Education Scotland
Foghlam Alba

Review of private further education colleges and English language schools

Chippendale International School of Furniture

4 January 2017

Transforming lives through learning

The review process

This review report follows the quality framework for the *review arrangements for private further education colleges and English language schools in Scotland, September 2016.* Over the two-day period, the review team:

- engage with learners;
- observe episodes of learning and teaching and provide feedback to each member of teaching staff or other learning facilitator on strengths and areas for further development;
- conduct interviews and undertake other activity required to determine the extent of concordance between documentary evidence and practice;
- evaluate evidence against the **14 reference quality indicators;** and
- identify key strengths and areas for further development for the organisation.

Education Scotland is an approved educational oversight body authorised by the Home Office to inspect private further education colleges and English language schools in Scotland.

Reviews are arranged under **three high-level principles** which Education Scotland is adopting for evaluative purposes:

Outcomes and Impact:
How well are learners progressing and achieving relevant, high quality outcomes?
How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

Service Delivery:
How good is the delivery of our learning and teaching?
How good is our management of the delivery of learning and teaching?

Leadership and quality culture:
How good is our strategic management?

These are underpinned by a wider principle on the centre's **Capacity for improvement** and the question, *How good is our capacity to improve?*

Education Scotland reviews are designed to:

- support and promote quality enhancement in organisations to provide the best possible experience for the learner;
- provide information to the Home Office, when required, on the quality of organisations and the learning experience they provide;
- provide an independent evaluation to assist organisations in informing prospective and current learners of the quality of the organisation's programmes and services;
- evaluate organisations against the *Education Scotland quality framework, September 2016;* and
- complement organisation-led internal review and self-evaluation.

Review provides objective and reliable reports on the quality of education provision in schools and colleges, and by placing reports in the public domain, makes this information available to learners, Government and the wider community. Review takes account of the context of each individual school or college, and of how it evaluates its own performance and demonstrates its success.

The review of the school or college is from an educational perspective and provides limited review of other aspects; though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on learners. The review does not include:

(i)   an exhaustive health and safety audit;
(ii)   an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school or college estate, its services or other physical features;
(iii)   an investigation of the financial viability of the school or college or its accounting procedures; and
(iv)   an in-depth investigation of the school's or college's compliance with employment law.

This report contains effectiveness statements that express the review team's overall evaluation of *learner progress and outcomes, learning and teaching processes* and *leadership and quality culture*.

The report also uses the following terms to describe numbers and proportions:

almost all	over 90%
most	75-90%
majority	50-74%
less than half	15-49%
few	up to 15%

Grades are awarded in THREE areas:

- *Outcomes and Impact*
- *Service Delivery*
- *Leadership and quality culture*

Inspectors use a SIX-point grading scale:

- *excellent – outstanding and sector leading*
- *very good – major strengths*
- *good – important strengths with some areas for improvement*
- *satisfactory – strengths just outweigh weaknesses*
- *weak – important weaknesses*
- *unsatisfactory – major weaknesses*

Contents

1.   Introduction

The organisation and its context

In carrying out the review of Chippendale International School of Furniture, Education Scotland took the following context fully into account.

Chippendale International School of Furniture was established in 1985 and is dedicated to teaching the skills and business acumen involved in designing and making bespoke furniture and antique restoration. It is located close to the village of Gifford in East Lothian. Most learning takes place in a workshop which accommodates around 25 learners. Separate machine, wood turning and sanding rooms are located adjacent to the workshop. Further rooms are available for exhibitions and learner functions. There is also a library with a range of reference books. There are commercial bench spaces for graduates who want to start up their own business in the incubation workshops, adjacent to the school. The workshop area uses wood and sawdust waste to generate a sustainable heating system.

The Chippendale International School of Furniture is an independent, non-profit making institution which is managed by the family-run business. The school is run alongside a furniture making and restoration business and learners benefit from opportunities to observe commercial activities and commissions. The school's aim is to provide an intensive course that encourages creativity and entrepreneurial skills.

