Inspection report

BRITISH COUNCIL	

Organisation name	Activate Learning City of Oxford College
Inspection date	22–24 May 2017

Section standard	Met	Not met
Management: The management of the provision will operate to the benefit of its students, in accordance with its publicity and in accordance with the *Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance*.	☒	☐
Resources and environment: The learning resources and environment will support and enhance the studies of students enrolled with the provider, and will offer an appropriate professional environment for staff.	☒	☐
Teaching and learning: Teachers will have appropriate qualifications and will be given sufficient support to ensure that their teaching meets the needs of their students. Programmes of learning will be managed for the benefit of students. The teaching observed will meet the requirements of the Scheme.	☒	☐
Welfare and student services: The needs of students for security, pastoral care, information and leisure activities will be met; any accommodation provided will be suitable; the management of the accommodation systems will work to the benefit of students.	☒	☐

Care of under 18s section	N/a	Met	Not met
There will be appropriate provision for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 within the organisation and in any leisure activities or accommodation provided.	☐	☒	☐

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation.

Summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Activate Learning City of Oxford College in May 2017. The Accreditation Scheme assesses the standards of management, resources and premises, teaching, welfare, and care of under 18s and accredits organisations which meet the overall standard in each area inspected (see www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation for details).

The English language teaching department of this large college of further education offers courses in general English and ESOL for adults (16+) and for closed groups of adults (16+).

Strengths were noted in the areas of staff management, premises and facilities, teaching and care of students.

The inspection report stated that the organisation met the standards of the Scheme.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	1990
Last full inspection	November 2013
Subsequent spot check (if applicable)	March 2015
Subsequent supplementary check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent interim visit (if applicable)	N/a
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	N/a
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	Activate Learning Reading College
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

State sector

Type of institution	College of further education
Other accreditation	N/a

Premises profile

Address of main site	City of Oxford College, Oxpens Road, Oxford OX1 1SA
Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the inspection	Banbury and Bicester College, Broughton Road, Banbury OX16 9QA Banbury and Bicester College, Telford Road, Bicester OX26 4LA
Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of the inspection	N/a
Profile of sites visited	Activate Learning City of Oxford College prior to 2013 was known as Oxford and Cherwell Valley College and comprised not only the sites at Oxpens Road and Blackbird Leys in Oxford, but also the Banbury campus at Broughton Road and the Bicester campus at Telford Road. In 2013, the college became part of the Activate Learning (AL) group, along with Reading College, which is separately accredited. Activate Learning City of Oxford College is still accredited with Banbury and Bicester College. At this inspection, the Oxford and Banbury sites were visited. No EFL or ESOL courses were running at Bicester, so this site was not visited. The Oxpens Road site is on the western edge of central Oxford, near the railway station. It comprises nine purpose-built buildings on a compact campus. Dorn building houses the main reception, advice and admissions, careers and senior management; it is also where the ESOL teachers' room is located. Glyme building is where ESOL teaching takes place, usually in classrooms on the first floor; there is also a multi-faith room. Jericho contains the library and learning centre and the study support team. Ash and Brent buildings house the main catering facilities for students and staff: a training restaurant, and a caféteria. Brent also accommodates the students' union. There are vending machines in various locations and another small coffee bar in Dorn. There is another campus in Blackbird Leys, but no ESOL teaching takes place there and it was not visited. The Banbury campus is located near the centre of Banbury and is located on a partly-wooded site divided by Broughton Road. All the operations related to ESOL and EFL take place in the northern part of the campus, which comprises five purpose-built buildings grouped around an open space which functions as the assembly point. The main building, which holds reception, also accommodates management, the ESOL teachers' room, the ESOL classrooms, the library, advice and admissions and study support. The catering facilities, which comprise a training restaurant, a caféteria and a café, are located in the same building as the students' union. Activate Learning have made impressive progress in ensuring that each campus replicates key facilities in a standardised way.

