

Quality and Standards Review for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students

University Academy 92 Limited

Review Report

January 2020



Working as the Designated Quality Body for England

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Summary of findings and reasons

Ref	Core practice	Outcome	Confidence	Summary of reasons
S1	The provider ensures that the threshold standards for its qualifications are consistent with the relevant national qualifications' frameworks.	Met	High	<p>From the evidence seen, the review team considers that the standards set for UA92's courses are in line with the sector-recognised standards defined in paragraph 342 of the OfS regulatory framework. Based on the evidence provided, the review team also considers that standards described in the approved programme documentation are set at levels that are consistent with these sector-recognised standards and UA92's Academic Regulations and policies should ensure that standards can be maintained appropriately.</p> <p>The review team considers that, based on the evidence scrutinised, the standards that will be achieved by UA92's students are expected to be line with the sector-recognised standards defined in paragraph 342 of the OfS regulatory framework. Based on this information the review team also considers that UA92's Academic Regulations and policies will ensure that these standards are maintained. The review team considers that staff fully understand UA92's approach to maintaining these standards and that the evidence seen demonstrates they are committed to implementing this approach. Therefore, based on its scrutiny of the evidence provided, the review team concludes that this Core practice is met.</p>
S2	The provider ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably	Met	High	The review team, based on the evidence presented, determined that the standards set for students to achieve beyond the threshold on the provider's courses are reasonably comparable with those set by other UK providers. The review team considers that the standards

	comparable with those achieved in other UK providers.			<p>described in the approved programme documentation and in the provider's Academic Regulations and policies should ensure that such standards are maintained appropriately.</p> <p>Therefore, the review team concludes, based on the evidence described above, that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers and this Core practice is met.</p>
S3	Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them.	Met	High	<p>UA92 has in place effective arrangements to ensure that, working in partnership with its awarding body, the standards of the awards it delivers are credible and secure. This is because the responsibilities between UA92 and Lancaster University are clearly defined in the Franchise Agreement. Lancaster University ensures its responsibility for the setting of academic standards through formal course approval processes and its responsibility for overseeing the maintenance of standards through monitoring reviews and Lancaster University's link tutors.</p> <p>UA92 has clear Academic Regulations for the management of partnerships with Lancaster University. It has robust and credible plans to secure standards in provision delivered in partnership, including clear governance structure and the monitoring and evaluation processes. Staff from both UA92 and Lancaster University clearly understood and were able to articulate their responsibilities for academic standards. Evidence from the recently appointed external examiners, Lancaster University link tutors, and the sample of student work confirm that so far in the programme the</p>

				standards of the awards delivered in the partnership are credible and secure. The review team therefore concludes that this Core practice is met.
S4	The provider uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent.	Met	High	UA92 uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent. This is because UA92 has clear and comprehensive regulations, in line with Lancaster University's regulations, which describe the requirements for using external expertise in maintaining academic standards and these requirements have been updated to ensure external verification will be sought in course design and approval, assessment design, moderation and classification processes. UA92 has robust plans to use external expertise in maintaining academic standards. The use of external expertise in course design and assessment will be reviewed by Lancaster University and external examiners' formal reports will feed into Lancaster University's annual monitoring and evaluation procedure. External examiners provide detailed feedback and UA92 gives that expertise due consideration. Staff understand the requirements for the use of external expertise, and UA92's assessment and classification processes. Students confirm that UA92's assessment and classification processes are reliable, fair and transparent. The review team therefore concludes, based on the evidence provided, that this Core practice is met.
Q1	The provider has a reliable, fair and inclusive admissions system.	Met	High	UA92 has a reliable, fair and inclusive admissions system. This is evidenced through UA92's clear and comprehensive admissions policy which provides detailed guidance on the application and selection process. UA92 also has clear Admissions Complaints

				<p>and Appeals Policy and Procedure which clearly explain the grounds for, and procedure to be applied in the event of dissatisfaction with any aspect of the application and admission process. The Admissions Records demonstrated that UA92's admissions policies were implemented in practice. The only concern from the admission record check is that the Admissions Complaints and Appeals Policy and Process is not explicitly flagged to unsuccessful applicants in rejection communications. UA92's monitoring procedure is in place to ensure the admissions systems are reliable, fair and inclusive. Admissions requirements for specific programmes are available on the UA92 website for all applicants, and all information for applicants on UA92's website is transparent, accessible and fit for purpose. UA92 has plans in place that will allow for the effective management of arrangements with recruitment agents, to ensure that its policies and requirements are strictly adhered to. Students agreed that the admissions system was reliable, fair and inclusive. Staff involved in admissions understood their role and were appropriately skilled and trained through formal professional development opportunities, as well as through informal shadowing of relevant staff. The review team therefore concludes, on balance, that this Core practice is met.</p>
Q2	The provider designs and/or delivers high-quality courses.	Met	High	<p>UA92 designs and delivers high-quality courses. The UA92 Learning and Teaching Strategy, in line with its Academic Regulations, outlines the principles of course design and delivery and explains UA92's pedagogical approach to deliver high-quality courses. UA92 has clear monitoring and review processes with students, external examiners and the University's link tutors' feedback included, to ensure high-quality course delivery. Approved course documentation, including</p>

				<p>programme specifications, module specifications and module handbooks, indicate that the teaching, learning and assessment design enable students to meet and demonstrate the intended learning outcomes. Evidence of student confidence in UA92's provision of high-quality courses is provided in the student submission, completed module surveys, and in the meeting with the team. Staff are able to articulate what 'high quality' means in the context of the provider, and to show how the provision meets that definition. Observations of teaching and learning demonstrate clarity of learning objectives, good planning and delivery, content appropriate to the level of study, appropriate use of resources and consistency with UA92's pedagogical approach. The review team has some concerns around the credit value of modules and the student workload this implies within concentrated periods, but this is mitigated by the strong monitoring and evaluation processes that are in place to ensure that this will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and credible plans for the design and delivery of high-quality courses. The review team therefore concludes that, on balance, this Core practice is met.</p>
Q3	The provider has sufficient appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience.	Met	High	<p>UA92 has sufficient appropriately qualified staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience. UA92's policies for the recruitment, appointment, induction and support for staff provide for a sufficient number of suitably qualified and skilled staff. The regulations for the recruitment and appointment of staff is overseen by the awarding body, Lancaster University, and strong processes are in place to ensure there are sufficient staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience. There are some opportunities for staff development, but at the current stage, there is no policy or strategic</p>

				<p>approach to ensure staff training needs are identified and addressed in a systematic way. UA92's senior staff were aware of this issue and confirmed in the meeting that there is a need to develop a more strategic approach to identifying staff development needs. UA92 has realistic and credible plans to ensure both academic and support staff are sufficient, appropriately qualified and skilled as student numbers grow. The teaching observation process is in place and the summary of observation records will feed into UA92's monitoring and evaluation process to ensure that staff are meeting high standards of teaching. Staff sampled and met by the review team have been recruited, appointed and inducted according to UA92's Academic Regulations and policies. Observations of teaching by the team confirm that staff are appropriately skilled and have appropriate experience to deliver a high-quality course that is consistent with the pedagogical approach of UA92. Students tend to agree that staff are sufficiently skilled to deliver a high-quality academic experience. The review team therefore concludes that, on balance, this Core practice is met.</p>
Q4	The provider has sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning resources and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience.	Met	High	<p>UA92 has sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning resources, and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience. UA92's facilities, resources and support services plan demonstrated the credible and realistic development of provision that supports and future proofs the objective to deliver successful academic and professional outcomes for students. Academic and professional support staff demonstrated a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for maintaining and developing student support services to ensure a high-quality student experience is maintained over time. Student feedback</p>

				<p>from completed module surveys, the student submission and the meeting with the review team confirmed that students considered facilities, learning resources, and student support services to be sufficient and appropriate, and facilitating a high-quality academic experience. During the review visit, the team was able to conduct teaching observations and tour the facilities to be able to confirm with confidence that UA92 provides a high-quality academic experience. The review team therefore concludes that this Core practice is met.</p>
Q5	<p>The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience.</p>	Met	High	<p>UA92 actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience. This is because UA92's Student Voice Policy clearly explains how student feedback is individually and collectively sought, how action resulting from student feedback is taken, which bodies are accountable for such actions, and how actions taken are communicated back to students. Given that the detailed policies and procedures to student engagement are in place, the review team considered UA92's plans for individually and collectively engaging students in the quality of their educational experience is credible and robust. There are examples of UA92 changing and improving students' learning experience in response to student feedback from module surveys. Students reported that UA92 engages them in the quality of their educational experience. Students agreed that their voice is heard and valued, and their feedback was listened to and acted upon by UA92 in an effective and timely manner. The review team therefore concludes that this Core practice is met.</p>

