BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

Independent Higher Education (IHE)

Re-accreditation Inspection

NAME OF INSTITUTION: Boston City Campus

ADDRESS: Johannesburg:
247 Louis Botha Avenue
Orchards
2192
South Africa

Stellenbosch (Joint Head Office):
19A Elektron Avenue
Techno Park
Stellenbosch 7600
South Africa

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Dr Hendrik Botha

DATE OF INSPECTION: 5–8 March 2024

ACCREDITATION STATUS AT INSPECTION: Accredited

DECISION ON ACCREDITATION:

☒ Re-accreditation awarded for the full four-year period

☐ Probation accreditation

☐ Decision on accreditation deferred

☐ Award of accreditation withdrawn

DATE: 27 June 2024

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

Boston City Campus (BCC/the Institution) is accredited by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and registered as a Private Higher Education Institution with South Africa's Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

Originally known as Boston City Campus and Business College, BCC was established as a private higher education institution in South Africa in 1996. In 2003, it began delivering higher education courses via distance learning, following approval from the South African Higher Education Quality Committee of the CHE. In 2020, it changed its name to Boston City Campus, reflecting the wider range of qualifications provided.

BCC offers accredited higher education qualifications at National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Levels 5 to 8 in a range of subjects, including Social Sciences, Business, Management and Accounting. Higher education qualifications are delivered via an online, distance learning modality. In addition, the Institution also offers a range of short courses and a few bespoke occupational programmes that are taught in person and are accredited and quality assured by various quality councils. British Accreditation Council (BAC) accreditation relates only to BCC's higher education qualifications that are offered via online distance learning.

BCC has a registered joint head office in Johannesburg and Stellenbosch. The Institution also has a network of 47 Learner Support Centres (LSCs), also referred to as branches, distributed across South Africa. LSCs provide higher education students with optional access to the internet and computer equipment to ensure they can access their online learning materials.

BCC's vision is to strive to enhance, uplift and continuously improve the quality of education and training in South Africa through a commitment to education for life. It aims to provide students with high-quality learning and teaching opportunities by providing market-relevant, accredited programmes.

BCC has a Board of Directors. Six Executive Directors take an active role in the governance and management of the Institution, with each assigned to a specific role, including as Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Managing Director, Financial Director, and Head of Institution.

Since the previous inspection, two additional Directors have been appointed to the Board. The Institution has also made changes to its governance and organisational structure, including establishing an academic planning and development unit, a quality promotion and research unit, a programme committee, a research committee and an advisory board. Since the previous inspection, one new LSC has been opened.

2. Brief description of the current provision

BCC offers 23 accredited higher education courses in a range of subject areas, including Business, Management, Human Resources (HR), Accounting and Finance, Marketing, Hospitality, Social Sciences, and Law. All courses are offered asynchronously via online distance learning.

BCC offers one Postgraduate Diploma in Management, one Advanced Diploma in Adaptive Leadership, and five Bachelor's degree programmes in Commerce and Marketing Management, Accounting, Law, HR Management, and Social Sciences.

BCC also offers seven Diploma programmes in Business Management, Financial Accounting, Event Management, HR Management, Marketing Management, Network Systems and Systems Development. It has 13 Higher Certificates, covering areas such as Advertising, Marketing, Business Management, HIV/AIDS Counselling and Management, HR Management, Accounting Practice, Hospitality, Tourism and Travel, Logistics and Supply Chains,

Paralegal Practice, Game Design and Development Practice, Web and User Interface Design Practice, and Financial Planning.

At the time of the inspection, 19,662 students were enrolled on BCC programmes. The Institution has a capacity for up to 40,000 students.

All students are over the age of 18 years. The majority are female. Almost all students are South African, with a very small minority from other countries in Africa, including Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Angola and Lesotho.

Enrolment takes place twice a year at the beginning of each semester in January and February and again in June and July. Students must meet published entry requirements that are in line with South African legislation. For entry to degree courses, students must hold a National Senior Certificate with English or a suitable equivalent, and a Bachelor's endorsement. To enrol on the Postgraduate Diploma, students must hold a suitable undergraduate degree, advanced diploma or suitable equivalent qualification.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was undertaken online over three and a half days by three inspectors, including a student inspector. Inspectors held meetings with the CEO, Head of Institution, Financial Director, Managing Director, Academic Head, Head of Academic Planning and Development, Head of Quality Promotion and Research, Registrar Administration, Registrar Academic and other senior leaders. Meetings were held with students and with academic and administrative staff. Inspectors observed online lessons and undertook a virtual tour of the premises. A wide range of documentation was provided electronically for scrutiny. The Institution co-operated fully with inspectors before and during the inspection.

4. Inspection history

Inspection type	Date
Full Accreditation	7–10 March 2018
Interim	8–10 April 2019

PART B – JUDGEMENT AND EVIDENCE

The following judgements and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector(s) during the inspection and from documentation provided by the Institution.

INSPECTION AREA – GOVERNANCE, STRATEGY AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

1.   The institution is effectively and responsibly governed

1.1	The overall organisational structure, including the role and extent of the authority of any owners, directors or governing body, is clearly defined, documented and effectively communicated to stakeholders, including governors, management, staff and students.	☒ Yes	☐ No
1.2	There is an identified senior committee with decision-making authority on academic matters, in order to protect the integrity of academic freedom.	☒ Yes	☐ No
1.3	The link between governance and management is clearly articulated and documented.	☒ Yes	☐ No
1.4	Internal stakeholders develop and implement policy through appropriate structures and processes while involving external stakeholders.	☒ Yes	☐ No
1.5	An explicit procedure for risk assessment is implemented, producing a risk assessment statement, which is regularly reviewed and updated.	☒ Yes	☐ No
1.6	Effective action is taken by the governing body and senior managers in response to the outcomes of regular risk assessments.	☒ Yes	☐ No
1.7	All relationships with other educational organisations are defined formally and are fully transparent with those organisations' requirements.	☒ Yes	☐ No ☐ NA
1.8	There are clear channels of communication between the governing body, the executive, academic management, staff, including those working remotely, students and other stakeholders.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

BCC is effectively and responsibly governed. The Institution has a clearly defined organisational structure that is clearly communicated to all relevant stakeholders. The organisation chart clearly sets out the roles of staff at all levels, including the Board of Directors, which provides overall governance.

BCC has an effective academic committee in place. This committee is the most senior decision-making authority on academic matters. The committee is mandated by the Board of Directors to govern and implement BCC's academic strategy. The committee has appropriate oversight of institutional quality assurance mechanisms. The committee ensures the integrity of academic freedom of BCC's courses, and the student experience is protected.

The link between governance and management is clearly articulated and documented in the academic governance document. There are very clear processes in place to ensure that BCC's policies and procedures are appropriately developed. The academic planning and development unit ensures that relevant internal and external stakeholders, such as the advisory board, are appropriately consulted and involved in developing, revising, and updating the Institution's policies and procedures. These measures ensure that policies and procedures are fit for purpose and continue to meet the needs of students and staff.

The Board of Directors has implemented a suitable, explicit procedure for risk assessment. The Head of Institution completes an overall institutional risk profile and register, which is formally updated annually. The risk register considers a suitable range of risks and mitigation measures with a useful assessment rating. Senior leaders take appropriate action when required in response to the risk assessment process.

BCC has a broad range of professional, formally defined and highly effective relationships with other educational organisations. A significant range of professional authorities and statutory bodies recognise the Institution. BCC is also

a certified member of the National Association of Distance Education and Open Learning in South Africa. All relationships are fully transparent in respect of those organisations' requirements.

Leaders and managers have established clear and effective channels of communication between internal and external stakeholders at all levels. For example, managers communicate with all staff via centrally co-ordinated e-mails and online conferencing platforms. The BCC website, prospectus, course outlines, student rulebooks and the Learner Management System (LMS) provide effective channels of communication with students.

