Spot check report

Organisation name | Swansea University
---|---
Inspection date | 17 August 2018
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 2021.

**Changes to the summary statement**

An updated summary statement can now be issued.

**New summary statement**

The British Council inspected and accredited Swansea University in August 2017 and August 2018. 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 university offers courses in general and academic English for adults (16+) and for closed groups of under 18s.

Strengths were noted in the areas of quality assurance, learning resources, academic management, course design, learner management, teaching, care of students, and leisure opportunities.

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

**Organisation profile**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inspection history</th>
<th>Dates/details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First inspection</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last full inspection</td>
<td>August 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsequent spot check(s) (if applicable)</td>
<td>N/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsequent supplementary check(s) (if applicable)</td>
<td>N/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsequent interim visit(s) (if applicable)</td>
<td>N/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre</td>
<td>Externally validated pre-service ELT training. Support for mainstream students provided by Centre for Academic Success (CAS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates</td>
<td>N/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates</td>
<td>The International College Wales Swansea (ICWS), which is run by Navitas for the university, offers foundation undergraduate and postgraduate pathways on to Swansea University degree programmes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student and staff profile**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>At inspection</th>
<th>In peak week: July</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical age range</td>
<td>18–22</td>
<td>17–22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical length of stay</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predominant nationalities</td>
<td>Chinese, Saudi Arabian</td>
<td>Chinese, Saudi Arabian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of managers including academic</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff | 5 | 5

**Premises profile**
- **Address of main site**: ELTS, Swansea University, Margam Building (Third floor) Singleton campus, Swansea SA2 8PP
- **Additional sites in use**: N/a
- **Additional sites not in use**: N/a
- **Sites inspected**: Singleton campus

**Introduction**

**Background**
English Language Teaching Services (ELTS) at Swansea university was last inspected in August 2017, when accreditation was placed under review because Care of under 18s (2018 Safeguarding under 18s) was not met and because of weaknesses in T2. An action plan to address urgent issues relating to Care of under 18s (2018 Safeguarding under 18s) was submitted in March 2018. The purpose of this spot check was to check specifically on these areas to establish whether the period of review could be ended.

**Preparation**
The Accreditation Unit sent inspectors the necessary paperwork in advance. The provider was aware that the spot check would take place during the summer but did not know the date.

**Programme and persons present**
Two inspectors carried out the inspection. They arrived at 09.00 and left at 12.45. Meetings were held with the head of ELTS and the short programme co-ordinator. Inspectors spoke briefly to the deputy co-ordinator and one of the teachers on the pre-sessional programme. A focus group meeting was held with pre-sessional students. One inspector visited the university’s human resources department (HR) to view a staff file. A range of documents was reviewed.

**Findings**

**Significant changes since the last inspection**
There have been no significant changes in staffing or management since the last inspection and the provision remains largely the same. Changes have been made to some systems and processes, as detailed below.

**Management**
Considerable efforts have been made to improve the proportion of TEFLQ teachers, and this issue has in part been tackled through support for existing staff, as well as regular returners, to upgrade their qualifications. In addition, recruitment efforts have focused on appropriately qualified new teachers and returners.

The head of ELTS has worked closely with other areas of the university, and HR in particular, to ensure that recruitment systems, procedures and records are able to meet Scheme requirements, and a specific result of that process has been an agreed process for the checking of references and other requirements for newly recruited staff (see points to be addressed below). Inspectors viewed references for one teacher but were unable to gain access to any other staff files to verify that new systems are working effectively.

**Teaching and learning**
Improving the proportion of TEFLQ teachers on EAP programmes is an ongoing process and very good progress has been made, particularly in relation to permanent staff. At the time of the inspection, close to 50 per cent of permanent staff were TEFLQ, although the percentage was considerably lower among temporary summer staff. As a number of teachers were undertaking, or about to undertake, with ELTS support, qualifications which would lead to TEFLQ status, these proportions are likely to improve. Continuing improvement also seems likely, due to ongoing support for teachers to upgrade qualifications and improved systems for recruiting TEFLQ teachers for the summer period.

