Name of Provider: Moorlands College
UKPRN: 10023454

TEF Year Three provider submission

1 Provider Context

1.1 Moorlands College is a small "Alternative Provider" offering undergraduate and postgraduate[1] programmes in Applied Theology. Its Higher Education (HE) provision has been validated since 1994 by the University of Gloucestershire (the University) and implements the College's strategy of developing people for or in Christian ministry or in other, similar, social-service related employment.[2] This tight focus facilitates a high level of cohesion throughout the provision.

1.2 There are two undergraduate programmes, with, in 2016-17, 195 students, almost all of whom were full-time.[3] The programmes are closely related, with:

- most of their programme learning outcomes either being in common or differing by minor variations;
- the majority of their modules appearing in both Course Maps;
- oversight provided by a joint Course Leader, Course Committee, and a pair of External Examiners.[4]

1.3 This means that any student or External Examiner comment is effectively about the whole of the provision that this submission discusses.

1.4 The programmes can be accessed

- via the Campus-Based mode, which is the traditional mode of HE study, based on weekly timetables across terms and semesters, or
- through a number of Placement-Based modes, which involve at least some modules being delivered in intensive study blocks, and which, in some cases, involve certain modules[5] being delivered at locations other than the main campus (currently sites in Torquay and Birmingham).

1.5 The introduction of non-traditional modes was designed to best enable a wide range of students to reach their full potential, and has assisted the College to grow, so that the student body is now around 40% larger than ten years ago. The careful management of this growth is at the heart of the College's strategic plan.[6]

1.6 This submission is structured around the TEF assessment criteria, but in an order approximating reverse. This allows the pedagogical goals of the College to be made clear (through discussing student outcomes; SO2, SO1, SO3), before considering issues of institutional approach to learning (TQ2, LE2, LE1, LE3) and of actual delivery to students (TQ3, TQ4, TQ1).

---

[1] In 2016-17, with 86 students, all part-time.
[2] Strategic Plan 2018-2023.
[3] TEF Year 3 metrics, contextual data.
[4] Relevant Programme Specifications, 14; relevant Course Maps. Modules are divided between the External Examiners, roughly as theoretical and practical, rather than by programme.
[5] 27% of all module deliveries are not at the main campus, divided roughly equally between two Regional Centres.
[6] Strategic Plan 2018-2023.

1.7 At a number of points reference is made to "the EMS" or Extra-Modular Survey, which is a questionnaire responded to by all undergraduates. In 2016 the EMS used the same questions as the NSS, and so gives a College-wide, internal perspective on the same issues. In 2017, to avoid a sense of survey overload for Level 6 students, the number of questions was reduced to a smaller set that complements the NSS.

2 Employability and transferable skills (SO2)

2.1 In line with the mission of the institution, the College's undergraduate programmes have as their explicit goal, to equip people for work, rather than simply to enable them to study a body of knowledge.[7] The programmes' learning outcomes expect graduates to demonstrate "vocational suitability, through excellent professional understanding, abilities and skills, for a variety of service and leadership settings, in the Christian sector and public arena".[8] Thus, development in knowledge, skills and attitudes that are valued by employers and that enhance students' personal and professional lives stand at the centre of the College's provision. The principles of the assurance of academic quality and the maintaining of academic standards in HE ensure that in these programmes "learning gain"[9] is the focus of teaching, personal support and assessment, and the ultimate destination of the undergraduate programmes; learning gain is not a mere hoped-for result of a parallel or extracurricular process. When a student graduates from these programmes, it is because they have proved themselves to be employable.

2.2 This philosophy and strategy is embedded in the College by various means, including:

- employment of teachers with significant experience of, on-going engagement in and deeply held commitment to the importance of practice;
- careful construction of the programmes to balance modules between theory, theory of the practice, personal development and practice;[10]
- an active Professional Advisory Group, whose members are mainly placement supervisors and who are typical employers of graduates, advising on course design and impact on students, and which was recognised by QAA as good practice;[11]
- extra-curricular activities, recently including staff-led trips to work with orphans in Ukraine (2016) and to Israel/Palestine to study the historical background of the Bible (2017), short courses focussing on preparation to enter ministry in specific denominational traditions, and engagement in practice alongside teachers.