These measures ensure that all stakeholders, including those working remotely, are kept fully informed and up to date. In meetings with inspectors, staff and students confirmed that they received regular, effective communications from the Institution. Inspection findings confirm this view.

2. The institution has a clear and achievable strategy

2.1	The institution has a clear strategy for the development of its higher education provision, which is supported by appropriate implementation plans and financial management and takes into account the quality of the student experience.	☒ Yes	☐ No
2.2	There is provision for stakeholder input, including governors, management, staff and students, to inform the strategic direction of the institution.	☒ Yes	☐ No
2.3	The strategy is well communicated to all stakeholders within and outside the institution.	☐ Yes	☒ No
2.4	The governing body and senior management conduct a regular and systematic review of their own performance and the institution's overall performance, and each is measured against strategic targets.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☐ Met   ☒ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

Directors and senior leaders have a clear strategic vision for the Institution, which considers the quality of the student experience. At the time of the inspection, a draft strategic plan clearly identified five relevant focus areas for the development of the Institution in line with the BCC vision, mission and values. Appropriate goals and implementation objectives support each strategic area. This ensures that the Institution has a clear plan for the development of the student experience.

Senior leaders consider feedback from a range of different stakeholders when evaluating the quality of provision and considering updates to the strategic plan. For example, staff feedback is gathered through staff meetings and the committee structure. Student feedback is systematically collected and analysed throughout the student journey. Directors also seek input from the advisory board when necessary, as well as considering the view of external moderators at course level. These feedback arrangements help to inform the strategic direction of the Institution.

2.3 At the time of the inspection, the draft strategic plan had not been fully ratified and formally communicated to all stakeholders within and outside the Institution.

The Board of Directors, as the governing body, conducts a regular and systematic review of the performance of the Institution. Directors formally review performance against BCC's strategic targets and against the regulatory expectations of the Department of Higher Education and Training and the CHE. Formal reviews ensure that Directors have appropriate oversight of how well the Institution is meeting its key performance targets and strategic objectives.

3. Financial management is open, honest and effective

3.1	The institution conducts its financial matters professionally, transparently and with appropriate probity.	☒ Yes	☐ No
3.2	The institution's finances are subject to regular independent external audit.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

BCC conducts its financial matters professionally, transparently and with appropriate probity. The Institution has clear, professional, and transparent mechanisms for financial management and effective oversight by a chartered accountant and registered auditor.

The Institution's finances are subject to regular, independent external audit. BCC is registered with the National Credit Regulator, which extends the transparency, oversight and reporting of the management of student accounts.

INSPECTION AREA – GENERAL AND ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

4. The institution is effectively managed

4.1	The management structure is clearly defined, documented and understood by all stakeholder groups, including governors, management, staff and students.	☒ Yes	☐ No
4.2	There are clearly delineated responsibilities and reporting arrangements at institutional, faculty, departmental, programme and course levels.	☒ Yes	☐ No
4.3	There is an appropriate and effective committee structure, with appropriate reporting lines to inform management decision-making.	☒ Yes	☐ No
4.4	Committees have clear and appropriate terms of reference and meet regularly. The meetings are accurately recorded with clear action-planning.	☒ Yes	☐ No
4.5	The institution has formal mechanisms to monitor the information it provides internally and externally and to make any enhancements deemed necessary to ensure that it is accurate and fit for purpose.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

The Institution has a clearly documented and published management structure that is well communicated to all stakeholders through the BCC website, the organisation chart and relevant handbooks and policy documents. This ensures that all stakeholders understand how the Institution is led and managed.

Senior leaders have implemented a clear and effective structure of appropriately delineated responsibilities and reporting arrangements at all levels. The Institution is managed through a system of interdependent departments and specialised units, with clear reporting lines to the leadership and management structure. In meetings with inspectors, staff confirmed that the Institution is effectively managed, and inspection findings confirm this view.

BCC has a suitable committee structure to meet its needs. Since the previous inspection, senior leaders have established a broader range of formal committees to support the academic leadership and governance function, such as the programme and research committees. Each committee has an appropriate and clearly documented structure and reporting lines. As a result, the committee structure is very effective in supporting leaders in their decision-making.

A review of the governance structure and committee meeting minutes demonstrates that committees meet regularly and have clear and appropriate terms of reference. The meetings are accurately recorded and have clear action plans. As a result, each committee supports leaders and managers well in informing their overall decision-making.

The Institution has clear and formal mechanisms in place to ensure that the information provided internally and externally is accurate and fit for purpose. The Board of Directors approves marketing materials that are shared externally to ensure the information is accurate and up to date. Formal internal communications are channelled through appropriate managers to ensure information is clear and factually accurate. Documents and marketing materials reviewed during the inspection confirm that information is up to date and reflects the Institution's current operations.

5. The Institution is administered effectively

5.1	The size of the administrative team is sufficient to ensure the effective day-to-day running of the institution.	☒ Yes	☐ No

5.2	The administrative support available to the management is clearly defined, documented and understood and appropriately focused to support its activities.	☒ Yes	☐ No
5.3	Administrative policies, procedures and systems are well documented and disseminated effectively across the institution.	☒ Yes	☐ No
5.4	Classes are timetabled and rooms allocated appropriately for the courses offered.	☒ Yes	☐ No
5.5	Data collection and collation systems are well documented, accurate and effectively disseminated.	☒ Yes	☐ No
5.6	Comprehensive administrative records are organised and stored efficiently, easily accessed and used effectively.	☒ Yes	☐ No
5.7	Students' records are sufficient, accurately maintained and up to date.	☒ Yes	☐ No
5.8	Staff records are sufficient, accurately maintained and up to date.	☒ Yes	☐ No
5.9	The institution has a robust security system and policies in place for protecting the data of its students and staff.	☒ Yes	☐ No
5.10	The institution has processes through which the institution verifies that the student who registers on the programme is the same student who participates on and completes and receives the credit.	☒ Yes	☐ No
5.11	There are secure and efficient procedures for the administration of examinations and other means of assessment.	☒ Yes	☐ No
5.12	There are effective procedures for internal and external moderation at pre- and post-assessment stages.	☒ Yes	☐ No
5.13	The institution makes student records and transcripts available to its students in a timely manner.	☒ Yes	☐ No
5.14	There is a policy on the collection of and refund of students' fees that is implemented effectively.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

BCC employs a sufficient number of administrators and support centre managers to ensure the efficient running of the organisation. The administrative support function is clearly defined and documented in a range of formal policy documents and staff and student handbooks. Administration documents are effectively shared with staff and students via the online LMS and internal staff communication systems. This ensures that all stakeholders clearly understand the available administration support. In interviews with inspectors, staff and students confirmed that the administration function meets their needs well. Inspection findings confirm this view.

Students on higher education courses complete their learning online at a time that suits them. Leaders and managers ensure students receive clear information on how to access their online learning materials through the LMS. Students benefit from access to a range of LSCs, which have appropriate opening hours to support students who require access to computers and the internet in order to complete their online learning activities.

The Institution has effective mechanisms in place to collect and collate key data, such as student assessment results and module grades. A review of BCC's main student administration system and related sub-systems, such as the LMS and the student communication platform, demonstrates that data and administrative systems are accurate and effective.

A review of student administration records demonstrates that these are accurately maintained, easily accessed and stored effectively through the online systems. A review of electronic and hard-copy staff records demonstrates that they are up to date and meticulously maintained by managers at each head office location.

Leaders and managers ensure that the Institution has relevant data protection policies and measures in place. As an institution operating largely via the online distance mode, leaders prioritise data protection and security and ensure compliance with relevant data protection legislation. Staff can access relevant privacy policies via the website and both students and staff can access them through the handbooks. This ensures that they are clear about how their data is stored and processed.

Student identification is checked effectively through the application and enrolment process and at each formal assessment point. This ensures that the student who registers on the programme is the same student who participates in the programme, completes it and receives the credit.

