NILE

EAQUALS INSPECTION REPORT

Eaquals Inspection Scheme 7.2

Institution: NILE

Inspectors: **Ania Kolbuszewska (reporting) & Galya Mateva**

Dates: **8 – 9 August 2024**

This report is written in alignment with the [Eaquals Inspection Scheme Version 7.2](#)

Section One: Inspection Verdict

Verdict statement:
Accredited membership of the institution can be (re)confirmed, as all standards of the Eaquals Charters are fully met.

Grades

Grade 2 = meets the high quality Standards required by the Eaquals Charters

Grade 2,5 = does not meet the Standards required by the Eaquals Charters with reference to one or more relatively minor indicators of compliance, which can easily and swiftly be rectified, and evidence, such as a document or photo, can be readily submitted

Grade 3 = does not meet the high quality Standards required by the Eaquals Charters

Grade 1 = exceeds the high quality Standards required by the Eaquals Charters and identifies a Category of consistent excellence in the institution

Grade 1,5 = meets the high quality Standards required by the Eaquals Charters and identifies a Category which, in some respects, exceeds Eaquals high Standards, exhibiting one or two indicators of excellence, while not achieving consistent excellence in this Category

Section A: Institutional Management and Governance			Section B: Academic Management		
Categories		Grade	Categories		Grade
1	Management and Administration	1	5	Course Design and Supporting Systems	1
2	Quality Assurance	1	6	Teaching and Learning	1.5
3	Communication with Staff	1.5	7	Assessment and Certification	2
4	Communication with Students and Clients	1	8	Academic Resources	1
Section C: Student Services			**Section D: Staff**		
9	Student Services	1	10	Staff Profile and Development	1
			11	Staff Employment Terms	2
Section E: Learning Environment and Facilities					
12	Learning Environment	1			
TOTAL GRADE:					15

Executive Summary

The inspection at NILE was a re-inspection carried out on site, with two meetings carried out in a hybrid mode, with some staff present on site and some joining the meeting on zoom (please see the inspection timetable).

According to the information provided by the institution, language courses are offered to closed groups only and they constitute a mere 6% of courses offered. Over 90% of courses offered are teacher training and / or teacher development courses. At the time of the inspection, six face-to-face teacher development courses were running. The fact that NILE's profile is not that of a language teaching operation but rather a teacher training provider presented the Inspectors with several challenges in using the Eaquals Inspection Scheme to assess whether the institution meets or indeed exceeds Eaquals standards. Where the Inspectors were not able to follow the letter of the Inspection Scheme, they followed its spirit.

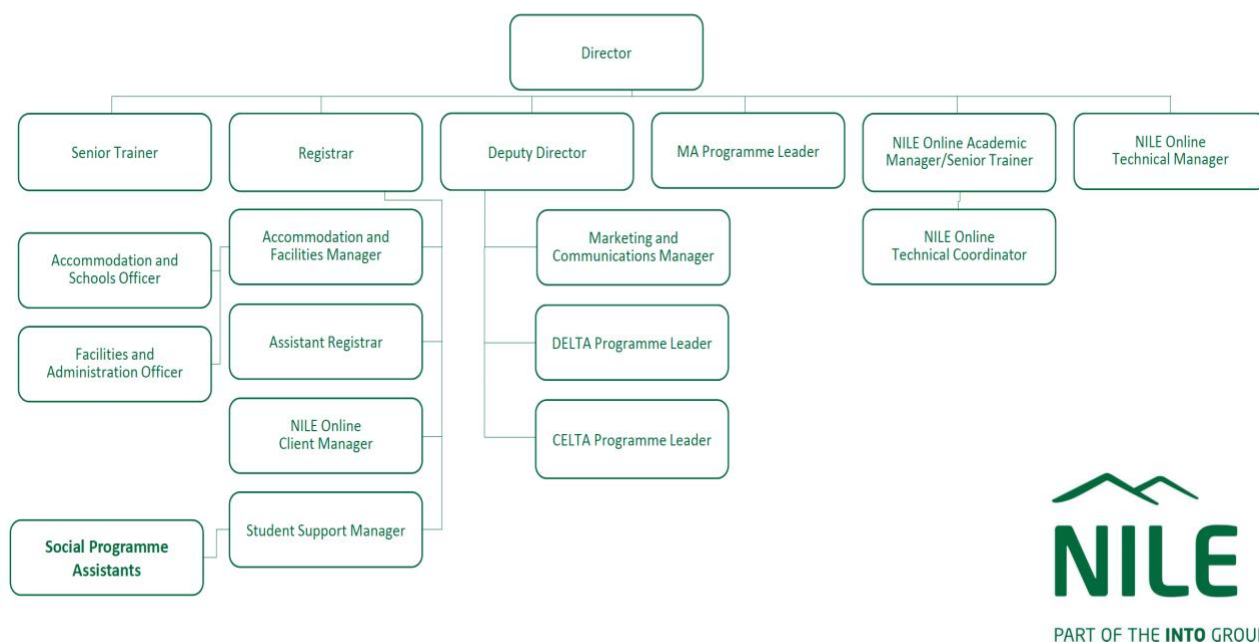# Section Two: Account of the Inspection

Timetable

Thursday 08 August 2024 (day 1)			
Time	**Action**	**Staff involved**	**Inspectors**
08.35 – 09.00	Arrival & tour of premises Meeting staff available Inspection final arrangements	Director, staff present	AK, GM
09.00 – 10.00	Meeting with Director (management, strategy)	Director	AK, GM
10:00 – 11:00	Meeting with Registrar, Assistant Registrar and NILE Online Client Manager (client registration, administration and finance)	Registrar, Assistant Registrar, NILE Online Client Manager	AK, GM
11:00 – 11:30	Classroom observation (Inspector standardisation)	Trainer	AK, GM
11:30 – 12:30	Classroom observations / inspection of premises	Trainers	AK / GM
12:30 – 14:00	Inspectors' lunch and meeting		
14:00 – 14:45	Meeting with Deputy Director and Marketing and Communications Manager (communication with clients, business development)	Deputy Director, Marketing and Communications Manager	AK
14:00 – 14:30	Meeting with DELTA and MA Programme Leaders, and Senior Trainer	DELTA and MA Programme Leaders	GM NB. hybrid meeting (DELTA and MA Programme Leaders remotely)
14:30 – 15:15	Classroom observations / inspection of premises	Trainers	GM
14:45 – 15:15	Inspection of NILE resources on site		AK
15:15 – 16:00	Meeting with Accommodation and Facilities Manager and Accommodation and Schools Officer (accommodation, client welfare)	Accommodation and Facilities Manager, Accommodation and Schools Officer	AK, GM
16:00 – 16:30	Trainer Focus Group meeting	Trainers	AK, GM
16:30 – 17:00	Accommodation inspection: calls to host families		GM

Time	Action	Staff involved	Inspectors
16:30 – 17:00	Meeting with Accommodation and Facilities Manager and Facilities and Administration Officer (health and safety)	Accommodation and Facilities Manager, Facilities and Administration Officer	AK
17:00 – 18:00	Accommodation inspection: visits to residential accommodation	Accommodation staff	GM
17:00 – 17:30	Inspection of documentation / inspection of premises		AK
19:00 – 20:00	Inspectors' meeting		AK, GM

Friday 09 August 2024 (day 2)

Time	Action	Staff involved	Inspectors
09:00 – 10:00	Meeting with NILE Online Academic Manager, NILE Online Technical Manager and NILE Online Technical Coordinator Inspection of NILE resources (guided tour – NILE Online) (resources for clients and trainers; online courses)	NILE Online Academic Manager, Technical Manager and Technical Coordinator	AK, GM NB: hybrid meeting (Online Technical Coordinator remotely)
10:00 – 10:50	Meeting with Deputy Director, and NILE Online Academic Manager and Senior Trainer (academic management)	Deputy Director, Senior Trainer	AK, GM
11:30 – 12:30	Classroom observations / inspection of premises	Trainers	AK / GM
11:30 – 12:45	Inspection of documentation Inspectors' meeting		AK, GM
12:45 – 13:15	Student Focus Group meeting		AK, GM
13:15 – 14:30	Inspectors' lunch and meeting		
14:30 – 15:00	Meeting with Student Support Manager and Social Programme Assistant (social programme)	Student Support Manager, Social Programme Assistant	GM
14:30 – 15:15	Classroom observations	Trainers	AK
15:00 – 16:00	Feedback preparation		AK, GM
16:00 – 17:00	Feedback to management	Director, Deputy Director	AK, GM

Staffing of the Language Centre

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| Senior Trainer | Registrar | Deputy Director | MA Programme Leader | NILE Online Academic Manager/Senior Trainer | NILE Online Technical Manager |

- Accommodation and Schools Officer
- Facilities and Administration Officer

- Accommodation and Facilities Manager
- Assistant Registrar
- NILE Online Client Manager
- Student Support Manager

- Marketing and Communications Manager
- DELTA Programme Leader
- CELTA Programme Leader

- NILE Online Technical Coordinator

- **Social Programme Assistants**

NILE is part of the INTO Group, and HR as well as accounting departments at the parent organisation provide services to NILE. The institution's Director is part of the management structure at the parent organisation. All other areas of activity are the responsibility of NILE staff, with Director and Deputy Director providing support to staff as necessary.

The overall responsibility for the running of the institution lies with the Director. The Deputy Director has a double role: academic management and business development. The administrative and client welfare side of the operation is overseen by the Registrar.

Trainers running teacher development courses are freelance.

