TEF Year Four provider submission

Provider Context

We aim "to offer an inspirational student experience, enabling people, irrespective of their backgrounds, to fulfil their potential, develop as global citizens and meet their life and career goals". Our mission is "to create positive change in our students, staff, business partners and wider community". Our clear vision and delivery of consistently outstanding teaching, learning and student outcomes is outlined in examples below which demonstrate excellence exemplified in our rise through the league tables: 32 place rise for 'value added' (Guardian League table, 2019) and Graduate Prospects (Complete University Guide, rank 79 in 2019 compared to 91 in 2016). We believe the significant year on year increases in our full time cohorts' success and our part time cohorts' continued top level national success evidence the excellence and sustained impact of our strategic approach to learning and teaching in delivering our mission.

Through teaching, research, innovation, and knowledge exchange, the University is a significant driver of economic, cultural and social development in the City of Preston, Lancashire, Cumbria and the North West, benefitting diverse communities and business. The University's role is critical to the region's social and economic infrastructure, in driving forward strategies from the Northern Powerhouse to the Preston City Deal to secure more opportunities for skilled graduate employment.

- The University is the largest employer in Preston with 2,489 FTE staff and supports a total of 4,500 FTE jobs across the North West (Regeneris Consulting, 2018)
- In 2016/17, the University added £220m to the regional economy and spent £29m on bought in goods and services in the region, (£19m of this in Lancashire)[1]
- Procurement regulations support local wealth generation and social value in our role as an anchor institution in Preston. 21% of our top 300 suppliers are based within the city boundary.
- Our graduates generate an annual gross value add (GVA) of £24m in the North West[1]

Many of our students have deep regional family and cultural ties, with 81% originating from the North West, 95% of whom remain in the region after graduation. Lancashire is one of the most economically challenged counties in the UK and, true to our mission, we lead in supporting people from under-represented groups into HE. Widening participation is ingrained in our culture:

- UCLan exceeded all 12 HESA WP benchmarks in 2016/17
- 98.4%[2] of our Young FT Undergraduates were state school educated (ranked 19th of 153)
- 17.5%[2] were domiciled in Low Participation Neighbourhoods (ranked 25th of 153)
- Our percentage of students from lower social classes is growing year-on-year and currently stands at 45%, against the sector average of 33%

Students are at the heart of the values and culture of the University, cementing a strong relationship with the Students' Union (SU), built on the principles of partnership working, acknowledged in the Student submission to the 2015 (most recent) Higher Education Review: *"The Students' Union enjoys a good relationship with senior management of the university. Student officers have places on the majority of senior decision making committees including the university's Board of Governors, Academic Board, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee, and the Student Experience Committee. Officers regularly meet with senior colleagues throughout the university including the Vice Chancellor as well as School and Service management and maintain a direct point of contact with a member of university Directorate."*

The President of the Union, Chair of the University Board, the University Vice-Chancellor and Union Chief Executive have signed a Partnership Agreement which, based on guidance from the NUS and Association of University Chairs, codifies how we will work together for mutual benefit. Students are active on every committee at School, Faculty and University level, ensuring a strong student voice is central to decisions. The SU President is a member of the University Board of Governors. Students participate in the recruitment of academics, including senior positions. The SU received the NUS Quality Students Union accreditation (2017) as a 'Very Good Student's Union'.

The University actively supports the SU mission of "making life better for students", through regular SU meetings with the University Senior Executive Team and academic governance, to share

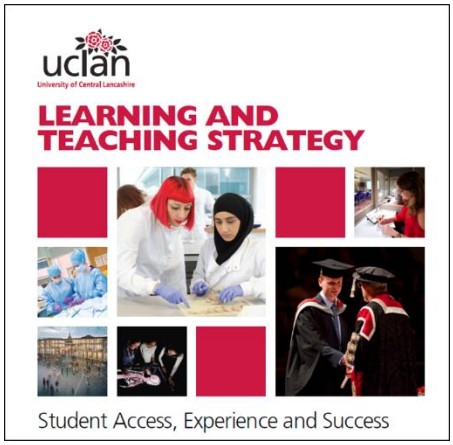
[1] *A Review of the University of Central Lancashire's Role as an Economic Anchor for Lancashire,* 25 June, 2018, Regeneris Consulting

[2] HESA, Widening Participation, Performance Indicators, 2018

the SU vision that "every student is able to take the opportunities that UCLan offers; be inspired, succeed and achieve their goals". Outcomes include: a new multi-faith space opened in May 2018; A University subsidised SUperBus to provide affordable transport for commuting students; and in 2017/18 the SU gained agreement through the University Student Experience and Engagement Committee for the adoption of a Student Voice Framework which coherently integrates the multiple ways in which students provide feedback and shape their university experience.

University leadership and governance is inclusive. Consultation for our University Strategic Plan 2015 to 2020, engaged the whole University community, led by the Chair of the Board of Governors, supported by the Vice-Chair and interim Vice-Chancellor, involved 14 open sessions with staff and students across the University, surveys and invitations for personal submissions. Our Board of Governors plays an active role in the oversight of quality management activities and monitoring strategic performance indictors, seven of which relate directly to the Teaching Excellence Framework. Our Learning and Teaching Strategy builds upon and articulates our focus on excellence and continuous improvement, involving broad engagement and consultation with colleagues and students and now informs university, faculty and school planning, resource allocation, and performance reporting.

We are confident our infrastructure ensures a resourced, prioritised and consistent approach to teaching excellence. The DVC Academic, supported by PVC Academic Development is responsible for strategy and leadership. The five Executive Deans, each supported by an Academic Development Director, are accountable for strategy delivery at Faculty level. PVC Academic Development has responsibility for our Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), development and implementation of the Learning and Teaching Strategy, and curriculum innovation. Professional service colleagues are responsible for quality assurance, student services, learning and information services, and estates.



THEMES

Our efforts will be focused around **five themes**

PEDAGOGY
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
ACCESSIBILITY
CURRICULUM
EMPLOYABILITY AND ENTERPRISE

Making UCLan the **PLACE** for students

The UCLan Learning and Teaching Strategy enhances the student experience, within a culture that places the highest value on establishing and maintaining meaningful relationships with and between students, embodied within a mnemonic of PLACE.

The effectiveness of our approach and commitment to learning and teaching was recognised by the positive outcome of the HER (March 2015). With multiple good practices highlighted including:

- The availability of international study opportunities for all students
- The embedded approach to widening participation and employability
- The Digital Shift project that enhances the student learning experience

Reviewers also commented on the effectiveness of course design, quality assurance systems, and the embedded approach to widening participation, employability, and internationalisation.

"A key component of the University's strategic approach to enabling student development and achievement is the embedding of employability into curriculum content and delivery. In addition the University recognises the educational benefits of preparing its students to become global citizens. The University has a commitment to its local region and the provision of educational opportunities for those from non-traditional backgrounds. The University's provision and the learning resources that support its delivery underpin the achievement of these aims and, as such, the review team considers the embedded approach to widening participation, employability and internationalisation is good practice…." (HER March 2015)

We recognise the importance of context. UCLan is a respected and improving university, with a focused approach that is making a difference. UCLan was shortlisted in five and won three categories at the Times Higher Education Awards (2018). We continue to grow our reputation as a centre of excellence for learning and teaching with a regional, national and international impact.