2.3 Perhaps the most important mechanism for enhancing the employability of students is the design and management of practice modules. These modules are centred on placements, in locations of the type that students aspire to be employed in, and tailored to the specific goals of students. They do not simply require hours of activity, but actively form students as skilled and reflective practitioners. The effectiveness of the placement provision is consistently affirmed internally and externally.[12]

---

[7] Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework, 1.1; relevant Programme Specifications, 13/1.
[8] BA in Applied Theology Programme Specification, 14/6. The Youth and Community Work programme replaces "service and leadership" with "youth and community work". Cf. the College's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework, which sees learning as "a holistic process of personal development, covering inter-relating aspects of human personality, the intellectual, spiritual, practical and relational."
[9] Defined by HEFCE as "improvement in knowledge, skills, work-readiness and personal development".
[10] Periodic Review Submission 2015, Rationale.
[11] QAA, HER (Plus) Response, 2014.
[12] BA Course Committee 7 July 2017, item 10 (Review of practice modules); External Examiner Report 2016-17, BA Salter, 4.1; QAA, HER (Plus) Response, 2014, Good Practice.

2.4 One of the two programmes is "professionally validated" by the National Youth Agency (NYA), resulting in the qualification generally referred to as "JNC". The NYA focusses on the formation of qualities necessary for the specific area of professional work, and many of the professional values and requirements it encourages have been adopted into the other programme, though it is not associated with the NYA.

2.5 The very high number of graduates recorded as entering employment or further study (all but three) indicates the success of the College in attaining its goals.[13]

2.6 Students confirm this: the College scored very highly on certain questions in the 2016 NSS relating to how the programmes improve students' employability (questions dropped in the 2017 NSS).

NSS 2016 question	Joint ranking (out of 371 institutions)
19. My course has helped me present myself with confidence.	10th
20. My communication skills have improved.	38th
21. As a result of the course, I feel confident in tackling unfamiliar problems.	5th

2.7 Students recognise the developmental process they are undergoing. The 2017 EMS questions about personal development (questions 5-8, regarding spiritual, practical skill-based, intellectual and relational growth) received very high levels of positive responses: respectively, 89%, 81%, 94%, and 86%.

2.8 Similarly, External Examiners confirm this (though not necessarily and unsurprisingly not using the language of employability). "Being able to put theory into practice, or ensure that practice is informed by theory, was evident across the board."[14] Assessment tasks "demonstrate that students are being well equipped and enabled to relate their theological learning to today's world in thoughtful and creative ways."[15]

2.9 Comparatively few graduates go straight into further study (4%[16]), because of the programmes' immediate focus on practice. That is not to say that the College's students are unprepared or lacking in desire for further study. Indeed, the College's last two years' MA intakes have seen a total of 19 graduates of the College entering further study. Given the small numbers of students graduating each year in the past, this is a strong vote of confidence from graduates in the excellence of the College's teaching.

3 Highly skilled employment and further study (SO1)

3.1 In the College's case, the entire discussion relating to the development of students' employability is also directly relevant to the criterion of student attainment of their goals: the programmes are marketed as training for employment, and students chose them with future employment as a primary goal. Thus, the College is confident in the high quality of its provision in enabling students to attain their educational and professional goals. However, if attainment of goals is measured by proportions entering further study or highly skilled employment, the results may mislead for a number of reasons.

3.2 The type of employment, for which the students are prepared, is accurately described as highly skilled. And, at the end of their studies, a large majority of graduates do take jobs of this nature, whether professional (e.g., church leadership, school teaching roles) or associate professional

[13] TEF Year 3 Core Metrics.
[14] External Examiner Report 2016-17, BA Salter, 5.1.
[15] External Examiner Report 2016-17, BA Walton, 2.1.
[16] Average DLHE data for 2015 and 2016 leavers.

and technical occupations (e.g., youth or community workers). However, in comparison to other theological colleges, there are reasons why the College's figures may be lower for highly skilled employment than it is for employment.[17]

- The College is not tied to any particular denomination, so its provision is not a phase within a system flowing towards ordination.
- The College has been more successful than other theological colleges in recruiting younger people, and each year a few of the College's graduates decide at the end of their studies that they need to gain more experience of life before they take up a position with a high level of responsibility for other people.