The Institution operates very effective assessment procedures, which are clearly documented in relevant policy documents. A demonstration of digital proctoring systems and the invigilation mobile application demonstrates how the Institution ensures that assessments are secure and that student evidence is authentic. Any concerns over the authenticity of student evidence are systematically and assiduously followed up. Suspected cases of student malpractice are swiftly identified and robustly pursued. These arrangements ensure that assessment outcomes are valid and reliable.

The Institution implements clear and well-established procedures for internal and external moderation at both the pre- and post-assessment stages. All assessments are pre-moderated to ensure they are fit for purpose and aligned with the relevant learning outcomes. Internal moderation arrangements are comprehensive and robust. External moderation takes place at the pre- and post-assessment stages for all modules undertaken at the exit level. These arrangements ensure that assessment outcomes are reliable and that students receive credit that reflects their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Student records and transcripts are made available from the academic registry. The Institution has clear and transparent processes to ensure students understand how to access their records and the indicative timescales for receiving their transcripts.

The refund arrangements are clearly outlined in the student registration contract, in policy documentation and on the BCC website. The policy on the collection of and refund of students' fees is implemented effectively. In interviews with inspectors, students were clear about their fees and the refund process.

6.   The institution employs and continues to support appropriately qualified and experienced staff

6.1	There are appropriate policies and effective procedures for the recruitment and continuing employment of suitably qualified and experienced staff, which are designed to ensure the safety of the students.	☒ Yes	☐ No
6.2	All staff are suitably qualified and experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying them out.	☒ Yes	☐ No
6.3	There are clear and appropriate job specifications for all staff.	☒ Yes	☐ No
6.4	There are effective procedures for the induction of all staff.	☒ Yes	☐ No
6.5	All staff are treated fairly and according to a published equality and diversity policy.	☒ Yes	☐ No
6.6	Staff have access to an appropriate complaints and appeals procedure.	☒ Yes	☐ No
6.7	Management monitors and reviews the performance of all staff through a clearly documented and transparent appraisal system that includes regular classroom observations of teaching staff.	☐ Yes	☒ No
6.8	The professional development needs of staff are identified through appraisal and other means, and measures are taken to support staff to address these and gain additional qualifications, where relevant.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☐ Met   ☒ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

BCC employs and supports appropriately qualified and experienced staff. Leaders and managers implement clear and appropriate policies and procedures effectively for the recruitment of staff. The Institution does not recruit students under the age of 18 to its higher education courses.

Meetings with staff and a review of staff's Curricula Vitae (CVs) demonstrate that all staff are suitably qualified and experienced; they understand their specific responsibilities and carry these out effectively. There are clear and appropriate job specifications for all staff.

There is an effective induction programme that helps all staff understand their roles and the Institution. Academic staff attend a range of orientation sessions, which helps them to understand the institutional quality management systems, the BCC teaching strategy and the research management policy.

The staff handbook provides detailed policies and information about the Institution's commitment to equality and diversity. In meetings with inspectors, staff confirmed that they are treated fairly and in accordance with relevant policies. Inspection findings confirm this view.

Staff have access to an appropriate complaints and appeals procedure, which is made available in the staff handbook and in manuals shared via online communication platforms. This ensures that all staff have access to important HR policies across the organisation.

A detailed and holistic annual appraisal process was recently developed for staff. The process makes effective use of self and peer assessments to comprehensively review the performance of staff, including job knowledge, productivity and self-management. This allows line managers to accurately review the performance of staff and evaluate how effectively they are meeting the expectations of their role.

6.7 The appraisal process has not yet been completed for all academic staff.

Leaders and managers identify the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) needs of staff through informal conversations, quality audits, moderation activities and a systematic review of student feedback. These mechanisms ensure that staff are well supported to undertake appropriate qualifications and training opportunities when necessary. In meetings with inspectors, staff confirmed that the Institution supports their CPD needs well. Inspection findings confirm this view.

7. Academic management is effective

7.1	There are appropriate procedures for the proposal, design and validation of programmes of study that take account of the mission of the institution.	☒ Yes ☐ No
7.2	Intended learning outcomes for all programmes are clearly articulated, understood by students and publicly available.	☒ Yes ☐ No
7.3	There are regularly scheduled and recorded meetings of academic staff where academic programmes are reviewed.	☒ Yes ☐ No
7.4	There is an appropriate policy and effective procedures for the acquisition of academic resources to support programmes.	☒ Yes ☐ No
7.5	Commissioning of course materials is managed effectively, and materials and the budget are checked to ensure standardisation and consistency across the provision.	☒ Yes ☐ No
7.6	Students are encouraged to take an active role in the development of the academic provision to ensure student-centred learning.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

BCC has effective academic management arrangements. Meetings with academic managers and a review of relevant documents, including leaders' self-evaluations, confirm that there are well-developed procedures for the proposal, design and validation of programmes of study that consider the Institution's vision and mission effectively.

Meetings with students and a review of course and module handbooks and the LMS show that intended learning outcomes for all programmes are clearly articulated and publicly available. This ensures that students understand the purpose and learning intentions of their course.

Records of meetings demonstrate that there are regularly scheduled and recorded meetings of academic staff where academic courses are reviewed. In meetings with inspectors, academic staff confirmed that they meet regularly to review the performance and delivery of all courses. Inspection findings confirm this view.

BCC has clear and effective processes and procedures for commissioning and acquiring academic resources to support programmes. Meetings with academic staff and a review of the resource and programme management policies clearly demonstrate how managers identify, commission and procure the necessary learning resources, workbooks, multimedia materials and textbooks for each course. Managers confirm that there are systematic processes in place to ensure that materials and budgets are checked to ensure standardisation and consistency across the provision.

In inspection meetings, students confirm that they are encouraged to take an active role in developing the academic provision to ensure student-centred learning. Academic managers also confirm this. Inspection findings confirm these views.

8.   The institution takes reasonable care to recruit and enrol suitable students for its courses

8.1	Entry requirements for each programme are set at an appropriate level and are clearly stated in the programme descriptions seen by prospective students.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
8.2	Students are informed as to the necessary language requirements for entry onto programmes.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
8.3	A formal application process ensures that students meet the entry requirements and any claimed qualifications are verified.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
8.4	All students' application enquiries are responded to promptly and appropriately.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
8.5	Prospective students are properly briefed on the nature and requirements of the programme(s) in which they are interested and provided with advice on choosing their programme.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
8.6	Students receive a proper initial assessment, which includes language ability, to confirm their capability to complete the programmes on which they are enrolling.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
8.7	The institution makes it clear to applicants that they are responsible for checking that they have the skills and knowledge required to study on the chosen course.	☒ Yes	☐ No	
8.8	The institution has a clear policy on the accreditation of prior learning and prior experiential learning, which is brought to the attention of prospective students.	☒ Yes	☐ No	☐ NA
8.9	Any recruitment agents are properly selected, briefed, monitored and evaluated.	☐ Yes	☐ No	☒ NA

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

BCC has effective mechanisms in place to ensure that students are recruited to suitable courses that meet their needs and capabilities. A review of course handbooks and the BCC website demonstrates that the entry criteria and language requirements for each programme are set at an appropriate level. In meetings with inspectors, students confirmed they had received clear advice and guidance on the necessary entry and language requirements for their courses.

A review of the online student administration management system demonstrates that the Institution has an effective, formal admissions process. Admissions officers have proper procedures in place to check and verify student documentation to ensure that they meet the requirements and can provide reliable evidence of their qualifications and identity, for example their certified identity document and a certified National Senior Certificate.

The Institution has effective arrangements in place to ensure that application enquiries are responded to promptly and appropriately. Prospective students benefit from effective advice and guidance about the nature and requirements of BCC's courses and delivery mode. This ensures that students have the necessary information to make decisions about their studies and course options. Students confirmed to inspectors that their questions and enquiries were dealt with promptly and professionally. Inspection findings confirm this to be the case.

