

Organisation name	INTO Queen's University Belfast
Inspection date	10–11 October 2023

Section standards	
Management The management of the provision operates to the benefit of the students, and in accordance with the provider's stated goals, values, and publicity.	Met
Premises and resources The premises provide students and staff with a comfortable and professional environment for work and relaxation. A range of learning resources is available, appropriate to the age and needs of the students. Guidance on the use of these resources is provided for staff and students where needed.	Met
Teaching and learning The academic staff team has a professional profile (qualifications, experience and continuing professional development) appropriate to the context. Teachers receive sufficient guidance to ensure that they support students effectively in their learning. Courses are structured and managed to provide the maximum possible benefit to students. The teaching observed meets the requirements of the Scheme.	Met
Welfare and student services The provision meets the needs of the students for security, pastoral care, information and leisure activities. Students benefit from well-managed student services, including, where offered, out-of-class activities and suitable accommodation.	Met
Safeguarding under 18s There is appropriate provision for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 within the organisation and in any leisure activities or accommodation provided.	Met

Recommendation
We recommend continued accreditation.

Summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited INTO Queen's University Belfast in October 2023. 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).

This private language teaching organisation offers courses in academic English for adults (16+).

Strengths were noted in the areas of strategic and quality management, staff management, student administration, premises and facilities, learning resources, course design, learner management, teaching, care of students, accommodation, leisure opportunities, and safeguarding under 18s.

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

Introduction

INTO Queen's University Belfast operates as a joint venture between Queen's University Belfast (QUB) and INTO University Partnerships (IUP). There are currently nine INTO centres in the UK, all of which are supported by central services provided by INTO headquarters in Brighton. All courses have been quality assured and validated through Queen's University's internal quality assurance procedures and the Centre is subject to Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) review processes, most recently in the spring of 2023. There have been some staff changes since the last inspection; the centre director took up this post in June 2023 having previously been academic director; the new academic director took up her post in September 2023, having been with INTO for eight years.

The inspection lasted two days and involved two inspectors, one on site and one remotely. It included meetings with the senior vice president IUP, the head of global student recruitment QUB, the centre director, the academic director, the head of student services, the human resources manager, the programme managers for English language programmes, the student admissions and enrolments manager, the assistant director of student recruitment, the social and welfare officer, the international marketing and recruitment manager and the student services officer. Focus group meetings were held with teachers and students. One inspector visited residential accommodation remotely. All teachers teaching INTO courses timetabled during the inspection were observed. Two in-session support teachers were also observed informally.

Address of main site/head office

2-8 Lennoxvale, Belfast BT9 5BY

Description of sites visited/observed

The INTO centre is situated on the southern edge of the QUB campus. It occupies two double-fronted 19th century listed buildings which have been joined by a modern-build café and breakout and seating area. The staffroom and hot-desk computing area, the centre director's office, and a lecture room are located on the ground floor of West building. East building houses the main reception desk, student services, academic support, HR, and the learning resource centre (LRC). Other offices are distributed throughout the buildings and there is a computer room on the first floor of West building. Classrooms are located on the ground and first floor of both buildings.

Course profile	Year round		Vacation only	
	Run	Seen	Run	Seen
General ELT for adults (18+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General ELT for adults (18+) and young people (16+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General ELT for juniors (under 18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English for academic purposes (excludes IELTS preparation)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English for specific purposes (includes English for Executives)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher development (excludes award-bearing courses)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ESOL skills for life/for citizenship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

Academic English (year-round) and pre-session programmes (four to ten weeks in summer) are both full-time EAP courses. In addition, the centre offers International Foundation, International Year One, and Pre-Master's programmes, all of which include an English language component. English Language and Study Skills in-session support is also provided to students enrolled on university programmes. Students aged 16 and 17 are enrolled on adult courses.

Management profile

The Centre Director reports to the INTO Queen's Joint Venture board, which links to the wider INTO operation and Queen's University. Four senior managers report to the Centre Director: the head of student services, the academic director, the HR manager and the assistant director recruitment. Each of these managers heads up their own team or teams. The two English language programme managers and the programme managers for the pre-master's programme, the International Year 1 programme and the Foundation programme report to the academic director. Teachers are line managed by the relevant programme manager.