Description of the Institution; provided by the Language Centre

Section E: **Language Centre Background Information**	
History	Established in 1995, NILE concentrates mainly on professional development and training courses for teachers and trainers involved in language education. In June 2006 NILE became part of the INTO University Partnerships group, a British company based in London specialising in on-campus university preparation courses, collaborating on the development of a joint venture with the University of East Anglia. This change in the formal structure of NILE didn't have a strong impact on its day to day work as there is little overlap with INTO activities In 2010, a separate, parallel company was set up specifically to run training courses such as Cambridge CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults) and DELTA (Diploma in English Language Teaching) which are liable to VAT when the VAT threshold is exceeded. In 2012, NILE opened its new building Delta House. In 2013 NILE invested in developing a bespoke online platform to design and deliver blended and online teacher development courses and programmes to language teachers and education professionals worldwide. Since 2014, NILE has developed more than 25 online courses for teachers, from pre-service training to a full Master's programme. NILE Online was nominated to an ELTons Award in 2015 and again in 2017, and the winner of an ESU Award in 2018. In 2016 NILE and Macmillan Education signed a strategic partnership to promote quality teacher education programmes globally. Since the pandemic and the decision by the UK to leave the EU, NILE has increased our online provision with investment in a new platform (Brightspace) in 2021, and moving all MA modules online plus adding new stand-alone NILE Online courses. We have maintained our strong relationships with partners, from individual Eaquals-member partners (e.g. IH Lacunza, ESE Malta, London School Thiene) to global partners such as Macmillan and British Council. The latter has resulted in more large-scale consultancy projects e.g. in Tunisia and Rwanda, and a new global partnership to open NILE Teacher Education programmes in British Council Teaching Centres worldwide, starting in Bogota in 2024.
Accreditation	Accredited by the British Council for the Teaching of English 1999. Re-inspections 2000, 2002, 2006, 2007, 2011, 2015, 2019, accreditation every time. Accredited by AQUEDUTO (Online Courses) 2017
Methodological approach	At NILE we believe in the centrality of the individual in the educational process: we teach people, not courses. As such we gather information about participant needs prior to the course and at the start in order to shape both the content to be delivered and the methods to be used. While the expertise of our trainers and the experience of our organisation has identified key areas of knowledge and skills that will likely be useful to participants seeking to develop in specific areas, we understand the diversity of contexts needs to be taken into account if the content is to be relevant and useful. Thus, we aim to build assessment round projects where participants can put their knowledge and skills into use, producing something to communicate to others, and for them to give feedback on. With teacher focussed courses this often means incorporating micro-teaching opportunities and developing action plans for implementation upon their return to their institution. With courses involving students this typically involves opportunities for students to explore the local environment, interacting with local people and creating projects that combine this with research that can be presented to their tutors and peers. We integrate online and digital technology into each course including with access to our NILE eLibrary, NILE Members Area, and NILE Online platform. We seek to listen and learn from the participants before, during and after the course.

Premises	**Delta House (DH):** Opened in June 2012, the building is arranged over three floors. Delta House contains an extensive, up-to-date library of materials, background books and resource books for teachers of English, 6 classrooms, a private tutorial room and quiet study areas, a relaxation zone and roof terrace. Delta House also houses the Student Services Office and a combined Academic Office and staff room with kitchen and workstations. **Masonic Halls (MH) and INTO UEA:** At peak times we need extra or larger training rooms for particularly large groups. The Masonic Halls and INTO UEA's facilities are used for this. These facilities with various capacity rooms are not NILE-owned. INTO is approx. 4km from NILE, with residential accommodation.

DH1	DH2	DH3	DH4	DH5	DH 6	DH Library
20	12	16	20	16	16	(20)

Facilities	DH: Water dispensers throughout the building. Social areas are the roof terrace and first floor of DH. NILE is situated on a café-lined street, some of which offer discounts to NILE participants. MH: water available and coffee served daily INTO UEA's cafeteria serves food all day, and NILE participants have access to the UEA Sports Park for a reduced fee. All courses include a digital platform for materials, extra-curricular activities and networking and participants have access to NILE's ELT e-library through the Brightspace platform.
Classroom equipment	All classrooms have audio-visual facilities and interactive whiteboards or smartboards.
Any other premises used by the Language Centre	N/A
Location of in-company courses	NILE co-delivers selected courses with partners in Galway, Ireland (Galway Language Centre), St. Julian's Malta (ESE), San Sebastian, Spain (IH Lacunza), and Bogota, Colombia (British Council). A NILE mentor is assigned to each course where a local teacher trainer is delivering sessions, and each trainer is given full access to the relevant NILE Online course and guided in adapting content and materials.

Section F: **Courses Offered**

	Approximate **percentage of total student hours** as calculated below (for an academic year)	Approximate **number of students** (for an academic year)	Approximate **number of teachers per language** taught (for an academic year)
Language 1 (insert name) add further rows as needed	English 100%	1762 (online and face to face)	37 online; 25 face to face Norwich; 50+ large-scale consultancies (NB: many individuals work on all 3 programme types)

Types of course, e.g. national and international exam courses, and blended/ on-line courses over the year (add rows as needed)

General Language		Language improvement (closed groups)	6% of all courses taught (109 participants)

Teacher development courses involving a significant element of language improvement	open enrolment, face to face	8% of all courses taught (148 participants)
Teacher development courses involving a significant element of language improvement	closed group, face to face	18% of all courses taught (320 participants)
Teacher Development courses	Open enrolment, online	22% of all courses taught (382 participants)
Teacher Development courses	Closed group, online	30% of all courses taught (532 participants)
MA in Professional Development for Language Education	online	5% of all courses taught (85 participants)
MA in Professional Development for Language Education	face to face	.5% of all courses taught (4 participants)

Any courses provided which are <u>not</u> language courses (e.g. teacher training).

Name of course	Type	Number of students	Number of teachers
CELTA	face to face	37 (2%)	4
CELTA	online	30 (2%)	4
CELTA	mixed mode	9 (1%)	2
DELTA	online	106 (6%)	35

Please specify how your courses are currently delivered

	Yes / No	% of all courses taught
Face–to–face	**Yes**	**39 %** (40 courses)
Blended	**Yes**	**1%** (1 course)
Online	**Yes**	**60%** (61 courses)

Technology enhanced learning	
Are your **face-to-face courses supported by digital /online tools** and methodology? This may include the use of hardware and/or software both in and out of class during the period of the course. Yes. If yes:	
• Is this a compulsory element of the course?	Yes – all courses have a digital learning platform for materials and collaboration
• Is it a fully integrated part of the course?	No. The degree to which this is used varies form course to course
• Is it used for homework?	At times
• Is it used for assessment?	No
• Is it used in class?	At times

Please describe the use of educational technology briefly.	The primary educational technologies used are Brightspace and IWBs/ smartboards, the former as the platform giving students access to materials, and as a place for them to interact online with each other through forums and other tools. The latter are used to allow tutors to present content in engaging and interactive formats. NILE also has sets of Chromebooks, for class use, to enable participants to work together virtually through such tools as Google docs and forms. We use technology to extend interaction beyond the face-to-face, and to deepen engagement. Pedagogy and methodology drive technology use (not vice versa). We also give all participants access to the NILE Members Area, with dozens of resources for future use and a digital Teacher Research Toolkit to support local classroom investigation and reflective practice.
Blended Learning and online courses Are any of the enrolled hours for any course(s) required to be completed online (either as asynchronous online learning or through synchronous interaction with a teacher online via a webinar or similar tool)? Are there any courses delivered exclusively online?	Yes In addition to our face-to-face courses, NILE Online deliver teacher development courses entirely online. The bespoke tools include both asynchronous and synchronous options Some bespoke courses for closed groups consist of a face-to-face course followed by an online component, with the face-to-face section either at NILE or in-country. Additionally, we offer a mixed mode CELTA course, starting with 3 weeks online, then 2 weeks face to face.
% of student hours spent online as part of the course	100% on online courses, no compulsory hours on regular face-to-face courses
Number of teachers for both synchronous and asynchronous learning	37
Blended Learning / online courses: timing	
Please give details of online learning likely to be taking place during the period of 3 weeks before and 3 weeks after the inspection period, including where possible:	NB: NILE Online Open enrolment courses are not scheduled to run in the peak F2F period June-August. Exceptions to this may be made for closed group online clients. Next NILE Online scheduled start date: 16 Sept 2024 Teaching English in Pre-Primary Education Teaching Young Learners (incl. MA) Teaching Teenagers From Teacher to Trainer Syllabus Design and Development Materials Development for Language Education (incl. MA) Management in Language Education (incl. MA) Testing, Evaluation and Assessment (incl. MA) Teaching English for Aviation Trainer Development (incl. MA) Prepare Your Students for IELTS (6 weeks) DELTA (all modules)
Number of levels / courses	
Number of hours, if synchronous	Each fully online course includes 3-4 hours of webinars (in total) hosted by the tutors, but these hours may be doubled in the cases where there is a significant geographical spread

Synchronous (teachers and students online together):	Yes
Asynchronous (material available for students to use at their convenience):	Yes

Section G: Staff and Student Numbers

FACE-TO-FACE only. See below for online courses

Students

Approximate total of number of all **student hours** of tuition provided by the Language Education Centre **during the last 12 months.** Include course participants taught in-company and in other off-site locations	**Total Number:** 31,350
Low and Peak Seasons (Please tell us which are your busiest and quietest months)	Low Season (months): September - May / Peak season (months): June – August
Numbers of sites	Please list all sites you use in low and peak season and state approximate travel time from main premises
Low Season: **NILE**	Peak season: NILE, Masonic Halls(200m), INTO UEA (4km) (10 minutes' drive)

Approximate total of number of students at different times of the year	Q1 Jan-March: 21	Q2 April-Jun: 61	Q3 July-Sept: 381	Q4 Oct-Dec: 164

Approximate **numbers of full time** (15 or more hours per week) and **part-time** (under 15 hours per week) course participants **age 18+ over the year**		**Full-time**	**Part time**
	Number:	**575**	0
	Percentage:	92%	0%

Maximum size of classes taught:	16

Approximate **numbers of full time** (15 or more hours per week) and **part-time** (under 15 hours per week) course participants **age 16 – 17.**		**Full-time**	**Part time**
	Number:	52	0
	Percentage:	8%	0%

Maximum size of classes taught:	16

Approximate **Numbers** of **Junior** (11-15) **Young Learners** (6-10) and **Very Young Learners** (6 and under) over the year		**Junior** (11-15)	**Young Learners** (6-10)	**Very Young Learners** (6 and under)
	Number:	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Percentage:	%	%	%

Maximum size of classes taught:	N/A
Staffing	

Number of Full Time Teaching Staff	Q1 Jan-March:	Q2 April-Jun:	Q3 July-Sept:	Q4 Oct-Dec:
	4	4	4	4
Number of Part Time/Freelance Teaching Staff	Q1 Jan-March:	Q2 April-Jun:	Q3 July-Sept:	Q4 Oct-Dec:
	0	2	20	2
Number of Full Time Administrative Staff	Q1 Jan-March:	Q2 April-Jun:	Q3 July-Sept:	Q4 Oct-Dec:
	6	6	7	6
Number of Part Time Administrative Staff	Q1 Jan-March:	Q2 April-Jun:	Q3 July-Sept:	Q4 Oct-Dec:
	2	2	4	2

Section G: **Staff and Student Numbers**

ONLINE only.