The school is a Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) centre and offers two Higher National (HN) units as part of the school's full-time award in Furniture Design, Making and Restoration programme.

At the time of the inspection, 25 learners were studying on the programme. Thirty two percent of the current learners come from non-European Economic Area countries. All learners undergo an interview to establish their suitability for the programme prior to enrolment. The school employs five full-time teaching staff and a number of visiting experts. A *Student Welfare Officer* provides support for learners with accommodation, transport, health and well-being.

The review

The review by Education Scotland took place during the week beginning 21 November 2016.

We examined learning and teaching and other important activities that impact on the learner experience. We evaluated these against outcomes and impact, service delivery and leadership and quality culture using the 14 reference quality indicators outlined in *Inspection arrangements for private further education colleges and English language schools in Scotland, September 2016*. We used information submitted in advance by the organisation to decide on the scope of the inspection. The inspection team talked with learners and staff at all levels in the organisation.

The inspection included the School of Furniture but did not include the incubation workshops.

2. Outcomes of external review

Judgement of Grades

The review team awarded grades for each of the 3 key themes based on the following criteria.

excellent: **outstanding and sector leading**
very good: **major strengths**
good: **important strengths with some areas for improvement**
satisfactory: **strengths just outweigh weaknesses**
weak: **important weaknesses**
unsatisfactory: **major weaknesses**

Key Theme	Grade awarded
Outcomes and Impact	very good
Service delivery	very good
Leadership and quality culture	good

3.   Outcomes and Impact

Learner progression and achievement:

How well are learners progressing and achieving high quality outcomes?

Areas of positive practice

- Retention rates for learners on all programmes are very high, (100%) and all learners are making good progress from their prior learning.
- All learners who sit external examinations successfully achieve their awards. In 2015, 100% of learners who were presented for SQA, HN in Furniture Project and Furniture: Finishing Techniques gained a pass, with a continuing trend over three years.
- On completion of their study all learners who complete the course receive a school certificate in Furniture Design, Making and Restoration.
- Most learners who successfully complete their study, progress to employment with a high number entering self-employment.
- All learners gain a broad range of practical skills in design, manufacture and restoration of furniture. They also gain other skills, such as working in teams to peer review and critique their work.
- All learners gain high level skills which equip them well for future self-employment. They gain confidence in their own career prospects.

Areas for development

- The school does not certificate skills for employability or entrepreneurship and learners do not benefit from the additional credit to support progression opportunities.

Meeting the needs of stakeholders

How well do we meet the needs of stakeholders?

Areas of positive practice

- The school meets the requirements of appropriate directives and regulations and they have in place comprehensive policies and procedures in health and safety.
- Equality and diversity is promoted and embedded within the culture of the school and supports learners' creativity.
- The school offers highly relevant programmes which include short introductory courses and a full-time, 30-week programme.
- All learners who require additional support to develop language skills are supported well from a specialist tutor.
- The school demonstrates and promotes sustainability actively through its business model and its use of resources and recycling of raw materials. For example, wood and sawdust burners are used to provide heating in the workshop area. Raw materials are sustainably sourced.
- All learners are highly satisfied with their experience and are well supported. They feel included and engaged in decision making about their course.
- Learners' work is celebrated by an end-of-year exhibition of their work, a graduation ceremony and pieces of work being chosen to be displayed in the Scottish Parliament.

Areas for development

- Strategies for promoting equality and diversity and arrangements for safeguarding of young people and vulnerable groups are not comprehensive. Staff have limited awareness of procedures and do not understand their responsibilities. Staff are not part of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme. The school management and staff have not yet put in place policies or procedures to support the PREVENT agenda. However, there are no learners in the school under the age of 18.

4. Service delivery

Delivery of learning and teaching:

How good is our delivery of learning and teaching?

