



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

CAMBRIDGE SEMINARS COLLEGE

Company registration no. – 08183749

Full Name	Cambridge Seminars College										
Address	Logic House, 143-147 Newmarket Road, Cambridge CB5 8HA										
Parent\Company name	Camsem Investments Ltd and Cambridge International Educational Centre (CIEC)										
Telephone Number	01223 300123										
Email Address	marion.cobby@cambridgeseminarscollege.co.uk										
Principal	Mr Philip Scherb										
Proprietor	Dr Mukhamed-Ali Kurmanbayev and Mrs Aziza Tlevlessova										
Age Range	15+										
Total number of students	47										
Numbers by age and type of study	<table> <tr> <td>16 – 18</td> <td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18+:</td> <td>38</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EFL only:</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FE only:</td> <td>34</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EFL and FE:</td> <td>11</td> </tr> </table>	16 – 18	9	18+:	38	EFL only:	2	FE only:	34	EFL and FE:	11
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Inspection dates	25 – 27 June 2019										

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight of private further education colleges and English language schools. The inspection consists of a three-day team inspection of the institution's educational provision.

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.

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1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 Cambridge Seminars College is a private educational institution established in 1981 and located close to Cambridge city centre. The aim of the college is to ensure every student can fulfil their academic potential and achieve their life aspirations.
- 1.2 Since the last inspection one of the proprietors has resigned and was replaced by a new proprietor. The two proprietors own Camsem Investment PLC and are directors of the college. Cambridge International Educational Centre (CIEC) is the minority shareholder but does not play an active role. The college is led by the principal and its two directors. A new principal was appointed 21 June 2019 and is supported by a small management team.
- 1.3 The college offers GCSE, A level, Foundation, pre-masters and pre-doctoral programmes in a variety of academic subjects. It also provides English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses and preparation for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and Cambridge 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 generally occurs in September or January. For Foundation courses enrolment currently occurs in September, October, January, and March each year. Next year start times will be September and March. Pre-masters and pre-doctoral courses can start at any time. EFL programmes are offered throughout the year and are of variable length, ranging from two weeks to nine months. Courses are open to students aged 16 years and older and students of 15 years are occasionally accepted.
- 1.4 At the time of inspection there were 47 students. There are approximately equal numbers of male and female students. All students are over 16 years old and come from a wide range of different countries. There are 6 students studying on Tier 4 visas. English is an additional language for most students. At the time of the visit no students were identified with language and learning difficulties or disabilities. Accommodation is offered through the provision of a student residence and host family option.
- 1.5 The college was previously inspected on 2 October 2018 when the college did not meet expectations.
- 1.6 The action point from the previous inspection report is:
 1. Ensure that the college maintains an accurate attendance register
- 1.7 The recommendations from the previous inspection report are:
 - Ensure all legal requirements are renewed in a timely manner
 - Ensure a Disclosure and Barring Service (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 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 meets expectations for the quality of education.** At the time of the inspection, all Key Standards for Educational Oversight were met and quality is good.
- 2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is good. Students are well educated according to their needs and aspirations. Accurate initial assessment, advice and guidance ensure students are placed on suitable learning programmes. Suitability of course provision and curriculum is good and learning activities are well matched to students' ages, aptitudes and language capabilities. Most students make very good progress although poor attendance limits achievement for a minority of students. Teaching is good with excellent aspects and students enjoy their lessons. Teachers display high levels of subject knowledge and use a variety of approaches to engage students and encourage participation. Teachers know students well and plan effectively for their students' individual needs. The good quality of teaching, together with discussion during tutorials, encourages students to take responsibility for their academic progress. Attainment and progress are excellent. Students make very good progress in relation to their starting points and nearly all students complete their courses and progress to university.
- 2.3 Arrangements for the health, safety and welfare of students are good. The college provides a safe environment for students and staff. All necessary measures have been taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. Regular safety checks are undertaken. Signage regarding first aid, fire and evacuation procedures are clear. Risk assessments are in place. College premises are fit for purpose, secure and well maintained and fittings and fixtures are well designed for the needs of the students. There are no facilities for wheelchair users. Admission and attendance records are accurate. The lateness policy lacks clarity. The quality of personal and pastoral support for students is excellent. A comprehensive induction helps students to settle in quickly. There is no regular social programme in place. Students receive helpful advice and guidance regarding future study and careers. Safeguarding arrangements are good. All staff have received enhanced DBS checks with barring. Arrangements for residential accommodation are excellent. The external hall of residence is of a high standard and managed very well. Homestay is very well managed and monitored in accordance with national requirements. Where students under 18 are accommodated, all adults in the family have received enhanced DBS checks. Students speak highly of their accommodation.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is satisfactory. Ownership and oversight are satisfactory. Educational direction is clear and reflected in the high quality of education and the care of students. However, proprietors have not always ensured sufficiency of resources through robust financial management. Failure to meet contractual obligations on staff pay in a timely manner has affected the smooth running of the college and eroded trust. The proprietors have put in place measures to remedy past omissions and to ensure robust financial support for future development. Management is satisfactory. Roles are currently being redefined and a new principal has taken up post. Quality assurance is satisfactory.

