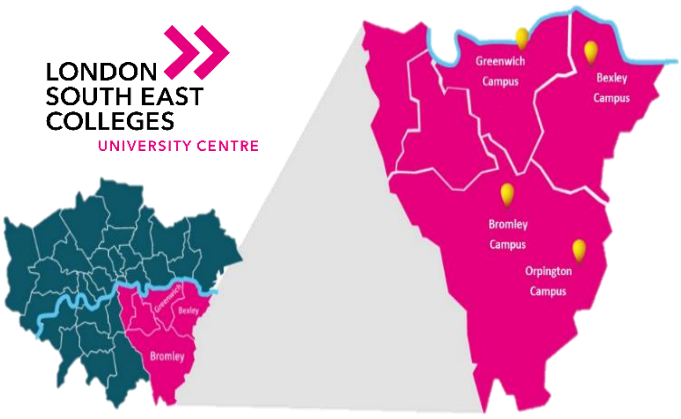
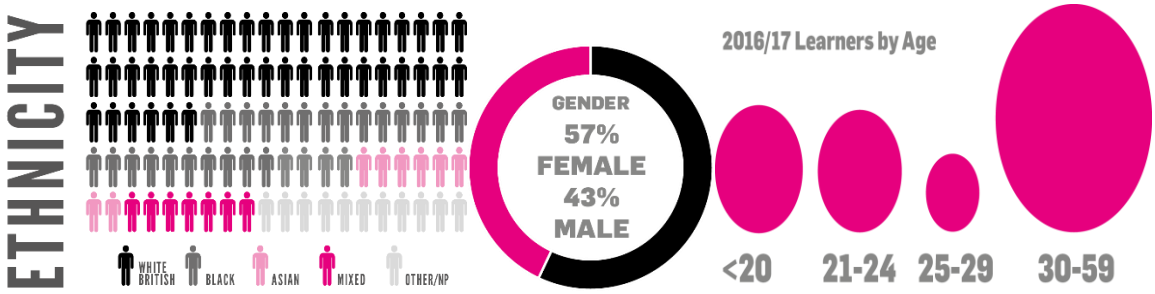
Provider Context

London South East Colleges is the leading provider of Higher and Further Education in South East London, acknowledged in our most recent HEFCE & QAA Monitoring Review Visit in March 2017 which concluded that: "*There can be confidence that academic standards are reliable, meet UK requirements, and are reasonably comparable. There can be confidence that the quality of the student academic experience meets baseline regulatory requirements*."[1]There were no specified improvements required from this review.

Following the three-way merger between Bromley College, Greenwich Community College and Bexley College in August 2016, the trading name London South East Colleges was adopted. The new College has a total student population of over 13,000, over 1,000 staff, seven campus locations and a turnover of £50m. The University Centre was formed to bring together all Higher Education (HE) provision under one brand. There are now over 700 HE students studying across 4 campuses.



The College recruits from a mainly local catchment area, with 89% of students from the region. There is a higher proportion of University Centre students from low socio-economic groups compared with the national average, with 25% of students coming from the top 20% most deprived wards in the UK and 22% from the Participation of Local Areas (POLAR) quintile 1 and 2 areas. The vast majority of students (94%) have low or nontariff entry grades when they enrol onto courses at the college. The University Centre student cohort is predominantly mature (77% 21 or over), with 54% from non-white backgrounds. There are 57% of students who are female and 43% male.



The College offers these students the best of the both worlds in terms of a supportive and integrated HE in FE learning experience, in a distinctive taught environment which enables students to benefit from the teaching strengths of an FE College with dedicated HE accommodation and resources at all our campuses, enhancing their learning experience. The College prides itself in providing a college based higher education model which offers genuine opportunities for day/evening, flexible models of delivery, academic simulation and vocational experience personalised to their needs. A vocational and applied vocational curriculum offer is delivered in collaboration with the College's University Partners, Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU), the University of Greenwich (UoG) and

1 http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/Bromley%20College%20of%20Further%20and%20Higher%20Education/Bromley-College-of-Further-and-Higher-Education-QRV-17.pdf

through Pearson. The College continues to deliver higher level skills to the local community in London and the South Est that makes a significant contribution to the economic growth, evident in the high levels of graduates who progress into higher skilled employment in the TEF core metrics and split metrics of full-time and part-time mode. Based on the metrics, the initial hypothesis is a TEF Silver Award, this submission provides the context and supporting evidence to endorse a TEF Silver Award. The College recognises the continuous improvements made in the past year with part-time metrics as recognised by the QAA Review Visit.

