



Audit of overseas provision

**Edinburgh Napier University and the
Institute of Advanced Management, India**

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Introduction

This report considers the collaborative arrangement between Edinburgh Napier University and the Institute of Advanced Management, India.

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

1 The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is a United Kingdom (UK) organisation that seeks to promote public confidence that the quality of provision and the standards of awards in higher education are being safeguarded. It provides public information about quality and standards in higher education mainly by publishing reports resulting from a peer review process of audits and reviews. These are conducted by teams, selected and trained by QAA, and comprising academic staff from higher or further education institutions.

2 One of QAA's review activities is to carry out quality audits of collaborative links between UK higher education institutions and their partner organisations in other countries. In 2008-09 QAA conducted audits of selected partnership links between UK higher education institutions and institutions in India. The purpose of these audits was to provide information on the way in which the UK institutions were maintaining academic standards and the quality of education in their partnerships. The reports on the individual audits will be used in the preparation of an overview report on the collaborative arrangements for the management of standards and quality of UK higher education provision in India.

The audit process for overseas collaborative links

3 In April 2008, QAA invited all UK higher education institutions to provide information on their collaborative partnerships in India. On the basis of the information returned on the nature and scale of the links, QAA selected for audit visits ten UK institutions with links in India. Each of the selected institutions produced a briefing paper describing the way in which the link operated, and commenting on the effectiveness of the means by which it assured quality and standards. In addition, each institution was asked to make reference to the extent to which the link was representative of its procedures and practice in all its overseas collaborative activity. Institutions were also invited to make reference to the ways in which their arrangements met the expectations of the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education (Code of practice)*, particularly *Section 2: Collaborative provision and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning)*, published by QAA in 2004.

4 In October/November 2008, one of three audit teams visited each of the selected UK institutions to discuss its arrangements in the light of its briefing paper. In January/February 2009, the same team visited the relevant partner organisations in India to gain further insight into the experience of students and staff, and to supplement the view formed by the team from the briefing paper and from the UK visit. During the visits to institutions in India, discussions were conducted with key members of staff and with students. The audit of Edinburgh Napier University was coordinated for QAA by Mr W Naylor, Assistant Director, Reviews Group. The audit team comprised Ms Ann Kettle and Mr Philip Lloyd (auditors), with Mr W Naylor acting as audit secretary. QAA is particularly grateful to the UK institutions and their partners in India for the willing cooperation they provided to the team.

The context of collaborative provision with partners in India

5 In India, responsibility for higher education resides with the Department of Higher Education within the Ministry of Human Resources Development. The University Grants Commission (UGC) is the national body responsible for granting recognition to all higher education qualifications; it also regulates the use of university title. Constitutional responsibilities for education are shared between the national parliament and state legislatures. Both can authorise the establishment of universities, public or private, while the national government can grant 'deemed university' status to an institution on recommendation from UGC. Degree awarding powers are vested in universities, but

there are also numerous colleges that offer the degrees of universities to which they are affiliated. Colleges may be categorised as public or private based on their ownership; however, funding arrangements blur the distinction because of the self-financing activities of public institutions and because private institutions may receive government aid. The number of private institutions has grown in recent years and these tend to offer more employment-orientated programmes than their public counterparts; some award qualifications through collaboration with foreign institutions. The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) is one of several bodies established with responsibilities in particular subject areas. The remit of AICTE is broad and includes engineering and technology, business and management, hotel and catering management, architecture and town planning, pharmacy, and applied arts and crafts. AICTE introduced regulations in 2005, under which foreign institutions imparting technical education are required to obtain approval from AICTE for their operations in India. There is currently no legal framework for recognising qualifications awarded by foreign institutions on the basis of programmes delivered entirely in India. The so-called 'Foreign Providers Bill', which would introduce such a framework, has been the subject of parliamentary debate, but has yet to reach the statute books.

Section 1: The background to the collaborative link

Nature of the link

6 The partnership between Edinburgh Napier University (Napier) and the Institute of Advanced Management (IAM) was established in 2006. The main focus of the partnership is the delivery by IAM of the third year of Napier's BA Hospitality Management, leading to the award of an ordinary degree by the University. Applicants are normally required to have completed successfully the first two years of IAM's Diploma in Hospitality Administration (formerly Diploma in Hotel and Catering Management). Applicants may also choose to pursue the third year of the programme at Napier.

7 IAM delivers the programme at two campuses in Kolkata and Goa. All teaching and assessment is in English. There is one entry point a year and delivery of the programme began in September 2006. Seventy-six students (64 in Kolkata and 12 in Goa) were admitted in 2006, 114 students (71 in Kolkata and 43 in Goa) in September 2007 and 191 (113 in Kolkata and 78 in Goa) in September 2008.

