BRITISH COUNCIL

Inspection report

Organisation name	Birmingham International Academy, Birmingham University
Inspection date	30 August – 2 September and 5 September 2016

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. However, evidence must be submitted within 12 months to demonstrate that weaknesses in T2 and T3 have been addressed.

Summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Birmingham International Academy, Birmingham University in September 2016. 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 large English language teaching department of this large university offers courses in academic English for adults (16+) and for closed groups of adults (18+).

The inspection report noted a need for improvement in the area of publicity.

Strengths were noted in the areas of course design, 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	2004
Last full inspection	July 2012
Subsequent spot check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent supplementary check (if applicable)	May 2013
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	N/a
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a

State sector

Type of institution	University
Other accreditation	N/a

Premises profile

Address of main site	Priorsfield House, Edgbaston Park Road, Birmingham B15 2TT
Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the inspection	Additional buildings on Edgbaston campus used for summer pre-sessional courses, with number of rooms in brackets: Strathcona (19) Muirhead (3) Law (5) Physics West (2) Watson (3) Biosciences (2) Gisbert Kapp (7) Metallurgy & Materials (3) European Research Institute (2) 52 Pritchatt's Road (2) Park House (1) Mechanical & Civil Engineering (8) Sport & Ex Sciences (2) Chemical Engineering (1) University House (2)
Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of the inspection	N/a
Profile of sites visited	All teaching takes place on the Edgbaston campus, a 250-acre site with a full range of facilities, including shops, banks, a post office, medical and dental surgeries, and a concert hall. A new library is scheduled to open in autumn 2016 and a new sports centre at the beginning of 2017. The Birmingham International Academy base is Priorsfield House, to the north-east of the campus. This contains four classrooms, a large common room for students and staff, a staffroom, and offices on three floors for academic and administrative staff. Two adjacent outbuildings, which provide a computer cluster for staff and additional flexible teaching spaces during the academic year, serve as additional areas for administrative and teaching staff over the summer. The buildings are set in a landscaped garden. At the time of the inspection, rooms in a large number of other university buildings, distributed across the whole site, were being used for summer pre-sessional programmes.

Student profile	At inspection	In peak week: August (organisation's estimate)
Of all international students, approximate percentage on ELT/ESOL courses	20%	20%
ELT/ESOL students (eligible courses)	At inspection	In peak week
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) 18 years and over	941	941
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged 16–17 years	11	11
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged under 16	0	0
Part-time ELT aged 18 years and over	0	0
Part-time ELT aged 16–17 years	0	0
Part-time ELT aged under 16 years	0	0
Overall total ELT/ESOL students shown above	952	952
Minimum age	17	17
Typical age range	20–23	20–23
Typical length of stay	6–10 weeks	6–10 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Chinese, Taiwanese, South Korean, Saudi Arabian, Thai	Chinese, Taiwanese, South Korean, Saudi Arabian, Thai
Number on PBS Tier 4 General student visas	943	943
Number on PBS Tier 4 child visas	0	0
Number on short-term study visas	2	2

Staff profile	At inspection	In peak week (organisation's estimate)
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	78	78
Number teaching ELT under 10 hours/week	3	
Number teaching ELT 10–19 hours/week	0	
Number teaching ELT 20 hours and over/week	75	
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	14 (9 permanent, 5 temporary)	

Academic staff qualifications to teach ELT/ESOL

Profile in week of inspection	
Professional qualifications	Total number of teachers
Diploma-level ELT/TESOL qualification (TEFLQ)	57
Certificate-level ELT/TESOL qualification (TEFLI)	7
Holding specialist qualifications only (specify)	0
YL initiated	0
Qualified teacher status only (QTS)	0
Rationales required for teachers without appropriate ELT/TESOL qualifications	14
Total	78

These figures   exclude   the academic manager(s)

Comments

Academic managers and coordinators, all of whom are TEFLQ, are not timetabled to teach during the summer.