3.3 Thus, while fewer graduates enter highly skilled employment or further study within six months, when compared to the theological college sector more broadly, the College is confident in a high rate of success in giving students the potential to achieve their educational and professional goals. This is echoed by External Examiners:

> "The programme [sic] allows students to opt for either the JNC professional qualification or the nonprofessional route. Both routes have clear structures in place to ensure that students qualify with a solid understanding of what it means to work professionally as a youth and community worker alongside their theological qualification. Being able to put theory into practice, or ensure that practice is informed by theory, was evident across the board."[18]

> "The majority of the work practice and placement work continues to be good, very good or excellent and clearly meets the requirements and expectations of the churches, agencies and other organisations that provide placements to the students. The majority of the work practice and placement work continues to be good, very good or excellent and clearly meets the requirements and expectations of the churches, agencies and other organisations that provide placements to the students."[19]

4 Positive outcomes for all (SO3)

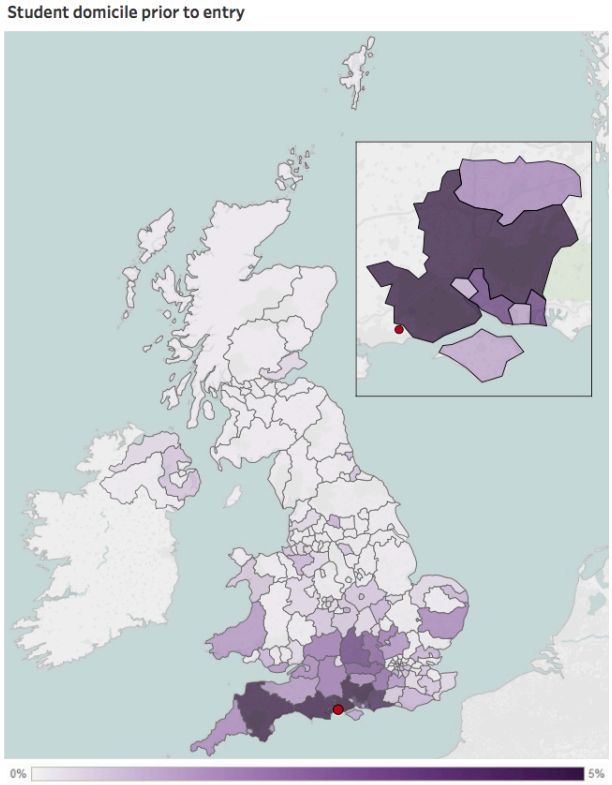
4.1 As discussed above (sections 2, 3), the College is succeeding in developing students' employability and enabling them to attain their goals.

4.2 Access Statements have been published in both 2016 and 2017. Reflecting the value the College places on the individual student (see section 8) and the seriousness with which the College addresses issues of equality, the College's Access Statement is not the minimal indication of intent, but is backed up by extensive statistical analyses, presented as an appendix, in 2018, of 17 pages.[20] This evaluation is impacting College decision-making.

4.3 The analyses of the statement and the TEF metrics affirm the general success achieved by the College. There are a few weaker areas, but, beyond the issues discussed elsewhere (particularly in paragraphs 1.5, 3.2, 7.3-7.6 and 8.5), most of the data relates to such small groups that statistical analysis gives little or no support to the idea that anything other than normal patterns of variation are the reason.[21]

[17] TEF Year 3 Metrics.
[18] External Examiner Report 2016-17, BA Salter, 5.1.
[19] External Examiner Report 2016-17, BA Twilley, 2.1.
[20] Access and Participation Statement.
[21] One example is the low entry to highly skilled employment of students from IMD areas 1 and 2 (1.1 below the benchmark), but with only ten students in the population no conclusions can be drawn.

4.4 The College recruits more White students than the national average (92%), though the student body is clearly more diverse than the three counties from which the College recruits most students: Devon (96.6% White), Dorset (98.7%) and Hampshire (95.0%).[22] There are no adverse issues for non-White students, in acceptance, continuation, or attainment.



4.5 The student body is older than sector norms: 54% are 21 and over; 21% are over 30.[23] These students tend to do well in the College, despite the challenges they face, with many of them having to balance study, family and placement commitments (and in some cases, particularly for these students, the placements overlap with part-time employment).

