



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

EXTENDED MONITORING VISIT

ACE COLLEGE OF IT AND MANAGEMENT

Full Name	ACE College of IT and Management
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Email Address	info@acecollege.co.uk
Website	www.acecollege.co.uk
Principal	Mr Wasey Syed Abdul
Proprietor	Mr Wasey Syed Abdul
Age Range	18+
Total number of students	5
Numbers by age and type of study	18+: 5 FE only: 5
Inspection date	13 May 2014

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 Ace College of IT and Management is a private further education institution located in Ilford, London. It was founded as a limited company in 2010. The proprietor is also the principal and is supported by two more directors, forming the management team. One director is the head of academics and quality assurance. The mission of the college is to provide affordable and quality educational opportunities to individuals, which lead to career success and make them employable in today's competitive market.
- 1.2 The college offers full-time courses in business and healthcare management at levels six and seven, which are accredited by the ATHE awarding organisation. Enrolment is continuous, but all current students joined the college in January 2014. All hold international student visas and were recruited locally, transferring from courses in other colleges. At the time of the inspection there were 5 students enrolled, four of whom are male. All students come from southern Asia, are aged over 18 and speak English as an additional language (EAL). None has identified special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Courses in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) were not running at the time of the inspection.
- 1.3 The college began delivering the management courses in January 2014. Due to a recent substantial reduction in student numbers, these courses are currently combined, with students following modules common to both qualifications. The original teachers left in April, once the first modules were completed, and new teachers started the subsequent modules in the week of the inspection.
- 1.4 This monitoring visit has been extended due to a change of 30 per cent or more of the type of provision. For this reason, Section 3 of the Educational Oversight Framework will be looked at in detail. The college was previously inspected on 21-23 May 2013 when it met all Key Standards and the quality of education was found to meet expectations. The recommendations from the previous report are:
- Develop the use of individual learning plans to negotiate specific targets with students and effectively track progress.
 - Ensure self-evaluation leads to clear action planning with specific and measurable targets for quality improvement.
 - Formalise the process for observing teaching and learning and monitor identified areas for development.
 - Improve the college website to ensure that all information is accurate and reflects the current provision.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The college meets expectations.** At the previous inspection 21-23 May 2013 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 satisfactory. All courses lead to Home Office approved qualifications. An effective curriculum policy is well implemented. Suitable initial assessment takes account of prior attainment and places students on courses appropriate to their learning goals. Assessment directed towards developing student learning profiles is effective. Support arrangements for English language and SEND are adequate. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and meets students' needs. Teachers are knowledgeable, but lesson planning is insufficiently detailed and results in a tendency to over-direct during presentation of new learning. This limits participation and opportunities to challenge stronger students. Students are confident and demonstrate good subject understanding during student-led sessions. Tracking of student progress is appropriate. Satisfactory progress has been made in the development of individual learning plans (ILPs), but target setting is insufficiently clear to support full realisation of individual potential. Assessment, based on clear assignments, is fair and supports progress. Attainment is satisfactory.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is satisfactory. Provision for health and safety meets legal requirements and is well communicated to students. Premises are secure, fit for purpose and provide an appropriate environment for teaching and learning. Admission and attendance recording is accurate and up-to-date. The college has suitable procedures for reporting to the Home Office. Pastoral support is suitable for current students. Induction is effective and the welfare officer is available at all times to provide support on practical or personal issues. The college does not currently offer a programme of social activities. Students confirm that they enjoy good relationships within the college and are satisfied with provision.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is satisfactory. The proprietor provides effective oversight and works closely with the management team to maintain suitable standards of provision. Good communication with teachers results in effective implementation of management decisions. The self-evaluation process is underdeveloped and is not supported by evidence from college data. Progress on action planning is unsatisfactory. It continues to be insufficiently formal and precise. Agreed actions are not subject to regular monitoring; this limits quality improvement. Progress towards formalising the process for lesson observations is satisfactory. The procedure has been improved by the development of a suitable form, but lesson observations for new staff have not yet taken place. The form lacks a section on areas for development with specified review date. An appropriate staff appraisal procedure has been implemented resulting in suitable staff development. Students' views are taken informally and through evaluation forms, which only cover academic provision. Outcomes are not analysed to produce data to support improvement. The complaints procedure is satisfactory. Progress on improving the

college web-site is good. Provision of information on the web-site is accurate and meets requirements.