Accommodation profile

All students are offered accommodation at a residential campus, just 15 minutes' walk from the main INTO site. Most accommodation residences have three floors with eleven people on each floor. All rooms are single with en suite facilities. Entry fobs only allow entry to individual students' residences, floors and rooms. Residential assistants are employed by the university to monitor three residences for students' well-being, general support and to provide a monthly room check. There is a separate social block on the main residential campus with 24-hour reception, first aid and security facilities.

Summary of inspection findings

Management

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The organisation has clear goals and values, sound quality and review procedures and good human resources support and development. Student administration is of a high standard and the management of the provision operates to the benefit of students. *Strategic and quality management, Staff management and Student administration* are areas of strength.

Premises and resources

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The premises are well looked after and well-equipped, providing a comfortable environment for study and relaxation. There are ample appropriate resources available for staff and students. *Premises and facilities* and *Learning resources* are areas of strength.

Teaching and learning

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The academic staff team has a professional profile appropriate to the context. Teachers receive sufficient guidance to ensure that they support students effectively in their learning. Courses are structured and managed to provide the maximum possible benefit to students. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme. *Course design, Learner management* and *Teaching* are areas of strength.

Welfare and student services

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. Very good arrangements are in place to ensure that the students' needs for security, pastoral care, information and leisure activities are met. Students benefit from well-managed student services including out-of-class activities and suitable accommodation. *Care of students, Accommodation* and *Leisure opportunities* are areas of strength.

Safeguarding under 18s

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The arrangements for the safeguarding of students aged under 18 within lessons, activities and excursions, during any free time, and in their accommodation are of a very high standard. *Safeguarding under 18s* is an area of strength.

Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

The items sampled were satisfactory.

Evidence

Management

Strategic and quality management	Area of strength
M1 There is a clear statement describing the goals and values of the organisation, which is made known to all staff.	Strength
M2 The management has clear objectives for the future of the organisation and has realistic plans to achieve them.	Strength
M3 There is a documented and clearly understood structure for the ELT operation. There are sufficient staff to manage and deliver the provision, and to ensure continuity at all times.	Strength
M4 There are effective channels of communication between all involved in the ELT operation, and between the ELT operation and any wider organisation of which it is a part.	Strength
M5 The provider regularly obtains and records feedback from students on all the services offered. Feedback is circulated to relevant staff and appropriate action is taken and recorded.	Strength
M6 The provider regularly seeks and records feedback from all staff on the services offered. Appropriate action is taken and recorded.	Strength
M7 The provider reviews systems, processes and practices with a view to continuing improvement. Appropriate action is taken and recorded in an annual self-evaluation.	Strength

Comments

M1 The goals and values of INTO QUB and how they align with those of the university are clearly articulated on the website and across the centre. Every effort is made to encourage staff to feel part of INTO QUB and to understand and 'own' these core values.

M2 There is a clear direction of travel for INTO QUB with well articulated plans for the future development of the centre. Plans are realistic and achievable and are being developed with the support and steer of senior management, the wider INTO organisation and the university.

M3 The structure of the ELT provision is very clear and works well: two programme managers look after the English language aspects of the different courses, subject specialists look after the different subject area courses. Key staff are able to cover for each other at all times. The structure is clarified appropriately to students with pictures of key staff and their roles clearly displayed.

M4 Channels of communication are clear, appropriate and work well. Meetings at various levels take place frequently and information is minuted, actioned and fed back to staff. Staff in the focus group felt involved in, and very much a part, of the centre.

M5 The centre employs a variety of means of collecting feedback from students including individual tutorials, early feedback and end-of-course feedback. Students are also encouraged to give feedback or raise any issues informally at any time. The student voice is actively sought and helps to inform relevant aspects of future planning.

M6 Feedback from staff is also looked for and encouraged through regular staff meetings, staff engagement surveys, CEO 'listening sessions' and performance coaching. Staff in the focus group meeting felt very much part of the overall centre team, felt encouraged to give feedback, and that their feedback would be received positively and acted on.

M7 Comprehensive and effective systems, incorporating multiple sources of reference, are in place for reviewing all aspects of the provision as part of the overall quality systems of INTO and the wider university.

Staff management and development	Area of strength
M8 The provider implements appropriate human resources policies, which are made known to staff.	Strength
M9 The provider specifies the duties of all staff working with ELT students, and regularly reviews these.	Met
M10 There are effective procedures for the recruitment and selection of all staff.	Met
M11 There are effective induction procedures for all staff.	Strength
M12 There are effective procedures for monitoring and appraising all staff, and for handling unsatisfactory performance or conduct. These procedures are made known to all staff.	Strength
M13 There are effective procedures to ensure the continuing professional development of all staff to meet the needs of the individual, the students and the organisation.	Strength

Comments

M8 A comprehensive suite of HR policies is in place. Staff are given information and guidance on these policies on recruitment; they are described fully in the staff handbook and available on the staff portal.