Vision and Mission of Higher Education

The overall Vision for the College is for the University Centre to become a leading provider of Higher Education in South East London, developing a reputation for high quality provision and securing positive destinations for all of its graduates, linked to their chosen career paths, while increasing student numbers both through working with our partner Universities and building internal capacity. The values that underpin this vision are:

- A **student centered approach** to all areas of their experience so they will thrive and achieve **academic excellence** (*first-class honours degrees*) and enhance their **skills for sustainable portfolio careers**
- A **relentless focus on raising teaching standards**, developing inspirational teaching and learning with sound pedagogical approaches to academic support, assessment and feedback.
- Aligning the curriculum portfolio and delivery methods for a more **flexible, work based, market, focusing on delivery options** that meet the needs of those in work, including fast-track, two-year degrees, Degree Apprenticeships, modular options, evening, blended/online and e-learning, weekend provision and Summer Schools.
- Utilising **e-learning to develop innovative and inspiring teaching methods** and ensuring students can access learning in different ways to suit their needs, with the enhancement of the student experience at the centre of new methods of delivery.
- **Increasing specialisations** within the curriculum offer; aligned to regional areas of specialisation and Local Enterprise Partnership skills priority growth sectors, with a clear line of sight to employment. There will be an ongoing focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM); Education & life sciences; and the Business School subjects, underpinned by applied work experience and strong employer engagement

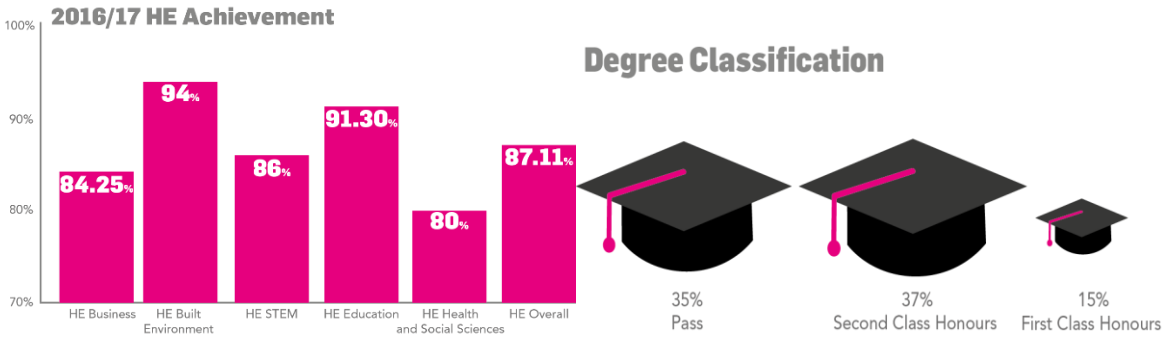
There are excellent levels of student success and overall student achievements are high (87%), with a good record of widening participation, all this achieved with 25% of students coming from areas of high deprivation and significant improvements in reducing **non-continuation rates** as shown in the TEF core and split metrics. This is achieved through strong personal development whilst at the College, with students benefiting from smaller classes and more personal support from academic staff. They develop their confidence and become independent learners in a short timeframe. The College promotes scholarship, research and innovation within HE and is recognised for excellence in educational research, with staff having dedicated time for research and scholarly activities that inform their teaching.

In 2016-17, 97% of the students at the University Centre progressed to highly skilled jobs or further study[2], this is being achieved through a curriculum that is closely mapped to employer needs and skills gaps with a clear line of sight to employment. There is strong

[2] Destination of Leavers in Higher Education Survey 2017-18

partnership work with the Local Authorities, employers and other stakeholders, that is based on sound market intelligence, and has led to new areas of curriculum provision being developed and delivered through the existing cross borough 'Hub and Spoke' model. This supports progression skills pathways into work in key sector areas identified as LEP and local area priorities.

The dedicated staff are focussed on ensuring that every student has an outstanding journey, excels and progresses to high quality destinations. Whether that is within their current employment, into a new job role, or onto a top-up full-degree. The London Economic Action Partnership (LEAP), Local Market Information and other data clearly sets out the requirement for an increase in provision for the higher-level skills required in industry. The College works closely with employers to ensure the provision is matched to skills gaps and students are enhanced with attributes and employability skills they need to progress. Students are highly satisfied with the preparation they receive to enable them to progress with 82.8% of students saying their course prepared them well or very well for employment.[3]



Teaching Quality

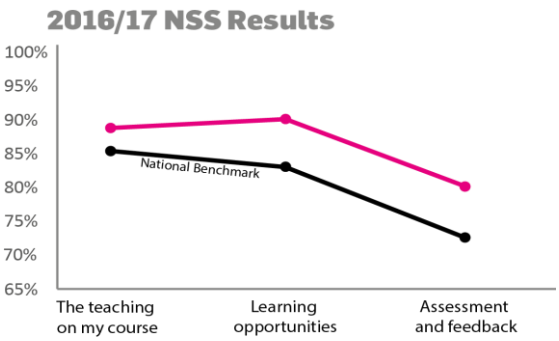
High-quality learning and teaching is at the heart of the strategic goals of the College and is set out in the Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) Strategy 2016-2020. This LTA strategy is underpinned by a commitment to develop outstanding learning, teaching and assessment and to determine the key priorities and critical success factors. The key strands of the strategy are to:

- **Engage the Student Union** in the development of a positive and inclusive learning community
- Design a **relevant, attractive and engaging curriculum** that maximises student success
- Embed within the curriculum a learner experience that celebrates equality and diversity, challenges discrimination, and meets student's social, moral, cultural, spiritual needs.
- **Encourage HE ethos research and scholarship pursuits** with staff given time for scholarly activity and becoming HEA fellows.
- Foster and encourage strong levels of staff development including sector and industry updating, pedagogical development, subject updating and a wide range of CPD, including HEA fellowships and postgraduate degrees
- **Establish Students as partners in learning** to ensure to build their confidence, independence and resilience to achieve at the highest level.
- Participate with partner universities in their employability activities
- Incorporate the Graduate Attributes, Skills and Behaviours needed for Employment

[3] National Student Survey 2017-18

The College's LTA strategy is also mapped to the awarding bodies, through this approach (which was commended during the QAA Review Visit) the college ensures that the delivery of the provision meets the academic standards set by their University partners whilst identifying potential areas of future developments that fit alongside the current projects.[4] The College has the responsibility for ensuring that learning and teaching meets all the quality standards set. In support of this, the College has developed an internal reporting structure of quality assurance committees that reports to the quality boards of the awarding bodies. The student academic experience and teaching quality is the focus on all agendas, and students participate in most of these committees.

