

Institution: IH Newcastle

Inspectors: Paul Hammond & Lynden Cronin

Dates: 19th – 20th May 2015



Section One: Inspection Verdict

Verdict statement:

Accredited membership of the institution can be reconfirmed, as all standards of the Eaquals Charters are fully met.

Grades

Grade 2 = meets the standards required by the Eaquals Charters

Grade 3 = does not meet the standards required by the Eaquals Charters

Grade 1 = identifies an area of excellence in the institution

	CATEGORIES	Grade		CATEGORIES (CON'T)	Grade
1	Management and Administration	2	7	Client Services	2
2	Teaching and Learning	2	8	Quality assurance	2
3	Course Design and Supporting Systems	2	9	Staff Profile and Development	2
4	Assessment and Certification	2	10	Staff Employment Terms	2
5	Academic Resources	1.5	11	Internal Communications	2
6	Learning Environment	2	12	External Communications	2
TOTAL GRADE:					23.5

Executive Summary

IH Newcastle is clearly a well-established, high quality teaching operation with committed and diligent staff offering a service of high standards, experience and ability. There is a strong feeling of a team striving for excellence. The premises are clean and comfortable and provide a pleasant workplace for the staff and a friendly and professional atmosphere for clients. The inspectors would like to thank the staff for all their help and support during the inspection.



Section Two: Account of the Inspection

Timetable

Tuesday 19th May

Time	Activity	IH staff	Inspector(s)
08.30-09:10	Arrival at school, tour of premises, greet staff		PH & LC
09:10-09:40	Initial meeting with Managing Director	Managing Director	PH & LC
09:40-10:00	Joint observation	Teachers	PH & LC
10:00-11:00	Observations	Teachers	PH & LC
11:00-12:05	Meeting with Academic Director	Academic Director	PH & LC
12:05-12:40	Observations	Teachers	PH & LC
12:40-13:30	Lunch		PH & LC
13:30-14:00	Observations	Teachers	PH
13:30-14:05	Meeting with Head of Administration	Head of Administration	LC
14:00-14:30	Meeting with Accommodation Administrator/Accommodation Co-ordinator/Homestay Inspector	Accommodation Administrator + Accommodation Co-ordinator + Homestay Inspector	PH & LC
14:30-15:00	Meeting with Head of Student Services	Head of Student Services	PH & LC
15:00-15:30	Teacher focus group	Teachers	LC
15:00-15:30	Student focus group	Students	PH
15:30-15:50	Meeting with Teacher Trainer/YL Co-ordinator	Teacher Trainer/YL Co-ordinator	PH
15:30-16:40	Observations	Teachers	PH & LC
16:40-18:45	Visit Accommodation (Charlotte House & Homestays)	Accommodation Administrator + Homestay Inspector	PH & LC
18:45-19:05	Observations	Teachers	PH

Wednesday 20th May

Time	Activity	IH staff	Inspector(s)
08:30-08:45	Meeting with Managing Director	Managing Director	PH & LC
08:45-09:20	Meeting with Senior Teacher/PSP Co-ordinator	Senior Teacher/PSP Co-ordinator	PH & LC
09:20-10:10	Observations	Teachers	PH
09:20-10:15	Meeting with Managing Director	Managing Director	LC



10:10-10:30	Observation PSP		PH & LC
10:30-11:00	Meeting with Senior Teacher Exams Co-ordinator	Senior Teacher Exams Co-ordinator	PH
10:30-10:45	Meeting with café staff	Cafe + Cafe & Admin assistant	LC
10:45-11:00	Meeting with Social Programme staff	Marketing + Admin assistant	LC
11:00-11:30	Meeting with Head of Finance	Head of Finance	LC
11:00-11:30	Observations	Teachers	PH
11:30-12:00	Meeting with Marketing & Executive Director	Marketing & Executive Director	PH
11:30-12:00	Observations	Teachers	LC
12:00-12:30	Meeting with Academic Co-ordinator, Teacher Trainer	Academic Co-ordinator	PH
12:00-12:35	Meeting with Head of Estates & Health and safety	Caretaker/driver	LC
12:35-13.30	Lunch		PH & LC
13:30-14:00	Teacher focus group	Teachers	PH
13:30-14:00	Student focus group	Students	LC
14:00-15:00	Meeting with Academic Director	Academic Director	PH & LC
15:00-15:30	Meeting with Enrolments administrator	Enrolments administrator	LC
15:00-15:25	Focus group other staff members	Reception + Marketing & design assistant	PH
15:25-16:00	Check documentation/inspect premises		PH
15:30-16:15	Meeting with Teacher Trainer/CPD Co-ordinator	Teacher Trainer/CPD Co-ordinator	LC
16:00-17:30	Feedback preparation		PH & LC
17:30-18:15	Feedback to management	Management	PH & LC

Staffing of the Language Education Centre

The school is a limited company with two majority and one minority shareholders, all of whom work in the school.

At the time of the inspection the school was staffed as follows:

- Managing Director
- Executive & Marketing Director
- Head of Student Services
- Head of Administration
- Head of Estates and Health & safety
- Finance Manager
- Enrolments Administrator
- Accommodation Administrator
- Homestay Inspector
- Social Programme Activity Leader & Tour Guide
- Marketing and Design Assistant
- Reception and Admin Assistant
- Admin Assistant
- Caretaker/Driver
- Caretaking Support/Driver
- Housekeeping Supervisor
- Café staff member



- Café and Admin Assistant
- 2 cleaners
- Academic Co-ordinator
- Senior teacher – teacher trainer and CPD Co-ordinator
- Senior teacher – teacher trainer and YL Co-ordinator
- Senior teacher – PSP Co-ordinator
- Senior teacher – Exams Co-ordinator
- Materials Writer
- 22 teachers

Description of the Institution; provided by the Language Education Centre.

