Kensington Education Foundation limited
UKPRN: 10003566

Teaching Excellence Framework Submission - 2018

PROVIDER CONTEXT

PC1: Vision and Strategy

The aim of the founders of the College in 1982 was to give students of all backgrounds and diverse cultures the best possible Educational opportunities and learning support in the firm belief that Education plays a key role in :-

a. improving our knowledge and understanding of the world;
b. nurturing personal development and maturity;
c. fostering interpersonal skills and international understanding; and
d. promoting productivity and, therefore, economic growth

thereby enriching society in general and individual lives in particular.

The College strategic plan was to play a role in the development of the Professionalization of **Business** management [origin of College name] and so originally delivered courses for Professional qualifications in General management (ABE,ICSA) and Management Fields (CIM,CIB).

In 1992, it was one of the first Colleges to commence franchised delivery of University degree programmes and played a role in the development of credit transfers between University degrees and professional qualifications which continues today with its validated degree courses.

PC 2: Awarding Body Partners

Kensington College of Business is currently in partnership with three main awarding bodies:

I. The Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (ICSA) which is the corporate governance institute for which the college courses are all part time or online. These courses though are not designated and so and so will not be discussed further.
II. The University of Chester for which the College is approved to deliver validated BA degrees in; Business Management, Accounting and Marketing and on a franchised basis the BSc in Computer Science, LLB Law with Business and the MBA.
III. Pearson BTEC or which the College is approved to deliver on a franchised basis the Higher National Certificate and Diplomas in Business and now recently the Diploma in Education and Training (DET).

The Quality Assurance processes of the College then have to include those of the awarding body which will impact on the NSS results in particular.

An example of this might be the University of Chester regulation with regard to the use of the Turnitin software for the checking of plagiarism. Some universities use the software for diagnostic purposes allowing the student to submit their work first and establish if there has been any plagiarism which can then be removed from the final submission. Our previous partner Glyndwr University used the software in this way and students were positive about the support this gives them in their studies enabling them to remove possible plagiarism. University of Chester though,

allows one submission in the belief that students should know what is or is not plagiarism which our student representatives have raised as a concern but one that cannot be changed

At the other extreme Pearson BTEC does not require their centres to use Turnitin at all, whilst the College has always thought Turnitin was a very useful assessment tool and so introduced its own requirement that all HNC/D module assessments had to be put through the Turnitin Software.

This led to a situation where the College was only one of very few Pearson BTEC centres in London that used Turnitin for all module assessments .This practice led to student feedback that the college was not supporting them as their friends in other centres were able to submit coursework that was not checked for plagiarism and so results were far better overall.

These regulations are one example of where students would feel they are not being supported by the College.

PC 3: Location and catchment area

The College was originally located in the Borough of Kensington (origin of College's name); but continued growth in student numbers led to the College's eventual move in 2000 to its present 30,000 sq. ft. (GIA) purpose built building in Holborn

Holborn is often described as "midtown" being located between the West End and the City of London and is primarily a commercial area.

Residential accommodation in Holborn is expanding in recent years but the cost of this accommodation is well beyond the budgets of the students attending the College at approximately £1200 per sq. ft. to buy or £20,000 pa for a 1 bed flat.

The College analysis of the location of its students living accommodation shows the majority (85%) living in deprived areas outside Central London such as: East and South East London and Essex and so illustrate again the disadvantaged groups they represent.

PC 4: Students

From the opening of the College until the removal of Post Study work (PSW), the College overseas students' right to work part time and the tightening of visa controls, the majority of College students were non EU.

The difficulties overseas students face are in many ways similar to those faced by the students the College recruits today from the UK or EU and so the College onsite learning experience is very helpful.

English for many of our students is a second language. The TEF contextual data captures ethnicity and domicile, but these splits will not capture the information on the students' first language.