These structures are developed to provide a rigorous, secure, holistic and risk-based approach. The internal quality assurance cycle is further supported by the academic higher education committee structure which operates below the governance level to keep an oversight of higher education. These structures consist of various sub-groups of review meetings which take place in conjunction with the awarding bodies. The subgroups raise any operational issues which are fed into the strategic committees of the College.



The TEF split metrics for the full-time provision for 'teaching on my course' identifies a downward trend and a detailed analysis of the NSS was carried out which showed that the NSS results for full–time students were disproportionally affected by a small minority of students on two courses which brought down the overall satisfaction score to 70% against the previous year's benchmark of 80%.and the national benchmark of 84%. The specific circumstances relating to this were accepted by the QAA Review Visit and did not impact on the final judgements. The remaining courses scored overall 92% overall. A full review of HE staffing was carried out and improvement plans set out to monitor the satisfaction rates. The mid-year internal survey on the 2 courses show 90% of the student population are now satisfied with the quality of teaching.

The NSS score for part-time learners, with low satisfaction in the split metrics has seen a considerable improvement with a 20% increase in overall satisfaction. Within the NSS the following areas exceeded the national benchmarks:

- My course has challenged me to achieve my best work
- My course has provided me with an opportunity to apply what I have learnt
- The criteria used in marking have been clear in advance
- Marking and assessment has been fair
- Timetables work efficiently for me
- I have the right opportunities to work with the other students

Student Engagement (TQ1)

The College's approach is to view students as partners in learning, quality assurance processes and as major contributors to the enhancement of learning opportunities.

[4] Higher Education Learning, Teaching and Assessment Higher Education (Mapped to Canterbury Christ Church University and University of Greenwich)

Students are involved and engaged in programme and curriculum design and organisation of the programmes (i.e. validation panels and revalidation panels). They also provide feedback and are involved in consultation on learning resources and facilities (for example, consultation with students led to the College providing a dedicated University Centre Learning Resource Centre (LRC).

Students are involved in the quality policies, procedures and process of the College and there is student involvement and participation at each organisational level. This captures the student experience and ensures there is effective representation of the student body of the HE provision in the College. The aim is to ensure students are partners in their learning from the moment they arrive through to becoming alumni of the College and respective awarding bodies.

Following a recent student consultation, a need was identified for a flexible system of student representation which is accessible, technology enhanced and comparable across the campuses. Current mediums such as 'WhatsApp' and 'group emails' are sometimes problematic in capturing the views of all students in the class or outside the class especially for evening or part-time students. The College has introduced 'Unitu' - a platform designed to overcome the challenge of operating effective student feedback across multiple campuses.
'Unitu' is a web-based platform built around the student representative system. It creates clear communication channels between students, course representatives and staff which allows them to collaboratively collect feedback. It is also a platform through which students can raise issues, suggest ideas, ask a question and give praise at any time during the year.

The College operates a sophisticated student feedback mechanism. The mechanism is to continually improve the academic experience of students at the College by gathering feedback. This is collected in various ways; student representation on various committees, student forums and councils and feedback from the elected Higher Education Vice-President and student officers. This is further supported by analysis of NSS given by the final year students and to further supplement this survey, the College has internal surveys to gather timely, effective and in-year feedback from all students.

This student voice is central to the College's academic student experience and is captured at all levels in the College. The College's corporation has active membership of a student governor, student representation in Higher Education Committee (HEC), Employer Advisory Board, Higher Education Student Council, Programme Review Meetings and Higher Education Forums with the awarding bodies. To further encourage student engagement, Student Council Meetings are held termly on each campus. These provide a formal opportunity for Student Representatives to meet with the Dean of Higher Education, Vice Principal, Innovation and Enterprise and support staff. Students can raise any compliments or concerns, and these are then posted on Moodle and kept up to date by the higher education administrator.

Informal opportunities for all students to meet with the Dean of Higher Education and HE Link Governor are held twice termly on the main campuses. Students are notified of the times and they can drop in for informal conversations if required.

The College also collects feedback using end of module evaluations in all areas and this is an excellent way of checking the student experience as well as capturing thoughts and

ideas on the module content and delivery. It offers a well-timed opportunity for staff to gather feedback to inform the teaching and learning as the programme progresses. These module evaluations are shared with the link tutors and in the programme review meetings.

Higher Education Student Representatives receive training and attend 'updating' events throughout the year. They are given roles and responsibilities that include attendance to meetings such as the Higher Education Committee and Programme Review Meetings to represent to the College about students' views. They work collaboratively with College staff and other students towards providing a positive Higher Education student experience.