Statement on the Metrics

When reviewing our metrics, it is important to note the local context, specific mission and values of the University, in particular our economic context and the prior educational attainment and experience of our students. The TEF benchmarking methodology does not currently take account of regional economic circumstances, placing our University at a serious disadvantage, nevertheless it accentuates the successes we are seeing in year on year increases in graduate level employment and further study.

Majority mode (full-time)	*2014/15*	*2015/16*	*2016/17*
Positive outcomes	92.2%	93.9%	95.5%
Graduate Prospects	64.5%	70.0%	76.9%

In 2018 UCLan achieved its highest ever HESA Employment Indicator (Positive Outcomes) score with 95.5% of our leavers (full-time, UK domiciled, first degree) in work or further study. This is 0.9% higher than the sector score of 94.6% and above our benchmark of 94.7%. The TEF approach similarly underrates the very significant contribution to lifelong learning demonstrated by the sector-leading outcomes achieved by our part-time students. Our majority mode of study is full-time; however, we have 2,810 part-time students and are committed to excellence in this area, evidenced by the indicators that are consistently above or significantly above benchmark. Our highly skilled employment/further study results rank in the top 10% of absolute performance for the second consecutive year.

Almost half our students come from families with an annual household income of under £25,000, mostly below £20,000, and at least one third have caring responsibilities, including a significant number who are young adult carers. Through student surveys, we estimate approximately 70% of our full time students work part-time to support themselves. Many report financial pressures and stress. In a 2016 SU 'student feedback wall' initiative, over half of students' issues related to financial and debt pressures, evidence corroborated by our own and the SU's support teams. A substantial investment of £3.8m (2017/18) in student bursaries, hardship funds, academic and mentoring support advisors, and initiatives identified in our Access and Participation Plan continue to help to alleviate these pressures and enable students to engage with their studies. We regularly review our offer to remove any unexpected course costs; supported by the SU 'of course not' campaign where they work directly with Schools and Course teams to address these costs and promote the financial support available to students. We offer extra financial and mentoring support to leavers from care to encourage participation and success and adopt innovative approaches, for example our SU Christmas Day lunch party for students such as leavers from care or international students. Our leavers' survey assesses any impact of financial hardship and informs strategy, policy, and action. The SU offers budgeting and financial advice workshops.

The sole indicator from our core metrics below current benchmark, is the NSS, *teaching on my course*. Although it represents a fall from previous years, we remain confident in our strategic approach. Our confidence stems from value added and graduate outcomes data accompanied by:

- Results of internal University Student Survey scores are higher for comparable questions e.g. teaching on my course 2018 overall satisfaction 83% compared with NSS 81%;
- International Student Barometer results (autumn 2016) for "learning overall" are 88% compared to 87% global average and 86% for UK modern universities;
- Feedback from external examiners, interactions with PSRBs and other external experts in teaching and learning. The University's Institutional External Examiner (IEE) provides an objective view on how well the University responds to comments made by course level external examiners. The IEE's 2016/17 report noted "*areas of good practice include quality and style of feedback, range and innovation in assessment, quality of student support and of learning and teaching. Some of the positive comments made by EEs are also evidenced by the revised Learning and Teaching and Internationalisation Strategies*".
- Student feedback from student-staff liaison, formal committees, through regular meetings with course teams and mid-module and end of module questionnaires. The quality of teaching and support can be evidenced by the 1122 award nominations proposed by students since 2016/17 for the SU-led teaching awards, resulting in over 40 staff members being awarded.

We have been consistently rated above benchmark in our results for assessment and feedback (74% in 2018), reinforced by feedback from external experts. The University has a proven track record of success in widening access, maximising learning gain and supporting students' success, evidenced by the composition of our student and alumni population. Major strategic initiatives such as the significant expansion of the integrated foundation entry route in 2014/15, academic

development framework and graduate internship schemes, build on this in ways that maximise success while addressing any skills gaps arising from prior disadvantage. Ongoing work to eliminate attainment gaps based on students' ethnicity, has seen our BME graduate attainment gap reduce to one of the sector's lowest (2016/17: UCLan gap 11.5%, sector gap 13.6%). Our effectiveness is sustained by implementing a range of initiatives and approaches, embedded in core business. In 2017/18 an SU initiative enabled BAME community members to collectively influence the BAME student experience, making decisions about how personal experiences shape change that will positively influence future student experience. Our robust financial management enables investment in additional human, physical and digital resources to improve our ability to track, tailor support for, and maximise all students' engagement, performance and attainment during their studies.

We acknowledge the makeup of our student body and the challenges they face which create more barriers than experienced by contemporaries without prior disadvantage. This impacts disproportionately on engagement and attainment, but also satisfaction, as students struggle to balance competing commitments and expend more effort for the same gain. We partner with our students to build their resilience to challenges and to boost their success and wellbeing. Our rigour in assessment provision has strongly resisted the grade inflation experienced elsewhere in the sector, repeatedly verified in external feedback and recognised by students in their NSS feedback.

Around 40%[3] of our students commute to campus; a factor we believe influences not only academic progression rates but also satisfaction, well-being and feelings of belonging (Student Resilience: Unite Students Insight Report 2016). We create opportunities to engage together as communities of learners and develop a sense of community for all students. A key focus of this work is through the university-wide 'Creative Learning Spaces', 'Student Voice', and 'Assessment Strategy' programmes, implemented over the last three years. We have significantly invested in the development of our academic and support staff, curriculum development, and estate. Alongside access to innovative interactive learning spaces and the latest technologies, we have created an environment which enhances students' achievement and progression. The development of our staff enables them to draw on best practice in designing and delivering professional learning and in evaluating and feeding back on progress to elevate student attainment and enhance employability.

Our combination of embedded support for inclusive learning and study/academic /employment skills development within all our programmes, plus specific, targeted interventions for those requiring additional needs, has positively impacted progress toward achieving social mobility for many of our students. We significantly invest in initiatives designed to smooth the transition into HE and maximise engagement during the critical first year; developing strong communities of learning and cohort identity to strengthen academic performance from under-represented groups; re-engaging students who have withdrawn or are at risk of withdrawing; with specialist support for students with specific needs. Increasingly, we see the positive impact from more emphasis on working proactively with students, encouraging them to maximise their opportunities, as part of and in addition to their studies, building networks to support future success.