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
17 year-olds are enrolled on the international foundation and pre-sessional programmes and 16 year-olds may be enrolled if they turn 17 before the beginning of the academic year. The majority of students (941 in 2016) attend English for Academic Purposes pre-sessional courses varying in length from 42 weeks to four weeks. A smaller, but still substantial number (220 in 2015-16) take academic English modules on the international foundation and pre-masters courses. In-sessional English classes, workshops and one-to-one support (20%) are offered during autumn and spring terms. In summer, a closed course which combines methodology and language development is run for Japanese school teachers.

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	8	N/a
Private home	N/a	N/a
Home tuition	N/a	N/a
Residential	531	11
Hotel/guesthouse	N/a	N/a
Independent self-catering e.g. flats, bedsits, student houses	N/a	N/a
Arranged by student/family/guardian		
Staying with own family	0	0
Staying in privately rented rooms/flats	402	0
Overall totals adults/under 18s	941	11
Overall total adults + under 18s	952	

Introduction

Birmingham University has almost 30,000 students, including some 4,500 international students. There are campuses in Edgbaston and Selly Oak. All English language teaching provision is located on the Edgbaston campus.

The Birmingham International Academy (BIA) was established in May 2015 in order to rationalise and better represent the full range of activity within the former Birmingham Foundation Academy (BFA) and the former English for International Students' Unit (EISU). Structurally, BIA forms part of Academic Services, alongside directorates of,

for example, student services and library services. All programme managers and the operations (administration) manager within BIA report to the operations and development director. The academic director, an academic in the School of Biosciences and on secondment to the BIA, supervises the academic pathways within the international foundation programme. He also has overall responsibility for the annual academic review, but has no academic line-reporting responsibilities within BIA. The interim operations and development director supervises the pre-sessional and in-sessional programmes as well as a project officer who has been conducting a review of the BIA programmes and projects.

During the academic year, BIA offers an international foundation course with three pathways and intakes in September and January, and in-sessional courses in autumn and spring terms. Pre-sessional courses lasting from 42 to four weeks, with students' language level determining the length of their course, run during the year and throughout the summer. A small eight-week course for Japanese school teachers also takes place during the summer.

A number of the staff seen during the inspection were in interim posts. Within BIA, a new operations and development director will take up post at the beginning of the new academic year. The present incumbent will become director of English for Academic Purposes (EAP), a new title for the existing post of assistant director of BIA.

The inspection was conducted over five days, with two of the four inspectors leaving at the end of the fourth day. Meetings were held with the interim director of academic services, the interim operations and development director of BIA, the academic director within BIA, programme managers for pre-sessional, foundation and in-sessional programmes and all academic co-ordinators, the e-learning co-ordinator, the project officer who has been working on a review of BIA systems, the operations manager for administrative support within BIA and BIA programme administrators, the interim assistant director (student support) for student services, the safeguarding and welfare officer for BIA and the deputy head of legal services for the university, the manager of the international student advisory service (ISAS), the operations manager for security, staff responsible for student residences, the recruitment manager and administration team leader in human resources, the member of staff responsible for the leisure programme and social organisers, and staff responsible for publicity. Focus group meetings were held with three groups of teachers and four groups of students, including all the under 18s on courses at the time of the inspection. The inspectors looked at learning resources in the main library and a resource centre and were shown the university's virtual learning environment (VLE). One inspector visited residential accommodation and two homestays. A total of 76 teaching observations was carried out.

Management

Legal and statutory regulations

Criteria	See comments
M1 Declaration of compliance	☒

Comments
M1 Sampling identified the following issue: there were no CLA guidelines by the photocopier in the staffroom (the Stewart room) at Priorsfield; the institution should seek further advice from the relevant statutory/regulatory body or obtain independent legal advice.