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

- 3.1 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is satisfactory. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Develop the use of individual learning plans to negotiate specific targets with students and effectively track progress.
- 3.3 Progress against this recommendation is satisfactory. Appropriate procedures have been developed for recording and tracking students' progress. Information on individual progress contributes to setting realistic targets in tutorials. Targets are not consistently specific and measurable. They are marked as achieved on the ILP when met. The large majority of students are aware of their targets and the progress they are making.
- 3.4 The college has an effective curriculum policy, which is well supported by appropriate, detailed schemes of work. Courses meet students' needs and match their language capabilities. They lead to qualifications approved by the Home Office. Initial assessment is accurate and students are placed on suitable courses with regard to their prior attainment and career aspirations. The college uses a well-designed computer-based assessment to identify the particular language needs of ESOL students, but this has not been used with management students. Teachers make effective use of activities to identify students' English language development needs during lessons. English language support will be available from a newly-appointed specialist teacher, but delivery has not yet commenced. The college has adequate provision for supporting dyslexia. This has not been required to date.
- 3.5 The quality of teaching is satisfactory, and takes into account the ages and cultural backgrounds of students. Learning outcomes are well explained and learning is checked consistently. Teachers are knowledgeable and effectively link new concepts to employment contexts. Lesson planning for presentation of new learning is insufficiently detailed and does not include varied activities or patterns of interaction. As a result, input stages of lessons lack pace and teaching is over-directed, limiting opportunities for active participation and providing insufficient challenge for stronger learners. Adequate classroom resources are used effectively to support learning. Student-focused sessions successfully develop independent research skills and co-operative learning. Learners are confident, engaged and demonstrate good understanding.
- 3.6 Assessment is satisfactory. Assignments are clear and appropriate. Homework is set regularly and marking provides suitable guidance to support improvement. A rigorous internal verification system has recently been introduced but it is too early to judge its impact.