Q6	The provider has fair and transparent procedures for handling complaints and appeals which are accessible to all students.	Met	High	UA92 has fair and transparent procedures for handling complaints and appeals which are accessible to all students. This is because UA92's Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure and Student Complaints Policy and Procedure clearly explain what situations can or cannot be applied to complaints or appeals, what process should be followed, when they should be escalated to the University or OIA, and what is the deadline for each step. All complaints and appeal records will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that decisions have been made consistently and at the right level and also to identify any action required to improve student experience. All relevant policies and procedures regarding complaints and appeals, as well as forms for completion, are available on the UA92 website and within the VLE, so these can be found easily by students. They are written in plain language so can be easily understood. Although no complaints or appeals have been lodged, students did not raise any concerns or doubts about their ability to access details of the relevant procedures. The review team therefore concludes that, on balance, this Core practice is met.
Q8	Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the academic experience is high-quality irrespective of where or how courses are delivered and who delivers them.	Met	High	UA92 has in place effective partnership arrangements with Lancaster University to ensure that the academic experience is high-quality for the students. This is because the franchise agreement is clear and comprehensive in its articulation of the respective roles of UA92 and Lancaster University. UA92 has clear and comprehensive regulations for the management of partnerships with Lancaster University, to ensure that the academic experience is high quality. It has robust and credible plans to ensure a high-quality academic experience for provision delivered in partnership through monitoring and evaluation processes. Students are

				satisfied with their academic experience. Staff from both UA92 and Lancaster University clearly understand their respective responsibilities for working in partnerships to deliver a high-quality academic experience. The review team therefore concludes that this Core practice is met.
Q9	The provider supports all students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes.	Met	High	UA92 supports all students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes. UA92's approaches to supporting students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes are explained in the Learning and Teaching Strategy, Inclusive Curriculum Guidelines and Target Talent Curriculum Module Descriptors. The Learning and Teaching Strategy also specifies UA92's approach to identifying and monitoring the needs of individual students through the personal coaching system. Given that detailed policies and procedures for student support are in place and the effectiveness of student support services is monitored and reviewed within the quality cycle, the review team considers that the UA92's approaches to supporting students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes are credible and robust. Assessed student work demonstrates that students are given feedback that is helpful, timely, and broadly comprehensive. All staff (both academic and professional support staff) understand their role in supporting students achieving successful academic and professional outcomes. Students tend to agree that they are adequately supported to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes. The review team therefore concludes that this Core practice is met.

About this report

This is a report detailing the outcomes of the Quality and Standards Review for providers applying to register with the Office for Students (OfS), conducted by QAA in January 2020, for University Academy 92 Limited.

A Quality and Standards Review (QSR) is a method of review QAA uses to provide the OfS with evidence about whether new providers applying to be on the OfS Register meet the Core practices of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code), based on evidence reviewed by expert assessors. This report is structured to outline the review team's decisions about the provider's ability to meet the Core practices through detailing the key pieces of evidence scrutinised and linking that evidence to the judgements made.

The team for this review was:

Name: Dr Victoria O'Donnell
Institution: Laureate Online Education
Role in review team: Institutional reviewer

Name: Ms Liz Crolley
Institution: University of Liverpool
Role in review team: Subject reviewer (Business and Management)

Name: Mr Andrew Burston
Institution: University College Birmingham
Role in review team: Subject reviewer (Sport and Exercise sciences)

The QAA Officer for the review was: Dr Yue Song.

The size and composition of this review team is in line with published guidance and, as such, is comprised of experts with significant experience and expertise across the higher education sector. The team included members with experience of a similar provider to the institution, knowledge of the academic awards offered and included academics with expertise in subject areas relevant to the provider's provision. Collectively the team had experience of the management and delivery of higher education programmes from academic and professional services perspectives, included members with regulatory and investigative experience, and had at least one member able to represent the interests of students. The team included at least one senior academic leader qualified to doctoral level. Details of team members were shared with the provider prior to the review to identify and resolve any possible conflicts of interest.

About University Academy 92 Limited

University Academy 92 Limited (UA92) is a new higher education institution which has one campus based in Old Trafford, Manchester.

From September 2019, UA92 began delivering bachelor's honours degree courses and one-year Certificates of Higher Education in full-time mode. All UA92 courses are validated by Lancaster University (the University) under a franchise arrangement.

UA92's Academic Committee, chaired by the Principal, forms a deliberative committee to provide assurance on the management, operation and effectiveness of UA92's academic governance. UA92's Academic Quality Group (AQG) has delegated authority from the Academic Committee to oversee the operation of processes, assuring academic standards

and quality for all courses. The annual monitoring report and associated action plans are considered by UA92's AQG and approved by Lancaster University's Academic Standards and Quality Committee. The LU-UA92 Joint Implementation Group streamlines reporting between UA92 and the University and provides oversight of the development of UA92, discusses emerging issues, and priorities and considers matters relating to academic and portfolio development, staffing, policies and procedures.

At the time of the visit there were 83 students enrolled onto the following programmes.

Programme	Number of students	Programme	Number of students
BA (Hons) Accounting and Finance	12	Cert HE Accounting	5
BA (Hons) Business Studies	14	Cert HE Business Studies	5
BA (Hons) Journalism	5	Cert HE Journalism Studies	3
BA (Hons) Media and Communications	9	Cert HE Media and Communication	0
BA (Hons) Physical Education	7	Cert HE Sports Development	2
BSc (Hons) Sport and Exercise Science	19	Cert HE Sports Performance	2

How the review was conducted

The review was conducted according to the process set out in [Quality and Standards Review for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students: Guidance for Providers](#) (March 2019).

When undertaking a QSR all 13 of the Core practices are considered by the review team. However, for this review it was clear that the provider does not offer a research degree programme. Therefore, the review team did not consider Q7 (where the provider offers research degrees, it delivers these in appropriate and supportive research environments).

To form its judgements about the provider's ability to meet the Core practices, the review team considered a range of evidence that was submitted prior to the review visit and evidence gathered at the review visit itself. To ensure that the review team focused on the principles embedded in the Core practices, and that the evidence considered was assessed in a way that is clear and consistent with all other reviews, the team used Annex 4 of the Guidance for Providers to construct this report and detail the key pieces of evidence seen. Annex 4 expects that review teams will sample certain types of key evidence using a combination of representative sampling, risk-based sampling and randomised sampling. In this review, the team sampled the following areas for evidence for the reasons given below:

- The review team considered a representative sample of programme specifications, module specifications from six programmes covering different subjects, levels of study and a mixture of large and small student cohorts, in order to test that specified sector-recognised standards for courses sampled are consistent with relevant national qualifications' frameworks; to test that specified sector-recognised

standards for courses sampled are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers; to test whether admissions requirements for courses sampled reflect UA92's admissions policy; to test that all elements of the courses sampled are high quality (curriculum design; content and organisation; learning, teaching and assessment approaches); that the teaching, learning and assessment design will enable students to demonstrate the intended learning outcomes and to assess the reliability, fairness and transparency of assessment and classification processes for the courses sampled.

- The review team considered a random sample of 16 pieces of assessed student work from two modules: Business Studies (Management and Organisations) and Sport and Physical Education (Introduction to Sports Psychology) and the module handbooks for these two modules, which include assessment briefs, to test that students' assessed work reflects the sector-recognised standards; to test that marks and awards given to students are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers; to test that standards of awards are credible and secure, thus confirming the effectiveness of the underpinning arrangements; to assess the reliability, fairness and transparency of assessment and classification processes for the courses sampled; and to test whether students are given comprehensive, helpful and timely feedback.
- To assess whether reliable, fair and inclusive admissions decisions were made for the applicants sampled, the review team considered a random sample of 16 sets of admissions records for students who successfully secured a place at UA92 and two sets of admissions records for unsuccessful applicants.
- To assess whether the staff sampled are appropriately qualified and skilled to perform their roles effectively and to determine whether staff roles are consistent with the delivery of a high-quality learning experience, the review team considered all job descriptions for academics and professional support staff, and a random sample of 12 academic staff CVs.
- To identify and assess students' views about the quality of the courses sampled; about sufficiency, qualifications and skills of staff; about facilities, learning resources and support services; about student engagement in the quality of their educational experience; about quality of courses delivered in partnership and about student support mechanisms, the review team considered all available student completed module evaluations from two modules: Business Studies (Management and Organisations) and Sport and Physical Education (Introduction to Sports Psychology) that have been delivered in different subjects.
- UA92 reported that no complaints or appeals have been received to date.

Explanation of findings

S1 The provider ensures that the threshold standards for its qualifications are consistent with the relevant national qualifications' frameworks

1 To meet this Core practice a provider must ensure that threshold standards for its qualifications are consistent with the relevant national qualifications' frameworks. The threshold standards for its qualifications must be articulated clearly and must be met, or exceeded, through the delivery of the qualification and the assessment of students.

2 The sector-recognised standards that are used in relation to this Core practice are those that apply in England, as defined in paragraph 342 of the OfS regulatory framework. That is, those set out in Table 1, in paragraphs 4.10, 4.12, 4.15, 4.17, 4.18, in paragraphs 6.13-6.18 and in the Table in Annex C, in the version of [The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies](#) (FHEQ) published in October 2014. These sector-recognised standards represent the threshold academic standards for each level of the FHEQ and the minimum volumes of credit typically associated with qualifications at each level.

3 The QAA review team completed an assessment of this Core practice in line with the principles and outcomes that are detailed in the [Quality and Standards Review for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students: Guidance for Providers](#) (March 2019).

The evidence the team considered

4 The QAA review team assessed the evidence presented, both prior to and at the visit, to determine if the provider could meet this Core practice at a threshold level. The Quality and Standards Review Guidance for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students includes a matrix (Annex 4) which identifies key pieces of evidence that a provider may present and which the team should consider when making a judgement against this Core practice to ensure that the relevant outcomes are being delivered. The review team used that matrix to ensure that the evidence considered was assessed in a way that is clear and consistent with all other reviews and focused on relevant outcomes. A list of the key pieces of evidence seen by the team is below:

- a Lancaster University Academic Regulations for Assessment and Award, for External Examiner procedures
- b UA92's Academic Regulations
- c Assessed student work: Business, Sport and Physical Education
- d The Franchise Agreement
- e UA92 Assessment Policy
- f UA92's Grading Rubrics
- g Module handbooks
- h UA92 Quality Assurance and Enhancement: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy
- i Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure
- j Block 1 Monitoring and Evaluation Form
- k Membership/Terms of Reference of LU- UA92 Joint Implementation Group
- l Link Tutor Guidance
- m Internal moderation form and minutes of the Board of Examiners
- n Programme specifications
- o Module specifications
- p Meeting with senior staff and the University representatives

q Meeting with academic and professional support staff, and the University's link tutors.