A large number of our students are originally from EU countries such as: Poland, Romania and Hungary (80%) and in addition many of the UK students (15%) were not born in the UK, but have acquired the right to stay

This has two major effects:

I. studying a course at FHEQ levels 4 to 6 in a second language clearly creates a major hurdle for KCB students to overcome that will not be faced by many other HEs
II. the Education system in their country of origin is typically far less interactive with didactic delivery by Lecturers in most cases coupled with assessment by unseen emanations. The switch to a system in which students are personally engaged in their studies and have to undertake research, read widely and critically evaluate again creates an additional obstacle not faced by those born in the UK.

In addition, the 'age profile' of Kensington College of Business students, with very few school leavers (11%) means, that the majority have been out of education in many cases a long time and so the adjustments to returning to study particularly at HE level are great.

The IMD data also show the students living in deprived areas where the average income is low and where it is likely that the student would be the first member of the family to enter HE which again creates challenges.

Finally, the qualifications on entry to the degree or diploma courses are in most cases non-tariff (75%) or non UK (18%) and so a lot more support is needed during the time of their study at the College.

In conclusion, the majority profile of Kensington College of Business students with English as a second language, non-tariff entry requirements from a different educational system living in deprived parts of the country and out of education for some time means the College is helping to achieve the Government's aim of opening access to education to disadvantaged students.

It also means that it is far more difficult for the College to achieve high marks in the assessment criteria making the colleges performance creditable particularly with overall student satisfaction [90%] higher than in the measure for all England HEIs (84%).

METRICS COMMENTARY

MC 1: Core metrics

Kensington College of Business has received two positive flags for the criteria on employability graduate level employability and progress to further study which given the student profiles outlined above is very pleasing.

The only one exclamation mark as opposed to negative flag relates to student support where there are a number of explanatory factors:

I. Access to staff: The College has low student numbers and is therefore able to operate an "open door" policy for administration matters. Student representatives' report this policy, as welcomed by students. For Academic staff their available times are put up on the student portal and students encouraged to book in a time but do not always want to do so and so simply turn up when they want to and so often find the lecturer is teaching or is seeing another student. This policy can sometimes lead to queues and so frustration as students,

many with part time jobs or family responsibilities, have very limited times to see staff and so feel they cannot always see staff at times that they want.

II. *Advice and guidance on the Course*: At the admissions stage all students are given an academic interview at which standard questions are asked and responses noted about the reasons for the choice of the course which is then discussed to ensure they have made the right choice. In addition the requirements of the course are then explained and discussed in terms of contact hours at College and the hours required for private study and assessments. The records of these meetings are kept in the student files and also attendance at the induction course at which again the pathways in, for example, the business degrees are discussed and choices made with awarding body registration forms then completed and signed by the student.

III. On course choices these are again explained at the admissions stage and reinforced at the induction stage. Once these choices have been made the modules that have to be studied are determined by the Programme Specification, therefore no choices can be made; the College will advise all students on their choices of progression in the final year of their course and the Programme Leader sets aside time to address all completing students.

The evidence from the NSS survey on student support is contradicted by both the QAA HER report in 2016: *Commendation on student support:*

" It has continued to engage with the Quality Code and remains strong in supporting students through formative feedback, study skills modules and by introducing a bridging programme to aid transitions,"

QAA Review for Educational Oversight Report in 2014:

"The review team found evidence that the students value the academic and pastoral support they received from teaching staff"

The University of Chester report at the Partner Review in July 2017: *Commendation on student support:*

"The panel wishes to commend the engagement of staff and their commitment to supporting students."

The College has always prided itself on student support and it appears that students perhaps have not understood what is meant by questions 14 and 15 and perhaps been frustrated by the inability to see staff at the time they want for question 13 which is reinforced by the final response where 90% of the students are satisfied with the quality of the course overall.

MC: 2 - Core and Split metrics

Performance against metrics: academic support

The TEF 2017 metrics demonstrates that student satisfaction for Academic Support is 72.0% against the Benchmark of 81.0%. BME student satisfaction at 56.3% is low when compared to other reportable split metric cells, with highest satisfaction at 78.3%. This may also be due to low response rate from the sample size available.