Our Institutional External Examiner's overview report highlights action taken in response to external examiner reports. This positively impacts on quality, particularly in providing assurance that systems to measure and externally oversee learning are robust and rigorous. *"There is a significant amount of good practice highlighted by external examiners. This covers aspects of assessment methods, student support, feedback, employability and moderation. There were some particularly positive comments across a number of reports with regards to innovative and effective assessment practices and their relevance to preparing students for work." (*2014/15 Report)

We welcome the recent improvement in Student Outcomes and Learning Gain indicators, particularly given the significant geographical disadvantage in relation to the availability of graduate level employment opportunities. In 2018 UCLan achieved its highest ever Graduate Prospect score (Times Calculation) of 76.9%, just above the sector median of 76%. Graduate prospects results in The Times Good University Guide have risen 30 places from rank 92 in 2016 to rank 62 in 2019.

Research conducted by the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership[4] identified the University's key role as a provider of high-level skills for Lancashire residents: in any given year, 1 in 100 of all

[3] Internal UCLan Market Segmentation Survey, 2018

[4] *Economic Contribution, Colleges, Training Providers and HEIs in Lancashire* Final Report, May 2016, Lancashire Enterprise Partnership

Lancashire residents are enrolled on courses at the University. The research noted Lancashire underperforms against the national average (excluding London) on a number of key indicators with 1,000 fewer jobs per 100,000 working age residents than the national average. Gross Value Added levels per worker and per head are below the national average (-£10,359 and -£6,605 respectively); and only 5 businesses per 1,000 working age residents, compared to UK's average 54. The rate of unemployment in Lancashire is slightly below the national average of 4.6%; when the number of jobs in the area is divided by the total population of working age, Lancashire ranks in the bottom third of the LEP regions[5]. The latest Regeneris review[6] of UCLan's role as an Economic Anchor, 2018 found:

- UCLan is well established as the main higher education provider - in any given year around 1% of all Lancashire residents are enrolled at UCLan.
- 78% of graduates entered graduate level employment six months after graduation.
- 43% of those graduates who found graduate level work stayed in Lancashire (around 2,250).
- Around 37% of employed graduates entered into a professional occupation, increasing to 46% for those who stayed in Lancashire. A large proportion of these were public sector occupations.
- UCLan contributes positively to social mobility (2016/17): 18% of undergraduates were from neighbourhoods with low participation rates in HE, compared with a national average of 11%.
- 77% of 2015/16 graduates from low participation neighbourhoods entered employment six months after graduation, higher than UCLan's overall average (74%); fewer went on to further study.
- The graduate retention rate in Lancashire has increased slightly since 2015 to 45%. Notably, this increases to 84% for those graduates who originate from Lancashire.

The findings of national research, as most recently summarised in the Sutton Trust report on the work of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Mobility (January 2017), show that students from disadvantaged backgrounds are less successful in gaining access to the top professions. "Less able, better-off kids are 35% more likely to become high earners than bright poor kids."[7]

Recognising these obstacles, we established a two-pronged approach to improving outcomes for our graduates. The first centres on our long-term commitment to Lancashire and the North West, contributing strongly towards improving the long-term regional prospects through active roles in the Northern Powerhouse and Lancashire LEP. We have developed a highly successful approach to encouraging entrepreneurship, embedding this theme throughout the curriculum, with an established and award-winning package of support for graduate start-ups. We offer business incubation support, action learning[8], networking and mentoring opportunities and, as a result, data from the Higher Education-Business and Community Interaction Survey has consistently shown us to be amongst the highest performing UK universities for the number of graduate start-ups and the quantity still active after three years. Since 2015-16, we have successfully supported 542 student and graduate start-ups and of the 1829 start-ups since 2008, 972 are still active, receiving life long career support.

The second prong focuses on ensuring we equip our graduates to flourish from the opportunities that are available. National research indicates that graduates with work experience are more successful in gaining high quality employment[9]; structured work experience is in every programme.

As the supplementary metrics show, we perform well against our benchmark for sustained employment or further study and our part-time students perform above benchmark (in some areas significantly) in both this and the above median earnings threshold or further study indicator. Skills formation in the region lags behind the national average by a small degree and the proportion of managerial and professional jobs lags the national average by 7 per cent. There is a mismatch between qualifications and jobs available in Preston, and in Lancashire overall skills available do not correlate strongly with jobs available.[10]

The University is aware of the concerns around ***grade inflation*** at all levels of education. We take our responsibilities as awarding body and custodian of academic standards seriously and are

[5] *Productivity in Lancashire, Sparking New Ideas,* Centre for SME Development, October 2018
[6] *A Review of the University of Central Lancashire's Role as an Economic Anchor for Lancashire,* 25 June, 2018, Regeneris Consulting
[7] *Social Mobility & Child Poverty Commission, 'Downward mobility, opportunity hoarding and the 'glass floor'*, Abigail McKnight, Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE), London School of Economics, June 2015, page 10
[8] Propeller (formerly Northern Lights) won at the Lancashire Business Awards (LBA) in 2015 for Best Business Enabler.
[9] All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Mobility, *The class ceiling: Increasing access to the leading professions,* 2017
[10] *A Review of the University of Central Lancashire's Role as an Economic Anchor for Lancashire,* 25 June, 2018, Regeneris Consulting

stringent in our arrangements for safeguarding standards. We also acknowledge the need to ensure parity with other HE providers, to ensure that we are not disadvantaging our students by awarding lower outcomes than they would have received elsewhere. We undertake regular review of our award algorithms. Although the supplementary metrics for this show an increase in first and upper second class honours awards and a corresponding reduction in lower class awards between 2008/09 and 2016/17, we note that the proportion of first and upper second class honours that we award remains below the sector average (2016/17: sector 74.9%, UCLan 69.2%). We also note the parallel increase in student success (graduate prospects increase 64.5% (2014/15) to 76.9% (2016/17)).

Teaching Quality

We commit to providing our students with an education which is challenging and inspiring, informed by a strong evidence base and an understanding of what works and why. Our approach is informed by an understanding of pedagogy, professional experience and the feedback we receive from our students and stakeholders. Our staff, working as part of a collaborative learning community, develop and support each other to provide the best possible education. Our Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) and well-qualified network of embedded academic developers has become a strong enabler for excellence.

Our University works hard to enhance practice that encourages ***effective student engagement with learning***. Our courses are characterised by research-led and research-informed teaching generating increasing independence in learners throughout programmes. We create the right balance between teaching staff input and independent learning, valuing active learning; offering multiple delivery modes to promote inclusive, flexible and engaging learning. We enable students to engage actively as learners and co-creators of learning content alongside the university, such as; working with curriculum development teams to influence delivery approaches, problem based and case based learning, group approaches to assessment support, elective / negotiated placement options and students presenting alongside staff at Faculty learning and teaching events.

Student feedback is imperative. Our student Voice project co-led by the DVC Academic and SU President successfully initiated new approaches, such as enhanced staff-student working, active student roles in university governance at all levels, enhanced Student Staff Liaison committees chaired by students and student feedback boards. We also monitor student complaints and act upon these at individual, local and university level.

Our institutional culture ***recognises and rewards excellence in learning and teaching***. We ensure that all teaching staff have access to a suite of educational and tailored subject-relevant CPD, practice opportunity and support for employer engagement, and conference attendance. As a benchmark performance standard, 'Fellow of the Higher Education Academy' assures us that professional standards underpin the performance of all employees.