Students

Approximate total of number of all **student hours** of tuition provided by the Language Education Centre **during the last 12 months.** Include course participants taught in-company and in other off-site locations	**Total Number**: 45,400 (an average of 40 hours of study per online course x 999 participants)	
Low and Peak Seasons (Please tell us which are your busiest and quietest months)	Low Season (months): June-August	Peak season (months): September-June

Numbers of sites

Low Season: Admin from NILE (online courses)	**Peak Season:** Admin from NILE (online courses)		
Approximate total of number of students at different times of the year	Q1 Jan-March: 426	Q2 April-Jun: 281	Q3 July-Sept: 109	Q4 Oct-Dec: 319

Approximate **numbers of full time** (15 or more hours per week) and **part-time** (under 15 hours per week) course participants **age 18+ over the year**		**Full-time**	**Part time**
	Number:	**92**	1043
	Percentage:	8%	92%

Maximum size of classes taught:	16		

Approximate **numbers of full time** (15 or more hours per week) and **part-time** (under 15 hours per week) course participants **age 16 – 17.**		**Full-time**	**Part time**
	Number:	N/A	N/A
	Percentage:	%	0%

Maximum size of classes taught:			

Staffing

Full Time Teaching Staff	Q1 Jan-March:	Q2 April-Jun:	Q3 July-Sept:	Q4 Oct-Dec:
	0	0	0	0
Part Time/Freelance Teaching Staff	Q1 Jan-March:	Q2 April-Jun:	Q3 July-Sept:	Q4 Oct-Dec:
	37	37	0	37
Number of Full Time Administrative Staff	Q1 Jan-March:	Q2 April-Jun:	Q3 July-Sept:	Q4 Oct-Dec:
	2	2	2	2
Part Time Administrative Staff (1 0.9 FTE staff member, one as part of her full time job.	Q1 Jan-March:	Q2 April-Jun:	Q3 July-Sept:	Q4 Oct-Dec:
	2	2	0	2

Section H: Developments since your last Inspection (re-inspections only)

Developments based on Eaquals recommendations

Actions taken
Ensure that both full time and part time key staff and influencers are fully aware of their role in achieving the strategic objectives in the current strategic plan. The central NILE strategy feeds into annual objective setting for full-time and part-time staff. Strategy documents are available in shared folder. Advisory Board and Ambassadors are updated twice per year.
Consider changing Certificates of Attendance to Certs of Participation and reflect this in some core text. Current review of design, content and sharing of certificates began Dec 2022.
Follow up on borrowed resources from the library if they haven t been returned. Delegated responsibility of new Academic Assistant role, which began June 2022.
Put fire evacuation maps with routes on the backs of classroom doors. Delegated responsibility of new Facilities Coordinator role, which began in Feb 2021.
Continue to work on digitizing student records and associated documentation to enable ceasing to use hard copies in line with the 'green' policy Enrolment and Welcome packs are now all sent by email. Hosts are also emailed and paper copy only sent if requested. Hard copy student and course data files now replaced by digital files Students still given a course folder on arrival with essential information and to use for storage of any course materials, information – significantly reduced content since 2019. Additional use of QR codes, Padlet walls, and Google docs to share information with participants.
Consider a higher remuneration for host families of minors given the greater responsibilities. Policy reviewed but decided on no differentiation for u18s hosts. General pay increase of 12.5%. All DBS checks and updates covered by NILE.
Consider more regular visiting of host families, e.g., every 12 months, particularly for newer families. We feel our visit schedule, plus remote re-inspection visits, plus new feedback questionnaire, are sufficient with rebuilding number of hosts since pandemic.
Consider expanding the modes of feedback collection to supplement and verify what is received through questionnaires. We now collect text and video testimonials; early-bird feedback questionnaires; informal management conversations at social events; and have added a section to Trainer Handbook on collecting and sharing participant feedback.
Explore how to use learner and course analytics to further quality assure that the intended outcomes are achieved in terms of quality teaching and learning. We still prefer qualitative feedback to data-driven quantitative feedback given the nature of courses, course length and group size. Previous trial of online feedback surveys was not effective. Outcomes not quantifiable except DELTA and MA, where data has been over-simplified or erroneous from qualification provider.
Consider collecting feedback again after a time lag post the end of the course which could have a focus on learning impact. We do this on an occasional basis, e.g. survey of 1000 NILE Online course participants from 2015 – 2020, but difficult to imagine other forms beyond testimonials, alumni stories, and monitoring social media.

Develop a system of observation for part time teachers both peer and line managers, for development, support and consistency.
We have a new management observation system and policy with all teaching staff observed annually, and a peer-observation policy actively promoted to both f2f and online teachers.

Explore how to embed Eaquals more centrally in the operations of the institute and use the resources as appropriate.
Eaquals resources embedded in relevant NILE courses (e.g. AMCF in Management in Language Education; TD FRAM in Trainer Development); key NILE staff involved in Eaquals projects (e.g. Tony Prince – LAP framework; Martyn Clarke – AMCF; Thom Kiddle – ALTE – Eaquals projects); NILE involvement in Eaquals conferences, webinar series and campaigns.

Review current printed and online versions to identify their real value in communicating the key messages about the NILE approach to training, teaching and learning – _in some cases, this could get lost in the text.
New website in 2021, all copy re-written to reflect recommendation. Introduction to NILE reviewed in tender templates, teaching approaches specified in course descriptions.

The Eaquals Guarantees could be displayed more prominently and be made more meaningful for learners and other stakeholders.
Eaquals guarantees are in all classrooms, staffroom and offices. We hope they are made meaningful through our actions, not just our words.

All other developments

Actions taken
New NILE Online platform supports online courses, f2f courses, and hosts the NILE Members Area for all teachers (5000+ current members). This latter resource is a significant development and incorporates amazing resources, tools and guides.
New NILE Trainers CPD webinar series for 150+ NILE trainers covers key topics which are part of the NILE teaching and training ethos and approach – e.g. use of the CEFR; Making Thinking Visible; Learning Differences and Inclusion; Principled engagement with AI; Global Citizenship.
New partnerships (e.g. IH Lacunza; British Council Bogota) taking NILE reach beyond existing clients.
New courses (e.g. Learning Differences and Inclusion; Environmental Sustainability in Language Teaching; Global Citizenship in Language Education) support NILE ethos of innovation, responsibility and responsiveness.
New staffing structure, and new colleagues in 2023 / 2024 gives greater cross-department support, and dedicated responsibilities shared across wider teams.
Closer ties with INTO University Partnerships (now part of UK Edco arm) gives greater support with finance, HR and appraisal, resources, marketing, and business development. Also gives internal market for NILE programmes.
Strategic move to combine all local staff in one physical space, and use INTO University of East Anglia sister centre more for teaching delivery, has been great for team-building, understanding, and re-thinking resources.
Contributions to the wider language education community – NILE Members Area; Take Your Teaching Online free course; Guide to AI for academic integrity; Authentic Video in Language Teaching free course; free webinar and Insights panel discussion series.
Review of job roles and job descriptions in 2023 / 24 as part of restructure of Student Services (prompted by retirement of Registrar) and Academic Management team (prompted by planned and unplanned staff changes).

Section Three: Grading

Section A – Institutional Management and Governance

1. Management and Administration

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found standards in this category to be a Point of Excellence for the Language Centre. (Grade 1)

1.1   The language centre has been established and operates in compliance with all relevant international, national and local legislation.

1.2   There is an institutional mission which provides the foundation for the language centre's activities.

1.3   The leadership, management and organisational structure of the language centre support this mission and the achievement of its objectives.

1.4   There is a strategic approach to management with an awareness of the educational and economic environment.

1.5   There are effective administrative systems which support the delivery of the language centre's services.

1.1

The school submitted a statutory declaration confirming compliance with their legal obligations. A comprehensive Privacy Statement published on the institution's website covers the following areas: personal data collected, purpose of data collection, how it is shared (including a section on transferring data abroad), security of personal data, cookies, audio and video recordings and clients' right to access and update data stored by the institution. A separate, very detailed and comprehensive Cookies Policy is also published on the website. Copyright license was provided for inspection. Copyright of materials used by freelance trainers remains with the trainers. The online platform used by the institution is owned by a third party and was recommended by the parent company who also adopts the same platform. Shortly before the Eaquals Inspection, the institution underwent a successful copyright inspection.

1.2

The institution's aim "to deliver world-leading language teacher education face-to-face and online to education professionals globally" is presented in internal strategy documents. On the website, the following quotation can be found: *"A central part of the NILE ethos is our belief that through partnerships we combine experience and expertise, approaches and ideas, to provide excellence in language education and beyond."* The management believe that a mission statement may be limiting, so the lack of a published mission statement is a conscious choice on the part of the institution. Although there is no mission statement as such, it was very clear that all staff understand and fully identify with the mission and that their work is directed by it. The management often refer to a metaphor of "roots and wings" as a defining image for how they operate at all levels: providing solid foundations to staff as well as to clients which in turn enables them to become independent in what they do. This is a very powerful metaphor which could act as a public statement of the institution's mission in dealing with both internal and external clients. The Inspectors were impressed at the extent to which this metaphor is in fact the driving force behind the work of the management, permanent staff as well as freelance trainers.

The institution has its Environmental Policy. There is also a Green Policy & Targets document, which records progress and lists ways in which the environmental aims are being met (or worked towards). A member of administrative staff is a designated Green Lead for the institution. There is a section on Green Issues in the Trainer's Handbook. For information on implementation of the Environmental Policy, see category 12, Learning Environment, of this report.

1.3

The management structure is clear and appropriate to the size of the operation. The Inspectors were impressed at how efficiently a relatively small team of managers and other permanent staff deal with what can, at peak times, be a very large training operation. Management is ethical, transparent, supportive as well as inclusive. Staff are encouraged to and supported in taking responsibility for contributing to the development of the institution (see point about "roots and wings" metaphor above).