"I have had the experience of sitting in one of the programme review meetings and was involved in the validation of Foundation Degree Events, Hospitality and Venues Management with Canterbury Christ Church University. This was during my second year of Foundation Degree, and was happy to see the programme being renewed and approved by the new awarding body team. My colleagues from Business Studies also sit on the Business School Employer Board and HE Employer Advisory Board as well as. They were actively involved in discussion and providing feedback regarding new curriculum and validation of degrees." BSc Business Top-Up Student

Valuing Teaching (TQ2)

A Higher Education Lesson Observation (Pro-Forma)[5] is in place to support academic staff to assess their practice. The criteria used in the observation form are closely linked to the UKPSF and the indicators of sound practice outlined in section B3 of the UK quality Code. This has added the benefit of giving lecturers evidence in subsequent applications for Higher Education Academy fellowship. Feedback from colleagues also informs an individual's scholarly activity which in turn serves to further enhance and develop teaching skills and expertise for higher level students.

This approach focuses on one of the core values of the UKPSF in the evaluation of effective teaching in higher education by academic staff and managers. Staff training is put in place focused on this theme and improves the reflection and evaluation of secondary and primary data to enhance learning, teaching, assessment and academic support in the College and with a specific focus on delivery to part-time students.

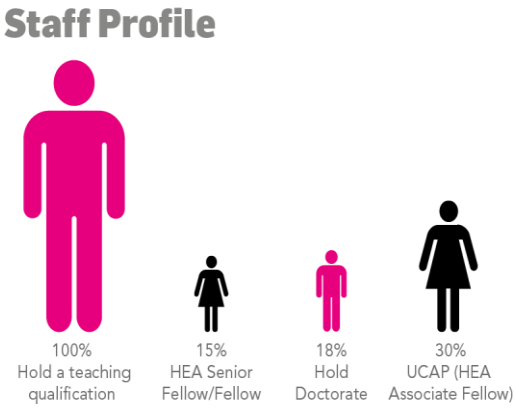
Academic staff receive training in how to evaluate and use the data sources available e.g. external examiner reports, analysis of NSS, QDP, focus groups and lesson observation actions, more effectively in their pedagogical practice. The aim of this evaluative training is to enhance the academic student experience and all stakeholders are taken into consideration. The staff who teach on University programmes delivered in collaboration with the university partners become associate tutors of the University for the duration of their involvement in teaching or assessing on the programme. Associate tutors are required to undertake training and development for this role.

An illustrative example of this is how the NSS and TEF metrics data was used to devise an action plan in the Faculty of Business and Education to enhance the academic experience for part-time and evening students. Tutorial sessions are run at the beginning and end of each lesson, providing students with regular opportunities to gain personal academic

[5] https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/downloads/uk_professional_standards_framework.pdf

support and engage with their learning experience. Part-time and evening students have assessment surgeries where they are able to discuss assessment progress with the tutor and reflect on feedback.

The College has made a long-term commitment to supporting HE staff in gaining further qualifications. There is a partnership agreement between the College and university which is part of our wider HE academic framework. The College has supported more than 20 staff in undertaking advanced subject level training at Masters and Doctorate level. There is also a wider academic development framework for teaching and learning where all modules are located within the PGCert (HE), the Diploma in Education (HE) and the Masters in Education (HE).



Rigour and Stretch (TQ3)

Course design, development, standards and assessment are effective in stretching students to develop independence, knowledge, understanding and skills that reflect their full potential. Courses are mapped against the FHEQ and QAA subject specialist benchmarks. Furthermore, course standards are monitored and maintained by internal quality procedures, external quality procedures of our partner university, the University of Greenwich and external examiners.

While working closely with the validating partners, the courses are designed to develop knowledge and understanding. Students are academically stretched, and assessments have been developed to allow students to show their true potential. Evidence of the high rigour and stretch come from the external examiner reports e.g. *"There are a range of teaching and assessment styles available to students and they receive detailed feedback". Foundation degree in Software Development*

"The academic structure challenges in different ways, as befitting a well-rounded programme. There is an appropriate balance of numeracy and language and communication skills and these are pitched, supported and assessed at suitable levels". External Examiner report, Foundation degree in Biomedical

Teaching sessions incorporate real life contexts. For example, HND Built Environment students worked on the Olympic stadium in Stratford, local housing projects and the college's new campus building in Erith. Using these projects enables the College to stretch the students' ability to develop their research skills, carry out diagnosis of existing building for defects etc. *The external examiner commented on the benefit of using "live briefs and especially the project units at both centres are different but both innovative and prepare student for progression and further studies really well".*

"A*t the interview, questions asked related to everything I had studied and therefore, I was able to answer with confidence", HND Construction Management student who gained employment after their first year of study with one of the industry's largest contractors.*

"As my course has progressed the assessments have indeed gotten more complex/ challenging, we not only are building upon existing knowledge, but the information given to

us via the coursework requirements is basic at most so a lot of the requirements rely on spending hours researching and testing, for this reason alone makes assessments more complex to complete. However due to the extra independent learning dependability, you feel a great sense of achievement after overcoming a difficult assessment" Second year, FD Computing Studies

Feedback (TQ4)

Assessment and feedback are used effectively in supporting students' development, progression and attainment. The College utilises the assessment policies, regulations and processes of the awarding bodies, CCCU, UoG and Pearson. The academic standards required for the programmes franchised from these awarding bodies' assessments are set out in their academic regulations and are regularly discussed by the Academic Link Tutors and HE programme staff at the College.

