



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

MONITORING VISIT

CAMBRIDGE SEMINARS COLLEGE

Company registration no. – 08183749

Full Name	Cambridge Seminars College	
Address	Logic House, 143-147 Newmarket Road, Cambridge, CB5 8HA	
Telephone Number	01223 300123	
Email Address	admin@cambridgeseminarscollege.co.uk	
Website	www.cambridgeseminarscollege.co.uk	
Principal	Mr Michael Trewhella	
Proprietors	Mr Yermek Smailov Dr Mukhamed-Ali Kurmanbayev	
Age Range	16+	
Total number of students	27	
Numbers by age and type of study	16 – 18	6
	18+:	21
	FE only:	27
Inspection date	2 October 2018	

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight Monitoring Visits and Extended Monitoring Visits of private further education colleges and English language schools. The focus of the visit is to confirm that the quality standards reported at the last full inspection are being maintained.

The ISI is an approved Educational Oversight body authorised by the Home Office to inspect privately funded further education colleges and English language schools in England and Wales offering courses on the Qualifications and Credit Framework. It is designed to improve the quality of education on offer to international students who attend UK colleges through Tier 4 of the points-based system for student visas.

ISI inspections are required to:

- Report on the extent to which colleges comply with the published Educational Oversight Standards;
- Assess and report on the quality of educational outcomes and provision;
- Where applicable, make recommendations outside the scope of the Standards to support continued improvement of quality.

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

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

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

A monitoring visit is for those colleges found at the last inspection to have met or exceeded the Standards for Educational Oversight. Inspectors will make judgements on progress against any action points and recommendations made at that time. The inspection will not examine all other Standards in detail but will sample to confirm that previous Standards have been maintained and that there are no contrary indicators to those quality judgements.

CONTENTS

	Page
1 CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT	2
2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	3
3 THE QUALITY OF THE CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENTS	5
4 STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY	6
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	7
6 ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	9
INSPECTION EVIDENCE	10

1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 Established in 1981, Cambridge Seminars College is a private educational institution located close to Cambridge city centre. It is jointly owned by two proprietors, one of whom is the director of business development, and governed by its directors. A new principal was appointed at the end of September 2018 and is supported by a small management team. The college aims to provide students with the best opportunity for their future in terms of their courses and the time they spent in the college.
- 1.2 The college offers GCSE, A level, Foundation and pre-Masters courses in a variety of academic subjects. It also provides general English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses and preparation for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and Cambridge First Certificate and Advanced examinations. Selection is based on initial assessment of previous academic attainment, English language skills and future learning goals. Enrolment to GCSE and A level courses occurs in September and January. For Foundation and pre-Master's courses, enrolment occurs in September, January, April and June each year. EFL programmes are offered throughout the year and are of variable length, ranging from 2 weeks to 9 months. Courses are open to students aged 16 years and older.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection there were 27 students. The majority are male, over 18 years, and come from a wide range of countries. There are four students studying on a Tier 4 visa. English is an additional language (EAL) for the vast majority of students. At the time of the visit there were no students identified with language and learning difficulties or disabilities. Accommodation is offered through the provision of a student residence and host family options.
- 1.4 The college was last inspected on the 27 June 2017 when it met all Key Standards and the quality of education was judged to meet expectations. The main recommendations from the previous report are:
- Provide students with tutorial records that include details of progress and measurable targets with review dates to maximise achievement.
 - Implement a structured approach to formal self-evaluation that draws upon all relevant data, including outcomes of quality assurance processes.
 - Systematically analyse the impact of management decisions to enable effective whole school evaluation.
 - Ensure that development planning includes actions, assigned responsibilities and timescales to better support college improvement.
 - Collate staff Continuing Professional Development (CPD) plans agreed in appraisal and integrate this into the school development plan to ensure CPD is completed in a timely manner.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

2.1 **The college does not meet expectations.** The quality of education found at the last inspection of 27 June 2017 has not been maintained. The college does not meet the following Key Standards:

- **Does the college or language school maintain an accurate admission register and an accurate attendance register? [30]**

2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is good. Students receive a good education in accordance with their objectives and the colleges' aims. An appropriate range of courses are offered that meet the needs of the students and provide clear routes into further study. Courses on offer to Tier 4 students meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. Initial assessment prior to and on arrival is accurate and is effective in ensuring that students are placed on the right course in accordance with their abilities and academic aims. Teaching is good. In the majority of lessons, teachers demonstrate high levels of subject knowledge, plan lessons effectively and use an effective range of teaching methods to engage and motivate the students in their class. However, in a minority of lessons, planning is underdeveloped, with the limited range of teaching approaches used, reducing student engagement and slowing progress. Overall, students make high levels of progress given their starting points.