There is a comprehensive Equality and Diversity Policy which is communicated to all clients and stakeholders of the institution, and supported by the management.

Risk assessment is regularly carried out for a variety of situations, such as e.g. working from home, travelling abroad for work, host party, etc. Relevant risk assessment documents are available to staff. There are several clear and informative current documents with regard to crisis management, including posters for calling emergency services from locations used by the institution. Major incident teams' contact information is provided in a Major Incident Policy document. All aspects of dealing with a major incident are detailed in the document, including communication: with stakeholders and those affected / their families, supporting people, dealing with the media. Critical incident drills are conducted annually and there is a record of these.

1.4

There is evidence of short-term and long-term strategic planning informed by a very high level of awareness of the local as well as the global contexts. There are regular reviews and assessment of institutional strategy in place. The institutional strategy feeds into annual objective setting for staff. The Advisory Board and Ambassadors are regularly informed of all developments. The ability to successfully adapt to the sometimes fast changing market conditions and socio-political environment is being constantly demonstrated by the management and staff. The Inspectors have no hesitation in calling NILE a learning organisation at all levels of its functioning.

1.5

Administrative systems are effective and efficient. Client-facing staff are not only effective and efficient in what they do, but they also present a very personalised approach to communication with clients. Systems used provide for reliable, secure and accessible data collection and collation. There is effective communication and coordination between administrative staff and academic staff to ensure that clients' needs are met. There is clear evidence of very good coordination between management and administrative staff to ensure provision of high quality service to internal as well as external clients. The Inspectors noticed a focus on documenting processes and procedures, which allows the institution to function effectively even in the time of crisis or when key personnel are unavailable without notice.

Points of Excellence

This category is an area of excellence because of:

- a style of management which encourages a very high level of staff involvement, initiative and loyalty leading to flexibility in response to changes in the business environment and a high level of innovation at all levels of the organisation.
- clear understanding by and identification of staff with the institution's mission.
- very efficient administration services which successfully combine professionalism and effectiveness with a personal approach to clients.

Strong Recommendations

none

Recommendations

- Consider using the "roots and wings" metaphor as a visual mission statement in internal and external publicity and information materials.

Requirements

2. Quality Assurance

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found standards in this category to be a Point of Excellence for the Language Centre. (Grade 1)

2.1 There are systems and procedures to foster a culture of quality and to improve all aspects of the student experience through continuous evaluation, reflection and action.

2.2 The learning experience is fully monitored by management systems, including regular lesson observation, which are used to improve the quality of all services.

2.3 There are procedures which enable students, staff and other stakeholders to give regular feedback on all aspects of the learning experience, and this feedback is used to drive continuous improvement.

2.1

Great care is taken by the management to foster a culture of quality throughout the institution. Quality assurance measures are systematic and cover all aspects of the institution's functioning. There is a systemic approach to improving the quality of services offered at all levels of the institution, and all processes are regularly reviewed with a view to improving them (see 2.2 and 2.3 below). Inspectors were impressed by how far quality assurance measures were part of the fabric of the institution and to what extent the drive for continuous improvement is reflected throughout the operation.

NILE is a member of English UK and is accredited by the British Council for the teaching of English in the UK and by AQUEDUTO (Association for Quality Education and Training Online) for its online programmes.

2.2

All trainers are observed at least once a year. New trainers are observed in the first weeks of their work for NILE. Observations of training activity combine elements of quality assurance with professional development. Given that trainers who are freelance (and who have considerable experience in teacher training) may only be working a few weeks in a year, combining the developmental and quality assurance aspects is appropriate, and clearly works in this context, which is demonstrated by a short reaction time to issues indicated in formal or informal feedback. Observations which are focused specifically on quality assurance are conducted in case of complaints or when feedback from course participants indicates that there is an issue which needs to be dealt with. There is a clear pre-, during and post-observations procedure and there are records of observations which the Inspectors were able to inspect. Observation forms have a section where good practice to be disseminated is identified by the observer. This feeds into informal and formalised continuous professional development for not only individuals but the whole training staff as a group (see also Category 10, Staff Profile and Development, of this report).

All courses are regularly reviewed based on feedback from clients as well as trainers. Each course is assigned a course coordinator, who collects and reviews feedback on course content and organisation with a view to suggesting adjustments to courses. Course coordinators are the first point of contact for trainers and they monitor trainer performance by meeting regularly with trainers to discuss possible issues and / or potential changes to course content or delivery. The impression the Inspectors gained was of an ongoing discussion of the trainer's performance between the trainer and the course coordinator. In case of closed courses, course coordinators also meet with group leaders to gauge how the course is progressing and to review the participants' and sponsors' formal and informal feedback.

2.3

Qualitative feedback from clients is collected systematically, analysed by relevant teams and action is taken where there are elements for improvement. For courses of a duration of minimum 2 weeks, feedback is collected mid-week of the first week of the course ("early bird" feedback). Final feedback is collected on all courses. After being reviewed by Academic, Administration, Facilities and Student Support teams, appropriate

action is taken. Where relevant, a post-course meeting is called and notes are saved in a course folder. For tailor-made programmes, formal course reports (individual or for the whole group) may be compiled if required. This report is then taken into account in future courses by the same sponsor. Feedback on all facilities provided by NILE is collected separately, analysed and acted upon. Hosts are rated and a spreadsheet with the ratings is kept on file. Feedback is also collected from hosts. A section of the Trainer Handbook deals with collecting and sharing client feedback. Based on experience and research, the institution has made a conscious choice to collect qualitative, rather than quantitative feedback.

Weekly staff meetings and monthly Academic Management team meetings provide regular opportunities for collecting feedback from staff. In addition, it was clear for the Inspectors that there is also a lot of informal communication where feedback is provided.

Each year there is a summer review meeting which provides another opportunity to review feedback collected and further improve courses and other aspects of the operation. End-of-summer trainer feedback is collected from all summer trainers. The parent organisation, INTO, uses a staff survey platform to survey several aspects of the business, with a separate report for NILE, as well as measuring NILE view against that of the rest of the business.

It was clear for the Inspectors that feedback collected is treated as a source of valuable information about potential improvements which can be implemented for the benefit of clients and of the institution itself.

Points of Excellence

This category is an area of excellence because of:

- how systematic and comprehensive quality assurance procedures are.
- the extent to which quality assurance is integrated into the fabric of the institution at all its levels.
- the extent to which feedback is used to drive improvements across the institution.

Strong Recommendations

none

Recommendations

- Where relevant and appropriate, consider conducting more observations which could focus on course participants more than on trainers (visible learning vs training aims – see comment regarding learning outcomes in section 6, Teaching and Learning, of this report).

Requirements

3. Communication with Staff

Verdict statement:

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

3.1   The responsibilities, lines of accountability and channels of communication between members of management and staff are clearly defined and documented.

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

3.3   Information is available to staff about the language centre, its mission and any planned developments.

3.4   Information about Eaquals and its resources is available to staff.

3.1

All management and staff have transparent and comprehensive current job descriptions which accurately reflect their responsibilities and respective roles within the organisation. All lines of accountability are clear.

3.2

There is a very effective mix of formal and informal communication within, between and across teams, between staff and management, as well as with oversight bodies. Regular, minuted meetings are also an opportunity for staff to provide feedback to management and to other teams. Two-way communication with the parent company ensures effective exchange of information in the area of training opportunities, business strategy, feedback as well as business support. There are a number of communication channels in operation within the institution including email, WhatsApp groups, information channel via online course platform, zoom channels dedicated to various issues / areas. Communication channels are set up in such a way that teams can follow all their correspondence with clients which gives them the possibility of responding more efficiently (e.g if one team member has more tasks to complete, another may respond to a client) and at the same time it allows for monitoring the work of and supporting more junior staff members in real time. The open plan offices contribute to a high level of effectiveness in communication and the resulting ability to substitute for one another in case of emergency.

3.3

There is a comprehensive Employee Handbook which provides updated information on a range of relevant issues, such as employment issues (including an employee assistance programme), safeguarding, health and safety. Procedures such as disciplinary and grievance, equal opportunities, as well as personal harassment policy are also covered. In addition, the Handbook provides information on anti-bribery policy and whistle-blowing. The Handbook is regularly updated, and all updates are recorded in the initial section of the document. (see also Category 11, Staff Employment Terms, of this report). The Trainer's Handbook is equally comprehensive and covers all relevant academic and academic administration issues, as well as information useful for freelance trainers (e.g. invoicing). The Trainer's Handbook is updated annually based on feedback from summer courses as well as summer planning and evaluation meeting.

All policies in operation at NILE are published on and downloadable from the institution's website.

In the course of the inspection it became increasingly clear to the Inspectors that all staff, including freelance trainers, feel valued and respected, that they are fully informed with respect to all developments at the institution and contribute actively to new developments. This was clearly articulated in all meetings with staff. It was also evident that the type of leadership practised at the institution contributes to a very high level of staff loyalty and trust which translate into engagement and initiative (see also information on "roots and wings" in section 1, Management and Administration, of this report).

3.4

All staff were aware of the purpose and procedures of an Eaquals inspection. NILE staff are regularly involved in Eaquals projects and conferences, with the Director holding an elected post of Eaquals Chair. Eaquals Guarantees are posted throughout the premises. There is information about Eaquals in the institution's information and promotional materials, but not in the Employee and Trainer's Handbooks (except as part of the complaints procedure). (See category 8.2 for staff awareness of Eaquals resources.)

Points of Excellence

- 3.2 and 3.3 are excellent because there is evidence of a very strong element of ongoing consultation between staff and management as well as very effective communication within the institution which is facilitated by thoughtfully set up communication channels and opportunities. Staff display a very high level of engagement and take action which demonstrates their feeling of responsibility for the development of the institution.

Strong Recommendations

none

Recommendations

- Consider adding a separate section about Eaquals to the Employee and Trainer's Handbooks.

Requirements

4.   Communication with Students and Clients

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found standards in this category to be a Point of Excellence for the Language Centre. (Grade 1)

4.1   All promotional materials accurately describe the language centre's products and services.

4.2   Contractual information provided to students, clients and other stakeholders is accurate and complete, and expressed in easily understood language.