Student profile *Where a single figure is given, this applies to both sites.*	At inspection	In peak week: March (organisation's estimate)
Of all international students, approximate percentage on ELT/ESOL courses	Oxford: 25% Banbury: 41%	Oxford: 25% Banbury: 41%
ELT/ESOL students (eligible courses)	At inspection	In peak week
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) 18 years and over	0	0
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged 16–17 years	0	0
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged under 16	0	0
Part-time ELT aged 18 years and over	Oxford: 180 Banbury: 115 **Total: 295**	Oxford: 189 Banbury: 120 **Total: 3**09
Part-time ELT aged 16–17 years	Oxford: 7 Banbury: 10 **Total: 17**	Oxford: 9 Banbury: 9 **Total: 18**
Part-time ELT aged under 16 years	0	0
Overall total ELT/ESOL students shown above	Oxford: 187 Banbury: 125 **Total: 312**	Oxford: 198 Banbury: 130 **Total: 328**
Minimum age	16	16
Typical age range	16–65	16–65
Typical length of stay	8 months	8 months
Predominant nationalities	Both sites: Polish, Romanian Oxford: Syrian, Bulgarian, Spanish, Afghan Banbury: British Asian	Both sites: Polish, Romanian, Oxford: Syrian, Bulgarian, Spanish, Afghan Banbury: British Asian
Number on PBS Tier 4 General student visas	0	0
Number on PBS Tier 4 child visas	0	0
Number on short-term study visas	0	0

Staff profile	At inspection	In peak week (organisation's estimate)
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	Oxford: 6 Banbury: 4 **Total: 10**	Oxford: 6 Banbury: 5 **Total: 11**
Number teaching ELT under 10 hours/week	Oxford: 1 Banbury: 2 **Total: 3**	
Number teaching ELT 10–19 hours/week	Oxford: 5 Banbury: 2 **Total: 7**	
Number teaching ELT 20 hours and over/week	0	
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	Oxford: 1 Banbury: 1 **Total: 2**	

Academic staff qualifications to teach ELT/ESOL

Profile in week of inspection	
Professional qualifications	Total number of teachers
Diploma-level ELT/TESOL qualification (TEFLQ)	Oxford: 4 Banbury: 2 **Total: 6**
Certificate-level ELT/TESOL qualification (TEFLI)	Oxford: 2 Banbury: 1 **Total: 3**

Holding specialist qualifications only (specify)	0
YL initiated	0
Qualified teacher status only (QTS)	0
Rationale(s) required for teachers without appropriate ELT/TESOL qualifications	Oxford: 0 Banbury: 1 **Total: 1**
Total	Oxford: 6 Banbury: 4 **Total: 10**

These figures   exclude   the academic managers.

Comments
One teacher who was on the timetable during the inspection week was not observed because it was not feasible to do so.

Course profile

Eligible activities	Year round		Vacation		Other - N/a	
	Run	Seen	Run	Seen	Run	Seen
General ELT for adults	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
General ELT for juniors (under 18)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
English for academic purposes (excludes IELTS preparation)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
English for specific purposes (includes English for Executives)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teacher development (excludes award-bearing courses)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
ESOL skills for life/for citizenship	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments
16–17 year-olds are enrolled on adult courses. The classes running during the inspection were, with one exception, all part-time ESOL, following a course based on the skills for life syllabus. Levels ranged from Pre-Entry to Entry Level 3. The only general English class for adults was an IELTS preparation class at Oxford.

