



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

MONITORING VISIT

CAMBRIDGE SEMINARS COLLEGE

(Company registration no. – 08183749)

Full Name	Cambridge Seminars College
Address	87-89 Cherry Hinton Road, Cambridge, CB1 7BS
Parent Company name	Camsem Investment PLC
Telephone Number	01223 300123
Email Address	admissions@csc.uk
Website	www.csc.uk
Principal	Mr Philip Scherb
Proprietor	Camsem Investment PLC
Age Range	16+
Total number of students	14
Numbers by age and type of study	16 – 18: 06 18+: 08 FE only: 14
Inspection date	20 September 2022

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 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 Cambridge Seminars College is a private educational institution established in 1981. It is located close to Cambridge city centre and moved into its current premises in March 2021. Since June 2021 the institution has been owned by Camsem Investment PLC (CIP), with the two proprietors of CIP also being directors of the college. The college is led by the principal and its two directors. The principal is supported by a small management team. The aim of the college is to ensure every student can fulfil their academic potential and achieve their life aspirations.
- 1.2 The college offers A' level, Foundation, pre-masters and pre-doctoral programmes in a variety of academic subjects. It also provides Academic English courses and preparation for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and Cambridge examinations. In addition, existing or prospective students may study GCSEs on a one-to-one basis if required, but only alongside an existing course.
- 1.3 Selection for courses is based on initial assessment of previous academic attainment, English language skills and future learning goals. Enrolment to GCSE and A level courses generally occurs in September or January. For Foundation courses, enrolment occurs in September, January and March. Pre-masters and pre-doctoral courses can start at any time. EFL programmes are offered throughout the year and are of variable length, ranging from two weeks to nine months. Courses are open to students aged 16 years and older.
- 1.4 At the time of inspection there were 14 students enrolled at the college, the majority being female and over 18 years old. Students come from a wide range of countries and English is an additional language for most students. At the time of the visit, there were no students identified with learning difficulties or disabilities. Accommodation is offered through the provision of a student residence or host family option.
- 1.5 The college was previously inspected on 6 July 2021 when it was judged to meet expectations and the quality was good. The recommendation from the previous report is:
 - Identify inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in order to further improve academic standards.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The college meets expectations.** At the previous inspection of 6 July 2021 the college was found to meet 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 good. Students are well educated in a supportive environment and in accordance with their objectives and the college's aims. Course provision is good. The curriculum is well organized, flexible and is effective in meeting the needs of the students. Courses on offer to students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. Initial assessment prior to and on arrival is accurate and is effective in ensuring that student's are placed on a programme of study in accordance with their abilities and future higher education needs. Teaching is good. Teachers are appropriately experienced, have good subject knowledge and plan effectively. A wide range of teaching and learning methods are used to deliver engaging and student-focused lessons. There are clearly defined processes in place to monitor students' progress to ensure that they are successfully progressing towards their learning aim. Attainment is high and attendance rates good.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is good. The colleges' buildings are fit-for-purpose, well-maintained and provide a safe environment for students and staff. A wide range of appropriate health and safety policies and procedures are in place, regularly updated and implemented effectively. Fire precautions, drills and evacuations are systematically undertaken and are clearly understood by students and staff. Student registration and attendance records are accurate, well managed and staff are effective in monitoring attendance and taking necessary action. Procedures for reporting to the Home Office are secure. Pastoral support is good and provides an appropriate level of support and guidance in accordance with the college's aims. Arrangements for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 years are good, fully implemented and reflect official guidance.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is good. Effective oversight is combined with a high level of financial support so that the quality of education and the welfare, health and safety of students are secure. An appropriate management structure, with clear roles and responsibilities, ensures that the college is well run and that it meets all its legal obligations. Leadership and management are good. There is effective communication between managers and other staff. Policies and procedures are well defined and appropriate. Procedures for the recruitment of staff are good, in accordance with legal requirements, with all appropriate checks undertaken.