History

International House was founded in 1978 and is registered as ‘International House Newcastle Ltd.’. It is based in central Newcastle-upon-Tyne and is owned and managed by three directors, all of whom occupy senior roles within the school. One is the managing director who takes responsibility for strategic planning, financial management, regulation and compliance, premises and day-to-day management. A second director has responsibility for marketing and the third for the academic life of the school, including the curriculum and standards. The school was established to deliver mainly English language classes to overseas students, many of whom are preparing for university entrance or postgraduate studies. It is also a TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) teacher training centre and offers Spanish and French evening classes. The school aims to ‘go one step further’ in providing an integrated and extensive academic and social programme for its students.

Premises

The buildings have been recently refurbished to create an environment suitable for both young and adult learners. 16 English language classrooms and a large PSP language learning suite are well maintained and in a very good state of decoration. Furniture and fittings throughout the school are of good quality. Washrooms are accessible for disabled users and a lift to all floors allows the school to make provision for students with limited mobility. Office accommodation is well proportioned and situated centrally, giving students good access to the directors and members of the administration team.

Facilities

An excellent café with an adjoining soft seating area provides a relaxing, friendly and reassuring environment where students can socialise. These facilities are very well used by students. There is also free Wi-Fi access throughout the building.

Classroom equipment

Desks, chairs, networked PCs, Wi-Fi, digital projectors, whiteboards.

Any other premises used by the Language Education Centre

IH Newcastle utilises Strathallan School during its students’ summer recess, with all of its wonderful facilities, for our junior residential courses there in the summer. Strathallan School is located in one of the most beautiful rural areas in Scotland. It is situated just a 40-minute drive from Edinburgh and is a fantastic base to explore all that Scotland has to offer in terms of spectacular scenery, picturesque towns and villages, and cosmopolitan areas.

Section E: Courses Offered		
	Approximate percentage of total student hours as calculated below	Approximate number of teachers per language taught
Language 1 (English) add further rows as needed	99%	33
Language 2 (Spanish) add further rows as needed	1%	2
Language 3 (French) add further rows as needed	Far less than 1%	1



Types of course, e.g. national and international exam courses, .and on-line courses over the year (add rows as needed)		
General Language	(English)	74%
Special purpose	(Academic)	9%
Special purpose	(Business)	2%
Special purpose	(Exam prep)	3%
Special purpose	(Spanish)	11%
Special purpose	(French)	Less than 1%
Special purpose	(English, CLIL and Methodology)	Less than 1%
Any courses provided which are <u>not</u> language courses (e.g. teacher training).		
Name of course	Type	Student Numbers
CELTA	Teacher training	56
DELTA	Teacher training	12

Approximately 70% of the students also books Personal Study Programme sessions as part of their package. This is one hour a day at a scheduled time and counts as part of the student's attendance record.

Section F: Staff and Student Numbers					
Students					
Approximate total of number of all student hours of tuition provided by the Language Education Centre during the last 12 months . Include course participants taught in-company and in other off-site locations			Total Number: 236,762 hrs		
Approximate total of number of students at different times of the year	Q1 Jan-March: 243	Q2 April-Jun: 246	Q3 July-Sept: 268	Q4 Oct-Dec: 192	
Approximate numbers of full time (15 or more hours per week) and part-time (under 15 hours per week) course participants over the year			Full-time	Part time	
	Number:		1519	46	
Percentage:		97%		3%	
Approximate Numbers of Junior (16-11) Young Learners (10-6) and Very Young Learners (5 and under) over the year			Junior	Young Learners	Very Young Learners
	Number:		326	0	0
Percentage:		100%		0%	0%
Maximum size of classes taught:			15	N/A	N/A
Staffing					
Number of Full Time Teaching Staff employed	Q1 Jan-March:	Q2 April-Jun:	Q3 July-Sept:	Q4 Oct-Dec:	



	28	31	40	33
Number of Part Time Teaching Staff employed	Q1 Jan-March:	Q2 April-Jun:	Q3 July-Sept:	Q4 Oct-Dec:
	0	0	1	1
Number of Full Time Administrative Staff employed	Q1 Jan-March:	Q2 April-Jun:	Q3 July-Sept:	Q4 Oct-Dec:
	9	9	9	9
Number of Part Time Administrative Staff employed	Q1 Jan-March:	Q2 April-Jun:	Q3 July-Sept:	Q4 Oct-Dec:
	1	1	3	3

At the time of the inspection there were 151 students enrolled on English courses, 43 on Spanish courses and eight on French courses.