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	☒	☐
M7 Induction procedures	☐	☒	☐	☒	
M8 Monitoring staff performance	☐	☒	☐	☒	
M9 Professional development	☐	☒	☐	☒	

Comments
M2 The job titles of some members of staff do not indicate sufficiently clearly their respective roles within the BIA management team. Some academic managers with identical roles are referred to as 'senior co-ordinators' and others as 'co-ordinators'.
M3 Duties of all staff are clearly specified. Some job descriptions have not been updated following recent structural changes.
M4 Course-based teachers' meetings are held regularly, though the frequency varies from course to course. Points for action are noted and actions taken reported at the next meeting. Email and the university's virtual learning environment (VLE) are also used for communication.
M6 Certificates were missing from some teacher files and references from many. Some certificates had not been endorsed to show that the originals had been seen. There was no evidence that qualifications had been evaluated to establish whether they met Scheme requirements as teaching qualifications.
M7 Induction procedures are thorough. For permanent staff, these are university-wide. Administrative staff normally have an opportunity to shadow the person they are replacing or receive handover notes. Pre-sessional teachers have a three-day induction. All staff stated that they felt well briefed.
M8 All permanent staff have an annual performance development review (PDR). Students are also asked to evaluate the performance of individual teachers.
M9 Continuing professional development (CPD) for all staff includes basic awareness training for safeguarding and Prevent training, and modular training is available in all aspects of vulnerability. The university's Teaching Academy offers centralised support and development opportunities for teaching, and there is an annual teaching and learning conference. Funding support is available for external training and conference attendance for permanent staff and those on fixed-term contracts during the academic year. ELT-specific CPD opportunities for staff employed only during the summer were limited.

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
M10 Additional clerical staff, many of whom are students of the university, are taken on for the summer. Students in focus groups were very positive about the help they received from BIA staff, but critical of the efficiency of the international student advisory service.
M12 Flexible arrangements are in place to allow students in financial difficulties to pay in instalments.
M13 All records sampled were complete. Students are shown how to update their local address in their first tutorial and regularly reminded by their tutors to do this.
M14 Electronic records are kept of student attendance. These show both weekly and cumulative percentages, and highlight any drop below the 90 percent requirement. Warning letters outlining sanctions are sent out as necessary.

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 Several of the points to be addressed from the 2012 inspection were found to have been addressed at the 2013 supplementary inspection. Most of the other points are no longer relevant or have been satisfactorily

addressed, but see M6 and concerns about the placement of under 18 year-olds in university residences (C7, previously W31 and W32).

M17 The university's quality assurance cycle provides for an annual programme review which draws on feedback from students and staff. Following the restructuring which accompanied the establishment of BIA, a review was set in motion to examine BIA policies and processes within the wider framework of the university. Concrete results of the first phase of the review have included the production of a new pre-sessional student handbook and programme-specific student guides and teacher guides for each of the pre-sessional programmes.

M18 There is a standardised tutorial form which forms the basis for first-week one-to-one tutorials. The checklist of items to be covered includes accommodation and aspects of personal adjustment, however, it is in the main course-related, and the effectiveness of the process is dependent on teachers eliciting, noting and reporting any issues within the time constraints. Staff-student representative committee meetings take place regularly, with the first held early in each course. These are minuted and action taken on points arising from the previous meeting is noted. End-of-course student feedback is also collected and collated, with individual verbatim comments also being conscientiously listed. However, responses to end-of-course feedback, in the annual course review, for example, were at a very general level.

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

Publicity includes the website and two brochures describing the international foundation programme and pre-sessional programmes.

M21 The language used in publicity is accessible. There are a number of proofreading errors in both the website and the printed publicity, but these do not affect clarity. Brief information leaflets promoting the foundation programme are available in Arabic and Mandarin Chinese.

M23 Information on course content and objectives is presented in sufficient detail, and the pre-sessional brochure shows the relationship between entry level and course length very clearly. However, this brochure states that one of the aims of these courses is to develop accuracy and fluency in English 'for academic study and social life'. The reference to 'social life' may be misleading, since the primary focus is on integration into the academic community.

M24 Information on the number of taught hours is insufficiently precise. Course descriptions typically refer to an average or approximate number of hours per week, including breaks, without specifying the length of the breaks. A note also states that the university operates 50-minute 'hours' without indicating how this translates into the actual number of class hours. Information on minimum enrolment age appears only as a response to a frequently asked question. The pre-sessional brochure shows maximum class size as 15, but in the website description of the four-week pre-sessional for students with unconditional offers this is 18. In the week of the inspection, there were 16 students in one of the four-week classes.

