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| Organisation name | Docklands Academy London |
| Inspection date | 19 February 2019 |
| Current accreditation status | Accreditation under review |
| Reason for spot check | Signalled: end period under review |

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. The period of review may now be ended and accreditation continued until the next full inspection, which falls due in 2022.

Changes to the summary statement

An updated summary statement can now be issued.

New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Docklands Academy London in August 2018 and February 2019. The Accreditation Scheme assesses the standards of management, resources and premises, teaching, welfare, and safeguarding 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 institute of higher education offers courses in general English for adults (18+) and young people (16+) and vacation courses for under 18s.

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

Organisation profile

| Inspection history | Dates/details |
|---|--|
| First inspection | October 2014 |
| Last full inspection | August 2018 |
| Subsequent spot check(s) (if applicable) | February 2019 |
| Subsequent supplementary check(s) (if applicable) | N/a |
| Subsequent interim visit(s) (if applicable) | N/a |
| Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre | HNC and HND programmes in hospitality management and travel and tourism management |
| Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates | N/a |
| Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates | N/a |

| Student and staff profile | At inspection | In peak week: August |
|--|------------------|---------------------------|
| Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT) | 20 | 43 |
| Minimum age (including closed group or vacation) | 18 | 10 |
| Typical age range | 19–62 | 10–42 |
| Typical length of stay | 2 weeks – 1 year | 2–4 weeks |
| Predominant nationalities | Turkish, Italian | Chinese, Italian, Turkish |
| Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses | 2 | 6 |
| Total number of managers including academic | 1 | 1 |
| Total number of administrative/ancillary staff | 2 | 2 |

| Premises profile | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Address of main site | 11 Selsdon Way, City Harbour, London E14 9GL |
| Additional sites in use | N/a |
| Additional sites not in use | N/a |
| Sites inspected | 11 Selsdon Way, City Harbour, London E14 9GL |

Introduction

Background

Docklands Academy, London (DAL) was set up in 2011 by the owner of a number of restaurants and cafés in central London. DAL is a not-for-profit limited company offering HNC and HND courses in hospitality management and tourism management, delivered through a franchise agreement with a London FE college. HNC and HND business courses are due to begin in May 2019 subsequent to validation. The academy also arranges paid work placements for its students in the company's restaurants.

DAL also offers general English courses for adults (16+) year round; student numbers are around one fifth of the numbers on HE programmes. At the time of the spot check, a two-week CLIL programme for Italian teachers was also running. In summer 2018, vacation courses were held for groups of Chinese students (10–15 years).

The academic head has responsibility for both the HE and the English language courses. The English department has two full-time teachers and one regularly employed temporary teacher. Three full-time and five part-time teachers also teach on the HE courses.

The HE programme has grown significantly since the last inspection with almost 170 students currently enrolled. There is no English component on the HE programme except for language support classes offered free of charge to students who require them.

DAL was inspected in August 2018 and accreditation was placed under review due to weaknesses in M18, M26 and Safeguarding.

Preparation

The spot check was carried out by two inspectors, one of whom had inspected DAL previously. The Accreditation Unit sent the relevant documentation and the inspectors looked at the DAL website. The spot check was signalled, but no contact was made with the provider before the visit.

Programme and persons present

The inspectors arrived at 09.50 and left at 13.20. Meetings were held with the academic head, the principal and the welfare officer. Inspectors viewed documentation relating to safeguarding, including parental consent forms and safer recruitment, policies on abusive behaviour, Prevent and critical incident procedures, student feedback and records of complaints.

Findings

Significant changes since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no changes in management or structure, and the staff profile remains the same. The HE programmes have grown and student numbers on these programmes are now much higher than the English language programme, which accounts for about 20 per cent of students on the premises. The number of under 18s is minimal, with only three enrolled on an HE programme since last summer.

Management

The management structure is consistent and lines of reporting are very clear. Publicity now contains more accurate information on courses, although there is more detailed information on examination preparation courses than general English courses. Publicity states that some leisure activities may incur an additional cost. However, no approximate costs are given. The correct Accreditation Scheme marque is used on all publicity.

Premises and resources

Classrooms are now equipped with blinds on the windows, which have helped prevent the rooms from overheating on sunny days and have improved visibility of the screens.

Welfare and student services

The language in the abusive behaviour policy has been reviewed and is now more accessible to students at B1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). A Prevent risk assessment has been carried out and a Prevent policy is in place. Fire drill logs show that fire evacuation drills have taken place during weekday and

weekend classes and arrangements are in place for drills every six months. The school has worked with the student residence to ensure that cleaning materials are provided for the students and that more washing machines are available. Risk assessments for leisure activities are satisfactory.