Section G: Developments since your last Inspection	
Please note here any important activities or changes to structures or systems which have occurred since your previous inspection. You may find it helpful to refer to the 12 categories of the Equals Standards. Please keep your account as brief as possible.	
Actions taken	Based on Equals recommendations?
Management and Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration of year round language school - <i>International House Edinburgh</i> Pathways agreement with <i>University of Sunderland</i> Highly effective e-systems in all areas of administrative support Policies and implementation clearly defined and regularly reviewed 	No No No No
Teaching and Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pop in Observations carried out by the Academic Director weekly to maintain quality and consistency throughout the school. Observations are fed into the CPD programme. For example, in 2014/15 there have been workshops on Feedback, Preventing L1 in the classroom, Promoting Autonomy Learning, Demand High, Writing, Correction A series of workshops for teachers on pronunciation have been delivered as part of CPD. Workshops focusing on particular pronunciation problems have been delivered to students Teachers submit a copy of the weekly work plan to the Academic Director at the start of each week. This is checked to see that a balance of activities is included each week and to ensure consistency across the school Homework and home learning has been promoted. Seminars have been held to suggest different ways that the students can learn out of class time. The Younger Learners programme has been revised to include more homework appropriate to the age and task The T card board, in the students' room, has been arranged according to level, from A1 to C2. Students have a visual representation of progression. Levels have been subdivided so that students feel that they are progressing within a CEFR band. (For example there are currently 4 B1 levels ranging from low B1 to high B1) 	Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes No
Course Design and Supporting Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of Modern Languages Department Personal Methodology Programmes, TKT and CLIL teacher training courses Students more aware of syllabus for their level as it is printed on the back of the students' weekly 	No No No



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> progress reports New graphics for the syllabus documents making it easier to read 	No
Assessment and Certification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved system of Day One testing. New certificate format providing clear and personalised learner assessment Weekly student feedback enabling students to better gauge own progress Parents / sponsors can request regular progress reports Monthly reports sent to most embassies in the format requested by the embassy. 	No No No No No
Academic Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership with Harvard Business Publishing offering Harvard ManageMentor E-courses Subscription to teaching journals and Teacher Training journals 	No
Learning Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Projectors and internet-linked computers in each classroom Free wifi internet access throughout the school Major refurbishments at Charlotte House student apartments 	No No No
Client Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beta version of the International House 'Hub' (50k investment) due to launch in summer 2015 to improve student experience in all areas of the school's provision Safeguarding compliance standards are exceeded Exceptional attention given to detail and personal service for all students 	No No No
Quality Assurance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student and staff feedback in various formats regularly collected and acted upon 	No
Staff Profile and Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff are DBS-checked and have completed at least '<i>Basic Awareness</i>' (formerly Level One) safeguarding training Regular and varied programme of CPD Appointment of a CPD coordinator Individuals given opportunities based on requests from annual PDI interviews Pop in observations are carried out by the Academic Director every Thursday to maintain quality and consistency throughout the school. 	No No No No No
Staff Employment Terms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved Staff Handbooks cover staff welfare issues <i>School Emergency Management Plan (SEMP)</i> in place Improved Recruitment Policy, with provision for safeguarding duties 	No No No
Internal Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular staff meetings, mini-meetings, memos, and emailed updates for staff and students. Weekly meeting of academic management Monthly meeting of coordinators Monthly meetings of teacher trainers 	No No No No



External communication <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Website rebuilt and content populated by school staff to ensure information is current and relevant.• Facebook• Instagram	No No No



Section Three: Grading

1. Management and Administration (Eaquals General Charter: 1, 2, 3, 4)

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found that the Language Education Centre meets Eaquals criteria for this category (Grade 2)

1.1 There is an institutional ethos which provides the foundation for the institution's activities.

1.2 The leadership and organisational structure of the Language Education Centre support this mission and the achievement of its objectives.

There is a detailed statement of the school's educational philosophy available to students and in the Teachers' Handbook and this reflects what is to be found in the school. There is also a mission statement which underpins the school's activities and this, too, was reflected by what the inspectors saw during the inspection. The Mission Statement and the Statement of Educational Purpose are made available to the students in the Student Guide and in the General Policy document, both of which can be downloaded from the website.

The aim of the school is to offer a quality learning experience in a stimulating and friendly atmosphere and this was reflected by what the student focus groups reported and what the inspectors were able to see.

The owners and management of the school follow developments in their key markets closely and are actively involved in marketing it.

The management structure is appropriate to the size of the school with internal communication channels in place and the lines of responsibility are clear to all staff members.

Administrative systems work well and the management system can be accessed by different categories of staff who have access to different data sets according to their position in the school,

Administrative systems and enrolment procedures are clear and according to the student focus group underlined the fact that these are problem free. The data management system (Class) is effective and will shortly be greatly improved with the introduction of a tailor-made online system to be called IH Hub.

The school has a CLA Licence and its policy on making copies is laid down in the General Policy document. Photocopies are made of teachers' own material, in-house materials, published supplementary materials as well as some copied being made from coursebooks. Copies of published materials are sourced.

Recommendations

None

Requirements

None



2. Teaching and Learning (Eaquals General Charter, 1.2; Charter For Course Participants 1,2, 3)

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found that the Language Education Centre meets Eaquals criteria for this category (Grade 2)

- 2.1 The pedagogical approach and methods reflect the institution's educational philosophy.
- 2.2 The quality of course delivery consistently provides opportunities for effective learning.
- 2.3 Lessons are planned with reference to the course programme and the learning and motivational needs of individuals and the group; specified learning outcomes are shared with learners.
- 2.4 The opportunities offered for learning are varied, making use of available technology and resources.
- 2.5 Learners have the opportunity to develop their study skills and to share responsibility for their own learning.

At the time of the inspection there were 24 courses running (including five Spanish and one French course) covering all levels from A 1 to C 2 and including IELTS and Cambridge exam preparation, as well as Business English. The inspectors observed 22 lesson segments across all levels and course types plus Personal Study Programme (PSP) segment. 21 of the 22 teachers were observed, including a Spanish teacher. The inspectors were unable to observe the French course as it took place after the feedback session.

