



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

MONITORING VISIT

**MC ACADEMY (FORMERLY MANCHESTER CENTRAL SCHOOL OF
ENGLISH)**

(08392893)

Full Name	MC Academy (formerly Manchester Central School of English)
Address	Suite 2 Royal Buildings, 2 Mosley Street, Manchester, M2 3AN
Company name	MC Academic Limited
Telephone Number	0161 236 7575
Email Address	dos@themcacademy.co.uk
Website	www.themcacademy.co.uk
Executive Director	Mr Imad Ahmed
Proprietor	Mr Abdul Majid Abufares
Age Range	10+
Total number of students	106
Numbers by age and type of study	Under 16: 0 16 – 18: 8 18+: 98 EFL only: 106
Inspection date	22 November 2022

PREFACE

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

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

ISI inspections are required to:

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

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

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

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

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

CONTENTS

	Page
1 CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT	2
2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	3
3 THE QUALITY OF THE CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENTS	4
4 STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY	5
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	7
6 ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	8
INSPECTION EVIDENCE	9

1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 MC Academy is an English language school established in 2005 and located in the centre of Manchester. In 2019 it changed its name from Manchester Central School of English to MC Academy. Governance is provided by the sole director and day-to-day oversight of the school is provided by the executive director. He is supported by a small management team, which includes the head of development, a director of studies and an administration manager. The language school aims to motivate, support and guide students by providing the best possible language education in a stimulating and supportive environment.
- 1.2 MC Academy offers a range of general English courses at different levels. The school also offers more specialist courses to students over the age of 16 years, for example English for academic purposes, business English and pre-sessional programmes. The school offers examination preparation classes for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), Cambridge English qualifications, and the Occupational English Test (OET), along with the Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA) programme.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection 106 students were enrolled. The large majority are over the age of 18 and the majority are male. The vast majority of students come from the Middle East and all speak English as an additional language. Three students have been identified with learning difficulties or disabilities.
- 1.4 English courses and examination preparation classes last for different lengths of time and students may enrol for them on a weekly basis. The CELTA programme is offered at specific times of the year and has published entry requirements. In the summer, closed groups of students from the age of 10 years are accepted.
- 1.5 The school was previously inspected on 27–29 July 2021 when it was judged to meet expectations and the quality was good. The recommendations from the previous report are:
 - Ensure that checks on residential accommodation are consistently recorded.
 - Improve arrangements for monitoring the checks on safety equipment to ensure they are completed in line with school policies.
 - Develop the analysis of student progression data to better inform improvement planning.
 - Ensure the VLE provides all students with access to high quality resources and activities which support their independent learning skills.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The school meets expectations.** At the previous inspection of 27–29 July 2021 the school was found to meet expectations and the quality of education as judged at that time has been maintained.
- 2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is good. Students are appropriately educated in accordance with their objectives and the school's aims. Course provision is good. The curriculum is well organised, flexible and is effective in meeting the needs of the students. Courses on offer to students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. English language courses are aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Initial assessment prior to and on arrival is accurate and is effective in ensuring that students are placed on a programme of study in accordance with their language abilities and needs. Teaching is good. Teachers are experienced and have good subject knowledge. They plan well, with a wide range of teaching and learning methods planned and used to deliver engaging lessons. There are clearly defined processes in place to monitor students' progress to ensure that they are successfully progressing towards their learning aim.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is good. The schools' premises are fit-for-purpose, well-maintained and provide a safe and comfortable environment for students to learn and staff work. A wide range of appropriate health and safety policies and procedures are regularly updated and implemented effectively. Fire precautions, drills and evacuations are systematically undertaken and are clearly understood by students and staff. Student registration and attendance records are accurate, very well managed and staff are highly effective in monitoring attendance and taking necessary action. Procedures for reporting to the Home Office are secure. Pastoral support is good and provides a good level of support and guidance in accordance with the school's aims. Arrangements for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 years are good, fully implemented and reflect official guidance.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is good. Effective oversight is combined with an appropriate level of financial support so that the quality of education and the welfare, health and safety of students are secure. An appropriate management structure, with clear roles and responsibilities, ensures that the school is well run and that it meets all its legal obligations. Leadership and management are good. There is effective communication between managers and other staff. Policies and procedures are well defined and appropriate. Procedures for the recruitment of staff are good, in accordance with legal requirements, with all appropriate checks undertaken.