4.3   There are effective measures to respond to any concerns raised by students, clients or other stakeholders, including a formal complaints procedure.

4.4   Accredited members make information about Eaquals publicly available: they display the Eaquals Guarantees publicly, and use the Eaquals logo correctly.

4.1

The institution's promotional and information materials are comprehensive, clear and unambiguous. The institution's website is accessible, very user-friendly and exceedingly well organised. It contains all relevant information needed by a prospective client, with several documents (including NILE policies) downloadable for user's convenience. The website is very factual and focused on what NILE does, and the management themselves feel that it might benefit from more focus on the prospective clients and their needs. The Inspectors felt that this could at least partly be achieved by including a less factual, more human interest or emotionally appealing elements. The Inspectors felt that the "roots and wings" metaphor (see also section 1, Management and Administration, of this report) could be very useful here. The NILE Members Area of the website, which consists of a wide range of free teacher resources available to any teacher / trainer can be considered a PR tool for NILE. Social media are used creatively and responsibly. Branding on all promotional and information materials is completely consistent. It was clear for the Inspectors that a lot of thought and effort has been successfully put into making the information and promotional materials as informative and as aesthetic as possible. Promotional and information materials are also reviewed on a regular basis and improvements are made where they are felt to be necessary.

4.2

Contractual information for both face-to-face and online courses, including a privacy statement, is very clear, unambiguous and comprehensive. All necessary and relevant information is sent out to course participants in a digital format before the start of the course. In addition, a student course folder is provided on arrival. The information pack is comprehensive and covers all essential aspects of a course participant's experience, from course information to travelling and staying in the UK, health and safety issues, safeguarding, or the institution's green policy. There is also a "Who is who" information sheet with all permanent staff listed with their areas of responsibility. In the course of the Student Focus Group meeting, course participants confirmed that they received all relevant information prior to arriving in Norwich.

4.3

A transparent complaints procedure is available for course participants, with useful information on who to contact depending on the nature of enquiry or complaint. There is information on apealing the outcome to Director as well as English UK. There is no reference to the Eaquals complaints procedure or the Eaquals Ombudsperson in the document. All complaints are dealt with efficiently and swiftly. A log is kept of these, of the steps taken and of the outcome. Complaints are treated as another source of feedback, which drives changes and improvements at the institution, and staff are proactive in seeking out opportunities to prevent complaints whenever possible. (for more information about feedback, see section 2, Quality Assurance, of this report).

4.4

Information about Eaquals is available on the institution's website, and Eaquals Guarantees are posted throughout the building. The Eaquals logo is used in compliance with the official guidelines for members. Course participants who took part in the Student Focus Group meeting were aware of the purpose of the inspection and of Eaquals in general. One of them is a staff member in an Eaquals accredited institution. As stated above, there is no information about the Eaquals Ombudsperson available to clients.

Points of Excellence

The following are points of excellence in this category:

- considerable efforts which are taken to ensure that all promotional and information materials are readily accessible to potential candidates, that they are not only clear and comprehensive but also aesthetically appealing.
- the proactive approach of all staff to dealing with course participants' concerns or complaints which reflects their overall understanding of the value of feedback.

Strong Recommendations

none

Recommendations

- Consider using the "roots and wings" metaphor on the institution's website.

- Include in the Complaints procedure for course participants information about the Eaquals complaints procedure and the Eaquals Ombudsperson.

Requirements

Section B – Academic Management

5. Course Design and Supporting Systems

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found standards in this category to be a Point of Excellence for the Language Centre. (Grade 1)

5.1   There is a statement of the language centre's educational philosophy and its pedagogical approach.

5.2   Courses are designed to be coherent, relevant to student needs and aims and have specified learning objectives and content.

5.3   All language course programmes are specified by levels which refer to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), the Global Scale of English (GSE) or another internationally recognised language learning scale, and learning objectives for each level are related to the global descriptors of one of these scales.

5.4   There is an academic administration and coordination structure, with systems which ensure the efficient delivery of course programmes.

5.5   There are systems for teacher induction and support which ensure the effective implementation of the language centre's educational objectives.

5.1

The institution's educational philosophy and pedagogic approach are laid out in a document "Educational philosophy": "*It is a central tenet of NILE's ethos that teacher and trainer development programmes must be rooted in the local context, sensitive to socio-political, cultural, educational and professional backgrounds and expectations*". The application form contains a section on methodological approach, where the following explanation can be found: "*At NILE we believe in the centrality of the individual in the educational process: we teach people, not courses. As such we gather information about participant needs prior to the course and at the start in order to shape both the content to be delivered and the methods to be used. While the expertise of our trainers and the experience of our organisation has identified key areas of knowledge and skills that will likely be useful to participants seeking to develop in specific areas, we understand the diversity of contexts needs to be taken into account if the content is to be relevant and useful.*" There is also information in a downloadable brochure about student-focus in creating courses: "*Here at NILE we listen carefully to all of our participants, and offer training sessions that meet their specific requirements, using a combination of theory and practical application.*" In course design the institution follows the "roots and wings" principle, that is providing course participants with the foundation of knowledge and skills, with a clear focus on their institutional and cultural context, with a view to enabling them to use the knowledge and skills acquired in their work in home countries in the future. In the course of class observations as well as meetings with staff, the Inspectors were able to verify that the approach as defined above informs not only course development and delivery, but the work of all, including non-academic, staff.

5.2

There are written descriptions for all courses (online and face-to-face) offered at NILE, all specifying relevant and necessary information. In case of online courses, there is clear information about synchronous and asynchronous elements of the course. All course participants have access to an online platform for materials, extra-curricular activities and networking, and participants have access to NILE's ELT e-library through the platform. All training courses contain an element of language development. For more information on dealing with the language development element in training practice, see Category 6, Teaching and Learning, of this report. An initial needs analysis is carried out by means of an online pre-course questionnaire. This is shared with the Academic team / course coordinator. There is also needs analysis conducted in the first session of the course. The results of needs analyses inform the final shape of the course both on the level of content and delivery. This co-construction of courses allows for a more accurate response to course participants' needs. In case of closed-group programmes, sponsors and stakeholders are involved in the needs analysis process; in addition, individual participant profiles are taken into account with a view to designing a relevant and appropriate training course. All course programmes are monitored and reviewed regularly based on feedback from clients as well as staff. In the course of the inspection, the Inspectors were able to understand the whole

cycle of designing, piloting and revising a training course leading to a creation of training which is not only relevant for the future participants, but also financially viable.

5.3

Where relevant, course levels or entry language levels are specified within the CEFR.

5.4

Academic management is adequate to the size of the organisation (both in high and low seasons) and very effective. The system of assigning a course coordinator to each course makes academic management very hands-on and responsive to the immediate needs of a given trainer teaching a particular course. This type of approach to academic management translates clearly into high levels of support for trainers and consequently a high level of engagement on the part of course participants. This was confirmed in the course of Teacher Focus and Student Focus group meetings. Academic administration systems in place are effective. For both online and face-to-face courses there are registers of course participant attendance. Face-to-face courses have paper registers where last names of participants are not provided for reasons of personal data protection. There are records of work completed by trainers, and materials from courses are regularly uploaded onto the online platform used by the institution (see information above). Course participants have access to these for up to 6 months after completing a course.

Support systems for trainers delivering online courses are excellent. Trainers receive a thorough induction into NILE Online courses, and since they are involved in the creation and review of these courses, the support they receive can be accurately targeted. The NILE Online team is always available for help if needed. Timetables for all courses are part of the course description. Where changes are made to the provisional timetable based on needs analysis, the final timetable is shared with course participants.

5.5

All new staff receive a thorough onboarding. The most important issues are then revisited with staff every year. Induction for all staff includes a strong element of safeguarding (see also section 10, Student Services). A Trainer's Handbook is a very comprehensive document including academic as well as academic administration information and guidance (see also Category 3, Communication with Staff). Based on inspected documentation as well as meetings with staff and freelance trainers, it was clear for the Inspectors that trainers receive excellent support from the management as well as from their peers. One of the reasons given by the trainers for coming back to lead courses year after year was the fact that there is a culture of professional support and collegiality present throughout the institution.

Points of Excellence

This category is an area of excellence because of:

- the clarity, scope and relevance of the institution's educational philosophy to its clients and staff.
- the fact that educational philosophy informs the work of all staff, including non-academic staff.
- coherence of course design and delivery.
- a thorough, cohesive and at the same time flexible approach to academic management which results in excellent levels of support provided to trainers and consequently a high level of course participant engagement and motivation.

Recommendations

Requirements

None

6. Teaching and Learning

Verdict statement:

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

6.1   The pedagogical approach and methods reflect the language centre's stated educational philosophy.

6.2   Lessons are planned with reference to the learning objectives, and the learning and motivational needs of individuals and the group.

6.3   The quality of teaching consistently provides opportunities for effective language learning.

6.4   The opportunities offered for learning are varied, making good use of available technology and resources.

6.5   Students are given guidance on how to increase their effectiveness both as language learners and cross-cultural communicators in the classroom and beyond it.

In the course of the inspection the Inspectors were able to observe all 7 trainers carrying out training on the two inspection days. Each of the courses running at the time of the inspection was a 2-week teacher development course, each with a different focus (e.g. Teaching Teenagers / Language Improvement for Teachers / Environmental Sustainability / etc). The first observation was carried out by both Inspectors together for standardisation purposes. One trainer was observed twice, the remaining 6 trainers were each observed once. Observations lasted between 20 and 40 minutes.

6.1 & 6.5

All observed extracts showed consistency with the "roots and wings" approach, i.e. providing course participants with foundations so that they can become independent and use the knowledge and skills they've acquired in their work contexts in their home countries.

6.2

For all observations the Inspectors were provided with session plans and were given access to class registers and the learning plan for the entirety of each 2-week course. The session plans provided varied in terms of level of detail: some were quite detailed, some fairly general. Each session plan included learning outcomes for this particular session. In most session plans there was no information about how trainers intend to deal with the language development element of the course. It was not clear for the Inspectors to what extent course participants realised how much language focus there was in the sessions.

6.3

The Inspectors are aware that all trainers are experts in their respective fields. The Inspectors understand that in the types of courses they observed input may need to constitute a significant part of a session since it is both knowledge and skills that the course participants expect to acquire in the course of training.