5 Some of the key pieces of evidence, outlined in Annex 4, were not considered by the review team. These pieces of evidence and the reason why they were not considered during this review are outlined below:

6 Third party endorsements, as none are available for the provision on offer at UA92.

7 No formal external examiner reports were available at the time of the review.

How any samples of evidence were constructed

8 To test that specified sector-recognised standards for courses sampled are consistent with relevant national qualifications' frameworks, the review team considered a representative sample of programme specifications, module specifications from six programmes covering different subjects, levels of study and a mixture of large and small student cohorts.

9 To test that students' assessed work reflects the sector-recognised standards, the review team considered a random sample of 16 pieces of assessed student work from two modules: Business Studies (Management and Organisations) and Sport and Physical Education (Introduction to Sports Psychology) and the module handbooks for these two modules, which included assessment briefs.

Why and how the team considered this evidence

10 As highlighted, all of the evidence submitted by the provider was considered by the review team either prior to the visit, or at the visit itself. As such, several pieces of evidence will have been considered to allow the review team to make its judgement regarding the provider's ability to meet this Core practice. To ensure consistency in decision making and to ensure that those decisions focused on outcomes, the review team considered the key pieces of evidence outlined in Annex 4 of the Guidance for Providers. These key pieces of evidence and the reason for scrutinising them are outlined below.

11 To identify UA92's institutional approach to course and assessment design, marking and moderation, and approaches for classification as the underlying basis for the standards of awards, the review team considered the Franchise Agreement, UA92's Academic Regulations, Lancaster University's Academic Regulations for Assessment and Award, UA92's Assessment Policy, UA92's Grading Rubrics, module handbooks.

12 To interrogate the robustness and credibility of UA92's plans for ensuring sector-recognised standards, the review team considered UA92's Quality Assurance and Enhancement: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure, Block 1 Monitoring and Evaluation Form, the Franchise Agreement, Membership/Terms of Reference of LU- UA92 Joint Implementation Group, Link Tutor Guidance, internal moderation form and minutes of the Board of Examiners, Lancaster University Academic Regulations for External Examiner procedures.

13 To test that specified sector-recognised standards for courses sampled are consistent with relevant national qualifications' frameworks, the review team considered programme specifications and module specifications.

14 To test that students' assessed work reflects sector-recognised standards, the review team considered assessed student work, internal moderation form and minutes of the Board of Examiners.

15 To test that staff understand and apply UA92's approach to maintaining sector-recognised standards, the review team met with UA92 senior and academic staff.

What the evidence shows

16 The review team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

17 The Franchise Agreement confirms that Lancaster University, as the awarding body, is responsible for setting and providing oversight of UA92's maintenance of sector-recognised standards. Accordingly, UA92's Academic Regulations confirm that all programmes leading to awards of Lancaster University must comply with criteria agreed by the Lancaster University Senate in terms of the level of study, duration of programmes, numbers of modules, student learning hours and credit frameworks, and must be aligned with the relevant national qualifications' frameworks.

18 UA92's Academic Regulations, in line with Lancaster University's Academic Regulations for Assessment and Award, specify clear standards for credit levels and values, assessment, marking and moderation processes, and student progression regulations, which are consistent with the relevant national qualifications' frameworks. The assessment and moderation process, as outlined in UA92's Academic Regulations and Assessment Policy, facilitates the maintenance of sector-recognised standards because it not only includes internal moderation but also Lancaster University link tutor's verification and external examiners' approval of standards. UA92's Grading Rubrics form part of the module handbooks to guide students on how to structure their assessed work to meet sector-recognised standards.

19 UA92's plans for maintaining sector-recognised standards include the monitoring and review procedure, and the involvement of Lancaster University and external examiners. UA92's Quality Assurance and Enhancement: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy explains UA92's monitoring and review process at module level. Module evaluation takes place at the end of each block and takes into consideration feedback from students, staff and anyone else who might have engaged with the module (for example, employers). The views of external examiners and the Lancaster University link tutors are also sought to confirm the maintenance of sector-recognised standards. The academic tutor of the module is responsible for collating all feedback to the module evaluation form and reporting the form to the Course Board which feeds into the annual monitoring and evaluation procedure at programme level. The annual programme monitoring and evaluation procedure is outlined in Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure. It is an evidence-based process and draws on performance data (retention, failure rates, average marks, progression, awards, graduate destinations, National Student Survey (NSS) scores, benchmark data) as well as feedback gathered during the year. It requires the input of external examiners and link tutors as well as students and other external stakeholders. The annual programme monitoring report and associated action plans will be received by UA92's AQG and approved by Lancaster University Academic Standards and Quality Committee. Academic staff at the visit showed a clear understanding of how this process operates.

20 The Franchise Agreement details how Lancaster University oversees UA92's maintenance of sector-recognised standards. As confirmed in the Franchise Agreement, UA92 is required to revalidate programmes after two years and then every five years, as well as engage in annual monitoring review processes. Specific reference is made to adhering to the requirements of the Quality Code. The LU-UA92 Joint Implementation Group streamlines reporting between UA92 and the University. Terms of Reference include oversight of a range of operational, statutory, compliance, regulatory or reputational matters as well as monitoring performance and maintenance of sector-recognised standards. Membership includes three senior representatives from both UA92 and the University.

21 The University's oversight is operationalised via the input of link tutors in all aspects of quality assurance. The role of the link tutors from Lancaster University is outlined in the Link Tutor Guidance where it explains that the main purposes of the link tutors are to 'support the ongoing monitoring and maintenance of quality and standards of the Lancaster higher education programmes at UA92, in particular, to ensure comparability of standards'. In practice, Lancaster University link tutors are heavily involved in maintaining standards by overseeing all course documentation, moderating all assessments and participation in the annual review of all courses. Internal moderation forms and examination board meeting minutes demonstrate that any actions needed before marks are confirmed should be considered by the University link tutor together with UA92's internal moderation panel. This process was clearly articulated by the link tutor from Lancaster University and UA92 senior and academic staff in meetings.

22 Lancaster University's Academic Regulations for External Examiner Procedures explains the role of the external examiner in maintaining standards through monitoring and evaluation processes. It states that the external examiners' comments and judgements 'inform the continuous review of programmes' and 'form an essential part of the University's annual and periodic review processes and procedures'. External examiner reports are required at the end of each academic year but because this is the first year of operation none have yet been submitted. However, there is some evidence of external examiner input in assessment and moderation in the minutes of the Board of Examiners where all external examiners confirmed satisfaction with the appropriateness of standards. Given that detailed policies and procedures are in place as described above, the review team concludes that UA92 has robust plans for maintaining sector-recognised standards.

23 The sector-recognised standards described in programme specifications and module specifications at Level 4 are consistent with the FHEQ. This is because most of the definitive course documentation clearly outlines the assessment framework, classification, grading bands and grading criteria, and learning outcomes in terms of subject knowledge, understanding and skills, with appropriate references to the FHEQ. Some of the programme specifications are disorganised and incomplete. In one subject area there is a lack of specific reference to any national qualification framework within the programme specifications. Nevertheless, the review team found that the learning outcomes in both cases appeared to be consistent with the FHEQ qualification descriptors.

24 At the time of the review visit, there was limited evidence of student work in the sample given that only two modules had been delivered on each programme at UA92 at the time of the review and all are Level 4. However, a review of the samples of assessed student work for Business (Management and Organisation) and Sport and Physical Education (Introduction to Sports Psychology) provides evidence that feedback articulates how student work meets standards. There is some inconsistent application of rubric and grading criteria to student work. Comments by the link tutor and external examiner confirmed that there needs to be greater consistency in applying specific reference points of the grading criteria in the marking process and student feedback. Overall, the marking criteria were applied, which are based on FHEQ levels, so the review team is confident that credit is awarded only where the sector-recognised standards have been met.

25 Staff understand and apply consistently UA92's approach to maintaining standards. Staff have a clear understanding of how the processes for course approval and monitoring of standards operate. They are able to articulate the processes, standards and approach to assessment, marking and moderation. They understand the marking and moderation process and the role of external examiners and link tutors. UA92 course leaders and academic tutors are all clear about the process and able to refer to Academic Regulations accurately. Lancaster University link tutors were represented at the meeting and were equally confident in outlining their role in maintaining standards. They were able to present

their plans for ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

26 UA92's senior and academic staff demonstrated a clear understanding of applying UA92's approach to maintaining sector-recognised standards. Course leaders were fully aware of their responsibilities in maintaining sector-recognised standards, as they were able to explain how they will deliver, assess and monitor the courses, and take feedback from the University link tutor and external examiners into consideration. The University link tutors clearly articulated the University's roles in setting and maintaining standards with reference to the University's Academic Regulations.

Conclusions

27 As described above, the review team considered all of the evidence submitted to form a judgement as to whether the provider meets this Core practice. In making this judgement the team followed the process set out in Guidance for Providers and took account of the key statements outlined in Annex 5. In so doing the review team ensured that its judgement was consistent with all other reviews and remained outcomes focused. The team's conclusions, based on the evidence considered, are detailed below.