During the lesson segments the inspectors were able to see that great attention is paid to real life communication with an emphasis on skills, pronunciation, accuracy and fluency and that, for the most part, students are encouraged to communicate in the target language within the school and this reflects the educational philosophy of the school.

The inspectors saw many segments of good teaching. The teachers were linguistically competent, effective and professional, with sound classroom management skills. The teachers were roundly praised by the students. The inspectors could see that teachers had a very good rapport with their students and offered a wide variety of activities and interaction types. The inspectors saw many examples of student production, examples of all types of skills work, numerous examples of good communication activities including various communication types such as individual work, pair work, small groups and open class work. There were some good examples of grammar segments with further examples elicited from the students. There were also examples of students developing writing and exam strategies. The inspectors saw good examples of unobtrusive modeling, clear explanations and targeted eliciting. There was good boardwork, use of media and pronunciation drilling and widespread use of the data projectors and Smartboards.

Teachers provide a weekly plan for each course that has to be filed. These are then checked by the Academic Director. Lesson plans were also provided and were generally good, with clear aims and clear links to previous lessons and teachers demonstrated they had sound pre-knowledge of their students. Lesson aims were not given, but these are available to all students on the weekly plan which hangs in the classroom. The inspectors were pleased to see lessons which were not textbook dominated, but rather made good use of supplementary and in-house material to achieve the aims of the lesson which could then be better targeted to the needs of the group.

It was clear to the inspectors that there was total student involvement in the lesson segments observed and it was good to see that, with the exception of one class, all communication between the students during pair and groupwork, was going on in the target language.

The Personalised Study Programme session observed, where there were four teachers present, was varied and clearly suited to the needs of the students. The inspectors saw examples of teachers suggesting IELTS, writing texts for exam practice, listening and a 1-to-1 tutorial during the PSP session. There are language board games which students play together, and on the PCs, as well as ready-made language practice



programmes there is a Pinterest site where recommended websites are stored. Students are encouraged to choose their own exercises. On the computer there is a PSP learning journal where there is a file for each student for writing exercises and communication with their teacher. Teachers correct the writing by using Track Changes.

The inspectors considered that teachers could sometimes have expected more from their students, with one word answers being accepted without the focal point of the lesson, time deadlines were sometimes given and not respected, and in some cases incorrect use of classroom language at A2 and above was observed. The inspectors would also have expected more error correction where this was related to the aims of the lesson.

Recommendations

- Consider running a training session for teachers of languages other than English to encourage the use of the target language during pair work
- Consider running a training session on the timing of lessons and lesson segments, including assessing time to be taken over a phase and ensuring that sessions do not overrun.
- Ensure teachers encourage correct use of classroom language from their students
- Consider running training session on the point of error correction when related to lesson aims
- Encourage teachers to put lesson aims on the board at the start of the lesson

Requirements

None



3 Course Design and Supporting System (Eaquals General Charter 1.2; Charter for Course Participants 2.2, 2.4, 2.6,)

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found that the Language Education Centre meets Eaquals criteria for this category (Grade 2)

3.1 There is a statement of the institution's educational philosophy and written descriptions of its learning programmes, including course objectives and content.

3.2 All language course programmes are specified by levels which refer to the CEFR, and learning objectives are related to the global descriptors of CEFR levels.

3.3 There is an academic management and coordination structure, with supporting systems, which ensure the implementation of the institution's educational philosophy.

There is a detailed statement of the school's educational philosophy and a framework of levels which is referenced to the CEFR.

There is a syllabus for each level and these are linked to the can-do statements and also include information on grammar and functions. The syllabus for each level is displayed in the stairwell. Each point on the syllabus has an identification code and this is reflected in the weekly schemes of work so that students can see how what they do in the classroom relates to the syllabus. The weekly schemes of work are displayed in the classroom as from midday each Tuesday. The link between the syllabus and the schemes of work is very clear and was appreciated by the Student Focus Group. The inspectors were also able to see this reflected in the lesson plans and in what took place in the classroom.

There is an Academic Director, an Academic Co-ordinator and Senior Teachers and teacher support systems include an induction process for new teachers, a teachers' handbook and a mentoring system. The Academic Director deals with more strategic planning, while the Academic Co-ordinator's role is to support and assist the Academic Director with placement testing, observations, timetabling and cover. Senior teachers each have their own area of responsibility, such as CPD Co-ordinator, Personal Study Programme Co-ordinator, Exams Co-ordinator. Job descriptions for all these positions are included in the Teachers' Handbook.

Academic administrative systems are all in place, including registers, weekly schemes of work, records of work, handover strategies for courses with handover meetings and sometimes peer observations and a standby cover system for absent teachers. The Teacher Focus Group praised the handover process as being very smooth. The inspectors saw attendance registers were complete and kept up to date, that the weekly schemes of work were produced in all cases and contained sufficient detail for students and that records of work were also kept up to date.

Recommendations

- Consider making the job description for the Academic Co-ordinator more detailed.

Requirements

None



4. Assessment and Certification (Eaquals General Charter 1.2; Charter For Course Participants 1.2, 1.3, 2.10, 3.1)

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found that the Language Education Centre meets Eaquals criteria for this category (Grade 2)

4.1 Assessment procedures are compatible with the institution's educational philosophy and course objectives.

4.2 Placement procedures are appropriate to the learning context and to learners' needs.

4.3 Systems for assessing language competence provide reliable, valid and fair means of evaluating progress and achievement in a way that is appropriate for the course and the learners.