4.6 The College has a high proportion of disabled students (19%[24]), reflecting the College's success in attracting and supporting students with Specific Learning Difficulties (discussed in section 8). Notably, 100% of the graduates with a disability entered employment or further study (though the caution about comparatively small numbers may also be relevant here).

5 Valuing teaching (TQ2)

5.1 The primary aim of the College is "to equip people".[25] Thus, learning is the College's most valued goal, and teaching is the most valued activity. The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework indicates that teaching is understood broadly as whatever facilitates learning.[26] The College recruits teachers who share its ethos and values, and who have an evidenced sense of vocation to the development of others. With a small staff team (nine full-time teaching staff), the College has chosen not to develop a system of rewards specifically for teaching, although student feedback on teaching within modules is discussed openly as part of the programmes' Course Committee, and issues relating to teaching are at the heart of teachers' annual review processes.[27]

5.2 The College continues to develop its teachers through three staff development events per annum focussed on pedagogy. Recent topics have included: dealing with students in crises as a personal tutor, use of the VLE for effective learning, good practice in electronic annotation of student submissions, and the nature and purpose of assessment. Teachers discuss each other's teaching annually in pairs of peers, using a system overseen by the Vice-Principal (Academic), which formally records the discussion, and identifies good practice for wider dissemination and any issues that need remedial addressing.

[22] Statistics from relevant County Council websites.
[23] TEF Year 3 metrics, contextual data.
[24] TEF Year 3 metrics, contextual data. Cf. the national average of 7%: HESA, "Widening Participation Summary: UK Performance Indicators 2015-16", Table T7C.
[25] Strategic Plan, 2018-23.
[26] Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework, 2.3.
[27] Academic Staff Annual Review Form. The form contains the procedure.

5.3 The success in fostering quality teaching is reflected in student feedback beyond the very positive TEF metric, which is in the top 10% nationally. The two highest scoring questions in the 2016 EMS were "Staff are enthusiastic about what they are teaching" (100% positive) and "The course is intellectually stimulating" (95% positive).[28] Comments like "special praise for the quality of teaching"[29] are normal prefaces to representatives' reports at Course Committees.

5.4 Other means by which the College promotes, facilitates and recognises excellent teaching for the purposes of the programmes are discussed in section 2.

6 Scholarship, research and professional practice (LE2)

6.1 The College's teaching is enriched with scholarship and professional practice, and to a lesser extent, research.

- The College's Quality Manual embeds a policy that controls the increasing academic qualifications required of staff at different levels of study, starting with a requirement that to teach at Level 4 an Honours qualification must be held.[30]
- Doctorates are held by 44% of full-time staff, and 41% of all teaching staff. The College is committed to increase those percentages as staff are replaced.[31]
- Staff loadings, which are managed in detail, include a standard allotment of over four hours/week for research, training and conferences.[32] Some staff have increased allowances, e.g., in 2017-18 three of the full-time teachers have an allotment of, on average, over three hours/week to support current writing projects, including in one case the completion of a doctoral thesis.
- In addition to supporting the member of staff pursuing a doctorate, the College is also facilitating three part-time staff who are working on Masters' qualifications (two teachers and one Learning Support tutor).

6.2 The impact of scholarship is vital to and significant in the programmes: as one External Examiner commented, "The curriculum is very well designed and organised; material is regularly updated in line with developments in scholarship."[33]

6.3 Just as the programmes emphasise the linking of theory and practice (see section 2), so the staff engage in practice in a way that enriches their teaching. Most of the academic staff are regularly engaged in teaching events, with adults and/or youth, in conferences, churches and other settings. It is estimated that on average the full-time staff are engaged in just under two such events per month. Of the nine full-time teaching staff,

- two are currently leaders in local churches,
- four are ordained ministers,
- three have professional qualification in Youth and Community Work ("JNC"),
- and between them they are trustees of seven charities, engaged in precisely the kind of work the College prepares students for.

[28] Extra-Modular Survey 2016.
[29] BA Course Committee, 7 July 2017, 5 (student representatives' report).
[30] Quality Manual 2017-18, 1.5.
[31] University of Gloucestershire, Response to Partnership Review 2015, 9.5.1.
[32] QAA, HER (Plus) 2014, Response, 2.12.
[33] External Examiner Report 2016-17, BA Walton, 5.1.