Accommodation profile

Number of students in each at the time of inspection (all students on eligible courses)		
Types of accommodation	Adults	Under 18s
Arranged by provider/agency		
Homestay	0	0
Private home	0	0
Home tuition	0	0
Residential	0	0
Hotel/guesthouse	0	0
Independent self-catering e.g. flats, bedsits, student houses	0	0
Arranged by student/family/guardian		
Staying with own family	Oxford: 180 (living in own home/rented accommodation) Banbury: 115 (living in	Oxford: 1 in care, 6 with family Banbury: 1 in care, 9 with family

	own home/rented accommodation) **Total: 295**	**Total: 2 in care, 15 with family**
Staying in privately rented rooms/flats	See above	0
Overall totals adults/under 18s	Oxford: 180 Banbury: 115 **Total: 295**	Oxford: 7 Banbury: 10 **Total: 17**
Overall total adults + under 18s	Oxford: 187 Banbury: 125 **Total: 312**	

Introduction

City of Oxford College is one of three further education colleges that make up the AL group. The other two are Banbury and Bicester College and Reading College. Reading is separately accredited, but Banbury and Bicester College is included in the same accreditation for the historical reason that City of Oxford and Banbury and Bicester Colleges used to be grouped together under the name of Oxford and Cherwell Valley College. AL was launched in 2013 and, in addition to the colleges, comprises a number of schools, an apprenticeship and training facility, commercial and consultancy services and a number of international initiatives, including three further education colleges for women in Saudi Arabia.

The structure of AL is distinctive in that senior managers have cross-institutional roles that cover all three colleges. The chief executive and six executive directors work peripatetically across the campuses, as do many of the 24 directors who report to them. Faculty managers and faculty co-ordinators are based on specific campuses, as are most of the teaching staff. ESOL and EFL provision sits in the lifeskills faculty.

At present, EFL represents a small proportion of the business, the great majority of classes being for part-time ESOL students. ESOL students are enrolled through the college admissions process, whereas the small number of EFL students are recruited and enrolled through the international office and referred to as Destination UK (DUK) students.

The inspection took place over two and a half days plus one evening. Meetings were held with the chief executive officer, the executive director of faculties, the director of career pathways, the director of delivery, the faculty manager (Banbury), the lead internal verifier (Banbury), the course leader (Oxford), the faculty co-ordinators on both campuses, the international business co-ordinator, the director of the accommodation agency used by the college, the designated safeguarding lead, the group student support manager, the learning resources co-ordinator and the business partner marketing. Group meetings were held with students on both sites, as they were with teachers. Nine teachers were observed. One inspector visited two homestays.

Management

Legal and statutory regulations

Criteria	See comments
M1 Declaration of compliance	☒
Comments	
M1 The items sampled were satisfactory.	

Staff management

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
M2 Management structure	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
M3 Duties specified	☐	☒	N/a	☐	
M4 Communication channels	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐
M5 Human resources policies	☐	☒	☒	☒	
M6 Qualifications verified	☐	☒	N/a	☒	☐

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
M7 Induction procedures	☐	☒	☒	☒	
M8 Monitoring staff performance	☐	☒	☒	☒	
M9 Professional development	☐	☒	☒	☒	

Comments

M4 Communication channels are effective, although written records of team meetings are kept somewhat irregularly. Action points are followed up by email.

M5 The college's human resources policies are comprehensive and well supported with appropriate checklists and templates for managers. Managers with recruitment roles have safer recruitment training.

M6 The college is rigorous in checking and recording qualifications certificates. However, the process of evaluating TEFL qualifications is insufficiently robust. (See T2.)

M7 Induction applies to all staff and is implemented thoroughly at both college-wide and faculty level. There are checklists for managers and new staff and a detailed staff handbook.

M8 The appraisal process applies to all staff and is linked to continuing professional development (CPD). The process is thorough and well documented with initial, quarterly and end-of-year review meetings. For staff at director level and above, it includes 360 degree appraisal. The emphasis of the scheme is supportive, but if performance is unsatisfactory and does not improve, a capability procedure can be invoked.

M9 CPD is well resourced and taken very seriously by the organisation. The provision has four strands: enhancing skills for current work, supporting staff to gain higher qualifications, leadership training for all managers and mandatory health and safety training. There are good systems for recording individuals' training. The college encourages innovation and supports this through its applied learning foundation. Development days are held at college- and organisation-wide levels several times a year and faculty managers have time to run specific training events for their teams.