For all modules, irrespective of the awarding body concerned, students will have a range of formative assessments which are varied in type, developmentally focused and well-spaced across the delivery of the modules. Summative assessments at the module level incorporate a wide range of assessment practices which where possible, replicate work place skills such as writing management reports rather than essays, 'open book' time constrained assessments and individual and group presentations.

On the majority of the programmes, students receive their feedback via the 'Grademark' facility of TURNITIN and this practice is encouraged at programmes and staff training provided in the College. As noted above, the quality of assessments and feedback is reviewed through the moderation processes stipulated by the awarding body. Evidence of moderation is provided by the moderator and made available to External Examiners who will comment on the moderation processes and the samples of work seen in their annual report.

Learning Environment

The strategic aims of the college are to invest in providing a learning environment to students that maximises the academic student experience, supported by high-quality physical and digital resources and a strategy which is responsive to the local employer needs and economic priorities. A capital investment of more than £100k has been made in physical resources for computing students at Erith Campus with state of the art software and hardware equipment and Engineering and Surveying Equipment for Built Environment students at our Holy Hill and Bromley Campus. Innovative e-learning methods are being introduced to enhance learning and teaching activities. This enables students to access resources in support of their learning in different ways to suit their needs.

Resources (LE1)

Physical and digital resources are used effectively to aid students' learning and the development of independent study and research skills. Students are provided with a full tour of the Learning Resource Centre resources to maximise their access to both onsite and online resources and in addition, have access to the online portals of CCCU and UoG. Part-time and evening students are provided with an induction designed to meet their needs.

The College has a dedicated HE quiet study area in the LRC. As a result of student feedback, the College has increased this resource across the campuses. The continuous

and formative evaluation measures provide the College with an opportunity to act on the feedback and further enhance the academic student experience.

The College is making a capital investment for the delivery of a blended and distance learning space designed to support, engage and sustain a diverse student community of practice. By incorporating existing and emerging technologies, content, assessment methods, communication and pedagogical methods the framework would be designed to deliver a scalable, transferable and sustainable extended learning process as part of the student academic experience. As part of the College's commitment to support innovative learning and teaching, a Virtual World Research Project initiative was approved and launched with Foundation Degree (FD) Computing students.

This initiative gave students an experiential collaborative learning space using virtual world simulations to acquire knowledge, understanding and competence. The feedback survey demonstrated that 94% of students stated that using the virtual world was fun and exciting; 93% agreed that the virtual world was beneficial to their learning; 87% agreed that working in a virtual world is an enriching experience. As further enhancement, the Virtual Learning Environment project aims to produce an agreed set of metrics for e-Learning activities, assessment methods and pathways.

The College considers how staff can enable every student to fulfil their potential and engage in learning. It ensures that learning resources are sufficient and accessible to students and staff, monitoring students' performance in assessments and continually seeking to improve upon the quantity and quality of available resources. Through the merger process, the College has ensured that differentiated, local support is available to students on all campuses. Communication with students during Learning Resource Centre (LRC) visits and other suggestion/request routes helps the service establish whether any additional resources may be required.

LRC staff are members of the Higher Education Committee and all Curriculum Review Meetings to ensure that they work closely with the teams and maintain both operational and strategic oversight. The LRC Manager works with Course Team Managers to ensure all core texts are available in our Learning Resource Centres. Students have access to a dedicated Higher Education Common Room, and a dedicated Higher Education Learning Resource Centre facility at Bromley, Erith, Greenwich and Holy Hill Campuses. Students have further support within the LRCs where they can work independently or request help (such as with referencing and e-journals). LRC staff engage with students from the enrolment and induction HE sessions to specific workshops requested by teaching staff and face to face in the LRC. Students are easily identifiable by their different coloured lanyards, ensuring that LRC staff can immediately engage them with support aimed at the right level.

There is a dedicated HE Learning Resources VLE page populated with contact details and additional supporting information. Hard copies of some VLE content are located in the dedicated HE learning Resource study room. It has been established by speaking to students that the IT equipment requires improvement, and this will be taken forward with our IT support teams. There is a commitment to upgrading the dedicated PCs available to HE students. The Additional Learning HE service at the College is broad ranged and highly personalised and the provision supports all students with a disability or learning difficulty. The service is headed by a Learning Inclusion Manager and delivered by a combined team of qualified and experienced support assistants, specialist assessors and tutors.

HE students have access to Learning Support and related Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) at any stage of their journey in college. They are actively encouraged to disclose learning support needs on application, during induction and on-course through publicity provided by the Learning Resource Centres. The support service makes effective use of pre-entry information from student applications and declaration at interview to enhance the induction and on-course experience. Students with a disability and/or a specific learning difficulty are provided with initial information and advice and have a guidance interview with a qualified specialist. If appropriate, they are also supported through the DSA application process.

Where no appropriate evidence of a specific learning difficulty is available, students are advised on a range of universal support and accessible resources available to them. For example, all support programmes are augmented by assistive technologies, software and adaptive aids which are available in many locations throughout the College.