In all sessions observed the trainers had clearly developed an excellent rapport with the course participants, and the level of student engagement was generally high. All sessions had a good pace, and where pace was varied in the extracts observed, it was done in what was clearly a principled way. The Inspectors saw some session extracts in which work was carried out in plenary mode only. It was not clear from the session plans if this was later balanced out by more interactive and student-focused session fragments, as there was no information about interaction provided in session plans. All trainers had very good voice projection and delivery was very clear. Where there was group- or pair-work, it was monitored effectively and trainers provided a good level of support both in terms of task and, if necessary, in terms of language. Technology was used well and it was clear that the trainers were comfortable with the online tools used at the institution, and that technology is used in a principled way (i.e. methodology drives the use of technology rather than vice

versa). Classroom management was effective and efficient. Instructions were generally given in a transparent fashion, and time limits were given where appropriate for group tasks. In some of the observed extracts there was a lot of movement which was used effectively to demonstrate or practise points focused on. The Inspectors saw some instances of language development focus. Each trainer had their own way of dealing with language issues coming up in the course of the session. Feedback on tasks as well as on language was always informative, appropriate and sensitive.

6.4 & 6.5

Trainers drew course participants' attention to resources which they had at their disposal at the institution (on site and online) at the time of the course and for up to 6 months after the course. In the Student Focus group meeting trainers were praised for finding and directing course participants to the exact literature which was relevant to their current or future professional needs. All sessions observed demonstrated that trainers are fully aware of course participants' diversity and that they often addressed the course participants' individual needs. The Inspectors also observed in session samples as well as in session plans frequent and fully appropriate focus on intercultural communication and competences, including drawing on participants' own experience and knowledge.

Given that teacher development courses may be seen by course participants as a model to follow in their own teaching practice, the following are issues which the institution may consider focusing on in future CPD for trainers:

- formulating learning outcomes: although in most sessions these were formulated appropriately, in some session plans they were formulated as activities to be done in the session
- level of interactivity of input: in some instances input provided by trainers was almost completely teacher-centered
- student-student interaction: in some sessions the Inspectors felt that trainers missed opportunities for authentic student-student interaction e.g. by collecting answers to a task in plenary going round the room
- language development focus: although language development is one of the focal points of each course, it was not always made visible to the course participants. The Inspectors are aware that the management are planning a training session which would focus on different ways of dealing with emergent language.
- instructions and explanations: in some sessions observed instructions were too complicated and long; in some cases long explanations were given where elicitation would be far more appropriate

Points of Excellence

- 6.4 is excellent because all teaching materials are selected and / or created for relevance and to suit course participants needs on an individual and group level based in part on needs analysis which precedes the course. In addition, trainers are extremely helpful in finding relevant literature for course participants.
- 6.5 is excellent because:
  - there was a high degree of focus on intercultural communication skills and competences in the sessions observed (and in session plans inspected).
  - teaching observed focused on developing course participants' independence in using the knowledge and skills acquired during the course.

Strong Recommendations

- **In future CPD for trainers, focus on the following issues:**
  - **formulating learning outcomes**
  - **level of interactivity of input**
  - **making language development focus more visible for course participants**

Recommendations

- In future CPD for trainers, consider focusing on the following issues:
    - student-student interaction (how to utilise all opportunities for authentic interaction between course participants).
    - trainer language (instructions and alternatives to explanation).

Requirements

7. Assessment and Certification

Verdict statement:

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

7.1 Assessment content and procedures reflect the stated mission and methodological approach.

7.2 Assessment content and procedures are aligned with the course learning objectives and with students needs.

7.3 Systems for assessing language competence provide consistent, reliable, and fair means of evaluating progress and achievement.

7.4 Formative assessment is used to provide students with feedback and advice on their learning.

7.5 Student reports and certificates provide a reliable statement of student achievements in terms of the level and course learning objectives.

7.1, 7.2, 7.3

The institution's placement and assessment procedures are as follows :

a. for open-enrolment courses where there is a stipulated minimum language level, participants self-assess as part of the pre-course questionnaire
b. if placement is necessary for a given course type, published diagnostic tests are used
c. for closed courses, if requested, tailor-made assessment materials are created in liaison with the sponsor (organiser) in order to provide assessment of and / or feedback for the course participants.
d. Some teacher development courses finish with an assignment which enables course participants to use knowledge and skills gained to develop action plans to be implemented on their return to their home countries. Many of the face-to face courses end with microteaching or presentations of an aspect of the course, and online courses have an optional end-of-course assignment.
e. There are clear, written criteria for the end-of-course assignments; these are shared with course participants.

All assessment procedures are appropriate to the course types, and target course participants, and in this sense they are valid and in line with the institution's approach to teaching / training. Since placement, if at all needed, is conducted online, there is no need for large-scale placement testing on course participants' arrival.

7.4

Formative assessment in the form of micro-teaching followed by feedback to course participants is used regularly as part of teacher development courses.

7.5

All students receive an end of course certificate giving course dates, hours and content. Individual or group course reports for closed groups are produced on request. The report is very detailed, with sections relating to the course programme, participants' motivation, feedback from participants and suggested changes for the next iteration of the training, as well as welfare issues (accommodation).

External language exams are offered to closed groups only. Trinity Certificate for Practising Teachers is offered as an add-on to most face-to-face and online courses.

Strong Recommendations

none

Recommendations
none

Requirements

8. Academic Resources

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found standards in this category to be a Point of Excellence for the Language Centre. (Grade 1)

8.1   Core and supplementary course materials are appropriate for the course types taught, the learning objectives and the pedagogical approach.

8.2   There is a system for monitoring the use of resources, together with advice to teachers and students about their effective application.

8.3   To ensure their relevance and quality, there are systems to review, update and develop resources as required .

8.4   Learning resources are available, accessible, and implemented as appropriate.

8.1

All materials used are appropriate and relevant in the context of courses offered. Course participants and trainers have access to a very impressive ELT library on site, as well as a constantly updated large ELT e-library. A section of the institution's website, NILE Members' Area, offers open access to multiple resources for teachers, independent of whether they have participated in courses at the institution or not. All courses include online access to course materials as well as extra-curricular activities (for more information on online social programme see category 9, Student Services, of this report). Participants have access to NILE's ELT e-library through the online platform (Brightspace). Course trainers use materials which are developed by them or selected and adapted according to course participants' needs. The Inspectors saw some very creative and highly engaging materials used in the observed extracts. Acknowledgements are made on copies of materials from other sources.

8.2

Both online and on site libraries are very well organised and access is intuitive. There is a library catalogue kept in an excel file, which facilitates resource searches and cross-referencing of materials. Teaching / learning materials which are part of the course are uploaded progressively into Brightspace which facilitates access to relevant materials for course participants. All course participants have access to the NILE Members' Area (area of the website which offers open access to teaching resources). There is a very accessible library guide for students which is part of the Welcome Pack. Details of access and use of the teaching and learning materials are laid out in the course files, and further explained at the start of the course. Eaquals resources (such as AMCF or TD FRAM) are embedded in relevant NILE courses and the trainer development programme.

8.3

There is a Resources Policy in place which focuses on sustainability and meeting internal and external customer needs. The overall responsibility for the implementation of the Resources Policy lies with Facilities Manager in liaison with a relevant manager or staff member. The institution seeks feedback from participants and trainers on available resources and these are updated accordingly and in line with relevant budgets.

8.4

All trainers observed were aware of resources available and they make excellent use of these resources in their courses. Where necessary or requested, they direct course participants to resources relevant to their particular context or immediate need. In the course of several classroom observations the Inspectors noted references to uploaded course materials. These are easily accessible for course participants. Where necessary, hard copies are provided as well.   In the case of online courses, there is excellent guidance for course participants on navigating the course as well as the relevant online resources.   Materials are used in accordance with relevant copyright regulations (for more information on copyright see Category 1, Management and Administration, of this report).

Points of Excellence

This category is an area of excellence because of:

- the size, organisation and accessibility of both physical library and e-library, as well as a very effective and principled approach to maintaining and updating the libraries.
- the care taken to ensure that materials used are interesting, engaging, topical, current and relevant to course participants' needs.
- an open access resource centre (NILE Members' Area) available to any teacher, independent of whether they have been the institution's client or not.

Strong Recommendations

none

Recommendations

Requirements

Section C – Student Services

9. Student Services

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found standards in this category to be a Point of Excellence for the Language Centre. (Grade 1)

9.1   Information and advice are available to students and other stakeholders throughout the course.

9.2   Welfare support, including safeguarding arrangements where appropriate, is provided to students.

9.3   There are effective systems for administering and monitoring leisure programmes, if provided.

9.4   There are effective systems for administering and monitoring accommodation provision, if provided.

9.1

There are procedures in place for dealing with course participants' queries, and information is provided to clients on who to turn to with what type of issue. A comprehensive document outlining terms and conditions, which is published on the NILE website, includes a section devoted to student absences as well as expectations in terms of student behaviour.

Students under the age of 18 and their parents sign a Student Safety and Behaviour form which includes information about attendance. There is also relevant information included in the course file which all course participants receive on arrival. For trainers' information there is a section in the Trainer's Handbook which provides guidance in this area.

There is a video tutorial for online resources, and the designated librarian is identified in the introductory section of the resources part of the website.

9.2

All staff demonstrate a high level of care for student welfare, which was confirmed in the Student Focus group meeting. The Student Services office is easy to find and students are directed to it on the first day of their respective courses.

A very comprehensive set of detailed and very clearly laid out safeguarding documents has been produced by the institution under the "Safeguarding and Child Protection" umbrella. These are internally cross-referenced, as well as linked to the website. The institutional safeguarding polices are made available to all parties. There are also hard copies available of the safeguarding documents, including report templates. These documents can also be obtained from the Registrar who is a member of the Safeguarding team, led by the Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP). The DSP is currently the Student Support Manager, with the Deputy Director having overall responsibility for safeguarding.

Contact details and location on the premises of all team members can be found in the overarching safeguarding policy. The NILE emergency number is also listed as a contact possibility when team members cannot be reached. The whole Safeguarding Team undergo regular training in order to keep their knowledge and skills up to date. Refresher sessions for staff are carried out annually, and safeguarding information is additionally provided to trainers before the start of a course. All safeguarding policies are reviewed on an annual basis by The Safer Programme, Norfolk. Safeguarding and Child Protection documentation has very comprehensive coverage and is in line with the relevant legislation and standards. It is accessible and necessary information can be retrieved with ease. The Inspectors saw evidence of implementation of the Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures. Student support and safeguarding staff are clearly identified close to the entrance of the building.