28 From the evidence seen, the review team considers that the standards set for UA92's courses are in line with the sector-recognised standards defined in paragraph 342 of the OfS regulatory framework. Based on the evidence provided, the review team also considered that standards described in the approved programme documentation are set at levels that are consistent with these sector-recognised standards and UA92's Academic Regulations and policies should ensure that standards can be maintained appropriately.

29 The review team considers that, based on the evidence scrutinised, the standards that will be achieved by UA92's students are expected to be in line with the sector-recognised standards defined in paragraph 342 of the OfS regulatory framework. Based on this information the review team also considers that UA92's Academic Regulations and policies will ensure that these standards are maintained. The team considers that staff fully understand UA92's approach to maintaining these standards and that the evidence seen demonstrates they are committed to implementing this approach. Therefore, based on its scrutiny of the evidence provided, the review team concludes that this Core practice is met.

30 The evidence underpinning this judgement reflects all the evidence described in QSR evidence matrix, with the exception of the third-party endorsement and formal external examiner reports. The rest of the evidence base leads the review team to have a high degree of confidence in this judgement.

S2 The provider ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers

31 This Core practice expects that the provider ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers.

32 The QAA review team completed an assessment of this Core practice in line with the principles and outcomes that are detailed in the [Quality and Standards Review for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students: Guidance for Providers](#) (March 2019).

The evidence the team considered

33 The review team assessed the evidence presented, both prior to and at the visit, to determine if the provider could meet this Core practice at a threshold level. The Quality and Standards Review Guidance for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students includes a matrix (Annex 4) which identifies key pieces of evidence that a provider may present and which the team should consider when making a judgement against this Core practice to ensure that the relevant outcomes are being delivered. The review team used that matrix to ensure that the evidence considered was assessed in a way that is clear and consistent with all other reviews and focused on relevant outcomes. A list of the key pieces of evidence seen by the team is below:

- a Lancaster University Academic Regulations for Assessment and Award, for External Examiner procedures
- b UA92's Academic Regulations
- c Grading rubrics
- d UA92 Assessment Policy
- e UA92 Quality Assurance and Enhancement: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy
- f Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure
- g Link Tutor Guidance
- h Internal moderation form and minutes of the Board of Examiners
- i Block 1 Monitoring and Evaluation Form
- j Programme specifications
- k Curriculum Mapping
- l Assessed student work: Business, Sport and Physical Education
- m Student submission
- n Meeting with students
- o Meeting with academic and professional support staff, and the University's link tutors.

34 Some of the key pieces of evidence, outlined in Annex 4, were not considered by the review team. These pieces of evidence and the reason why they were not considered during this review are outlined below:

35 Third party endorsements, as none are available for the provision on offer at UA92.

36 No formal external examiner reports were available at the time of the review.

How any samples of evidence were constructed

37 To test that specified threshold standards for courses sampled are reasonably

comparable with those achieved in other UK providers, the review team considered a representative sample of programme specifications from six programmes covering different subjects, levels of study and a mixture of large and small student cohorts.

38 To test that marks and awards given to students are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers, the review team considered a random sample of 16 pieces of assessed student work from two modules: Business Studies (Management and Organisations) and Sport and Physical Education (Introduction to Sports Psychology), as these are the only two modules that had been delivered at the time of the visit.

Why and how the team considered this evidence

39 As highlighted, all of the evidence submitted by the provider was considered by the review team either prior to the visit, or at the visit itself. As such, several pieces of evidence will have been considered to allow the review team to make its judgement regarding the provider's ability to meet this Core practice. To ensure consistency in decision making and to ensure that those decisions focused on outcomes, the review team considered the key pieces of evidence outlined in Annex 4 of the Guidance for Providers. These key pieces of evidence and the reason for scrutinising them are outlined below.

40 To identify institutional approaches to maintaining standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers, the review team considered UA92's Academic Regulations, Lancaster University's Academic Regulations for Assessment and Award, grading rubrics and UA92's Assessment Policy.

41 To interrogate the robustness of UA92's plans for maintaining comparable standards and to ensure that plans are credible and evidence-based, the review team considered UA92 Quality Assurance and Enhancement: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure, Lancaster University's Academic Regulations for External Examiner procedures, Link Tutor Guidance, Internal moderation form and minutes of the Board of Examiners.

42 To test that specified standards beyond the threshold for courses sampled are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers, the review team considered programme specifications and curriculum mapping.

43 There are no formal external examiner reports available to date, but some evidence of external verification of standards was available at the time of the review visit. To check that external examiners confirm that standards beyond the threshold for courses sampled are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers, the review team considered internal moderation forms and minutes of the Board of Examiners.

44 To test that marks and awards given to students are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers, the review team reviewed Student Work, Block 1 Monitoring and Evaluation Form.

45 To assess whether students understand what is required of them to reach standards beyond the threshold requirements, the review team considered the student submission and met with students.

46 To test that staff understand and apply the UA92's approach to maintaining comparable standards, the review team met academic staff and professional support staff, and the University's link tutors.

What the evidence shows

47 The review team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

48 To ensure the maintenance of standards beyond threshold levels that are comparable with other UK providers, UA92's Academic Regulations, in line with Lancaster University's Academic Regulations, clearly outline progression requirements and expectations of student achievement beyond the threshold level. Grading rubrics are designed to show differentiation of FHEQ levels and how students will develop their knowledge, understanding and skills beyond the threshold level. This provides transparency for student and staff expectations as well as consistency in staff marking that are consistent with FHEQ levels. Staff and students are aware of these standards and students confirmed that the marking criteria are publicised in advance of assessments. Staff and students demonstrate a good understanding of what is required beyond threshold level with clear references to UA92's Academic Regulations and Assessment Policy.

49 UA92's plans for maintaining sector-recognised standards beyond threshold levels include the monitoring and review procedure, and the involvement of Lancaster University and external examiners. The module/programme evaluation and monitoring and evaluation procedures are outlined in UA92's Quality Assurance and Enhancement: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure. The views of external examiners and Lancaster University link tutors are considered in module and programme review processes to inform the maintenance of standards and to help UA92 understand how students can achieve beyond the expected standards.

50 External examiners' and Lancaster University link tutors' roles in monitoring the quality, standards and comparability of the learning and teaching experience at UA92 are respectively outlined in Lancaster University Academic Regulations for External Examiner procedures and Link Tutor Guidance. The UA92's maintenance of academic standards is overseen by Lancaster University as the awarding body on an ongoing basis, with Lancaster University link tutor input in all stages of curriculum and assessment design, monitoring and evaluation. UA92 will have input from external examiners in the course and assessment design moving forward, which further ensures the comparability of the standard to other UK institutions. The internal moderation form and minutes of the Board of Examiners demonstrate the involvement of external examiners and the University link tutors in the assessment and moderation process. Any actions needed before marks are confirmed by the board of examiners should be considered by the University link tutor and external examiners together with UA92's internal moderation panel.

51 Given the discussion above, the review team found that UA92 has robust and credible plans for maintaining comparable standards through the monitoring and review procedure, and the involvement of Lancaster University and external examiners.

52 UA92 has mapped subject-based learning outcomes in programme specifications to the appropriate FHEQ levels together with assessment criteria which illustrate how students will be able to meet the sector-recognised standards. Each programme specification includes a curriculum mapping which explains how the modules contribute to the programme learning outcomes and what students must do to achieve beyond the sector-recognised standards. The review team therefore found that the standards beyond the threshold described in definitive course documentation are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers.

53 There were no formal external examiner reports available at the time of the visit but external examiners are in place for all courses and are making comments on the assessments. As recorded in the internal moderation form and minutes of the Board of

Examiners, external examiners all confirm standards as being appropriate for Level 4, and that the grade boundaries within Level 4 are appropriate.

54 The review team considered the sample of assessed student work and agreed that marks awarded to students were reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK institutions. While there were no examples of failures, there were some borderline assignments in the sample and the review team was satisfied that awards (or credit and grades that contribute to awards) were not being awarded where the standards were not met. Students were attaining standards beyond threshold level and work was generally marked consistently and in accordance with the grading criteria. As recorded in Block 1 Monitoring and Evaluation Form, one external examiner did suggest that the feedback can link more closely with the grading rubric, and this needs to be monitored.

55 All students are currently in Level 4 and still relatively new to higher education so are still learning how to understand levels and expectations at threshold level, but they nevertheless demonstrated an understanding of what they needed to do to go beyond the threshold level, or at least knew how to find this out. Students mentioned that the relevant rubrics are easily accessible via the virtual learning environment (VLE), and students commented that assessment expectations and requirements to achieve beyond threshold levels are presented in a clear, student-friendly way. Students understood how to develop as independent learners and all were aware of marking criteria/descriptors and rubrics, and how to distinguish between classifications.

56 Course leaders and academic tutors demonstrated a clear understanding of how they ensure the standards are comparable with those in other UK providers. They explained to the review team the course structures and how they had related the learning outcomes to relevant national qualifications' frameworks. They explained that the course documents contain the award requirements in order to give the students the opportunities to achieve standards beyond the sector-recognised level. Course leaders and the University link tutors clearly articulated the monitoring and review processes at module and programme levels and how the University and external examiners work with UA92 to monitor the programmes for comparable standards.

Conclusions

57 As described above, the review team considered all of the evidence submitted to form a judgement as to whether the provider meets this Core practice. In making this judgement the team followed the process set out in Guidance for Providers and took account of the key statements outlined in Annex 5. In so doing the review team ensured that its judgement was consistent with all other reviews and remained outcomes focused. The team's conclusions, based on the evidence considered, are detailed below.