Student administration

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
M10 Administrative staff and resources	☐	☒	☐	☐	
M11 Information on course choice	☐	☒	☐	☐	
M12 Enrolment procedures	☐	☒	☐	☐	
M13 Contact details	☐	☒	☐	☐	
M14 Student attendance policy	☐	☒	☐	☒	
M15 Students asked to leave course	☐	☒	☐	☐	

Comments

M14 There are clear and well documented procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality, known to students and staff, which are implemented consistently. Teachers enter attendance records into the electronic system and it is they, in the first instance, who follow up absences. Attendance is then monitored by the faculty co-ordinators who complete 'cause for concern' forms if students do not respond to teachers. Follow up is relatively informal, however.

Quality assurance

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
M16 Action plan	☐	☒	N/a	☒	☐
M17 Continuing improvement	☐	☒	☐	☒	
M18 Student feedback and action	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐
M19 Staff feedback and action	☐	☒	☐	☒	
M20 Complaints and action	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐

Comments

M16 An action plan to address the points raised in the previous inspection was submitted. However, the actions planned for one of the two points (C3) were not relevant to the issue, which was about publicity.

M17 There is a comprehensive and rigorous approach to reviewing processes and practices across the organisation. A large amount of data is generated and managers use this to write self-assessment reviews and make action plans for each stage. Student surveys also feed into the review process. However, local review practices within EFL/ESOL tend to be less systematic.

M18 Feedback from EFL/ESOL students is captured using a paper form rather than the electronic submission used by other students. This approach is appropriate to the language level of the students, but the form could be better designed to produce more useful data on the course. The data is surveyed informally by the faculty co-ordinators who discuss salient features with the director. It is entered into the college-wide student survey but this does not distinguish EFL/ESOL students from the overall student body.

M19 Staff feedback is generally gathered ad hoc through team and one-to-one meetings. There have been opportunities for staff to take part in surveys, but teachers seemed unaware of these.

Publicity

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
M21 Accessible accurate language	☐	☒	☐	☐	
M22 Realistic expectations	☐	☒	☐	☐	
M23 Course descriptions	☐	☒	☐	☒	
M24 Course information	☐	☒	N/a	☒	
M25 Costs	☒	☐	☐	☒	
M26 Accommodation	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
M27 Leisure programme	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
M28 Staff qualifications	☐	☒	N/a	☒	☐
M29 Accreditation	☐	☒	N/a	☐	☐

Comments

The main medium of publicity is the website. There is also a printed guide to full-time programmes and apprenticeships, and several flyers advertising EFL courses.

M23 Outline course descriptions include objectives but do not include the range of levels available.

M24 Most of the required course information is given with the exception of the minimum enrolment age and, for the ESOL course, approximate times of classes.

M25 The costs of tuition are given, as are the requirements for deposits, payment of fees and the refund policy. However, the cost of homestay accommodation is not given, nor is the approximate cost of the IELTS test.

M28 The printed guide to full-time programmes states that EFL courses are 'led by qualified teachers', which did not apply to the full range of teachers at the time of the inspection.

Management summary

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. Staff management is effective and supportive. Student administration is efficient and works to the benefit of students. Quality assurance is satisfactory. *Staff management* is an area of strength.

Resources and environment

Premises and facilities

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
R1 Adequate space	☐	☒	☒	☒	
R2 Condition of premises	☐	☒	☒	☒	
R3 Classrooms and learning areas	☐	☒	☒	☒	
R4 Student relaxation areas and food	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
R5 Signage and display	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
R6 Staffroom(s)	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐

Comments

R1 Both campuses provide sufficient space for students and staff in attractively laid-out surroundings. There is sufficient space for students outside class time, both indoors and outdoors. Classrooms allow for students and teachers to move around easily. Offices are spacious with good amounts of storage space.