2.3 Arrangements for the health, safety and welfare of students are unsatisfactory. The college's premises are fit-for-purpose, well maintained and provides an environment which effectively supports learning. Appropriate health and safety policies and procedures are in place and implemented effectively. All necessary measures have been taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. However, not all legal requirements in relation to the safety of gas appliances within the college were in place prior to the inspection but were completed during the visit. Student registration records are accurate and well maintained. However, student attendance recording is unsatisfactory. Not all registers are accurate or completed. Procedures for reporting to the Home Office are satisfactory. The college's pastoral structure provides good support and guidance for the students in accordance with its aims. Relationships between staff and students are good. Arrangements for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 are satisfactory and reflect official guidance. Students report that they are well supported.

2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is satisfactory. Oversight is provided by the board of directors who successfully share a clear vision for the future of the college with staff. However, they have not been effective in maintaining standards in all aspects of the college's work. As a result, the previous high quality of teaching has not been maintained, procedures for ensuring that accurate attendance registers are kept are not secure and financial planning does not always ensure that the college's needs are supported by available funds. Management of the college is satisfactory. Roles and responsibilities are clearly

defined and there is effective communication between managers and other staff. Quality assurance is satisfactory. Student feedback is regularly sought and used effectively to improve the quality of the student experience. However, self-assessment is underdeveloped and fails to effectively inform improvement planning or identify specific priorities and actions to quickly bring about improvement. Procedures for the recruitment of staff are good, in accordance with legal requirements, with all appropriate checks undertaken. All suitability checks are accurately recorded and effectively summarised in a single central register.

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

- 3.1 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is good. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Provide students with tutorial records that include details of progress and measurable targets with review dates to maximise achievement.
- 3.3 Unsatisfactory progress has been made against the recommendation. Tutorial records do not provide clear details of student progress or measurable targets with review dates.
- 3.4 The quality of course provision and curriculum is good. Students' receive a good education in accordance with their objectives and the college aims. The curriculum is based on a suitable policy statement, enables students to learn and make progress and is appropriate for the ages, aptitudes, and language capabilities of students. It is appropriately planned and effectively meets the different higher education aspirations of the students. Courses on offer to Tier 4 students meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance.
- 3.5 Initial assessment is good and ensures students are placed on the appropriate level of course in accordance with their abilities. The process is accurate and the majority of teachers use the information effectively to plan lessons and provide any necessary support or guidance.
- 3.6 The quality of teaching is good. In the majority of lessons, teachers demonstrate high levels of subject knowledge, plan lessons well and use an effective range of teaching methods to engage and motivate the students in their class. They ask searching questions that prompt students to think and respond successfully. However, in a minority of lessons, planning is underdeveloped, with the limited range of teaching approaches used reducing student engagement and slowing progress.
- 3.7 The evidence from lesson observations and results from internally assessed courses show that the majority of students make high levels of progress in relation to their starting points.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 4.1 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is unsatisfactory. Not all Key Standards continue to be met.
- 4.2 The college premises are secure, fit-for-purpose, and well maintained. Classrooms are clean, spacious, light and appropriately furnished. Appropriate policies and procedures ensure that the health and safety of students and staff are effective. All necessary measures to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards have been taken. However, not all legal requirements in relation to the safety of gas appliances within the college were in place prior to the inspection but were completed during the visit. Fire drills and evacuations are systematically undertaken and are understood by all students and staff. The college has an appropriate number of fire marshals and staff trained in first aid.
- 4.3 Student registration records are accurate and well maintained. However, systems for recording attendance are unsatisfactory and are not appropriately managed or monitored. The college's policy requires paper registers to be completed by the class teacher and then transferred onto an electronic system by administrators. However, the system is underdeveloped and fails to ensure that all teachers complete their registers accurately, in a timely manner, and in a small number of cases, complete a register at all. As a result, not all registers are accurate or available and the ability to monitor all students' attendance is limited. Appropriate arrangements to make any necessary reports to the Home Office are in place and fully understood by staff.
- 4.4 Pastoral support is good and provides effective support and guidance for students in accordance with their needs and the college's aims. Students are clear about who to see and where to go if they have a concern. They report that the college is providing them with a supportive environment which effectively meets their learning needs. Relationships between staff and students are very good.
- 4.5 The safeguarding arrangements for students under the age of 18 are satisfactory. Arrangements have proper regard to official guidance and the implementation of safeguarding and recruitment strategies are appropriately checked by senior managers. There is a designated child protection officer in place who is trained to the required level. All staff have received appropriate safeguarding training and been subject to an appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) suitability check prior to or on appointment. However, a DBS check has not been carried out by the college themselves for all new staff, with the college accepting a DBS check from a previous employer.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is satisfactory. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report are:
- Implement a structured approach to formal self-evaluation that draws upon all relevant data, including outcomes of quality assurance processes.
 - Systematically analyse the impact of management decisions to enable effective whole school evaluation.
 - Ensure that development planning includes actions, assigned responsibilities and timescales to better support college improvement.
 - Collate staff CPD plans agreed in appraisal and integrate this into the school development plan to ensure CPD is completed in a timely manner.
- 5.3 Unsatisfactory progress has been made against the first recommendation. A structured approach to formal self-evaluation is not in place. Relevant college data is not used effectively to support the self-evaluation process.
- 5.4 Unsatisfactory progress has been made against the second recommendation. A small number of management decisions have been reviewed. However, the impact of these decisions are not effectively or systematically analysed to support whole school evaluation.
- 5.5 Unsatisfactory progress has been made against the third recommendation. A development plan has been completed. However, no responsibilities, including the monitoring of the progress of the actions, have been assigned or timescales provided to ensure effective completion of the actions within the plan.
- 5.6 Unsatisfactory progress has been made against the fourth recommendation. Limited CPD has been agreed in appraisals or integrated into the college development plan due to financial constraints.
- 5.7 Governance and leadership is satisfactory. Oversight is provided by the board of directors who successfully share with staff their vision for the future of the college and provide clear educational direction. They discharge their responsibilities well in relation to supporting students and providing a comfortable learning environment. However, they have not been effective in maintaining standards in all other aspects of the college's work. As a result, the previous high quality of teaching have not been maintained, procedures for ensuring that accurate attendance registers are kept are not secure and financial planning does not always ensure that the college's needs are supported by an appropriate allocation of funds.