However, there has been an increase in student satisfaction compared to the TEF 2016 metrics with 64.1% student satisfaction against the Benchmark of 81.4%, with an improved difference from -17.3% to -9.0%.

Performance against metrics: continuation

Our TEF 2017 metrics student continuation at 82.0% is slightly lower than Benchmark of 83.1%, where 68.0% continuation at year 2 are mostly from BME Asian background. This negative variance is mainly due to the Glyndwr University degree students from 2013/14 Cohort who have been either discontinued or transferred to the Glyndwr University London campus during academic years 2014/15.

Performance against metrics: assessment and feedback

Our assessment and feedback performance against the benchmark, compared over the last two years gives a z-score difference of 0.4, which is an improvement. The student satisfaction with assessment and feedback improved from 66.2% in 2016 to 74.3% in 2017.

TEACHING QUALITY

When the College started delivering courses for professional qualifications students would simply "vote with their feet" and so teaching quality has always been at the forefront of College objectives.

TQ 1: The teaching and learning strategy of the College has five main elements:

I. Degree programmes designed [validated] by the College use external reference points throughout. Academic standards are maintained by reference to the FHEQ indicators reinforced by feedback from the awarding body and external consultants.
The student knowledge and skills required for the degree subject area are referenced to the QAA benchmark statements with feedback from the awarding body and external consultants. Finally professional recognition can be applied for by mapping the module content and learning outcomes of the degree and the professional award as evidence by the BA Marketing with the Chartered Institute of Marketing and the BA Marketing with the Association of Chartered of Certified Accountants (ACCA).
At the end of each year student data is reviewed together with feedback from module leaders, students, External Examiners and the Annual Programme Review is considered at the Academic board at the end of the year with action plans decided.
The degree programmes offered at Kensington College of Business then are: academically demanding, develop the knowledge and skills required in the subject area with delivery and assessments that develop independent learning and so enable students to achieve their full potential.

II. College continually assesses and develops the Academic staff. It is a requirement that staff delivering on a programme must be qualified at an Academic level above that at which they are teaching and so a Master's degree would be required to teach on a Bachelor's programme. In addition the Module Leaders must have teaching experience at the level at which they are going to lecture. Staff appraisals are conducted annually at which the major focus will be on assessment results and student feedback with evaluation of and targets set

for staff development over the coming year facilitated by college membership of the HEA. The majority of the Academic staff employed have been with the College for over ten years and have achieved good results on both these criteria and are now in the process of applying for membership of HEA the majority of staff are employed of on a full time or fractional permanent basis in order to be able to assist with student support.

III. In order for students to achieve the best possible programme outcomes the College uses a number of tracking mechanisms in the belief that, if the student is contacted at an early stage of non-performance, improvements are possible before the results of the behaviour become unrecoverable. Firstly and very importantly if a student does not attend the programme it is obvious that they cannot benefit from it Student attendance therefore is monitored daily using a combination of a fingerprint recognition system for all lectures combined with a hard copy register as a double check. If a student is absent from a lecture, tutorial or other contact session they will on the same day be sent a text message as the attendance monitoring system will communicate with the college SMS Database. The student will then be required to provide an explanation of their reasons for absence and if helpful referred to an academic tutor or welfare officer. If the absenteeism is persistent a letter will be sent and the student invited for interview with an action plan agreed and again monitored.

In addition, participation is monitored as students can often attend fully without submitting any work. The College therefore monitors submission and grades achieved of both formative assessments and summative coursework submitted during the term. Either low attendance or low participation are followed up to ensure the student has the opportunity both to complete the year and then progress to the next year.