8 IAM is a member of the IndiSmart Group, a group of colleges established in the early 1990s to provide programmes of study in business, management, information technology (IT) and hospitality management. Napier's current Principal had been involved in successful partnerships between IndiSmart colleges and Robert Gordon University and Queen Margaret University since 1993. The link between Napier and IndiSmart Group began in 2003 with the approval of an MBA to be delivered by another of the group's colleges, but the programme did not run due to a lack of demand. IAM is approved by AICTE and is also a member of the Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education. The audit team was informed by Napier that IAM had recently received confirmation from an advocate in the Kolkata High Court that the partnership does not require a separate approval from AICTE.

9 Napier's first programme to be delivered overseas was approved in 1993. In March 2008 it had a portfolio of 14 such programmes in China, Malaysia and India, as well as a number of articulation agreements with partners outside the UK. Napier's register of collaborative programmes is maintained by the Collaborative Partnerships Committee and is available on the University's intranet. Napier may wish to reconsider the availability of the register given the expectation in the *Code of practice, Section 2*, that it will form part of the University's publicly available information.

10 Since the link with IAM was approved, Napier has revised the way that it manages its overseas activities and reviewed its procedures and processes in relation to collaborative provision (see paragraphs 11 to 20). However, the fundamental principles of the ways in which it operates

in partnership with other institutions remain unchanged. The University, therefore, considers the partnership with IAM to be representative of its approach to overseas collaboration.

The UK institution's approach to overseas collaborative provision

11 In its Briefing Paper, Napier stated that its Strategic Plan, with the development of the University's international focus as one of its key aims, had shaped its approach to collaborative partnerships. In respect of international collaboration, the Strategic Plan envisages working with partners overseas to develop new programmes and articulation routes to bring international students to study in Edinburgh. An International Strategy, developed from the Strategic Plan, set out specific international strategic aims and more detailed targets for overseas collaboration. Napier also recognised that international collaboration was important for its contribution to the financial sustainability of the University and its ability to invest further in the development of its activities in the UK and overseas.

12 In the context of these institutional strategies, Napier creates, maintains and develops collaborative partnerships with reference to a set of principles, some of which apply specifically to international activities. In general, Napier undertakes to ensure through partner evaluation and due diligence that there is a consonance between the mission and values of the University and the proposed partner; to acknowledge and accept that it is responsible for the quality and academic standards of all awards made in its name; to acknowledge and accept that all students registered for awards made in Napier's name are registered students of the University and receive appropriate information and consideration; to ensure that there is sufficient specific academic expertise in the University to create, foster and develop any academic collaboration; to ensure that the academic partner is able to provide an appropriate learning experience for students following Napier awards; to ensure that it responds positively to the *Code of practice, Section 2*.

13 Principles which apply specifically to international partnerships include setting out the respective responsibilities of the faculties and the International College (see paragraph 15) in the creation, operation and development of international partnerships; ensuring that Napier has an appropriate understanding of the culture of the countries in which it operates and the legalities of such operation; ensuring that its academic partners are in good legal, academic and financial standing; ensuring that the language of transaction with partners is English; ensuring that the language of instruction and assessment of programmes is normally English; designing particular processes, and introducing appropriate safeguards, where the language of instruction and assessment is not English. To date all programmes have been delivered and assessed in English only.

14 A further set of principles informs the operational processes related to the establishment and maintenance of collaborative partnerships and include ensuring that the processes reflect an appropriate balance between faculty-level and university-level responsibilities; ensuring that levels of authority and decision-making reflect the acknowledged risks to business processes and institutional reputation inherent in partnership working; designing processes which maintain appropriate rigour and safeguard Napier against risks; ensuring that partnership development can be undertaken in a flexible manner which responds to the demands of the particular market; ensuring that all partnerships operate with an appropriate business plan which defines its financial viability and sustainability; ensuring that there is an appropriate separation between the processes related to academic approval of programmes and the processes related to the business and financial aspects of partnership.

15 In October 2006 Napier created the International College by merging its International Office, which was hitherto responsible for the support of international students and some aspects of their recruitment, with the Overseas Programme Support Unit in the Business School, where most international collaborative activities, including the partnership with IAM, are based. The International College works with all the faculties and schools within the University and provides support for overseas programmes during set up and delivery.

16 The Senior Vice-Principal (Academic Development) has institutional responsibility for all international activities, including overseas collaborative provision. This responsibility includes convening the Collaborative Partnerships Committee and line-managing the Dean of International Strategy and Operations. The Dean, who heads the International College, undertakes institutional liaison with senior staff of international partners and is required to approve all business cases and collaborative agreements. The Associate Director: Academic Enhancement is responsible for the management and operation of the Collaborative Partnerships Committee and programme validation and first cohort review. At faculty level, executive responsibility for international activities is usually held at associate dean level. At school level, the head of school is responsible for the leadership and resourcing of the programme, including the provision of staff development in the partner institution.