There are appropriate and documented procedures in place for safeguarding and supervision of students who are under 18. The institution has developed a very comprehensive and accessible „NILE Online Safety – Working with under 18's online" document, which is part of the Safeguarding and Child Protection pack. Students and staff working online are provided with a code of conduct before the start of the course, which they sign. Parental consent must also be given. Parents and students receive a link to video guidance detailing how to remain safe online. Staff are provided with a checklist of safety measures they must implement for live

sessions. A NILE member of staff trained in Safer Recruitment takes part in all interviews for teaching and non-teaching positions which involve working with students under the age of 18.

9.3

There are staff responsible for organising and promoting social events for course participants. The Social programme is interesting, engaging and varied. The Social programme is organised not only for on-site courses, but for online courses as well. The Inspectors were impressed with the idea of providing online course participants with an opportunity to participate in online events, as well as with the range of activities offered. These are not only leisure options, but an excellent way of ensuring that online course participants feel that they are not studying alone, and that all attendees on a given course are in fact a team.

There is a comprehensive and very clear document detailing the NILE off-site visits policy and procedures. The document is part of the Safeguarding and Child Protection pack. Risk assessments are carried out for off-site events. There is a risk assessment form to be completed by the trip leader before any visit outside the classroom and handed to the designated Health and Safety Officer. The Inspectors were able to inspect an internal record of risk assessment procedures carried out in 2023 in the form of a helpful checklist with notes, as well as insurance policies for external service providers.

9.4

There is an excellent, clear and comprehensive section on accommodation options on the institution's website (incl. FAQs and a map of residential accommodation); a separate section targets potential homestay hosts, and it is also clear, comprehensive and written in factual language. There are downloadable materials for potential hosts. Terms and conditions for hosts are very clear, informative and comprehensive.

The institution is currently successfully rebuilding its hosts database. There are clear criteria for host selection in place. It was clear to the Inspectors that the accommodation staff have built a very good working relationship with the hosts, and that any issues arising (both raised by students and by hosts) are dealt with efficiently, effectively and in a sensitive way. Host families are visited regularly (once every 2 years), with regular contact between visits (including social events for hosts). There is a checklist for host visits in place. A comprehensive host database contains information on all relevant welfare and legal issues (including disabled access), with indication when the next inspection visit by accommodation staff will take place. The level of detail of information on the database makes matching course participants and hosts very efficient. There are effective procedures for collecting feedback from students and from hosts; feedback is analysed and acted on immediately (see also Category 2, Quality Assurance, of this report).

In the course of the inspection two hosts (one currently hosting for NILE) were interviewed. Both conversations confirmed very professional yet friendly and effective cooperation between the institution and hosts. Residential accommodation (rented by NILE) was inspected by one Inspector and found to accurately reflect information presented in the institution's promotional and information materials. Feedback with regard to residential accommodation is collected and any problems arising are dealt with efficiently and effectively in liaison with the staff representing the owner.

Points of Excellence

This category is an area of excellence because of:

- The exceptional care taken to provide all necessary and relevant information before arrival and on arrival in a sustainable way.
- the range, quality, accessibility of safeguarding and child protection documentation and procedures as well as the way they are implemented throughout the institution.
- the level of staff awareness of student welfare and safeguarding issues.
- an excellent range of face-to-face as well as online leisure activities which promote intercultural awareness and provide a sense of belonging for online course participants.
- exceptionally good information about accommodation options, highly effective and efficient procedures for placing course participants and for dealing with issues regarding accommodation.

Strong Recommendations

none

Recommendations

Requirements

Section D – Staff

10. Staff Profile and Development

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found standards in this category to be a Point of Excellence for the Language Centre. (Grade 1)

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

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

10.3   There is a formal framework to ensure appropriate continuous professional development for all staff.

10.4   Conclusions from regular class observation are used developmentally to inform performance reviews and the teacher development programme.

10.1

All staff and managers have relevant and appropriate qualifications and experience to carry out their duties effectively, with a significant proportion of staff with qualifications and experience well above basic level. Freelance trainers working for NILE are all very experienced teacher trainers. All staff receive training in safeguarding and child protection (see also Category 9, Student Services, of this report). There is a Safer Recruitment Policy in place, which is part of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Pack.

10.2

Every new member of staff receives a thorough onboarding, which includes essential safeguarding information. Since freelance trainers may only work at NILE for a brief period in any given year, a review of the most important processes, policies and procedures is carried out annually. In addition, a comprehensive Trainer's Handbook and Employee Handbook provide further guidance and support in key academic and non-academic matters. There is a very high level of effective formalised and informal support for new staff, including shared email addresses (see also Category 5, Communication with Staff, of this report). The Inspectors were impressed with the level of care and support which junior staff members receive from the whole team, not just their line managers.

Professional development review is carried out for all staff in annual cycles, which include setting objectives, monitoring them and reviewing the degree to which they have been achieved at the end of the annual cycle. Between 2019 and July 2024, NILE used its parent organisation's appraisal system (Performance Coaching) operated through an online platform called Workday. The system was used throughout the parent organisation. It is based on clear procedures with deadlines in annual cycles. Inspectors were able to sample professional development review documents. From August 1st 2024 both NILE and the parent company INTO have moved to a new platform, Cezanne HR. As this is a new system, its impact was not yet clear at the time of the inspection. Although the system used prior to the inspection was not designed with a training organisation such as NILE in mind, it was evident that its limitations were creatively overcome to ensure full benefits for the staff under performance review, and its positive elements were fully taken advantage of.

10.3

Part of the appraisal process is identifying areas where further training is needed from an individual and / or institutional perspective (see also Category 5.4). All staff benefit from regular training opportunities both within and outside the institution (e.g. training events offered by industry associations and / or local providers). Although trainers work freelance, and at times for short periods in a year only, there is a CPD programme designed for them as well. The programme's title is "For Us By Us" and it consists of webinars run by staff or freelance trainers themselves, which deal with issues either coming out of classroom observations,

or requested by trainers. The fact that the institution provides CPD opportunities to these freelance trainers encourages a feeling of being part of the NILE team. This was confirmed in the Teacher Focus group meeting. Participation in professional conferences and other professional events (e.g. Eaquals conferences and projects), as well as in consultancy opportunities in other countries is also recorded and treated as further professional development opportunities for staff and managers. The institution offers financial support for staff to participate in training events or courses. Currently a staff member receives financial support to complete an MA programme. Based on meetings conducted, the Inspectors gained an impression of an environment where professional development is not a separate organisational process or procedure, but a part of the organisation's fabric. Professional development is continuous and often takes on the form of spontaneous conversations or activities which are not directed but happen because they meet the developmental needs of individuals or groups.

10.4

There is a programme of regular observations in place at the institution. There are clear and comprehensive observation guidelines in the Trainer's Handbook. All trainers are observed at least once a year. New trainers will be observed within their first month at NILE by a member of the Academic Management team. There are clear pre-, during and post-observation procedures in place. An observation will generally last between 20 and 60 minutes. A standardised observation sheet is used to record the pre-observation discussion, the observer's notes during the observation, as well as post-observation feedback and reflection. There is a section of the observation sheet which identifies good practice to be disseminated. This may then be used in the context of CPD for all trainers. A management observation will be carried out in case of a complaint; in this case, the aim of the observation will be to provide clarification and / or support with an issue a trainer may be struggling with. Trainers may also request an observation for individual CPD or for any other reason.

Given the organisational setup, the approach to classroom observations where quality assurance and developmental observations are not separated is reasonable and it was obvious to the Inspectors that it is effective in this particular context where observations are carried out in training sessions run by very experienced and carefully selected teacher trainers (see also section 2, Quality Assurance, of this report).

Peer observations are encouraged but they are not formalised and neither are they formally recorded, although trainers are requested to notify one of the Senior Trainers when they carry out a peer observation. An opportunity to observe other trainers in action are Wednesday afternoon sessions which are open to all course participants, which means that not all trainers are teaching at the same time. Since courses offered at the institution are largely teacher training and development courses, course participants who are practising teachers might be encouraged to conduct peer observations of their trainers to further increase the benefits of the course for their professional development.

Points of Excellence

This category is an area of excellence because:

- there are a high proportion of staff with qualifications and experience well above basic level.
- performance review is carried out in a cycle which promotes professional development and provides an excellent level of support for staff.
- there is coherence and cohesion between all elements of CPD.
- substantial CPD opportunities are provided for trainers who may only work for the institution for short periods in any given year, thus creating a feeling of being part of a NILE team for freelance trainers
- financial support is available for individual professional development .
- there is a drive towards using all opportunities (internal and external) for professional development throughout the institution (including freelance trainers).


Strong Recommendations

none

Recommendations

- consider introducing a record of peer observations which would enable identifying good practice to be disseminated.
- consider encouraging course participants who are practising teachers to carry out peer observations of trainers to further encourage reflective practice and for teachers to benefit even more fully from their courses.

Requirements
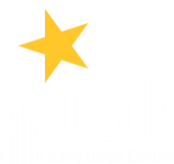
11. Staff Employment Terms

Verdict statement:

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

- 11.1 All staff hold current employment contracts; these conform to local requirements, as confirmed by the statutory declaration of the language centre.
- 11.2 The terms and conditions of employment offered to staff are fair and conform to local requirements.
- 11.3 Grievance and disciplinary procedures are in place and known to staff.

11.1

There is a Recruitment Policy in place, with a strong element of Safer Recruitment (Safeguarding and Child Protection). The Policy provides details on the recruitment process, equal opportunities statement, complaints procedure, as well as information about induction procedures, and other post-recruitment matters. All staff have written contracts which comply with national labour legislation, are fair and transparent.

11.2

Terms and conditions of employment are clear and fair and there are salary scales in place. Given the nature and timing of courses offered by the institution, there is an appropriate mix of permanent staff and freelance consultants (trainers). There is stability and continuity in terms of permanent staff, as well as freelance trainers cooperating with the institution. Clear and comprehensive written procedures facilitate transition in case of staff moving to different positions within the organisation or new staff being employed.