- 5.8 Management of the college is satisfactory. A clear and appropriate management structure, with clear roles and responsibilities is in place and ensures that all members of staff understand their different roles and duties. Communication between managers and other staff is effective. Replies to the pre-inspection questionnaire and meetings with staff show that the majority of staff are happy and supportive of the college.
- 5.9 Arrangements for quality assurance are satisfactory. Academic progress is appropriately monitored. Student feedback is regularly sought; trends are analysed and used to improve the quality of the student experience. However, formal whole-college self-assessment is underdeveloped and fails to effectively review the college's strengths and areas for improvement. As a result, the process does not effectively inform improvement planning or identify specific priorities and actions to effectively bring about improvement.
- 5.10 Arrangements for staff recruitment are good. Leaders and managers are successful in recruiting high quality staff. Appropriate procedures are in place to ensure their suitability to work with students, including those under the age of 18 and any vulnerable adults. There are well-maintained staff files for all members of staff, containing relevant personal details, certified copies of qualifications and proof of eligibility to work in the UK. Professional references and checks to confirm previous employment history have been taken up for all staff. Details of these checks are accurately recorded and summarised in a single central register.
- 5.11 Students do not have access to a fee protection scheme.
- 5.12 The college were responsive in providing information for the inspection in a timely manner.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The college has not maintained the good quality found at the last inspection.

Actions required to meet the Standards

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

1. **Ensure that the college maintains an accurate attendance register? [30]**

Recommendations for further improvement

In addition to the above action points, the college should make the following improvements:

- Ensure all legal requirements are renewed in a timely manner.
- Ensure a DBS check is carried out for all new staff, even if they currently have a DBS check from a previous employer.
- Provide students with tutorial records that include details of progress and measurable targets with review dates to maximise achievement.
- Implement a structured approach to formal self-evaluation that draws upon all relevant data, including outcomes of quality assurance processes.
- Systematically analyse the impact of management decisions to enable effective whole school evaluation.
- Ensure that development planning includes actions, assigned responsibilities and timescales to better support college improvement.
- Collate staff CPD plans agreed in appraisal and integrate this into the school development plan to ensure CPD is completed in a timely manner.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons and conducted formal interviews with students and staff. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the proprietors and attended registration sessions. The responses of staff to confidential pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the college.

Inspectors

Dr Nigel Chambers	Lead Inspector
Ms Jane Beeson	Team Inspector