R2 The premises are very well maintained and in a very good state of décor and cleanliness.
R3 Classrooms are sufficiently large for the size of the classes. They are well appointed, with good natural light and are free from extraneous noise. There are suitable designated rooms for most EFL/ESOL classes.
R5 Signage on both campuses is clear and well designed, creating a sense of visual identity and making it easy to navigate. Noticeboards are well distributed both in common spaces and classrooms and benefit from visually attractive displays, including well designed and informative posters.
R6 Both campuses have spacious staffrooms with kitchen facilities. Staff, both teaching and administrative, have good-sized desks, shelves and storage space.

Learning resources

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
R7 Learning materials for students	☐	☒	☐	☒	
R8 Resources for teachers	☐	☒	☐	☒	
R9 Educational technology	☐	☒	☒	☒	
R10 Self-access facilities	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
R11 Library/self-access guidance	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
R12 Review and development	☒	☐	☐	☒	

Comments

R7 Apart from one examination class, coursebooks are not issued to students and most materials are photocopied. There is a good provision of appropriate, up-to-date published materials on both campuses from which these materials are drawn. Teachers also make use of online resources, including video.
R8 There is a satisfactory provision of materials and resources on both campuses for teachers. At Oxford, there is a large collection of printed materials. On both sites, these are well organised and sufficiently up to date. Teachers also have access to, and can upload, materials on a shared drive and on the college's virtual learning environment.
R9 Classrooms are well equipped with educational technology on both campuses. All rooms have, as a minimum, data projection and audio playback facilities. Teachers reported that technical support was responsive and effective.
R10 There are well equipped, well organised libraries on both campuses. Each have quiet study areas and more social spaces, with a good provision of computers. The resources for EFL/ESOL students are well targeted and easily accessible, and include a good collection of well-used graded readers.
R11 All students, including those who enrol after the course has started, have an induction to the library and are accompanied by their teacher. Library staff are approachable and willing to assist students. Further guidance is available online.
R12 Resources are updated in response to requests from teachers and co-ordinators and according to the library's own criteria. However, the development of resources tends to be reactive rather than policy driven and is not explicitly linked to other review processes.

Resources and environment summary

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. Premises and facilities are of a high standard. Learning resources on the whole enhance the studies of students but would benefit from more systematic review. *Premises and facilities* is an area of strength.

Teaching and learning

Academic staff profile

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
T1 General education (and rationales)	☐	☒	N/a	☒	
T2 ELT/TESOL teacher qualifications	☒	☐	☐	☒	
T3 Rationales for teachers	☐	☒	N/a	☒	☐
T4 Profile of academic manager(s)	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐
T5 Rationale for academic manager(s)	☐	☒	N/a	☒	☐

Comments

T1 Rationales were provided for two teachers without a Level 6 qualification. Both were accepted in the context of

this inspection as both teachers had certificates of education and had undertaken substantial CPD.
T2 One teacher did not hold an EFL/ESOL qualification that meets the requirements of the Scheme.
T3 The rationale for this teacher was accepted in the context of this inspection as the teacher had undertaken substantial EFL-related CPD.
T4 There is a academic management team of three, one of whom is TEFLQ and two who are trained teachers but do not have EFL/ESOL qualifications. The TEFLQ director works on both campuses and is responsible for recruitment and the monitoring and observation of teachers. The other members of the team are responsible for such areas as timetabling, arranging cover and day-to-day support for teachers, as well as having input into CPD. Roles are appropriately distributed according to experience and qualifications.
T5 Rationales were provided for the two members of the academic management team who do not have TEFL qualifications. These were both accepted within the context of the inspection. Both are well qualified and experienced teachers at this level: one is line-managed by the TEFLQ director and receives guidance and support from him; the other has a postgraduate certificate in a cognate area – assessing and teaching students with dyslexia – and is guided by the TEFLQ director on areas such as discipline-specific CPD which require TEFL expertise.

