

Organisation name	University of Dundee
Inspection dates	19, 25–26 November 2021
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: check provision not seen at inspection

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. The next inspection now falls due in 2024; there are no grounds for bringing this forward. However, evidence must be submitted within three months to demonstrate that the weakness in S1 has been addressed. The required evidence was subsequently submitted.

Changes to the summary statement

No changes need to be made to the summary statement, apart from adding the date of this inspection and updating the reference to the age of students. Courses for young adults (16+) can be added.

New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited the University of Dundee in October 2019 and in November 2021. 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 large English language teaching department of this university offers courses in general and academic English for adults (18+) and young adults (16+).

Strengths were noted in the areas of staff management, student administration, premises and facilities, learning resources, academic staff profile, academic management, course design, learner management, care of students, and leisure opportunities.

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

Updated summary inspection findings

Safeguarding under 18s

The provision meets the section standard. There is appropriate provision for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 within the organisation.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	October 2015
Last full inspection	October 2019
Subsequent spot check(s) (if applicable)	N/a
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	N/a
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)	1417	1519
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	14	14
Typical age range	17–45	17–45

Typical length of stay/course	11 weeks	11 weeks
Predominant nationalities	Chinese	Chinese
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	15	15
Total number of managers including academic	4	4
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	Numerous university staff	Numerous university staff

Premises profile

Address of main site	English for International Students, 1 Airley Place, University of Dundee, Nethergate, Dundee DD1 4HN
Additional sites in use	N/a
Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	N/a

Introduction

Background

The main purpose of this spot check was to inspect the safeguarding provision for students aged under 18 enrolled on courses run by the English for International Students (EIS) unit of the University of Dundee. The University of Dundee has more than 17,000 undergraduate and post-graduate students and more than 3,000 staff; 25 per cent of the students are from outside the UK. EIS is located within the student services area of the university and provides pre-sessional and in-sessional academic English skills courses for international students at the university. From May 2020 until September 2021 all university courses were run online. Since September 2021, within the university blended learning has been taking place with some teaching taking place on campus. However, the majority of the teaching and support provided by EIS is currently delivered online only.

At the time of the last full inspection in 2019, EIS did not accept under 18s. However, since September 2020 it has been running an in-sessional course online for undergraduates studying for a B.Eng. (Hons) Biomedical Engineering degree awarded jointly by a university in China and the University of Dundee. Students take English for Biomedical Engineering modules in two semesters per year in Years 1 and 2 of their degree programme. Semester 1 runs from September to December and Semester 2 from March to June. On successful completion of the first three years of the programme, students will come to the University of Dundee for the final year of their degree programme. Some of the students in the current Year 1 cohort are aged under 18.

Preparation

Due to the global pandemic the inspection was conducted remotely, by one inspector over the equivalent of half a day.

Programme and persons present

The programme was agreed in advance. A meeting was held with the head of EIS and the Global Student Experience Co-ordinator; two online lessons were observed; focus group meetings were held with students and teachers.

Findings

Findings are reported in the following section and in the Action taken on points to be addressed.

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.	Met
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.	Met
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.	Met
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.	N/a
S7 There are suitable arrangements for the accommodation of students.	N/a
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

At the time of the spot check inspection there were 14 students aged under 18, all enrolled on online courses. They are members of a group of 236 students who are all currently based in China.

S1 There is a safeguarding policy which specifies appropriate procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of all students under the age of 18. Named members of staff are responsible for implementing this policy and responding to child protection allegations. Although the safeguarding policy does not include guidance on delayed suitability checks, it is clear from recruitment documentation that appropriate suitability checks are required prior to confirmation of appointment.

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.

Management

M5 Feedback on accommodation services in the early questionnaire does not provide the most useful information and needs to be reviewed.

Partially addressed: the questionnaire has been reviewed but not yet put into action; during the pandemic students have not occupied university accommodation.

M6 There was poor take-up of staff feedback at the end of the summer pre-sessional.

Addressed: feedback has been sought and obtained on a regular basis from all staff during the time of transition to online teaching.

Teaching and learning

T13 Students have written course outlines but some of this information tends to be written in academic jargon.

Addressed: in the lessons sampled, course outlines were clear and detailed.

T23 Little evidence was seen of phonological work or of board work that included helpful information such as parts of speech.

Addressed: in the lessons sampled, there was evidence of a focus on phonology and grammar when appropriate.

T24 Lesson plans did not fully reflect the individual needs of the students nor demonstrate how to accommodate different learning styles and cultural backgrounds.

Addressed: in the lessons sampled, lesson plans reflected very well the needs of the students.

T25 Learning outcomes were not always made clear to the students. Few lesson plans showed anticipated problems.

Addressed: in the lessons sampled, learning outcomes were made clear to the students and there was evidence that problems had been anticipated.

T26 Some lesson segments were very teacher focused and students were not given sufficient opportunity to produce long turns of speech.

Addressed: the lessons sampled were very student focused.

T27 In some segments, instructions were not clear, and students were unsure of the task and/or how to complete it. Better use could have been made of the whiteboard and of seating arrangements to encourage interaction.

Addressed: in the lessons sampled, instructions were clear, and the online classroom was well managed with, for example, appropriate use of break-out rooms.

Conclusions

Overall, the University of Dundee has appropriate policies and procedures to ensure the security and safeguarding of students aged under 18. There is evidence that EIS is successfully implementing these policies and procedures within the current teaching and learning context.