17 The Academic Board is the University's primary academic body with responsibility for overseeing the overall planning, coordination, development and supervision of the academic work of the institution. Academic Board delegates responsibility for quality assurance and enhancement to Quality Committee. In 2006 the Quality Committee established a Collaborative Partnerships Committee in recognition of the growing strategic and operational importance of collaborative provision. Collaborative Partnerships Committee's remit includes: developing procedures and policies for the development, approval and review of collaborative partnerships; ensuring that University procedures and practices meet both internal and external quality assurance requirements, specifically the *Code of practice*; developing and monitoring the progress for the identification and management of risk in relation to partnerships; maintaining a strategic overview of current partnerships to ensure that arrangements are working satisfactorily and that quality assurance and enhancement arrangements are appropriate; making recommendations to Quality Committee on the development of the Quality Framework and associated processes in relation to collaborative partnerships. The members of Collaborative Partnerships Committee include staff from those areas of the University with responsibility for collaborative provision, including the International College, the faculties and Quality Enhancement Services.

18 At faculty level, the Faculty Quality Committee is responsible for the oversight of the operation of academic partnerships and reports to Collaborative Partnerships Committee on the quality and standards of programmes offered with those partners. The Faculty Quality Committee makes an annual report to Collaborative Partnerships Committee on each programme and makes recommendations on the appointment of external examiners to the Associate Director: Academic Enhancement, who acts on behalf of the University Quality Committee. At school level, the School Quality Committee is responsible for reviewing external examiners' reports and acting on any issues which they raise.

19 A dedicated section of the University's Quality Framework deals with collaborative provision and includes guidance and regulatory requirements on development, approval and operational processes and procedures. Quality Enhancement Services is responsible for the provision of advice and guidance to the Quality Committee and also plays a role in the development and dissemination of policies and procedures related to quality assurance and enhancement. Following a suggestion in the *Enhancement-led institutional review* report, published by QAA in 2006, that there would be benefit in a critical analysis of the components of the Quality Framework, Collaborative Partnerships Committee undertook a revision of approaches to partner evaluation, and programme approval, monitoring and review and a consolidated set of principles and processes was approved and came into operation at the beginning of the 2008-09 session.

20 The partnership with IAM was developed and approved under the processes current in 2006. On the basis of discussions with staff and scrutiny of documentation, the audit team concluded that Napier's executive and deliberative structures and revised policies and procedures formed a robust platform for its overseas collaborative partnerships, including any expansion of activity in India. The team identified the sets of principles informing collaborative partnerships as a positive feature of the University's approach to overseas collaborative provision.

Section 2: Arrangements for establishing the link

Selecting and approving the partner organisation

21 The relationship between Napier and the IndiSmart Group pre-dated the link with IAM. An Institutional Review was carried out on two IndiSmart colleges prior to the validation of the MBA (India) in 2003. Internal and external assessments were conducted as part of due diligence to determine the suitability and ability of the partner to deliver the programme and the review concluded that both colleges were suitable.

22 When the partnership with IAM was proposed, further scrutiny was undertaken, chiefly to re-affirm and re-validate the evidence collected in 2003. Senior staff from Napier's School of Marketing, Tourism and Languages (one of three schools within the Business School) visited the IAM campuses in Kolkata and Goa in January 2006. They inspected classrooms, libraries, computing facilities and student accommodation and met academic and support staff and students. Teaching and student support were found to be of an extremely high standard and administrative, computing and library facilities were reported to be satisfactory. A risk-assessment matrix was completed based on assessments, following the 2003 Institutional Review and the 2006 visit, of the ability of the partner to deliver the programme in terms of organisational structure, human and physical resources and quality assurance procedures.

23 In May 2006 an external academic assessor visited IAM to provide an external view about the Institute's ability to deliver the programme. The assessor's report concluded there was sufficient evidence that the majority of staff were more than capable of delivering the programme and that, although academic facilities varied from campus to campus, there was in the main an effective level of academic support for undergraduate programmes up to year three. There was, however, need for investment in library resources. It was confirmed that IAM was approved by AICTE. According to the Briefing Paper, following approval of a business plan by the Director of Finance, Napier was able to confirm that IAM was of good academic standing, financially stable, in a position to contract legally with the University, and that it had the appropriate academic infrastructure to support student learning.

24 The audit team heard that strong personal ties between Napier's Principal and the Head of the IndiSmart Group, who is also the Chief Executive of IAM, underpin the partnership, and that, even under its current procedures, Napier would not require a full partner evaluation for the establishment of a new programme with an existing partner. With this reassurance, and following a scrutiny of the documentation, the audit team concluded that the University had been appropriately thorough in establishing the partnership.

Programme approval

25 Programme approval followed the preliminary visits by members of the School of Marketing, Tourism and Languages in January 2006. A scrutiny document was considered in April 2006 by a faculty panel which included members from another faculty. The proposal was allowed to proceed to validation on condition that more detailed information was provided about IAM, its status within India, its organisational structure and its ability to work effectively with Napier in the delivery of the programme. The scrutiny document and the panel's report were made available to the external academic assessor before his visit to IAM in May 2006.