M25 There is no indication of the costs of organised leisure activities which are not included in the course fee.

M28 The website and the pre-sessional brochure claim that all tutors are highly qualified. Although this is true of staff teaching during the academic year, it is not an accurate description of all staff employed at the time of the inspection.

M29 Publicity describing the foundation programme makes selective and, in one case, incorrect reference to the previous report.

Management summary

The provision meets the section standard. The management of the provision operates to the benefit of the students. Student administration is responsive and efficient and there are good systems to support and monitor staff. Some aspects of teacher recruitment need attention. There is a need for improvement in *Publicity*.

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 The Edgbaston campus, with its extensive green spaces, provides a very attractive and comfortable environment for students and staff. Students in focus groups indicated that the campus surpassed their expectations.
R2 All the teaching buildings inspected were clean and well maintained.
R3 During the summer, BIA is obliged to make some use of small lecture theatres. Neither teachers nor students saw this as a particular problem. Other classrooms seen were entirely fit for purpose.
R4 There are ample areas, internal and external, for relaxation; students at Priorsfield have access to a large common room. Although a range of food is available through different outlets in the centrally-located University House, the number of food outlets open in summer across the campus is limited and all close at the end of the afternoon. Students reported that in general there is little variety in what is available. The inspectors were told that there is adequate choice during the academic year.
R5 Campus-wide signage is inadequate and the location of teaching rooms within buildings is not always clearly indicated. However, printed campus maps are clear and the map is available as a mobile phone application. When asked, students in focus groups said they did not have any serious problems with orientation.
R6 Permanent staff have their own shared offices in Priorsfield. For summer tutors, the only staffroom is in an annexe of Priorsfield which is located at some distance from many of the university buildings where teaching is taking place. This room has computers and a photocopier, and tutors can make use of any of the computer clusters on the campus for preparation. There is no secure storage space for personal possessions in this annexe, but lockers were made available to some staff on longer programmes in locations nearby.

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 Resources for students include tailor-made coursebooks, published coursebooks, teacher handouts and materials on the VLE. Although some texts were rather dated, the materials seen were in the main appropriate and students in the focus groups confirmed that they found them to be useful, interesting and of an appropriate level.
R8 Teachers are given a detailed scheme of work and core materials, but are encouraged to exploit, adapt or source their own materials. Teachers in the focus groups appreciated the freedom they were allowed within the overall structure.
R9 All classrooms are well equipped and teachers in the focus groups said that excellent IT support is available. For permanent staff, training in the use of technology is available throughout the academic year; teachers on summer pre-sessionals receive training during induction and weekly drop-in sessions are also offered.
R10 There are numerous computer clusters across the campus. Teachers upload materials to the VLE for learning before and after class.
R11 Induction includes an introduction to the VLE. The inspectors were told that students make little use of the main library for their English language studies. Help is, however, available if they need it.

R12 Learning and teaching resources are reviewed as part of the annual programme review. Time has been allocated for the development of in-house materials.

Resources and environment summary

The provision meets the section standard. The campus is well maintained and the learning resources support and enhance the studies of students. Classrooms are well equipped and teaching resources are good but there is a need in summer for additional staffrooms.