58 The review team, based on the evidence presented, determined that the standards set for students to achieve beyond the threshold on the provider's courses are reasonably comparable with those set by other UK providers. The review team considered that the standards described in the approved programme documentation and in the provider's Academic Regulations and policies should ensure that such standards are maintained appropriately.

59 Therefore, the review team concludes, based on the evidence described above, that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers and this Core practice is met.

60 The team considered that UA92's Academic Regulations and policies should ensure that standards beyond the threshold are maintained. UA92 has robust plans for maintaining

comparable standards through the monitoring and review procedure, and the involvement of Lancaster University and external examiners. The review team considers UA92's plans for maintaining comparable standards appropriate, well documented and understood by staff members. All students are currently in Level 4 and, but they demonstrated understanding of what is required to reach standards beyond the threshold. Students understood how to develop as independent learners and all were aware of marking criteria/descriptors and rubrics, and how to distinguish between classifications. Assessed student work demonstrates that credit and qualifications are awarded only where the relevant standards have been met.

61 The evidence underpinning this judgement reflects all evidence described in QSR evidence matrix, with the exception of the third-party endorsement and formal external examiner reports. The rest of the evidence base leads the review team to have a high degree of confidence in this judgement.

S3 Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them

62 This Core practice expects that where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them.

63 The QAA review team completed an assessment of this Core practice in line with the principles and outcomes that are detailed in the [Quality and Standards Review for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students: Guidance for Providers](#) (March 2019).

The evidence the team considered

64 The review team assessed the evidence presented, both prior to and at the visit, to determine if the provider could meet this Core practice at a threshold level. The Quality and Standards Review Guidance for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students includes a matrix (Annex 4) which identifies key pieces of evidence that a provider may present and which the team should consider when making a judgement against this Core practice to ensure that the relevant outcomes are being delivered. The review team used that matrix to ensure that the evidence considered was assessed in a way that is clear and consistent with all other reviews and focused on relevant outcomes. A list of the key pieces of evidence seen by the team is below:

- a The Franchise Agreement
- b Lancaster University's Manual of Academic Regulations and Procedures and External Examiner procedures
- c UA92's Academic Regulations
- d LU-UA92 Joint Faculty Teaching Community meeting minutes and LU Senate approval document
- e Approval process from October 2019
- f Link Tutor Guidance
- g Terms of Reference/Membership of LU-UA92 Joint Implementation Group
- h UA92 Governance structure
- i Terms of Reference and memberships for UA92 Academic Committee
- j Terms of Reference and memberships for UA92 Committees involved in Quality Assurance
- k Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure
- l UA92 Quality Assurance and Enhancement: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy
- m Service Level Agreement
- n Assessed student work: Business, Sport and Physical Education
- o Internal moderation form and minutes of the Board of Examiners
- p Block 1 Monitoring and Evaluation Form
- q Meeting with senior staff and the University representatives
- r Meeting with academic and professional support staff, and the University's link tutors.

65 Some of the key pieces of evidence, outlined in Annex 4, were not considered by the review team. These pieces of evidence and the reason why they were not considered during this review are outlined below:

66 Third party endorsements, as none are available for the provision on offer at UA92.

67 No formal external examiner reports were available at the time of the review.

How any samples of evidence were constructed

68 To test that standards of awards are credible and secure, thus confirming the effectiveness of the underpinning arrangements, the review team considered a random sample of 16 pieces of assessed student work from two modules: Business Studies (Management and Organisations) and Sport and Physical Education (Introduction to Sports Psychology).

Why and how the team considered this evidence

69 As highlighted, all of the evidence submitted by the provider was considered by the review team either prior to the visit, or at the visit itself. As such, several pieces of evidence will have been considered to allow the team to make its judgement regarding the provider's ability to meet this Core practice. To ensure consistency in decision making and to ensure that those decisions focused on outcomes, the review team considered the key pieces of evidence outlined in Annex 4 of the Guidance for Providers. These key pieces of evidence and the reason for scrutinising them are outlined below.

70 To identify how UA92 ensures the standards of awards delivered on behalf of Lancaster University are credible and secure, the review team considered the Franchise Agreement, Lancaster University Academic Regulations for Course, Development and Approval document, the University Senate approval document, Approval process from October 2019, Link Tutor Guidance, Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure, Block 1 Monitoring and Evaluation Form, Terms of Reference/Membership of LU-UA92 Joint Implementation Group, Lancaster University's Manual of Academic Regulations and Procedures, and UA92's Academic Regulations.

71 To assess whether UA92 has credible, robust and evidence-based plans for securing standards in partnership work, the review team considered UA92's Governance Structure, the Terms of References and Membership of the UA92 Academic Committee and Committee involved in Quality Assurance, the Franchise Agreement, Lancaster University Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure, and UA92's Quality Assurance and Enhancement: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy.

72 To interrogate the basis for the maintenance of academic standards within specific partnerships, and to test that those arrangements are in line with UA92's regulations and policies, the review team considered the Franchise Agreement, Lancaster University's Academic Regulations for course design, development and approval, assessment and external examiner procedures, Service Level Agreement, LU-UA92 Joint Faculty Teaching Community meeting minutes and LU Senate approval document.

73 To test whether external examiners consider that standards are credible and secure, thus confirming the effectiveness of the underpinning arrangements, the review team considered the internal moderation form and minutes of the Board of Examiners.

74 To test that standards of awards are credible and secure, thus confirming the effectiveness of the underpinning arrangements, the review team considered assessed student work, the internal moderation form and minutes of the Board of Examiners, and UA92's Academic Regulations.

75 To test that staff understand and discharge effectively their responsibilities to the awarding body and to test the awarding body's understanding of their responsibilities and

how this is implemented and monitored in practice, the review team considered meetings with UA92 senior staff and University representatives, UA92 academic staff and the University's link tutors.

What the evidence shows

76 The review team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

77 UA92 courses are validated by Lancaster University under a franchise arrangement. The responsibilities between UA92 and Lancaster University are clearly defined in the Franchise Agreement. Lancaster University, as the awarding body for UA92, is responsible for the security and credibility of the academic standards of the awards granted in its name.

78 Lancaster University ensures that its responsibility for setting of academic standards is clearly communicated and is implemented through formal course approval processes as outlined in Lancaster University Academic Regulations for Course, Development and Approval document. All proposed courses are approved by the LU-UA92 Joint Faculty Teaching Committee and then progress for institutional approval to the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education and EDI at Lancaster University. All approved programmes are noted by the University Senate. New degree types would require Senate approval, Lancaster University Academic Regulations for Course, Development and Approval document demonstrates structured and recorded processes for programme design, development, and approval. In this instance, UA92 programmes were designed and developed by Lancaster University academic staff with subject specialisms, and then for innovative or complex proposals discussed with LU-UA92 Joint Faculty Teaching Committees and the University's Academic Standards and Quality Team. The Dean for Academic Quality and the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education at Lancaster University were also consulted. The review team noted that there was no consultation with external experts in the sector during the course design stage. Senior staff confirmed that for subsequent programme approvals, a new process for course design has been agreed between Lancaster University and UA92 in which external verification will be sought for course design and approval.

79 To ensure academic standards are maintained on an ongoing basis, academic delivery is overseen by the University through the University's annual programme monitoring and evaluation procedure and link tutors. An academic at Lancaster University has been appointed as a link tutor for each subject area to support the ongoing monitoring and maintenance of the quality and standards of higher education programmes at UA92. The Link Tutor Guidance sets out the roles of link tutors from Lancaster University, including annual review and monitoring, programme delivery support, oversight of staff appointment, moderation of assessment, liaison with UA92 external examiners, and attending UA92 examination boards as University representatives. It was confirmed in the meeting with senior and University representatives that the University's link tutors will continue to be appointed as the UA92 programme portfolio grows, and almost all have been allocated for the 2020 entry programmes. The effectiveness of the link tutor's work in maintaining sector-recognised standards was captured in the module evaluation report where after UA92's internal moderation, the assessment sample is moderated by the link tutor before reporting to external examiners. UA92 course leaders explained how the Lancaster University link tutors provided subject expertise in the programme development and approval, in assessment through the moderation process and how the University link tutors are involved in UA92's annual monitoring and reviews to ensure a high-quality learning experience for UA92 students.

80 The Joint Implementation Group streamlines reporting between UA92 and Lancaster University. The Terms of Reference/Membership of LU-UA92 Joint

Implementation Group include oversight of a range of operational, statutory, compliance, regulatory or reputational matters as well as monitoring performance and maintenance of sector-recognised standards. Membership includes three senior representatives from each of UA92 and Lancaster University.

81 The Franchise Agreement between UA92 and Lancaster University confirms that both parties agree to abide by the University's Manual of Academic Regulations and Procedures in respect of the conduct and delivery of UA92 programmes. Based on Lancaster University's Academic Regulations for Assessment and Award, UA92 has developed its Academic Regulations to maintain sector-recognised standards and to ensure that qualifications are awarded only where sector-recognised standards have been met.

82 UA92 has credible and robust plans to ensure the academic standards in partnership work, including a clear governance structure and the monitoring and evaluation processes. UA92's Governance Structure demonstrates clarity of structure and relationship between provider, awarding body, partners, and students. This structure highlights the deliberative committees, Lancaster University responsibilities, and U92 academic and corporate governance mechanisms with clear direct and indirect reporting lines to ensure that plans for quality assurance and enhancement are in place. Terms of Reference and membership of UA92's Academic Committee and Committee for Quality Assurance indicate that representatives from Lancaster University are included in UA92's key committees in assuring quality and standards. The UA92 Academic Committee is chaired by the UA92 Principal and reports to the UA92 Board and Lancaster University's Academic Quality and Standards Committee. As explained in the Franchise Agreement, all academic quality and standards issues relating to the UA92 programmes, including 'entry standards, teaching quality, module and programme development, approval and reapproval, assessment methods and outcomes and progression and award criteria' will be reviewed by Lancaster University's Academic Quality and Standards Committee through the University's annual programme monitoring and evaluation procedure.