- Every eligible employee has the UKPSF expectation written into the Statement of Particulars, as part of their employment contract. "The University is committed to high quality teaching and learning for all its students and is keen to assist all staff to develop their teaching capabilities. All staff with teaching responsibilities appointed to the University will, as a condition of appointment, be expected to achieve the appropriate category of UK Professional Standard Framework for Higher Education, normally within two academic years of joining the University. The category will be appropriate for the role you are undertaking. The University offers a number of routes towards accredited status, and you will be supported to undertake this as part of your agreed duties. Satisfactory engagement with this requirement will be a contributing factor in determining the completion of your probationary year. More experienced staff are expected to work towards Senior or Principal Fellow".
- To pass 'probation' individuals obtain Fellow status, or are on track to obtain this within 2 years.
- Fellowship of the HEA is required for internal promotion to Senior Lecturer.

The percentage of academic staff at UCLan with HEA Fellowship (70.6%, 2017/18) exceeds that for both the sector (42.8%) and other University Alliance partners (53.3%). The University has 700 Fellows, 17 Senior Fellows and 5 Principal Fellows. We have 8 NTF winners actively involved in supporting university teaching excellence. In 2019 we will implement the Academic Professional Apprenticeship. Where staff are appointed because of their experience outside of HE, they develop teaching competence through recognised professional development routes, assisted by CELT. A culture of continuous professional development exists at School, Faculty and University level. CELT deliver CPD workshops (500 colleagues in 2017/18), and supports faculties in staff development

activities such as training days, conferences and workshops. We recognise and reward teaching excellence including through student-led teaching awards, university events and awards:

- An annual Learning and Teaching Conference and events such as a mini conference on 'cultivating collaboration' showcase best practice such as: a network of 65 members all working on collaborative teaching projects; Faculty Learning and Teaching Conferences which staff describe as inspiring, fantastic, encouraging, effective, and enjoyable, helping to make connections and placing value on L&T. Staff who present at faculty conferences often go on to present at the university conference and externally, nurturing our talent.
- Pedagogic research writing group, online pedagogic research forum, and journal
- In 2016/17 the University revised the criteria and process under which the titles of Professor and Reader are awarded to recognise and reward excellence in performance that supports the delivery of the University's strategic objectives. The process utilises criteria that reflects a variety of career pathways; including teaching and learning. In 2 years, UCLan has awarded 4 teaching and learning Professors (33% of all promotions to this level) and 5 Readers.
- The University Students' Union Golden Roses and 'We ❤ you' awards. Golden Rose winners share their good practice with colleagues through workshops which are recorded and accessible online. Using student nominations to inform teaching practice is an excellent way to put students at the forefront of shaping their university experience and this initiative.
- The Vice-Chancellor's 'University Stars' reward process recognises excellence in leadership and in supporting students. Winners are recognised at an annual winter celebration event.
- The University makes annual staff performance related pay awards of up to 1% salary linked to student feedback and student outcomes.

We proactively seek and respond to feedback through reports from external examiners, professional body accreditations, employer advisors and periodic course reviews, which include meetings with students. The impact and quality of teaching is reviewed and good practice shared within our peer observation scheme involving all academic staff. Course team development and enhancement of learning is supported through the course based Observations of Teaching Scheme, with actions directly aimed at achieving consistency of student experience across groups. The leadership and management structures of our faculties, schools and academic registry have been strengthened to drive forward a culture of continuous improvement and ensure effective oversight.

Our approach to learning and teaching is to provide ***rigour and stretch*** for all students in inclusive ways, stimulating and driving the quality of their engagement with learning. UCLan is a broad and diverse university where we respond and adapt to the diverse needs of learners. We build stretch and challenge into the curriculum. The challenge of creating real outputs is stimulating for students. UCLan TV, initially commissioned to make six 30 minute programmes for SkySports has in 2018/19 been commissioned to make another 10 for Sports and 10 for Arts. Teaching practice on the TESOL course enables students to work with international learners to support their learning as well as the wider community including asylum seekers and immigrants. The UCLan Dental Clinic, our Law Clinic and our THES (2018) award winning student publishing house all provide opportunities for students. Our specialist and interactive learning spaces enable teaching teams to provide stretch to enable students to meet their full potential in both practical and academic ways through project work and independent (and nurtured) engagement with external partners.

We provide outstanding outcomes for students from all backgrounds enabling them to develop independence, knowledge and skills, testing and challenging their attitudes and behaviours in an external context. In April 2018, UCLan students participated in, and won, the first ever 'Great Ideas Hack'. Working with business experts and international trade advisers, the initiative encouraged aspiring exporters to develop their thinking and understanding about the importance of international trade and investment. Students from the School of Physical Science and Computing won the Defectives University Challenge (2018). We support the transition into HE through a personalised learning experience, our Peer Assisted Study Scheme (PASS). The activities are student led, PASS leaders are encouraged to allow the participants to set the agenda. Our evaluation of the scheme confirms that it benefits lower year students in terms of social aspects of university life and learning, together with a greater understanding of their programme of study, and for the PASS Leaders in terms of enhanced employability skills and a renewed understanding of how learners learn, which increases attainment in their own studies.

We value, learn from, and embed sector leading practice. Our improving performance in the NSS ***assessment and feedback*** questions is partly a result of a sector-leading partnership initiative with

the HEA (2016/17) to extend towards an 'assessment for learning' driven framework, through which we can rationalise summative assessment, enabling a clearer focus on formative assessment. The HEA Assessment Labs consisted of a three-part series of workshops delivered to senior management, senior staff and 60 academic staff members across 10 programmes. The Assessment Labs have been a threshold experience for the majority of participants, in terms of their understanding and embracing of a programme level view of assessment, supported by participants' feedback. UCLan has subsequently taken ownership of the Assessment Lab process, thus contributing to a culture of continuous improvement.

Our assessment policies are designed to effectively support students' development, progression and attainment, through the delivery of high quality and timely feedback on student work. Our minimum standards are inclusive learning assessment and written feedback within 15 working days; although other forms of feedback are earlier. External examiners often report assessment as being of good quality, constructive, comprehensive, supportive, innovative, and providing opportunities to apply theory to practice:

- *'The quality of the feedback given to students is highly commendable: you can see that the tutors are reflecting on creative writing practice and technique in their comments to students so that students can build on what they have already produced*' – BA (Hons) English Language and Creative Writing (2016/17).
- *'The use of voice comment in feedback is fantastic and enhances the feedback given to students considerably'.* BSc (Hons) Psychology (2016/17).
- '*The programmes are structured and well designed; modules incorporate both theoretical, practical and self-learning elements*.' MEng/BEng (Hons) Electronic Engineering (2016/17).