Academic progress is monitored effectively. Student feedback is sought and results in improvements in student experience. Self-evaluation is accurate and leads to some improvements. However, processes for analysing data for evaluating performance are not fully developed. Lesson observations identify good practice and areas for development, but these are not systematically followed up. Observation records feed into staff appraisals, which identify CPD needs. Procedures for staff recruitment are good. All suitability checks are accurately recorded, and the single central record is complete. Provision of information is good, and the college complied efficiently with all requests for information.

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

- 3.1 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is good.
- 3.2 The recommendation in this area from the previous report is:
- Provide students with tutorial records that include details of progress and measurable targets with review dates to maximise achievement.
- 3.3 Satisfactory progress has been made against the recommendation. All students have at least three tutorials with the director of studies during their course, although most have more. Records contain details of progress and targets, which are reviewed at the following tutorial. However, targets are insufficiently detailed, measurable or set within a limited timeframe, and records do not contain information as to how well these have been achieved. Teachers are unaware of the targets set as they do not have access to tutorial records.

3.(a) Assessment of students prior to or on arrival

- 3.4 The assessment of students prior to and on arrival is good. Initial assessment is used effectively in placing students on the most appropriate programme for their needs and aspirations. Accurate information, advice and guidance are provided which enable students to make informed decisions about the courses they wish to study to prepare them for their next steps. Support is provided for less able students as required, especially in mathematics and English. Most students progress well and the number of withdrawals from programmes is very low.

3.(b) Suitability of course provision and curriculum

- 3.5 Suitability of course provision and curriculum is good. Educational purpose is clear and there are appropriate schemes of work for all subjects. Courses accurately reflect published information and most students complete the course for which they registered. Students receive a good learning experience and are well educated in accordance with their objectives and the college's aims.
- 3.6 Learning programmes and activities are well matched to students' ages, aptitudes and language capabilities. The vast majority of students make good progress and achieve their goals, although poor attendance limits achievement for a minority of students. Courses on offer to Tier 4 students meet the definition of an approved qualification as set out in the Home Office guidance.

3.(c) The quality of teaching and its impact on learning

- 3.7 The quality of teaching is good with many excellent aspects. Classes are well planned and managed with suitable activities that enable students to make excellent progress. In most lessons, teachers use questioning and dialogue very well to engage students and develop their subject skills. Effective teaching methods enable students to make good progress during their lessons. Teachers' clear responses to

questions enables students' knowledge and understanding to develop well. Students enjoy their lessons and enhance their learning through good use of dialogue and questioning, exhibiting good application of their subject skills.

- 3.8 Teachers have high levels of subject knowledge and use this to develop students' understanding of the topic. Students confirm that class tests and assessment tasks enable them to progress. Detailed developmental feedback informs them how they can improve. Students receive regular tutorials with the director of studies to discuss their progress and set targets for improvement.
- 3.9 Classes are well planned and managed and tutors use a variety of approaches and activities to engage students and encourage participation. Teachers make effective use of the resources available to them within the classrooms. Students enjoy their lessons and, as a result, exhibit high levels of learning and progress well during classes. Due to the small class sizes, tutors know their students well and take their aptitudes, needs, cultural background and prior attainment into account effectively when planning lessons. The good quality of teaching, together with discussion during tutorials, encourages students to take responsibility for their academic progress.