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

T2 The qualifications were examined of the 77 teachers scheduled to teach language classes in the week of the inspection and of one cover teacher who replaced a teacher absent for the whole week. In total, 57 teachers were judged to be qualified at diploma level. Seven were TEFLI but teaching on EAP programmes and 14 either had no teaching qualifications or a qualification that did not meet Scheme requirements.
T3 Rationales were submitted for the 21 teachers referred to in T2 who were not qualified at diploma level.
The seven TEFLI teachers: three of these teachers have completed modules leading to externally validated in-service ELT training and another has extensive teaching experience. Two further teachers have relevant specialist background knowledge and/or teaching experience. All these rationales were accepted within the context of this inspection on the grounds that detailed guidance in the form of a course structure, scheme of work and appropriate materials are available, together with support from academic managers. The rationale was not accepted for one teacher who was covering for an absent teacher but has only one year's teaching experience.
The 14 teachers without an ELT qualification that meets Scheme requirements: rationales for two of these teachers were accepted within the context of this inspection on the grounds that the same support was available, both had relevant teaching experience and both had completed initial TEFL training programmes with reasonable academic inputs and teaching practice even though these programmes did not fully meet Scheme requirements. A further 12 teachers had been employed on the basis of their relevant academic qualifications and, in several cases, substantial relevant teaching experience in overseas or UK universities, including BIA. Three of these teachers claim that their academic qualifications also qualify them to teach English in state institutions in their country of origin, but no evidence was provided that this was the case; a fourth teacher was unable to show that a UK university qualification meets Scheme requirements in relation to teaching practice. Given the lack of evidenced ELT qualifications that meet Scheme requirements and the weaknesses noted under T10 and T11, none of these 12 rationales was accepted. In total, therefore, 13 rationales were not accepted.
T4 There is a large academic management team, consisting of the interim operations and development director, who will become director of EAP from January 2017, four programme managers and several pre-sessional co-ordinators. All are TEFLQ and suitably experienced. Many also have relevant postgraduate qualifications.

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	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐

T6 Deployment takes into account teachers' specialist background knowledge and, for returners, experience of teaching on specific courses. On some courses, less experienced teachers are paired with a more experienced 'buddy'. Additional, qualified staff are employed as 'learning support teachers' to offer targeted help (for example, with writing skills) outside class time to individuals and small groups referred by their teachers.

T7 Despite the size of the campus, limited space is available for summer pre-sessionals and timetabling of a large number of classes is complex. This has been accomplished with great skill to ensure that there is no necessity for students to change classrooms and that students from the same disciplinary area are as far as possible located in the same part of the campus. A zig-zag timetable has been used on some courses to maximise room use.

T8 There are excellent cover arrangements based on a rota system. Records of work are stored on the VLE. When necessary, learning support teachers can also substitute for class teachers.

T10 During the academic year, CPD opportunities related specifically to the teaching of EAP include peer observation (on some programmes), short input sessions and discussion of practice during team meetings, and weekly research seminars in the department of English language and applied linguistics. There is no regular organised CPD for teachers on summer pre-sessional programmes, other than meetings to standardise assessment and training in the use of the VLE. An afternoon event was organised in late July which combined opportunities for teachers across courses to give talks on their active research with the exchange of practical ideas. Teachers in focus groups were highly appreciative of the insights this provided, but felt the need for a series of spaced CPD activities.

T11 There was no evidence of recent observation of many of the permanent staff. Teachers employed only during the summer are observed every two years unless they are teaching a different programme, in which case they are re-observed. A small number of teachers had been observed by TEFLQ teachers who are not members of the academic management team. The observation records sampled had been conscientiously completed but did not always identify action points.

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	☐	☒	☐	☒	

T12 Programme-specific teacher guides provide detailed information on course components, a detailed scheme of work and suggested teaching strategies.

T13 All courses are reviewed annually as part of the university's quality assurance process. Reporting mechanisms draw on feedback from students, teachers and, in the case of the pre-sessional programmes, the external examiner. Numerous programme-specific examples were seen of a commitment to the improvement of provision, but the extent of review is uneven across programmes. Course design is, however, part of a continuing very thorough review designed to harmonise systems, processes and practices within the BIA and ensure that these are aligned with those of the university.

T15 All courses focus on the skills and study and learning strategies that students need to meet the assessment requirements for their current courses and to benefit fully from their future courses. The VLE provides resources and links for class-related learning. In-sessional in-house resources also include materials for independent learning.

T16 The primary aim of all courses is to equip students to participate successfully in an academic community in the UK.