4.4 Reports and certificates issued to learners indicate their achievements in terms of the course objectives and content. They provide a reliable statement of the level achieved.

4.5 Where information on public examinations is provided, relevant advice and support is given to learners.

There is an in-house produced written placement test with four components - Tense review (13 items), Functional language (10 items), Vocabulary (30 items) and Written production plus an accompanying oral test which is conducted by the Academic Director, Academic Coordinator or a Senior Teacher for all new students on a Monday morning. This appears to work well and the inspectors saw no examples of misplaced students. There are, however, strategies in place for dealing with these should the issue arise.

Placement tests take place every Monday for new arrivals and the students are placed in the class according to their level, regardless of how many other students of the same mothertongue there might be in the class. The school has no quotas for language groups within a class, preferring the main focus to be that students have the right level. The maximum class size is 12.

Students are evaluated on a weekly basis but there are no formal progress, end of stay or end of level tests. This takes place with an evaluation across nine points – skills, functions, grammar, pronunciation, PSP and motivation. Students progress to the next level when the nine-point weekly evaluation (motivation, PSP, writing, reading, speaking, listening, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar) demonstrates their excellence across a range of points. Each of these points are graded (Below Standard(BS). Repeated BS grades should result in the student moving down a level; Standard (S) The student is being challenged at this level; Above Standard(AS) the student is coping well but needs more time at this level; Excellent (E). Repeated E grades should result in the student moving up a level) and the results are recorded in the register.

In order to have a record of their progress, students also have the option of receiving a 'Student Progress Report' from their teacher each week which uses the same headings as the register.

Tutorials are organised every four weeks to give students the opportunity to express any concerns and request areas of lesson focus. For the teacher, the tutorials allow for further assessment to be made of their students' progress.

The end of course certificate includes a comments section for further clarification of progress made and/or advice. The grades given match the grades in the register for that week.

Certificates of attendance are given to students at the end of their stay rather than a certificate of achievement which might have more face validity. The Certificate includes the duration of the course and states that students have attended a course at a given CEFR level.

The school is a Cambridge open centre and students are informed of the various possibilities for sitting these exams, with posters around the school and information included in the Day One Folder for students and in the Student Guide. There is a senior teacher who is the Exams Co-ordinator and part of her role is to visit classes of the relevant levels to inform students of the Cambridge exams. There are also exam



preparation classes for Cambridge Upper Main Suite exams and for IELTS.

Recommendations

- Consider developing end of level tests. This could be done with Macmillan-Campus and be carried out in the Personal Study Programme centre.
- Consider developing a certificate of achievement.

Requirements

None



5. Academic Resources (Eaquals General Charter 1.2, 1.3; Charter For Course Participants 2.5)

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found some Points of Excellence in this category (Grade 1.5)

5.1 The coursebooks or other core course materials, online learning platforms and resources, and reference materials reflect course objectives and the methodology used.

5.2 There is a system for monitoring learning material developed in-house.

5.3 All equipment and electronic connectivity is accessible and well maintained.

The school has a good range of resources available for teachers and they are aware that they can make suggestions for buying additional material. The Teacher Focus Group liked the idea that they are not tied down to coursebooks and were satisfied with the amount of resources available,

Coursebooks are not issued to students - the material used in the classes is taken from supplementary materials, coursebooks, , in-house materials and the teachers' own material according to the weekly plan of the teachers related to the syllabus. The Student Focus Group's only reaction to not having a coursebook was that they felt it probably made the course cheaper for them. There is wide use of Powerpoint and Word documents.

In-house material is stored digitally and is monitored for quality by the academic managers. In most cases this material had the IH logo and/or the coloured wavy line that the school uses as part of its corporate identity. The criteria for choosing the materials is that they match the syllabus and are appropriate for the level and age of the group being taught. The Institute pays for CLA which is a copyright licence.

There are data projectors in all classrooms and Smartboards are also available in some classrooms. All members of staff are trained to use these and the inspectors saw them widely used in an intelligent manner which aided the efficiency of the classroom, with screens prepared previously by the teachers and attractive visual aids



The Personal Study Programme (PSP) centre is open throughout the day for students to use, either in planned groups from 10 till 4, or before and after that on a self access basis and the inspectors saw that it is clearly a valuable resource for the students. During the planned group sessions it is staffed by teachers at a ratio of 1 teacher to 8 students. In the PSP centre there are 17 desks with PCs, a comfortable seating area, nests of tables and a lending library for students as well as internet access and online materials.

The student focus group praised the facilities available in the school.

Points of Excellence

5.1 is excellent because during PSP the students receive highly individualised advice on what they need to do to improve their English and the inspectors saw examples of teachers suggesting IELTS, writing texts for exam practice, listening, a 1-to-1 tutorial – each student has one a week during PSP, suggesting what to do with homework, advising students on what material was available and explaining how to play a game. Students keep a record of what they have done in the sessions in a personal file on the computer and this can be accessed by teachers and commented on and can also be used for communication between the teacher and the student.

Recommendations

- Ensure that all in-house material uses the same format.

Requirements

None

6. Learning Environment (Eaquals General Charter 1, Charter for Course Participants 2.3; Staff Charter 2)

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found that the Language Education Centre meets Eaquals criteria for this category (Grade 2)

6.1 The teaching and study environment meets the requirements of course programmes and learners.

6.2 Any non-pedagogical facilities and/or spaces required for the services offered are fit for purpose and well maintained.