The College operates a badging system of Bronze, Silver and Gold programmes to ensure that Moodle, the College VLE, not only meets the needs of the students as a useful resource repository but also enhances their learning opportunities. This reflects a distributed set of e-Learning strategies and how well the platform is used as an experiential, collaborative and virtual learning space to engage students in real-time simulation, feedback, problem-solving and critical thinking as part of a social learning experience. The E-Learning team in the College has a dedicated Higher Education link and supports the team with setting up, building, designing and enhancing Moodle. All programme leads, and tutors are expected to comply with the minimum specifications.

Scholarship, Research and Professional Practice (LE2)

To meet the College's strategic goal of 'an organisation that shares best practice and learns from others and has a reputation for excellence in Teaching and Learning and its contribution to student success', the College has made a huge investment to establish an **HE ethos underpinned by a culture of 'scholarship and research'**. A dedicated University Centre with distinct committee structures and policies and procedures with the majority of the staff teaching only on higher education programmes and dedicated time and space for staff development has created an institutional culture of 'HEness', demonstrating the College's commitment to quality and excellence.

The Governing body oversees the maintenance of this institutional culture of HE programmes through a robust set of instruments and articles that are modelled on the HE Code of Governance and the AoC Code of Good Governance. This enables the Governing body to stretch, challenge and support the senior team through its scrutiny of regular quality assurance reports and still maintain the principles of research, scholarship, collegiality and academic freedom.

The learning environment is enriched by student exposure to and involvement in provision at the forefront of scholarship, research and/or professional practice. To further support academic staff to develop their professional practice and offer students a rigorous and challenging learning experience, the College has a dedicated **HE CPD, Research and Scholarship Policy** which is monitored by **College's Research and Scholarship Committee**. The policy focuses on College based higher education scholarship and is mapped to the Quality Code Expectation and UKPSF. Academic staff are required to engage with the HEA and work towards Fellowship. The policy contains definitions and

examples of scholarship mapped to the AOC's The Scholarship Project and provides a checklist for staff to develop their scholarship in the College. The aim of the policy is to enhance the quality of learning, teaching and academic support. The College is strongly committed to research and scholarly activity within the HE teams, with a formal research and ethics framework underpinning scholarship and research projects undertaken each year which is built into the staff appraisal and lesson observation system.

The College engages HE staff and students with the **Research and Ethics Framework** by encouraging them to undertake a range of research projects around the strategic goals of the College. Underpinning this is the idea of keeping the student experience at the heart of what the College does and developing staff as reflective practitioners. Some of these research projects are aimed at areas of improvement in the College and are designed to improve the student academic experience. Research project proposals are presented to the Research and Scholarship Committee, which has seen a steady rise in submissions by HE staff. The research projects carried out last academic year by HE staff covered: improving team based learning among accounting students; using module feedback questionnaires to improve programme design; and personal academic tutorials to help students review their progress and plan their personal development.

There is also a strong collaboration between students and staff to carry out the research projects. For example, an action research project was carried out with the first-year undergraduates which considered the benefits of using blogging within a group project. With the shift towards technology enhanced learning evidence suggests that the incorporation of technology to enhance digital literacy's allowing different aspects of the curriculum to be delivered in formats that the students might find easier to engage with. The College is keen to develop students who can compete within the competitive 21st Century jobs market. The action research project proved that by incorporating new ways of assessing, opportunities were created for students to engage in new ways of collaborative inquiry and learning, whilst preparing for the workplace. Overall, conducting collaborative research encouraged scholarship among our students to enrich their academic journey. These research projects have supported planning of in-year intervention for students and are aligned with the NSS, DLHE and TEF metrics to identify the areas of improvement.

"I am also a member of the College's Research and Scholarship Committee and I have seen the link between research undertaken by staff and how it is shared with the students in the modules." HE Student Officer AY 2016-17

The College is an Accredited Member of Higher Education Academy (HEA) with the purpose of engaging staff with the HEA Fellowship process with Fellowship applications funded by the College. HEA accredited staff in the College provide support to those staff who are developing their application and it is now a requirement that all academic staff achieve AFHEA, FHEA or SFHEA status. The college has 45% staff who are engaged with the HEA Fellowships, 15% have achieved their HEA Fellowships meeting the industry benchmark of HEA Fellowships in College Based Higher Education. 10% of staff are currently awaiting decision from HEA and 30% of staff are undertaking the University Academic Practice Certificate to achieve their associate fellowships. This is a measure put in place by the College to ensure learning, teaching and assessment, impacts on the Key Information Sets (KIS) and Teaching Excellence Framework.

*"The **senior fellowship of HEA has allowed me to think more deeply and thereby enhance the quality and effectiveness of delivery and learning** in a practice that is aligned with a nationally recognised standard for higher education." Senior HE Computing & Software Development Lecturer*

In addition, the College actively promotes external development opportunities giving academic staff the chance to work as External Examiners and Assessors. Where possible, academic staff are also encouraged to take advantage of development opportunities offered by the awarding bodies. Both the University of Greenwich and Canterbury Christ Church University hold dedicated partner College staff development days or away days. In previous years, the focus of this activity has been on enhancing the quality of learning and building partnerships and collaborating with the College based higher education academic and support staff.

