



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

HARROW INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS SCHOOL

Full Name of College	Harrow International Business School
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Principal	Mr Dilip Amdekar
Proprietor	Mr Dilip Amdekar
Age Range	19+
Total Number of students	629
Numbers by Age and type of study	19+: 629 FE only: 629
Inspection dates	22-24 November 2011

PREFACE

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

The ISI is an approved educational oversight body authorised by the UK Border Agency to inspect privately funded further education colleges in England and Wales offering courses on the Qualifications and Credit Framework, and English language colleges.

ISI inspections are required to:

- Report on the extent to which colleges comply with the published Standards for private colleges;
- Assess and report on the quality of educational outcomes and provision;
- Where applicable, make recommendations to colleges 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. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COLLEGE

- 1.1 Harrow International Business School (HIBS) is a privately owned Further Education College that operates as a limited company by guarantee. It was established in March 2007 with teaching commencing in September 2008. Prior to September 2008, the college operated as part of Khalsa College London. The college has a nominated Board of Directors, with the proprietor as chair and chief executive officer. The accommodation is situated in managed premises in the London borough of Harrow.
- 1.2 HIBS is committed to excellence in teaching and the creation of future leaders in their chosen professions. The college offers a range of courses ranging from level 2 to level 7 in the areas of 3D Animation, Hospitality and Tourism, Business Management and Health and Social Care. The leadership team includes the CEO, as college principal, and the academic director, who are supported by the Board of Directors, the heads of the departments, the Quality Assurance Board, the Examination Board and the Curriculum Board.
- 1.3 The College is rated as a 'trusted A provider' by the UKBA. It has 369 Confirmations for Acceptance of Studies (CAS) of which 251 have been assigned. Catering for students that are aged 18 and over, the college does not provide any residential accommodation but does support students in finding appropriate housing. Of the 629 students on learning programmes, 572 are Tier 4. The majority of students are recruited from India and the Philippines. The CEO is responsible for recruiting overseas students. Many of the current students have transferred from colleges in London that have ceased to trade. Students are recruited on a termly basis. All the students are aged over 19 and are evenly split in terms of gender. The majority of students until 2010 were recruited in their country of origin, since when the majority of students originated from overseas with existing licences, but were recruited from other colleges in the UK. The college reports that there are no students that require support for learning difficulties or disabilities. For all 629 students, English is not their first language.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE COLLEGE

2.(a) Executive Summary

Section of the standards	Grade awarded 1-4
3. The quality of the curriculum, teaching and students' achievement	2 Meets expectations
4. Students' welfare, including health and safety	2 Meets expectations
5. The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management	2 Meets expectations

- 2.1 HIBS has a thorough recruitment and selection process that effectively supports students in selecting the correct courses to meet their needs, and in guiding them to further study on their chosen career path. The curriculum is responsive to student demand, adding new courses such as 3D animation. Teaching is good overall and staff are highly skilled and qualified in their specialist subjects. Planning for lessons is good and at its best, highly engaging and challenging. Some teaching uses too limited a range of teaching methods to engage students fully in their learning. Assessment is fair and accurate, but the quality of written feedback on students' work is variable. Outcomes for students are good.
- 2.2 HIBS provides a safe working environment for students. Safety and risk assessment of the premises are given high priority and prompt action is taken in response to any issues arising. The accommodation is of a satisfactory standard overall. HIBS is currently taking action to remedy overcrowding in a number of classes. Attendance monitoring and arrangements are rigorous. Students confirm that HIBS' approach to dealing with issues concerning bullying and harassment are robust. A very small minority of students feel that they do not always have access to a tutor if they need support with personal matters.
- 2.3 The proprietor fulfils all legal duties within the college. The clear and detailed strategic plan overarches all UK and international work that HIBS undertakes. Information regarding strategic planning is routinely shared with staff to provide them with a clear educational direction. Staff recruitment is rigorous and includes a number of checks to ensure that staff from outside of the EU are eligible to work in the UK. Middle managers within the college support the leadership team in ensuring high quality provision. However, they do not contribute to strategic decision making. Senior leadership accurately identifies strengths and areas for improvement within the college and takes appropriate action. Formal self-evaluation at departmental level is developing well.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with standards for Private Colleges

- 2.4 At the time of the inspection, the college met all the key requirements of the standards for private further education colleges and quality is good. **The college meets expectations.**

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.5 The college is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Develop teaching and learning so that all teachers include a range of teaching methods that ensure students are fully engaged in their learning.
2. Provide students consistently with constructive written feedback from assessment to inform them how they can improve their work.
3. Engage the middle management team more fully in the college's strategic decision making processes.
4. Complete the increase in classroom space for larger classes.