Attendance and participation will be affected not only by personal circumstances and motivation but also by the delivery and assessment methods used by the module leader which are designed to engage the students in their learning. The module descriptors which are part of the programme specifications referred to above have to be both interesting and relevant to students who need to feel both engaged by what they are learning and is directly relevant to their intended occupation or professional practice. The same is true of the assessments. The College uses a variety of delivery and assessment methods rather than just a traditional lecture in order to achieve this objective. These include, case studies, group work seminars and presentations.

IV. Assessments and feedback mechanism are key to student performance and outcomes. The College strategy is to use assessment feedback at the start of during the course, and at the end.

During the admissions stage students satisfying the entry requirements for the course are required to take a diagnostic assessment in both literacy and numeracy in order for the College to be sure that they will be able to cope in practice even though on paper they are qualified for admission. The English test has two elements with a 100 question multiple choice rotating questions examination with marks that are referenced to IELTS. If the student archives the score equating to a minimum of the IELTS 5.5 they are then required

to write an essay on a topic of interest but that does not require subject knowledge e.g. a favourite holiday. This is marked and students then required to either undertake English classes before starting the course, English classes alongside the class or be admitted without a requirement to attend English classes After the English assessment the student is then required to take a test in basic numeracy which again needs to be passed in order to gain admission. Students are then interviewed by an academic member of staff who further assess their suitability.

At the Induction students receive study and IT skills classes in which topics such as research referencing and plagiarism will be covered and students shown how to use the Turnitin software and given practice examples on the PC. This is key for coursework assessments and for examinations. Unfair practices in their many forms and the penalties that may result are explained.

During their programme of study, students are given formative assessments which do not count towards the final mark for the assessment. They are used to prepare students for the end of course assessment, and enable staff to identify students who may have difficulties. Formative assessments are set for each module delivered. This can take a variety of different forms such as a multiple choice exam, a report or an essay. The students will receive feedback before the end of term assessment is set. For the degree courses the coursework element of the summative assessment is used for the same purpose as it will be submitted before the end of the term and feedback is provided which can help with the final exam. For Pearson BTEC courses students can show a draft of some of the completed learning outcomes to ensure they are on track with their research.

V. Student feedback on their courses is encouraged in order that the modules and the programmes to remain current and relevant to students' needs as well as representing students' issues to the College management. This feedback takes a number of different forms. Firstly near the start of each term student representatives are elected for each programme level and given training on their roles by the respective Programme Leaders supplemented by online information as to what they are required to do in terms of carrying out their duties. Sufficient students standing for the elections has proved difficult in the past but has been encouraged by providing certificates for those who carry out this role and by explaining the importance of this role in job references on their CV.

Pearson's External Examiners Report 2016/2017:

"Formative feedback is extremely supportive and full of advice. Formal and informal tutorials are a great strength at this college".

"All lecturers on the programme are appropriately qualified to the required level and in the skill of teaching and assessment. There is an ongoing and formally recorded programme of continuous professional development for staff to ensure that knowledge, skills and qualifications are appropriate and up to date."

"The records show a comprehensive management of the assessment process, review and improvement of methods and resources and consideration of a wide range of influencing factors including staff performance.

"The College has a range of mechanisms suitable for overseeing its learning and teaching. Sampling indicates that assessment is thorough and standards appropriate to the qualifications are maintained. Both formative and summative assessment practices are used and it is clear that students also seek support and guidance through electronic means from Assessors. The assignment briefs are thoughtfully designed and met the required academic standards in all cases where sampling has taken place. Some very good work has been produced.
The college has good quality assurance procedures ensuring the reliability of assessment and verification management."

QAA Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring November 2017:

"There are effective systems in place which engage students in ensuring quality of provision and identifying enhancement. The student cohort elects representatives to membership of the Staff-Student Liaison Committee and the Academic Board. Students are fully trained for this role."