83 UA92's Quality Assurance and Enhancement: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy demonstrates how its plans to secure the standards of the programme are credible and secure with module evaluation reviewing a range of information including feedback from Lancaster University link tutors and external examiners. Modules are Red-Amber-Green (RAG) rated based on a combination of the evidence of analysis for any amendments to be considered. Programme evaluation is referred to Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure. The Lancaster University Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure monitors and evaluates whether delivery is robust, secure and credible in accordance with UA92's Academic Regulations. This is demonstrated in Section 2.2 of Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure in which Lancaster University will consider performance data packs from the provider, as well as a series of qualitative questions about the currency of the programme content, the experience of the delivery team, resources, and student feedback. In addition, as evidenced in the Franchise Agreement, UA92 is required to revalidate all the programmes after two years and then every five years.

84 The Franchise Agreement is legally binding with both parties agreeing to abide by the University's Academic Regulations and Procedures in respect of the conduct and delivery of UA92's programmes. Both parties' roles and responsibilities, and what services and resources that the University should provide to UA92 are clearly explained in the Agreement. An example of how the Franchise Agreement has been operationalised effectively is the Service Level Agreement confirmed in line with the Franchise Agreement for the provision of a managed transactional Human Resources (HR) and Payroll Service between Lancaster University and UA92.

85 LU-UA92 Joint Faculty Teaching Community meeting minutes and the LU Senate approval document confirmed full course approval from Lancaster University's Senate. This evidence details plans to ensure Lancaster University and UA92's roles in setting and maintaining standards will be implemented in practice. For example, it was noted that the University's link tutors had been identified for all relevant departments and contact had been made with UA92. Within the meeting minutes, the review team noticed that the possible funding issues to support link tutors' moderation work for Target Talent Curriculum were still being considered for approval by Lancaster University. During the meeting with University representatives, it was confirmed by the Lancaster University UA92 Teaching Director that although this has not yet been confirmed it was being resolved through appropriate Lancaster University processes in the next month (February 2020).

86 There were no formal external examiner reports available at the time of the visit. However, external examiners have made some comments on the Block 1 assessed student work after internal moderation by the module leader and the Lancaster University link tutor. This provides evidence that the external examiners confirm that the standards of awards are robust and credible.

87 The team reviewed a sample of assessed student work and confirmed that the awards are credible and secure with evidence of marking and grading in accordance with grading criteria and internal moderation as outlined in UA92's Academic Regulations, which is in line with Lancaster University's Academic Regulations. Assessed student work had also been evaluated by the University link tutor and external examiner. Their feedback report to the Examination Board demonstrated that both the link tutor and external examiner were satisfied with student work assessed and graded in line with UA92's Academic Regulations.

88 Senior staff and academic staff provided evidence that UA92 and Lancaster University fully understood their responsibilities in the delivery of the partnership agreement. An example of this was explained during about how the Lancaster University module designated link tutors are all selected for this duty because of their subject expertise, and experience of acting as moderators on other Lancaster University partnerships. The timetable of assessment and moderation is built into the workload of the Lancaster University link tutors who fully comply with the moderation timeline that has been communicated to students at UA92 who have received an initial grade and assessment feedback.

Conclusions

89 As described above, the review team considered all of the evidence submitted to form a judgement as to whether the provider meets this Core practice. In making this judgement the team followed the process set out in Guidance for Providers and took account of the key statements outlined in Annex 5. In so doing the review team ensured that its judgement was consistent with all other reviews and remained outcomes focused. The team's conclusions, based on the evidence considered, are detailed below.

90 UA92 has in place effective arrangements to ensure that, working in partnership with its awarding body, the standards of the awards it delivers are credible and secure. This is because the responsibilities between UA92 and Lancaster University are clearly defined in the Franchise Agreement. Lancaster University ensures its responsibility for the setting of academic standards through formal course approval processes and its responsibility for overseeing the maintenance of standards through monitoring reviews and the University's link tutors.

91 UA92 has clear Academic Regulations for the management of partnerships with Lancaster University. It has robust and credible plans to secure standards in provision

delivered in partnership, including a clear governance structure and monitoring and evaluation processes. Staff from both UA92 and Lancaster University clearly understood and were able to articulate their responsibilities for academic standards. Evidence from the recently appointed external examiners, Lancaster University link tutors, and the sample of student work confirm that, so far, the programme the standards of the awards delivered in the partnership are credible and secure. The review team, therefore, concludes that this Core practice is met.

92 The evidence underpinning this judgement reflects all evidence described in QSR evidence matrix, with the exception of the third-party endorsement and formal external examiner reports. The rest of the evidence base leads the review team to have a high degree of confidence in this judgement.

S4 The provider uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent

93 This Core practice expects that the provider uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent.

94 The QAA review team completed an assessment of this Core practice in line with the principles and outcomes that are detailed in the [Quality and Standards Review for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students: Guidance for Providers](#) (March 2019).

The evidence the team considered

95 The review team assessed the evidence presented, both prior to and at the visit, to determine if the provider could meet this Core practice at a threshold level. The Quality and Standards Review Guidance for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students includes a matrix (Annex 4) which identifies key pieces of evidence that a provider may present and which the team should consider when making a judgement against this Core practice to ensure that the relevant outcomes are being delivered. The review team used that matrix to ensure that the evidence considered was assessed in a way that is clear and consistent with all other reviews and focused on relevant outcomes. A list of the key pieces of evidence seen by the team is below:

- a UA92's Academic Regulations
- b Lancaster University Academic Regulations for course design, development and approval, assessment and External Examiner procedures
- c Approval process from October 2019
- d UA92's Course Design Development Approval and Modification procedure
- e External examiner appointment letters
- f External examiner involvement in assessment setting
- g UA92 Assessment policy
- h UA92 Quality Assurance and Enhancement: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy
- i Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure
- j Internal moderation form and minutes of the Board of Examiners
- k Block 1 monitoring and evaluation form
- l Assessed student work: Business, Sport and Physical Education
- m Module handbook
- n Module specifications
- o Student submission
- p Meeting with senior staff and the University representatives
- q Meeting with students
- r Meeting with academic and professional support staff, and the University's link tutors.

96 Some of the key pieces of evidence, outlined in Annex 4, were not considered by the review team. These pieces of evidence and the reason why they were not considered during this review are outlined below:

97 Third party endorsements as none are available for the provision on offer at UA92.

98 No formal external examiner reports were available at the time of the review.

How any samples of evidence were constructed

99 To assess the reliability, fairness and transparency of assessment and classification

processes for the courses sampled, the review team considered a representative sample of module specifications from six programmes covering different subjects, levels of study and a mixture of large and small student cohorts.

Why and how the team considered this evidence

100 As highlighted, all of the evidence submitted by the provider was considered by the review team either prior to the visit, or at the visit itself. As such, several pieces of evidence will have been considered to allow the review team to make its judgement regarding the provider's ability to meet this Core practice. To ensure consistency in decision making and to ensure that those decisions focused on outcomes, the review team considered the key pieces of evidence outlined in Annex 4 of the Guidance for Providers. These key pieces of evidence and the reason for scrutinising them are outlined below.

101 To identify how external experts are used in maintaining academic standards, and how the provider's assessment and classification processes operate, the review team considered UA92's Academic Regulations, Lancaster University's Academic Regulations for course design, development and approval, assessment and External Examiner procedures, Lancaster University's annual programme monitoring procedure, Approval process from October 2019, UA92's Course Design Development Approval and Modification procedure, external examiner appointment letters, external examiner involvement in assessment setting and UA92's Assessment Policy.

102 To assess whether plans for using external expertise in maintaining academic standards and plans for assessment and classification processes are credible, robust and evidence-based, the review team considered Lancaster University's Academic Regulations for course design, development and approval, internal moderation form and minutes of the Board of Examiners, UA92's Assessment Policy, UA92's Quality Assurance and Enhancement: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, and Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure.

103 To assess the reliability, fairness and transparency of assessment and classification processes for the courses sampled, the review team considered assessed module specifications and module handbooks.

104 To interrogate the use of external examiners and that the provider considers and responds to external reports regarding standards appropriately and to identify external views about reliability, fairness and transparency of assessment and classification processes, the review team considered the internal moderation form and minutes of the Board of Examiners and the Block 1 monitoring and evaluation form, which includes external examiners' feedback.

105 To test that staff understand the requirements for the use of external expertise, and UA92's assessment and classification processes, the review team considered comments from meetings with senior staff and academic and professional support staff.

106 To identify how students regard the reliability, fairness and transparency of assessment and classification processes, the review team considered the student submission and the meeting with students.

What the evidence shows

107 The review team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

108 UA92's Academic Regulations and Lancaster University's Academic Regulations for course design, development and approval, assessment and external examiner procedures

together provide a clear and comprehensive framework for maintaining standards, the use of external expertise and assessment and classification processes.

109 At least one external examiner is appointed for each programme by UA92 according to Lancaster University's criteria and approved by the University. External examiners' roles are detailed in the Lancaster University Academic Regulations: External Examiner Procedures, including commenting on the standards of marking and student achievement, approving the assignment briefs and marking schemes to identify any causes of concern in relation to academic standards, attending UA92's examination board and participating fully in decision making for final awards. The external examiners also provide an annual report addressing aspects of comparability of standards, assessment methods and procedures, and student achievement. This then feeds into the annual programme review procedure.