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

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

- 3.1 The assessment of the needs of students prior to and on arrival meets requirements. All prospective students undergo rigorous recruitment processes. HIBS have strengthened their procedure for recruiting overseas students by ceasing to use recruitment agents and conducting interviews, including checks for suitability and eligibility, in the presence of the principal. They use a satellite office in Mumbai, staffed by a member of the college team. Students are required to achieve grade 5.5 on an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test and show proof of the necessary prior qualifications before they can enrol onto their chosen programmes. Rigorous checking of these requirements ensures that students are correctly placed on suitable courses of study. This is closely monitored and is recorded on students' electronic personal files.
- 3.2 Information, advice and guidance on courses of study is appropriate and is provided to students during the recruitment process, during their selected courses and as they reach the end of their programmes. This is effective in helping students to select the right course for them, and to plan for their next steps of learning or entry into employment. Teachers and tutors make effective use of the initial information and assessments in their planning and support. The majority of students attend tutorial sessions with personal tutors to discuss progress and achievement. Tutors set goals and targets for achievement to help students to succeed.

3.(b) Suitability of course provision and curriculum

- 3.3 The suitability of course provision and curriculum is good. The college website, prospectus and marketing materials provide accurate and detailed information about the courses on offer, so that students can make informed choices. As a result, students select courses well matched to their needs and objectives. The majority of students studying on HIBS courses are postgraduates and hope to return to their home country with a Masters level qualification. This matches the college aim of commitment to the creation of future leaders in their chosen professions. All courses lead to an approved qualification for UKBA purposes.
- 3.4 Induction onto programmes is good. This involves a short induction programme that provides students with comprehensive information about the college and life as a student in the UK. A useful student handbook explains their roles and responsibilities and those of the college. Staff observe students over the first few weeks on their course and will discuss with students if they feel that they need additional support with their English language skills. The college EAL staff help them to become more proficient in English. Assessment information that has been gathered is used effectively by teachers to plan and deliver lessons that meet the individual needs of the students.
- 3.5 Staff and students engage in enrichment activities outside of college. Students appreciate the time and effort that the staff put into arranging picnics in the park, the HIBS Christmas party and other trips and visits. They feel that it helps them to integrate with UK society and develops their awareness of a range of cultures.

- 3.6 The majority of students successfully complete the courses for which they initially register. A small minority of students complete their course but do not gain a qualification. This has been identified by the senior management team and robust actions put in place to address this issue. The large majority of students progress to further study or employment at a higher level in their chosen industry.

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

- 3.7 The quality of teaching is good overall. It helps students to progress well in their studies and so meets expectations. It does not have the consistency to realise fully its ambitious aspiration to excellence. Teachers have a deep knowledge of their subjects. Most plan their lessons effectively, taking account of their good understanding of the course requirements and of the needs and potential of the individual students they teach. They provide clear, well structured information and analysis, in most cases making effective use of the resources available. Most teachers take care to check and correct their students' understanding. All students, including those that have English support needs, are treated sensitively and are encouraged to engage in activities to improve their skills. In the good lessons, teachers make their lessons lively and interesting. They successfully motivate all their students to increase their knowledge and skills, and to think, study and research for themselves. In such lessons students develop strong relationships with their teachers and their peers, working productively both individually and in groups. Occasionally, the pace of teaching is too slow or the methods used are limited and do not fully engage all students. The school has recognised that this weakness is exacerbated by overcrowding in a very small number of classes. Because of the generally good quality of teaching, students engage in reasoned arguments during discussion and are able to answer questions relating to their subjects confidently and competently.
- 3.8 Assessment of students' work is regular, fair and rigorous, and internal moderation has established and maintained its accuracy. Students receive and value helpful oral guidance on how they can improve from their teachers and their tutors. Only a minority of teachers provide constructive written comments about the quality of work so that students can review and track their own progress in meeting targets. The college is aware of this weakness and has identified assessment as an area for development.

3.(d) Progress and attainment

- 3.9 The progress and attainment of students of all abilities and needs are good and meet expectations. Success rates are good overall and there has been some improvement in 2010/11. Managers use the extensive data that is available to them effectively to improve course provision. The college was quick to identify and take effective action to remove a weakness identified in one of their courses in 2009.
- 3.10 Most students make good progress towards attaining their individual learning goals and a large majority proceed to work in higher skilled jobs after their course. Students' knowledge, understanding and skills are such that they are well prepared for their next steps in learning and/or employment.
- 3.11 Students' written work is of a good standard. They are able to take relevant notes from their classes and use them to support their written assessments. The voluntary study skills sessions help many to improve the quality and standard of their work. Students report that they develop high levels of self-confidence and self-esteem and they show a driving ambition to succeed. Regular progress points ensure that

teachers are able to monitor the achievements of the students, and provide additional support or take action against a student for lack of progress if necessary. As a result, students' knowledge, understanding and skills, including English language skills, develop rapidly.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