Student Representatives play a role ranging from dealing with individual student concerns or problems relating to their personal circumstances or difficulties with a module to attending the Academic Board of the College. They can take an individual's concern or issue to the programme leader if urgent on the same day or at the latest by the end of the week in order that the student will be able to focus fully on their studies again after the problem is resolved, if a meeting with a module or programme leader or indeed management is required the student representative can attend to support the individual concerned

Student Representatives attend the monthly Staff Student Liaison Committees to provide feedback from their group on issues/questions which will be minuted and an action plan decided after the meeting. This is sent to the Student Representatives at the latest a week after the meeting. Some suggestions will be accepted and dates given for completion whereas others can be rejected but explanations given so that students understand why their ideas are not to be implemented.

Also, for each course one student representative is elected and will attend the highest level deliberative committee in the College titled the Academic Board. This Board will discuss and focus on strategic decisions for the College as opposed to the more operational focus of the Staff Student Liaison Committee .One of the main functions is to consider the Annual Programme Reviews and the Annual Monitoring Reviews of the College and consider recommendations from students, staff, awarding bodies or external examiners. The Board will then minute action plans for the year ahead which will be reviewed at the Board in line with completion dates.

At the end of each term student module questionnaires are given to every student with both closed questions with answers graded form one to five and a grade point average obtained for each module and open questions where the student can write any comments additional to the information provided by the closed questions. These module questionnaires forms and analysis are then brought to the Quality Committees weekly meetings in order for academic staff to look at the feedback and the committee to make decisions on action plans. Over the last three years has always obtained grade point averages in excess of four for each module and so the student

satisfaction with the teaching and assessment of the modules is clearly positive which again confirms the feedback form the QAA and the awarding bodies partner reviews. These results and decisions are then fed back to the staff student liaison committee.

Student Representative Lead QAA SED submission 2016:

"Students can see evidence of a link between research undertaken by lecturers and the contents of the modules."

"Lecturers can also be reached by e-mail, telephone, or by appointment if there are any queries. Students are content with the guidance received and with the convenient and approachable ways that the lecturers offer their prompt feedback."

"Feedback summary - Course Delivery indicates students are extremely satisfied with Induction received, Standard of Courses, Course Assessments, Achievement of learning objectives, and responses to student feedback, all graded by students with overall average of 4.50."

Conclusions: the College is satisfied with the quality of the teaching and learning being delivered and the view is shared it seems by the students looking at the NSS with an overall satisfaction rating of 90% the module questionnaires with a GPA for all module sin excess of 4, the conclusions of the QAA recent HER and the partner review conclusions of both the University of Chester and Pearson BTEC.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The College is focussed on providing a friendly multicultural environment, in which students from all over the world may benefit from the best of education in the UK. Central to that commitment is the belief that learning is a continuous process that does not end when the students graduate from the College. We support and encourage the pursuit of intellectual and personal growth as well as the attainment of academic and professional skills and qualifications.

Given the distinctive profile of KCB students described in the provider context section the College has adapted its approach to teaching and learning to ensure our students achieve the best possible outcomes given where they start from on their HE journey.

I. College has a large proportion of students for whom English is not their first language and so KCB introduced English language classes for those who might satisfy the English language entry requirements but on testing and interviews at the college have been assessed as not having the language skills to study at HE level 4 and above. These classes are provided at no charge to the students and are designed again to reference to the IELTS skills of listening, reading, writing and speaking. The College scores at the start of the course are recorded and at the end of the term further testing is carried out in order to assess whether their English is now at a level to start their HE course. These students would be taught by the college if their IELTS equivalent is judged to be 4.5 with the expectation of them achieving 5.5 at the end of the KCB 2 term course. For students with lower IELTS scores the college recommends they attend an English language course at a

college that specialises in all levels of English and the College will then reinterview and test them again if they choose to return to the College.

For those whose English is assessed to be at an higher level but the college feels they will benefit from additional English classes they also are able to attend English classes without payment of additional fees.