6.4 The result of all this is the stretching provision discussed in section 9, leading to employable students, as discussed in sections 2-4.

7 Resources (LE1)

7.1 One External Examiner described the programmes' "learning environment [as one] where students are enabled to fulfil — and exceed — their potential."[34] Another said, "The resources available through the [physical] library and electronically are very much fit for purpose".[35] Similarly, in the 2017 EMS, 86% of students gave a positive response regarding facilities.[36]

7.2 In 2015 a building project was completed which added new teaching spaces and improved student social areas. A sum equivalent to 1.6 times the College's annual turnover was invested in this way without incurring any debt. The Academic Board noted the significant contribution this enhancement made to the provision of the College.[37]

7.3 At the start of the 2015-16 academic year, the College invested in an improved, Moodle-based, Virtual Learning Environment. This is now a central feature of the delivery of the programmes. The College has reviewed its use of the VLE and found it to be an effective enhancement facilitating students to attain their learning goals.[38]

7.4 The libraries hold more than 40,000 hard copy books, with over 1,000 added in the typical year.[39] Considerable attention has been given to ensuring that students in modes of study other than Campus-Based are able to access sufficient materials, in particular, through the development of electronic resources. In summer 2016, the University withdrew access to its electronic resources from students at validated partners, but the College was well-prepared for this and had already purchased licences for relevant databases of electronic learning resources. As of the start of the 2017-18 academic year, the College had over 3,000 subject-relevant, full-text journals (with over 2.5 million articles) and over 7,500 e-books, with a particular emphasis on core text books for modules.[40] It was recently agreed that postgraduate module tutors should identify a further 10-20 items available electronically and relevant to their modules.[41] This will significantly enhance the provision for undergraduates in the latter years of their studies.

7.5 During the first semester of 2016-17, the College introduced a new, online library database system (Heritage), for all physical and electronic items at all locations. It is seamlessly integrated within the VLE platform. A recent review of the provision for undergraduates concluded that the system was very helpful for students, particularly off-campus.[42]

7.6 From the start of the 2016-17 academic year, the College launched a new, online system for submission and marking of assignments. This was developed in-house, requiring considerable investment in design and development. Students, irrespective of location, can now submit assignments via a VLE page, marking and moderation are undertaken electronically, and feedback is sent by email instantly. Student representatives reported that the system was "functioning well" and "really helpful".[43]

[34] External Examiner Report 2016-17, BA Walton, 1.1.
[35] External Examiner Report 2016-17, BA Walton, 4.1.
[36] Extra-Modular Survey 2017, Q1.
[37] Academic Board, 8 September 2015.
[38] Academic Board, 28 March 2017, 8.
[39] Learning Resources Development Policy (both numbers).
[40] Learning Resources Development Policy.
[41] MA Course Committee, 15 November 2017, 12(3).
[42] BA Course Committee, 9 November 2016, 12(b).
[43] BA Course Committee, 1 March 2017, 6(b, g). A third reporting representative was similarly positive, 6(j).

8 Personalised learning (LE3)

8.1 In line with the College's ethos, which puts the development of the person at the heart of the educational processes,[44] College staff invest considerable time in engaging with students at the individual level.

8.2 A relationship is built up between the student and their personal tutor through timetabled tutor group times (1-2 hours per week, depending on mode) and through five, half-hour one-to-one personal tutorials per year.[45] In addition, personal tutors are available to discuss issues at other times and support the student as the primary point of contact with the College; all of the full-time academics, except the Principal and one Vice-Principal, operate open-door policies, so that students know that concerns and questions can easily be raised.

8.3 This is confirmed by 2017 NSS results: students felt they had been able to contact staff when they need to (95.2% positive, putting the College in the top 40 institutions; Q12), and recognised their membership in a community of staff and students (82.3% positive; the sector average is 70.3%; Q21). After meeting students, the University noted, "There was a constant line of communication with teaching staff at the College to support their [students'] learning and research."[46] An External Examiner recorded, "The personal and practice tutors should be commended on the work that they do to support and encourage students".[47]

8.4 In addition, the College inducts students into their studies thoroughly, taking account of individual needs, and informs students accurately about transitions and options in their studies. The College enables students to identify placements that are appropriate for them, with personal tutors and the Placements department playing key roles. The College's strategic and embedded focus on the individual means that there is a good range of optional modules, enabling students to develop their own interests and ensuring that teaching is personalised in terms of class size, with the median size being 12 students, and only 11% of classes having more than 30 students.