26 The report of the external academic assessor informed the full validation event which took place in May 2006, with three external assessors on the panel. The validation process identified risks in several areas including demand, delivery, operational support, library and IT facilities, plagiarism and finance. The programme was approved indefinitely, subject to nine conditions being met and consideration given to four recommendations. First cohort review (see paragraphs 38 to 42) was expected in the 2006-07 session, followed by quinquennial review in 2010-11.

27 One of the conditions of validation was the clarification of the relationship between the IAM programme and the BA (Hons) Hospitality Management offered by the School of Marketing, Tourism and Languages at Napier, including articulation arrangements and a statement that the programme was being validated and run as a separate programme. The Briefing Paper explained that although the IAM programme was validated as a separate programme it was 'broadly similar' to year three of the programme delivered at Napier. The core modules are identical and two of the most popular options in the UK are also offered at IAM as core modules. A Live Project 30-credit module was replaced by two 15-credit modules: a Hospitality Industry Project and a Hospitality Supervision and Training module which offered similar learning outcomes but were considered more appropriate to the hospitality industry in India.

28 Students who have successfully completed the first two years of IAM's Diploma in Hotel and Catering Management are eligible either to enter the BA Hospitality Management programme in India or to articulate onto year three of the programme in the UK. All students may obtain the IAM Diploma by studying for an extra trimester in India. Students who complete successfully year three of the programme in India are eligible to articulate onto year four of the parent programme in the UK. At the time of the audit, Napier had no plans to offer year four of the honours programme in India owing to a perceived lack of demand.

29 The first two years of IAM's three-year Diploma in Hotel and Catering Management (now renamed Diploma in Hospitality Administration), which is delivered and assessed in English, were the subject of matching and credit-rating exercises conducted during the development phase of the collaborative programme and were recognised as offering 240 credits at SCQF levels 7 and 8 (in full-time mode equal to years one and two of the Scottish four-year honours degree). In response to the suggestion from Napier that students would benefit from further preparation in theory, IAM later revised some 20 per cent of the syllabus of the Diploma to include more management elements and changed the title to Diploma in Hospitality Administration. As these relatively minor changes had been carried out without the formal approval of the University, a credit-rating exercise was conducted on the additional elements in March 2008. The audit team was informed that the transition from 15 to 20-credit modules, due to take place in 2009-10 for overseas collaborations, will not affect the credit-rating of the Diploma.

30 Following an examination of the documentation, the audit team was able to confirm the University's view that the programme approval process carried out in 2006 was detailed and robust.

Written agreements with the partner organisation

31 The collaboration agreement is developed in parallel with the programme document and the first condition of the validation was that the agreement and business plan should be finalised and signed by both partners. The collaboration agreement remains in force until August 2011, unless provisions for earlier termination are activated. In the event of early termination both partners recognise their obligations to students and agree to work together throughout the duration of the period of the written notice of termination to ensure that students enrolled on the programme are given the opportunity to complete their programme of study and achieve the expected or a similar comparable award with Napier or another educational institution nominated by Napier.

32 An annex of the collaboration agreement lists the respective duties of Napier and IAM in assuring academic quality and standards; programme feedback mechanisms; recruitment and selection of academic staff; teaching arrangements; assessment arrangements; administrative arrangements for the application, enrolment and registration of students, communication between Napier and IAM, graduation arrangements and general administrative support; recruitment and selection of students; advertising, publicity and promotion of the programme; certificates and transcripts; information and support for students. It is Napier's responsibility to ensure that all relevant bodies in India are provided with appropriate information to ensure that the programme is registered in accordance with local regulations. The audit team regarded the comprehensiveness and clarity of the collaboration agreement as a positive feature of this partnership.

Section 3: Academic standards and the quality of programmes

Day-to-day management

33 The formal arrangements for the day-to-day management of the programme are laid out in the collaboration agreement and the programme validation document. There is a programme leader and module leaders in Napier and a programme leader for both of IAM's campuses in Kolkata and Goa and their respective duties are set out in the validation document. The main academic line of communication is between the programme leaders in Napier and IAM. The International College has responsibility for all administrative processes. Delivery of the programme is supported by a dedicated programme administrator in the International College and a programme manager for the two campuses in India. The Napier programme leader is responsible for the management and operation of the programme, including convening the Programme Board of Studies and student-staff liaison committee, and for liaison with the partner and the International College on day-to-day operational issues.

34 The administration of records involved in the admission, enrolment and registration of students is shared between the partners. IAM tutors are required to maintain records on individual students and to report monthly to the IAM programme leader on the basis of those records. Napier's programme administrator is responsible for the maintenance of records of student performance.

35 Students have access to the same support services provided for all full-time students at IAM; these are regarded by the partners as comparable with those at Napier. Both partners recognise their duties of pastoral care of students. The IAM programme leaders are the first point of contact for students seeking support with pastoral issues, while individual module leaders deal with academic problems. Napier staff make themselves available for consultations with individual students during their visits to India. Students whom the audit team met confirmed the accessibility and helpfulness of the staff of both institutions in offering academic and personal support.

