International Quality Review of British University Vietnam

October 2022

Contents

About this review

This is a report of an International Quality Review conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at British University Vietnam. The review took place from 17 to 19 October 2022 and was conducted by a team of three reviewers, as follows:

- Sharon Jones
- Chrystalle Margallo (student reviewer)
- Ian Kimber (International reviewer)

The QAA Officer for this review was Tess Winther.

International Quality Review (IQR) offers institutions outside the UK the opportunity to have a review by the UK's Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). The review benchmarks the institution's quality assurance processes against international quality assurance standards set out in Part 1 of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

In International Quality Review, the QAA review team:

- makes conclusions against each of the 10 standards set out in Part 1 of the ESG
- makes conditions (if relevant)
- makes recommendations
- identifies features of good practice
- comes to an overall conclusion as to whether the institution meets the standards for International Quality Review.

A summary of the findings can be found in the 'Key findings' section starting on page 2. The 'Explanations of the findings' section starting on page 6 provides the detailed commentary.

The QAA website gives more information about QAA and its mission. A dedicated section explains the method for International Quality Review and has links to other informative documents. For an explanation of terms see the Glossary at the end of this report.

Key findings

Executive summary

British University Vietnam (BUV) is an internationally owned higher education provider which is also licensed by the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (MoET). BUV is governed by two Charters. Firstly, the BUV Company Limited Charter, which recognises BUV as a 'foreign investment' enterprise legally operating in Vietnam. Secondly, the BUV University Charter which enables the University to conduct educational and training activities in compliance with Vietnamese law.

BUV began operations in 2009 with an initial cohort of 20 students joining the following year. It offered English and foundation programmes which were an approved pathway to commencing Staffordshire University (SU) degree programmes at BUV. In 2018, BUV moved to a new purpose-built campus in the Ecopark Township on the edge of Hanoi. The second phase of the BUV campus has a planned capacity of over 5,000 students and intends to increase the specialist facilities available to staff and students.

At the time of the review, BUV had a total of 192 staff members, including 53 higher education faculty and 13 non-higher education teaching staff. The student body has grown to over 1,600 students studying undergraduate and postgraduate degrees at BUV. BUV currently offers 11 undergraduate programmes and a Master's in Business Administration.

BUV is a teaching-intensive University. In addition to the degrees offered in partnership with SU and University of London (UoL), BUV also offers two BUV developed programmes which are compliant with Vietnamese degree programmes. These are taught in English, except for specific compulsory courses in Vietnamese which are outsourced to a Vietnamese University.

Due to BUV being an internationally-owned provider as well as a licensed university in Viet Nam, it operates in a complex environment across legal, regulatory, and international requirements by various external stakeholders. Following the 2018 appointment of the first Vice-Chancellor at BUV, the University began to formalise its governance and quality assurance structures.

The BUV mission has two key elements:

- Provide high-quality British degrees and a world-class campus in Vietnam.
- Create a new generation of discoverers, explorers and creative thinkers who are educated, trained, and prepared to thrive in future (4IR) fields of work and life.

The mission is supported by a range of strategic objectives.

The main challenges for BUV are related to the increase of student numbers. The increase has resulted in a more diverse student population and, therefore, also a more diverse range of student needs in terms of specialist support and welfare requirements. BUV has implemented a student welfare monitoring and reporting system. Additionally, a psychological counsellor has been employed.

Growth and transition have challenged the existing governance and quality assurance, but BUV has placed strategic importance on developing and evolving these areas to assure quality standards are maintained. In addition to the internal challenges, the complex legal and regulatory environment of Viet Nam has seen many changes over recent years and has required BUV to assess and adapt.

BUV works closely with its partners to ensure consistent communication and collaboration. Recently, a major change in the senior leadership and organisational structure of SU resulted in changes being made in plans relating to two new degree programmes which would be offered with BUV. The COVID-19 pandemic was also a challenging phase, as it was across all higher education sectors. Operationally, BUV uses the campus as a unique selling point, but the pandemic meant it developed its use of online technologies and virtual tours to support ongoing recruitment. Other developments include the introduction of a digital textbook system, Canvas, as the Learning Management System, and increased access to digital learning resources. From April 2019, all undergraduate students were issued with an Apple iPad to support access to resources.

In reaching conclusions about the extent to which British University Vietnam meets the 10 ESG Standards, the QAA review team followed the evidence-based review procedure as outlined in the handbook for International Quality Review (June 2021). The University provided the review team with a self-evaluation and supporting evidence. During the review visit, which took place from 17 to 19 October 2022, the review team held a total of eight meetings with the Vice-Chancellor, senior management team, academic staff, professional support staff, students, alumni, external stakeholders, and UK partners. The review team also had the opportunity to observe the University's facilities and learning resources. It was evident that the BUV campus in Ecopark Township had been designed and developed to meet the needs of students and staff, and provide specialist facilities to support learning, teaching, and skills development in BUV students. The review team found that the campus balances academic facilities with areas for students to socialise and collaborate on academic and non-academic projects.

In summary, the team found three examples of good practice and made seven recommendations for enhancement. The recommendations are of a desirable rather than essential nature and are proposed to enable the University to build on existing practice which is operating satisfactorily but which could be improved or enhanced. The team did not set any conditions that the University must satisfy to achieve QAA accreditation.

Overall, the team concluded that British University Vietnam **meets** all standards for International Quality.

QAA's conclusions about British University Vietnam

The QAA review team reached the following conclusions about the higher education provision at British University Vietnam.

European Standards and Guidelines

British University Vietnam meets all of the 10 ESG Standards and Guidelines.

Good practice

The QAA review team identified the following features of **good practice** at British University Vietnam.

- Significant employer engagement and connections with civic society is actively facilitated by all internal stakeholders, including students. It is fundamental to enabling BUV to deliver its mission (ESG Standard 1.1).

- Opportunities and support for students in preparing for, identifying, and participating in work placements and internships, as formal components of programmes and as extracurricular activities, greatly enhances job readiness and employability (ESG Standard 1.2).

- Certified and comprehensive Personal Development Programme of activities and modules that enhance students' broader knowledge and personal development, help to define graduate attributes (ESG Standard 1.2).

Recommendations

The QAA review team makes the following **recommendations** to British University Vietnam.

- Expedite consolidation and synthesis of existing policies and procedures as part of a clear plan to support growth ambitions and development of a BUV quality assurance approach. This work should keep pace with further diversification of academic and placement partnerships, planned entry into an online market, and step changes in student numbers (ESG Standard 1.1).

- Ensure all documented quality assurance policies and procedures are made available to all staff and students through an appropriate platform (ESG Standard 1.1)

- Adopt a regular, planned academic governance effectiveness review to ensure continued fitness for purpose that cross references examples of good governance relevant to its context (ESG Standard 1.1).

- Undertake further mapping and defining of the BUV student-centred approach to delivering all programmes, irrespective of the degree being BUV or partnership offering (ESG Standard 1.3).

- Consider a proactive approach to engaging students as partners in the design of their learning, teaching, and assessment to continue to meet their diverse learning needs (ESG Standard 1.3).

- Define the transition points along the student lifecycle, to understand student support needs and align policy, procedure, data management, and reporting to support ongoing monitoring and enhancement (ESG Standard 1.4).

- Map and define institutional data needs, to support decision-making and enhancement which reflect the context and wide purpose of BUV as well as provide a consolidated business intelligence report to Senate (ESG Standard 1.7).

Explanation of the findings about British University Vietnam

This section explains the review findings in more detail.

Terms that may be unfamiliar to some readers have been included in a brief glossary at the end of this report. A fuller glossary of terms is available on the QAA website, and formal definitions of certain terms may be found in the operational description and handbook for the review method, also on the QAA website.

Explanation of the findings about British University Vietnam

Standard 1.1   Policy for quality assurance

Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.

Findings

1.1   The Mission of British University Vietnam (BUV) is to provide high-quality British degrees from a world-class campus in Viet Nam. BUV seeks to create a new generation of discoverers, explorers and creative thinkers who are educated, trained, and prepared to thrive in future (4IR) fields of work and life. 4IR refers to the Fourth Industrial Revolution. BUV recently revised its Mission and Vision to position itself for growth from approximately 1,600 students to over 5,000 students by the end of Phase 2 of its campus development. The team found that BUV demonstrated alignment between its approach to quality assurance and its revised Mission, Vision, and strategic objectives.

1.2   BUV currently offers two undergraduate degrees under its licence with the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) in Viet Nam. Other BUV awards include 11 bachelor programmes and an MBA offered under franchise partnership agreements with Staffordshire University (SU) and University of London (UoL). BUV is a Recognised Teaching Centre of UoL.