Academic management

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
T6 Deployment of teachers	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
T7 Timetabling	☐	☒	☐	☐	
T8 Cover for absent teachers	☐	☒	☐	☐	
T9 Continuous enrolment	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
T10 Formalised support for teachers	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐
T11 Observation and monitoring	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐

Comments

T10 Although overall college provision is very good and it is clear that the college plans to improve provision of EFL/ESOL-specific CPD, little has been done on the latter over the past year.
T11 All teachers are observed by a TEFLQ academic manager at least annually. Teachers reported that the feedback they received was helpful and supportive. However, linkage between the observation process and CPD is insufficiently systematic.

Course design and implementation

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
T12 Principled course structure	☐	☒	☐	☒	
T13 Review of course design	☐	☒	☐	☒	
T14 Course outlines and outcomes	☒	☐	☐	☒	
T15 Study and learning strategies	☐	☒	☐	☐	
T16 Linguistic benefit from UK	☐	☒	☐	☐	

Comments

T12 Course design is framed around the skills for life syllabus for the ESOL course or the examination syllabus for the IELTS course.
T13 Review of course design is carried out continuously by the teaching team. However, the process is informal and it is not monitored by an appropriately qualified academic manager.
T14 With the exception of the IELTS course, written course outlines with learning outcomes are not made available to students.

Learner management

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
T17 Placement for level and age	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
T18 Monitoring students' progress	☐	☒	☐	☒	

	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
T19 Examination guidance	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
T20 Assessment criteria	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
T21 Academic reports	☐	☒	☐	☐	
T22 Information on UK education	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐

Comments

T18 Although part-time ESOL students do not have timetabled tutorials, their progress is monitored satisfactorily both formally and informally. Homework is regularly set and marked and there are practice tests for the formal examinations that all ESOL students are expected to take.
T22 There is a dedicated advice service on both campuses, with trained staff and visits from universities.

Classroom observation record

Number of teachers seen	9
Number of observations	9
Parts of programme(s) observed	All except the IELTS course.

Comments

One teacher at Oxford was not observed because it was not feasible for timetable reasons.

Classroom observation

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
T23 Models and awareness of English in use	☐	☒	☐	☐	
T24 Appropriate content	☐	☒	☒	☒	
T25 Learning outcomes	☐	☒	☒	☒	
T26 Teaching techniques	☐	☒	☐	☒	
T27 Classroom management	☐	☒	☐	☒	
T28 Feedback to students	☐	☒	☒	☒	
T29 Evaluating student learning	☐	☒	☒	☒	
T30 Student engagement	☐	☒	☐	☒	

Comments

T24 Teachers produced clear plans which included detailed evaluation of students' individual needs and difficulties. Content was well targeted to these.
T25 Lesson aims were clear and shared with students. Plans revealed appropriate staging with good links to relevant homework.
T26 A generally good range of appropriate techniques was demonstrated, including eliciting, attentive monitoring and effective use of controlled practice and choral drilling. In a small minority of weaker segments, the teaching of vocabulary was unsatisfactory, with only questions such 'what does x mean?' being used.
T27 Teachers exploited classroom resources effectively, making competent use of data projectors, recording work in an organised way on conventional whiteboards and, in stronger segments, making good use of flashcards. However, insufficient help was given to students in organising the large number of photocopied handouts.
T28 Feedback was helpful and very encouraging. A range of correction techniques was employed and these were applied with sensitive timing. Self-correction was encouraged.
T29 Lessons systematically included appropriate review and recap activities. Homework was set and marked with helpful comments, which students said they valued.
T30 Students were fully engaged in the lessons and were making strong contributions. Teachers' language was normally well graded and their presence contributed a very positive learning atmosphere. Activities were well managed. However, some teacher language was unnecessarily complicated and lengthy for the level of the students and instructions were not always clearly given or demonstrated.