The admissions process ensures that the necessary checks and assessments are completed to ensure that students have the required prior achievements and ability to complete the courses on which they are enrolling. Admissions

officers have effective assessment arrangements in place to respond to any concerns over students' English language proficiency.

Students' responsibility for checking that they have the skills and knowledge required to study their chosen programme is reinforced throughout the application process. For example, admissions officers clarify with students the demands and expectations of courses to ensure they are able to make informed decisions about their study choices.

The Institution implements effective policies to deal with the accreditation of prior learning. Clear policies on credit accumulation and transfer and the recognition of prior learning are made available to students, where required. This ensures that students' relevant informal and non-formal learning acquired through work and life experience is appropriately considered when applying possible exemptions.

BCC does not make use of external recruitment agents.

9. The institution encourages and supports its staff to undertake research and other forms of scholarship and to engage in other professional activities

9.1	The institution encourages academic staff to undertake research in relevant fields and to publish their findings.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
9.2	Academic staff are encouraged to engage in research and/or scholarship that informs their teaching.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
9.3	There is a fair and transparent procedure for staff to seek financial support for their research and other professional development activities.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
9.4	The institution provides time for staff to meet regularly to share and discuss current research activities and, if appropriate, invites external speakers.	☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ NA

This standard is judged to be: ☐ Met   ☒ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met   ☐ NA

Comments

The Institution encourages academic staff to undertake research and to publish their findings. For example, the research management policy outlines the financial incentives available to support staff in publishing their research. Leaders have recently created the post of Research and Didactic Leads to promote and support research development across the Institution.

Leaders and managers have implemented effective procedures for staff to apply for and access financial support for their research and for undertaking CPD activities. Procedures are disseminated to staff effectively through the online communication platform. In meetings with inspectors, academic staff confirmed that financial support arrangements are clear and transparent. Inspection findings confirm this view.

9.4 The Institution does not yet provide specific time for staff to meet regularly to share and discuss their current research activities.

10. Publicity material, both printed and electronic, gives a comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate description of the institution and its curriculum

10.1	Text and images provide an accurate depiction of the institution's location, premises, facilities and the range and nature of resources and services offered.	☒ Yes ☐ No
10.2	Information on the programmes available and their assessment and progression is comprehensive, accurate, readily accessible and up to date.	☒ Yes ☐ No
10.3	There are effective procedures to update information on a regular basis to ensure its relevance and accuracy.	☒ Yes ☐ No
10.4	The information provided ensures students are well informed of the status of the qualifications offered, including the awarding body and level of award.	☒ Yes ☐ No
10.5	Students are informed of the full cost of all programmes, including costs of assessments, activities and any required materials.	☒ Yes ☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

A review of the BCC website and publicity materials confirms that text and images provide an up-to-date and accurate description of the Institution, its courses and services and facilities. This useful information ensures that students can make informed choices about their studies.

Programme handbooks, the BCC website, clear course factsheets and detailed prospectuses are regularly updated by the marketing team, providing accurate and comprehensive information on each of the courses provided.

Course factsheets ensure students are well informed about the status of the qualifications offered, including the level of award and a detailed breakdown of costs.

INSPECTION AREA – TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

11.   Academic staff are effective in facilitating student learning

11.1	Lecturers have the required subject knowledge and pedagogic and communicative skills and experience to teach both the course content and level of course to which they are allocated.	☒ Yes	☐ No
11.2	The allocation of teaching staff to courses provides for a consistent learning experience, and delivery is monitored to ensure consistency.	☒ Yes	☐ No
11.3	The programmes and their constituent courses are delivered and assessed in ways that enable students to succeed by developing the knowledge and skills that will be required for final examinations or assessments.	☒ Yes	☐ No
11.4	Teaching sessions are appropriately informed by module descriptors and relate to defined intended learning outcomes.	☒ Yes	☐ No
11.5	Academic staff are effective in recognising individual learning needs and preferred learning styles and adapting their delivery to meet these.	☒ Yes	☐ No
11.6	Academic staff use a mixture of group and individual activities to encourage the active participation of all students and support their learning.	☐ Yes	☐ No ☒ NA
11.7	Students are encouraged and enabled to develop independent learning skills.	☒ Yes	☐ No
11.8	Students and academic staff have access to appropriate learning and study materials as well as other resources, and the institution encourages and supports their use.	☒ Yes	☐ No

To here

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

Academic staff have the relevant qualifications and experience to facilitate effective student learning. A review of staff CVs and meetings with academic managers confirms that academic staff hold the required level of subject knowledge and expertise in order to plan, implement and facilitate effective learning opportunities for students.

Leaders and managers systematically monitor the quality of online distance learning through reviews of learning, student engagement, internal moderation of assessments, and the collation and review of student feedback. This ensures that students' learning experiences are consistently of a high quality.

Academic staff ensure that courses are designed and assessed in innovative ways that are well suited to the online distance learning modality. A review of the LMS confirms that online courses are appropriately structured. Clear outlines for each course are in place and ensure that all required learning outcomes and skills are covered. This helps to ensure students are well prepared for their final assessments.

Group work is not applicable to the type of provision offered by BCC.

Students benefit from engaging course materials, pre-recorded lecturers and case-study materials that promote reflection, self-assessment and application. Materials are designed to allow students to access learning at a time and in

a place convenient for them, supporting their independent learning skills. Students engage well with the creative, online multimedia resources and a range of engaging learning activities that meet their individual needs.

A review of different courses available through the LMS demonstrates that students and staff have access to a wide range of appropriate and high-quality learning resources. All students are provided with hard-copy textbooks that support the broad range of online resources provided. The Institution fully encourages and is highly supportive of their use and development. As a result, learning materials are very effective in facilitating students' learning and progress.

12. Assessment is fair and appropriate for the level and nature of the courses, and students receive timely and supportive feedback on their work

12.1	Students are provided with an assessment schedule in which required coursework and revision periods are detailed in advance, with clear submission dates.	☒ Yes	☐ No
12.2	Assessment strategies are relevant to the content and nature of the courses and focused on measuring students' achievement of the intended learning outcomes.	☒ Yes	☐ No
12.3	Assessment tasks are clearly written, indicating what students need to do to meet stipulated levels of achievement.	☒ Yes	☐ No
12.4	Students receive detailed and supportive verbal and written feedback on their assessments and overall performance and progress, which are effectively monitored.	☒ Yes	☐ No
12.5	The institution takes appropriate steps to identify and discourage cheating, including plagiarism and other misdemeanours, and to penalise offenders.	☒ Yes	☐ No
12.6	There are clear policies and procedures for students to claim mitigating circumstances and to appeal against marks awarded.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be:　　　　☒ Met　　　☐ Partially Met　　　☐ Not Met

Comments

Course assessment arrangements are fair and appropriate. Inspection meetings and a review of the information provided on the LMS confirm that students are able to access a detailed online assessment schedule for their course. Clear assessment and assignment submission dates and exam revision periods are provided. This is effective in supporting students in preparing for their assessments.

A review of the course assessments confirms that students benefit from a wide range of effective formative and summative assessment strategies, such as multiple-choice questions, research essays and traditional invigilated examinations. Assessments are aligned well with the learning outcomes of each course. The assessment methods used are relevant to the nature of the student's course and referred to in module materials.

Scrutiny of the course assignment briefs confirms that these are detailed and provide clear and well-written tasks that are linked to the learning outcomes. Tasks allow a full range of grades to be achieved and are clearly linked to the relevant module grading criteria.

Feedback arrangements are effective. A review of the LMS, completed assessment feedback and meetings with students confirm that clear spoken and comprehensive written feedback is provided on all forms of assessment. Marked assessments show that markers clearly identify areas where students have done well and where they could have developed their work more. Individual student progress and performance are monitored effectively via online platforms. These arrangements ensure academic staff provide prompt and appropriate support when students are not progressing as expected.