1.3   Meetings with staff, students, employers, and partnering UK universities demonstrated an authentic and deep commitment to BUV and the ambition of BUV to seize learning opportunities to augment partner curricula to meet local needs and conditions while retaining the quality and standards of awards. The augmentation of curricula to provide a quality, relevant higher education was clearly understood and practised in the lived experience of the BUV community. It is further assured by Senate and agreed through its partnership agreements in such a way as to meet the expectations of both internal and external stakeholders. BUV employer engagement and connections with civic society is actively facilitated by all internal stakeholders, including students. It is fundamental to enabling BUV to deliver its mission and demonstrates an area of **good practice**.

1.4   The BUV Quality Assurance Policy (QAP) is published on the website and includes links to Quality Assurance Structure and Responsibilities and the Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy (SCLTA). The SCLTA Policy does not supersede any partner university policies related to student-centred teaching, learning or assessment but serves to contextualise these in relation to BUV practices and the broader requirements of the MoET granted BUV Licence.

1.5   Taken together, the Quality Assurance Policy, the Student-centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy, and Quality Assurance Structure and Responsibilities form the core of the BUV approach to quality and standards. These core policies are underpinned by a suite of supporting policy, procedural, regulatory, and guidance documents to assure the quality of franchised awards and BUV awards. Meetings with academic staff and support staff enabled the team to confirm staff awareness and commitment to quality assurance and its operation in practice.

1.6   The Senior Leadership Team articulated ambitions to diversify the BUV partnership network and achieve growth ambitions aligned with portfolio development to meet local economic and social need. Over reliance on the main partners, SU and UoL, is an identified risk on the BUV Top Risk Register. BUV leadership is alive to the complexity of the existing business and regulatory landscape and have taken deliberate steps to mature the BUV

approach to quality assurance. The appointment of a dedicated Head of Quality and Academic Development (HoQ) has supported this development. The HoQ reports to the Deputy Chief Academic Officer (DCAO). The team welcomes this appointment and the recognition of a need to coordinate, simplify, and consolidate its quality assurance landscape in the context of growth ambitions. The recent appointment of a Deputy Vice-Chancellor provided further evidence of the BUV Senior Leadership Team strengthening and preparing for growth.

1.7   The Senior Leadership Team, faculty, and professional services staff understand that the current size and shape of the BUV community enables a personalised method of operating that significantly benefits BUV students. Staff at all levels recognise that greater formalisation and consolidation is required to continue assurance of standards and maintain quality of staff and student experiences while aiming for growth.

1.8   The levels of quality assurance at BUV form a comprehensive and consistent operation that reflects the institutional structure and supports BUV in its maturing as a university. Although, BUV has the means of undertaking continual evaluation and improvement it has not yet fully conceptualised its approach. The Policy and Procedure Development document provides a starting point.

1.9   The team **recommends** that BUV expedite consolidation and synthesis of existing policies and procedures as part of a clear plan for development of a BUV quality assurance approach. This work should keep pace with further diversification of academic and placement partnerships, planned entry into an online market, and step changes in student numbers. The team further **recommends** that all documented quality assurance policies and procedures are made available to all staff and students through an appropriate platform.

1.10   The Academic Governance Framework is evolving and maturing. A new Academic Board reporting to Senate has been established and the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) is chair. Academic Board had not met at the time of the review visit, and therefore its operationalisation and relationship with the Learning and Teaching Committee and the Quality Assurance Committee could not be evaluated. Based on the documents supplied, further refinement and testing for duplication across the work of the three committees would enhance the effective and evidence-based decision-making as well as robust assessment of institutional effectiveness. The mapping of functions and responsibilities of committees relating to quality assurance may aid clarification remits and robustness of decision-making.

1.11   The University Senate Terms of Reference are valid for all programmes running at BUV. This includes both BUV degrees and those with partner institutions. Senate is advisory to the Vice-Chancellor and the University Council. The Vice-Chancellor confirmed this arrangement which has been adopted to separate Senate decision-making on academic matters from the Vice-Chancellor's General Director function. The Vice-Chancellor appoints the Senate Chair. If required, the Senate has the power to engage with the University's senior executive to address any management decisions and actions deemed to be in breach, or potential breach, of BUV academic policy. If the Senate is not satisfied with the outcome of this engagement, it has the power to bring the issue to the University Council for resolution.

1.12   The University Council oversees BUV activities, with powers to ratify the development of strategies, development plans, annual plans of BUV, approve new programmes, policies and regulations among other duties and responsibilities. The University Council reports through the BUV Company Limited Members' Council to Apollo Education Management Ltd (AEML). AEML reports to Taylors Education Pte. Ltd (TEPL). TEPL is a part of the Educrest Group which provides advice and governance practices with which all other parties comply.

1.13   Sufficient evidence is provided to demonstrate that Senate is operating as the final academic authority and discharging its duties appropriately with respect to the approval of relevant policies, procedures, and annual academic performance measures. The reporting relationship between Senate and the University Council is through the Vice-Chancellor. The ownership structure of BUV means that although BUV operates as an independent University, it must also comply with external requirements, including those of the Educrest Group and the University Council.

1.14   The team **recommends** that BUV adopt a regular, planned academic governance effectiveness review to ensure continued fitness for purpose that cross references examples of good governance relevant to its context. Such a deliberate step will secure BUV's quality and standards into the future, enable adjustment and realignment in response to BUV's complex operating environment, support maturity and transition from reliance on partner quality models, and ensure that assurance functions keep pace with ambitions for growth.

1.15   The team met BUV academic partners who confirmed the strong and mutually respectful ways of working between the parties and provided additional evidence of the value of the partnerships with SU and UoL as a growing university. The partnership with SU provides added value to the student and staff experience through an exchange programme.

1.16   Students and employers are clear about the relationship between BUV, SU and UoL. Stakeholders in both groups are particularly clear about the value and relevance to them of a British university degree.

1.17   Students are clear about their identity as a BUV student and an SU or UoL graduate. They also understand the way quality assurance maintains the standard of BUV awards, the purpose, and how students contribute to the quality and standards of BUV degree programmes as elected representatives. Students are fully apprised of the role and value of the Student Association Committee (SAC), Student-Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs), School Industry Advisory Panels, and student representation on Senate. The evidence submitted by BUV summarising the institutional landscape for engaging with students to enhance the quality of their experience notes that after consultation between SAC and the Student Life team, a new position on the SAC was created with the title of Head of Student Academic Affairs. The position was created to further enhance links between the student population and the academic element of student experience at BUV. The team found evidence of the effectiveness of this new position in meetings with students and staff.

1.18   The Senior Leadership Team explained that formal student representation on Senate was experimental, had worked well, and that BUV planned to roll-out student representation on other relevant committees.

1.19   External quality assurance is provided through partnership arrangements with SU and UoL. BUV has adopted the SU examiner model for its own awards. In addition, to ensure that external reference points are used on all BUV programmes, the University has appointed its own external examiner to critique, provide feedback, and approve the results of BUV degree programmes at external examination boards.

1.20   External quality assurance is also used to provide independent external accreditation for programmes run at the University. The evidence provided shows that bodies such as the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales (ICAEW) and the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) have accredited BUV. Further external stakeholder views on quality assurance processes are provided by School Industry Advisory Panels and an External Advisory Committee at University level made up of regional, national, and international leaders in a range of fields and disciplines. BUV demonstrated the

mutual value derived from these arrangements in the contextualisation of BUV degree programmes to meet local needs and conditions and support for emerging industries.

1.21   The team found that policies and procedures, as well as meetings with students, staff, and stakeholders and underpinning arrangements confirm that quality assurance at BUV is robust and that development and implementation occurs with input from both internal and external stakeholders. Therefore, the team concludes that Standard 1.1 is **met**.

Standard 1.2   Design and approval of programmes

Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programmes. The programmes should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated, and refer to the correct level of the national qualifications' framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

Findings

2.1   BUV currently offers 11 undergraduate programmes and one postgraduate programme. Initially, BUV delivered English and foundation programmes, which were developed in-house, as an approved pathway for Staffordshire University (SU) and University of London (UoL) courses. In 2010, BUV began to deliver SU and UoL degree programmes both of which were under validation or franchise arrangements. Since 2013, the University has delivered two BUV programmes, approved by the MoET: a Bachelor in International Hospitality Management (IHM), and a Bachelor in Finance and Economics (FE). The latter is a dual degree with SU.

2.2   BUV policies and procedures for the design of their programmes are recent. The University shared that during the development of the FE and IHM programmes, no formal policies were in place for the design and approval of new programmes. However, the process was assisted by BUV partners, and also meets MoET requirements for curriculum and programme design.

2.3   BUV programmes are designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy. For instance, the IHM programme Learning Outcome (LO) 2.3 'Modify actions with respect to local cultural, environmental, and legal matters' is aligned with the BUV strategic objective 12 'Respect, promote and embed Vietnam's core social values in all that we do'. Likewise, the first aim of the FE programme to 'Encourage the development of a range of skills, both subject specific and more general employability skills, which will enhance career opportunities' aligns with BUV mission element 2. Student achievement of learning outcomes is evidenced by the high level of graduate employment and levels of satisfaction of employers with their work readiness.