110 There was no external input into the programme design and approval process for existing programmes that are currently being delivered at UA92. Lancaster University representatives confirmed that there was no requirement for external examiner engagement in the new course approval process for the programmes delivered in 2019-20. As explained by the University Academic Registrar, this was consistent with the approval processes as set out in Lancaster University's Academic Regulations when the programmes were approved, which UA92's programme team followed at the time. As confirmed by Lancaster University representatives and UA92's senior staff, there was consultation with other faculties and the Lancaster University Teaching Committee during development and validation of UA92 programmes, which was in line with Lancaster University's Academic Regulations. Moving forward, as updated in the Lancaster University regulations on course design, development and approval, UA92 'is required to engage with external advisors (such as external examiners and employers) in course design and development'. A new course approval process has been agreed between Lancaster University and UA92, where external verification will be sought for course design and approval. The review team confirmed with senior staff and academics that this is indeed taking place for programmes currently in development and due to start from 2020. The Computer Science degree development notes confirm this external input, both academic and industrial, at the design stage of programme development. External input in course design has not yet been formally updated in the UA92's Course Design Development Approval and Modification procedure.

111 UA92's Academic Regulations explain how external expertise is used for the assessment of undergraduate programmes, including marking and moderation of assessment, progression, reassessment, and consideration and confirmation of results. However, UA92's Academic Regulations do not include external input beyond the external examiner in setting and approving assessment for programmes. UA92 senior staff and academics confirmed that no external examiner expertise from outside of Lancaster University was used in the plans for assessment. Evidence from external examiner appointment letters shows that external examiners' appointment to programmes took place between April and September 2019. The external examiner involvement in assessment setting confirmed that external examiners were not used to check all assessments in Block 1 and Block 2 in advance of students undertaking the assessment. However, plans are set out for external examiners to check the intentions of the forms of assessment and the appropriate grading scheme. Before students undertake the assessment, an assessment moderation form will be sent to external examiners asking for comments on the approved module specification, assignment briefs and grading rubric. External examiners are required to comment on assessment setting and report back to Lancaster University link tutors and UA92 course leaders at the pre-launch of assessment.

112 UA92 has robust plans to use external expertise in maintaining academic standards. The updated Lancaster University regulations on course design, development

and approval require UA92 to use external expertise in course design and development. The use of external expertise in course design will be reviewed by Lancaster University as part of the course approval process. In addition, the internal moderation form and minutes of the Board of Examiners confirm that assessed student work is sampled and moderated by external examiners whose comments recorded in the internal moderation form are considered by the Board of Examiners. This is consistent with UA92 Assessment Policy which states that all assessments for all modules at all levels are required to be moderated by the Lancaster University programme link tutor and the external examiner. UA92's Quality Assurance and Enhancement: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure confirm that external examiners' feedback will be reviewed in UA92's module evaluations, and external examiners' reports will be considered in Lancaster University's annual programme review procedure.

113 Lancaster University's Academic Regulations for Assessment provide an appropriate quality framework for the operation of assessment and classification processes. It is clearly evident that they have been used to underpin the assessment and classification guidance in UA92's Academic Regulations. UA92's Academic Regulations explain the approach to determining the programme structures and associated learning outcomes, setting, approving and reviewing assessments, conducting those assessments and moderation of the marking to ensure the maintenance of academic standards. They also detail the classification requirements at award level and use the First, Upper Second, Lower Second and Third-Class classification for its degrees and the Pass, Merit, Distinction classification for its Certificate of Higher Education awards.

114 UA92's assessment process is further detailed in UA92's Assessment Policy. Academic tutors are responsible for setting assessments for all modules in line with the module specifications approved by Lancaster University. Academic tutors are responsible for marking students' assessments. Following the completion of marking, all student work will be subject to moderation internally by UA92 academic staff to ensure a reliable and fair assessment process within the academic team. Student assessment is then subject to further moderation both via a link tutor at Lancaster University and through the external examining procedures. All students' assessment results will be finally considered by the Board of Examiners, which provides further assurance for a reliable and fair assessment process. Internal moderation form and minutes of the Board of Examiners indicate that after Block 1 assessment, internal moderation was completed by UA92 and the link tutor at Lancaster University and confirmed by the external examiner. The external examiner commented 'that detailed feedback was given to students, but action is needed to match assignment brief more closely to the generic grading criteria for transparency'. UA92's Assessment Policy further explained that course readers will report to UA92's AQG to ensure that the assessment schemes for programmes, and their operation, are monitored through annual quality review processes. Given detailed policies and procedures are in place, the review team considered the assessment process reliable and fair.

115 The module specifications and the module handbooks provide further evidence to indicate that the assessment and classification processes are reliable, fair and transparent. This is because module specifications set out the assessment methods for each module and the percentage weightings of each assessment task. The module handbooks include assessment briefs and marking criteria which are adjusted to the types of assessed work - group presentation (50%) and written essay (50%). Both the module specifications and the module handbooks are available on the VLE.

116 Although formal end-of-year external examiner reports were not yet available at the time of the visit, there is clear evidence that external verification is sought about reliability, fairness and transparency of assessment and classification processes. The minutes of the Board of Examiners and the Block 1 monitoring and evaluation form demonstrate that the

external examiners provided detailed feedback on assessment and expressed satisfaction about the reliability, fairness, and transparency of assessment processes: 'external examiners confirmed that the standard of the work was what they would expect at this level of study and was comparable with the standards they had seen within their own and other institutions', 'Thorough and useful moderation process', 'consider matching assessment criteria in rubrics directly with the assessment briefs', 'internal and external moderation has taken place, and I believe the grades are suitable for consideration by the board'.

117 Senior staff and course leaders demonstrated a clear understanding of the requirements for the use of external expertise and the University link tutors in maintaining sector-recognised standards. It was confirmed with representatives that the Lancaster University link tutors' roles will continue for 2020 entry programmes and the majority have already been allocated by the University. Course leaders and academic tutors articulated the UA92's approach to assessment and classification with clear references to UA92's Academic Regulations and UA92 Assessment Policy. The University link tutors explained how the University maintains oversight of assessment and classification processes through link tutors' involvement in moderation and the assessment considered in annual programme monitoring and evaluation procedure.

118 Students confirmed in the meeting that they were aware that their assignment should be moderated not only by internal UA92 staff but also staff from Lancaster University and external examiners. Students confirmed in the meeting and in the student submission that they understood how their marks had been allocated, that the process was fair and transparent and that grade descriptors and criteria were clear and available in various places, including in the assignment briefs and handbooks, and on their VLE Feedback for student work was received in a detailed and timely manner.

Conclusions

119 As described above, the review team considered all of the evidence submitted to form a judgement as to whether the provider meets this Core practice. In making this judgement the team followed the process set out in Guidance for Providers and took account of the key statements outlined in Annex 5. In so doing the review team ensured that its judgement was consistent with all other reviews and remained outcomes focused. The team's conclusions, based on the evidence considered, are detailed below.

120 UA92 uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent. This is because UA92 has clear and comprehensive regulations, in line with University's regulations, which describe the requirements for using external expertise in maintaining academic standards and these requirements have been updated to ensure external verification will be sought in course design and approval, assessment design, moderation and classification processes. UA92 has robust plans to use external expertise in maintaining academic standards. The use of external expertise in course design and assessment will be reviewed by Lancaster University, and external examiners' formal reports will feed into Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure. External examiners provide detailed feedback and UA92 gives that expertise due consideration. Staff understand the requirements for the use of external expertise and UA92's assessment and classification processes. Students confirm that UA92's assessment and classification processes are reliable, fair and transparent. The review team therefore concludes based on the evidence provided that this Core practice is met.

121 The evidence underpinning this judgement reflects all evidence described in QSR evidence matrix, with the exception of the third-party endorsement and formal external examiner reports. The rest of the evidence base leads the review team to have a high degree of confidence in this judgement.

Q1 The provider has a reliable, fair and inclusive admissions system

122 This Core practice expects that the provider has a reliable, fair and inclusive admissions system.

123 The QAA review team completed an assessment of this Core practice in line with the principles and outcomes that are detailed in the [Quality and Standards Review for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students: Guidance for Providers](#) (March 2019).

The evidence the team considered

124 The QAA review team assessed the evidence presented, both prior to and at the visit, to determine if the provider could meet this Core practice at a threshold level. The Quality and Standards Review Guidance for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students includes a matrix (Annex 4) which identifies key pieces of evidence that a provider may present and which the team should consider when making a judgement against this Core practice to ensure that the relevant outcomes are being delivered. The review team used that matrix to ensure that the evidence considered was assessed in a way that is clear and consistent with all other reviews and focused on relevant outcomes. A list of the key pieces of evidence seen by the team is below:

- a UA92 Admissions Policy
- b Admissions Flowchart
- c Student Recruitment and Marketing Strategy
- d Admissions Staff Training and Guidance
- e UA92 Template Agent Agreement
- f UA92 Admissions Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- g UA92 website <https://ua92.ac.uk>
- h UA92 Governance Structure
- i Terms of Reference of the UA92 Academic Committee
- j UA92 Organisational Design and Staffing Structure
- k Programme specifications
- l Admissions records
- m Student submission
- n Meeting with senior staff and the University representatives
- o Meeting with students
- p Meeting with academic and professional support staff, and the University's link tutors.