The Institution has well-developed processes and procedures in place to identify, discourage and penalise cases of plagiarism and other forms of student malpractice. A clear and appropriate academic misconduct policy is shared with students in a printed handbook. Academic staff make effective use of commercial software to confirm the originality and authenticity of student assessment evidence.

Advanced digital proctoring applications and software together support academic staff very well to identify concerns over possible student malpractice cases swiftly and in taking prompt, necessary action when needed. As a result, offenders are penalised appropriately where necessary.

Clear guidance provided in the detailed student handbook and appeals policy ensures that students are aware of how to claim mitigating circumstances and to appeal against the marks awarded.

13. Student materials are appropriate to the medium of delivery and are effective

13.1	Course materials are designed for a specific and clearly stated level of study.	☒ Yes	☐ No
13.2	Course materials are appropriately presented and sufficiently comprehensive to enable students to achieve the programmes' objectives.	☒ Yes	☐ No
13.3	Course materials are accurate and reflect current knowledge and practice, and are regularly reviewed and revised.	☒ Yes	☐ No
13.4	Programme designers make effective use of appropriate teaching aids and learning resources.	☒ Yes	☐ No
13.5	The institution makes effective provision for students to access all resources.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met ☐ Partially Met ☐ Not Met

Comments

A review of online course resources and meetings with academic staff and students confirm that course materials very effectively support students' studies in the online distance learning modality.

Course materials and other learning materials are of a high quality and well designed. They support learning well and are appropriate for the individual courses and level of study. Academic managers ensure that courses are built around sound instructional design principles that are suitable for the online distance learning mode of study. As a result, key concepts and theories are reinforced well, supporting students' construction of understanding over time.

A review of BCC's online courses demonstrates that learning materials are accurate and reflect current knowledge, research and theory. Staff and student feedback, as well feedback from the internal and external moderation process, help to ensure that course materials are regularly reviewed. Where changes are required, academic managers have implemented clear procedures for issuing updates as and when necessary.

Course designers made effective use of pre-recorded lessons, interactive textbooks, quizzes, case studies and weekly teaching and learning activities to engage students and support learning and progression. All students have access to the course materials they need through the LMS and via hard-copy textbooks. The Institution's countrywide network of 47 LSCs ensures that all students are able to access a reliable computer and internet connection in order to access the resources they need for their studies.

INSPECTION AREA – STUDENT SUPPORT, GUIDANCE AND PROGRESSION

14. Students receive pastoral support appropriate to their age, background and circumstances

14.1	There are appropriate staff members responsible for student welfare who are accessible to all students and available to provide advice and counselling.	☒ Yes	☐ No
14.2	Students are given an induction to the institution, their programme of study and guidance on the use of facilities such as the library and IT provision.	☒ Yes	☐ No
14.3	Students receive appropriate information on the pastoral support available to them, including for the provision of emergency support.	☒ Yes	☐ No
14.4	The institution has policies to avoid discrimination and a published procedure for dealing with any abusive behaviour.	☒ Yes	☐ No
14.5	Staff are available to assist students to resolve issues of a general and/or technological nature. All enquiries from students are handled promptly and sympathetically.	☒ Yes	☐ No

14.6	There are effective systems to communicate with students out of class hours.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
14.7	Effective safeguarding arrangements are in place and are regularly reviewed to keep all participants safe.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA
14.8	Effective arrangements are in place to protect participants from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.	☒ Yes ☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

BCC has appropriate staff to support students' welfare needs. Student advisers provide students with personalised advice and guidance on all aspects of the student journey in each of the LSC hubs across South Africa.

Students receive a detailed and effective induction that supports their studies well. Students receive comprehensive guidance on how to use the various online Information Technology (IT) systems, including the LMS and online library resources. All students complete a foundational course in computer literacy to ensure they have the skills required to independently access their online courses, learning materials and assessments.

Clear guidance provided in handbooks and a dedicated online wellness module that is available to access at any time from the LMS ensure that all students receive appropriate information about the pastoral support available to them, including the provision of emergency support.

The student and staff handbooks provide clear policies outlining the Institution's commitment to equality and diversity, avoiding discrimination and tackling abusive behaviour. Handbooks provide clear guidance on whom to contact if any concerns were to arise.

Student advisers in each LSC provide students with prompt and effective support. Helpful IT support is also available through the central online support services, which are accessed through e-mail and online platforms such as the LMS. In meetings with inspectors, students confirm that their questions and queries are dealt with swiftly and professionally. Inspection findings confirm this view.

The Institution has a range of effective systems to communicate with students at times convenient for them. For example, students can use the LMS, e-mail and online communication platforms to contact student advisers and academic staff at any time.

BCC does not enrol students under the age of 18 years on its higher education courses.

The Institution has implemented effective arrangements to protect students from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism, including a suitable policy, risk assessment and action plan. Leaders have completed relevant online training to further develop their understanding of how to support people who are susceptible to radicalisation and extremist ideologies.

Leaders and managers have provided workshops and training to relevant staff to encourage critical engagement with the key issues leading to radicalisation and extremism and their roles and responsibilities in helping to protect students.

15.   Students receive appropriate academic support and guidance

15.1	Students have appropriate access to teaching staff outside teaching and learning sessions.	☒ Yes ☐ No
15.2	Students have access to appropriate support to enable the regular review of their academic progress.	☒ Yes ☐ No
15.3	Assessment outcomes are monitored to enable the identification of students who are not making satisfactory progress, and prompt intervention is made, where appropriate.	☒ Yes ☐ No

15.4	Academic support, advice and guidance on alternative programmes are provided to students who are judged not to be making sufficient progress and/or who wish to change their pattern of study.	☒ Yes ☐ No
15.5	Students have access to appropriate advice and guidance on careers and further study and any professional body exemptions that may be available.	☒ Yes ☐ No
15.6	The institution has a fair complaints procedure that includes an external adjudicator, for example, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) in the UK, and students are informed of how to submit a complaint.	☒ Yes ☐ No
15.7	Students are advised of BAC's complaints procedure.	☒ Yes ☐ No
15.8	Instructions and suggestions on how to study are made available to assist students to learn effectively and efficiently.	☒ Yes ☐ No
15.9	Students with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) are identified so that appropriate support can be provided.	☒ Yes ☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

Students have appropriate access to academic staff at convenient times to suit their needs. Students can contact full-time educators during office hours or visit their local LSC six days a week. Students can also use a range of electronic communication methods to liaise with staff. Contact details for educators are clearly published on course materials and also on the LMS. This ensures that all students are able to access the academic support and guidance they need.

Students are well supported in reviewing their academic progress through the feedback they receive on formative assessment activities and weekly teaching and learning activities via the LMS. Academic staff are proactive in carefully monitoring student engagement and participation. They contact students promptly to intervene and offer further support and guidance if concerns over their progress become apparent.

Students benefit from access to appropriate information and guidance on careers and further study. For example, students can use the online career compass tool to explore possible career routes that match their needs and interests. BCC's graduate support service helps students hone their CVs and interview skills to secure employment. The Graduate Plus scheme provides students who have recently completed their studies with enhanced job search support and access to bursaries to fund higher level qualifications. The arrangements ensure that students receive the advice and guidance they need to support their progression and next steps.

The Institution has a fair complaints policy and process in place, which include provision for the appointment of an external independent arbitrator where required. Clear guidance in the student rulebook and provided through induction ensures that students are clear about how to raise a formal complaint if necessary. The student entry, guidance and support policy provides students with advice about the BAC complaints procedure.

A range of high-quality resources provides students with effective guidance on how to study and learn effectively. For example, dedicated online modules provide students with specific guidance on setting goals, time management, essay writing and study skills. In meetings with inspectors, students confirmed that they are well supported to learn effectively online. Inspection findings confirm this view.