36 The programme team employs several mechanisms to collect and analyse feedback from both staff and students. IAM tutors complete a feedback report at the end of each module for discussion at the Programme Board of Studies. Students complete anonymously a module evaluation questionnaire at the end of each module and a programme evaluation questionnaire at the end of the session. Analyses of the questionnaires are prepared for discussion at the Programme Board of Studies. The report of the first cohort review (see paragraphs 38 to 42) noted that student feedback from questionnaires had been positive and there was evidence that suitable responses had been made to issues students had raised.

37 There is a student-staff liaison committee which reports to the Programme Board of Studies. The first cohort review report noted that, despite the active engagement of students with staff, participation in student-staff liaison committees at both campuses was low and recommended that the programme team should consider how it might be improved. In response, the programme team explained that Indian cultural norms militated against students expressing their concerns directly to staff. Meetings were, however, run formally and students encouraged to make their views known; the audit team noted from committee minutes that during the 2007-08 session students were more confident in expressing their views in front of staff. The students whom the audit team met at IAM gave examples of matters raised at meetings of the student-staff liaison committee and confirmed the constructive nature of the responses they received from IAM.

Arrangements for monitoring and review

38 Napier's arrangements for monitoring and reviewing programmes delivered on its Edinburgh campuses also apply to collaborative programmes, with the additional requirement of a first cohort review. The Briefing Paper explained that first cohort reviews are usually scheduled during the first year of operation of a new collaborative programme in recognition of the fact

that collaborative partnerships often raise issues that need to be tackled at an early stage. When the programme was approved in May 2006, the review was expected towards the end of the 2006-07 session but it was delayed until after the completion of the first year chiefly, according to the Briefing Paper, to allow fuller consideration of available evidence, including the first report of the external examiner. The audit team heard that, following the successful outcome of the first cohort review, Napier had decided to delay all the first cohort reviews of new collaborative programmes until after the end of the first year.

39 The first cohort review took place in autumn 2007. A review team of three internal members was appointed to evaluate the programme, in line with the programme validation document and the collaboration agreement. The team reviewed a sample of relevant documentation and met with members of the programme team at Napier and with IAM staff and students in Kolkata and Goa. The team was satisfied that the academic standards and quality of the programme were secure and that staff in Napier and IAM were working effectively in partnership to ensure the quality of the learning experience. A number of areas of good practice were identified, including the proactive approach to staff engagement and development (see paragraphs 43 to 46); the delivery model which gave staff and students at IAM direct and frequent engagement with academic and administrative staff at Napier; the effective and constructive way issues, including plagiarism, had been addressed during the first year of the partnership.

40 The review report also raised several points for further attention, including an improvement in the IT infrastructure; the need to improve the quality of library provision on the Goa campus; the timing of the appointment of staff; a move to the new Kolkata campus at the first opportunity so that students could benefit from more modern facilities; a review of the effectiveness of the operation of student-staff liaison committees. An action plan following up the findings of the first cohort review report addressed the recommendations for action. It was acknowledged by the programme team that there had been problems with the IT infrastructure in the early stages of delivery of the programme; although some immediate improvements had been made, it was agreed that further work was required to bring the facilities up to an acceptable standard. The audit team heard that the IT problems in Kolkata had been addressed by the move to a new campus with better provision and that IAM had invested in improvements to the infrastructure at Goa. In addition, students at IAM had been provided with detailed module handbooks at the start of the session to mitigate problems in accessing the University's virtual learning environment. The programme team also acknowledged that library provision on the Goa Campus required more efficient organisation. Some early action had been taken and further improvements were planned to create a more efficient service by 2009. IAM staff whom the team met confirmed that the improvements to the library and IT facilities at Goa had taken place and the team had the opportunity to view the facilities available to students on the Kolkata campus.

41 Following an examination of the first cohort review report and action plan, the audit team confirmed the view of the 2006 QAA Enhancement-led institutional review team that the first cohort review process provides '...a timely and robust means by which the University could be assured of the success, or otherwise, of any new overseas collaborative provision'. The team identified the effectiveness of first cohort review as a positive feature of the partnership.

42 Since the University does not require an annual report from collaborative programmes in the year in which they are subject to first cohort review, the report of the 2007-08 annual review of the programme was in preparation at the time of the audit visit. IAM staff whom the audit team met confirmed that they had been fully involved in the annual review process.

Staffing and staff development

43 The Briefing Paper explained that the delivery of the programme involved two members of the programme team visiting IAM in Goa and Kolkata at the start of trimesters 1 and 2 to introduce each module and deliver initial lectures. Following this initial input, IAM tutors deliver the remainder of the module content. The appointment of tutors is the responsibility of IAM but is overseen by

Napier using agreed appointment criteria; curricula vitae are submitted to, and retained by, the University. Although the first cohort review team found that all IAM tutors met the criteria set for appointment, it highlighted that a number of staff teaching on the programme, particularly in Goa, had not been formally approved by Napier before they started teaching; this had happened when staff had left unexpectedly. According to the Briefing Paper, following the first cohort review report, new procedures had been implemented to ensure that the Napier programme leader approved all new appointments in advance of teaching. During the audit visit it was confirmed that the curricula vitae of all IAM staff involved with the delivery of the programme had been approved.

