



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

**FOLLOW-UP VISIT**

**BSC EDUCATION**

**(12655362)**

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Director of Operations	Mr Ed Brandt
Proprietor	BSC Education Ltd
Age Range	16+
Total number of students	35
Numbers by age and type of study	16–17: 0
	18+: 35
	EFL only: 35
	FE only: 0
Inspection date	<b>24 July 2023</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight Inspections of private further education colleges and English language schools. The focus of the visit is to ensure that the action points and recommendations made during the previous inspection have been adequately addressed.

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.

A follow-up inspection is for those colleges which did not fully meet the required Standards at their last inspection and so need improvement. Inspectors will make judgements on progress against any action points and recommendations made at that time to determine whether Educational Oversight Standards are now fully met. The inspection will not examine any other Standards.

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## 1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 BSC Education is a private educational institution that moved to its current premises in Holborn, central London in June 2022. The centre is part of the BSC Education Group whose headquarters are located in Birkenhead, Merseyside. The centre is led by the director of operations who is supported by a small management team. Oversight is provided by the institutions' parent company. The vision of the centre and group is to provide students with stepping stones to their future by delivering outstanding and transformational learning experiences. They aim to provide consistent high-quality educational experiences that their students will remember.
- 1.2 The centre offers a wide range of courses, including general English courses from elementary to advanced levels, business English, and examination preparation courses. Students from 16 years of age are accepted on year-round courses. Enrolments onto courses take place throughout the year and provisional allocation to courses is made on the basis of an online test and submission of written work. An international foundation year (IFY) in Business or Humanities is offered in conjunction with the Northern Consortium of UK Universities (NCUK). This has published entry requirements and a fixed start date in October and January.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection, 35 students were enrolled on English language courses. There were similar numbers of female and male and two were under 18 years old. The students come from a wide range of countries, with the majority from Brazil. All students spoke English as an additional language. No students had identified learning difficulties or disabilities.
- 1.4 When an individual applies to join a course, the centre checks their suitability through the use of a pre-course application form and test to ensure that they meet the academic and English language requirements for entry onto the programme of their choice. Residential accommodation is provided in home-stay and in a commercial student residence.

## 2. FINDINGS

2.1 A follow-up visit for BSC Education took place on 24 July 2023 to determine the progress made in implementing the recommendations and action points arising from the Educational Oversight inspection of 13–15 December 2022. The college has made insufficient progress and now **does not meet expectations**. The following Key Standards are not met:

1. The teaching enables students to make clear progress according to their ability so that they develop the skills and understanding necessary to follow their chosen accredited course and/or employment **[Standard 8]**.
2. Students reach acceptable levels of attainment and make good progress based on their starting points and the length of their course **[Standard 18]**.
3. The leadership of the college provide clear educational direction which is reflected in the quality of education provided, the care of students, and the fulfilment of the colleges stated purpose, or its aims and ethos **[Standard 45]**.
4. The college has adequate quality assurance mechanisms in place which lead to the improvement of the quality of educational experience or the maintenance of existing high standards **[49]**.

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

- 3.1 The action points relating to the quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements are:
1. The teaching enables students to make clear progress according to their ability so that they develop the skills and understanding necessary to follow their chosen accredited course and/or employment **[Standard 8]**.
  2. Students reach acceptable levels of attainment and make good progress based on their starting points and the length of their course **[Standard 18]**.
- 3.2 The recommendation relating to the quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is:
- Ensure that initial assessment is used effectively to place students on the most appropriate programme and to provide effective support to help them with their studies.
- 3.3 Unsatisfactory progress has been made in meeting the first action point. Teaching on English language courses continues to be effective, with students making good progress. However, the impact of teaching on IFY students remains unsatisfactory, with students not making the progress that they should over time. A number of actions have been taken by the college, such as, the introduction of weekly formative assessments and the continuous monitoring of the quality of teaching and the engagement of students through lesson observations. However, these actions have not improved the impact of teaching on IFY students so that they make suitable progress in the medium and long term. As a result, all of the January 2023 IFY student cohort has been withdrawn from their course, with students who attended their exams being unsuccessful.
- 3.4 Unsatisfactory progress has been made in meeting the second action point. Students studying on English language courses progress well given their starting points. However, attainment and progress rates for the IFY course are unsatisfactory, with the entire January 2023 cohort of students being withdrawn by the college for failing to attend their course or academically engage. Since the previous ISI inspection the college has implemented a number of actions to improve student academic engagement and raise success rates for the IFY programme, including the introduction of weekly formative assessments. However, these actions have not led to an improvement in the number of students making the expected progress they should given their starting points and capabilities. As a result, success rates for the IFY programme remain unacceptably low, with no students achieving their qualification or aim to gain sufficient accreditation to enable them to apply for university courses.
- 3.5 Unsatisfactory progress has been made in meeting the above recommendation. Initial assessment procedures for English language students are effective and place

them on the correct level for their current language ability. However, pre-enrolment and initial assessment for the IFY programme continues to be unsatisfactory and does not ensure that the programme and its activities meet the needs, interests and future aspirations of the students. The college reviewed its admissions requirements and procedures for the IFY January student cohort, including holding a meeting with each student in their home country. However, this has not led to an improvement in the ability, English language skills or motivation of the recruited students. As a result, there has been no improvement of student engagement with their course, with all students being withdrawn for failure to attend or appropriately engage in their learning.