M11 Clear, thorough and supportive induction procedures ensure that new staff are fully briefed on appointment. The most recently appointed members of staff in the focus group were very positive about their induction; they felt welcomed into the organisation and well prepared and supported for their roles.

M12 Sound monitoring and appraisal systems are in place. The performance coaching cycle is supportive and developmental; the procedure for handling unsatisfactory performance is detailed and clear.

M13 Continuing professional development (CPD) is encouraged and records show a good mix of in-house ELT specific and external training. Support for upgrading qualifications and attending external events is available, as are wider CPD opportunities through INTO and the university.

Student administration	Area of strength
M14 Staff are helpful and courteous to students and their representatives, and provide satisfactory levels of customer service.	Strength
M15 Students or their representatives receive sufficient information and advice on their course choices before arrival and during their stay.	Strength
M16 Staff carry out enrolment, cancellation and refund procedures efficiently, fairly, and with appropriate sensitivity.	Strength
M17 There are effective systems in place to maintain accurate and up-to-date records of student enrolment, payment and course details. These records are accessible at all times to authorised staff.	Met
M18 There are effective systems to maintain up-to-date and accessible records of local contact details for students, and their designated emergency contacts.	Met

M19 There is a clear and effective policy on student attendance and punctuality that is known to all staff and students and is applied consistently.	Strength
M20 All staff and students are made aware of conditions and procedures under which a student may be asked to leave the course.	Strength
M21 All students and, where appropriate, group leaders and parents/legal guardians, receive information in writing about how to make a complaint.	Strength

Comments

M14 The student services team receives very positive feedback from students, and customer service is supported through comprehensive IT systems, with good access for the relevant staff members.

M15 The personalised nature of the service and the strong agent network means that any questions about course content, eligibility and suitability are dealt with individually before students arrive. Good advice is given to students before arrival, and this continues through their time with INTO and beyond.

M16 Enrolment and cancellation procedures are made explicit on the website and in all pre-departure correspondence. Good supportive structures are in place to deal with any financial issues related to refunds: students are dealt with as individuals and personal circumstances are taken into account.

M19 A very clear attendance policy is in place and enforced. It is made known to students before arrival and at induction.

M20 A student code of conduct is in place with an effective, staged process allowing for warning and opportunity for improvement. The code of conduct is available on the website, is explained in the student handbook and at induction.

M21 The complaints procedure is covered at induction and available for reference in student handbooks, which provide a helpful visual representation of the process. All complaints are logged and followed up.

Publicity	Met
M22 All publicity and information is accurate, and gives rise to realistic expectations about the premises, location, and the extent and availability of the services and resources.	Met
M23 All publicity and information about the provider and the services it offers is in clear, accurate and accessible English.	Met
M24 Publicity gives clear, accurate and easy-to-find information on the courses.	Met
M25 Publicity includes clear, accurate and easy-to-find information on costs.	Met
M26 Publicity or other information made available before enrolment gives an accurate description of the level of care and support given to any students under 18.	Met
M27 Publicity gives an accurate description of any accommodation offered.	Met
M28 Descriptions of staff qualifications are accurate.	Met
M29 Claims to accreditation are in line with Scheme requirements.	Met

Comments

The main medium of publicity is the INTO website with course specific downloadable brochures. Print versions of the brochures are also available, used largely at marketing events.

All criteria in this area are fully met.

Premises and resources

Premises and facilities	Area of strength
P1 Premises, including any external areas, are in a good state of repair, cleanliness and decoration, and provide a comfortable environment for students and staff.	Strength
P2 Classrooms and other learning areas provide a suitable study environment.	Strength
P3 Students have adequate room and suitable facilities for relaxation and the consumption of food.	Strength
P4 Free drinking water is available. A choice of appropriate food at affordable prices is available to students on site, if not available locally.	Strength
P5 There is adequate signage to buildings, routes, rooms and exits, and there are facilities for the display of general information.	Strength
P6 There is sufficient space for all staff, for meetings, relaxation and the storage of personal possessions, and for teachers to carry out their preparation and marking.	Strength

Comments

P1 Premises are of a very high standard; clean, spacious, well looked after with a clear INTO identity.