Students influence all aspects of university life. Our ethos is to ***work in partnership with students*** to the benefit of our strategic approach and enhancement of provision. Together we recognise and act upon the wishes of the student voice, promote equality and diversity and encourage mutual respect and understanding of each other's distinct roles. We proactively seek and respond to student feedback through formal and informal processes, with an ethos of continuous monitoring, timely and effective response to areas for improvement. '*The strength of this programme is in the team work demonstrated by the staff delivering the programme. They are very responsive to student feedback and reflective on their practice, this lead to enhancement of the curriculum and its delivery in a timely fashion*.' External Examiner for MSc Industrial Pharmaceutics (2016/17)

Students are active members of working parties, all enhancement projects and task and finish groups. Elected Student Presidents work in partnership with School leadership teams. They chair the Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC). Student Course Representatives also play an important role in gathering feedback from students and creating shared solutions, feeding outcomes back to fellow students, and referring students to the relevant Students' Union or University service.

Learning Environment

Our creative and integrated ***physical and digital resources*** and facilities create an environment for students to thrive in diverse physical locations, contexts and cultures. We invest in specialist spaces with access to all who need them, ensuring that our learning environment remains contemporary and increasingly immersive in nature. Examples include our fully updated Broadcast Journalism suite, £550k investment in our interactive Anatomy Resource Centre including, Hi fidelity mannequins, anatomy models, virtual dissection tables, VR kit, mobile technology and associated apps. Our £350k Hydra Minerva immersive learning suite, flight simulator and new subsonic and supersonic wind tunnels are all to the benefit of student learning.

Following our Digital Shift project we continue to invest in the physical infrastructure, teaching tools, and staff development. In 2016 the University distributed around 1500 Microsoft tablets to all academic staff alongside a digital capability workshop, with an aim to raise awareness of the support available through our Technology Enabled Learning & Teaching Team (TELT). This support is supplemented with the placement of learning technologists for each faculty, to build relationships and integrate technology. This initiative has taken place alongside a £5m classroom refurbishment project (Creative Learning Spaces) to optimise student engagement and participatory learning. An evaluation survey completed by over 200 users found that the investment in tablet technology has enhanced productivity and improved performance. *"I have used my surface pro to record videos for lectures on my modules via Office Mix which the students find really useful! I can more successfully*

and efficiently work anywhere …. I can look things up in class and show things to a student individually…. I can respond to student queries almost instantly, wherever I am as I can look things up … I have instant access to everything, can find material quickly and easily. I can honestly say this device has changed my working life. I love it and would be lost without it." Faculty of Science & Technology

The refurbishment of all 170 general teaching spaces included the provision of flexible furniture, state of the art IT and Audio-Visual technology, wireless projection capability, event recording technology and a docking device for the user's new tablet computer to facilitate enhanced in-class capabilities and more active and participatory teaching approaches. A room information guide in every teaching space offers visual examples of possibilities for delivery. Not all students embrace change quickly and the radical changes to rooms, approaches and pedagogy may have influenced the NSS scores 2017, as this represented a move towards more active participation in learning. The University continues to monitor this and seek feedback.

Collaborations with Microsoft created a co-hosted ground-breaking conference on the transformational benefits of technology in learning and teaching (2017), attracting over 200 delegates from Universities, Colleges, and suppliers across the UK and Ireland, focusing on the use of Microsoft Office 365, Windows 10 and Surface technologies in learning and teaching. Contributions from the University's Executive Team, CELT, TELT and external partners, drew overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees. Microsoft now describes the University as "UK Higher Education Tech trend setters". Other expertise is recognised externally:

- Amanda Taylor, Senior Lecturer in Social Work, was nominated 3rd in the shortlist of "Female GovTech Digital Leaders" for her innovative approach to learning and teaching.
- Chris Melia, our Digital Learning Technologist for the Faculty of Health and Wellbeing, was shortlisted for the ALT Learning Technologist of the Year 2018 award, with blog entries published on the Microsoft Education blog and the Association for Learning Technology website.
- In March 2018 our work on the Creative Learning Spaces project, dubbed "People, Places, Pedagogy", was shortlisted for the Educate North Innovation Award.

As a means to recognise achievements of our academic staff in their digital skills development, at the start of 2018-19 we introduced our "DigiLearn" programme; an institutional recognition framework, that enables and empowers colleagues in sharing their digital approaches, reflecting on practice and celebrating success. Aligned to one or more of the five themes (PLACE) in the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy there are three levels of achievement, recognised by a certificate, lanyard and online badge.

Our strategic goal is to align technology and pedagogy, evidenced by: our annual Digital Learning Conference; development of a range of combined CPD learning programmes; the creation of a centrally supported academic development hub to showcase technology integrated activities. Staff are supported through an extensive portfolio of learning support delivered through an online staff development hub entitled E3 (*Evaluate, Empower and Enhance*). Use of a localised version of the JISC Digital Capabilities Tool, provides an assessment of the user's current skills and recommends the most appropriate workshops for targeted and relevant personal development. This has been particularly successful in identifying Faculty champions, collating case study examples and developing learner communities to facilitate the sharing of best practice.

The International Student Barometer (ISB) survey (2017) showed that 94.5% of UCLan students were satisfied with the online learning environment, compared to 91.1% globally (5th out of 120 providers) and 91.6% in the UK – the highest-ranking score of all 31 UK providers who entered. 95.6% of UCLan students were satisfied with learning technologies, compared to 90.1% globally and 91.9% in the UK, putting us 15th out of 120 providers globally and 3rd out of 31 providers in the UK.

As a founding signatory of the Technician Commitment, the University actively promotes and supports its technicians through professional accreditation. All of our Performing Arts technicians are affiliated members of the Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT), all of our Learning Technologists are Chartered Members of the Association of Learning Technologists (CMALT), and many of our Science technicians have achieved RSci, IST accreditation.

Our investment in library facilities enables every student to maximise opportunities to benefit from our resources. The inclusion of information skills in the curriculum is key, with library staff delivering training sessions directly to 9,000 students (360 information skills sessions in semester one of 2016/17). The University provides over 280,000 physical library books in addition to over 350,000 electronic resources to support learning, spending £2.4m annually. To increase accessibility and flexibility we prioritise the procurement of electronic/digital library resources where possible. Throughout the academic year, hour-long appointments are available to book 1-2-1 "Ask" meetings with a librarian; popular with students including those with specific learning difficulties, postgraduates and from partner colleges. Appointments are managed through the student relationship management (Starfish) system, meaning easier and clearer referrals and a record of engagement.

UCLan has a range of student support facilities on campus, including a Medical Centre and Pharmacy, a Pre-school centre and Multi-faith Centre. The University has two excellent Sports Centres - the UCLan Sports Arena and the Sir Tom Finney Sports Centre, offering free membership to all students at the Preston Campus. Ongoing investment includes the new £1.6m Oasis Faith and Spirituality Centre centre opened in 2018, to encourage people in the pursuit and development of faith and wellbeing, and to promote understanding and respect amongst members of different faiths. The chaplaincy team offer pastoral and spiritual support for all. There is a place to make a hot drink, meet others and relax. There are rooms for prayer, meditation, reading and quiet reflection.