With both groups of students the college is able to provide language support at no cost to the student so that they are not discouraged from undertaking what the college feels is essential to their progress in UK HE

II. A large number of our students whether from the EU or UK permanent residents who were born outside the UK have been educated in a completely different leaning environment prior to joining the College. The education systems in most of the countries form which our students originate use far more formal or traditional methods of teaching and learning in which student engagement is minimal both in the delivery process with traditional lectures and in the assessments where unseen exams only are the norm

The College has adopted a number of different strategies in order to ease the student transition to the interactive learning processes used in UK HE

At the admissions stage the College advises the majority of its students to commence their course with the Pearson higher national certificate at level 4 which then acts as a foundation for their later studies. The main advantage of this course to the students is that it introduces them to assessment by coursework which will require them then to undertake independent study and research and to understand there are often no right and wrong answers to questions they will need themselves to evaluate the evidence before arriving at conclusions which is the approach needed in UK HE. Having completed the HNC the programme leaders can then assess the performances of the students and divide them into 3 groups based on their academic performance.

Some Students will have found the HNC very difficult and it is felt there is not the potential to improve their performances by further study. This group of students will be advised to stop their studies on completion of the HNC and will be able to search for jobs that require the knowledge and skill obtained at FHEW level 4.

A second group will have been able to complete the HNC but are not assessed to be capable of studying for a degree. This group will be advised then to carry on with the Higher national diploma at level 5 .If their performance improves they will have the option of transferring to the BA degree at level 6 but the college experience is that the majority of this group will compete the HND but not progress to the degree and will then look for a job at this level

The final group will be those who are assessed as capable of completing a degree programme and so at the end of the HNC will transfer into the BA degree at level 5.They will then be in a position to undertake all the requirements of a BA degree and will not be disadvantaged as the HNC and the BA year 1 have been mapped and so the knowledge acquired so broadly the same and HNC students will have acquired the skills of

independent study and research that they will need to complete the degree course successfully

By using the HNC in this way the College is able to diagnose at an early stage the capabilities of the students and so students receive a personalised study plan and so are enable to achieve the best results of which they are capable.

III. The College in the HNC programme selected 2 modules relating to study skills that they asked Pearson for special permission to include as credit bearing modules for both the HNC and HND. The embedding of 2 study skills module sin the first term of the programme was a great help again to the students as the College felt that the acquisition of study skills needed for UK HE was far more important than the study of another knowledge based subject. The 2 study skills modules also mapped against the business communications and skills module in the BA year 1 programme which again eased the transition from the HNC to the BA. The college had to submit a written application to Person for this change to be agreed based on what is referred to as local circumstances and were pleased it was agreed as the student feedback was very positive. The college regrets that in the programme redesign (RQF) of the HNC/HND all study skills module have been removed and are now covered online which the college feels is not such a good option for its students.

IV. the College timetables for all degree and HNC/D students one class per week in study skills which is not credit bearing but is seen as an essential support to study for all KCB students again given their profile.In this course the students are taught English for academic purposes, communication skills introduced to, group work and presentations as well as the techniques required for both writing coursework and sitting exams. Again student feedback has been very positive even at level 6 where some students at the QAA HER recently apparently referred to this course as their favourite as they felt they learnt so much .The college observed also a definite improvement in the assessment results of all students after it was introduced and so again it has played a key role in student development.

V. Students with individual concerns or questions can on pastoral matters approach one of the two Student Welfare Officers [one male and one female] whom the college sponsored on a counselling course at the City Lit. Again though given the small size of the college personal relationships can be built up easily and so students do not have to see the welfare officer but can consult with any other member of the Administartive team or academic staff benefitting from the open door policy the college has always adopted. The ability to discuss and seek help for personal problems is very important the college feels for all students as these issues can seriously affect the student progress on the course and the college will always endeavour to find internal solutions first but if the matter is more serious refer student to the relevant external agency.

