



**EDUCATIONAL OVERSIGHT INSPECTION OF PRIVATE FURTHER  
EDUCATION COLLEGES AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOLS**

**EXTENDED MONITORING VISIT**

**OXFORD INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE**

Full Name	<b>Oxford International College</b>
Address	1 London Place, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX4 1BD
Telephone Number	01865 203988
Email Address	info@oxcoll.com
Website	<a href="http://www.oxcoll.com">www.oxcoll.com</a>
Principal	Mrs Kim Terrar
Director	Dr Mario Peters
Age Range	15+
Total number of students	75
Numbers by age and type of study	Under 16: 1 16-18: 40 18+: 34 FE only: 75
Inspection date	<b>18 March 2015</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight Monitoring Visits and Extended Monitoring Visits of private further education colleges and English language schools. The focus of the visit is to confirm that the quality standards reported at the last full inspection are being maintained.

The ISI is an approved Educational Oversight body authorised by the Home Office to inspect privately funded further education colleges and English language schools in England and Wales offering courses on the Qualifications and Credit Framework. It is designed to improve the quality of education on offer to international students who attend UK colleges through Tier 4 of the points-based system for student visas.

ISI inspections are required to:

- Report on the extent to which colleges comply with the published Educational Oversight Standards;
- Assess and report on the quality of educational outcomes and provision;
- Where applicable, make recommendations outside the scope of the Standards to support continued improvement of quality.

Inspection provides objective and reliable reports on the quality of colleges, and by placing reports in the public domain, makes this information available to students, Government and the wider community. Inspection takes account of the context of each individual college, and of how it evaluates its own performance and demonstrates its success.

The inspection of the college is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on students. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit;
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the college, its services or other physical features;
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the college or its accounting procedures;
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the college's compliance with employment law.

An extended monitoring visit is for those colleges found at the last inspection to have met or exceeded the quality Standards for Educational Oversight. Inspectors will make judgements on progress against any action points and recommendations made at that time. The inspection will not examine all other Standards in detail but will sample to confirm that previous Standards have been maintained and that there are no contrary indicators to those quality judgements. Inspectors will also consider the impact of any material change reported since the last inspection.

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## 1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 Oxford International College Ltd is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. Established in 2002 the college has relocated into new premises three times, most recently in August 2013 into larger rebuilt leased accommodation near Oxford city centre. The college also has three licensed schools in China and Switzerland. It is led by a senior leadership team and governed by the director of the company who co-owns it.
- 1.2 The aim of the college is to prepare students between the ages of 15 and 21 for entry into higher education through a curriculum consisting of a wide range of subjects offered at GCSE and A level. The majority of teaching is by means of one to one tutorials or small groups although the college is increasingly developing larger groups in popular subjects.
- 1.3 There are currently 75 students enrolled, of whom 26 are female and 49 male. The majority of students are from the UK. A minority is from European Union (EU) countries, the Middle East, Asia and Russia, and all of these students have English as an additional language (EAL). The college reports that three students have been assessed to have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- 1.4 The college confirms student suitability prior to enrolment by means of an application form, assessment and interview. The majority of student accommodation is provided in a new purpose-built hall of residence, although for some younger students there are homestay arrangements with local families.
- 1.5 This monitoring visit has been extended due to the acquisition of a new building. For this reason, Section 4 of the Educational Oversight Framework will be looked at in detail.
- 1.6 The college received a monitoring visit on 11 February 2014 when it met all Key Standards and the quality of education exceeded expectations. The recommendations from the previous report are:
  - Improve the analysis and benchmarking of achievement data to inform quality improvement.
  - Introduce regular review and monitoring of teaching, learning and achievement by senior managers.

## 2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The college exceeds expectations.** At the previous inspection of 11 February 2014 the college was found to exceed expectations and the quality of education as judged at that time has been maintained.
- 2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. Courses are highly effective in meeting the aims of the college to prepare students for university entry. The quality of teaching overall is very good; teachers are enthusiastic and motivate their students. Lessons are well prepared and students are encouraged to become independent learners. Progress is monitored effectively and students are informed well of their achievements in different subjects. Opportunities for the management of their own performance are limited without a comprehensively developed individualised learning plan (ILP) to set targets for improvement. Students make excellent progress and achieve good outcomes in their final examinations.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. The management of residential accommodation is very good and all staff have had Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. The management of residential accommodation is very good. Accommodation is provided on one site for most students. This provides a safe, well supported environment which helps students prepare for independent living prior to university. Effective arrangements are in place to promote the health and safety of staff and students. Good fire safety precautions and first aid measures are in place. Premises are well maintained and are fit for purpose. Records of registration and attendance are accurate and well managed. Students studying under Tier 4 visa arrangements are advised of Home Office requirements and procedures for reporting are effective. The college has highly effective safeguarding and e-safeguarding policies. All staff receive safeguarding training at a level appropriate to their role and are informed of actions to take in the event of an incident.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. Good progress has been made in the use of achievement data to inform quality improvement. Progress is good in reviewing teaching, learning and achievement; staff see this as a positive measure. The proprietor is fully involved in strategic and operational management and is effectively supported by an excellent senior leadership team. Communication with and support for staff is highly effective. The college is very successful in recruiting highly qualified staff and conducts appropriate checks prior to appointment maintaining accurate records compliant with the safeguarding policy. Performance management is effective and staff have good opportunities for professional development. There are strong mechanisms for quality assurance which lead to quality improvement, but regular reporting and analysis of performance data is not used in a structured way to monitor performance.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF THE CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENTS**