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

- 3.1 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is good. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Identify inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in order to further improve academic standards.
- 3.3 Excellent progress has been made against the recommendation. Since the previous inspection a new policy for the recruitment and training of teaching staff has been introduced which focuses on the planning of lessons and the use of effective teaching methods to support learning and ensure a consistent quality of lesson delivery. As a result, lesson observations show a consistent approach to lesson planning, content delivery and an improvement in the quality of teaching.
- 3.4 The quality of course provision and curriculum is good. Students are well educated in a supportive environment and in accordance with their objectives and the college's aims. The curriculum is based on a clear policy statement, is flexible and well planned. It provides an appropriate range of courses which enables students to progress and which meets the different abilities and academic aims of the students.
- 3.5 Initial assessment is good. The process is accurate and ensures that students are placed on courses that meet their needs, abilities and future higher education opportunities. Courses on offer to students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance.
- 3.6 Teaching is good. Detailed planning and a clear understanding of the needs of their students allow teachers to successfully adapt lessons to meet individual learning needs and effectively challenge students. Teachers are experienced, enthusiastic and have good subject knowledge. A wide range of teaching and learning methods are used to deliver engaging and student-focused lessons.
- 3.7 Teaching effectively promotes fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It encourages respect for other people including those with the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.8 The monitoring of student progress is good. There are clearly defined processes in place to monitor students' progress to ensure that they are successfully progressing towards their learning aim. Attainment is high and attendance rates good.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 4.1 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is good. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 4.2 The college's premises are fit for purpose, very well-maintained and enhance the students learning experience. A wide range of detailed health and safety, first aid and fire safety policies and procedures are in place and consistently implemented. All necessary measures to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards have been taken. Fire precautions, drills and evacuations are systematically undertaken and are clearly understood by all students and staff. The college has an appropriate number of fire marshals and staff trained in first aid. Classrooms are spacious, light and very well furnished. Free drinking water is readily available. Students report that they feel safe and secure at the college.
- 4.3 Systems for recording registration and attendance are well-managed. Admission procedures are clear and strictly observed. A central register is accurately maintained and individual student files contain all relevant information. Attendance records are accurate and daily attendance is closely monitored. Home Office monitoring and reporting procedures for students who are studying under Student visa arrangements or under the Student visa route are well understood and adhered to.
- 4.4 Pastoral support for students is good. Student welfare is a priority and the college has invested effectively to ensure that it provides a safe and supportive environment where students can progress successfully. Relationships between staff and students, and amongst the students themselves, are excellent with a strong culture of mutual respect, integration and tolerance. A wide range of policies and procedures reinforce this culture and the expectations of appropriate behaviour and conduct.
- 4.5 The safeguarding arrangements for students under the age of 18 are good. Arrangements have proper regard to official guidance and the implementation of all strategies is appropriately checked by senior managers. There is a designated child protection officer who is appropriately trained. All relevant persons are subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks prior to or on appointment, and an accurate central register is maintained of suitability checks on staff.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is good. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 The quality of leadership and management is good. The focus of governance and leadership has a clear emphasis on supporting students and improving standards. Senior leaders provide clear educational direction and effectively discharge their responsibilities in accordance with the aims of the college. Financial management is effective in ensuring appropriate action is taken with regard to course development, maintenance of premises and student welfare. As a result, a culture of caring for students is successfully embedded throughout the whole organisation.
- 5.3 An appropriate management structure, with clear roles and responsibilities is in place and ensures that the college is well run and that it meets all its legal obligations. Policies and procedures are well defined and appropriate. Relationships and communication between the leadership team, the proprietors and the teaching staff are good.
- 5.4 The college is well managed. The directors provide good oversight and discharge their responsibilities well for financial planning and investment in the future. The focus of governance and leadership has a clear emphasis on ensuring the welfare, health and safety of students, as well as improving academic performance. Staff are very supportive of the college. An appropriate complaints policy is in place.
- 5.5 Staff recruitment, qualifications and suitability checks are good. An appropriate recruitment policy is in place that ensures that well qualified and experienced staff are recruited. All required recruitment checks have been carried out in a timely manner and appropriately recorded. The process to validate references and qualifications is good, with due regard to statutory requirements concerning the identity of staff. A comprehensive central record is maintained and monitored by senior staff.
- 5.6 The website contains all required information. The college was very responsive in providing information for the inspection in a timely manner.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The college has maintained good quality found at the last inspection.

Recommendations for further improvement

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

- Identify and share the good practice in the quality of teaching in order to further improve the good academic standards.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with students. They held discussions with senior members of staff and attended registration sessions. 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

Dr Nigel Chambers	Lead Inspector
Ms Ann O'Toole	Team Inspector