11.3

Grievance and disciplinary procedures are communicated to all staff in writing and are clear. Staff are aware of these and know where to locate them. Grievance procedure specifies the possibility to appeal to the accreditation bodies (English UK and Eaquals), but does not refer to the Eaquals Ombudsperson.

Strong Recommendations

- **ensure that there is a clear reference to the Eaquals Ombudsperson in the grievance procedure.**

Recommendations

Requirements

Section E – Learning Environment and Facilities

12. Learning Environment

Verdict statement:

The Inspectors found standards in this category to be a Point of Excellence for the Language Centre. (Grade 1)

12.1 The teaching and study environment meets the requirements of course programmes and students.

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

12.3 All electronic and other equipment is readily accessible and well maintained; electronic connectivity is reliable and available for staff and students.

12.4 Arrangements are in place to protect the health and ensure the safety of students and staff as well as to promote care for the environment.

12.1 & 12.2

In 2012, NILE opened its new building Delta House. For a detailed description of Delta House, see p. 8 of this report. At peak times training rooms are rented at Masonic Halls (5 minutes' walk from Delta House) and at INTO University of East Anglia, where residential accommodation is also located.

All offices, communal spaces and classrooms are well-lit, spacious and airy, very tastefully decorated and very well maintained. There is air conditioning in the building. There is a terrace on the first floor of Delta House which provides extra space for relaxation or work and is also used for social functions. All classrooms are of adequate size. They are all appropriately equipped both in terms of technology as well as stationery. Offices have an open plan layout which facilitates communication within teams without compromising the ability to focus on individual tasks. The overall impression is of a very welcoming space for both internal and external clients. Delta House has provisions for disabled access to the building. Since there is no lift in the building, if necessary, a course can be run on the ground floor, where there is also a disabled toilet. There is a sufficient number of toilets in the building which are kept clean. In female toilets there are pink boxes with free female sanitary products. Some toilet cubicles on the first and second floor are equipped with extra railings for persons with mobility issues.

There are notice boards with various types of information throughout the building. They are located at points of high visibility and information is kept up-to-date and clear.

12.3

All equipment is properly maintained and connectivity throughout the building is very good. The online learning platform used by the institution (Brightspace) offers a range of tools to support delivery of online courses. The synchronous elements of online courses are carried out in Zoom, which has a range of delivery tools. The layout of online courses is very clear and intuitive, as well as very attractive. There are accessibility options built into the course design. Online course participants are offered an introduction to the platform which is recorded and available as part of the course for future reference or in case a course participant could not take part in the introduction session live. In addition, there are guidance tools built into each course which further facilitate use of the platform.

12.4

There is a set of comprehensive health and safety procedures at the institution. An external contractor has been retained to provide appropriate guidance to the institution in health and safety matters. The Health and safety policy document is regularly reviewed (review dates and outcomes are recorded). The operational side of the health and safety policy is also monitored, and the adequacy of health and safety procedures is reassessed on a regular basis. A number of administrative and academic staff have received training in fire safety (fire

marshal and live extinguisher training), as well as first aid training. First aiders are identified to course participants. The Inspectors were able to inspect a fire safety audit conducted by an external organisation. There is appropriate emergency signage throughout the building and emergency exits are clearly marked. Evacuation routes are posted throughout the building. Fire equipment is visible and easily accessible. There are maintenance records for fire equipment. There is sufficient provision of first aid kits throughout the building and they are appropriately stocked, with provisions for regular checks of their content. According to local legislation, the institution has conducted legionella risk assessments throughout buildings used.

It was clear for the Inspectors that the Green Policy (see section 1, Management and Administration, of this report) is a living document which informs decisions and actions throughout the institution. Some examples of implementation of Green Policy are: digitalisation of information packs for course participants and course data files, use of QR codes, Padlets and Google docs for information sharing, use of reusable water bottles instead of plastic cups.

Points of Excellence

This category is an area of excellence because:

- the physical and online learning environments are exceptionally attractive, well-designed and both provide accessibility options for persons with disabilities.
- there is a very high level of awareness of health and safety issues and emergency procedures are well developed and regularly practised.
- there is a Green Policy which not only sets environmental aims but helps track achievement of these.

Strong Recommendations

none

Recommendations

Requirements

Section Four: Summary

Areas which have not been inspected in this inspection and need to be included in the next one:

General language courses

Summary of Points of Excellence

Section A – Institutional Management and Governance	
1	Management and Administration
	This category is an area of excellence because: • a style of management which encourages a very high level of staff involvement, initiative and loyalty leading to flexibility in response to changes in the business environment and a high level of innovation at all levels of the organisation. • clear understanding by and identification of staff with the institution's mission. • very efficient administration services which successfully combine professionalism and effectiveness with a personal approach to clients.**Error! Reference source not found.Error! Reference source not found.Error! Reference source not found.**
2	Quality Assurance
	This category is an area of excellence because: • how systematic and comprehensive quality assurance procedures are. • the extent to which quality assurance is integrated into the fabric of the institution at all its levels. • the extent to which feedback is used to drive improvements across the institution.
3	Communication with Staff
	• 3.2 and 3.3 are excellent because there is evidence of a very strong element of ongoing consultation between staff and management as well as very effective communication within the institution which is facilitated by thoughtfully set up communication channels and opportunities. Staff display a very high level of engagement and take action which demonstrates their feeling of responsibility for the development of the institution.
4	Communication with Students and Clients
	This category is an area of excellence because: • considerable efforts which are taken to ensure that all promotional and information materials are readily accessible to potential candidates, that they are not only clear and comprehensive but also aesthetically appealing. • the proactive approach of all staff to dealing with course participants' concerns or complaints which reflects their overall understanding of the value of feedback.
Section B – Academic Management	
5	Course Design and Supporting Systems
	This category is an area of excellence because: • the clarity, scope and relevance of the institution's educational philosophy to its clients and staff. • the fact that educational philosophy informs the work of all staff, including non-academic staff. • coherence of course design and delivery.

		• a thorough, cohesive and at the same time flexible approach to academic management which results in excellent levels of support provided to trainers and consequently a high level of course participant engagement and motivation.
6	Teaching and Learning	

		• 6.4 is excellent because all teaching materials are selected and / or created for relevance and to suit course participants needs on an individual and group level based in part on needs analysis which precedes the course. In addition, trainers are extremely helpful in finding relevant literature for course participants.
		• 6.5 is excellent because:
		  o there was a high degree of focus on intercultural communication skills and competences in the sessions observed (and in session plans inspected).
		  o teaching observed focused on developing course participants' independence in using the knowledge and skills acquired during the course.

8	Academic Resources	
		This category is an area of excellence because: • the size, organisation and accessibility of both physical library and e-library, as well as a very effective and principled approach to maintaining and updating the libraries. • the care taken to ensure that materials used are interesting, engaging, topical, current and relevant to course participants' needs. • an open access resource centre (NILE Members' Area) available to any teacher, independent of whether they have been the institution's client or not.

Section C – Student Services

9	Student Services	
		This category is an area of excellence because: • The exceptional care taken to provide all necessary and relevant information before arrival and on arrival in a sustainable way. • the range, quality, accessibility of safeguarding and child protection documentation and procedures as well as the way they are implemented throughout the institution. • the level of staff awareness of student welfare and safeguarding issues. • an excellent range of face-to-face as well as online leisure activities which promote intercultural awareness and provide a sense of belonging for online course participants. • exceptionally good information about accommodation options, highly effective and efficient procedures for placing course participants and for dealing with issues regarding accommodation.

Section D – Staff

10	Staff Profile and Development	
		This category is an area of excellence because: • there are a high proportion of staff with qualifications and experience well above basic level. • performance review is carried out in a cycle which promotes professional development and provides an excellent level of support for staff. • there is coherence and cohesion between all elements of CPD. • substantial CPD opportunities are provided for trainers who may only work for the institution for short periods in any given year, thus creating a feeling of being part of a NILE team for freelance trainers • financial support is available for individual professional development .

	there is a drive towards using all opportunities (internal and external) for professional development throughout the institution (including freelance trainers).
Section E – Learning Environment and Facilities	
12	Learning Environment
	This category is an area of excellence because: • the physical and online learning environments are exceptionally attractive, well-designed and both provide accessibility options for persons with disabilities. • there is a very high level of awareness of health and safety issues and emergency procedures are well developed and regularly practised. • there is a Green Policy which not only sets environmental aims but helps track achievement of these.

Summary of Recommendations

	Section A – Institutional Management and Governance
1	Management and Administration
	• Consider using the "roots and wings" metaphor as a visual mission statement in internal and external publicity and information materials.
2	Quality Assurance
	• Where relevant and appropriate, consider conducting more observations which could focus on course participants more than on trainers (visible learning vs training aims – see comment regarding learning outcomes in section 6, Teaching and Learning, of this report).
3	Communication with Staff
	• Consider adding a separate section about Eaquals to the Employee and Trainer's Handbooks.
4	Communication with Students and Clients
	• Consider using the "roots and wings" metaphor on the institution's website. • Include in the Complaints procedure for course participants information about the Eaquals complaints procedure and the Eaquals Ombudsperson.
	Section B – Academic Management
6	Teaching and Learning

	• **In future CPD for trainers, focus on the following issues:**
	   o **formulating learning outcomes**
	   o **level of interactivity of input**
	   o **making language development focus more visible for course participants**
	• In future CPD for trainers, consider focusing on the following issues:

	o student-student interaction (how to utilise all opportunities for authentic interaction between course participants). o trainer language (instructions and alternatives to explanation).
Section D – Staff	
10	Staff Profile and Development
	• consider introducing a record of peer observations which would enable identifying good practice to be disseminated. • consider encouraging course participants who are practising teachers to carry out peer observations of trainers to further encourage reflective practice and for teachers to benefit even more fully from their courses.
11	Staff Employment Terms
	• **ensure that there is a clear reference to the Eaquals Ombudsperson in the grievance procedure.**

We confirm that this report is based on evidence found at the time of the Inspection and that our opinion is based on our professional judgement.

DATE: 30-08-2024

Ania Kolbuszewska
Reporting inspector

Galya Mateva
Co-inspector

Angela Signorastri
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