2.4   However, the team also noted advice in both the SED and during meetings that the BUV Mission Statement was currently under review, and its Graduate Attributes would not be finalised until the Mission Statement was adopted. BUV acknowledged that it would need to revisit the programmes' objectives to ensure full alignment with the new Mission and Graduate Attributes.

2.5   For collaborative partner programmes, BUV is not involved with the design and approval process. However, the University works with SU to contextualise programmes to meet specific needs of students or delivery requirements within Viet Nam. For example, SU Cyber Security programmes have been adapted to use local software and the BUV Learning Management System (Canvas), and programmes with law content include relevant aspects of Vietnamese law.

2.6   For the development of FE and IHM, approval was gained from the University Council following consideration of the potential options available for BUV to expand its programme offerings. As the FE and IHM programmes were the first developed by BUV in its own right, the University was assisted by its UK partners, and also by subject matter

expertise from Malaysia-based Taylors University (a partner in BUV's ownership group). The overall process is set out in BUV's Programme Licensing Process.

2.7   BUV advised the team that the current BUV strategy was developed after the design of the IHM and FE programmes but claims nonetheless that the broad programme aims align with the mission and strategic objectives. Further, the review team was told that the University's Mission is currently being updated. Likewise, the University's Graduate Attributes have not yet been formalised. A process is currently in place for their finalisation, which will occur following the approval and adoption of the revised Mission.

2.8   In the meantime, the SED and discussions at the site visit confirmed that BUV Graduate Attributes and associated assurance of the learning process will be embedded in the University's compulsory Personal Development Programme (see below).

2.9   BUV's two accredited programmes have explicit learning outcomes, set out in programme documentation, and made available to students in the programme handbooks. Each module has learning outcomes mapped to the programme aims, and these in turn are mapped to assessment through a process of constructive alignment. This aids faculty to develop content appropriate to the overall programme aims and defines the student learning process.

2.10   In relation to the involvement of students in programme design, BUV acknowledges this is an area where it is currently developing its capabilities. For SU and UoL programmes, BUV students are not directly involved in their development but do have opportunities to input to contextualise their delivery in Viet Nam, as mentioned above.

2.11   Predominantly, BUV uses module student feedback surveys and the Student-Staff Liaison Committees to provide input to development and improvement of programmes. At a programme level, Student-Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs) provide opportunities for elected student representatives to meet formally with the academic staff to provide feedback related to facilities, academic issues, and students' concerns and experiences at BUV. The Student Association Committee (SAC) works closely with the Student Operations team to ensure that there are open avenues of communication between students and the senior leadership of the university.

2.12   The views of students and alumni are also represented in School Industry Advisory Panels (SIAPs), which aim to provide a strategic role in linking faculty, industry, and government agencies. At the time of the review visit the SIAP meeting had not yet been held. Membership includes representatives of business and government agencies that are potential employers of BUV graduates.

2.13   Noting the University's acknowledgment that student involvement in programme development was an area requiring further work, this was an aspect considered closely by the team. Discussions with students at the site visit confirmed that while opportunities for student input were relatively limited, they were satisfied that the 'student voice' was being heard. Further, students were being supported in their capacity to input to more formal processes through the Personal Development Programme and the work of the Student Experience Department. The team heard that the University saw student input to programme design and review as central to its student-centred 'discovery-based learning' approach.

2.14   For the development of IHM, input was received from an appraisal council. This was a panel of independent academics and industry experts who provided comments and advice following the design stage.

2.15   BUV considers a range of external reference points in its operations and the development and review of academic programmes. The main external reference points include:

- academic partners (SU and the UoL)
- MoET and other relevant government bodies within Viet Nam
- institutions and professional accreditation bodies who provide programme-level accreditation for BUV
- external advisory boards such as the External Advisory Committee (EAC) and school-level School Industry Advisory Panels (SIAPs)
- European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)
- programme-level qualifications' frameworks of partner universities such as QAA subject benchmarks where applicable
- industry and market analysis consulting firms
- benchmarking against competitors.

2.16   As mentioned above, BUV has formed SIAPs for each of the schools to ensure programmes remain relevant to the rapidly developing needs of industry, and that BUV graduates continue to meet the needs and expectations of employers. It was clear that local business, industry and public agencies had effective input into programme development, and that this contributed greatly to the positive employment outcomes for BUV graduates.

2.17   The qualification awarded from all programmes is stated in programme handbooks provided to students, on the website, and in all promotional materials published by BUV. Qualifications are aligned with the Vietnamese Qualifications Framework and can be mapped in turn to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The specific skills, knowledge, and responsibility requirements gained during each module are specified in module descriptions.

2.18   BUV operates a four-semester system, with 12 weeks per semester. One semester of study is followed by one semester during which students carry out assessments and complete work experience/internships. During this 12-week period, student work is evaluated, moderated, processed and confirmed by examination boards to allow for students to return to study in their next teaching semester. Under the Programme Design and Development Policy all programmes are structured with progression built in at each level, integrated across modules, and tracked through levels and modules with respect to learning content, teaching approaches, assessment tasks and feedback.

2.19   BUV provides effective and well-structured placement opportunities for students, aligned to their learning and career needs. The three-month gaps between semesters gives students the opportunity to complete internships and develop practical industry experience. The completion of at least one internship opportunity is a requirement to obtain the BUV Career Readiness Certificate, which is an additional skills transcript offered to students. Students can have completed up to four or five internships upon graduation. BUV draws on an extensive network of industry and business partners to facilitate placements and internships. Students are supported in internships by the Careers, Industrial Relations and Alumni Office (CIRAO), and the Student Experience (SE). The Careers Team works closely with partners to negotiate opportunities for BUV students and support students to apply for these opportunities. It provides a full array of support including application preparation, consultation during the internship period and guidance through to completion.

2.20   The team considers the opportunities and support of students in preparing for, identifying, and participating in work placements and internships, as formal components of programmes and as extracurricular activities, greatly enhancing job readiness and employability, as a feature of **good practice**.

2.21   In addition to work placements, students on BUV programmes are required to complete a compulsory skills programme called BUV Personal Development Programme (PDP). This is recorded on a PDP transcript, separate from academic transcripts. Students who gain enough credits through activities such as skills development, work experience, community engagement, and projects within clubs and societies, are issued with a Career Readiness Certificate (CRC). This certificate demonstrates to employers how students have not only completed the learning outcomes of a degree programme but also acquired technical and core skills such as creativity, critical thinking, communication, and teamwork.

2.22   The review team considers the certified, comprehensive Personal Development Programme of activities and modules that enhance students' broader knowledge and personal development and helps define their graduate attributes as a feature of **good practice**.

2.23   BUV is required to follow the approval process set out by MoET to offer any degree level qualification within Viet Nam. Programmes are reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team and academic experts prior to submission to MoET. Applications to gain approval from MoET are developed jointly by the Legal and Academic Compliance teams, and the applications formally submitted by the Legal and Compliance team. BUV must demonstrate the broader need for trained graduates within the field of study of the proposed degree programme. This is demonstrated through research which is conducted to support the application. BUV is required to seek approval from MoET for all new programmes it offers, including collaborative partner programmes, and is currently engaged in the approvals processes for one additional collaborative partner programme, and one additional BUV degree programme.

2.24   In the SED and during meetings with staff, BUV advised and confirmed that when developing the IHM and FE programmes, related policies and procedures - such as the Programme Design and Development Policy (PDD) and the Proposal, Amendment and Withdrawal of Programme and Module Policy - had not been formalised. The procedure followed in the development of these programmes was in line with guidance provided by the parent organisation of BUV and its UK academic partners. The policies were approved by the Senate in April 2022 and January 2022 respectively. Discussions with staff demonstrated that principles set out in the PDD had been applied in the development of the IHM and FE. The recommendation regarding formalisation of ways of working made in section 1.1 above is particularly applicable to programme development.

2.25   The team concluded that BUV has a clear and robust framework for the design and approval of new programmes, meeting its internal requirements, those of the Viet Nam Government and its academic partners, and of students and external stakeholders. Based on the evidence, the team concludes that Standard 1.2 is **met.**

Standard 1.3   Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.

Findings

3.1   The institutional approach to Student Centred Learning is specified in the Student Centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy. This policy aims to support and guide faculty and staff in understanding what a student-centred approach means in the context of BUV. According to the SED, the policy highlights the recognition of learners as individuals with a responsibility for shaping their own learning paths. It also states the importance of using a range of pedagogical methods and different approaches to learning. The value of student participation in governance and decision making is also included in the policy. At a strategic level, the institutional commitment is framed by Element Two of the BUV Mission statement: 'Create a new generation of discoverers, explorers and creative thinkers who are educated, trained, and prepared to thrive in future (4IR) fields of work and life', which emphasises the importance of autonomy in the learning process.