The Institution's application form requests that students disclose any SEND so that appropriate support and reasonable adjustment can be provided. The staff and student disability policy outlines the reasonable adjustments that can be made to ensure that students' individual needs are accommodated.

16.   International students are provided with specific advice and assistance

16.1	Before their arrival, international students receive appropriate advice on travelling to and living in their chosen country of study.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
16.2	On arrival, international students receive an appropriate induction on issues specific to the local area.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

16.3	Information and advice, which are specific to international students, continue to be available throughout their time at the institution.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
16.4	Provision of support takes into account cultural and religious considerations.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
16.5	Where possible, students have access to speakers of their own first language.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met   ☐ NA

Comments

All higher education students complete their studies through online distance learning. However, if international students do travel to South Africa, they receive appropriate, personalised advice and guidance from the Office of the Registrar or from an LSC student adviser on arrival and throughout their studies, including on issues specific to the local area.

Students' cultural and religious requirements are taken into consideration effectively. For example, learning materials are designed to be inclusive. Students can access their studies flexibly and at times that are suitable to meet their individual needs, such as through accommodating the observance of religious holidays.

All courses and learning materials are presented in the English language, and proficiency in English is a requirement of enrolment. However, in the event that a student's first language is not English, access to speakers of their own first language is available, where possible.

17. Student attendance is measured and recorded regularly, and effective remedial action is taken where necessary

17.1	There is an appropriate, clear and published policy on required student attendance and punctuality.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA
17.2	There are effective procedures and systems to enforce attendance and punctuality.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA
17.3	Accurate and secure records of attendance and punctuality, at each session, are kept for all students.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA
17.4	Data on attendance and punctuality is collated centrally and reviewed regularly, and absences are followed up promptly.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

All higher education students complete their studies through online distance learning. This means that they can engage with their studies and complete the learning materials and activities at times to suit their individual needs and around other commitments. Therefore, the Institution has no specific policy on recording and enforcing attendance and punctuality at specific sessions.

Academic staff collect and review data on student engagement and participation through the dedicated mentoring as a service system. A system review demonstrates how student communication and online participation are proactively monitored by student advisers and other staff to quickly identify where students are not regularly engaging and may be at risk of not completing their studies.

A systematic process of alerts ensures that when students do not regularly participate and engage, this is quickly identified and followed up effectively.

18. Where residential accommodation is offered, it is fit for purpose, well maintained and appropriately supervised

18.1	Any residential accommodation is clean, safe and of a standard that is adequate for the needs of students.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
18.2	Any residential accommodation is open to inspection by the appropriate authorities.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

18.3	A level of supervision is provided that is appropriate to the needs of students.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
18.4	Students are provided with advice on suitable private accommodation.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

This standard is judged to be: ☐ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met   ☒ NA

Comments

19. The institution provides an appropriate social programme for students and information on activities in the locality

19.1	Students are provided with appropriate information on opportunities for participation in social events and other leisure activities that may be of interest.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
19.2	The social programme is responsive to the needs and wishes of students, and activities have been chosen with consideration of their affordability.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
19.3	Any activities organised by the institution are supervised by a responsible representative with suitable qualifications and/or experience.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
19.4	Students are encouraged to develop and participate in extramural activities and, when studying remotely, the activities include appropriate use of online forums or channels.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
19.5	The institution supports and encourages peer interaction through a variety of channels, e.g. social network forums and channels.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met   ☐ NA

Comments

The Institution provides an appropriate social programme for students and information on activities in the locality. Students are provided with information relating to social events organised through their local LSC, for example, sporting, music, film and cultural events. Social events are organised in response to students' needs and wishes.

The relevant LSC branch manager supervises all events following approval from managers at the BCC head office.

Although students complete their courses online, they are actively encouraged to participate in the social activities arranged by each of the 47 LSCs nationwide. The Institution has also recently launched the Boston Broadcast online radio station, through which students are encouraged to host radio shows and take part in broadcasts and competitions.

The Boston Times publication is widely shared with students electronically and demonstrates how peer interaction is encouraged and promoted. The publication features a celebration of all the different events in which students have participated.

In addition, the LMS provides a useful online forum for students to interact with their peers. These initiatives ensure that students have access to an appropriate social programme online and in their locality.

INSPECTION AREA – PREMISES, FACILITIES AND LEARNING RESOURCES

20. The institution has secure possession of and access to its premises

20.1	The institution has secure tenure on its premises.	☒ Yes ☐ No
20.2	The institution has the legal right to use these premises for the delivery of higher education.	☒ Yes ☐ No

20.3	Where required, the institution has access to suitable external premises for academic or non-academic purposes of a temporary or occasional nature.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

A document review and meetings with leaders and managers confirm that the Institution has secure tenure via ownership or long-lease agreements on its head office buildings and the 47 LSC venues where students can access computers and the internet in order to participate in BCC's online distance learning courses.

The Institution has the appropriate legal rights to use the two head office premises for the purposes of higher education. Appropriate authority to deliver in-person higher education programmes is not required for each of the LSCs due to the distance learning nature of the Institution's approved higher education courses. No course delivery takes place at the LSCs.

The Institution has no requirement to access external premises for academic or non-academic purposes.

21. The premises provide a safe, secure and clean environment for students and staff

21.1	Access to the premises is appropriately restricted and secured.	☒ Yes ☐ No
21.2	The premises are maintained in an adequate state of repair, decoration and cleanliness.	☒ Yes ☐ No
21.3	There are specific safety rules in areas of particular hazard (e.g. science laboratories), which are brought to the attention of students, staff and visitors.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA
21.4	General guidance on health and safety is made available to students, staff and visitors.	☒ Yes ☐ No
21.5	There is adequate signage inside and outside the premises, and general information is displayed effectively.	☒ Yes ☐ No
21.6	There is adequate circulation space for the number of students and staff accommodated and a suitable area in which to receive visitors.	☒ Yes ☐ No
21.7	There are toilet and hand-washing facilities of an appropriate number and acceptable level of cleanliness.	☒ Yes ☐ No
21.8	There is adequate air conditioning, heating and ventilation in all rooms.	☒ Yes ☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met   ☐ NA

Comments

BCC premises provide a safe, secure, and clean environment for both students and staff. An online tour of the premises demonstrates that access is secure and appropriately restricted. For example, the head office premises are appropriately secured, with access monitored by a reception and information desk on the ground floor and with restricted access to all areas. The premises are accessible to those with disabilities and restricted mobility. Staff are well supported by a detailed security policy, as communicated in the staff handbook.

A remote review of a sample of the 47 LSCs showed that they are well maintained, decorated and clean. Detailed health and safety guidance, including on fire evacuation routes, is displayed in all relevant areas. A documentation review and discussions with managers and staff confirm that comprehensive guidance is provided to staff and students during their induction and as detailed in their respective handbooks.

There are no areas of particular hazard that require specific safety rules.

The head office premises and the LSCs provide adequate space for both staff and students. Reception staff provide appropriate guidance on arrival and accompany visitors as necessary. The premises have clear general and safety signage throughout to ensure that staff and students know how to keep themselves safe.

The premises provide an excellent space for staff to work, socialise and receive visitors. The toilets are adequate in number, very clean, and well maintained. Heating, ventilation and air conditioning are excellent. LSCs provide a safe working environment and a comfortable area for students to access the IT support and resources they need.

22. Classrooms and other learning areas are appropriate for the programmes offered

22.1	Classrooms and other learning areas provide adequate accommodation in size and number for the classes (e.g. lectures, seminars, tutorials) allocated to them.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
22.2	Classrooms and/or any specialised learning areas (e.g. laboratories, clinics, workshops, studios) are equipped to a level that allows for the effective delivery of each programme.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
22.3	There are facilities suitable for conducting assessments such as examinations.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met ☐ Partially Met ☐ Not Met ☐ NA

Comments

The network of 47 LSCs provides students with adequate accommodation to access support and IT facilities when required.