3.(d) Attainment and progress

- 3.10 Attainment and progress are excellent. Students make very good progress in relation to their starting points. Lesson observation and scrutiny of students work confirmed the high quality of student attainment. Achievement is excellent and the vast majority of students complete their courses and progress to university.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

4.(a) Health, safety and security of the premises

4.1 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is good. All key standards are met.

4.2 The required action in this area from the previous inspection is:

(a) Ensure that the college maintains an accurate attendance register.

4.3 Satisfactory progress has been made. There is an accurate attendance register. Attendance is checked both by students signing in and out at reception and by class registers taken by teachers. Attendance is copied onto an electronic record daily, but cumulative attendance is only calculated for students holding Tier 4 visas. As a result, ongoing attendance data for the majority of students is difficult to ascertain quickly in order to take any appropriate action in a timely manner. An information management system, which will enable ongoing recording and monitoring of attendance data, has been purchased but not yet implemented. The lateness policy is described in the student handbook but lacks clarity regarding precise requirements.

4.4 The college demonstrates proper regard for health and safety. There are well implemented procedures for ensuring the health and safety of students and staff. There is a satisfactory level of fire safety which conforms to legal requirements and all necessary measures have been taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. Fire alarms and emergency lighting are tested weekly by staff and, along with fire safety equipment, are regularly maintained by external contractors. The college has an appropriate number of fire marshals. Fire drills are undertaken, and students confirmed that they are aware of emergency evacuation procedures, with the majority having participated in a practice drill. There is an appropriate policy on first aid which is implemented effectively, and details of qualified First Aiders are displayed publicly. Signage regarding first aid, fire and evacuation procedures are clear. Risk assessments are in place for activities outside the college.

4.5 The college premises are fit for purpose, well maintained and secure, and appropriate emergency procedures are in place. There is no facility for wheelchair users. There are sufficient washrooms. All areas of the college are well decorated, clean and tidy. Lighting, ventilation and sound insulation are satisfactory. Furniture and fittings are suitable for the needs of the students and regular safety checks are undertaken. As a result, the school provides a safe environment for students and staff.

4.(b) Student registration and attendance records.

4.6 Systems for recording registration and attendance are satisfactory. Since the last inspection, the college has made significant efforts to ensure accuracy of attendance recording.

- 4.7 Staff have a clear understanding of Home Office requirements regarding the enrolment and attendance requirements for students with Tier 4 visas. Required reports are made to the Home Office when necessary.

4.(c) Pastoral support for students

- 4.8 The quality of personal and pastoral support provided to students is excellent. Students are aware of whom to approach for help and make effective use of the support on offer. A recent case of cyber-harassment was resolved very effectively. Detailed records are kept of issues raised and their resolution. There are good relationships between staff and students.
- 4.9 All students receive a comprehensive induction at the start of their course which covers course requirements, health and safety, welfare, registering with a doctor, and other information pertaining to life in the UK. This enables students to settle into their course quickly. The college does not have a regular programme of social or enrichment activities in place. Students are provided with helpful advice and guidance which enables them to make informed decisions regarding future study and careers.

4.(d) Safeguarding for under 18s

- 4.10 Safeguarding arrangements are good. All necessary safeguarding measures are in place. There is a Designated Safeguarding Lead, and deputy, and all staff have received appropriate training on safeguarding and the prevention of radicalisation. There is an appropriate code of conduct for staff and a suitable e-policy for staff and students. There are clear notices around the college regarding cyber-bullying and other possible issues. The single central record is complete. Safeguarding has a high priority and learners confirmed that they feel safe.