8.5 The College's overall figure for students with disabilities is high (19% in 2016-17), and more than half of them had a Specific Learning Difficulty. This is a result of the College's successful marketing strategy, which emphasises the quality of the Learning Support available to such students. The College's Learning Support tutors work with these students to empower them to make the most of their learning opportunities.

8.6 From the start of the 2017-18 academic year, and with the goal of further enhancing the College's strong continuation rates, the College offers two free sessions with a Learning Support tutor to any student who fails an assessment: the first session to help the student review and comprehend the reasons for the grade, and the second session to enable them to plan better for the next assignment. The impact of this additional service will be monitored by Academic Board.

8.7 Thus, students, in the 2017 EMS gave a 92% positive response regarding support for their learning.[48] Similarly, an External Examiner noted,

> "I'm particularly impressed with the individual pastoral relationships between tutors and students which are evident from comments on assessments and the like… and the availability of tutors to students outside classes is very good… My sense is of a very good learning community in which students are helped and supported to grow intellectually very well indeed."[49]

[44] Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework, 1.2.
[45] Quality Manual, 2017-18, 6.1.2.
[46] University of Gloucestershire, Partnership Review Report, 8.2.
[47] External Examiner Report 2016-17, BA Twilley, 11.1
[48] Extra-Modular Survey 2017, Q1.
[49] External Examiner Report 2016-17, BA Walton, 4.1.

9 Rigour and stretch (TQ3)

9.1 The rigour of the College's provision can best be attested to by external bodies. The College engages with regular scrutiny processes conducted by the University and QAA. The most recent processes concluded positively.

- At the end of the Higher Education Review (Plus) process, the QAA review team found that the College met national expectations in all four areas, identified three aspects of good practice, and made three affirmations and three recommendations.[50] The College addressed the items through an action plan, closed by the 2017 visit, and it was concluded that the College was making commendable progress in the monitoring, evaluation and enhancement of its HE provision.[51]

- In 2015, the College underwent processes of partnership approval and periodic review and revalidation of its programmes with the University. In the concluding report, the University team placed no conditions on the re-approvals, made two recommendations to the College, and gave a commendation for the clarity and helpfulness of the documentation supplied.[52]

9.2 For the last twelve years at least, External Examiners have raised no questions about the rigour of the College's processes and have consistently affirmed the maintenance of academic standards, and the robustness, rigour and consistency of the assessment processes.[53] Moderation and placement processes have been repeatedly singled out for particular praise, respectively, for example, "very good indeed"[54] and "very well developed and… to be commended."[55] Overall, assessments "provide students with a range of academic skills and practice abilities to demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes."[56]

9.3 The stretching of students is a function of the approach to teaching, including course design, which is discussed thoroughly throughout this report. Students have strongly affirmed the provision in these areas. In the NSS 2017, 98.4% of students found their course to be intellectually stimulating, and 96.8% reported that they had been presented with opportunities to explore ideas or concepts at depth.[57]

10 Feedback (TQ4)

10.1 The College's approach to assessment is directed by the strategy of its Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework.[58] This is embedded in practice, by means of various policies.[59]

10.2 The College uses few merely formative assessment exercises, but rather has developed a culture where every assessment is viewed as being as much formative as summative. To enable this, the College's management strategically schedules assessments across the year. The impact of formative feedback is critical in the learning processes of summative assessment. As an External Examiner stated,

[50] QAA Higher Education Review Report, 2014.
[51] QAA Educational Oversight Monitoring Report, 2017.
[52] Report of Partnership and PRRs, 2015.
[53] External Examiner Reports 2016-17, BA Salter, BA Walton, 3.3, 3.4.
[54] External Examiner Report 2016-17, BA Walton, 3.4.
[55] External Examiner Report 2016-17, BA Twilley, 11.1.
[56] External Examiner Report 2016-17, BA Twilley, 3.1.
[57] NSS 2017, questions 3, 5.
[58] Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework.
[59] Academic Staff Induction Policy; Moderation Policy; Feedback Expectations Policy.