- 3.1 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 The college has clear aims and vision and an effective curriculum policy which is well supported by schemes of work and lesson plans developed to meet student's needs. Course provision is accurately described on the website and in the prospectus. The courses are highly effective in meeting the college's aims in preparing students for university entry. The subjects offered are appropriate for the students in preparing for application to university and meeting their aspirations for higher level study. Study skills supplement the GCSE and A level courses subjects and are effective in developing independent learning skills. Additional support is excellent and is provided one-to-one where students require assistance to achieve their learning aims or have a learning difficulty.
- 3.3 Initial assessment, advice and guidance prior to admission are highly effective in placing students on the most appropriate course and identifying any learning support needs. On enrolment, students' qualifications and English language skills are confirmed through subject tests and a further interview. As a result students are very satisfied with the programmes provided. Courses offered lead to qualifications which meet Home Office requirements for Tier 4 entrants.
- 3.4 Overall, teaching and learning are very good. The majority of teaching is excellent and fully engages the students' interest. A minority of teaching has less active student involvement. Teachers are enthusiastic and have excellent subject knowledge. The majority of teaching takes the form of one-to-one tutorials but increasingly larger groups of students are being taught in the more popular science subjects. Teaching is well planned to address students learning needs and to maintain interest and motivation. Teachers demonstrate good understanding of student background, aptitudes and abilities and use this well in the planning of their classes. Highly effective teaching and learning strategies are used to promote students' active involvement and encourage them to become independent learners. Lessons challenge students to apply their knowledge and teachers regularly test understanding, consequently students make excellent progress.
- 3.5 Rigorous processes are in place for monitoring student progress. Students are assessed regularly and their achievement and progress recorded systematically. Effective feedback is given to students, which enables them to identify areas for improvement. Good records are maintained of student progress and are used well to track performance. Students are informed of their progress in individual subjects but the opportunities for taking responsibility for the management of their own performance are limited by the absence of a comprehensively developed ILP to incorporate all of their studies and set clear targets for improvement.

- 3.6 Student achievement is excellent. Examination results for the past three years are high with grades significantly better than the national averages for equivalent qualifications.

#### **4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY**

- 4.1 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 4.2 There has been a significant change in the college's approach to the provision of student accommodation from homestay to hall of residence. The college has leased new, high quality, student residential accommodation. This is highly effective in meeting the requirements of the vast majority of current students. A small number of homestay accommodation places with local families remain available for younger students. Adult members of the host families have undertaken enhanced DBS checks and accommodation is registered in accordance with national requirements. All staff working at the residence are recent appointments and are DBS checked. The new accommodation has improved the provision which the college makes for students and ensures high standards of safety and care. The further impact of the residential development has been in promoting independent living and increased social cohesion. These elements have been appreciated by students and staff as highly effective in preparation for progression to university.
- 4.3 The residential accommodation is very well managed through senior managers and wardens in residence. Good support on personal issues is readily available from the wardens and reflects the college's commitment to the high standards of care for its students. The close proximity of the hall of residence to the college enables students to use the college's refectory and facilities for study over an extended day and at weekends.
- 4.4 The college demonstrates proper regard for health and safety including first aid and fire safety. Appropriate policies are in place and there are effective arrangements to ensure the safety of staff and students at all college premises. There are qualified first aiders and fire marshals for each of the college sites. Testing of equipment and evacuation drills take place regularly and accurate records are maintained of tests, drills, equipment and accidents. Detailed risk assessments are carried out for activities on site, visits arranged by the college and external events; comprehensive records are maintained.
- 4.5 The college premises have been remodelled, are fit for purpose, in excellent decorative order and are well maintained. There are adequate security arrangements, with controlled access to all buildings. There are sufficient washrooms and buildings have facilities for people with disabilities. Where food is prepared and served there are good arrangements to ensure hygienic preparation and service. Heating, ventilation, lighting and sound insulation are good in all buildings. Teaching and administrative rooms are well equipped; furniture and fittings are appropriate for the age and needs of the students.
- 4.6 The college maintains accurate admissions registers and records of student attendance. Attendance monitoring is good and students appreciate the need for punctuality and good attendance. Students are alerted immediately where lapses in