3.2   BUV has recently developed and introduced the Student Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy, which states the formal approach to providing equitable access to education for students, through such strategies as access to different programmes of study; different progression routes through programmes; opportunities for international studies; recognition of prior learning; and the contextualisation of modules to best support students. Inclusive practice in teaching and learning is further fostered through the monitoring and evaluation of teaching processes which incorporates peer observation to assess whether inclusive practice is demonstrated in teaching sessions and support on further development and enhancement.

3.3   The team saw evidence that BUV considers the diversity of its students and needs arising from a diverse student population. During the review visit, BUV demonstrated a good understanding of its student cohorts, beginning from outreach and engagement work with local secondary schools. This is facilitated through the 'diversity sensitive recruitment' approach and BUV is continuously informed by the range of student engagement and consultation opportunities across all levels of the institution. The University is currently reviewing all its policies and practices to identify and remove bias and barriers to inclusion.

3.4   Flexible learning pathways for the student cohort are enhanced through the recognition of prior learning (RPL) and mutual recognition of qualifications, and learning periods that can be completed abroad at other universities. The team saw examples of the application of RPL and heard that student mobility between BUV and its UK partners was effective in broadening learning experiences.

3.5   Historically, the main pedagogical approach was delivery through lecture sessions of two hours, and tutorial sessions of one hour. Like most higher education institutions, BUV adjusted to online delivery during the pandemic and while intending to continue with face to face as its main delivery mode, is applying the lessons learned to enhance the flexibility of delivery. For example, the increased greater use of Canvas as an adjunct to face-to-face delivery. The University considers this switch to have been successful, with students experiencing minimum disruption. BUV also provided equipment for students who did not have sufficient computing resources at home and for students on the Computer Games Design and Programming (CGDP), Cyber Security (CS) and Cloud Technologies (CT) programmes, as well as supplying art equipment for Contemporary Creative Practices (CCP) students, to minimise any potential disadvantages.

3.6   The team saw several innovations being adopted to better meet students' needs. In the development of new programmes, schools have considered lessons learnt and balance these with needs of specialist programmes such as computer lab sessions for the School of Computing & Innovative Technologies; studio sessions for the School of Creative Industries; and practical sessions in the test kitchen for students in the School of Hospitality and Tourism.

3.7   The team saw examples demonstrating how modes of delivery and approaches to pedagogy were adjusted in response to evaluation and feedback. These included extra formative assessments, adjustments to timing and length of assessment, and greater use of practical and simulation facilities available on campus. Students were supportive of changes and felt that changes were effective in improving learning outcomes.

3.8   BUV faculty use a range of student-centred techniques, including activity-based learning; business simulation software; team-based project learning across multiple cohorts; the integration of work-based learning as a required and primary element of the module curriculum; and 'flipped classroom' approaches.

3.9   Following the introduction of Canvas as the Learning Management System (LMS), BUV is now equipped to use online learning where required and appropriate. An LMS Curriculum Designer has been employed to support faculty and drive the development of innovative content delivery. A technical assistant has also been recruited to support faculty and students in the use of these tools and technologies.

3.10   Faculty are further supported in developing teaching practices and ongoing professional development by the Careers, Industrial Relations and Alumni Office (CIRAO) which also helps find external guest speakers or locations for site visits as part of a module.

3.11   Students have a range of means of accessing support to meet their learning and professional development needs. These include meeting with faculty during office hours and the Learning Success Team. BUV also has a Students At Risk Team to which faculty can refer any student believed to be at risk of not succeeding within their modules, or requiring additional support. Support provided by professional staff also includes a Psychological Counsellor and medical staff.

3.12   Student autonomy is balanced with support and guidance as described above. Professional staff from the Academic Team also support students with direct assistance on a range of needs. The Academic Team advises students on how to engage with different opportunities available to them during their studies. These include sessions on how to access learning materials provided by the Learning Management System Team and by the Academic Compliance Office, which provides ongoing information, support and training on regulations that need to be followed.

3.13   It was clear from the evidence submitted and the review visit, that BUV encourages a sense of autonomy in learners, while ensuring adequate guidance and support to meet student needs. Both staff and students agreed that the accessibility of staff meets student needs and that students are well supported in the transition to more self-directed learning and greater autonomy.

3.14   Evaluating and adjusting the modes of delivery and pedagogical methods is done in response to student and stakeholder feedback. Qualitative and quantitative data is gathered through formative and summative student module feedback; Student-Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) meetings; faculty feedback gained during peer observation; and faculty teaching evaluations. SSLC meetings provide opportunities every semester for elected student representatives to meet formally with Programme Leaders (PLs), the Chief Academic Officer (CAO), and the Deputy Chief Academic Officer (DCAO) to provide

feedback on modules, as well as more general feedback relating to facilities, academic issues, students' concerns, and experiences at BUV. The Student Association Committee also meets regularly with the senior leadership team to provide additional input on the evaluation of programmes and delivery.

3.15 Any serious concerns raised by student feedback are addressed immediately and directly managed by the CAO and DCAO. Other feedback is used by Module Leaders to support the development of modules by employing a process of academic monitoring. The academic monitoring process includes Module Monitoring Reports (MMRs); Programme Monitoring Reports (PMRs); Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs); and associated school action plans. The team acknowledges the number of mechanisms for gathering student views and, as mentioned above, the examples of how delivery and pedagogy have been adjusted in response to this input at BUV.

3.16 The team also acknowledges that for SU and UoL programmes, the capacity to involve students in the learning process is more limited. Nonetheless, the active involvement of students in the learning process is an important aspect of 'British' higher education, which BUV identifies itself with, and of good practice more broadly. The team therefore **recommends** that BUV undertake further mapping and defining of the BUV student-centred approach to delivering all programmes, irrespective of the degree being BUV or partnership offering. This is considered to be particularly important going forward as the University expands its partnerships with other universities.

3.17 The team also notes that the current methodologies for engaging students and collecting and acting on feedback are primarily retrospective and reactive, involving surveys and discussions following programme and module development and delivery. The team therefore further **recommends** that BUV consider a proactive approach to engaging students as partners in the design of their learning, teaching, and assessment to continue to meet their diverse learning needs.

3.18 In the SED, BUV advised that students joining directly from domestic high schools sometimes struggled with the more self-directed style of education applied at BUV. Therefore, the University has developed an in-depth orientation programme which is compulsory for all new students. Students undertaking Staffordshire University programmes complete a pathway programme which emphasises the importance of independent and student-led study. This focus is also reinforced in programme and module handbooks.

3.19 The procedures for addressing complaints are set out in the Complaints Management Procedure. The Procedure applies to all BUV students, regardless of which programme of study they are enrolled on and enables the escalation of complaints if one cannot be resolved. Most complaints are dealt with at managerial level and only serious cases are escalated to the DCAO and CAO. In addition to the formal complaints process, students can contact representatives of the Chief Academic Officer or Deputy Chief Academic Officer for any academic issues, and more generally via the feedback@buv.edu.vn address, with any concerns being dealt with by the academic leadership team.

3.20 Teaching and assessment at BUV is carried out by a range of full-time and part-time staff, who are approved by MoET and the BUV partner universities, and are qualified and supported to meet their specific roles in teaching, supporting learning, and assessing. The University has student-centred assessment principles which are based on the policies of its academic partners as well as the principles of assessment provided by the QAA and the UK Quality Code for Higher Education with minor adjustments for contextualisation of assessment practices at BUV.

3.21   To ensure BUV assessors are familiar with current testing and examination methods, the University provides in-depth training sessions for faculty which cover all elements of the assessment creation process and the first and second-marking process. Relevant guides and process documentation are sent to all faculty at key points in the semester, and a quality assurance (QA) subsite covering assessment is maintained on the Learning Management System.

3.22   Assessment training sessions are open to all faculty so skills can be refreshed. Training for marking is also recorded and made available for faculty on the QA subsite. BUV advised that training sessions will be integrated with other training, alongside the development of the faculty induction process.

3.23   All markers are allocated an internal moderator whose role is to work closely with the Module Leader (ML) and advise on assessments during the semester. Programme leaders also review the assessments designed and work closely to ensure that new MLs are familiar with the expected standards and to help enforce standards set out in guidelines.

3.24   The Board of Examiners is responsible for monitoring student performance, determining results in individual modules, and ratifying the assessment results for modules in accordance with the appropriate Assessment Regulations. Its remit covers all programmes running at BUV, including both BUV degrees and those of partner institutions. After the Board of Examiners meet, reports are distributed to all faculty so comments can be reviewed, and faculty can reflect on marking practices for the next session.

3.25   BUV module handbooks include information on the module assessment structure, criteria, and rubrics. Once assessments are approved for release to students, assessments are made available on the Canvas Learning Management System. The centralised online location of assessment-related information has helped avoid any conflict in published information and provides one centralised point for students to review assessment information.