6.3 Arrangements are made to protect the health and ensure the safety of learners and staff.

The premises are clean, welcoming and attractive, with sufficient, well equipped space for teaching staff. Classrooms are adequately furnished with chairs, tables and data projectors/Smartboards and are big enough for the maximum class size, which is 12. Rooms have plenty of light and there is no interference from external noise.

Noticeboards are full of useful information for students as well as examples of student work and are generally kept tidy, although sometimes they did appear overfilled.

There are sufficient toilets for the size of the school and in the inspectors' opinion these are generally kept clean, although the student focus group felt they were often dirty in the afternoon.

Communal space for the course participants is more than sufficient with a large café on the first floor and the PSP centre on the fourth floor.

Emergency procedures are clearly documented in the School Emergency Management Plan and cover all eventualities including fire, bomb threats, intruders on the premises and public health incidents Staff and students are informed of these.

There are regularly maintained fire extinguishers on all floors, the fire alarm is tested weekly and fire drills are carried out every three months with the result being recorded. This also applies to the student



accommodation in Charlotte House, where fire drills are carried out twice a year and the result is logged. New employees have to do a fire training course when they join the school.

There is emergency lighting on all floors, in the stairwell and outside on the fire exit. The lighting together with the fire alarms, fire extinguishers and door closures are checked visually every day and recorded every Friday by the person responsible for Safety procedures and his assistant.

There are lists of first aiders on each floor in the stairwell and a first aid box in the teachers' room on the fourth floor and in reception and the cafe on the first floor. The names of the first aiders are displayed on the First Aid Boxes. The location of the first aid boxes is marked. First aiders have to be retrained every three years.

Disabled learners have access to the school via a lift. There are disabled toilets and also an emergency button in them on the first and fourth floors .

Recommendations

- Consider having the toilets cleaned three times a day rather than two.

Requirements

None

7. Client Services (Eaquals General Charter 2.3;, 3.1; Charter For Course Participants 2.8)

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found that the Language Education Centre meets Eaquals criteria for this category (Grade 2)

7.1 Advice and support is available to learners and sponsors throughout the course, including welfare arrangements, where appropriate.

7.2 There are systems for monitoring and administering the provision of any leisure programme and/or accommodation. Any social programme takes account of learners' interests.

Learner queries are dealt with efficiently by front office staff and academic management and there are clear guidelines in the Teachers' Handbook and in the Student Guide regarding student absence, lateness, discipline and complaints. There is a separate complaints procedure for academic problems and for accommodation, welfare or administration problems and should these prove unsatisfactory there is a link provided to the various inspection bodies, including Eaquals. Students are expected to attend every lesson, including the PSP sessions and are marked 'late' on the register if they are more than five minutes late. Visa students are particularly checked in this respect. Students need to have at least 80% attendance in order to receive a certificate. There is a disciplinary procedure and a personal harassment and bullying policy in the General Policy document with various stages from issuing a verbal warning to expulsion from the course.

Welfare issues are dealt with efficiently and quickly, with many procedures, including a bullying policy, laid down in the staff handbook and in the teachers' handbook. All staff members have been trained at at least level 1 for Safeguarding in the UK, with two staff members having done level 2 and two staff members having done level 3. Teachers are informed when they have a student in their course who is under 18 and there is a Senior teacher, the YL Co-ordinator, who liaises with these teachers.

Students who are at the school for more than six months are signed up for a GP, otherwise students use the local walk-in medical centre. If they are 18 or under, a member of staff goes with them.

There are clear criteria for selecting homestay accommodation, with a contract between the host families



and the school and a separate homestay handbook for adults and young learners, including clear rules on behaviour. Homestays are divided into three categories according to facilities and accessibility and are inspected at least once every two years. Homestay families should not be more than 20 minutes away by public transport.

The school also has accommodation on a long term lease in nearby Charlotte House, where there are 105 bedrooms divided into 4/6 bedroom units with communal areas and shared bathrooms. There is always a responsible resident living there, who is either a temporary member of the administrative staff or a long term student, and there is a 24 hour emergency telephone number. The student focus group was very happy with Charlotte House and particularly praised the social life there.

The leisure programme is appropriate for the students and was praised by the student focus group, though some long-term students found it repetitive. Both free and paid for activities are offered and each event package is evaluated for risk on a weekly basis. There is a welcome party for new arrivals each Monday and this is also often attended by students who are already there.

Airport transfers are also arranged by the school using either the school minibus or a chauffeur service through a local company.

Recommendations

- Consider redesigning the social programme events to make them more appealing to long stay students.

Requirements

None

8 Quality Assurance (Eaquals General Charter 1.3; Charter For Course Participants 2.2, 2.7, 3.2; Staff Charter 4, 6)

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found that the Language Education Centre meets Eaquals criteria for this category (Grade 2)

8.1 There are systems to foster a culture of quality through continuous evaluation, reflection and action.

8.2 The learning experience is fully monitored by management systems (including regular classroom observations) which are used to improve the quality of all services.

8.3 There are procedures which enable learners and sponsors to give regular feedback relating to the academic and other services provided.

The school is a member of IHWO and is also inspected by Accreditation UK and ISI (Independent School Inspectorate), which allows them to apply for a Tier 4 licence to sponsor international students under the Points Based System.

