



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

**MONITORING VISIT**

**OXFORD INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE**

Full Name of College **Oxford International College**

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Principal Ms Fiona Pocock

Proprietor Dr Mario Peters

Chief Operating Officer Ms Kim Terrar

Age Range 14 – 21

Total number of students 60

Numbers by age and type of study  
Under 18: 34  
18+: 26  
FE only: 60

Inspection date **29 January 2013**

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight 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 UK Border Agency to inspect privately funded further education colleges, including 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 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 for private colleges;
- Assess and report on the quality of educational outcomes and provision;
- Where applicable, make recommendations to colleges 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.

A 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.

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## 1. CONTEXT

- 1.1 Oxford International College was established in 2002 with the aim of preparing students between the ages of 14 to 21 for entry into British universities, other English speaking universities and higher education institutions. The college offers personalised learning programmes with most teaching taking place through one-to-one tuition. The college's primary objective is to help every student achieve his or her personal academic goals. The college director is also a co-owner.
- 1.2 There have been no significant changes in the nature of the college or the curriculum offered since the previous Educational Oversight inspection. An extensive A level, international GCSE (IGCSE) and GCSE programme is the core curriculum. British and Asian students are in the majority, although the college has students from 16 countries in total. The age range is from 14 to 21 and there is an even gender split.
- 1.3 The college was first inspected on 8 to 10 November 2011 when it met all key Standards and the quality of education exceeded expectations.
- 1.4 The main action points and recommendations from the previous report are:
  - Co-ordinate the recording of assessment information and the tracking of students' progress over time more closely.
  - Develop a college management information system to connect and integrate information about students more easily.
  - Provide a balanced careers education programme that not only prepares students for further education but also for their working lives.
  - Support staff development by more closely assessing their in-service needs and facilitating training opportunities.
  - Provide more social and recreational events for students.

## 2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The college exceeds expectations.** The previous inspection of 8 to 10 November 2011 was judged 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 learning is excellent. Information gathered on learners is now centrally collated and systematically reviewed by managers and tutors. Adjustments to staff roles and responsibilities have ensured that the recently procured management information system has been effectively implemented and used for the benefit of learners. A comprehensive careers and personal development programme has been enthusiastically used by students and is an example of successful curriculum development. Initial assessment and identification of learners who may have a learning difficulty or disability need improvement.
- 2.3 The college exceeds expectations in the provision of student welfare and in exercising its responsibilities for health and safety. The recently developed social, cultural and recreational programme is well supported by both students and staff at all levels of the college. There is much enthusiasm for the programme and students benefit considerably. The partnership arrangement formed by the college with an external student event provider has resulted in a comprehensive review of social and cultural programmes that are a valuable addition to the college's welfare activities.
- 2.4 Leadership, management and quality assurance exceed expectations overall. Self-evaluation and policy review are a regular process and lead to relevant development planning and support activities. Teamwork and communication amongst managers are excellent. The college's arrangements for meeting the training and development needs of tutors are not sufficiently effective.

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

- 3.1 The quality of curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. All key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 The recommendations in this area from the last inspection report are:
- Co-ordinate the recording of assessment information and the tracking of students' progress over time more closely.
  - Develop a college management information system to connect and integrate information about students more easily.
  - Provide a balanced careers education programme that not only prepares students for further education but also for their working lives.
- 3.3 Good progress has been made in addressing these recommendations. The college has instituted an assessment information system supervised by senior managers that collects and collates information on the performance of learners on a weekly basis. Test results are stored centrally and made available to academic and administrative teams. Weekly management meetings review the progress of all students and areas of concern are effectively communicated to relevant tutors and student support officers.
- 3.4 A proprietary information management system has been purchased and is currently being implemented. The system contains the central record of all students and staff. Details of student performance, along with relevant personal information, are compiled on the database. The college has provided training for staff in accessing and using the database, ensuring its efficient operation.
- 3.5 In consultation with a professional careers consultancy, and under the supervision of the college director, a comprehensive careers programme has been developed from the beginning of 2012. This includes sessions for students on applying to university, curriculum vitae writing, personal skills development and self-presentation. The college also now employs a personal performance coach on a regular basis. Students confirmed that they highly value participation in the programme and enjoy taking part. Inspectors' findings support this view.
- 3.6 Teaching remains either good or outstanding. There is constant review of all aspects of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements. For example, academic support services have been reviewed, resulting in the development of a performance coaching programme and improved attendance monitoring activities. Ongoing review of student induction processes has resulted in improved tutor involvement at the commencement of a student's time at the college.

- 3.7 Insufficient attention is given to the initial assessment and identification of students who may have learning difficulties. Support services for learners are accessed by the college once a student has been identified as having a learning difficulty, but this identification is not always consistent or timely.

#### **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 The recommendation in this area from the last inspection report is:
- Provide more social and recreational events for students.
- 4.3 The college has made good progress in meeting this recommendation. In consultation with students, a varied programme of social, sporting and cultural activities has been developed. Included in this are activities related to academic courses, such as a visit to a factory to view manufacturing techniques. Students and staff have enthusiastically taken part in the programmes and value the events highly. Students feel that taking part in these activities has developed their own social skills and given them valuable cultural insights. Inspection findings support this view.
- 4.4 Health and safety, fire safety and safeguarding responsibilities receive close attention from senior managers and are subject to regular review.

## **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 recommendation in this area from the last inspection report is:
- Support staff development by more closely assessing their in-service needs and facilitating training opportunities.
- 5.3 Insufficient progress has been made in meeting this recommendation. The college has undertaken a number of initiatives in staff development, but these have not resulted in a majority of academic staff taking up training offered. In some cases staff are not aware of relevant training. The assessment of in-service training requirements for academic staff needs to improve to ensure that they can identify the learning needs of all students, particularly those who may have a learning difficulty or disability.
- 5.4 Self-evaluation activities are continuous and the college accurately identifies its strengths and areas for development. The development plan is frequently reviewed and updated, and nominated staff work under the effective supervision of an actively involved senior management team to ensure progress. A culture of self-improvement has been established amongst management. Communications among managers are excellent and there is acceptance of accountability and responsibility at all levels of management and administration. The college does not regularly appraise tutors or conduct professional development reviews that include lesson observations.

## **6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The college has maintained the excellent standards found at the last inspection.

### **Suggestions for further improvement**

In order to improve the excellent quality provided, the college is advised to:

- Improve the methods by which students with learning difficulties are identified and supported.
- Support staff development by more closely assessing their in-service needs and facilitating training opportunities.
- Provide opportunities for regular tutor appraisal and professional development reviews which include lesson observations.

## 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, tutors, administrators and with the proprietor. The inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the college.

### Inspectors

Professor Paul McGregor	Lead Inspector
Mr Brian Giddings	Team Inspector