A £7.7m investment to develop new social spaces, with two large areas at each end of campus (opened early 2018) and 28 additional smaller spaces across the campus, provide a non-monetarised environment where students meet and collaborate, can network and partake in informal learning. This is particularly important for commuting students and is popular for peer support meetings. Water fountains have been installed across campus and larger spaces are equipped with free kitchen facilities (access to cold and boiling water, and a microwave).

The learning environment is enriched by scholarship, research and professional practice. UCLan's Learning and Teaching strategy is based on developing, supporting and clearly articulating the research-teaching focus in all of our programmes. There is a strong emphasis on professional practice, particularly where the subject has as significant practice element. We develop scholarship that underpins and enhances quality enhancement and quality assurance. Through clusters of communities of practice and innovative scholarship we respond to challenges and find solutions in learning and teaching. For example

- The THES award (2018) winning Recycling Lives project where students learn through experience working on site with researchers achieving breakthroughs in bio-energy
- Lancashire Forensic Science Academy (LFSA) where placement students work on live research projects contributing directly to the policing practice
- Student placements built into the university's procurement processes, e.g. for engineering, architecture and design students in our newly built Engineering and Innovation Centre,
- Senior academics such as Professor Soo Downe, and our Turner prize winner, Professor Lubaina Hamid are actively involved in the development and delivery of courses

We focus on ***personalised learning*** provided in a supportive environment that enables student progression and attainment. As a '*Healthy University'* we work to create a learning environment and organisational culture that enhances/improves the health, wellbeing and sustainability of our community. We support the progression of learners through our integrated student support, responding and adapting to their diverse needs. As with many in the sector UCLan is seeing increasing numbers of students requiring additional support.

	15/16	**16/17**	**17/18**	**% diff**
Disability	2,818 [20% MH]	3,171 [26% MH]	3,485 [28% MH]	+24%
Mental Health/Counselling	582/1072	986/1,285	2,547/1,228	+337% / 13%
Student Financial Support	13,405	19,519	22,873	+70%

We provide holistic support to students through a single point of entry; frontline team for high volume queries, specialist teams for those with more complex needs including disability and dyslexia, mental health, counselling, wellbeing, student financial support, accommodation, safety, security, safeguarding, childcare and faith. This ensures students receive timely support first time. Specialist wellbeing and mental health staff work with students and liaise with other services, such as the NHS. We provide individual support plans that properly recognise the needs of each student, be they part time, full time or employer sponsored.

Through the extensive external network which augments our own provision (NHS, Police, Young Addaction, Safe Centre, Public Health England, faith leaders) students have rapid/appropriate support from a range of services beyond those directly provided by the University. These service providers also inform our strategies. For example our Suicide Reduction Strategy has been developed with Papyrus, Lancashire Care and Lancashire County Council. Through our close links with a range of charities and organisations we support students with the challenges they face. Examples include the SAFE Centre, Young ADDAction, A&E Liaison, Lancashire Constabulary, Samaritans, Papyrus, Cruse, Lancashire Eating Disorder, and Public Health England. We also offer specific support for carers, care leavers, LGBT+ students, and estranged students, those managing maternity, paternity and adoption and specialist services covering sexual violence, safeguarding, addiction, domestic violence, bullying and harassment.

Perhaps the most distinctive aspect of the Service is its development of proactive activities, to complement our reactive support, for example, 'Well@UCLan' programme (e.g. sleeping properly/managing anxiety etc.), an 'Activate your Mind' programme, based on the '5 Ways to Wellbeing', together with 1-2-1 appointments and drop-ins during the day, evenings and weekends, which actively reduce student crisis incidents. Our 'Time to Talk' drop-in sessions are available every day and include options for evening and weekends. We tailor support to the need of the individual. For students with additional learning needs, our Inclusive Support Advisers work closely with them from application to graduation ensuring adjustments are in place through individual support plans.

Teaching staff use Blackboard (our virtual learning environment) to share learning materials in advance, so that a student can adapt it to the format that best suits them. Teaching sessions are routinely recorded (using Relay technology) and uploaded to Blackboard. Our team of specialists provide both personal advice and access to equipment and assistive technology, which is available across the UCLan IT network. Student services and academic colleagues work as one team to ensure the appropriate support is in place in the classroom and throughout assessment periods:

- Staff teaching deaf students receive deaf awareness training and are supported in the classroom by an Interpreter and Note taker. Staff include subtitles on video material, routinely captioning UCLan produced video content, and follow specific guidelines for assessing work.
- Wellbeing/Mobility Ambassadors
- Visually impaired students have access to all of our library resources, including an assistant to help them locate material. We provide screen reader e-copies of resources.
- Learners with Autistic Spectrum Disorder have access to a specialist mentor and specific adjustments in class and assessment, together with a transition day, to manage change.
- Students registered with a disability have access to one-to-one library support. The Library book scanner prepares physical texts for an OCR reader. The output of this can be used by students who are covered by the Intellectual Property Office: Exceptions to Copyright: Accessible formats for disabled people. Using this service, the library teams can pro-actively prepare core items from the reading lists of all specifically referred students. In 2016 we were very proud to receive the inaugural George Pitcher award for this initiative.

All students have access to excellent study support services. Our WISER ("Walk-In Study Enhancement & Review"), service provides academic support to all students enrolled on University courses, helping them to study more effectively and communicate at an advanced and professional level. WISER provides 1-1 tutorial support (1919 sessions in 2017/18), dissertation support, weekly workshops (50% increase in attendance 2015/16 – 17/18; n=813) as well as maintaining a Blackboard space (2017/18, 6578 enrolments, an increase of 23% usage from the previous year), and a website to support students on their journey towards being an independent learner. The service also supports course teams to embed study support into the curriculum and organises bespoke specialist workshops for students, in conjunction with module tutors or course leaders. In 2016 the WISER team won a Students' Union Golden Rose award for University Service of the Year.

- *"Without wiser I wouldn't have been able to achieve the grades I did with my first assignment, I have come such a long way since using their service."*
- *"They're always really helpful and ensure I understand everything. I find they help when stress is rising, and deadlines are creeping they make you feel supported"*

Furthermore, the UCLan Language Academy supports over 200 international students through the language support consisting of course specific language modules, general academic English modules, drop-ins and workshops. Our Student Financial Support Team provide help to students in managing their finances, liaising with Student Finance England and providing emergency loans for those who face unexpected costs. In addition to bursaries, UCLan sets aside £1 million per annum to support priority groups, such as estranged students, carers, care leavers, disabled students, and student parents. We monitor student engagement through 'Starfish'. The Starfish system allows students to easily access support, book meetings with academics and support services online, as well as allowing academic support staff access to key information stored in a single secure location.