Classroom observation summary

The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme and ranged from satisfactory to excellent, with the majority being good. Lessons were well planned and took detailed account of individual needs. Classroom resources were effectively used. A range of appropriate techniques were used, particularly for giving feedback.

Students were fully engaged.

Teaching and learning summary

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. Teachers are in general appropriately qualified and receive sufficient support. Programmes of learning are managed for the benefit of students. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme. *Teaching* is an area of strength.

Welfare and student services

Care of students

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
W1 Safety and security onsite	☐	☒	☒	☒	
W2 Pastoral care	☐	☒	☒	☒	
W3 Personal problems	☐	☒	☒	☒	
W4 Dealing with abusive behaviour	☐	☒	☒	☒	
W5 Emergency contact number	☐	☒	N/a	☒	☐
W6 Transport and transfers	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐
W7 Advice	☐	☒	☒	☒	
W8 Medical and dental treatment	☐	☒	N/a	☐	

Comments

W1 There is impressive provision for all aspects of safety and security, from day-to-day management of sites and well-embedded safeguarding polices and procedures, through to responsiveness and planning for a wide range of scenarios. A number of senior managers share responsibility for the different aspects of this area, which is also seen as a concern of all staff, with appropriate staff training to reflect this. A major incident plan is in place, and a summary of procedures for staff and students is widely displayed.

W2 Pastoral care is taken very seriously. All permanent staff have Level 2 safeguarding training and are encouraged to be aware of students' potential needs and how to refer issues. For ESOL students, their teachers are often the first port of call, and although there is no formal tutorial provision for this group of students, teachers make the time to have one-to-one meetings with their students. Students in the focus group meetings mentioned the high level of trust they had in their teachers.

W3 The student support teams make consistent efforts to make themselves known to students, through presence at enrolment and induction, and learning walks, as well as by providing and disseminating a wealth of information and advice. Photograph galleries of staff members and their roles are prominently displayed. Staff members can easily be contacted, and there are appropriate facilities for confidential discussion.

W4 The student code of conduct, which covers a wide range of areas, including bullying and harassment, is widely displayed throughout the college. It forms part of the college ethos, in which potential issues are named and addressed in well-expressed documents and attractively laid-out displays. The same is true of the college's approach to its responsibilities in relation to the Prevent strategy: the college ensures that posters and information for students are widely displayed, and dialogue encouraged, in addition to appropriate risk assessment and management.

W5 ESOL students, who are all part of the local community, are not given an emergency number. The international office issues a number to DUK students.

W6 This criterion is not relevant to ESOL students. The international office issues a transfer information letter for DUK students.

W7 Information and advice appropriate to the needs of ESOL students, is provided at inductions, through teachers and as part of the student portal. DUK students receive comprehensive and detailed pre-arrival and in-course handbooks.

Accommodation profile

Comments on the accommodation seen by the inspectors

The college does not arrange accommodation for students, but its website offers links and information about a range of accommodation options. The college uses a non-registered agency to provide homestay accommodation and students are referred directly to the agent to make all arrangements. At the time of the inspection, no EFL or ESOL students were living in homestay accommodation. However, one inspector visited two homestays, each of which was hosting a DUK student.

Accommodation: all types

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
W9 Services and facilities	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
W10 Accommodation inspected first	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐
W11 Accommodation re-inspected	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐
W12 Accommodation registers	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐
W13 Information in advance	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
W14 Student feedback	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐
W15 Meals in homestay/residences	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐

Comments

W10 The agency, although not registered with the British Council, is familiar with the Scheme's criteria and has aligned its inspection documentation accordingly. Evidence from sampling indicated that the inspection checklist used for first inspection includes appropriate safety and suitability checks, including a fire risk assessment carried out in situ by the inspector.

W11 Re-inspection is carried out within an appropriate timescale, but systems for ensuring that a fire risk assessment is carried out as part of the reinspection are insufficiently clear.