On Academic questions the college publishes on the student portal the times of the week when academic staff are available to see students. The staff are listed with the subjects in which they have expertise beside their names and so students will not necessarily have to see the leader / lecturer for their module but can take advice from other staff if the availability times are better for them The college tries to encourage booking in advance for the meetings with the provision of lecturers email addresses but most students still seem to prefer a drop in session which can cause issues of queuing occasionally

Learning resources:

The student support described above is supplemented by the learning resources provided by the College:

In terms of the library resources it is unusual for our students to use the onsite library as they are typically working part time or have family commitments and live often quite far away. Their days of attendance at college are timetabled so that they have whole day contact session rather than half days at the request of the students and so during the days they attend the college they do not have much time for private study

On the days they are not required to attend college will not normally come into college for private study but prefer to use libraries nearer to where they live .The College then provides a library hand book detailing the three options available to them:

a. onsite library which has multiple copies of the core reading for each module and at least one copy of the further reading texts referred to in the module specifications for each programme which are provided at the start of the term
b. students are provided with an ID card which they can use for access for reference purposes only in university libraries in addition to using their own local libraries both for reference and borrowing
c. College has developed its own online library believing the main advantages of access to books at any time in any location is very attractive to students today .In the online library EBSCO for all journals is provided as well as many of the Core and further reading texts. The college is now working on an initiative with CENGAGE learning to considerably improve the number of books available online in the KCB library as well as including self-assessment rests marked online and additional materials to support each Module

BTEC Academic Management Reviewer Report (16/05/2017):

"The College is located in central London, with excellent communication links a short walk from Holborn tube station, in a large multiple floored building. A tour included 10 classrooms of varying size seating from 20 to 60 seats, but also with large halls, for staff and student meetings. Classrooms are well equipped with projection facilities. There are two libraries, one for Business and Law and Accounting with relevant text books, and an online library, and Pearson Global. In addition, students have access to the LSC a few metres away, and the close by The British Library. A large café is located in the basement. Overall the resources are good and sufficient for the current students and programme requirements, and for any expansion should this be required."

On IT resources the College has a well-received student portal which includes a VLE, where students can access materials and information on their course which is an invaluable aid to learning. The portal is also used for announcements and information sharing as well as being the point of student access for coursework submission for plagiarism checking (Turnitin) and assessment feedback to students (Grademark).

The college is wireless enabled throughout the building so that students can use their laptops or other devices anywhere in the college which supplements the 3 compute laboratories with over 50 pcs connected to JANET.

Pearson Standards Verifier (External Examiners) Report (19/05/2017):

"I was able to speak with two learners, both suggested they were enjoying the course and felt they had progressed as people as a result of doing the course. The tutors, they suggested were passionate and motivational. All knew how to achieve the extended grades when developing an assignment. Admissions staff operate an effective system for monitoring learner attendance. They are responsible personally for following up with the non-attendees and encouraging better attendance by providing helpful guidance and support. The College has developed an effective process for obtaining learner views on a formal basis. Arrangements for staff development support effectively the delivery of the provision. Physical resources are available for student use and support, good library with recommended text books and availability of computers in most classes and VLE. The tutors are qualified and have experience in their areas. Tutorial and pastoral support available through electronic means and face to face. End of term questionnaire provided for students to give feedback on their programme."

STUDENT OUTCOMES AND LEARNING GAIN

The College aims to enable all students to achieve their maximum potential no matter what their starting point in their educational journey. The College students in particular start in the main with non-tariff entry requirements and together with their other characteristics [age language absence form education etc.] face considerable challenges in achieving success in UK Higher Education.

Performance against core metrics: employment and further study:

The performance is above the benchmark for Employment and further study with z-score 0.8, however, necessary work is in under consideration to understand this variance better in relation to the TEF Employment or further study metric which is 3.7.

Firstly The College admission process plays a major part in helping all students achieve the best possible outcomes given their background and ability. The first stage involves collecting all the records required to determine whether or not the student satisfies the entry requirements for the course and that the documents are genuine. Their literacy and numeracy are then both tested again before the interview to understand the student's motivation and the course that would match their objectives. This process then ensures that students are not set up to fail but are enrolled on a course which they are capable of passing and for which they possess the required motivation. This is then reinforced by the induction course before the course commences .The admissions process and induction course are the first stage in ensuring that students are on the right course form the start.