3.26   Faculty create assessments based on core guidelines and standards set out in a range of templates depending on the specific programme of study. Examination-based assessments have pre-built templates which require the inclusion of either model answers, marking keys, or marking schemes, along with guidelines as to how marks will be allocated. BUV presented evidence demonstrating how faculty staff remain familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in development of skills relating to this. The training in assessment and marking is comprehensive, and BUV adapts its approach to assessment to fit the content and learning outcomes of its programmes.

3.27   Assessment methodologies offer a range of ways for students to demonstrate how they meet the Learning Outcomes (LOs). The Assessment Creation Guide prompts staff to specifically consider how assessment will enable students to demonstrate achievement of the LOs and internal moderators are likewise prompted in the Internal Moderation Checklist. A constructive alignment process ensures assessment is aligned to LOs, allowing students to demonstrate their achievement of the LOs, and this is further confirmed through the internal moderation process.

3.28   Faculty also receive training on use of formative assessment. BUV advised that the adoption of the Canvas Learning Management System has enabled a broader range of formative assessment, including self-marking quizzes, participation in discussion forums and file uploads.

3.29   Summative feedback is provided to students through Turnitin, accessible through the Canvas Learning Management System. Feedback is provided using a range of in-text comments, Turnitin 'Quick Marks' and an overall comment. Faculty are expected to mark

and provide feedback in accordance with the First Marking Guide and must use the marking rubric previously published to students to assign marks. An example of the ideal standard of feedback is provided on the QA subsite. The suitability of marking and feedback is checked by the module second marker in accordance with the Second Marking Guide.

3.30   BUV recognises that 'appropriate feedback' will differ depending on the type of assessment, the faculty member, the programme, and the size of the cohort being marked. The processes above aim to maintain a minimum standard of feedback given to students that can support them in improving assessments over a course or programme. Additionally, specific policies have been introduced for the marking of large cohorts so faculty can access additional support in marking where required. Students described how assessment feedback was both timely and effective.

3.31   The internal moderator, referred to above, also acts as a second marker for assessments happening within that module. Historically this role has carried out a second-marking process for every assessment paper as shown in the Second Marking Guide. However, some issues with the second-marking approach for large cohorts were identified by the external examiner (see below), so policies and procedures have been adjusted. They now take a sampling approach rather than second marking every item. Module leaders for large cohorts receive additional training in this area before they begin to mark these cohorts.

3.32   While changes to the second-marking process have allowed for marking processes for large cohorts to be completed in the required time, feedback from faculty and staff suggest further enhancement can be made. Discussions on the next steps for adjusting the second-marking and sampling processes are currently ongoing.

3.33   BUV also works with the external examiner systems of Staffordshire University and University of London. These are based on UK norms for external examiners. The University has appointed its own external examiner to critique, provide feedback and approve the results of BUV degree programmes.

3.34   For clarity and fairness to students, BUV has adopted the Staffordshire University Mitigating Circumstances Policy so this policy applies to both Staffordshire University and BUV degree programmes. The Exceptional Circumstances Policy is applied according to the Exceptional Circumstances Procedure, which sets out how students may submit claims and how these will be dealt with. Students on University of London (UoL) programmes who believe they have grounds for mitigating circumstances must contact UoL directly and cases are considered directly by UoL.

3.35   As discussed above, BUV faculty receive training and guidance in the relevant policies and processes regarding assessment creation, release and marking. Additional clarification is provided in regular discussions held within the faculty team. Faculty are supported in applying these policies and processes by the Head of Quality and Academic Development, DCAO, and the Examinations Office (EO).

3.36   The moderation and second-marking procedures together with the Examination Board and external examiner provide a high level of consistency and fairness in assessment. Consistency is further ensured by the organisation of assessment and marking being centralised and managed by the EO with direction and guidance provided to the EO and faculty from the Head of Quality and Academic Development, the DCAO, and the CAO as required.

3.37   In accordance with QC Process and Guidelines, completed marking is subject to an initial check (Pre-QC) by staff from the Examinations Office (EO), then a review by senior members of academic faculty (QC). The purpose of QC is to confirm that the general

standard of the marking meets the BUV standard and to highlight any potential areas for further investigation. There are multiple checks on accuracy of grades inputted to the computer systems carried out by the EO prior to the submission of results for consideration at internal or external examination boards.

3.38   Students have several mechanisms to appeal assessment and grades related decisions. All students studying on SU courses are subject to the SU Complaints and Appeals Procedure which sets out the grounds for students to appeal decisions related to SU courses, and students on UoL programmes are subject to the UoL Complaints and Appeals Procedure. BUV students are covered by a BUV Appeals Procedure. Students understood which process applies to them and know how to access the appropriate one.

3.39   Initial enquiries relating to appeals at BUV are usually made by students in relation to the marks that were awarded for assessments. These grounds of academic judgement are not subject to the appeals process of SU, BUV, or UOL and students are dealt with under the BUV Policy on Student Requests for Explanation of Grade, which sets out how BUV will support students to gain further information relating to how their grade was awarded by BUV faculty.

3.40   All appeals are dealt with by the Academic Compliance Office, and faculty members are not involved in any decisions relating to how appeals are made unless they sit as part of a formed Appeal Committee.

3.41   The review team saw evidence that BUV has several policies and procedures to ensure assessment is consistent, fairly applied and carried out in accordance with these policies and procedures. The team is satisfied that BUV ensures its programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach. Standard 1.3 is **met**.

Standard 1.4   Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

Institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student 'life cycle', eg student admission, progression, recognition and certification.

Findings

4.1   The BUV website provides clear information on degree programmes offered and includes information on programme structure and content, programme objectives and learning outcomes, as well as programme-specific admission requirements. Prospective students and parents are provided with a personalised admission support.

4.2   BUV has in place a system of policy, support and extracurricular activities that supports student progression holistically. BUV ensures consideration of the student life cycle through policies such as the Admission Policy, Recognition of Prior Learning Policy, the Progression Policy, and the Degree Management Policy. These reflect MoET and UK partner regulations and requirements. The Progression Policy allows BUV to consistently determine student progression. Collaborative programmes follow the progression policy of the UK partners.

4.3   Students, alumni and parents described a supportive and transparent admissions process and support of the in-house admission staff and BUV website. Students benefit from the processes in place which enable smooth admission into academic programmes at BUV. This includes the Admission Policy which provides a guide for BUV staff on admission procedure and informs applicants and parents of the admission process. The website admission page and admission procedure provides a standard set of admission requirements and detail of the admissions process which acts as a guide to parents and students during the conversion period.

4.4   The University provides comprehensive information detailing its approach to accreditation of prior learning through its Recognition of Prior Learning Policy. Students with prior experience are considered and supported through Staffordshire University and University of London regulations. This offers a consistent process of admission for students who wish to gain credit and recognition for prior learning from another recognised higher education provider.

4.5   BUV provides a range of bursaries or scholarship awards. Scholarship opportunities are available on the website Scholarships page alongside the recognition of prior experience or learning. Both provide ways to widen participation.

4.6   All BUV students undergo a formal and comprehensive student induction programme which provides information about programmes of study, wider services, and opportunities open to students across the University. The student induction is supplemented with Student Orientation Information; Pre-arrival Handbook; Module Descriptors; and a Programme Handbook. New students are invited to additional sessions to support success and progression during study. Skills Orientation Y1S1 is also embedded into partner courses and foundation programmes. Students also undergo pre-arrival training which covers an overview of the learning management system.

4.7   The Student Association Committee works closely with the Student Engagement department to arrange and host activities during induction to support student engagement.

4.8   BUV has implemented clear mechanisms to ensure students are supported to succeed and progress throughout the student life cycle. The University maintains an

Academic Recovery Panel Procedure to identify student issues and provide support for at risk students. At risk students are identified using the Attendance Management Procedure supported by referrals to the Students at Risk team. Students with low attendance are referred to the Academic Recovery Panel for further support at the last level of intervention. Students at BUV are also supported through the Academic and Student Operations department.

4.9   Management of student wellbeing enhancement falls under the Academic and Student Operations team, and Registry Service. Students at BUV have access to a student community Facebook group and student wellbeing activities to enrich the student experience.

4.10   BUV students are also able to access academic support through the learning support team and further support to progress into their career through internships acquired by the Careers, Industrial Relations and Alumni Office (CIRAO).

4.11   The Degree Management Policy is overseen by the Degree Certificate Management Committee. This committee ensures all certificates obtained accurately state the qualification gained and achieved learning outcomes along with a transcript. Students who have completed the Personal Development Programme are eligible to receive a Certificate of Career Readiness which is issued upon graduation.

4.12   Although the support systems are enhanced through student feedback, an understanding of student support needs should also be defined. Therefore, the team **recommends** that BUV define the transition points along the student life cycle to understand student support needs and align policy, procedure, data management, and reporting to support ongoing monitoring and enhancement. This will enable a proactive approach to enhance the experience of all students.