Learner management

Criteria	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
T17 Placement for level and age	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
T18 Monitoring students' progress	☐	☒	☒	☒	
T19 Examination guidance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
T20 Assessment criteria	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐
T21 Academic reports	☐	☒	☐	☒	

	Not met	Met	Strength	See comments	N/a
T22 Information on UK education	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐

Comments

T18 Students on the four-week course for those with unconditional offers have one tutorial. All other students have individual tutorials on a regular basis, normally fortnightly. Tutors work from a checklist of topics, which includes welfare, and keep records of the discussion in the tutorial booklet for each student. Students with specific weaknesses are referred to a learning support tutor, who logs on the VLE what they have done with students.
T20 Study guides for students on pre-sessional programmes contain detailed information on assessment and assessment criteria, and assessment standardisation sessions are arranged for teachers. Less written information is provided for students on the foundation programme.
T21 Reports are provided to sponsors on request.
T22 Advice and help are available for students who fail to meet the entry requirements for the courses they have applied for.

Classroom observation record

Number of teachers seen	76
Number of observations	76
Parts of programme(s) observed	Class teaching of all pre-sessional programmes; course for Japanese teachers of English

Comments

Observations were conducted of all but one of the teachers who were teaching full classes in the week of the inspection. Language support teachers, who were providing additional help for small groups or individual students, were not observed due to time constraints.

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

T23 Almost all teachers provided models of spoken and written English appropriate to academic contexts and demonstrated a sound understanding of the systems of English. However, there was little evidence that teachers had predicted and prepared explanations of lexical items likely to cause difficulty, and opportunities for enhancing students' linguistic awareness of language use (e.g. collocation) were seldom taken.
T24 Lesson plans were well focused. They took account of course objectives and were based not simply on predicted learner needs but also drew on teachers' own analyses of student performance. Content was largely relevant to students' disciplinary focus. Some plans showed an awareness of the need to cater for individual differences, although the differentiation strategies planned were rather limited.
T25 Almost all plans had been conscientiously prepared – and in some cases, very skilfully designed – to provide for a logical sequence of thematically-related activities, new linguistic input and well-balanced practice of skills. Planned learning outcomes were usually made known to students through an initial powerpoint slide or brief notes on the board. Stated outcomes were sometimes merely indications of content or activities and were therefore an inadequate basis for the evaluation of learning.
T26 Teaching techniques were varied and in general appropriate. Academic skills and the promotion of independent learning were well handled and in some of the more effective lessons communicative language teaching techniques were used to enliven potentially dry material. Some teachers were careful to relate new content to what students had done previously, there was some drilling of pronunciation and music was used to provide a soothing background while students were writing. Instructions were rarely checked and concept checking was underused.
T27 Teachers were confident and competent in the use of classroom technology and visual stimuli were exploited effectively; where a range of display surfaces were available, these were used in complementary ways. Students

were also encouraged to make use of their mobile phones to access dictionaries and other material. Teachers' own materials were useful and had been carefully prepared, though in a small number of cases the original sources were not acknowledged. Teachers who were teaching in lecture theatres had generally found ways of overcoming some of the constraints on student-student interaction and the monitoring of individual students.

T28 Evidence was seen that teachers mark students' written work conscientiously and carefully monitor individual writing in class. Peer feedback on written work was a feature of many classes and self-correction was prompted. However, teachers' responses to students' oral production frequently focused on content rather than language and pronunciation errors, even in classes composed solely or largely of the same nationality, were rarely addressed.

T29 In some lessons, evaluation was built into a series of tasks and student production was expected to provide evidence of learning. However, many lessons were clearly meant to prepare for a major assessment (presentation or research paper) and there was little evidence of planning for the evaluation of the specific learning outcomes of that lesson.

T30 In almost all cases, teachers had established a good rapport with their classes and used language appropriate to the level of the class. In the very best lessons they were alert both to students' use of language and their ideas, challenging them to think and explain themselves lucidly. Although some classes were too teacher-centred, in general, teachers had a clear sense of purpose, were encouraging, varied the composition of pairs and groups, and nominated to ensure active participation, with the result that students appeared motivated and fully engaged.

