take into account the performance of students throughout the year. The APMR is further supported by self-evaluation of support services in the Service Area Self Evaluation Document (SASED) and any audits of college-wide activity including QAA and awarding body reviews.

In addition, the college operates two significant review tools that can capture and address the success of practices that influence student experience and therefore provide in depth evaluation and areas of renewed focus:

- The Student Survey’s (Induction, Mid-semester, and End of Semester)
- In-class Teaching Observations

Each of these review tools enable the college to capture and respond immediately to any improvements or interventions that are required to enhance student experience or maintain academic standards. Details of these tools are evaluated by the Director of Quality, Enhancement and Development and Director of Studies respectively, with details being cascaded throughout relevant committees.

Comments, observations and actions highlighted throughout the year, are captured from the above tools along with IQA process, Team Meetings, Committee Meetings, External reviews from awarding organisation examiners and QAA reviewers. These are collated in a Live Action Plan for the academic year.

At the end of the academic year, the Live Action Plan is reviewed and the status for all actions updated. Where actions are ongoing, these are collated with the CSED and SASED actions within the UKCBC Annual Programme Monitoring and Review (APMR) Report and UKCBC Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) as presented earlier. Actions that have been completed within the year are not included QIP. Details from the AMR and QIP are expected to be re-utilised within awarding organisation and external monitoring or self-evaluation documents for the relevant year. The QIP becomes the basis of the new Live Action plan for the following academic year.

The following diagram presents the major inputs into the evaluation of UKCBC operations across the year. Note that it is not an exhaustive representation but rather reflective of the type of input rather than the volume or frequency of input.
What is known?
QIP
• Student feedback
• External benchmarks and reports: HESA, SSC, DoE
• Any processes that have been trialled previously
• Resources availability
• New college infrastructure?
• New college organisational structure?

What good practice can be disseminated?
Where can we improve?
APMR & QIP

Live Action Plan
• Lecturer feedback
• Committee Meetings
• Student Surveys
• Student Committees
• AO annual quality audits and visits
• QAA annual monitoring
• Student attendance,

• Consider Module, Programme and Department evaluations
• Development of CSED
• Development of SASED
• Development of APMR Report
• Develop Quality Improvement Plan

UKCBC Quality Improvement Cycle
• Student feedback
• Course Feedback from Students
• Course Feedback from Staff
• Course Feedback from external audits