Secondly during the course the College provides the support described above in terms of English language and study skills support classes together with the use of the HNC as effectively a foundation course win which modules are carefully chosen by the college to further improve their study skills. This is reinforced by support from welfare officers and academic staff on a one to one basis with IT and library resources available to all. This support for students again enable each student to achieve the highest level qualification that they are capable of

Finally students who archive good results at each stage and are sufficiently motivated are encouraged to continue with further study. In the case of those staring with the HNC this might be progression to the HND or the degree year 2 followed by year 3 within the College. If students want to progress further though having competed the degree then they will meet with their respective programme leader to discuss the options available to them. In some cases such as those who want to pursue a career in marketing or accountancy this might involve studying for the professional qualification with advanced standing based on their Bachelor's degree. Other might want to enter into general management and so an MBA could be the best route if there is sufficient work experience prior or a specialist MSC or MA if the objective is to work in a particular filed of management. In all cases then the college is set up well to give advice on further study to successful students.

Performance against core metrics: highly skilled employment

The excellent record of the College in terms of preparing students for their future after they graduate is illustrated by its statistically z-score (3.7) and flag (++) performance in the TEF Highly Skilled employment or further study metric.

In terms of progress into employment particularly highly skilled jobs the College programmes have all been designed with the aim of preparing students for a successful career.

In the law field for example the requirements of the 2 professional bodies have been taken into account to enable students to move directly to the 2nd part of the examinations for both the law society [solicitors] or bar council [barristers].For those who do not want to pursue a career in the legal profession the benefits of a law with business degree is that it equips students equally well for a career in business having included modules in the core management functions

In computing the degrees have just been redesigned taking into account the different career ambitions of students in this field .One degree will focus on the technical aspects of computing for those who want to work as programmers or systems analysts for example .Another degree will focus more on the applications of the software in the workplace and so include modules that focus on the software. The degrees then have been designed very much with future careers of the graduates in mind.

In business studies the HNC is very much a qualification that is vocational in its approach and students will study modules that give them exposure to all aspects of the business world such as business environment and then later the management functions of marketing finance HR operations and IT. If successful in the HNC they could then choose either a specialist degree preparing for a career in the fields of marketing or finance for example or keep their options open until they graduate by choosing the business Management degree

All the above degrees have been designed with the benchmark statements of the QAA as reference points and these cover all the knowledge and equally important today the skills required for a graduate in that field of study. All university of Chester graduates then will have acquired the knowledge and skills required by employers and so will be valued by Employers.

UoC External Examiner Report - Key Points Academic Year 2015 – 2016 - Mark Loon

"The external examiner confirms that student performance is comparable with that elsewhere and aims and learning outcomes are appropriate."

UoC External Examiner Report - Key Points Academic Year 2015 – 2016 - Ian Vandewalle

"The external examiner notes that 'there are several innovative, relevant and applied assignments which give students a real insight into professional practice' "

Equally the Persons HN programmes have been designed in close consultation with employers and their focus is very much on employability. Successful students then will also be valued by employers for highly skilled jobs at levels 4 and 5.

The college organises career advice sessions by the respective programme leaders and will provide references on demand to enable students to secure jobs whilst in the process of completing their qualifications. Future initiatives will include a careers day advisory session which has been agreed with the university of Chester and an open day for employers to come to meet our students

The very good core metrics on employability and further study reinforce college conclusions that all students are being well prepared for the best possible jobs they can achieve or for further study

CONCLUSIONS

The College today plays an important role in the development of students from non-traditional backgrounds helping them to achieve success at some level of higher education. The College has always been proud of this role consistent both with its mission statement and with the objectives of the UK Government today.