Classroom observation summary

The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme, ranging from excellent to, in a few cases, less than satisfactory, with the majority good or better. Teachers provided appropriate models of academic English and demonstrated a sound understanding of the systems of English. Lesson plans had been carefully prepared and were well focused. Teaching techniques were generally appropriate and teachers confident and competent in their use of technology. Marking of written work was conscientious, peer feedback was exploited and self-correction was prompted. Although some lessons were too teacher-centred, most teachers had established a good rapport with their classes and students were fully engaged. More attention is needed to differentiation strategies and explicit teacher feedback on language during classes. *Teaching* is an area of strength.

Teaching and learning summary

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The academic management team is experienced and well qualified, much thought goes into course design, and programmes of learning are managed for the benefit of students. However, more effective systems are needed to ensure that teachers are appropriately qualified to teach on EAP courses and that all teachers are observed and have access to other opportunities for continuing professional development on a regular basis. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme. *Course design* and *Teaching* are areas 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 Policies and procedures to ensure the safety and security of students are in place for all university premises, including the residences. There is a permanent police officer based on campus and security staff on patrol. The university has recently constructed a long stretch of lighted pathway with alarm points between the BIA premises and the residence used by most pre-sessional students and under 18s throughout the year. This allows students to avoid using the pavement along the busy main road.

W2 Students in the BIA have the support of the administrators located there as well as the evident care and

individual attention they receive from all the BIA tutors, staff and managers. There is a network of services offering pastoral care available to students within the university. Students are made aware of this support during their inductions and information is available in handbooks. Staff are also made fully aware of the services so that they can refer students as necessary. Disability and learning support services and counselling and wellbeing services are easily accessed and available within the university. The multi-faith chaplaincy, with chaplains from 20 different faiths, fulfils an important pastoral role. The students' guild (union) has a variety of faith-based groups and societies.
W3 There is a named welfare tutor available for BIA students. The residential adviser is available to offer personal support to residential students.
W4 The policies and procedures for dealing with abusive behaviour are made clear to students and staff. The university has developed effective strategies in order to address their responsibilities relating to the Prevent strategy. There is a Prevent lead, and staff in all departments have received appropriate training both online and during inductions. A Prevent module is included in the university-developed vulnerability training course. Students are made aware of the strategies in handbooks.
W6 The airport pick-up service from the major airports is free. Full details are given of alternative travel options using public transport.
W7 Students are given appropriate, clear and helpful advice in guides and handbooks, on posters and during their inductions. Further advice is available from the administrators within BIA and the university student advisory service.

Accommodation profile

Comments on the accommodation seen by the inspectors

The homestay provision is small and the providers are used once a year to host students on the Japanese teachers programme. The two homestay providers visited had been hosting for several years. The homes were located about a 30-minute journey away by public transport.
The university owns and manages three residential "villages". Two further residential campuses are owned by private providers. The majority of students enrolled at the time of the inspection were accommodated in blocks in The Vale village, about a 15-minute walk from BIA and 20 minutes from the main university campus. There are seven separate blocks within the village, with a total capacity of 3,500 students. Each block offers variable rates according to the room type. Inspectors visited the Vale and one of the blocks, Mason Hall, where the under 18 year-olds were accommodated.

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

W9 Both homes visited were very comfortable and students had the use of private bathrooms. In Mason Hall, six en-suite bedrooms share a kitchen diner and form a self-contained flat. The main "hub" within the Vale houses a 24-hour reception, restaurant, laundries, a bar, a café and a small supermarket. At the time of the inspection the restaurant was not open.
W11 Homestays are visited every year; Gas Safe certificates and fire risk assessments were seen. Halls of residence have regular inspections.
W13 There is detailed information about the different types of accommodation, rooms and rates in publicity. This includes distance from the main campus.
W14 During their first week, an administrator within BIA asks students on the JST programme if they have any problems in their homestay and they also complete an initial feedback form. Teachers ask students in residences about their accommodation during their first tutorial and report any issues raised. However students did not feel that their problems were always addressed and there was no written record of actions taken in response to specific problems.
W15 During the academic year there are restaurants and cafeterias in the various residences. Students have the option to include the purchase of a meal plan with their accommodation fee. This provides them with vouchers to spend in the restaurants and cafés of their choice. However, the restaurant in The Vale, where most of the students were staying at the time of the inspection, is not open through the summer and restaurants on the main university

campus shut at 15.00 or 16.00. The meal plan is not available through the summer and the type of meals available is limited.

