

Regulatory case report: King Stage Limited withdraws application to register with the Office for Students

Summary

King Stage Limited withdrew its application for registration with the Office for Students (OfS) on 19 January 2026.

This statement summarises findings from the quality and standards assessment, which was completed as part of the registration process, and our referral to National Trading Standards (Trading Standards) due to concerns identified in how the provider was advertising its courses. King Stage Limited withdrew from the registration process before we completed our assessment of its registration application. Therefore, we have not made any decisions about King Stage Limited's compliance with the initial conditions of registration or whether it should, or should not be, registered with the OfS.

We have published this summary to be transparent with the public about the status of registration applications and how we handle concerns identified during our assessment of a provider's registration application.

Case overview

King Stage Limited applied for registration with the OfS in April 2023. At the time it submitted its application, King Stage Limited was a small provider based in Greenwich, planning to become a new higher education provider with plans to introduce masters' courses in business. King Stage Limited recruited its first higher education students in 2024-25 onto a Level 7 diploma in International Business and Sustainability.

As part of the registration process, the OfS undertook a quality and standards assessment of King Stage Limited between 8 November 2024 and 13 February 2025. At the time, the provider had five students studying on its Level 7 diploma in International Business and Sustainability. The draft report from the quality and standards assessment was completed and shared with King Stage Limited on 7 July 2025. It contained negative judgements in relation to conditions of registration B7 (quality) and B8 (standards), and also highlighted that the OfS had identified some potentially misleading information on its website and prospectus. An overview of these findings has been included in this summary. Due to these findings, we referred King Stage Limited to Trading Standards as part of our partnership arrangement to protect students' rights.¹

King Stage Limited wrote to us on 19 July 2025 accepting the draft report, and expressing its commitment to work with the OfS and Trading Standards to address the concerns raised and ensure transparency across its provision. Following further discussions with the OfS around its

¹ For more information relating to our Partnership with National Trading Standards, see [Referrals to National Trading Standards - Office for Students](#).

future plans and timescales, the provider requested to withdraw its application to ensure it had adequate time to fully address the issues raised in the quality and standards assessment report before submitting a future application for registration. We accepted King Stage Limited's request to withdraw its application and closed the case on 16 January 2026. As this was before we had completed our assessment of King Stage Limited's registration application, we have not made any decisions about King Stage Limited's compliance with the initial conditions of registration or whether it should, or should not be, registered with the OfS.

Overview of the findings in the quality and standards report

For higher education providers seeking registration with the OfS, we assess their application and relevant evidence to determine whether they satisfy the initial conditions of registration. For providers that applied for registration on or after 1 May 2022, this includes an assessment of whether the provider satisfies initial conditions B7 (quality) and B8 (standards), as set out in the regulatory framework (November 2022).²

Condition B7 (quality)

Initial condition B7 requires a provider to have credible plans to comply with the following conditions:

- B1 – academic experience
- B2 – resources, support and student engagement
- B4 – assessment and awards.

The report from the quality and standards assessment indicated that for B7 (quality), King Stage Limited did not have credible plans that would allow it, if registered, to comply with the OfS's ongoing conditions of registration for conditions B1, B2 and B4. This was because:

- The evidence suggested that King Stage Limited lacked clear processes or plans to produce, monitor and review course content; it lacked clear plans for effective delivery of its qualifications; and it demonstrated a lack of understanding about the qualification being advertised and delivered. These issues raised concerns about its plans to comply with condition B1 (academic experience).
- The evidence suggested that King Stage Limited had insufficient resources, academic support and engagement processes to ensure that students received a high quality academic experience to succeed in and beyond higher education. This raised concerns about the credibility of its plans to comply with condition B2 (resources, support and student engagement).
- The assessment process identified serious issues relevant to the structure of the course, the relationship between King Stage Limited and its awarding body, King Stage Limited's documentation regarding quality assurance, its assessment strategy, and its lack of internal and external moderation arrangements and student record systems. This raised concerns about the credibility of King Stage Limited's plans to comply with condition B4 (assessment and awards).

² See [Regulatory framework for higher education in England - Office for Students](#).

Condition B8 (standards)

Initial condition B8 requires that a higher education provider must demonstrate that any standards it follows in awarding qualifications must align with the sector-recognised standards.³

The report from the quality and standards assessment indicated that for B8 (standards), the standards set and applied for any relevant awards granted to students who complete a higher education course that King Stage Limited intends to provide, if it is registered, do not appropriately reflect the applicable sector-recognised standards. This was because:

- The evidence indicated that the qualifications that would be awarded were not set at the correct level and therefore did not adequately reflect the sector-recognised standards, and the learning outcomes did not align with the qualification descriptors of the sector-recognised standards.
- The evidence indicated that the achievement of students on the course King Stage Limited intended to deliver did not appropriately reflect the sector-recognised standards, as it did not appropriately reflect the qualification descriptors, and the content and assessment did not adequately reflect the award title.

The published quality and standards assessment report for King Stage Limited can be found on our website.⁴

Referral to Trading Standards

As part of the quality and standards assessment, we identified that King Stage Limited's website and prospectus contained potentially misleading information for students. King Stage Limited was advertising masters' courses, which based on the sector-recognised standards are typically 180 credits. However, upon reviewing the course documentation we found that its courses were approved as 120 credits, in line with sector-recognised standards for a postgraduate diploma.

We also considered that King Stage Limited had incorrectly used the term 'degree' on its website. A degree is a protected term and, in England, a masters' degree can only be awarded by an OfS-registered provider with degree awarding powers. The provider's awarding body at the time of the OfS quality and standards assessment, NCC Education, is an awarding organisation and is not an OfS-registered provider, and therefore is unable to award masters' degrees, despite the courses being advertised as such by King Stage. We are aware that NCC Education stopped accrediting King Stage's courses in July 2025.

Based on these findings, we considered that the courses were incorrectly advertised on King Stage Limited's website, prospectus, UCAS and course documentation, and inaccurately referred to as a masters' course by staff. While there was no evidence of malicious intent from the provider, we considered that the way in which the provider was advertising its courses was potentially misleading for both its existing and future students. In referring to its courses as masters' programmes, King Stage Limited had demonstrated a lack of understanding of the qualification

³ See [Sector-recognised standards - Office for Students](#).

⁴ Available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/assessment-for-quality-and-standards-initial-conditions-b7-and-b8-king-stage-limited/.

being delivered, which negatively affected these students who, as a result of the information available to them at the time of application, had enrolled onto these incorrectly advertised courses.

Due to the range of concerns identified and the impact on students who had enrolled onto these incorrectly advertised courses during the academic year 2024-25, we referred the case to Trading Standards on 1 July 2025. Through our partnership, Trading Standards will examine each referral it receives from the OfS. The agreement means that we are supported by Trading Standards' expertise in understanding and enforcing consumer protection legislation so that together we are able to effectively protect students' consumer rights. Following the referral to Trading Standards, King Stage Limited has taken steps to update its website to improve the accuracy of information available to students.

We have published this case report to highlight our commitment to transparency and ensuring students' consumer rights are protected and they receive high quality provision.