Areas of positive practice

- The range of countries and cultures of learners supports well the diversity within the learning environment. This is used effectively by learners and teaching staff to support individuality in design and technique and enhance learners' projects.
- Learners regularly engage in opportunities provided by the school and local community to experience Scottish culture. Learners visit historic houses and their furniture to broaden the influences available.
- All learners are highly motivated and participate actively in the learning process. This helps to develop a collaborative environment and supports them well in their studies. Learners are challenged appropriately by teaching staff to meet the highest possible standards.
- Learners are encouraged by teaching staff to progress independently and regularly challenge tutors in discussions about design and process to further support the learning process.
- Learner 'stand-up' sessions are used effectively every day to problem solve and encourage learners to work together to further enhance their project design.
- All learners progress well in their learning and develop 'bench skills' to underpin techniques and processes appropriate to their area of learning.
- Learners benefit from a range of home and international visiting tutors. These visits challenge learners' thinking and expose them to wider aspects of furniture design and manufacture.
- Teaching staff demonstrate high levels of technical ability and support learners well to develop good subject knowledge in a real-life working environment.
- Teaching staff use an appropriate range of learning and teaching approaches. This is supported further by teaching staff and learners working together to use a range of online technology to widen the influence on learning opportunities.
- Learners benefit from peer support and discuss their progress through group meetings held throughout the academic session.
- Assessment is well-planned and scheduled appropriately. Learners are regularly provided with ongoing oral and written feedback, including peer review, to inform improvement.

Areas for development

- Arrangements to support learners with additional needs are underdeveloped and not systematic.
- Assessment arrangements are not fully robust for the core course work, excluding SQA units, as criteria for assessment are not standardised and are open to misinterpretation by staff and learners.

Management of learning and teaching

How good is our management of the delivery of learning and teaching?

Areas of positive practice

- The learning environment exposes learners to real life experience by integrating project-based learning with commercial influences. Mutually respectful relationships between learners and teaching staff are evident and these contribute to a purposeful environment for learning.
- The co-development between learners and teaching staff of the 'day-to-day' programme log book at the beginning of term facilitates planning of lessons well. Teaching staff manage the classroom activity well and plan at an individual level the input required to achieve successfully learners' project-based learning. Learners and teaching staff work well as a team to achieve this and rotate responsibilities to ensure they maximise the learning opportunities. Learners take responsibility to influence methodologies and approaches to meet their individual need.
- All learners are very well supported during their pre-entry and induction period and throughout their programme of study by the *Student Welfare Officer* They receive accurate and useful information about the school, accommodation, health and well-being and their programme.
- Learners benefit from one-to-one business lunches three time per programme which help them to develop their business model. The school work well with Business Gateway to support this development and support funding opportunities. Learners value highly this approach.
- All staff meet regularly to coordinate learner feedback from tutor meetings. They discuss areas for improvement and seek learner views on changes proposed and action these immediately where possible. At the end of the year all actions taken are reviewed and inform planning for the following year. Actions identified are recorded and monitored.
- The workshop environment supports a team teaching approach well. Learners are encouraged to share knowledge and skills within the workshop. Staff and learners work well together to develop this approach to learning. Visiting tutors add an external influence to broaden the experience.
- The Internal Verifier (IV) plays an independent role in ensuring standards are fully adhered to across the SQA unit delivery. The IV is mentoring the development of a further two staff to take forward this role.

Areas for development

- None identified.

5. Leadership and quality culture

Strategic leadership:

How good is our strategic leadership?