P2 Classrooms are of different sizes, all bright, well furnished and well equipped, providing a very suitable learning environment.

P3 Students have plenty of room to relax and socialise in, including their own café on site and a pleasant outdoor seating area.

P4 Free drinking water is available, and a range of reasonably priced food is offered in the centre cafeteria, with many other outlets available locally.

P5 Signage is clear and consistent throughout the centre, including at the entrance. There is a range of visually attractive, informative and up-to-date displays including additional information in the café area.

P6 There is very good provision for staff for both working and relaxing. Offices are spacious and teachers benefit from a large and well-equipped staffroom close to resources and a range of shared offices.

Learning resources	Area of strength
P7 There are sufficient learning resources for the number of students enrolled, appropriate to their age and the level, length and type of courses offered.	Strength
P8 There are appropriate resources for teachers, which are adequate in number, accessible, and well maintained and organised.	Strength
P9 Any educational technology inside the classroom and elsewhere is well maintained with adequate technical support. Staff receive appropriate training in using the available technology to support learning.	Strength
P10 Any facilities provided for additional or independent learning are appropriately equipped and organised.	Strength
P11 Students receive guidance on the use of any resources provided for independent learning.	Strength
P12 There is a policy for the continuing review and development of teaching and learning resources, and evidence of its implementation.	Strength

Comments

P7 Excellent learning resources are available to students, both paper-based and electronic, available on INTO's bespoke virtual learning environment (VLE). Students are given coursebooks where appropriate and access to additional learning resources in the learning resource centre.

P8 As for students, staff also have access to plentiful and well organised resources, both in the staffroom and on the VLE. Staff are encouraged to add to these resources, keeping them up to date and relevant to the courses and students.

P9 Technology in classrooms is impressive. All classrooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards (IWBs); staff benefit from very good in-house technical support and training.

P10 Students are encouraged and do use all of the very well provisioned QUB libraries, as well as INTO's own learning resource centre.

P11 A great deal of support, guidance and encouragement is offered to students to help them get the most out of the resources available in the INTO centre, making best use of the VLE and using QUB libraries. Library visits and VLE inductions are scheduled at the start of courses.

P12 Resources are reviewed formally on an annual basis as part of the annual programme review and continuously as part of CAPE, continuous action for programme enhancement.

Teaching and learning

Academic staff profile	Met
T1 All academic staff have a level of education normally represented by a Level 6 qualification on the Ofqual register of regulated qualifications.	Met
T2 The teaching team has ELT/TESOL qualifications relevant to the courses they are teaching.	Met
T3 The teaching team has a range of experience, knowledge and skills appropriate to the courses offered and the needs of the learners.	Strength
T4 The academic manager/academic management team has an appropriate professional profile to provide academic leadership.	Met

Comments

T2 One teacher did not have a TEFLQ qualification. A rationale was presented and accepted in the context of this inspection. The teacher has a wide range of experience and receives good support from the academic management team.

T3 With the exception of the teacher mentioned above, all teachers were TEFLQ with a range of appropriate knowledge, skills and experience, many with additional professional qualifications.

T4 A rationale was presented for one academic manager without ELT qualifications which meet Scheme requirements. Both the academic manager in question and the INTO centre had understood the qualifications to be relevant, as they were endorsed by an American university. This academic manager has a wide range of experience, the full respect of teaching staff and is supported by the other suitably qualified academic manager. The academic manager without a TELQ qualification is ready to undertake a TEFLQ programme of studies with immediate effect, and the centre is offering full support.

Academic management	Met
T5 Teachers are matched appropriately to courses.	Met
T6 There are effective procedures for the appropriate timetabling of students, teachers, courses and classrooms.	Met
T7 There are formalised arrangements, satisfactory to students and staff, for covering for absent teachers.	Strength
T8 Where enrolment is continuous, explicit attention is paid to all aspects of academic management affected.	N/a
T9 There are effective arrangements, led by an academic manager, to ensure appropriate day-to-day guidance and support for all teachers.	Strength
T10 There are effective arrangements for the observation and monitoring of teachers' performance by a TEFLQ academic manager.	Met

Comments

T7 There are clear and effective cover procedures with members of staff always timetabled to provide cover.
 T9 Teachers spoke very highly of the collegiate and supportive environment within the centre, especially the day-to-day support they received from the academic managers.
 T10 Observations until now had been carried out by the previous TEFLQ academic manager. Although plans were in place for the academic manager referred to in T4 to start the next cycle of observations, this responsibility will now be taken over by the second, appropriately qualified academic manager.