44 The validation document contains the arrangements for staff development in terms of the specific requirements of the programme. This form of staff development takes place during the biannual visits of the Napier programme leader to Kolkata and Goa. Topics covered include: assessment; extended academic writing; reducing plagiarism; and familiarisation with the University's systems, policies and strategies. IAM tutors are provided with tutor module guides which include teaching materials and assessment guidelines. They also receive individual support from Napier staff by email and face-to-face meetings on such matters as contextualising teaching material and the pastoral care of students. A visit by the IAM programme leaders to Napier took place in April 2008 and involved attending lectures, tutorials and a meeting of the programme board of studies. On their return the programme leaders had disseminated their experiences at a staff development workshop. In addition, IAM has its own comprehensive staff development programme and Napier has provided free places for IAM staff on its Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. At the time of the audit visit, six IAM tutors were enrolled and the first was expected to complete in the summer of 2009.

45 The first cohort review report recognised that the first year of the programme had been '...a steep learning curve', with IAM staff adapting both to new approaches to learning and teaching and to working with new requirements. The review team, however, found ample evidence of regular communication between staff at IAM and Napier on the full range of learning, teaching and assessment matters. Additional help had been provided by a visit from a member of Napier's Department of Educational Development to support IAM tutors in understanding the University's philosophy of learning, teaching and assessment. In general, the tutors whom the first cohort review team met in Kolkata and Goa spoke highly of the guidance and support provided by their colleagues in Edinburgh. The audit team had the opportunity to meet the Kolkata programme leader and a group of IAM tutors who confirmed the breadth and quality of the guidance and support provided by Napier staff.

46 In the view of the audit team, the area of staff development is indicative of the harmonious relationship between the partners. The regular visits by Napier staff facilitate effective communication on matters of quality and standards. In addition, the provision of free places on the Postgraduate Certificate is likely to enhance the quality of the teaching provided by IAM tutors. The audit team, therefore, identified the frequency and usefulness of visits by Napier staff to IAM as a positive feature of this partnership.

Student admissions

47 Applicants for year three of the degree programme must have successfully completed the first two years of IAM's Diploma in Hospitality Administration which has been accredited as offering 240 credits at SCQF levels 7 and 8. The audit team heard that Napier staff attend interviews of applicants for IAM's Diploma to tell them about the degree course. Applications from students with equivalent qualifications from other Indian institutions are considered individually. The IAM programme leaders in Kolkata and Goa carry out an initial screening of applications which may include an interview. Completed application forms are sent by courier to Napier with the final responsibility for approving admission resting with the Napier programme leader. Offer letters are sent from the University and forwarded by IAM to the applicants. IAM ensures that students admitted to the programme complete matriculation forms which are sent to Napier. On receipt students are enrolled and provided with a University student matriculation card.

Assessment requirements

48 Learning, teaching and assessment methods are set out in the programme specification. The assessment method and schedule for each module is given in the module descriptor, along with the weighting of each component in determining the final mark. The collaboration agreement sets out the responsibilities of the partners in respect of assessment. The assignments for each module are set by Napier module leaders and marked by IAM tutors. The module leader is responsible for arranging the moderation by Napier staff of a square root sample of course work. The external examiner moderates samples of coursework as well as examination assessments. Napier staff set examinations and mark final coursework and all examination scripts; a square root sample of examination scripts is double marked. Students at IAM undertake the same or equivalent assessments for the six common modules as UK-based students with submission and examination dates arranged to reflect local conditions.

49 The module and programme boards of examiners are responsible to Napier's Academic Board via the Faculty Quality Committee for the assessment and progression of students. Meetings of boards of examiners are held in Edinburgh and in the first year of the programme difficulties were experienced in establishing a teleconferencing link with the programme leaders in Goa and Kolkata. The audit team was informed that the problems in teleconferencing had since been largely resolved.

50 The first cohort review report noted a tendency for some IAM tutors to award lower marks than their counterparts at Napier. In response, the programme team confirmed that there had been some inconsistency in marking by IAM tutors but it was confident that the moderation process enabled early detection of discrepancies and any necessary adjustment of marks. It was recognised that there was a need to ensure that new staff were fully informed about marking criteria. IAM staff were required to meet Napier staff at the start of module delivery to review module materials and assessments. Additional help had been provided in the form of a visit from a member of Napier's Department of Educational Development. IAM tutors whom the audit team met confirmed the support offered by Napier staff in moderating their marking. Although external examiners have found the moderation process to be robust and effective, the report of the external examiner for 2007-08 noted some inconsistency in '...off-shore marking'. In view of the evidence of continuing problems with marking by IAM tutors, the audit team concluded that Napier will wish to continue to ensure that all IAM staff are kept fully informed of marking criteria and are provided with detailed feedback on their marking from module leaders.