Areas of positive practice

- The principal has a strong vision for the school and communicates clearly, to all staff, direction for the curriculum and the ethos of the school. He influences teaching staff daily by taking a lead role in the delivery workshops.
- The senior management team (SMT) work well together to promote the vision and direction of the school. They share a clear understanding of the culture and ethos and work well with staff to shape the vocational curriculum delivery.
- The SMT have in place a strong commitment to the sustainability of the school and have in place succession planning to take this forward.
- Staff are highly motivated and committed to the vision and aims of the school and work well together to deliver and develop a high quality learning experience.
- The school has a well-embedded culture of quality improvement which is demonstrated through the quality of delivery and the school's high reputation.
- Learner engagement is strong and embedded well in the culture of the school. Learners proactively suggest ideas for improvement and development. They are listened to and their opinions valued.
- The school uses specialist tutors regularly in a programme of exposure to a range of expertise to enhance the experience of learners. This is also effective in challenging school staff to reflect on their own practice.
- All staff are committed to a culture of quality improvement and regularly engage in a range of meetings and tutor sessions to identify areas for improvement and enhancement. These actions have resulted in practical improvements being implemented.

Areas for development

- The staff development strategy is under developed, as a result opportunities to further develop teaching skills and broaden the curriculum content are limiting the broader experience of learners.

6.   Capacity for Improvement

Capacity for improvement:

How good is our capacity for improvement?

Areas of positive practice

Chippendale International School of Furniture continues to deliver high quality learning and teaching which benefits those learners who choose to study there. The strong vision for the school and the commitment of the SMT and staff promote a high quality learning experience that equips learners well for future employment or self-employment. Staff are highly motivated and committed to the vision and aims of the school and work well together. The school has a well-embedded culture of quality improvement which is demonstrated through the quality of delivery and the school's high reputation. The SMT demonstrate a strong commitment to the sustainability of the school and have in place succession planning to take this forward.

Learner engagement is strong and embedded well in the culture of the school. Learners are listened to and their opinions valued to support the culture of improvement.

However, strategies for staff development of professional standards and the updating of some policies and procedures would ensure the ongoing development of the organisation and enhance the learner experience.

Evidence evaluated during the inspection would indicate a continued confidence in the organisation's capacity to continue to improve.

7.   What happens next?

This review report is valid for four years.

Education Scotland may engage at regular intervals to monitor progress, if invited by the organisation.

Any significant material change within the organisation should be reported to Education Scotland immediately.

Barbara Nelson
HM Inspector
Education Scotland

8.   Further information

This review and judgements relate to the service area as a whole. For further information about Education Scotland, the external review methodologies, or other information about reviews, see www.eduationscotland.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Glossary of terms

HN	Higher National
IV	Internal Verifier
PVG	Protecting Vulnerable Groups
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
SMT	Senior Management Team
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority
SVQ	Scottish Vocational Qualification

Appendix 2

THE SCOTTISH CREDIT AND QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

This Framework diagram has been produced to show the mainstream Scottish qualifications already credit rated by SQA and HEIs. However, there are a diverse number of learning programmes on the Framework, which, due to the limitations of this format, cannot be represented here. For more information, please visit the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk to view the interactive version of the Framework or search the Database.

scqf — scottish credit and qualifications framework

SCQF Levels	SQA Qualifications			Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions	SVQs/MAs
12	Some SQA qualifications are changing between 2013-2016. See www.sqa.org.uk/readyreckoner			Doctoral Degree	Professional Apprenticeship
11				Masters Degree, Integrated Masters Degree, Post Graduate Diploma, Post Graduate Certificate	Professional Apprenticeship SVQ 5
10				Honours Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Professional Apprenticeship
9			Professional Development Award	Bachelors / Ordinary Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Technical Apprenticeship SVQ 4
8		Higher National Diploma		Diploma Of Higher Education	Technical Apprenticeship SVQ 4
7	Advanced Higher Scottish Baccalaureate	Higher National Certificate		Certificate Of Higher Education	Modern Apprenticeship SVQ 3
6	Higher				Modern Apprenticeship SVQ 3
5	National 5 Intermediate 2				Modern Apprenticeship SVQ 2
4	National 4 Intermediate 1	National Certificate	National Progression Award		SVQ 1
3	National 3 Access 3				
2	National 2 Access 2				
1	National 1 Access 1				

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