Course design and implementation	Area of strength
T11 Course design is based on stated principles. There is a coherent and appropriate course structure described in writing for teachers' guidance.	Strength
T12 Course design is regularly reviewed in light of the different and changing needs of students and feedback from teachers and students.	Strength
T13 Written course outlines and intended learning outcomes, appropriate to the course length and type, are available to students.	Strength
T14 Any activities additional to English classes, and which form part of the language curriculum, encourage the acquisition of language and the development of relevant language skills.	N/a
T15 Courses include study and learning strategies that support independent learning and enable students to benefit from their programmes and continue their learning after the course.	Strength
T16 Courses include strategies which help students to develop their language skills outside the classroom and benefit linguistically from their stay in the UK.	Strength

Comments

T11 Courses are based on clear principles, they are intellectually stimulating and engaging and develop students' critical thinking abilities and language strategies, supporting their university studies or preparing them for future study.
 T12 Review of courses is ongoing, taking student and staff feedback into account and reacting quickly to changing student profile and needs as they arise. Formal review mechanisms are also in place to ensure the continued coherence and viability of courses, in line with university systems.
 T13 Course outlines and objectives are clearly explained on the VLE and in student handbooks, so always accessible as a reference point for students. They include all aspects of the different courses, including assessment where this forms part of a course.
 T15 Study and learning strategies are central to INTO QUB's programmes because of the need to prepare students for full-time study or support students already studying. Strategies are embedded into all aspects of course design and tutorials provide additional individual guidance for students.
 T16 Programmes fully support students in the development of language skills outside the classroom and particularly in the wider context of UK university life.

Learner management	Area of strength
T17 There are effective procedures for the correct placement of students, appropriate to their level and age.	Met
T18 There are effective procedures for evaluating, monitoring and recording students' progress.	Strength
T19 Students are provided with learning support and enabled to change courses or classes where necessary.	Strength
T20 Where relevant, students are guided to select the examinations and examination training best suited to their needs and interests.	N/a
T21 Academic reports are made available to students on request and, in the case of under 18s, to their parents/guardians.	Met
T22 Students wishing to progress to mainstream UK education have access to relevant information and advice.	Strength

Comments

T18 Progress against goals is constantly and consistently monitored, tracked and recorded on the VLE so that students can monitor their own progress. Individual tutorials with personal tutors offer further opportunities for advice, support and monitoring of progress.

T19 Learning support is integral to all programmes. Regular tutorials provide individual review and planning to assist in areas where students may be having difficulty.

T22 INTO's links and partnerships with QUB and other universities ensure very good availability of information and advice, which is clearly indicated to students.

Classroom observation record

Number of teachers seen	8
Number of observations	8
Parts of programme(s) observed	All INTO programmes running at the time of the inspection.

Comments

One teacher was absent at the time of the inspection. Two teachers teaching in-session classes were also observed informally to obtain an impression of all the teaching. These observations do not form part of the numbers above or overall classroom observation comments.

Teaching: classroom observation	Area of strength
T23 Teachers demonstrate sound knowledge and awareness of the use of English and the linguistic systems underlying it, and provide appropriate models of both spoken and written English.	Strength
T24 The content of the lessons shows that the course objectives, the learning needs and cultural backgrounds of the students have been taken into account.	Met
T25 Lessons lead to relevant learning outcomes, made known to students and achieved through a coherent sequence of activities.	Strength
T26 Teaching techniques are appropriate to the focus of the lesson and to the needs of the group and individual learners.	Strength
T27 Teachers promote learning by the effective management of the classroom environment and resources.	Met
T28 Students receive appropriate and timely feedback on their performance during the lesson.	Met
T29 Lessons include activities to evaluate whether learning is taking place.	Met
T30 Teachers demonstrate the ability to engage students and create a positive learning atmosphere.	Strength

Comments

T23 All teachers observed demonstrated sound knowledge and awareness of the linguistic systems of English and provided appropriate models. Explanations were relevant and concise. In many lessons teachers provided well thought out examples of concepts under discussion, including good explanations of grammatical structures and academic vocabulary.

T24 Although class profiles for most of the classes were not available, it was clear that teachers were aware of the learning needs of their students, even in the relatively short time they had been working together. Course objectives were carefully designed to focus on students' needs, taking cultural background into account.