Through our one university approach academic colleagues are informed and proactive in signposting students to relevant support services so that they can achieve their learning goals and mitigate 'life' problems that may otherwise prevent learning. We commit to providing every student with an Academic Advisor who will meet at least three times per year (with options for more regular support at key parts of the study journey) to provide insight and direction to enable students to realise their potential. Students can also book appointments directly with their Advisor. A key purpose of this role is to provide feedback on and evaluate student progress towards established goals (successes, motivation, attendance, skills development, employability) and encouragement of student self-development including engagement with extra-curricular opportunities (which may help to foster a sense of belonging, provide social and cultural integration and help with employability development). The role and the training was reviewed in 2017/18 through a project to enable student success through the support of confident, competent and enabled academic advisors. Staff feedback included: "*The workshop was delivered in a clear, informative and engaging way. It felt very much like staff were supported in the role and I think this is key in being a confident and effective advisor. Having a co-ordinator in the School is particularly important*".

Student Outcomes and Learning Gain

The University's Learning and Teaching Strategy has a theme dedicated to employability and enterprise with a specific focus on enabling students to gain the ***transferable skills*** that equip them for their careers, and enhance their professional lives. We develop graduate attributes through in curricula and extra curricula, accredited and non-accredited opportunities for skills acquisition. To ensure the relevance of knowledge, skills, work-readiness and personal development we are proactive in developing, adapting and reviewing our curriculum to meet student, employer and market needs. CELT support course teams through periodic course review and course approval to ensure best practice with a focus on inclusivity and employability. An internal audit (by PWC) of student employability identified leading practice compared to other institutions including:

- The CareerEDGE model as a framework to ensure employability is embedded within programmes, providing online resources to students, including e-learns, CV checking and the ability to book a one on one careers appointment or register to attend a careers event.
- Our strategy on "Employability and Enterprise" stipulates that employability must be embedded into each course in order to be approved by the University.
- CELT periodic reviews that assist academic staff in further integrating employability into courses.
- Monthly monitoring to determine the level of student engagement with the Careers Service.
- A partnership forum between UCLan and partner colleges to facilitate regular communication with employability regularly discussed.

PWC found a clear focus on employability across the Schools where action plans are adjusted when DLHE results are received, embedding employability into modules, assignments and CV/job application skills sessions, while encouraging our alumni network to speak to students as well as developing relationships with employers. An excellent example of this is our all day careers showcase / dragons den events (CJam) which create opportunities for students to pitch for placements. In November 2018, from 5 events, students were offered 320 placements by employers.

The University's longstanding strategy to seek relevant professional body accreditations has led to our courses gaining over 230 accreditations from approximately 70 accrediting bodies, with

approximately 50% of our undergraduate degrees carrying recognition. Wherever possible, courses have additional qualifications built into the curriculum, not only to support student progression into employment, but to develop students' independence, work readiness and skills. Staff are encouraged to refresh skills and maintain professional qualifications through links and immersion in discipline related work alongside their academic practice.

Our focus is on supporting students through their academic and wider experiences, enabling progress into ***graduate level employability or higher study***. In the last DLHE (2016/17 leavers) 95.5% were in employment or further study – exceeding our HESA benchmark of 94.7% and up from 92.2% in 2016/17, and 76.9% in graduate level employment or further study (up from 64.5% in 2016/17) (based on *The Times* methodology). Our Matrix kite mark quality assured Careers Service has received additional investment during the past three years; including the addition of qualified Guidance practitioners (all members of AGCAS) to support Schools. 84.7% of International students were satisfied with careers advice received (compared to 71% globally and 78.2% in the UK, ranking UCLan in the top 25% of all institutions; ISB 2017). Enhancements to our careers centre provide additional private interviewing space, drop in facilities, and additional digital investment to support online access. Our comprehensive careers case management system is integrated with our student records system, alongside an extensive employability resources platform. In 2017/18 we delivered over 300 career development workshops to students and greeted over 4,000 students for one to one guidance support. Our lifelong careers offer supports graduates at any point in their career journey and post-graduation. Student feedback shows that 99.5% of students surveyed in 2017 would recommend the careers service to a friend.

We hold a register of almost 2000 employers, many of whom have previously recruited UCLan graduates. Through our annual careers fairs and events, employers inform us of the skills they seek. We have invested in a number of online employability platforms to give 24hr access to professional skills training, information and technical courses, all designed to help prepare students for the world of work. Tailored to a wide range of learning styles the platforms (Abintegro and Lynda.com) provide access to over 6,400 courses in Business, Technology and Creative Skills taught by industry experts. In June 2018 there were 10,000 views on video and 1,674 logins. Whilst the most popular careers tools are the CV builder and interview simulator, many students also access essential training content such as C++, JavaScript, HTML, and Python.

We endeavour to enable students from all backgrounds to ***achieve positive outcomes***. "*The University will create an inspirational student experience, enabling people, irrespective of their backgrounds, to fulfil their potential, develop as a global citizen, and meet their life and career goals*" (University Strategy, 2015-2020).

The University's provides high-level skills for Lancashire residents. Evidence in the Lancashire Innovation Plan (March 2018) shows that 5% of the Lancashire population is employed in professional, scientific and technical roles (as a % of all jobs) compared to 7% in the Northwest and 8% across GB. 13.4% of jobs in the Lancashire LEP area are in manufacturing, compared with the national average of 8.1%. Lancashire ranks in the bottom third of LEP areas for job density (78% in 2015) and Lancashire consistently ranks in the bottom 10 LEPs for gross hourly pay (source: NOMIS 2017). 74% of our graduates stay within the North West. In line with our mission, many of our students come from non-traditional and disadvantaged backgrounds, are the first in their family to participate in HE, and are firmly embedded within their communities. There are significantly fewer major blue chip or market leaders in our geography, meaning fewer jobs with the 'Graduate' job description that is the norm within larger organisations. In key areas such as Accountancy and Finance we have large cohorts of local British Asian students who go on to work for successful family business. These types of businesses are not reflected in the DLHE favourably.

We proactively provide all students with opportunities for work-based and work-related learning through structured work experience. Our undergraduate Research Internship Scheme allows students to experience 'real world' research over the summer. Around 50 students are employed as research assistants each year and given the opportunity to participate in a full range of research activity. We work with a wide range of employers' networks to develop and deliver our successful and increasing Degree Apprenticeship provision (2018, 500+ learners) to meet their requirements for highly skilled workers. These combine an excellent educational experience with progression to highly skilled employment. Curriculum teams in all Faculties are supported by employer advisory boards (which advise on curriculum, skills and graduate attributes and engage students on live projects, set and assessed jointly with employers and personalised to the learner).

Our creative students produce films within an industry standard film setting. Our law courses embed a legal and transferable skills spine including mediation training and support extra-curricular activities which have led to our students winning the national mediation competition, with one of our students going on to win the world wide competition as individual mediator of the year. Our strong links to industry/practice expose our students to 'real world' issues and challenges via placements, visiting lecturers and work-based projects. Our collaboration with ITV, Coronation Street and Emmerdale, on innovating TV continuing drama production processes, created the Soap in a Week project (2017). This event involved over 150 students from Journalism, TV production, Film production, Music Production, Screenwriting and Acting, giving them unprecedented access to a range of technical, production and acting professionals in line with real-world experience. Students got their first on-screen credit which is a significant door opener for work in the industry. In 2018 a similarly successful 'musical in a week' production, was also supported by alumni and shared with local schools as part of our outreach activity.