W12 The accommodation files sampled demonstrated appropriate records in the majority of areas. However, although hosts are provided with a template for a fire risk assessment, none had been completed and none were on file.

W14 Students are asked informally about general satisfaction during their first week, and asked to complete a questionnaire during their first term – normally around three weeks into their course. However, there are no formal records of any action taken in response to such feedback, as issues are dealt with informally by telephone or email.

Accommodation: homestay

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
W16 No more than four students	☐	☒	N/a	☐	☐
W17 Rules, terms and conditions	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
W18 Shared bedrooms	☐	☒	N/a	☐	☐
W19 Students' first language	☐	☒	N/a	☐	☐
W20 Language of communication	☐	☒	N/a	☐	☐
W21 Adult to welcome	☐	☒	N/a	☐	☐

Comments

None.

Accommodation: residential

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
W22 Cleaning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
W23 Health	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒

Comments

None.

Accommodation: other

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
W24 Information and support	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
W25 Other accommodation	☐	☐	N/a	☐	☒

Comments
None.

Leisure opportunities

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
W26 Information and access	☐	☒	☐	☒	
W27 Leisure programmes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
W28 Health and safety	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
W29 Responsible person	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐

Comments
W26 There is no specific leisure programme, but students have access to and information about a range of sports and enrichment activities arranged by student support teams. At Oxford there is a gym on campus, and sports timetables also indicate sessions arranged in conjunction with local sports centres and venues.
W28 Any excursion or event organised by teachers or the international office is risk assessed. Risk assessment training is provided and there is a robust process for sign off and review.

Welfare and student services summary

The provision meets the section standard. Students benefit from high levels of safety, security, pastoral care and information. Accommodation is appropriately managed, and there are well organised and advertised opportunities for leisure activities. *Care of students* is an area of strength.

Care of under 18s

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
C1 Safeguarding policy	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
C2 Guidance and training	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐
C3 Publicity	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐
C4 Recruitment procedures	☐	☒	N/a	☒	☐
C5 Safety and supervision during scheduled lessons and activities	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐
C6 Safety and supervision outside scheduled lessons and activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
C7 Accommodation	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐
C8 Contact arrangements	☐	☒	N/a	☐	☐

Comments
At inspection there were ten under 18s enrolled on ESOL courses: seven in Oxford and ten in Banbury, and all living with family or carers in the local community. This reflects the normal situation in both colleges.
C1 The safeguarding policy is clear, comprehensive and continually reviewed. It includes comprehensive safe recruitment and suitability checks and makes provision for any exceptions that may arise. The policy is monitored and implemented by the college safeguarding committee and supported by a wide range of practical documents for staff, including incident reporting documentation, and for students, including a safeguarding booklet and code of conduct.
C2 There is a high level of safeguarding awareness amongst staff. All new staff are required to complete online basic awareness training before starting their employment, and then to undertake face-to-face advanced training within their first year at the college. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL), three site-specific deputy DSLs, and an extensive team of safeguarding advisors amongst teaching and support staff have received specialist training. There is a safeguarding booklet for learners.
C3 The website provides specific information about the level of care for DUK under 18s. There is currently no information specifically for ESOL students, or their parents or carers, in this age group.
C4 The college's recruitment procedures conform to safer recruitment best practice, and following the recent

inspection at Reading College procedures have been extended to include police checks for any visiting group leaders (although there have been none in Oxford or Banbury).

C5 Online class registers are kept by teachers and absences followed up. The swipe card system allows students' presence to be tracked.

C7 ESOL students live in the local community. DUK students are encouraged to book homestay accommodation, and where they make other choices, a parental consent form is required.

Care of under 18s summary

The provision meets the section standard. There are very strong safeguarding policies and procedures throughout the organisation, with extensive training, support and information. The college safeguarding committee is both proactive and well represented.