4.(a) Health, safety and security of the premises (in line with expectations of educational institutions)

- 4.1 The arrangements for health, safety and security of the premises meet requirements. HIBS provides a safe working environment for students, who are aware of their own responsibilities for health and safety. During induction, students are fully briefed on health and safety at the college. They are provided with information such as fire evacuation procedures, staff who are qualified first aiders and security information. The accommodation is of a satisfactory standard overall. HIBS is aware that it lacks facilities to accommodate the largest classes, and is already taking action to remedy this. Students have access to a pleasant, well equipped common room. There is a useful library with appropriate text books and computers to use for research, and a good computer laboratory, effectively used to support teaching and learning.
- 4.2 Risk assessment is comprehensive and fully documented. A fire risk assessment has been recently conducted by an external specialist company, and the college is already beginning to address its recommended action points. Fire alarm checks are carried out on a fortnightly basis and fire evacuation procedures are conducted on a termly basis. Policies and procedures covering health and safety are comprehensive and are issued to students during the induction process. First aid procedures are satisfactory. There is a written first aid policy in place and two staff currently have first aid training. However, only one of them is on the college premises on a full time basis. The college recognises the need for an additional first aider to be available and has booked an additional member of staff on to first aid training.
- 4.3 Security arrangements within HIBS premises are adequate. The students are issued with identity cards which they must present if asked. There is also closed circuit television in the entrance to ensure the safety of the students. The principal has identified that security could be strengthened and a key card system of entry is currently being installed. Enrichment activities and off-site visits are comprehensively risk assessed to ensure student safety and security, and staff to student ratios are high on such visits.

4.(b) Student registration and attendance records

- 4.4 Student registration and the administration of attendance are good. There is a detailed attendance policy in place that is issued to students on enrolment to HIBS. This informs students of UKBA and college protocols for non-attendance. Information is clear and includes the collection and refund of fees and deposits, should the course not meet the needs of the student or should they not be able to gain entry to the UK to complete their studies.
- 4.5 Attendance is rigorously monitored. Registers are completed twice during the college day and attendance data is entered onto the college system. Early identification of non-attendance is effective and individual students are contacted to establish the cause of their absence. A lack of a reasonable cause for non-attendance instigates a verbal warning. If attendance or progress does not improve, this is then followed by a written warning. Written warnings are also submitted to UKBA to make them aware of potential concerns regarding individual students. There is a well developed UKBA reporting process in place to ensure compliance if students miss ten expected contacts, fail to enrol or otherwise discontinue their

study. Course completion is regularly and effectively monitored and students' achievements are also recognised on the roll of honour page on the website.

4.(c) Pastoral support for students

- 4.6 Pastoral support and guidance for students are good. Initial advice and course guidance are timely and accurate, enabling students to make well informed choices about their studies and career choices. Students report that they have made the correct course choice, are making good progress and are confident that they will succeed on their chosen course. Students contact their personal tutors if in need of pastoral support, but feedback from a very small minority of students indicates that there is not always a staff member that they can go to if they have a personal problem. Students have regular one-to-one sessions with staff to discuss their progress and achievements and lack of progress over a sustained period of time is a cause for expulsion. Students are fully aware of this and say that it motivates them in requesting support from tutors.
- 4.7 Strong relationships have been developed between staff and students and amongst the student community. The small staff team work closely together in sharing information about students who they feel may need extra support for personal or educational reasons. Students feel that they can approach their teachers for advice, guidance and support and this enhances their confidence and motivation. They are also very complimentary about the principal's open door policy.
- 4.8 The college has effective policies and procedures in place for issues concerning bullying and harassment. In all cases, the principal is informed of the situation and the students are able to talk to him personally about any issues or concerns that they may have. To date, all concerns have been dealt with informally and there are no recorded incidents of bullying or harassment.
- 4.9 Students have regular access to staff to discuss their next steps for learning, including further educational courses or career choices. The staff are highly skilled and qualified in their curriculum areas and are able to offer good levels of support to students to help inform their next steps of developing as future leaders within their chosen professions.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) Ownership and oversight