4.13   The team concludes that admission processes, progression, recognising prior learning, and arrangements for graduation align with Standard 1.4. Although the team has made some recommendations, no conditions have been set for the Standard being met. The team therefore concludes that Standard 1.4 is **met**.

Standard 1.5 Teaching staff

Institutions should assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff.

Findings

5.1 BUV aims to recruit faculty with cross-cultural experiences working in recognised educational systems across a diverse range of countries. This is enabled by the set of recruitment policies and processes, which are regularly reviewed. The recruitment policies and processes consider the evolving organisational context of BUV and the industrial needs of employer. The policies are reviewed and managed by the Human Resources Department (HRD). The University explained to the team that policies and processes reflect the institutional approach to student-centred learning.

5.2 The team found that BUV has clear, transparent and fair processes for staff recruitment, and conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching. BUV is bound by Vietnamese laws and requirements for recruiting staff. These could present challenges when recruiting international faculty. An example of these challenges is the specific legal constraint relating to the years of experience required for a work permit for a foreign employee to be issued.

5.3 The BUV Recruitment Policy supports recruitment and appointment of faculty members and support staff. The policy was recently reviewed along with a range of HR related policies. The review included a benchmarking exercise against HR policies and practices of a number of Commonwealth institutions. This resulted in several significant changes including:

- greater coordination between the recruiting discipline and the HR department

- more standardised interview questions

- requirements for how a selection panel should be formed and additional supporting documentation

- adoption of A-E bands for academic levels (common in the Australian and UK systems)

- reconfigured salary bands to ensure regional and international competitiveness

- selection requirements consider experience of candidates with integrating technology into the classroom

- specific use of teaching demonstrations as part of the selection process

- taking account of a broader range of research backgrounds and teaching experience in applicants, as well as the need for recruitment of senior faculty to help support strategic objective 11: 'Attract world-class researchers'.

5.4 The benchmarking of HR practices undertaken resulted in significant improvements to the University's HR approach, and the team heard from faculty and support staff that these changes were welcomed and are proving effective. The onboarding of new staff was seen to be effective, and the team learned how the University was providing a structured programme of training and induction to help staff adjust to BUV.

5.5 BUV has recently developed two videos designed to provide potential faculty with a deeper understanding of the teaching-focused culture of BUV, and what they can expect in

Viet Nam more broadly. These are available on the Staff Life section of the website. The HR department provides onboarding for new faculty, who are also given key training by the Deputy Chief Academic Officer and Head of Academic Quality and Academic Development, prior to commencing teaching roles.

5.6   BUV has a system which monitors and assesses quality of teaching and supports the overall student experience. This system integrates student feedback on taught modules, peer observation groups, and formal teaching evaluations. It is set out in the Teaching and Learning Performance Evaluation Policy and associated Procedure. The system was introduced using a step-by-step approach beginning in the summer of 2021. Based on feedback from faculty members and administrative staff, minor adjustments were made. The policies and processes were put into practice for all academic programmes during autumn 2021 semester. Formal evaluation of teaching is central to the system and there is a standardised method of having cross-programme and school groups work together to observe and support colleagues with guidance in developing and sharing teaching practices.

5.7   The system for monitoring and assessment of teaching is integrated into the performance evaluations of faculty, together with the outcomes of student feedback processes. The performance evaluations are conducted annually, and if necessary bi-annually. Performance reviews are conducted in accordance with the Performance Management Policy which sets out guiding principles and the processes for how performance reviews are be carried out for both faculty and professional staff. Performance review also involves the monitoring of individual and department-level Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The academic performance management process at BUV allows for issues to be resolved through a progressive system of disciplinary actions, which may eventually result in non-renewal of contracts if necessary.

5.8   BUV also has a system of employee recognition and awards to further emphasise the importance of teaching in the role of faculty. These include an annual best teaching award (Vice-Chancellor and President's award) with a cash value of $1000, and a biannual best teaching award (Dean's award). These awards were introduced in 2019 and have been well appreciated.

5.9   The BUV Teaching Load Policy allows for an annual allocation for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) within overall workload calculations for faculty. This allocation can be used in a variety of ways based on identified training needs by faculty or line managers. Support is provided in the form of time and financial assistance for faculty members who want to continue in further study. CPD requirements are discussed and agreed as part of the performance evaluation process outlined above. Faculty members are encouraged and supported to gain accreditation of teaching practices through Fellowships and Senior Fellowships with Advance HE. BUV described how the system for promoting staff was previously not formalised. A new system linked to the academic classifications levels referred to above is currently being developed.

5.10   BUV teaching staff have opportunities for professional development supported by the University, and the team heard examples of staff accessing these opportunities and support. The team was satisfied that linkages between professional development, staff needs, and the BUV strategic aims are clear. Individual staff KPIs are sufficiently flexible to meet needs of staff members, their role, and the institutional needs. During the review visit, staff confirmed that the opportunities for professional development were accessible and met needs for development.

5.11   The Scholarly Activity Encouragement Policy defines scholarly activity within BUV, how the University will support the dissemination and recognise scholarly activity. The policy

states how the University will monitor KPIs to evaluate the success of its commitment to scholarly activity practices, which include:

- number of annual academic publications and presentations
- student satisfaction surveys
- peer observation feedback
- external examiners' feedback
- university partners' feedback
- student performance analytics
- programme monitoring reports.

5.12   Beyond traditional scholarly activity outputs, BUV also recognises the value of faculty maintaining broad external networks to help support both research and teaching practices. The team was satisfied that BUV has necessary policies and procedures in place to encourage scholarly activity. It was noted that the University has an ambition to raise its research profile and recruit world-class researchers.

5.13   As BUV grows, the University seeks to develop and enhance its research capabilities and reputation. To support these goals, a Research Committee has been established along with the Human Ethics subcommittee to encourage research activity. Although the Research Committee has been established, the documentation and discussions with staff showed that a research profile was still in the early stages of development.

5.14   The teaching monitoring and assessment system and the staff performance review framework include assessment of faculty engagement with innovation in teaching methods and use of new technologies. Recent CPD sessions for faculty on core teaching dimensions have focused on improving faculty ability to effectively use technology, not only as a mode of delivery, but also to enhance teaching through innovative methods. The team found evidence of how BUV encourages innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies. Evaluation of staff engagement with technology in teaching is embedded in the monitoring and assessment and performance review frameworks. There is also evidence that the University is monitoring the effectiveness of new learning innovations through student surveys and analysis of student learning outcomes.

5.15   Training sessions increase understanding of benefits from digital platforms and resources available at BUV, including Canvas, Kortext, and Proctorio. The University has also held sessions at away days focused on developing and utilising digital tools to enable further enhancement of degree offerings. A digital technologist has been employed to support digital transformation of resources provided to students and to offer specific training on equipment and use of facilities available to faculty and students. The appointment of a digital technologist to assist staff in adopting learning technologies and making full use of the available resources such as the Learning Management System is seen by the team as a positive move.

5.16   The team was satisfied that BUV has a robust approach to the monitoring and evaluation of teaching linked directly to formal performance review. It was noted that there had been some challenges implementing the teaching observation aspect of the monitoring system, which stemmed from a lack of understanding of what was being assessed and the aim of the exercise. During the review visit it was confirmed that the process had been temporarily halted to allow for additional training and to respond to staff concerns and questions. Staff were now supportive of the approach, and it was to be relaunched in July 2022. However, ongoing changes in the academic management structure had led to the relaunch being delayed until the new structures were confirmed. The new structures were

expected to be in place beginning 30th January 2023, after which the process for the formal evaluation of teaching practices will be adjusted and relaunched.

5.17   Overall, the team is satisfied that BUV assures itself of the competence of faculty and applies fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of its staff. Standard 1.5 is **met**.

Standard 1.6   Learning resources and student support

Institutions should have appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided.

Findings

6.1   Students are offered a wide range of student support covering all aspects of the student journey. The Academic and Student Operations (ASO) department manages student support as per the Management Structure. Each team under the ASO focuses on student wellbeing, academic support, student opportunities for career development, and supporting students with additional or specialist needs.

6.2   Students are provided with training to fully use tools offered to support learning. These tools include software and learning environment literacy. Students receive personalised support for assessments through 1:1 sessions with lecturers or through the Learning Support Team.

6.3   BUV has embedded wellbeing into its goals and student experience. Students are provided with a range of online and in-person events to enhance student wellbeing and ensure a balanced student experience. Students are offered enriching opportunities such as field trips, extracurricular activities, activities and projects to promote the students' voice.

6.4   BUV has a policy to ensure a consistent process for budget allocations in relation to student support spending. This enables enhancement of student support and resources which aids student success as shown in the student support spending. Students can access physical spaces such as breakout rooms, training rooms or classrooms, and the library spaces. BUV allocates excellent funding for databases where staff and students are able to request journals, textbooks and related databases.