LSCs are well equipped with modern personal computers and high-speed internet to ensure that all students can access their online learning materials and assessments.

Students can use the booking system to access LSC facilities to undertake their assessments and upload any assignment evidence. As a result, LSCs provide suitable premises for students to undertake their examinations and other assessments.

23. There are appropriate additional facilities for students and staff

23.1	Students have access to sufficient space and suitable facilities for private individual study and group work.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
23.2	Academic staff have access to sufficient personal space for preparing lessons, marking work and consultations with students.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA
23.3	Students and staff have access to space and facilities suitable for relaxation and the consumption of food and drink where appropriate.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
23.4	Students and staff have access to secure storage for personal possessions where appropriate.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
23.5	There are individual offices or rooms in which academic staff and senior management can hold private meetings and a room of sufficient size to hold staff meetings.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
23.6	Administrative offices are adequate in size and suitably resourced for the effective administration of the institution.	☒ Yes ☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met ☐ Partially Met ☐ Not Met

Comments

There are appropriate additional facilities for students and staff. The LSCs provide students with appropriate facilities to access a quiet space for online learning and to meet with other students to discuss their courses if required.

The LSCs are not used for teaching, and, therefore, teachers do not prepare lessons on site.

LSCs provide suitable areas for staff and students to relax, store personal possessions, and consume food and drink, where appropriate.

Meetings with staff and a remote review of a sample of the 47 LSCs demonstrate that staff have excellent access to a range of areas to carry out their roles. Facilities include an appropriate desk space to undertake their administrative duties, access to modern computer equipment and the use of storage and filing facilities.

Appropriate spaces are available for holding staff meetings.

An online tour of the head office premises shows that administrative offices are adequate in size and well-resourced for the effective administration of the Institution.

24. The library is appropriately stocked and provides a fit-for-purpose learning resource for the student body

24.1	There is sufficient provision of learning materials, including books, journals and periodicals and online materials.	☒ Yes ☐ No	
24.2	There are clear, systematic and effective means of ensuring the adequacy and currency of library stock to reflect staff and student needs.	☒ Yes ☐ No	
24.3	The library has sufficient space for student independent study and group working.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA	
24.4	There is a well-organised lending policy.	☒ Yes ☐ No	
24.5	The library is adequately staffed with appropriately qualified and experienced staff.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA	
24.6	Library opening times are sufficient to encourage and support students' independent learning.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ NA	

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met ☐ Partially Met ☐ Not Met

Comments

Students and staff have access to a comprehensive online library of resources, which provides a fit-for-purpose learning resource.

Academic staff systematically identify the online library resources required to support each course. This ensures that all students have effective online access to the learning texts and e-book stock they need.

The Institution's library is online, and there is no physical library space for students to access. However, students can visit one of the LSCs to access suitable space for study or groupwork if required.

Students are able to access library resources at any time from anywhere with an internet connection via the LMS.

A review of staff CVs demonstrates that the library is staffed by appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

As the library is purely online, there are no limits on when resources can be accessed.

25. The information technology resources are well managed, effective and provide a fit-for-purpose learning resource for the student body

25.1	There is appropriate technological access and sufficient connectivity to enable students to study flexibly.	☒ Yes ☐ No	
25.2	Students have effective online resources that assist with their learning, optimise interaction between the institution and the student and enhance instructional and educational services.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA	
25.3	There is provision of appropriate, up-to-date software and virtual learning environments that reflect the needs of the programmes.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA	
25.4	There is an effective means of ensuring the renewal of hardware and software to ensure efficiency and currency.	☒ Yes ☐ No	
25.5	The institution has access to the services of an experienced Information Technology (IT) technician who can ensure that systems are operative at all times and provide support to students, academic staff, and students and staff working remotely.	☒ Yes ☐ No	

25.6	The institution makes effective provision for students to access conventional and online resources.	☒ Yes ☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

IT resources are effective and well managed. Students are expected to have their own reliable technology resources in order to access their course materials and assessments online. In addition, the network of LSCs provides students with access to reliable personal computers and internet connection. This ensures that all students have the resources they need to study flexibly.

The LMS is reliable and accessible, ensuring that all students have effective online learning resources to support their studies and communicate with staff. In meetings with inspectors, students confirm that online learning resources are reliable, up to date and very well supported. Inspection findings confirm this view.

A centralised IT department ensures that software and hardware are regularly reviewed and updated to meet the Institution's and students' needs.

A suitable, experienced, and qualified IT manager and a team of IT technicians effectively oversee the Institution's IT operations, with appropriate technician support in place to ensure systems are operational at all times. The system's processes ensure that any technical issues are recorded effectively and responded to promptly. This ensures that staff and students benefit from reliable and effective IT resources to support their work and study.

As well as reliable IT resources and facilities, all students are provided with a hard-copy textbook. This ensures that students can access a reliable offline learning resource to supplement the comprehensive electronic resources available.

INSPECTION AREA – QUALITY MANAGEMENT, ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

26. The institution regularly obtains and records feedback from students and other stakeholders and takes appropriate action where necessary

26.1	The views of all stakeholders are canvassed and recorded regularly, considered objectively, analysed and evaluated thoroughly and, where necessary, appropriate action is taken.	☒ Yes ☐ No
26.2	Student feedback is obtained through appropriate formal student representation mechanisms.	☒ Yes ☐ No
26.3	The institution has appropriate formal feedback mechanisms to inform all stakeholders of any action taken as a result of their views.	☐ Yes ☒ No

This standard is judged to be: ☐ Met   ☒ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

The Institution regularly obtains and records feedback from students and other stakeholders and takes appropriate action where necessary. Leaders and managers obtain, record, and evaluate feedback from different stakeholders to inform their decision-making. For example, surveys systematically collect feedback from students and alumni on the quality of course modules and the effectiveness of institutional services.

Leaders and managers act when required in response to the stakeholder feedback obtained.

Given the online distance learning mode of study, all students have regular and systematic opportunities to provide feedback formally through the survey structure. This ensures that the Institution fully represents and considers students' views.

26.3 Leaders and managers have not yet implemented formal feedback mechanisms to inform all stakeholders of any action taken as a result of their views.

27.   The institution has effective systems to review its own standards and assess its own performance

27.1	All quality management policies and procedures are clearly documented and are brought to the attention of staff and, where appropriate, students and other stakeholders.	☒ Yes	☐ No
27.2	The institution's quality assurance policies and procedures appropriately inform its strategic management.	☒ Yes	☐ No
27.3	The principles of quality assurance are embedded throughout the institution to ensure a quality ethos.	☒ Yes	☐ No
27.4	The institution undertakes regular and systematic monitoring of its operations and reviews all aspects of its performance against clearly specified and appropriate performance indicators.	☒ Yes	☐ No
27.5	Management compiles regular reports that present the results of the institution's reviews and incorporate action plans.	☒ Yes	☐ No
27.6	Particular attention is paid to the quality of the student learning experience and to ensuring that there is fair treatment of all students.	☒ Yes	☐ No
27.7	The nominated course leader produces an end-of-session, end-of-semester or end-of-year course report that includes measures of student satisfaction, completion rates and achievement levels.	☒ Yes	☐ No
27.8	The nominated programme leader, drawing on reports from the constituent courses, produces an annual programme report that includes analysis of year-on-year results on student satisfaction, achievement levels, completion rates and progression to further study or employment.	☒ Yes	☐ No
27.9	Key performance indicators include an analysis of student outcomes in terms of year-on-year performance, which highlights any significant variations.	☒ Yes	☐ No
27.10	General performance reports include an analysis of year-on-year data, including on student satisfaction, retention and achievement, staff performance (including research and other forms of scholarship) and a review of resourcing issues.	☒ Yes	☐ No
27.11	Review and revalidation of programmes on a regular basis involve external assessors as appropriate.	☒ Yes	☐ No
27.12	Institutional systems ensure the effective consideration of programme reports and that appropriate actions are incorporated into action-planning.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

BCC has very clearly documented quality management policies and procedures, which are shared with staff and students effectively through induction, handbooks, and online communication platforms. The impact of quality assurance policies and procedures appropriately feeds into BCC's strategic management, including the Institution's key goals and objectives.