Teaching staff are observed twice a year with full length observations, with a lesson plan having to be prepared, a form filled in during the observation and a post observation meeting, while 'drop in' observations are carried out by the Academic Director on a weekly basis. This means that, on average, teachers are seen at least once a month. There does, however, seem to be some confusion between drop in observations and full observations, with 'drop in' observations sometimes lasting up to an hour and some full observations not being much longer. The school is currently piloting a new version of the observation forms which includes a section on areas of strength and areas to work on, and this form will be countersigned by the teacher.



'Drop in' observations are developmental, with the results being clearly fed into the CPD programme, whereas full observations are primarily for quality control as they are included in the appraisal system. There is a clear procedure for these and a 12-point evaluation grill of which teachers are aware. There is a space at the end for follow-up action which is developmental.

Teachers are also observed by their mentors, with each senior teacher having three or four teachers as their mentees. Peer observations also take place and although these are informal and voluntary, notes are taken, feedback is given and they are recorded on the individual teacher's CPD record. These also sometimes take place as part of the handover process when a different teacher takes over a course,

Observations take place regularly, in various formats, and with the new observation forms and procedures the inspectors are confident that this aspect of quality assurance works well.

Students are given feedback questionnaires at the end of their stay and these are evaluated by management, long stay students also have a tutorial with the Academic Director after their first six weeks where they are also asked for their feedback. These students are sent an online questionnaire in advance and any non-academic problems which arise in these tutorials are noted and the relevant member of staff is informed. Students also have a tutorial with their teacher every four weeks where problems can be raised. Students are informed of who they should go to if they have a problem as part of the arrival process on the first day and the student focus group confirmed this. There is a complaints procedure for staff and students and these can be found in the relevant handbooks.

In the inspectors' opinion the feedback opportunities are effective and this was backed up by the focus groups.

Recommendations

- Differentiate more clearly between drop in and full observations.

Requirements

None



9. Staff Profile and Development (Charter For Course Participants 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.7 ; Staff Charter 5, 6, 8,)

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found that the Language Education Centre meets Equals criteria for this category (Grade 2)

9.1 The competences, experience and qualifications of managers, teachers and administrative staff are relevant and adequate for each area of responsibility.

9.2 There are systems to provide appropriate support and guidance for all staff including a regular staff performance review.

9.3 There is a formal framework to assure appropriate continuous professional development for all staff.

Administrative staff are well qualified and fully capable of fulfilling their roles. Several administrative staff members have also done the CELTA. Other qualifications include bookkeeping qualifications, safeguarding levels 1 to 3, or a certificate in 'Principles of Business and Administration'.

On the academic side, the Academic Director, the Academic Co-ordinator and the Senior teachers are all DELTA qualified. The YL Co-ordinator also has the IH Certificate for Young Learners.

All English teachers hold the CELTA, with a third of them having the DELTA, too. The school clearly benefits from being a CELTA/DELTA centre as new teachers are recruited from these courses. Teachers who wish to do the DELTA are given a 24-month interest free loan to cover the cost and are paid 66% of their salary while doing it

New teachers who are not off these training courses are given the opportunity to observe a class before having to give a demonstration lesson with the same course. New teachers are allocated one of the Senior teachers as a mentor to extend teacher development. The Teacher focus group stated that they found this very useful.

Appraisals are held on a yearly basis for both administrative and academic staff and action points are set. For teaching staff a full observation takes place just before the appraisal for quality control purposes. Senior teachers (5) and the Academic Co-ordinator are appraised by the Managing Director and the Academic Director, whereas teachers (17) are appraised by the Academic Director.

There is a training and development plan for teaching staff and teachers have the opportunity to contribute to this as well as making suggestions for content.

Training sessions for teachers take place more or less once a week and last about an hour. Training sessions are led by different members of staff, not just the managers. These sessions are part of their weekly hours. Teachers of other languages are also invited to the training sessions for English teachers. Recent sessions in 2015 include: Managing, documenting and measuring students progress; What does 'student centred' mean; Checking meaning and understanding; Pronunciation party bag; and Training teachers (CPD for senior teachers). The Teacher Focus Group praised the training sessions as being very good. Administrative staff



generally learnt their roles on the job, but do also have the opportunity to do other training, and these have included sessions on Safeguarding, First Aid, and answering frontline enquiries in the past. Staff are aware that they have the opportunity to ask management for other training sessions, both during their appraisal and the rest of the year.

The CPD programme is repeated 9-10 am for late staff and 4-5 pm for early shift in order to ensure that all teachers can take part. There are two sessions every two weeks which are planned 1 month to 6 weeks ahead. Topics are based on: teachers' requests; feedback from lesson observations; swop shop of good ideas.

Recommendations

- Consider involving the Academic Co-ordinator in carrying out appraisals with teaching staff.

Requirements

None



10 Staff Employment Terms (Staff Charter 1,2, 3, 4, 5,6, 7, 8 9.10)

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found that the Language Education Centre meets Eaquls criteria for this category (Grade 2)

10.1 All staff hold current employment contracts; these conform to local requirements, as confirmed by the statutory declaration of the institution.

10.2 The terms and conditions of employment offered to staff are fair and comply with all statutory requirements as stated in a statutory declaration made by the LEC.

All members of staff have written contracts with the remuneration clearly set out and there are a mixture of fulltime, part-time, permanent and fixed term staff. Many staff members have been with the school for a number of years.

There is a salary scale for new staff based on their qualifications.

Staff get four weeks' holiday for the first two years, rising to six weeks after that. Administrative staff work 40 hours a week, including their lunch break, while teaching staff work 25 hours. Teaching contracts include information that the IH World maximum teaching hours are 120 a month, whereas at IH Newcastle the maximum is 100.