6.5   The Learning Management System - Canvas - provides students with access to learning facilities, technologies, and learning resources that support their academic success. This is supported by the Learning Resource Policy which provides appropriate learning resources to ensure a quality learning experience. The meeting with students confirmed that all their learning resource needs are met by BUV.

6.6   In the October 2019 semester, BUV introduced the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) from Instructure, which is used as the centralisation of online learning resources at BUV. During the pandemic, it supported the transition to online learning and teaching smoothly within 24 hours. This included a digital textbook system. Since April 2019, BUV provides all students with an Apple iPad, to support access to digital learning resources.

6.7   BUV also facilitated a range of activities during the pandemic to ensure a balanced learning and student experience. The Students at Risk (SAR) team coordinated student support and communications between students, staff, and BUV support departments to provide personalised support for students. International students also have access to a personalised support service which specialises in compliance.

6.8   Training to increase digital literacy is provided to all students to enhance the use and quality of engagement with digital learning resources, including the Learning Management System. Students also access their formative and summative assessments through the online learning platform.

6.9   BUV engages in an ongoing consultation with students relating to the development of student support and student experience. BUV involves students as partners in committees such as the Student-Staff Liaison Committee and Senate. Students are also represented at school level including academic misconduct panels. The student submission video and written submission created by students as part of the IQR process are examples of this partnership and engagement.

6.10   Students are able to communicate with senior academics and the Senior Leadership Team. Students are invited to complete a Student Experience Survey and provide feedback on student services. During the visit professional staff provided various examples of addressing student feedback. There is a clear commitment to developing and delivering individualised student support which was evidenced by the design of activities and services to enable personalised learning and career pathways.

6.11   BUV maintains policies on all procedures and services which are shared with students at induction such as a Quality Assurance Policy [037] and other academic policies.

6.12   Professional staff are upskilled through an HR training plan for professional staff which aims to develop and provide opportunities to staff working across BUV support services. During the meeting with support services staff, the team heard of experiences with the professional development plan.

6.13   BUV provides excellent, personalised and responsive support for students. Students are provided with a range of activities and resources to support academic as well as professional progression through soft skills that contribute to employability and career progression. Staff are dedicated to providing personalised support alongside responding to feedback in a timely manner. The team concludes that Standard 1.6 Learning resources and student support is **met**.

Standard 1.7   Information management

Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.

Findings

7.1   BUV has systematic and embedded processes in place for data capture, analysis and evaluation. This is operationalised by the Central Academic Information Services (CAIS) department to manage the storage, management, and control of all academic information in keeping with BUV regulations on data and information retention. Senate has overall responsibility for the Information Management Policy.

7.2   The current approach to student data collection - quantitative and qualitative - was clearly demonstrated to the team. Additionally, the team found the consolidation of data for management, academic quality assurance and enhancement purposes effective. While the current arrangements require substantial human resource in the analysis and synthesis of data, the team was satisfied that the responsible staff worked with due diligence and appropriate assurance mechanisms to ensure accuracy of data reported to BUV committees and external partners.

7.3   BUV engages with students to collect, analyse, and use feedback data gathered using a range of mechanisms. Data is collected from student satisfaction data on modules (weeks two and nine of each semester); Net Promoter Scores; Student-Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) meetings; direct feedback to the academic leadership team; discussions held between the Student Association Committee (SAC) and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT); feedback on internships and experiences with employers; and graduate engagement surveys. Surveys and other mechanisms assess the experiences and perspectives of students, alumni, and faculty. These provide BUV with significant insight into the educational process and adds context to the quantitative data used alongside qualitative data.

7.4   The Learning and Teaching Committee has primary responsibility for monitoring institutional statistics and data analysis; statistical projections; modelling; relevant analysis related to learning and teaching matters; and advice to the Senate. The responsibilities relating to actions and annual planning, in response to data analysis, is divided between the Learning and Teaching Committee and Senate as described in the self-evaluation document.

7.5   The team found a clear understanding of institutional data needs. This was demonstrated through a visual representation of how student-related information flowed through the academic decision-making structures. It illustrated how those making decisions receive and share information. The team considers that BUV would benefit from mapping its institutional data needs against committee terms of reference, especially of committees that are responsible for quality and standards, to assure itself that data collected and used as business intelligence supports decision-making and enhancements which consider the wider context and purpose for BUV throughout its governance structure.

7.6   Quantitative data reporting on student progression, student population, diversity performance, and attendance monitoring are used to monitor quality and maintenance of academic standards.

7.7   Feedback from staff is a prominent feature of the BUV data management landscape and is augmented by the Performance Management Policy. Evidence was provided of the system used to monitor KPIs, as well as a demonstration by staff during the review visit. The

team found that the monitoring system employed a range of mechanisms to collect data for management purposes. The Vice-Chancellor leads an annual Strategy Planning and Implementation Review event with all staff to monitor and evaluate progress against KPIs and to plan for the next cycle. BUV Strategy 2022 is supported by several enabling strategies, including a comprehensive Data Strategy. The Data Strategy, once operationalised, should provide coherent management information and business intelligence to support decision-making. The development of a defined institutional data set, such as through the recommended mapping as suggested in paragraph 7.5, will be a key enabler of the BUV Data Strategy.

7.8   The University Top Risk Register identifies the top seven institutional risks. The Risk Register does not include a data-related risk which, given current cyber security challenges and the complexity of the BUV operating environment, requires further consideration.

7.9   The University has a live strategic project to adopt Tribal SITS for student and curricula records management. Currently, most records are held electronically within business systems. Managers and specialist staff review file formats to ensure records are accessible over time and that technology and software requirements are met to support the implementation and development of systems.

7.10   BUV manages its records according to the Data Retention Policy which ensures information is not retained longer than required to meet business needs, legal and regulatory requirements. The Data Retention Policy complies with MoET regulations and UK partner requirements. It also outlines the timescales for retaining records and their disposal. The policy is reviewed every five years.

7.11   Strategic Priorities for 2022 and Major Strategic Projects for completion by the end of 2023 are guiding the next phase of development at BUV. The alignment of staff and student management information and KPIs with the strategic intentions of BUV is required to ensure quality and standards are maintained and supported by coherent management information and business intelligence.

7.12   The team concludes that Standard 1.7 is **met**. However, the team **recommends** that BUV maps and defines its institutional data needs, to support decision-making and enhancements which reflect the context and wide purpose of BUV as well as provide a consolidated business intelligence report to Senate. This is proposed to support Senate in continuing to effectively discharge its duty to assure quality and standards and institutional effectiveness during a period of potentially rapid change.

Standard 1.8   Public information

Institutions should publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible.

Findings

8.1   A comprehensive range of information is available on the BUV website, which is aligned with the Website Privacy Policy, Website Maintenance Checklist, and BUV Website Terms and Conditions. In addition to the public information on the BUV website, the Pre-Arrival Handbook provides sufficient information to prospective and current students about BUV programmes; selection criteria; programme objectives for each course; programme pass rate; and the final qualification awarded. The website also hosts a virtual tour of the campus.

8.2   Students are provided with the Pre-Arrival Handbook during orientation. This handbook provides an important overview of information about being a student at BUV. It covers information on facilities, support systems, and useful staff contacts.

8.3   A fee breakdown can be found on the website, and this is supported by the Programme Fees Breakdown and Fee Policy.

8.4   At induction, BUV shows students where and how to access various types of information, policies, and procedures during their studies. BUV also shares the Quality Assurance Policy with students. This was clear from the meeting with students, where there was a general awareness of policies and procedures across the student body. Students described an understanding of where to access information and support even if they were not aware of all policies and procedures.

8.5   The information available to students is easily accessible and reflects the needs of students, as was confirmed when meeting students and other stakeholders. Students can access information through course handbooks, the Learning Management Environment, and the BUV website.

8.6   BUV maintains a Personal Data Protection Policy which protects personal data and informs students of how BUV handles personal data which is collected for operational as well as enhancement purposes.

8.7   The website, handbooks, virtual learning environment, and pre-arrival handbook provide clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible information to prospective and current students, as well as other stakeholders. The information provided demonstrates a transparent and accurate picture of BUV as a higher education provider, its programmes, policies and procedures. The team therefore concludes that Standard 1.8 Public information is **met**.

Standard 1.9   Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes

Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned.

Findings

9.1   The University monitors and systematically reviews its programmes within the overall framework of regulatory requirements in Viet Nam and its validating partners, Staffordshire University, and the University of London.

9.2   The comprehensive review of systems that facilitates review and monitoring of BUV programmes was designed to increase the participation of all staff and faculty involved in programme management and to support the collection and use of data in action planning.

9.3   BUV held internal discussions regarding a redesign of annual programme monitoring and teaching activities in January 2021, with an intended plan to pilot a new system in the second quarter of 2021. Due to the pandemic and governmental restrictions all programmes were offered online in the April-July 2021 semester, delaying implementation of the new approach. However, BUV trialled using a step-by-step approach beginning in the summer of 2021, following significant discussion at committee and Senate meetings. Based on feedback from faculty and administrative staff, minor adjustments were made, with policies and processes put into practice for all academic programmes during the October 2021 semester.