- 3.7 Students' attainment is satisfactory. Results in external English examinations meet sector averages. Results of the first externally assessed modules of current courses are not yet available. Progress in class is appropriate.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 4.1 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is satisfactory. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 4.2 The college has proper regard for health and safety issues. Fire evacuation drills are carried out at appropriate intervals. Fire safety equipment is tested regularly. Records are well kept and up-to-date. The college has additional fire and hazard risk assessments on its own suite of rooms, resulting in suitable safety measures. Emergency signage and fire extinguishers are appropriately located. Policies and procedures are clear and well communicated to new students and staff through effective induction, which identifies college managers responsible for first aid and fire safety. The premises are secure, clean and well maintained. They provide a suitable environment for teaching and learning. The building has no access for people with mobility difficulties.
- 4.3 Recording of admissions and attendance is accurate and up-to-date. Student files are well maintained and include copies of all required documentation. Absence monitoring is good, the college attendance and punctuality policy is well understood by students and attendance rates are high. The electronic database provides suitable reports to identify attendance issues. Appropriate procedures are in place to report to the Home Office breaches of attendance requirements by students on Tier 4 visas. The refund policy is fair and well communicated through the college website and student handbook.
- 4.4 Pastoral support is satisfactory and meets the needs of current students. A thorough induction enables them to settle quickly into their studies. The welfare officer is available throughout college hours and provides suitable support on a range of practical issues. The students have been based in the UK for a number of years so requests for support on personal issues are infrequent, but such instances are dealt with effectively and are well recorded. In interviews, students said that they feel well supported and have good working relationships with teachers and their peers. They enjoy their learning and receive good individual academic support from teachers. Inspection evidence supports these views. Students confirmed that they would recommend the college to others. Currently, the college does not offer a social programme.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is satisfactory. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 The recommendations in this area from the previous inspection report are:
- Ensure self-evaluation leads to clear action planning with specific and measurable targets for quality improvement.
 - Formalise the process for observing teaching and learning and monitor identified areas for development.
 - Improve the college website to ensure that all information is accurate and reflects the current provision.
- 5.3 Progress against the first recommendation is unsatisfactory. Adequate self-evaluation takes place and managers are aware of most strengths and areas for development of the college. Self-evaluation draws upon the views of staff taken in meetings but does not make use of data. Action planning in relation to priorities for improvement is appropriate, but it is not formally recorded with specific measurable targets that are monitored and regularly reviewed. As a result, overall quality of provision has not improved since the previous inspection.
- 5.4 Satisfactory progress has been made with regard to the second recommendation. The college has introduced a standard lesson observation report form which effectively focuses judgements and feedback on key areas of teaching and learning. The form does not yet include a section on targets for development with review dates. Use of the form was successfully piloted in peer observations. Implementation of a strategy to improve the lesson observation process was delayed due to a long gap in delivery of courses and new teachers this year were not formally observed. Arrangements are now in progress for an external specialist to observe the current teachers and provide training to the head of academics to ensure that grading of future observations is standardised.
- 5.5 Progress with respect to the third recommendation is good. Course information on the web-site is up-to-date and accurate. The latest versions of the student handbook and prospectus are available to download.
- 5.6 Leadership provides clear educational direction. The proprietor is based at the college and is closely involved in its daily operations. He ensures that the aims and ethos are fulfilled. There is an effective relationship and good communication between the proprietor and managers. Management decision-making takes place at regular, minuted meetings. Decisions on academic provision are well communicated to teaching staff, who implement them effectively.
- 5.7 The college has adequate quality assurance mechanisms for its current, limited provision. Due to the long gap in course delivery and the change in type of

provision, the college has not gathered sufficient success data to analyse and inform course review. The views of students are gathered through an evaluation form which only covers academic provision. These evaluations are not anonymous and are not analysed to produce student satisfaction data. However, scrutiny of all completed forms during the inspection shows student evaluations to be overwhelmingly positive. This corresponds with students' responses to confidential pre-inspection questionnaires. Leadership has an open-door policy and students report that they feel free to approach the proprietor and managers directly with any issues. Inspectors saw such meetings in progress. In the context of current provision, the college responds effectively to student views. A suitable complaints policy is well publicised and is known to students. No formal complaints have been logged to date. The college does not participate in a fee protection scheme.

- 5.8 The college has an appropriate staff appraisal procedure in place, but this has only been applicable to one member of staff so far. Targets were agreed, but are insufficiently specific and measurable and progress towards them has not been reviewed. Training identified in that review has been completed.
- 5.9 Provision of information prior to the inspection was limited and so was preparation of evidence for the inspection visit.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Recommendations for further improvement

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

- Ensure that self-evaluation leads to clear action planning with specific and measurable targets for quality improvement, which are regularly monitored.
- Further develop the quality assurance systems to monitor improvement actions and ensure that they have a positive impact.
- Improve the quality of learning by ensuring that input stages of lessons include a range of interaction patterns and activities to engage and motivate all students.
- Ensure good quality teaching and learning through regular classroom observations, which result in targets for improvement with review dates.
- Ensure that all students have clear and measurable targets to effectively monitor progress towards achieving their full potential.
- Develop the student evaluation form to cover all aspects of provision and use this to obtain regular, anonymous feedback; analyse this data to inform improvement.

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. 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

Ms Dawn Hart	Lead Inspector
Ms Eileen O'Gara	Team Inspector