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

- 3.1 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is good. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Ensure the VLE provides all students with access to high quality resources and activities which support their independent learning skills.
- 3.3 Satisfactory progress has been made against the recommendation. The use of the VLE has been reviewed and now provides an appropriate range of high quality learning resources that support independent learning and meet the needs of the range of students studying at the school.
- 3.4 The quality of course provision and curriculum is good. Students are well educated in a very supportive environment and in accordance with their objectives and the school's aims. The curriculum is based on a clear policy statement, is flexible and well planned. It provides a good range of courses which enables students to progress and which meet the different English language abilities and aims of the students who attend the school. Courses on offer to students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. English language courses are well aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).
- 3.5 Initial assessment is good. The process is accurate and ensures that students are placed on courses that match their language abilities. Courses on offer to students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance.
- 3.6 Teaching is good. Detailed planning and a clear understanding of the needs of their students allow teachers to successfully adapt lessons to meet individual learning needs and effectively challenge students. Teachers are experienced, enthusiastic and have good subject knowledge. A wide range of teaching and learning methods are used to deliver engaging and student-focused lessons.
- 3.7 Teaching effectively promotes fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It encourages respect for other people including those with the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.8 The monitoring of student progress is good. There are clearly defined processes in place to monitor students' progress to ensure that they are successfully progressing towards their learning aim. Attainment is high and attendance rates good.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 4.1 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is good. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 4.2 The recommendations in this area from the previous inspection report are:
- Improve arrangements for monitoring the checks on safety equipment to ensure they are completed in line with school policies.
 - Ensure that checks on residential accommodation are consistently recorded.
- 4.3 Excellent progress has been made against the recommendation. Arrangements for monitoring checks on safety equipment have been reviewed and clear arrangements are now in place. This includes the introduction of a contractor renewal spreadsheet to ensure safety equipment and relevant employment certificates are maintained and completed in line with school policies. As a result, all fire and safety equipment is regularly checked as required.
- 4.4 Excellent progress has been made against the recommendation. All home-stay providers have been visited and checked since the previous inspection. Each visit has been fully recorded, with the school's log of visits now up to date and consistently completed.
- 4.5 The school's premises are fit for purpose, very well-maintained and enhance the students learning experience. A wide range of detailed health and safety, first aid and fire safety policies and procedures are consistently implemented. All necessary measures to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards have been taken. Fire precautions, drills and evacuations are systematically undertaken and are clearly understood by all students and staff. The school has an appropriate number of fire marshals and staff trained in first aid. Free drinking water is readily available. Students are highly supportive of the school and report that they feel safe and secure.
- 4.6 Systems for recording registration and attendance are very well-managed. Admission procedures are clear and strictly observed. A central register is accurately maintained and individual student files contain all relevant information. Attendance records are accurate and daily attendance is closely monitored staff are highly effective in monitoring attendance. Home Office monitoring and reporting procedures for students who are studying under Student visa arrangements or under the Student visa route are well understood and adhered to.
- 4.7 Pastoral support for students is good. Student welfare is a priority and the school provides a safe and highly supportive environment where students can progress successfully. Relationships between staff and students, and amongst the students themselves, are excellent with a strong culture of mutual respect, integration and tolerance. Appropriate policies and procedures reinforce this culture and the expectations of appropriate behaviour and conduct.

- 4.8 The safeguarding arrangements for students under the age of 18 are good. Arrangements have proper regard to official guidance and the implementation of all strategies is appropriately checked by senior managers. There is a designated child protection officer who is appropriately trained. All relevant persons are subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks prior to or on appointment, and an accurate central register is maintained of suitability checks on staff.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is good. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Develop the analysis of student progression data to better inform improvement planning.
- 5.3 Satisfactory progress has been made in relation to this recommendation. The school has updated their system of recording and analysing student progress data. Students' weekly progress test results are recorded and those who are not performing to the expected standard are identified and supported appropriately. However, data is not always used effectively to support and inform the judgements made in the school's self-evaluation report.
- 5.4 The quality of leadership and management is good. The focus of governance and leadership is on supporting students and improving standards. Senior leaders provide clear educational direction and effectively discharge their responsibilities in accordance with the aims of the school. Financial management is effective in ensuring appropriate action is taken with regard to course development, maintenance of premises and student welfare. Staff are very supportive of the school.
- 5.5 A well-defined management structure, with clear roles and responsibilities ensures that the school is well run and that it meets all its legal obligations. Policies and procedures are clear and appropriate. Relationships and communication between the leadership team, the proprietor and the teaching staff are very good.
- 5.6 Staff recruitment, qualifications and suitability checks are good. An appropriate recruitment policy is in place that ensures that well qualified and experienced staff are recruited. All required recruitment checks have been carried out in a timely manner and appropriately recorded. The process to validate references and qualifications is good, with due regard to statutory requirements concerning the identity of staff. A comprehensive central record is maintained and monitored by senior staff.
- 5.7 The web-site contains all required information. The school was very responsive in providing information for the inspection in a timely manner.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The school has maintained good quality found at the last inspection.

Recommendations for further improvement

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

- Use available data to support and inform the judgements made in the schools self-assessment report.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Dr Nigel Chambers	Lead Inspector
Ms Lesley Davis	Team Inspector