attendance are a cause for concern. Monitoring of student attendance is effective. Student attendance in residence is recorded and leave is only allowed with prior parental approval. Effective systems are in place for reporting to the Home Office where a student under Tier 4 visa arrangements fails to enrol or does not meet attendance requirements.

- 4.7 Pastoral and personal support for students is excellent. There are appropriate systems in place to provide support on personal and academic matters. All students follow an effective induction programme which prepares them for their studies and introduces the requirements of the college. The college has a good programme of social activities which includes a range of visits, cultural activities and enrichment in preparation for progression to university. Students have access to sporting and leisure facilities locally and are eligible to be members of the Oxford Union. The college provides good careers advice and thorough preparation for life as a university student.
- 4.8 There is a highly effective safeguarding policy, details of which are efficiently communicated to all staff and students through induction, staff and student handbooks and the college website. There is clear guidance on how to respond to incidents within the college and liaison with external agencies when appropriate. This is supplemented by a separate, thorough E-safety policy which includes clear specifications and guidance for use of ICT systems and devices at the college. All staff have received effective safeguarding training at levels appropriate to their roles. All newly appointed staff are required to undertake the training and provision is made for regular updating of training for existing staff.

## 5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 The recommendations in this area from the previous inspection report are:
- Improve the analysis and benchmarking of achievement data to inform quality improvement.
  - Introduce regular review and monitoring of teaching, learning and achievement by senior managers.
- 5.3 Progress against the first recommendation has been good. Use of data on student achievement has increased. Analysis of achievement in subjects studied by small numbers of students has proved unreliable, however with increased numbers and larger student groups comparisons with national average results is more successful and has been used with other information to identify priorities for improvement.
- 5.4 The college has made good progress in meeting the second recommendation. A thorough policy has been developed for observation of teaching and learning. The implementation of the strategies to support observations including staff training and development of documentation has been excellent. The introduction of peer observation has been welcomed by staff and is seen as a positive measure. The system of recording and the criteria for observations have been introduced effectively. Good records for teaching and learning observations are maintained by senior managers. The response has been constructive and has resulted in the improvement of teaching strategies among staff.
- 5.5 The educational direction of the college is clear and is effectively communicated and shared by all staff. The aims of the college are reflected in the high quality of provision and the excellent care of students. The proprietor is fully involved in all strategic and operational matters at the college. There is a good relationship between the college's managers and the senior leadership team is excellent. Communication between managers and staff is highly effective and staff report that managers are responsive to feedback. The college is very successful in securing high quality staff for whom good support is provided.
- 5.6 The college provides appropriate policies and has strategies for their development, approval, implementation and review. Policies are effectively communicated to staff through meetings and email, and are identified on the website.
- 5.7 The college has strong mechanisms for quality assurance which result in continuous improvement and maintenance of high standards of the educational experience. Managers are successful in identifying priorities for improvement but lack regular, systematic reporting and analysis of key data and other information to monitor the overall performance of the college. Performance management is strong; there are

good opportunities for staff appraisal which are effectively linked to personal and professional development.

- 5.8 The college has a thorough complaints policy which identifies the written records to be kept and allows for an independent external process of appeal should matters not be resolved.
- 5.9 The college has a detailed recruitment policy which reflects safeguarding requirements effectively and which is well implemented. Staff files have records of all appropriate checks made on staff and volunteers prior to, or as soon as practicable after, appointment. This information is also held electronically as a single central record. All staff, including approved contractors for the college, have enhanced DBS checks.
- 5.10 Information on the college website is sufficient to enable prospective students to make an informed choice of college and course of studies.
- 5.11 The college complied with all requests for information made by the inspectors.

## **6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The college maintained the excellent quality found at the last inspection.

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

In order to further improve the excellent quality provided, the college should:

- Use records and reports on student progress to develop a single individual learning programme to support students in managing their own performance.
- Strengthen the monitoring of college performance and the identification of priorities for improvement through the regular analysis and use of key performance data.

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with students and examined samples of students' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the proprietor. Inspectors visited residential accommodation. The responses of staff and students to confidential pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the college.

### Inspectors

Mr Peter Wood	Lead Inspector
Mr Simon Cohl	Team Inspector