T25 Aims and outcomes were seen in all lesson plans and in most cases made explicit to students at the start of the lesson. A real coherence was evident in well-structured lessons with links back to previous lessons and learning.

T26 In general, teachers made confident use of a range of appropriate techniques. The best lessons included well-prompted elicitation, review, and checking of meaning. Teachers mixed open questions and nomination appropriately; they challenged students; they varied tasks; and they provided opportunities for personalisation.

T27 Classroom management was generally skilled and effective. Students were sometimes thoughtfully seated and grouped to facilitate learning, but many classes were seated in rows facing the front with no opportunities for students to move around or interact easily.

T28 Teachers provided lots of praise and encouragement and some used a range of techniques to offer support and feedback including close monitoring and interacting with student groups. However, in some classes much of the feedback observed was on students' response to academic content rather than language performance.

T29 In some classes observed, teachers checked stages in the plan and built in a practice or a recap stage towards the end of the lesson or asked students to recall previous work done. Examples of teachers encouraging self-correction of concepts students had misunderstood were seen in some classes. In other classes, teachers were delivering content but there was little checking with students to see how they were receiving and understanding it.

T30 There were very high levels of student engagement in almost all classes, reflected in student participation and initiation. Teachers managed to establish group coherence and a sense of shared purpose through strong presence and rapport, and careful management of activities. This was especially impressive as teachers had only been working with their students for a relatively short period of time.

Classroom observation summary

The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme and ranged from very good to satisfactory against the criteria, with the majority being good. Teachers showed sound knowledge of linguistic systems and provided appropriate models. Teaching techniques were generally varied and appropriate, and the content of lessons was carefully chosen to meet the current needs of students and to prepare them for future academic contexts. Lessons were clearly staged and learning outcomes were shared with students. Students were engaged, teachers were energetic and professional and there was a positive atmosphere in all classes.

Welfare and student services

Care of students	Area of strength
W1 Providers ensure the safety and security of students on their premises by measures appropriate to their age and background, and the location.	Strength
W2 There is a comprehensive plan to respond to any emergency. This plan is known to all staff, and relevant elements are known to students.	Strength
W3 Students receive pastoral care appropriate to their age, background and circumstances. All staff and students know the name(s) of the person or people who deal with students' personal problems.	Strength
W4 There are policies to promote tolerance and respect, and procedures for dealing with any abusive behaviour. All staff and students are aware of these.	Strength
W5 Where relevant, students receive a 24-hour emergency contact number for the provider, in writing.	Met
W6 Students receive in advance information on the most appropriate forms of transport between the point of entry to the UK and the provider or accommodation, including approximate costs.	Met
W7 Students receive advice on relevant aspects of life in the UK.	Strength
W8 Students have access to adequate health care provision.	Strength

Comments

W1 Safety and security policies are managed by specialised staff, with devolved responsibility for day-to-day management of risk assessments, fire drills and first aid provision. Comprehensive risk assessments are available for all buildings and fire safety is a priority.

W2 There are comprehensive plans to respond to any emergency both on and off-site, and staff and students are made aware of the relevant parts of these. Information and advice are given, as appropriate to all staff and students during their induction. Special mobile phone connections ensure that high levels of communication during any emergency would be maintained.

W3 Pastoral care is excellent with appropriately differentiated procedures to support students with specific welfare and educational needs. Pastoral care is provided not only by the student services team but by teachers through personal tutoring and referrals. Students reported they felt very well looked after.

W4 Codes of conduct for students and staff outline the policies and procedures as appropriate. Information is conveyed to students in appropriate language via the website, during induction, in handbooks and on posters. Special social events highlight the variety of all student cultures and the importance of mutual respect.

W7 Information is provided on the website and in comprehensive student handbooks. Information sheets are distributed before arrival. Community police officers visit the centre once a term to offer advice and answer any student questions. The university international students' society is a constant provider of relevant support and advice.

W8 Students are prompted to complete an initial health centre form during their induction. These will ensure that students have full access to all medical services provided by the university and any GP they register with. First aid provision in INTO and student residences is very good.