Personalised Learning (LE3)

Students' academic experiences are tailored to the individual, maximising rates of retention as evident in the TEF split metrics, 87% and above attainment and 97% progressing to highly-skilled employment and further study. Small class sizes and the distinctive learning environment of college based higher education which focuses on individualised support, attendance monitoring, diagnostic assessment and risk monitoring and putting timely interventions in place facilitates personalised learning. This is achieved by using different approaches and models within the faculties.

The college has made substantial investment for computing, business and law students by deploying a Moodle virtual learning environment, Open Simulator 3D virtual worlds and augmented reality using the Aurasma platform. As part of main stream course delivery these initiatives continue to present staff and students with imaginative opportunities realised through affordances of such virtual learning spaces. In our most recent survey of HE 2017 software development students, 90% agreed partially or fully that working virtually had been an enriching experience that held their attention.[6]

The TEF metrics also identified in the split metrics the downward trend in academic support among full-time and below the benchmark metrics for part-time students, and the college identified the need for a formalised tutorial system. This research project was undertaken by an HE Curriculum Manager in collaboration with students. The project highlighted the benefits and challenges of personal academic tutoring and created a business case for senior management who commissioned a role out for the entire University Centre based on the recommendations of the project. Forty students across all levels participated in the Personal Academic Tutorial (PAT) project, which resulted in a 15% overall increase in their retention rates. This was especially evident among the 2nd year student's cohort, reducing the potential for dropping out of their programme of study and improved student progression. The project showed that 3rd year students used the PAT system far less than their counterparts, which was predicted to be the case. It emerged that students at this level required less personal support and were more concerned with the support needed at module level rather than holistic support through the PAT system. It would suggest that

[6] Jisc conference Augmented Reality for learning and marketing, 2013, http://jiscrsclondon.wordpress.com/Using Moodle to Transform Teaching and Learning, Personalizing Virtual Worlds chapter in the Greenwich University publications 9 781861 662453, https://journals.gre.ac.uk/index.php/compass/article/view/227

these students in line with the independent learning goals were far better developed as independent learners.

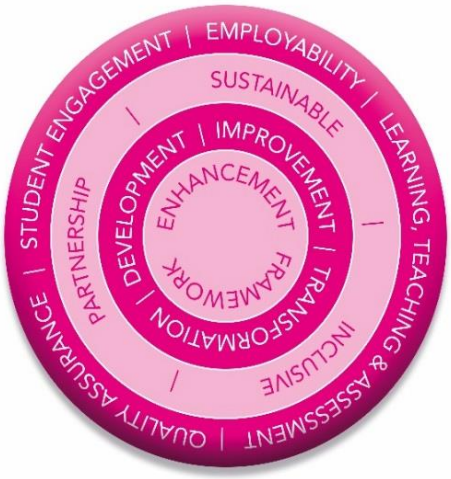
Over the years the College has also witnessed an unprecedented amount of admissions from students with additional learning support needs. Research shows that widening participation indicators are improving and widening agendas have brought students a greater range of support needs through the gates of many institutions. The research project showed that 17% of students who engaged with the PAT project had Additional Learning Support (ALS) needs. This exposed the need for increased support mechanisms to cater for the needs of these students to ensure inclusivity, as well as identifying the need for joined up working with other services within the College to form stronger relationships between academic staff and central student services to bridge the gap and provide localised support. This project illustrated the scope of personal academic tutoring and its potential contributions to quality enhancement for both students and the institution to promote personalised learning among students.

Employment and Further Study (SO1)
Student Outcomes and Learning Gain

Students acquire knowledge, skills and attributes that are valued by employers and that enhance their personal and/or professional lives. The strategic goal of the college is to provide students from very diverse backgrounds with the social and academic enhancement to achieve their best potential. The college has a formalised Enhancement Framework and Employer and Skills Board to support students with positive student outcomes and learning gain.

The College has adopted The Enhancement Framework (2016-2020) - a strategic framework developed in conjunction with our partner universities. The focus of the Framework is the enhancement of the student experience, especially in improving learning opportunities provided by improving learning, teaching and assessment. The College defines Enhancement as described in the Quality Code as:

'the deliberate steps taken to improve the student learning opportunities' in the College and all enhancement activities will be measured against transformation, improvement and development of students and staff and will focus on four core themes - learning and teaching, employability, student engagement and quality assurance'



There are a number of drivers which the College has recognised in the need to develop a strategic approach to enhancement. These include increased student investment through higher teaching fees and more locally, meeting the demands of the employers, together with the expectations of all our stakeholders, require the College to drive improvements in the quality of the HE provision and meet the strategic goals of the College. By doing so, the College will achieve teaching excellence and outstanding outcomes for students. The Enhancement Framework provides all HE students and staff with overarching themes and areas of focus. These are then embedded within the curriculum and form part of the improvement of quality of the learning opportunities. Each Faculty and programme team identify the theme(s) and activities to undertake to enhance their provision and thus contributing to the student's academic experience. Examples of this have been the inclusion of a mathematics module in the FD Software Engineering which has prepared students for

the demanding nature of the programme, the implementation of 'Unitu' to enhance student voice and representation and the Enterprise and Employability project.