Our strong links to industry/practice expose our students to 'real world' issues and challenges via placements, visiting lecturers and work-based projects. UCLan was the only university mentioned in the 2015 BBC Academy and Creative Skillset English Regions Skills Review, concerning Building a Stronger Broadcast Media Beyond London. The report notes the university's initiative to establish a finishing school to plug a skills gap; The Creative Learning Zone has afforded over 100 students the opportunity to deliver quality services and products to 15 large employers. UCLan's collaborative agreement with Lancashire Constabulary created the Lancashire Forensic Science Academy (LFSA) to jointly deliver courses creating over 300 placement opportunities annually. Many of these initiatives also offer valuable services to the local community, such as our Dental Clinic and pro bono Law Clinic. Despite being one of the country's newest Dental Schools, our graduate employment rate has topped the national tables with 100% for the past three years.

Now in its 8th year, the UCLan *LaunchPad Leadership Development Programme* (offered to students) has gone from strength to strength. In 2017 it was nominated in two categories in the Educate North UK Leadership Awards. It also hosted the first Annual LaunchPad Ball (run by and for the current students and Alumni), and gained recognition from the Chartered Management Institute who have granted Approved Programme Status. The students and graduates continue to achieve at all levels with those now in graduate roles starting to enter Senior Management. The data inclusive of 2017/18 graduates, shows that 95% of participants achieve a 1st or 2:1 degree and that 95% secured a graduate level role or went on to further study.

Through employability based final year project modules there is a move from traditional dissertations into more applied project based modules, encouraging students to work with local, national and international companies which are now delivered by partners such as VTC in Hong Kong. Through the Lancashire Forensic Science Academy partnership undergraduate students work alongside Police Officers and staff whilst on placement and during projects. Our networking with employers in the region has allowed Undergraduates to present their ideas to potential employers. One employer said: "*working with UCLan has been of great benefit. …From a commercial point of view, we have been fortunate to have the two presentations and for the students to think outside the box and suggest something we have not been thinking of. The two presentations delivered some unique concepts that we can take away and digest*." A student reported, "*I will be able to talk about this experience in years to come. I feel as though I have more confidence and will benefit me in the future as I'll be able to talk about in interviews with future employers".*

A particular challenge for our students from lower socio-economic backgrounds has been financing postgraduate study. Professional practice loans and family support are rarely available to such groups. This has been evidenced by the significant increase in applications by our students for postgraduate study when the fully funded HEFCE bursary was available to under-represented students for study in 2015-16. With the availability of SLC loans, our applications during 2016-17 increased by 31.3% (following an increase of 33.1% in 2015/16). We strongly encourage our new graduates to actively consider further study as a way of helping them to compete more effectively in the job market. In the 2015/16 (1st year), applications for PG loans was the highest in the country and this trend continues. This explains our previous lower rates of progression to postgraduate study, and will in future impact positively on students' outcomes. Our significant role in supporting lifelong learning is demonstrated by the very strong performance of our part-time graduates. The UCLan Graduate Placement Scheme (operating for 5 years) provides paid roles with employee benefits, training and coaching. Interns have secured high profile jobs as a result.

As recognised in a recent UKCES Working Futures 2014-2024 Evidence Report, the nature of jobs changes over periods, meaning that those roles previously regarded as lower skilled can gradually develop professional status. The most recent example of this is policing, which has now established a requirement for those within the Police Force to hold a degree. Indeed, the Social Mobility Commission recognised in its 'State of the Nation 2016' report that HE is increasingly an entry bar for associate professional occupations, such as paramedics, police officers, IT technicians. As a University which is closely in-tune with the skills requirement of our local region, we pioneer newly designed and tailored qualifications. Unfortunately, as Standard Occupational Classifications are only updated every decade, this does mean that some of our graduates who gain employment within these newly emerging professional fields have their roles coded as non-professional, which impacts on our figures for highly skilled employment.

UCLan is a large institution, proud to be offering a broad curriculum. Much of our offer leads to relatively conservatively paid public sector employment or self-employment. 30.6% go on to work for a public sector organisation (87.4% are in a graduate level job compared to just 62.9% in a graduate level job in the private sector). The majority of the students working in the public sector have studied Nursing degrees (DLHE 2016/17).The extent to which courses clearly prepared students for the world of work was commended by external examiners, who acknowledged courses were directly relevant to practice. The 2015 HER Report recognised that "*a key component of the University's strategic approach to enabling student development and achievement is the embedding of employability into curriculum content and delivery. In addition the University recognises the educational benefits of preparing its students to become global citizens. The University has a commitment to its local region and the provision of educational opportunities for those from non-traditional backgrounds … the review team considers the embedded approach to widening participation, employability and internationalisation is good practice".*

With one of the largest university-based volunteering centres in the UK, the University offers a huge range of CPD accredited opportunities within the local community, and internationally. In 2015 there were 2600 students undertaking volunteering opportunities, compared with 500 students two years previously. Students are able to broaden their horizons, experience something new or apply existing skills to gain additional qualifications, including accreditation from the Institute of Leadership and Management. Through volunteering, students receive discounts on various Leadership, Project Management or Sport Coaching qualifications. Other examples include:

- Opportunities for students to network with successful exponents of the careers they would like to pursue through the Great Northern Creative Expo; a full week of 40 events showcasing creative talent in media, film, photography, journalism, music and performance.
- Opportunities for students to engage, develop and participate in a variety of creative local events, such as the Lancashire Encounter which transforms key city locations to enable students to display their talent through performances, installations, and music.

The University's Lancashire Arts Festival Degree Show (2018) was acknowledged at a special awards ceremony sponsored by Creative Lancashire. In total, 15 awards were presented to students from creative disciplines including architecture, design, fine art, fashion, global studies, languages, media and performance. Creative Lancashire's Creative Director said: "*The nominees have done a phenomenal job and all deserve to be here. Businesses need innovators and these students have passion and value to take with them beyond university into industry*. "In recognition of the diverse student population at UCLan these are important opportunities for students to develop their social capital. In 2016 the University won the THE award for Excellence and Innovation in the Arts in relation to the Global Sound Movement (GSM), a unique digital arts student volunteering project launched in 2014-2015 in our Faculty of Culture and the Creative Industries. GSM launched a revolutionary sustainable fundraising platform, enabling the western music industry to utilise sounds from extremely rare and exotic instruments, enabling them to be used commercially by music producers. The money generated by the 'sound' library has been donated back to the communities from which the sounds were recorded.

The University is proud of the education we offer and the commitment we make to student success: every student, regardless of background or geography deserves every opportunity to succeed. Our strategic approach to learning and teaching recognises the diverse nature of our provision and our student population. The information provided here sets the context to our delivery of year on year increases in the success of full time cohorts and the continued top level national success of part time cohorts.