Safeguarding under 18s

All but one part-time member of staff have received basic safeguarding training from an external provider. The academic head has specialist training and has designed a course covering all essential safeguarding issues, which is routinely given to all staff. All staff have two references on file. However, it was noted that some of the references lacked detail and were very impersonal. All student records are now stored on a central database, which is accessible remotely. Sampling of the records showed that next of kin details and emergency contacts are stored systematically.

Action taken on points to be addressed

Points from the previous full inspection and/or subsequent spot checks or interim visits with comments (in bold) to indicate how far these have been addressed. Only points reviewed during this spot check are included here. Any points outstanding will be checked at the next full inspection.

Points which must be addressed before continued accreditation can be recommended

Management

M18 The name of the student's next of kin is not included on the spreadsheet available to the emergency phone holder.

Addressed. The database includes this information.

M26 There is insufficient detail about the level of care provided for students aged 16 and 17 years following the adult courses. The publicity does not state that students are unsupervised outside lessons or travelling between accommodation and the school and does not set out procedures for obtaining parental consent.

Addressed. A statement about the level of care for students aged 16 and 17 has been added to publicity.

Welfare and student services

W1 Fire drills are not conducted more than once a year.

Addressed. Fire drill logs show that fire evacuation drills are now carried out every six months.

Safeguarding under 18s

S2 Staff have not all had certificated basic awareness training.

Addressed. Records show evidence of online training for all but one part-time staff member. All staff have received detailed in-house training.

S4 In some cases only one reference was on file.

Addressed. HR files show two references for staff.

S8 The paper records of students' next of kin details are not transferred to the student information spreadsheet and therefore cannot be accessed remotely.

Addressed. All student information is now stored systematically on a database which can be accessed remotely.

Other points to be addressed

Management

M5 There is no formal system for collecting initial feedback from students. There is little evidence that specific issues raised in end-of-course questionnaires are consistently followed up and there is no record of action taken.

Addressed. Feedback on significant services is collected via a number of different feedback forms.

M10 Records of references are incomplete.

Addressed. (See S4 above.)

M15 The application form includes an option to enrol on a general English programme of 25 hours per week. However, this course is no longer available.

Addressed. This option has been removed.

M21 There is no complaints log and no system for recording action taken in response to complaints.

Addressed. A complaints log is now in use.

M23 Some parts of the terms and conditions are not written in accessible English.

Addressed. The language in the terms and conditions has been reviewed and simplified.

M24 Course objectives and levels are not described in sufficient detail. Also, the information about the number of hours' tuition on examination courses is inaccurate. This is given as 3–15 hours per week, when the actual length of these courses is six hours per week. The minimum age for the junior closed groups is given as ten years. One of the students in the Chinese group was nine years old.

Addressed. Information on courses is now accurate and course objectives are outlined. There was no evidence that advertised ages had been breached.

M25 There is no indication of the cost of leisure activities not included in the course fees.

Partially addressed. Publicity states that an additional fee may be payable for some activities, but no approximate costs are provided.

M29 The Accreditation Scheme marquee on one of the flyers is not in line with Scheme requirements.

Addressed.

Premises and resources

P2 At the time of the inspection some rooms were uncomfortably hot. Information projected from the computer is difficult to read in some classrooms.

Addressed. Blinds have been installed on the windows in the classrooms.

Welfare and student services

W4 Much of the language used in the school policies which cover procedures for dealing with abusive behaviour is written in language which is inaccessible to students at B1 level of the CEFR. A Prevent risk assessment has not been carried out.

Addressed. The language in the abusive behaviour policy has been reviewed and simplified. A Prevent risk assessment and policy is now in place.

W10 Students in the residence who are responsible for cleaning all the rooms in their flat are not given cleaning materials. The laundry room does not contain enough washing machines for the number of students.

Addressed. The school has worked with the residence to ensure cleaning materials are provided and that there are sufficient washing machines available.

W11 The residence does not conduct regular fire drills.

Addressed. (See W1 above.)

W26 Risk assessments do not include a section where the activity leader can comment on any other risks which were noted during the activity.

Addressed. This section has now been added.

Conclusions

The management team at DAL has taken action to address the points arising from the last inspection. The student database has ensured that all student information is collected and can be accessed remotely. HR procedures for safer recruitment are tighter and staff receive the required safeguarding training before taking up their roles. Feedback is collected systematically and action taken is recorded; similarly, there is now a system for recording complaints and action taken. Regular fire drills and a review of policies and risk assessments have improved the safety and security of students on site and on leisure activities.