All staff have a clear commitment to the principles of quality assurance. These principles are embedded throughout the Institution, as seen in the staffing structure and the rigorous and methodical approach to quality assurance. For example, leaders have invested in the creation of a specific quality promotion and research unit and a team of programme quality practitioners. In meetings with inspectors, staff demonstrated their passion and commitment to ensuring that the Institution is focused on delivering a high-quality experience for students.

The Institution undertakes regular and systematic monitoring of its operations and reviews all aspects of its performance against clearly specified and appropriate performance indicators. For example, programme reviews are regularly completed against relevant benchmarks to identify areas of strength and where improvements can be made to improve the quality of provision further.

Leaders compile annual reports that present the results of quality reviews and audits. Action plans are produced to clearly summarise recommendations for improvement, and the relevant staff teams review and implement these.

In their reviews and evaluations of performance, leaders and managers pay particular attention to the quality of the student learning experience and the fair treatment of all students. Regular student surveys ensure that the student voice is effectively captured and fully considered. Leaders are mindful of students' resources and ensure that their education experience is high quality and accessible to all.

Academic staff produce end-of-module reports that include relevant measures of student satisfaction, completion rates and achievement levels. Programme quality practitioners produce an annual programme report, which includes a clear and detailed analysis of year-on-year results on student satisfaction, achievement levels, completion rates and progression to further study or employment. The annual report provides a very clear summary of course performance against specific quality indicators. These processes ensure managers can carefully track and monitor how each programme evolves and improves over time.

Leaders complete detailed general performance reports that include an analysis of year-on-year data, including on student satisfaction rates, retention and achievement, staff performance and a review of resourcing issues. Programme review and revalidation are fully informed by external moderator feedback. This ensures that evaluations are accurate and fully informed.

Leaders consider programme reports in annual performance reports. This ensures that leaders have the information and data they need to evaluate the quality of provision and take appropriate action where required, such as in completing risk registers and quality improvement plans.

28.	The institution has a strong commitment to, and procedures that facilitate, continuing enhancement of its provision		
28.1	Good practice is effectively identified and disseminated across the institution.	☒ Yes	☐ No
28.2	End-of-session course and annual programme reports include improvement and ongoing developments made and identify further areas requiring enhancement.	☒ Yes	☐ No
28.3	Action plans for enhancement are implemented and reviewed regularly within the institution's committee structure.	☒ Yes	☐ No

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met

Comments

Leaders and managers have a strong commitment to, and procedures that facilitate, continuing enhancement of the provision at BCC. Quality managers complete regular audits of provision and identify best practice, which is shared through committees, online forums and in formal and informal meetings with staff.

Programme reports identify actions arising through reflection and detailed data analysis, including student survey feedback. This ensures that relevant improvement areas are promptly identified and included in action plans.

Committees regularly review improvement plans to monitor progress. Leaders and managers make research-informed decisions and are reflective and reflexive when considering and taking action.

INSPECTION AREA – ONLINE, DISTANCE AND BLENDED LEARNING

29.	The institution has suitable staff to ensure the successful delivery of online and distance learning	
29.1	Staff have an understanding of the specific requirements of online, distance and blended learning.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
29.2	Academic staff are properly and continuously trained with respect to provider policies, student needs, instructional approaches and techniques and the use of appropriate instructional technology.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
29.3	Tutors have an understanding of the special challenges and demands of online, distance and blended learning.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

29.4	Staff ensure students are made aware of the necessary level of digital literacy required to follow the stated programmes.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA
29.5	Instructions and suggestions on how to study and how to use the online tutorial materials are made available to assist students to learn effectively and efficiently.	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

This standard is judged to be: ☒ Met   ☐ Partially Met   ☐ Not Met   ☐ NA

Comments

The Institution has experienced and knowledgeable staff in place to ensure the successful delivery of online and distance learning. Meetings with staff and a review of their CVs show that staff have a secure and developed understanding of the specific requirements of online distance learning.

Leaders and managers use their extensive knowledge and specialist expertise in online distance learning to support and train all staff in the use of online instructional technology. Leaders and managers ensure that the courses and learning materials are carefully designed to use effective and engaging instructional approaches and techniques that engage students who are learning online.

Meetings with staff and students confirm that staff are experienced in and understand the opportunities, challenges and demands of online distance learning. Students confirmed to inspectors that they are very satisfied with the quality of their online learning experience, the high-quality learning resources and the high levels of support and guidance they receive from staff throughout their learning journey. Inspection findings confirm these views.

Course induction arrangements, guidance documents and handbooks ensure that all students are very well informed about the level of digital literacy required to complete the courses via online distance learning. Students benefit from detailed guidance documents and online learning modules that support the development of their online academic and digital literacies. As a result, students are very well supported to learn effectively and efficiently.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated   ☒ Yes   ☐ No

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

GOVERNANCE, STRATEGY AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Institution's strengths

There are clear and effective oversight and governance arrangements in place to ensure that BCC is well managed in accordance with its mission and aims.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
2.3 Leaders must ensure that the organisational strategy is well communicated to all stakeholders within and outside the Institution.	☐ High ☒ Medium ☐ Low

GENERAL AND ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Institution's strengths

The Institution operates very effective digital proctoring systems to ensure that assessment outcomes are valid and reliable. The Institution implements clear and well-established moderation procedures that ensure that assessment outcomes are accurate and students receive credit that reflects their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
6.7 Leaders and managers must ensure that the staff appraisal process is fully implemented for all staff.	☐ High ☒ Medium ☐ Low
9.4 The Institution must provide time for staff to meet regularly to share and discuss current research activities.	☐ High ☒ Medium ☐ Low

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Institution's strengths

Academic staff have the subject knowledge and expertise to plan, implement and facilitate effective online distance learning opportunities for students. Students benefit from access to a broad range of high-quality, engaging learning resources that promotes reflection, self-assessment and application and result in good support for students' independent learning skills.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

STUDENT SUPPORT, GUIDANCE AND PROGRESSION

Institution's strengths

Academic staff proactively monitor students' engagement and participation in their online studies so that students who need extra support are identified quickly and provided with the support they need to stay on track. The Institution provides students with relevant information and advice on careers and further study which provide the guidance they need to support their progression and next steps. A range of high-quality resources provides students with effective guidance on how to study effectively online.

Actions required	Priority H/M/L
None	☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

PREMISES, FACILITIES AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Institution's strengths

Students benefit from a network of clean, safe and well-equipped Learning Support Centres.	
All students have access to reliable computers and internet connections to complete their online learning and assessments.	
A comprehensive range of high-quality electronic and hard copy learning materials ensures that all students have the resources they need to learn, progress and complete their studies.	
Actions required	**Priority H/M/L**
None	☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

QUALITY MANAGEMENT, ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

Institution's strengths

Leaders and managers are passionate and committed to a culture of effective quality assurance.	
Areas for improvement are quickly identified and acted on, and students benefit from a consistently high standard of education and care.	
Actions required	**Priority H/M/L**
26.3 Leaders must implement an appropriate mechanism to inform all stakeholders of any action taken as a result of their feedback.	☐ High ☒ Medium ☐ Low

ONLINE, DISTANCE AND BLENDED LEARNING

Institution's strengths

Courses and learning materials are carefully designed to use effective and engaging instructional approaches and techniques to ensure that students are fully engaged in their online learning.	
Students benefit from effective guidance and resources to develop their online academic and digital literacies so that they are well supported to learn effectively and efficiently.	
Actions required	**Priority H/M/L**
None	☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

None

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

THE INSPECTION WAS CARRIED OUT BY:

| Steve Ingle | Lead Inspector |