51 Areas of good practice identified in the first cohort review report included the effective and constructive way in which problems had been addressed during the first year of the partnership. The most significant problem was plagiarism. Plagiarism had been identified as a risk area during validation and advice on avoiding it had been given at induction and in programme and module handbooks and in guidance for tutors. In spite of these measures, the review team heard that a number of cases had been identified, particularly in Kolkata. The school's academic conduct officer had dealt with all the cases in line with University policy and taking account of the programme's geographic location and local cultural expectations. In addition, the guidance provided to students had been modified and there had been an immediate and extended visit by the Napier programme leader, primarily to provide further guidance and information on plagiarism and how to avoid it. The review team was satisfied that the programme team had taken appropriate action and that colleagues in IAM were better prepared to implement the University's policy and guidance.

52 In its response to the first cohort review report, the programme team acknowledged that responding to early cases of plagiarism during the first year of operation of the programme had provided a useful learning experience for both staff and students. Napier staff delivering induction sessions had continued to explain what constituted plagiarism and to provide guidance on correct referencing. Students in the second cohort had been asked to make use of an anti-plagiarism programme, as recommended in the first cohort review report, but had

encountered problems in accessing it. It was anticipated that increased student awareness and the anticipated improvement in access to anti-plagiarism software would continue to reduce the number of cases of plagiarism. The audit team was informed that several cases of plagiarism had been detected in the 2007-08 session and had been dealt with according to Napier's policy on academic misconduct. There had been a further visit from the school's academic conduct officer at the beginning of the 2008-09 session before the first assignment was due. Staff and students whom the audit team met at IAM confirmed the effectiveness of the prompt response of the University to the cases of plagiarism and collusion detected in the first year of the programme.

53 After examining the available evidence, the audit team confirmed the view expressed in Napier's Briefing Paper that it does not underestimate the seriousness of academic misconduct and that its academic staff have the skills and determination to continue tackling the problem. The audit team encourages Napier to continue to exercise vigilance in this area.

External examining

54 IAM has no responsibilities in relation to the appointment or function of the external examiner or the administration of the external examining system. The external examiner for the programme is appointed according to standard Napier procedures and duties are allocated in line with a policy of ensuring that the external examiner is the same for all modules. In view of the scale of the partnership and its potential for growth, a second external examiner was appointed in 2007-08 and responsibilities reallocated while ensuring that there was a common external examiner for any given module, regardless of the delivery site.

55 The audit team scrutinised the external examiner reports for the first two years of the programme. Both reports were comprehensive in scope and drew attention to similar issues. Both external examiners praised University staff for 'developing the teaching teams in Goa and Kolkata' (2006-07) and in 'upholding the academic quality of the Napier brand' (2007-08). Both also drew attention to inconsistency in marking by IAM tutors which had been dealt with by a 'robust and effective' moderation process. Although both external examiners found that standards were being upheld, they were concerned about under-achievement and a high level of failure among international students, both those studying in the UK and in India. One external examiner noted that the Indian students were clearly finding it difficult to cope with examinations and needed to be better prepared for study at degree level. The other external examiner reported a paucity of basic academic skills among IAM students, manifest in a lack of wider reading and critical application and an overreliance on the internet for source material and evidence.

56 The audit team read the response of the programme team to the issues raised in the external examiner report for 2007-08. With regard to students studying in India, the programme leader had run induction sessions on avoiding plagiarism and good practice in academic writing and further sessions were planned on assessment practice and on academic writing, critical thinking and correct referencing. In addition, Napier had provided funding to develop an interactive study and assessment skills tool for Indian students to support them in their transition to a new and unfamiliar learning style. Initially this tool will only be available to IAM students, but Napier plans to extend access to overseas students studying anywhere on a Napier programme. The audit team heard from staff in both Napier and IAM that, in response to concerns expressed by one external examiner about 'the academic underpinning' of students progressing to study at degree level, IAM had made changes to the Diploma to include practice in writing longer assignments and the change to 20-credit modules would offer the opportunity of other ways of bridging the gap.

57 The audit team concluded that Napier had responded appropriately to issues raised in the external examiner reports. The University will wish to keep under review the achievement levels of students studying at IAM and to monitor the impact of the measures taken to improve the academic skills of students progressing on to the programme.

Certificates and transcripts

58 Napier has sole authority for the issue and control of award certificates and transcripts associated with the programme. The award certificate does not indicate the place of study. On the transcript, however, the programme is described as 'Hospitality - India' and individual modules are identified as having been delivered in India. No details are given on the transcript of the IAM Diploma or of the location of IAM. Napier staff explained to the audit team that the University had taken this approach because IAM felt that its students would not wish IAM to appear on the transcript. The audit team concluded that the University will wish to follow the guidance in the *Code of practice*, published by QAA, and ensure that the name and location of its partner appear on transcripts.