Accommodation (W9–W22 as applicable)	Area of strength
<i>All accommodation</i>	
W9 Students have a comfortable living environment throughout their stay.	Strength
W10 Arrangements for cleaning and laundry are satisfactory.	Met
W11 A responsible representative inspects all accommodation (for safety and suitability) before students are placed, and at least every two years after that.	Met
W12 Students receive written confirmation of accommodation booked, giving clear and accurate information.	Strength
W13 There are effective procedures for identifying and resolving any problems students have with their accommodation.	Strength
W14 Accommodation providers receive written confirmation of the rules, terms and conditions applied by the provider with respect to the provision of accommodation services.	Strength
W15 Students receive meals as agreed; these offer a well-balanced diet, taking into account any reasonable dietary requirements students may have.	N/a

Comments

W9 The accommodation in the residences sampled is of a high standard. All rooms are spacious, clean, comfortable, appropriately furnished and have ensuite facilities. Kitchens are spacious and well equipped. There are recreational facilities in each residence in addition to a separate building nearby, which provides a wide range of facilities and additional reception and support services.

W12 All students receive an accommodation welcome pack when they arrive.

W13 In addition to early student feedback, designated pastoral staff resident on site monitor on an ongoing basis any issues with accommodation. In addition, there are many other channels of communication through which any problems can be solved.

W14 INTO students are only offered university residential accommodation, which is managed to a high and consistent standard by the university.

<i>Accommodation: homestay only</i>	
W16 Homestay hosts accommodate no more than four students at one time.	N/a
W17 Homestay hosts do not accommodate more than one student with the same language, unless the students, their agents, parents or legal guardians specifically request this in writing.	N/a
W18 No more than two students share the same bedroom, unless the students, their agents, parents or legal guardians specifically request this in writing.	N/a
W19 English is the language of communication within the homestay home.	N/a
W20 Hosts ensure that there is an adult available to receive students on first arrival.	N/a

Comments

None.

<i>Accommodation: other</i>	
W21 Students receive information about the implications of their living in private rented accommodation and advice in case of difficulties.	Met
W22 The provider monitors any other accommodation recommended, and booking and payment arrangements are clear.	Met

Comments

None.

Leisure opportunities	Area of strength
W23 Students have appropriate information about and access to social, cultural and sporting events and activities which enhance their experience of studying in the UK.	Strength
W24 The content of any leisure programme is appropriate to the age and interests of the students.	Strength
W25 Any leisure programmes are well organised and sufficiently resourced.	Strength
W26 There are effective systems to ensure the health and safety of students on all on-site and off-site activities.	Strength
W27 Staff supervising sporting and leisure activities on or off-site have appropriate experience and training.	Strength

Comments

W23 Comprehensive information is shared with students in different formats enabling them to appreciate fully the opportunities at INTO, QUB and beyond. There is a very wide choice of activities and excursions which enhance students' experience of studying.

W24 A full, differentiated and interesting leisure programme, which includes a wide choice of activities and excursions, is available to all students. Many of these activities are free or low cost and include complimentary access to the gym and sports centre at any time. Students can also participate in the social programme organised by their halls of residence.

W25 Staff are recruited specifically to deliver the various leisure programme activities. Staff ratios are optimum, and programmes are very well planned and resourced.

W26 There are well-designed written risk assessments which are completed for every activity and off-site visit. These are constantly reviewed and updated, and form an important part of the briefing of all staff involved.

W27 Staff supervising sporting activities all have appropriate experience and training. Accompanying staff on excursions are fully briefed and confirm in writing that they have read and understood any relevant risk assessments, including those provided by the trip locations themselves.

Safeguarding under 18s

Safeguarding under 18s	Met
S1 There is a safeguarding policy which specifies procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of all students under the age of 18. A named member of staff is responsible for implementing this policy and responding to child protection allegations.	Strength
S2 The provider makes the policy known to all adults in contact with under 18s through their role with the organisation, and provides guidance or training relevant to its effective implementation.	Strength
S3 The provider has written parental/guardian consent reflecting the level of care and support given to students under 18, including medical consent.	Met
S4 Recruitment procedures for all roles involving responsibility for or substantial access to under 18s are in line with safer recruitment good practice and the organisation's safeguarding policy.	Strength
S5 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students during scheduled lessons and activities.	Met
S6 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students outside the scheduled programme.	Met
S7 There are suitable arrangements for the accommodation of students.	Strength
S8 There are suitable arrangements to ensure contact between the provider and parents, legal guardians or their nominated representatives concerning the welfare of students.	Met

Comments

The majority of students are aged 18 and over. No students are aged under 16 years.