> "The quality of marking and feedback is exemplary, including annotations on the (electronic) submissions and overall comments, usually of most of a page, which give detailed and clear advice on strengths and areas to improve (even for students scoring high marks)."[60]

10.3 Students agree: the positive TEF 2017 metric for assessment and feedback[61] is confirmed by a 91% positive response to "I have received detailed comments on my work" in the 2016 EMS.

10.4 The College has ensured that this approach is embedded across all its staff and at all locations through the policies and staff induction sessions. An External Examiner identified as an example of good practice the "very high quality of feedback and notes to students on assessment task [sic], which is consistent across the college's sites [i.e., modes]."[62]

10.5 The strong TEF metric for assessment and feedback over the two years masks an unevenness in the College's historical performance in this area. The metric is based on four NSS 2017 questions: the results of three of them put the College in the top 20% of institutions nationally, but the fourth is less than average. That weaker area relates to the timeliness of feedback. Since the end of the 2015-16 academic year, the College has put in place a number of measures to improve in this area, both line managerial and technological, and they and their impact are monitored by the Academic Board.[63] These measures have had a significant impact. The proportion of batches returned on time was only 79% in 2015-16[64] (and the NSS 2017 data, gathered in January 2017 would largely reflect that statistic from that previous academic year, since students would have had very few tasks due back by January). However, the proportion returned on time for the whole of 2016-17 was 90%. The College continues to work on the area, aiming for 100%.[65]

10.6 See also the discussions of rigour and stretch in the College's delivery (section 9) and of the learning evidence in student outcomes (sections 2, 3).

11 Student engagement in teaching and learning (TQ1)

11.1 The College's students are extremely enthusiastic about the quality of teaching they receive, with a TEF core metric of 94.5% for "The teaching on my course". The benchmark figure of 91.8% presumably reflects the high quality of teaching typical in similar institutions, but the quality of the College's teaching well exceeds this. The positivity about teaching is confirmed by other feedback from students, for example, in the 2016 EMS 96% of students were positive that staff had made the subject interesting.

11.2 These statistics, reflecting the student perception of teaching quality, are a result of the strategic and deliberate approach to learning and the mechanisms by which this approach is implemented, as discussed in all the preceding sections. The high level of student engagement is maintained by listening attentively to the student voice (the NSS 2017 result for "Staff value students' views and opinions about the course" was nearly 15% higher than the sector average). Student representatives are thoroughly trained[66] and are members of committees at all levels of management, from the Student Journey Enhancement Group, working on this submission, Course Committees, Academic Board, to the Board of Trustees. A recent Course Committee reviewed the various (six) surveys being used to gather information from

[60] External Examiner Report 2016-17, BA Walton, 3.3. Cf. the equally positive assessments External Examiner Report 2015-16, BA Walton, 3.3 and External Examiner Report 2014-15, BA Twilley, 3.3.
[61] TEF Year 3 Metrics,
[62] External Examiner Report 2016-17, BA Walton, 11.1.
[63] A standing item appears in all Academic Board minutes since June 2015.
[64] Academic Board minutes, 8 September 2016, 17.
[65] Academic Board minutes, 14 September 2017, 8.
[66] Student representative training materials.

undergraduates and concluded that the mechanisms are effectively enabling the College to respond well to students' concerns.[67]

11.3 The College recognises the virtuous cycle of high rates of engagement with teaching, that maintains high quality teaching, that promotes high rates of engagement. This is visible even to an External Examiner who only sees the results: "the quality of the student learning experience is very good".[68]

11.4 Attendance rates are presented as a final measure of the students' engagement with their learning opportunities. As of 4 January 2018, the mean attendance rate at all scheduled modular activities of all undergraduate students in the current year was 96.5%. The College suspects this is well above national averages.

11.5 For further discussion of the reasons for the highly engaging teaching of the College, see the preceding sections.

12 Summary

12.1 Students at Moorlands College are being taught excellently and attaining their personal goals. They report high levels of satisfaction (91.9% overall satisfaction in NSS 2017; 97% in EMS 2016) and External Examiners recognise "the very high quality of teaching and learning at Moorlands College."[69]

[67] BA Course Committee 7 July 2017, 12.
[68] External Examiner Report 2015-16, BA Twilley, 4.1.
[69] External Examiner Report 2016-17, BA Walton, 1.5.