Section 4: Information

Student information (oversight by UK institution)

59 The audit team was provided with copies of induction material, the student programme handbook and a sample module handbook. Induction is carried out by the Napier programme leader and consists of three sessions, each of three hours, covering a general introduction to the University and the programme; a guide to Napier's Learning Information Services; and advice and guidance in study skills and methods. Students are provided with a programme handbook which clearly explains the structure of the programme and the way it is delivered; the aims and objectives of the programme and its modules; types of assessment, marking and feedback, assessment regulations, examinations, plagiarism; programme management; resources, facilities and support; and details of the appeals and complaints procedures. Access to module materials, reading lists and other information is provided in module handbooks, on CD-ROM and through the virtual learning environment.

60 Students who met the first cohort review team spoke positively about the induction sessions and both external examiners have identified the module handbooks as examples of good practice. Students whom the audit team met at IAM also expressed their satisfaction with the induction sessions and the information about the programme provided for them in various forms.

61 The audit team verified the claim in IAM's Briefing Paper that the information provided to students to enable them to commence and progress on the programme is accurate and complete.

Publicity and marketing

62 The collaboration agreement lays out the procedures for the advertising, publicity and promotion of the programme. IAM is permitted, when appropriate, to market the programme, to monitor the effectiveness of the marketing and report on it to Napier. IAM is also required under the agreement to ensure that Napier approves the information provided to its staff and students in accordance with agreed procedures before it is distributed. The International College screens publicity material before passing it to the Marketing and Communications Department for approval. Napier considers that the arrangements governing promotional material have worked effectively but it intends to take advantage of the recent change in its name to revisit the use of the Napier brand by overseas partners.

~~Section 5: Student progression to the UK~~

63 The Briefing Paper explained that progression to the UK is not an integral part of the programme. Although students completing the programme successfully in India may articulate to the final honours year in Edinburgh, none had yet done so.

Conclusion

64 In considering the partnership, the audit team identified the following positive features:

- the sets of principles informing collaborative partnerships (paragraphs 12 to 14)
- the comprehensiveness and clarity of the collaboration agreement (paragraphs 31, 32)
- the effectiveness of first cohort review (paragraphs 38 to 41)
- the frequency and usefulness of visits by Napier staff to IAM (paragraphs 43 to 46).

65 The audit team also identified the following points for consideration by Napier as the partnership develops:

- continuing to ensure that IAM staff are kept fully informed of marking criteria and are provided with detailed feedback on their marking from module leaders (paragraph 50)
- continuing to exercise vigilance with regard to academic misconduct (paragraphs 51 to 53)
- keeping under review the achievement levels of IAM students and monitoring the impact of measures taken to improve the academic skills of students progressing on to the programme (paragraphs 55, 57)
- following the guidance in the *Code of practice* and ensuring that the name and location of IAM appear on transcripts (paragraph 58).

66 The audit team considered that the University was operating the partnership with due regard to the advice in the *Code of practice*. Where the team found that aspects of the University's practice could be improved in the context of the *Code*, these are identified in the main report and among the points for further consideration.

67 The audit team considered the Briefing Paper helpful in explaining the genesis of the partnership and developments in the delivery of the collaborative programme. In conclusion, Napier reflected that '...there were some aspects of the first year of operation...which constituted a learning curve for staff and students, with the partner needing particularly to adapt to new methods of teaching and learning'. The findings of the audit confirm the view of the University that the ways in which issues were dealt with by the programme team, together with the formal device of the First Cohort Review, has enabled it to manage its responsibility for the academic standards and quality of the collaborative programme properly. Although there have been recent changes in the way in which it operates its overseas activities, Napier considers that the fundamental principles of the ways in which it operates in partnership with other institutions have not changed. Against this backdrop, the findings of the audit would also support a conclusion of confidence in Napier's stewardship of academic standards and oversight of the quality of the student experience in its overseas collaborative provision.

Appendix A

Edinburgh Napier University's response to QAA's report on its collaboration arrangement with the Institute of Advanced Management, India

The University welcomes the very positive report on the collaborative arrangement with the Institute of Advanced Management, India, and the positive features identified by the audit team. It is particularly pleasing that the principles the University uses to inform all collaborative partnerships, the frequency and usefulness of visits by Edinburgh Napier staff to IAM and the effectiveness of the first cohort review are highlighted.

The University is grateful to the audit team for their constructive comments and is already addressing the points identified for consideration: work is ongoing to further involve IAM staff in good practice in assessment; the development activities to mitigate against academic misconduct are progressing effectively; recent changes in the IAM Diploma are proving beneficial to the preparation of students for the move to the degree programme, and the University is adopting QAA guidance on the content of transcripts as part of its renaming exercise to Edinburgh Napier University.

Appendix B

Edinburgh Napier University: BA Hospitality Management Student Enrolments for 2007-08

BA Hospitality Management - year three:

Kolkata: 71

Goa: 43

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