S1 The safeguarding policy is supported by relevant practical documents and considerable input by the local authority. The centre director is the designated safeguarding lead, but all programme managers and other designated staff have been trained as level 2 officers. Prospective staff applicants without evidence of level 1 training are not invited for interview.

S2 The policy is made known to all staff, and appropriate training is provided to ensure its effective implementation. The human resources department monitors and records all training undertaken. Safeguarding issues are routinely dealt with during staff meetings to ensure that basic measures such as the accurate registering of student attendance is carried out efficiently.

S4 Recruitment procedures are fully in line with safer recruitment good practice. References are followed up rigorously and interview procedures routinely check any gaps in applicants' curricula vitae. In addition, specialised human resources staff ensure that procedures are fully standardised for all applicants.

S7 Age-appropriate systems are in place with under 18s being required to sign out and sign into their accommodation at all times. Curfews are monitored and all staff are aware of who the under 18 students are. Any planned trips away need full parental authorisation at least five days in advance of any plans.

Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

D1 The organisation certifies that it operates at all times in accordance with the declarations in the *Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance*.

The Accreditation Scheme requires accredited providers to comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Providers must take steps to ensure that they are aware of, and comply with, all existing and new legal requirements.

On initial application and annual renewal of accreditation, providers are required to confirm that they are complying with all applicable laws and regulations.

Inspectors will check a random sample of items during inspection, in relation to criterion D1; if they find evidence of a breach of statutory or other legal requirements, the provider will be required to submit evidence of compliance confirmed by the appropriate regulatory body.

Any breach of the law or regulations will be viewed seriously by the Scheme and may result in the withdrawal or withholding of accreditation.

Any sustained breach of the law or regulations which an accredited provider fails upon reasonable notice to remedy will result in accreditation being withdrawn.

Comments

D1 The items sampled were satisfactory.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	2010
Last full inspection	2018
Subsequent spot check (if applicable)	N/a
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	Subject-specific modules within the academic programmes.
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	INTO Manchester
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	INTO University Partnerships (INTO) has partnerships with a number of universities in the UK, USA, Australia and Asia.

Private sector

Date of foundation	2009
Ownership	Name of company: INTO Queen's LLP (Joint Venture between INTO University Partnerships and Queen's University Belfast) Company number: NC000503
Other accreditation/inspection	QAA

Premises profile

Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the inspection but not visited/observed	Some classes can be held on the main campus of Queen's University Belfast
Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of the inspection	N/a

Student profile

	At inspection	In peak week: January
ELT/ESOL students (eligible courses)	At inspection	In peak week
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) 18 years and over	205	290
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged 16–17 years	45	60

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	250	350
Junior programmes: advertised minimum age	0	0
Junior programmes: advertised maximum age	0	0
Junior programmes: predominant nationalities	0	0
Adult programmes: advertised minimum age	16	16
Adult programmes: typical age range	16–24	16–24
Adult programmes: typical length of stay	One year	One year
Adult programmes: predominant nationalities	Chinese, Kuwaiti, Indonesian	Chinese, Kuwaiti, Indonesian

Staff profile	At inspection	In peak week
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	9	12
Number teaching ELT 20 hours and over a week	5	
Number teaching ELT under 20 hours a week	4	
Number of academic managers for eligible ELT courses	2	2
Number of management (non-academic) and administrative staff working on eligible ELT courses	11	
Total number of support staff	12	

Academic manager qualifications profile

Profile at inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of academic managers
TEFLQ qualification	1
Academic managers without TEFLQ qualification or three years relevant experience	1
Total	2

Comments

The two academic managers may cover but have no regular teaching commitments. Neither were teaching at the time of the inspection.

Teacher qualifications profile

Profile in week of inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of teachers
TEFLQ qualification	8
TEFLI qualification	1
Holding specialist qualifications only (specify)	0
Qualified teacher status only (QTS)	0
Teachers without appropriate ELT/TESOL qualification	0
Total	9

Comments

None.

Accommodation profile

Number of students in each at the time of inspection (all students on eligible courses)		
Types of accommodation	Adults	Under 18s
<i>Arranged by provider/agency</i>		
Homestay	0	0
Private home	0	0

Home tuition	0	0
Residential	118	34
Hotel/guesthouse	0	0
Independent self-catering e.g. flats, bedsits, student houses	0	0
<i>Arranged by student/family/guardian</i>		
Staying with own family	0	9
Staying in privately rented rooms/flats	87	2
Overall totals adults/under 18s	205	45
Overall total adults + under 18s	250	