**Safeguarding under 18s**
Following the recommendations from the last full inspection, ELTS submitted an action plan addressing points to be addressed relating to Care of under 18s ((2018 Safeguarding under 18s). This area was checked again as part of this spot check inspection. ELTS and the wider university have introduced a raft of changes in policies and procedures to ensure that Scheme requirements can be met. See section on points to be addressed below.
## Teaching and learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic staff profile</th>
<th>Met</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T1 All academic staff have a level of education normally represented by a Level 6 qualification on the Ofqual register of regulated qualifications.</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2 The teaching team has ELT/TESOL qualifications relevant to the courses they are teaching.</td>
<td>Not met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3 The teaching team has a range of experience, knowledge and skills appropriate to the courses offered and the needs of the learners.</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4 The academic manager/academic management team has an appropriate professional profile to provide academic leadership.</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Comments

T2 Although suitable rationales were provided for those teachers on EAP programmes who are not TEFLQ, the proportion of such teachers remains very high, especially among temporary summer teachers.

## Safeguarding under 18s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Safeguarding under 18s</th>
<th>Met</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3 The provider has written parental/guardian consent reflecting the level of care and support given to students under 18, including medical consent.</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S5 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students during scheduled lessons and activities.</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S6 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students outside the scheduled programme.</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S7 There are suitable arrangements for the accommodation of students.</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S8 There are suitable arrangements to ensure contact between the provider and parents, legal guardians or their nominated representatives concerning the welfare of students.</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Comments

During the academic year 16 and 17 year-olds are occasionally enrolled, but numbers are very small. At the time of the inspection there were no under 18s. Earlier in the summer, one 17 year-old had been enrolled. Bespoke programmes are offered for young adults aged 14–17 in closed groups with a group leader.

All criteria in this area are fully met.

### 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.

### Management

M6 There were no references for teachers recruited for the summer.

Addressed. The head of department has met with the university’s human resources team to ensure that all incoming teachers will have references and qualifications checked post interview prior to a formal offer of employment being made.

### Teaching and learning

T3 The proportion of teachers who are not TEFLQ but who were teaching on EAP courses (70 per cent) is unacceptably high.

Partially addressed. Sustained efforts have been made to increase the proportion of TEFLQ teachers (see
above), although this is still low in relation to Scheme requirements.

Care of under 18s (2018 Safeguarding under 18s)

C1 (2018 S1) The safeguarding policy is not sufficiently specific; policies relating to some of the particular
requirements of ELTS are not covered. Safeguarding responsibilities are not specified in the personal job
description of the ELTS safeguarding officer.

Addressed. A supplement to the university’s generic policy, which is itself under review, has been created
for ELTS. Job descriptions have been reviewed to reflect roles appropriately.

C4 (2018 S4) The university’s safeguarding policy does not include specific policies on recruitment and suitability
checks: for example, there is no policy on action to be taken in case of a delayed DBS check. Not all members of
ELTS staff have up-to-date DBS checks. References for ELTS temporary summer staff had not been required.

Group leaders of closed groups had not been asked for evidence of suitability checks.

Addressed. The ELTS supplement includes information on safer recruitment practices and dealing with
delayed suitability checks. All current staff have undergone suitability checks and a policy is in place to
ensure these checks for all new staff. Group leaders suitability checks are carried out and references are
obtained for all new staff prior to commencement of contract.

C6 (2018 S6) For individually enrolled students there are no formal arrangements made for the supervision and
safety of under 18s between and outside scheduled lessons and activities and without supervision: there are no
rules for what they may do within their accommodation, overnight and at weekends. There are no guidelines for
group leaders of closed groups about what the university considers to be suitable arrangements for the age of the
students. The ‘guardian/ financial guarantor’ is often not a legally appointed guardian and may not be resident in
Swansea and so is not able to supervise the student closely.

Addressed. Rules for under 18s and guidelines for parents form part of the ELTS policy supplement and
cover accommodation arrangements, as well as free time and social activities.

C7 (2018 S7) The university does not ensure that the students aged under 18 are suitably accommodated. The
student aged 17 was accommodated in a shared house or flat which had been arranged privately. The privately
organised accommodation arrangements had not been confirmed in writing by a parent or legally appointed
guardian, and nobody from the university had been responsible for checking that the arrangements were suitable.

Addressed. Students under 18 are required to stay in halls accommodation on campus, unless parental
consent has been obtained for them to stay with family members.

Conclusions

ELTS has made significant changes at both local and, more impressively, policy level through negotiation with other
areas of the university. As a result, major improvements have been made and the majority of points to be
addressed arising from the last inspection have been fully dealt with. Good progress is being made towards
improving the numbers of TEFLQ teachers on EAP programmes and, although the proportion is still low in relation
to Scheme requirements, systems are in place to ensure that this progress can continue.