Apart from the state pension, in line with changes in UK pension law, a new pension scheme is being introduced with contributions from staff members being matched by the school. This is laid out in detail in the Staff handbook but not in the Teachers' Handbook and the teacher focus group expressed some confusion over what would be happening. They were aware that this would be taking place as from 2016.

Conditions and terms of employment are fair given the local context.

Recommendations

- Add information on the new pension scheme to the teachers' handbook.
- Consider changing the contract to reflect the IH Newcastle maximum teaching hours rather than the higher IH World limit.

Requirements

None



11 Internal Communications (Eaquals General Charter 1.1, 2.3; Staff Charter 1, 4, 8, 10)

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found that the Language Education Centre meets Eaquals criteria for this category (Grade 2)

11.1 The responsibilities, lines of accountability and channels of communication among members of management and/or staff are clearly defined and documented.

11.2 There is formal, documented, communication and consultation between staff and managers, scheduled as appropriate.

11.3 Information is available to staff about the institution, its mission and any planned developments.

11.4 Grievance and disciplinary procedures are in place for staff and are known to them.

11.5 Information about Eaquals and its resources is available to staff and learners.

There is an organisational chart with clear lines of responsibility and up-to-date job descriptions for all members of staff.

Communication within the school works well, with regular staff meetings, fortnightly for administrative staff and weekly for academic staff. There are also meetings for both administrative and academic staff together on a quarterly basis. Meetings are minuted and matters regarding current and future developments are discussed. The members of staff spoken to felt valued by the school and enjoy working there.

Grievance and disciplinary procedures are available for staff and these are included in the Staff handbook and the Teachers' handbook.

Eaquals Charters are displayed in the teachers' room, in the café, in the PSP room and in the reception area. There is also some information in the handbooks, but the charters are not included and the inspectors felt that more could be done to publicise Eaquals and the charters

Recommendations



- Include the Eaqals charters in staff/student handbooks.

Requirements

None

12 External Communications (Information Charter 1-7)

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found that the Language Education Centre meets Eaqals criteria for this category (Grade 2)

12.1 All promotional materials accurately describe the institution's learning services: the range and functionality of resources and/or online tools offered, and other services and facilities.

12.2 Contractual information provided to learners and sponsors is accurate and complete, and expressed in easily understood language.

12.3 Accredited members make information about Eaqals publicly available; they display the Eaqals Charters publicly, and use the Eaqals logo correctly.

There is an informative website as well as a facebook page, twitter and LinkedIn. Promotional material, the website and social media are all attractive and well maintained. The information contained in/on them is comprehensible and complete, with the downloadable guides on the website being a mine of information.

Contractual information for students is mostly online and includes all the necessary information and procedures. The student Focus group were satisfied with the amount and quality of the information they had received from the school before arrival.

There is a link to the Eaqals website on the school's website and the logo is used appropriately. Students were aware that an Eaqals inspection was taking place but didn't seem fully aware of what Eaqals is.

Recommendations

- Consider putting more information about Eaqals on the website.
- Consider promoting Eaqals more amongst the students.

Requirements

None



Section Four: Summary

Areas which have not been inspected in this inspection and need follow-up inspection:

The school has a young learner operation at Strathallan School near Edinburgh in the summer. 2015 will be the last year of operation for this summer centre, however.

Summary of Points of Excellence.

5	Academic Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">5.1 is excellent because during PSP the students receive highly individualised advice on what they need to do to improve their English and the inspectors saw examples of teachers suggesting IELTS, writing texts for exam practice, listening, a 1-to-1 tutorial – each student has one a week during PSP, suggesting what to do with homework, advising students on what material was available and explaining how to play a game. Students keep a record of what they have done in the sessions and this can be accessed by teachers and commented on and also used for communication.



Summary of recommendations

2	Teaching and Learning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider running a training session for teachers of languages other than English to encourage the use of the target language during pairwork.• Consider running a training session on the timing of lessons and lesson segments, including assessing time to be taken over a phase and ensuring that sessions do not overrun. Ensure teachers encourage correct use of classroom language from their students.• Consider running discussion training session on the point of error correction when related to lesson aims.• Encourage teachers to put lesson aims on the board at the start of the lesson.
3	Course Design and Supporting System
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider making the job description for the Academic Co-ordinator more detailed.
4	Assessment and Certification
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Consider developing end of level tests.</u> This could be done with Macmillan Campus and be carried out in the Personal Study Programme centre.• Consider developing a certificate of achievement.
5	Academic Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that all in-house material uses the same format.
6	Learning Environment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider having the toilets cleaned three times a day rather than twice.
7	Client Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider redesigning the social programme events to make them more appealing to long stay students.
8	Quality Assurance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Differentiate more clearly between drop in and full observations.
9	Staff Profile and Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider involving the Academic Co-ordinator in carrying out appraisals with teaching staff.
10	Staff Employment Terms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Add information on the new pension scheme to the teachers' handbook</u>• Consider changing the contract to reflect the IH Newcastle maximum teaching hours rather than the higher IH World limit.
11	Internal Communications
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include the Eaquls charters in staff/student handbooks.
12	External Communications
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider putting more information about Eaquls on the website.



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|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider promoting Eaquals more amongst the students. |
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We confirm that this report is based on evidence found at the time of the Inspection and that our opinion is based on our professional judgement.

DATE

Signed

(Reporting inspector)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Hammond".

Signed

(Co-inspector)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynda Cronin".