Employability and Transferable Skills (SO2)

The College has received confirmation of outstanding performance in the Destination of Leavers in Higher Education (DLHE) reporting. Trends in the last three years, demonstrate that all students secure high levels of skilled employment regardless of age, gender or ethnicity. To further strengthen and sustain the performance, an enhancement project is being launched to strengthen the theme of Enterprise and Employability. The PAGES (Professional and Graduate Employability and Skills) project is an extracurricular development award that rewards higher education and professional studies students for the attributes, behaviours and skills they develop alongside their degree or professional course to better prepare them for their future career or to further their career for students already in employment.

PAGES is aligned to the HEA Embedding Employability model. The College has extensive links with local employers and takes advantage of College's Employment and Skills Board by using a panel of them to ascertain what skills, attributes and behaviours are essential for graduate success. This model is illustrated above and engages over 600 employers in curriculum design, delivery and placements.

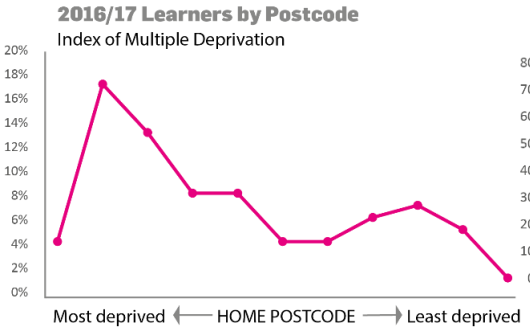
"The College has established an Employer Advisory Board that consists of a range of stakeholders including local employers and students. The College provides students with a range of opportunities to develop their employability skills, such as 40 days' work experience, skills workshops, guest speakers and the development of PAGES, a framework that will allow students to evidence how they have developed the skills, qualities and attributes required by future employers." QAA Review Visit Report March 2017

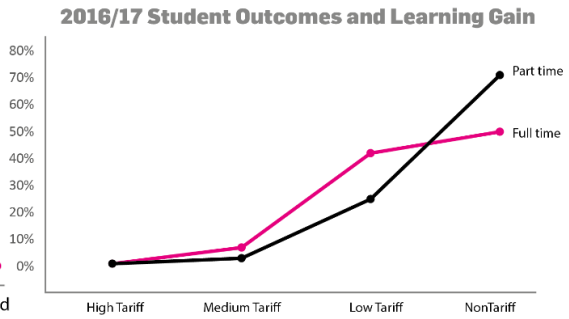
Positive Outcomes for All (SO3)

Positive outcomes are achieved by College students from all backgrounds, in particular those from disadvantaged backgrounds or those who are at greater risk of not achieving positive outcomes, as shown in the TEF Metrics, **92% of the students** come with entry qualifications of medium to non-tariff and achieve **outstanding outcomes** as well as high degree classifications evidencing the College's commitment to consistently achieving high outcomes for all students with outstanding progression to employment or higher-level study. This overall diversity can provide challenges for students and staff but at the College we have continually learnt and adapted our learning and teaching to ensure that each student can integrate and find their own path to success and employment.

We are committed to ensuring we reflect our diverse student body and this work is evidenced in our destination data, which is highly favourable in comparison to the benchmarks in the Destination for Leavers in Higher Education. We deliver diversity and inclusivity activities on employability mindful of lower employability outcomes for students from widening participation backgrounds. The College has recognised the flag on the supplementary metrics of low longitudinal and sustained employment outcomes for students with disability and has further enhanced the PAGES award and PAT and

Additional Learning Support systems to support these students and engage with BME students to achieve highly skilled jobs.





Student statement for Teaching Excellence Framework Submission

The statement below is put together for the Teaching Excellence Framework by the Student Union HE Vice-President and HE Student Officers in Employability, Enhancement and Student Engagement, Research & Scholarship and Equality and Diversity in consultation with the student council and student representatives:

We support the College's submission to be awarded as TEF Silver award. This college provides outstanding teaching and individualised support. During induction, we were provided with the University Centre Partnership Agreement which outlines the academic journey and our responsibility and partnership with the College. It outlines the College's expectations of us and the expectations we can have of the College for our teaching, assessment and feedback, equal opportunities and working in partnership.

From the very first day, we are engaged with the tutorials, academic workshops and lectures giving us high levels of stretch and challenge inside and outside the classroom. The lecturers are outstanding, and give us many opportunities to develop our employability skills making explicit links with the theory. 1-1 individual sessions are arranged for student development and to let students know of their progress and set targets. This approach has helped us keep track, stay focussed and keep us motivated. The College also have excellent dedicated areas and digital platforms where we can go and research our assignments and find relevant materials. We feel that we are developing individually each day we step in, all the learning, all the sessions are making us ready for the real world.

Conclusion

The Colleges' relentless focus on high quality learning and teaching; enhancing the student experience, preparing them for success in work or life and engagement with employers to develop a highly responsive curriculum matched to employer needs; is evidenced throughout this submission. The College has developed a consistent and coherent approach to achieve outstandingly high destinations, outstanding outcomes and learning gain, a learning environment where students are partners in learning and teaching that is informed by research, scholarship and professional practice. We are confident that this submission reflects the teaching excellence and overall HE ethos of the College and commend it for your consideration.