9.4   This development process resulted in the creation of three key policy documents which have continued to be reviewed and updated following ongoing feedback and discussion since approval. These are: Teaching and Learning Performance Evaluation Policy; Teaching and Learning Performance Evaluation Procedure; and Academic Monitoring Policy and Procedure. Considered together, these revised policies provide the cornerstone of annual monitoring and periodic programme review, supplementing validating partner provision.

9.5   The academic monitoring process used at BUV includes Module Monitoring Reports (MMRs); Programme Monitoring Reports (PMRs); and Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs); linked together with school-level Academic Action Plans (AAPs). This process operates in addition to a culture of rapid resolution of any identified operational teaching matters so that the student experience is not impacted.

9.6   Issues at module level are identified by Module Leaders and tracked by school AAPs. Faculty are provided with annual outcomes and student feedback to develop modules for the following delivery cycle. The BUV Academic Quality Officer monitors outcomes of continuous improvement.

9.7   AMRs are completed on a yearly basis for each school by the Head of School. BUV has introduced ongoing school-level AAPs to ensure that quality and compliance with academic requirements continues to be maintained, monitored, and followed up. AAPs contain actions from MMRs, PMRs and AMRs.

9.8   BUV has also developed a new policy and procedure on the governance and continuous improvement in its awards: Proposal, Amendment, and Withdrawal of Programme and Module Policy (PAWPM policy). This sets out the underlying systems and

processes for how adjustments can be made to BUV degree programmes and modules. This policy is a companion to the BUV Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review Policy (PMPR policy) for BUV awards.

9.9   Senate is the highest academic authority at BUV and is responsible for the quality, standards, review and approval of all programmes. The BUV Board of Examiners sits alongside other Senate committees providing advice and guidance on ongoing improvement and the maintenance of academic standards.

9.10   Highest level priorities emerging from ongoing monitoring and periodic review are curated for inclusion in the VCO Annual Report on University Strategy Planning and Implementation Process action plan.

9.11   Periodic review cycles are determined by MoET and validating partners. The University provided a review schedule in its self-evaluating document.

9.12   The team concludes that BUV monitors and regularly reviews its academic programmes with the aim to continuously improve the quality of programmes and modules. The team therefore concludes that Standard 1.9 is **met**.

Standard 1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance

Institutions should undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis.

Findings

10.1   The University has the structures, policies, and processes in place to continuously undertake quality assurance based on validating partner requirements for validated provision including programme amendment and withdrawal. BUV degrees are quality assured through an emerging University model based on SU good practice, the requirements of the MoET to operate in Viet Nam, and MoET Programme Licences.

10.2   Validation and licence periods range from three to five years and require annual audit and reporting to the responsible bodies. BUV degree programmes are required to be periodically reviewed under MoET regulations to ensure compliance with relevant legislation.

10.3   SU oversees the quality of student assessments, student performance, appoints internal and external examiners as well as an Academic Link Tutor (ALT) for each of the franchised subject areas. Similar arrangements are in place for UoL-validated degree programmes. To ensure that external reference points are used on all BUV programmes, the University has also appointed its own external examiner to critique, provide feedback, and approve the results of BUV degree programmes at external examination boards. Engagement with external examiners through the academic cycle, responsiveness to commentary and feedback is evidenced by the thoroughness of response to external examiner reports.

10.4   The responsibilities that BUV holds regarding requirements of its various provisions, to partner institutions as well as its own degree programmes, are clearly set out in the document Responsibilities of Higher Education Provision.

10.5   Following the move to the new campus in Ecopark in 2018, and the subsequent growth in staff and student numbers, BUV renewed its governance model to include the creation of a University Senate and associated committees. The goal of this change was to allow for a system of governance that recognises the unique position of BUV as a university licensed and operating within Viet Nam but operating on the principles of providing significant learning autonomy for students as well as facilitating a student-centred approach which enables them to develop their own learning journey. An Academic Board is proposed but was not operational at the time of the review visit. Academic Board, operating on behalf of Senate, will be responsible for the development and review of BUV strategies on Learning, Teaching and Assessment as well as Employability. Currently the Quality Assurance Committee and the Learning and Teaching Committee oversee quality and standards, policy development, and annual reporting on behalf of Senate. The updated governance model and the addition of the Academic Board, once fully implemented, will enhance current arrangements.

10.6   Established BUV policies and procedures, its responsiveness and engagement with MoET, employers, and civic society indicate that it currently operates effectively in ensuring the continuous review of its programmes. External reviews by MoET, validating partner annual reporting, external examiners' reports, and advisory boards and professional network engagement all demonstrate the conduct of continuous improvement planning at BUV. Therefore, the team concludes that there is an effective cyclical quality assurance process in place, and that Standard 1.10 is **met**.

Glossary

Action plan
A plan developed by the institution after the QAA review report has been published, which is signed off by the head of the institution. It responds to the recommendations in the report and gives any plans to capitalise on the identified good practice.

Annual monitoring
Checking a process or activity every year to see whether it meets expectations for standards and quality. Annual reports normally include information about student achievements and may comment on the evaluation of courses and modules.

Collaborative arrangement
A formal arrangement between a degree-awarding body and another higher education provider. These may be degree-awarding bodies with which the institution collaborates to deliver higher education qualifications on behalf of the degree-awarding bodies. Alternatively, they may be other delivery organisations who deliver part or all of a proportion of the institution's higher education programmes.

Condition
Conditions set out action that is required. Conditions are only used with unsatisfactory judgements where the quality cannot be approved. Conditions may be used where quality or standards are at risk/continuing risk if action is not taken or if a required standard is not met and action is needed for it to be met.

Degree-awarding body
Institutions that have authority, for example from a national agency, to issue their own awards. Institutions applying to IQR may be degree-awarding bodies themselves, or may collaborate to deliver higher education qualifications on behalf of degree-awarding bodies.

Desk-based analysis
An analysis by the review team of evidence, submitted by the institution, that enables the review team to identify its initial findings and subsequently supports the review team as it develops its review findings.

Enhancement
See **quality enhancement**.

European Standards and Guidelines
For details, including the full text on each standard, see www.enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg.

Examples of practice
A list of policies and practices that a review team may use when considering the extent to which an institution meets the standards for review. The examples should be considered as a guide only, in acknowledgment that not all of them will be appropriate for all institutions.

Externality
The use of experts from outside a higher education provider, such as external examiners or external advisers, to assist in quality assurance procedures.

Facilitator
The member of staff identified by the institution to act as the principal point of contact for the QAA officer and who will be available during the review visit, to assist with any questions or requests for additional documentation.

Good practice
A feature of good practice is a process or way of working that, in the view of a QAA review team, makes a particularly positive contribution to the institution's higher education provision.

Lead student representative
An optional voluntary role that is designed to allow students at the institution applying for IQR to play a central part in the organisation of the review.

Oversight
Objective scrutiny, monitoring and quality assurance of educational provision.

Peer reviewers
Members of the review team who make the decisions in relation to the review of the institution. Peer reviewers have experience of managing quality and academic standards in higher education or have recent experience of being a student in higher education.

Periodic review
An internal review of one or more programmes of study, undertaken by institutions periodically (typically once every five years), using nationally agreed reference points, to confirm that the programmes are of an appropriate academic standard and quality. The process typically involves experts from other higher education providers. It covers areas such as the continuing relevance of the programme, the currency of the curriculum and reference materials, the employability of graduates and the overall performance of students. Periodic review is one of the main processes whereby institutions can continue to assure themselves about the academic quality and standards of their awards.

Programme of study
An approved course of study that provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification. UK higher education programmes must be approved and validated by UK degree-awarding bodies.

Quality enhancement
The process by which higher education providers systematically improve the quality of provision and the ways in which students' learning is supported.

QAA officer
The person appointed by QAA to manage the review programme and to act as the liaison between the review team and the institution.

Quality assurance
The systematic monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching, and the processes that support them, to make sure that the standards of academic awards meet the necessary standards, and that the quality of the student learning experience is being safeguarded and improved.

Recognition of prior learning
Assessing previous learning that has occurred in any of a range of contexts including school, college and university, and/or through life and work experiences.

Recommendation
Review teams make recommendations where they agree that an institution should consider developing or changing a process or a procedure in order to improve the institution's higher education provision.

Reference points
Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured.

Self-evaluation document
A self-evaluation report by an institution. The submission should include information about the institution as well as an assessment of the effectiveness of its quality systems.

Student submission
A document representing student views that describes what it is like to be a student at the institution, and how students' views are considered in the institution's decision-making and quality assurance processes.

Validation
The process by which an institution ensures that its academic programmes meet expected academic standards and that students will be provided with appropriate learning opportunities. It may also be applied to circumstances where a degree-awarding institution gives approval for its awards to be offered by a partner institution or organisation.