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					

W25 "Living", the university accommodation service, in conjunction with the guild of students' own letting service, helps students to find accommodation in the private sector. They only work with landlords who are accredited through a recognised scheme that ensures all the listed properties comply with health and safety regulations.

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 Students are kept well informed about the events on the leisure programme organised by BIA and also by the university. A variety of social, sporting and cultural events is available. As well as local visits and day excursions, BIA organises two residential adventure weekends away during the academic year in order to promote team-building and social interaction.
W27 The programme at BIA is well organised by the administrators. The social organisers, who are university students, are employed through the summer to manage and supervise the activities and excursions. As necessary, additional "student ambassadors" are recruited to assist on particular events.
W28 There are risk assessments and measures in place for day and weekend excursions, but not for sports or other activities.

Welfare and student services summary

The provision meets the section standard. The needs of the students for security, pastoral care, information and leisure activities are met. Students receive very good care within BIA and benefit from the wealth of services and information that the university offers. The accommodation provided is suitable; the management of the accommodation systems works to the benefit of students. *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

C1 There is a comprehensive university safeguarding policy. The university has a lead child protection officer and lead designated safeguarder and there are three designated safeguarding officers (DSOs) within BIA.
C2 The leads and the DSOs have received appropriate training. Staff at BIA attended a basic awareness training session delivered by an external consultant. The safeguarding policy is made known in accessible form to all adults in contact with under 18s.
C3 Publicity gives quite detailed information about the level of care and supervision available for under 18s. Publicity states that the university cannot act 'in loco parentis' and strongly advises overseas parents to appoint a legal guardian for their child. Unless the parent or guardian has made alternative arrangements, under 18s are required to live in a named hall of residence where there is a residential adviser to offer additional support.
C4 Safer recruitment procedures are in place. Two social organisers at the time of the inspection had not had the results of their suitability checks, but they were always accompanied by staff who had been checked and were never left alone with under 18s. However, the safeguarding policy mentions the 'advisability' of having two staff members on each coach, but does not state that this is a requirement if a DBS check is still going through for one of the accompanying members of staff.
C5 All the leisure programme activities organised by BIA are suitable for under 18s. These include sports, local visits, social events, day excursions and two residential adventure weekends away. There are social organisers, assisted by student ambassadors, to supervise the activities and excursions, which ensures the correct ratios. The guild of students also arranges a full social programme throughout the year and it is made clear which of the events are suitable for under 18s.
C6 During a special induction, students are given detailed guidance and rules. There are procedures in place for following up any absences of students aged under 18, either from their classes or from the residence at weekends. Parents sign an agreement that if their 'child is planning to be absent from their university accommodation, for example at weekends or during vacations, they will be requested to sign a register of overnight absence from their university accommodation'. However, this is not enforced, and students are only required to send an email to say where they are staying. There are no procedures in place for checking the suitability of the arrangements with the student or parents or for refusing permission if the arrangements are deemed unsatisfactory.
C7 The written information for students states 'Students must use pre-paid meal plans unless alternative arrangements are confirmed in writing by the parents or legal guardians'. However, the meal plan is not available through the summer. This is made clear to parents in the consent form. All the under 18-year-old students spoken to during the inspection reported that they cooked for themselves, but there was no evidence that a specific risk assessment had been carried out. A residential adviser is responsible for the care of under 18 year-old students and lives in the block where they are required to live. At the request of a sponsor, the university has accommodated some under 18 year-old students in an alternative block in the same residential village. Although parental consent was given for the moves, there is no evidence that the parents were made aware that there is no residential adviser in the alternative block.

Care of under 18s summary

The provision just meets the section standard. There is generally appropriate provision for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 within the organisation and in any leisure activities. There are inconsistencies in the accommodation and supervision arrangements for students outside scheduled lessons and activities.