

## ACCREDITATION VISIT MAIN FINDINGS and RECOMMENDATIONS

**Name of Provider:** Oxford College of Management Sciences

**Date of visit:** 26 – 27 February 2009

**Number of students enrolled on date of visit:** 18 full time Students, including 5 Business Studies, 5 studying the Certificate in IT and 8 students on ESOL programmes.

### The provision in context

1. Oxford College of Management Sciences (OCMS) has been established at its current site since November 2008 and is located in Levenshulme, close to the centre of Manchester. The college occupies premises which were formerly a public house, in some areas renovations are still being completed. Most of the teaching accommodation is on the first floor. OCMS offers programmes in Business Management, Human Resource Management, Information and Communications Technology and ESOL. Most of the programmes are new, ESOL courses have been provided previously. Students are currently recruited from the home market and those who are already entered the UK under student visas. Current international students are mainly of south Asian or African origin. Students on ESOL programmes include UK nationals and those with visas. OCMS currently employ seven teachers, of which five hold a recognised teaching qualification.
2. Teaching and learning are all provided at the college premises. Sessions are classroom or workshop based. The college has two computer suites, a range of classrooms which can comfortably accommodate the students and a lecture hall. A small library is being established. The college is managed by a small team which includes the principal, an operations director and a quality manager.

### Overall judgement

3. Provision is satisfactory and can be approved for accreditation and should apply to UKBA for a Sponsors Licence. In accordance with the UKBA Statement of Intent for Students Tier 4 of the Points Based System, continued approval is subject to satisfactory completion of the areas for improvement as stipulated by Ofsted, within twelve months of the date of this letter.

### Feedback

4. This feedback contains the findings from the accreditation visit brought together under the three main aspects of the Common Inspection Framework. The findings

also focus on the five key questions of the Common Inspection Framework and the requirements of the student entry Points Based System (PBS) operated by United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA) for private education providers.

## **Achievement and standards**

5. With the exception of the ESOL programmes, all of the courses are new and to date there has been no achievement. ESOL programmes have been offered for some time. The success rates on ESOL entry level 1 are satisfactory at about 75%. Students on these programmes are making good progress. It is too early to judge the progress of the students who have recently started on business and ICT courses. All of the qualifications offered are at or above level 3.

## **Quality of education and training**

6. All of the courses offered to overseas students receive more than 15 hours full time tuition. Attendance at the time of accreditation was satisfactory, however some students were absent due to sickness. Most teachers have a recognised teaching qualification in addition to an appropriate qualification for their specialist subject area.
7. Teachers use a suitable range of teaching and learning methods. Formal assessment is planned through a number of external awarding bodies, currently OCMS works with three awarding bodies and is developing approval with a further awarding body. There is a very limited range of learning materials, however the college has plans to expand the range and availability of library and text books for students to use. The current range of programmes allows students to progress appropriately to higher levels.
8. The college provides suitable academic tutorial support to students and is developing a number of external links to provide pastoral support, particularly for overseas students. ESOL students currently benefit from some local visits to enrich their programme but it is too early to judge the quality of enrichment and additionality for other students.

## **Leadership and management**

9. The programmes are adequately managed by a small senior team. The college has a business plan, however the planned growth of the college is not fully evident in these plans. A detailed action plan is not yet in place to ensure that this growth is achieved. Quality assurance processes have been recently implemented in the organisation, many of these processes are new and have not yet been fully tested. A recent audit of key documents has been carried out and this has resulted in the

identification of areas for improvements, particularly in record keeping. Most of these improvements have been fully implemented. A small number of teaching and learning observations have taken place, however the process of effective monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is not fully embedded.

10. The college has suitable policies in place to cover the general health and safety of students, a recent audit of the fire regulations has resulted in some temporary measures to improve the fire and evacuation procedures. Some of the recommendations from the audit are still being implemented. The college has considered access issues for students with mobility difficulties and is developing a plan to enable all students to have access to the first floor teaching rooms.
11. Policies regarding student admission, equality of opportunity and other related matters are available. Some of the policies, such as the complaints and bullying and harassment policy are not yet fully linked to the information that is available in the handbook supplied to students. Some policies are not presented in ways that might enable students to fully understand how they might work in practice. Most of these policies are referred to in the student handbook, however further guidance is being developed to help support students and the administration of their learning as is the specific guidance on visa requirements.
12. The college safeguarding policy is not yet fully in place, however the college has already recognised the need for CRB checks for teaching staff and to appoint a designated safeguarding officer. The college has an effective register system and process for the identification of student absence that should be reported to UKBA. The system includes an electronic record which is linked to the colleges' management information system.
13. The college retains adequate records of staff qualifications which are generally consistent, in a minority of cases the files are incomplete. The college website has been developed as a tool to promote the college and provide information on the services on offer, some aspects of the website are still undergoing construction and are being reviewed.