- 5.1 Ownership and oversight of the provision are good. All legal duties within HIBS are fulfilled by the proprietor and the board of directors, who have a clear vision for the development of the college. The board provides strategic focus and has developed links with a number of universities in the UK and internationally to provide opportunities for students to move on to higher education. The strategic plan overarches all UK and international work that is undertaken. The plan is routinely shared with staff, providing a clear educational direction. The planning includes rigorous financial planning to ensure the development of a range of curricula and support the development and introduction of new courses. HIBS has successfully identified a significant area of growth in the form of 3D animation and has worked in partnership with an awarding body to develop this. They are currently working with a London university to ensure progression opportunities for 3D animation students. This programme has also been developed for delivery outside of the UK in countries such as Uganda and the Philippines.
- 5.2 Daily oversight of HIBS is provided by the proprietor, who is also the principal. He is fully involved in the day to day running of the college and monitors all aspects of provision, including the recruitment of staff, annual appraisals and performance reviews to maintain quality and standards. Staff recruitment is robust and includes a number of checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with students and are also eligible to work in the UK. Reference checks and background checks of prospective staff are routinely undertaken. A number of staff within the college have also been vetted through the criminal records bureau (CRB). The proprietor has built very good relationships with all staff and students and has recently appointed a staff member as his successor to the college when he retires.
- 5.3 Overall, the college provides a high level of health and safety. Risk assessments are used effectively to identify hazards and action is swiftly taken to minimize them. Students' welfare is a high priority and the proprietor is vigilant in supporting students through a range of difficulties that they may encounter.
- 5.4 All legal permissions are in place. The lease for the college is stringent and planning is in place to use as an educational institution. Although there have previously been some minor issues with examination and awarding bodies regarding assessment, these have now been fully addressed. Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) permissions are in place.

5.(b) Management structures and responsibilities

- 5.5 Management structures and responsibilities meet requirements. Middle managers within the college support the leadership team in ensuring high quality provision. There are clear and effective structures for the setting, implementation and review of policies. The senior and middle management team are effective in carrying out the aims of the college. There is a clear and commonly shared sense of educational priority and direction, and strategic planning is highly effective. Middle managers contribute little to this process. Heads of department carry out their assigned middle management roles effectively. They make sure that the curriculum is carefully planned and suitably enriched. Teaching and learning within the college

are good overall and this is reflected in the positive student experience and success rates of the college.

- 5.6 HIBS has been very successful in recruiting high quality staff because of its thorough recruitment and selection process. Opportunities for continuing professional development amongst staff and management teams are good. A particular strength is the insistence on Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) training for all staff that do not have a teaching qualification, highly valued by teachers. The principal is currently negotiating for the delivery of the next stage of the qualification, the Certificate to Teach in the Life Long Learning Sector (CTLTS). Staff are also supported in undertaking higher level qualifications such as masters level degrees and doctorates which enable them to teach on higher level courses.

5.(c) Quality assurance including student feedback

- 5.7 Quality assurance meets expectations. The college is in transition from relying on external consultants to establishing fully internal quality assurance. At this early stage of development, quality assurance arrangements are beginning to support improvement. Heads of department, supported by college leadership, have taken greater responsibility for quality assurance and monitoring of provision, thus providing the college with growing transparency and accountability. Leadership and management of departments are effective. Heads of department are beginning to observe teaching and learning and are currently developing their skills in implementing this process. Quality assurance between departments is variable but managers are beginning to share good practice to improve the quality of provision.
- 5.8 Student feedback is collected at the end of every course unit and course and effectively analysed and used to improve the quality of provision. Data has recently begun to be analysed to identify trends in students' achievements, but this is inconsistent across courses. The newly formed middle management team is aware of this and they are beginning to share good practice to improve provision across all areas of HIBS.
- 5.9 HIBS deal with students' issues and concerns very seriously. There is a formal complaints procedure in place that includes bullying and harassment. The principal has an open-door policy and students are able to discuss any concerns that personal tutors are not able to deal with. There have been no formal complaints made against the college and the students report high levels of satisfaction with HIBS. Questionnaires completed by students in preparation for the inspection were very complimentary. Students were positive about most aspects of the college and feel well supported in their studies. A very small minority of students feel that they would like teachers to be available more frequently to provide support for personal matters.

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

- 5.10 HIBS undertakes thorough suitability checks on staff appointed to HIBS and meets expectations. Their eligibility to work in the UK is checked and reference checks undertaken. As the students are over 18 years of age the staff are not required to have CRB checks. The staff team that teach on health and social care courses have had CRB checks as they will be accessing provision that accommodates vulnerable adults. The principal and academic director have also had CRB checks as they are involved in interviewing prospective students. All staff are currently completing documentation for CRB checks as the principal feels that this is an area of good practice.

5.(e) Provision of information

- 5.11 The provision of information is good. HIBS' website has been developed to a high standard. Information is clear and well-presented. Although information is provided regarding courses, student success and facilities, policies on arrangements for admissions, discipline and exclusions are not accessible via the website. All documents are available to students through the virtual learning environment.
- 5.12 The college was pro-active in providing information required by the inspectors. Information provided was of a high quality and effectively supported the inspectors in carrying out the educational oversight inspection.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with staff and students and examined samples of students' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff, the proprietor and with external consultants. The responses of staff and students to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the college.

Inspectors

Ms Anita Pyrkotsch-Jones	Lead Inspector
Ms Abigail Nwaokolo	Team Inspector
Ms Eileen O'Gara	Team Inspector
Mr Peter Casey	Team Inspector