4.(e) Residential accommodation

- 4.11 Arrangements for residential accommodation are excellent. The external hall of residence contracted by the college is of a high standard and managed very well. There is robust oversight of homestay accommodation, which is mainly used for students under the age of 18. Homestay is very well managed and monitored in accordance with national requirements. Where under-18s are accommodated in host families the main carer and all those over 18 in the house have an enhanced DBS check with barring. All students speak highly of the residential accommodation offered by the college, which plays a valuable part in the education and personal development of the students.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) Ownership and oversight

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is satisfactory. All key standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 The recommendations in this area from the previous inspection are:
- 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
 - Implement a structured approach to formal 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 The college has made excellent progress in addressing the first recommendation. A clear calendar of renewal dates for all legal permissions and checks is maintained and successfully monitored.
- 5.4 Excellent progress has been made against the second recommendation. Enhanced DBS checks with barring information have been completed for all staff.
- 5.5 Good progress has been made against the third recommendation. Self-evaluation now gives an accurate picture, and draws upon relevant data, although this is not analysed in sufficient depth.
- 5.6 Good progress has been made against the fourth recommendation. More accurate self-evaluation and the use of success criteria within the development action plan has resulted in clearer recognition of the impact of management decisions. Weekly management team meetings include a review of actions carried out and identify areas to be developed.
- 5.7 Good progress has been made against the fifth recommendation. A development action plan has been drawn up with actions that address areas for development, with assigned responsibilities and some timescales. However, actions are not always sufficiently detailed or measurable.

- 5.8 Good progress has been made against the sixth recommendation. Appraisals now identify staff CPD needs, which are collated. The college development plan now includes actions to address these training needs in the next academic year. Staff development occurs but does not always ensure that non-teaching staff are suitably trained for their roles.
- 5.9 Ownership and oversight are satisfactory. Educational direction is clear and reflected in the high quality of education and care of students. The leadership of the college have appointed high quality staff and ensured their suitability to work with students. The proprietors have not always ensured sufficiency of resources through robust financial management. Failure to meet contractual obligations on staff pay in a timely manner has affected the smooth running of the college and eroded trust. The proprietors have put in place measures to remedy past omissions and to ensure robust financial support for future development.
- 5.10 The proprietors implement policy in accordance with the aims of the college. They are now providing strategic direction and have made a start on exercising a more effective monitoring role. They discharge their responsibilities well in safeguarding students and providing a safe environment conducive to learning.

5.(b) Management structures and responsibilities

- 5.11 Management responsibilities are satisfactory and are currently being restructured following the appointment of a new principal and new definition of roles. There is an effective relationship between the principal and the proprietor. Leaders and managers safeguard students well and ensure the education provided is of a high quality and students achieve their goals. Senior management has started to review the college policies for effectiveness but has not yet completed the task.

5.(c) Quality assurance including student feedback

- 5.12 Quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory. Students' academic progress is monitored effectively on an individual basis. Student feedback is sought and analysed and results in actions to improve student experience. However, processes for analysing data for evaluating performance are not fully developed which limits the college's ability to manage more effectively.
- 5.13 There are regular lesson observations, which identify elements of good practice and areas for development, although these are not systematically followed up either by further observation or professional discussion.
- 5.14 The complaints procedure is clear and there are appropriate systems for independent adjudication of complaints. The college does not have a fee protection scheme.

5.(d) Staff recruitment, qualifications and suitability checks

5.15 Procedures for staff recruitment are good. All necessary identity, right to work and qualification checks are carried out and copies filed. References are taken up for new staff and previous history checked. The single central record is complete.

5.(e) Provision of information

5.16 Provision of information is good. The college website contains all the information required in the standards, including accurate course details and contact information.

5.17 The college complied swiftly and efficiently with all requests for information.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for further improvement

In order to further improve the good quality provided, the college should:

- Strengthen financial management and ensure that contractual obligations on staff pay are met in a timely manner.
- Implement a rigorous approach in the use of attendance data to quickly assess and address repeated student absence and lateness.
- Strengthen management processes by collating and analysing data to inform evaluation and improvement.
- Ensure that areas for development identified in lesson observations are effectively monitored by further observation or professional discussion.
- Ensure that targets set during tutorials are shared with subject staff and are detailed, measurable and set in an appropriate timeframe.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mrs Pauline Bateman	Lead Inspector
Mr Mike Coulson	Team Inspector