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

4.1 The action points relating to students' welfare, including health and safety are:

1. The college maintains an accurate admission register and an accurate attendance register **[Standard 33]**.
2. The college reports to the UKVI as required, when a student fails to enrol or otherwise discontinues study or does not fulfil Home Office requirements for attendance **[Standard 34]**.
3. The college provides effective pastoral and personal support to students **[Standard 35]**.

4.2 The recommendation relating to students' welfare, including health and safety is:

- Ensure that all students receive an appropriate induction that effectively prepares students for the requirements of their studies.

4.3 Good progress has been made in meeting the first action point. Arrangements for student registration and the recording of attendance are now effective. A central register is accurately maintained and individual student files contain all required information. Daily attendance is accurately recorded on the college's electronic attendance system and appropriately monitored. A detailed weekly attendance and academic monitoring spreadsheet has been introduced for IFY students and used very effectively to track their attendance; with all unexplained absences being followed up in a timely manner.

4.4 Good progress has been made in meeting the second action point. Procedures for reporting to the Home Office, as well as the enrolment and attendance requirements for students who are studying under Student visa arrangements, are understood and effectively implemented by staff. The introduction of a weekly attendance and academic monitoring spreadsheet for IFY students ensures that their attendance and other Student visa requirements are effectively monitored and any issues acted on. As a result, students who should have been withdrawn are reported in a timely manner.

4.5 Satisfactory progress has been made in meeting the third action point. Appropriate policies are in place to prevent discrimination, bullying, cyber bullying and radicalisation and extremism. Mental health support has recently been introduced, with referral to external agencies for more serious issues. Pastoral support is well organised by the student experience team and supports the academic team in following up any identified issues that may affect a student's attendance or academic performance. Attendance and punctuality are regularly checked and appropriately followed up, with attendance for English language students being good. However, the vast majority of IFY students have not followed the college's attendance policy and the actions taken by the college to improve this have not been effective. As a result, attendance rates remain very low and IFY students do not make appropriate progress on their course.

- 4.6 Satisfactory progress has been made in meeting the recommendation on providing an appropriate induction. An appropriate induction is planned and delivered to the vast majority of students which informs them of the requirements of their course and provides relevant information regarding life in London. However, a minority of IFY students have reported to the college that they were unaware of the attendance requirements of their course and the costs associated with living in London.

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

- 5.1 The action points relating to the effectiveness of governance, leadership and management are:
1. The leadership of the college provide clear educational direction that is reflected in the quality of education provided, the care of students, and the fulfilment of the colleges stated purpose, or its aims and ethos **[Standard 45]**.
  2. The college has adequate quality assurance mechanisms in place which lead to the improvement of the quality of educational experience or the maintenance of existing high standards **[Standard 49]**.
- 5.2 No recommendations relating to the effectiveness of governance, leadership and management were made during the last inspection, when quality requirements were met.
- 5.3 Unsatisfactory progress has been made in meeting the first action point. The BSC Education Group through their senior management team in the college continue to discharge their responsibilities well for financial planning, investment in the future and maintaining the quality of the colleges English language courses. A range of actions to improve the quality of the IFY courses have been introduced, including procedures to monitor and take action against IFY students who fail to attend or academically engage. However, these actions have had no impact with the entire IFY January 2023 student cohort being withdrawn. As a result, the college has not been successful in ensuring that all of the education provided is of a satisfactory quality, or that students accepted onto its IFY courses are of an appropriate academic standard to complete their course.
- 5.4 Unsatisfactory progress has been made in meeting the second action point. A range of quality assurance actions have been put in place since the previous ISI inspection, including detailed weekly attendance and engagement monitoring and weekly formative assessment of IFY students. However, the actions taken to bring about improvement have not been successful in ensuring that the attendance of IFY students is of a consistent satisfactory standard or that they academically engage with their learning. As a result, quality assurance actions have not led to improved learner outcomes, including success and progression rates, for IFY students.

## 6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The college has not improved the quality of education found at the last inspection.

### **Actions required to meet the Standards**

In order to meet the Standards of Educational Oversight, the college must:

1. The teaching enables students to make clear progress according to their ability so that they develop the skills and understanding necessary to follow their chosen accredited course and/or employment **[Standard 8]**.
2. Students reach acceptable levels of attainment and make good progress based on their starting points and the length of their course **[Standard 18]**.
3. The leadership of the college provide clear educational direction which is reflected in the quality of education provided, the care of students, and the fulfilment of the colleges stated purpose, or its aims and ethos **[Standard 45]**.
4. The college has adequate quality assurance mechanisms in place which lead to the improvement of the quality of educational experience or the maintenance of existing high standards **[Standard 49]**.

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

In addition to the above action points, the college should:

- Ensure that initial assessment is used effectively to place students on the most appropriate programme and to provide effective support to help them with their studies.

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons. They held discussions with senior members of staff and examined documentation made available by the college, and attended registration sessions.

### Inspectors

Dr Nigel Chambers	Lead Inspector
Mr Simon Bellamy	Team Inspector