How any samples of evidence were constructed

125 To assess whether reliable, fair and inclusive admissions decisions were being made, the review team considered a random sample of 16 sets of admissions records for students who successfully secured a place at UA92 and two sets of admissions records for unsuccessful applicants.

126 To test whether admissions requirements for courses sampled reflect UA92's admissions policy, the review team considered a representative sample of programme specifications from six programmes covering different subjects, levels of study and a mixture of large and small student cohorts.

Why and how the team considered this evidence

127 As highlighted, all of the evidence submitted by the provider was considered by the review team either prior to the visit, or at the visit itself. As such, several pieces of evidence will have been considered to allow the review team to make its judgement regarding the provider's ability to meet this Core practice. To ensure consistency in decision making and to ensure that those decisions focused on outcomes, the review team considered the key pieces of evidence outlined in Annex 4 of the Guidance for Providers. These key pieces of evidence and the reason for scrutinising them are outlined below.

128 To identify institutional policy relating to the recruitment, selection and admission of students, support for applicants, how the provider facilitates an inclusive admissions system, and how it handles complaints and appeals, the review team considered UA92's Admissions Policy, Admissions Flowchart, Student Recruitment Strategy, and the Admissions Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

129 To assess whether UA92 has credible, robust and evidence-based plans for ensuring that admissions systems are reliable, fair and inclusive, the review team considered the Student Recruitment and Marketing Strategy and UA92's Governance Structure.

130 To assess whether the information given to applicants is transparent, inclusive and fit for purpose, the review team considered UA92's Admissions Policy, UA92's Admissions Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure, and the UA92 website.

131 To interrogate how UA92 ensures that recruitment agents understand and implement UA92's admissions policy and process effectively, the review team considered Terms of Reference of the UA92 Academic Committee, Student Recruitment and Marketing Strategy and UA92's Template Agent Agreement, and UA92's Organisational Design and Staffing Structure.

132 To assess students' views about UA92's admissions process, the review team considered the student submission and met with students.

133 To test whether staff understand their responsibilities and are appropriately skilled and supported, the review team met with senior, academic and professional support staff and considered Admissions Staff Training and Guidance.

What the evidence shows

134 The review team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

135 UA92's Admissions Policy provides detailed guidance on the application and selection process and the roles of core admissions staff are clearly defined. The application and selection processes are also mapped in the Admissions Flowchart. All applications are received via UCAS and reviewed by UA92's admissions team based on UA92's entry requirements together with UCAS tariff points. The Admissions Flowchart does not include a step for interviews in the admissions process, but the Admissions Policy states that UA92 reserves the right to interview applicants and UA92 may choose to add an interview as part of an offer. As stated in the Admissions Policy and the Admissions Flowchart, decisions are made by the UA92 admissions team, which is part of the Registry and Quality Team. Where applicants are under the age of 18, admissions staff will take advice from academic staff regarding the appropriateness of the academic content of the programme for that applicant.

136 UA92's Admissions Policy makes explicit reference to the opportunity for a prospective student to complain about the admissions process or to appeal a decision not to offer a place. Applicants who want to make a complaint regarding the admissions process or

appeal against a decision not to be admitted are directed to UA92's Admissions Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure. The Admissions Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure clearly explains the grounds for complaints or appeals, what can and cannot be complained about or appealed against. It specifies who can lodge an admissions complaint or appeal, and the rights of a complainant/appellant. It specifies the time limits within which an admissions complaint or appeal can be lodged. It specifies the complaints/appeals processes to be followed in UA92 and the timescale for each step. It explains the adjustments that may be made where complainants/appellants have additional support needs. Although UA92 reported that no complaints or appeals on admissions have been received to date, given that detailed policies and procedures are in place, the review team concludes that UA92's approach to handling complaints and appeals regarding admissions is reliable, fair and likely to deliver timely outcomes.

137 The draft UA92 Student Recruitment Strategy details the target market for UA92's student recruitment and admissions, which includes students considering courses at other universities with similar entry requirements, students not yet considering higher education and instead interested in alternatives such as apprenticeships, starting work, joining the armed forces, adult learners and international students. To support these strategic plans, UA92's Admissions Policy includes a focus on widening participation and under-represented groups. It acknowledges that some educational or personal circumstances can affect achievement, and that because of this, while meeting standard academic criteria in the form of entry tariffs is a prime consideration, factors relating to widening participation will also be taken into consideration. These could include living in a less advantaged neighbourhood, undertaking sixth-form study at a school or college with below-average attainment, having day-to-day family or work responsibilities, or being a care leaver, refugee or from a travelling community. In addition, the Admissions Flowchart provides details of how applicants with additional support needs are identified within the application process and supported by a member of staff from UA92 Inclusive Support. The Admissions Flowchart also identifies international applicants who may require a Tier 4 visa and specifies how UA92 Student Affairs will then be involved in supporting the applicant further in this regard. The review team found that all these UA92's processes facilitate an inclusive admissions system.

138 The Student Recruitment Strategy outlines UA92's plans for monitoring and assessing the impact of the implementation of the admissions policy. To ensure that the policy and procedure are applied in practice, and to predict the path to student recruitment, UA92 considers student applications and enrolments data together with a number of metrics including advertising statistics (click-through rate, impressions, landing page visits, web journey), open day bookings/attendance, prospectus requests, the enquirer database, and website visit records. This data will be analysed and reported at the UA92 Executive and its two sub-groups, the Academic Planning Group and the Access and Participation Group. The review team found, therefore, that UA92's monitoring procedure is in place to ensure the admissions systems are reliable, fair and inclusive.

139 UA92's Admissions Policy is available on UA92's website for all applicants. The policy does not contain specific details about the entry requirements for each programme but refers students to course information on UA92's website. UA92's Admissions Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure is also available on the website, along with an Admissions Complaints Form and Admissions Appeals Form. Student Terms and Conditions are also on UA92's website and cross-reference to the Admissions Policy for specific information about admissions, as well as providing full details of UA92's Terms and Conditions for students. The review team agreed that all information for applicants is written in clear English. All policies on the website include links to further information and points of contact should applicants have any questions. The Head of Marketing and Communications and the University link tutors confirmed that all information contained within UA92's website is updated regularly and has been updated and approved by the University, since the

beginning of this review process, to reflect admissions requirements and course information for 2020-21 academic year entry. Students reported positive experiences about the information that was made available to them prior to the application. All of them felt that the information provided about the applications and admissions processes was clear and transparent and all agreed that their experiences as students aligned with the expectations that they had from pre-admission information. The review team therefore concludes that information for applicants is transparent, accessible and fit for purpose.

140 The UA92 Student Recruitment and Marketing Strategy is aligned with and justifies the use of recruitment agents in key regions. The UA92 Template Recruitment Agent Agreement contains detailed information including the respective rights, responsibilities and duties of the agent and UA92, payments, use of trademarks, issues of confidentiality of information, and intellectual property. No explicit mention is made of monitoring procedures for recruitment agents, but UA92 has appointed an International Student Recruitment Manager who is the named individual with responsibility for such agents. International student recruitment as an area of UA92's academic activities sits within UA92's External Affairs. A nominated representative from External Affairs sits on UA92's Academic Committee, which has overall responsibility for students and courses. The Academic Committee reports to the UA92 Board and also to Lancaster University's Academic Quality and Standards Committee. This demonstrates that arrangements are in place for the effective management of recruitment agents, and should ensure that UA92's admissions policies, processes and requirements are strictly adhered to.

141 UA92's programme specifications do not provide details of the admissions requirements for each programme. Programme specifications for the Bachelor programmes refer the reader to the standard UA92 entry tariffs, but those for the CertHE programmes do not mention admissions requirements or entry tariffs at all. However, the fact that the admissions requirements are publicly available on each course webpage on UA92's website mitigates their omission from the approved course documentation.

142 The review team considered a sample of 16 sets of admissions records for students who successfully secured a place at UA92 and two sets of admissions records for unsuccessful applicants. At the review visit, UA92 reported that these two unsuccessful applicants were in fact the only two unsuccessful applications from the entire set of applications for 2019-20 entry, therefore this represents the entire set of unsuccessful applications, not just a sample. The admissions records indicate that all applicants' prior qualifications were submitted for consideration. UA92's entry tariffs had been consistently applied across all applicants. No applicant had been made an offer when their qualifications were below the admissions requirements and no applicant had been rejected with qualifications that met the admissions requirements. The review team concludes, therefore, that UA92's Admissions Policy was implemented in practice and the admissions decisions, made in accordance with the Admissions Policy, were reliable and fair. All admissions records included copies of communications with applicants. The review team found that rejection communications did not include a direct link to the UA92 Admissions Complaints and Appeals information, but only an email address for applicants to contact for any further queries.

143 Students were positive and complimentary in their comments about the application and admissions process. All students agreed that, in their experience, the admissions procedure is fair and transparent. One student with specific additional support needs had received appropriate support through the application and admissions process and found that everything was in place when taking up the place at UA92. Students agreed that the information for applicants was easily accessible and useful and that UA92's close engagement with them during the application process ensured they were well informed and given opportunities to clarify where there were uncertainties.

144 Details of the training provided to staff involved in admissions demonstrate that staff involved in admissions should be appropriately trained and skilled. Academic and professional support staff involved in admissions also confirmed that they had completed an additional period of 'shadowing' Lancaster University staff, so that they were clear how to manage the recruitment, selection and admission of students in reliable and consistent ways. Academic and professional support staff demonstrated a clear understanding of their responsibilities in admissions. They clearly explained the process to be applied in admissions and how this process will be monitored and audited.

Conclusions

145 As described above, the review team considered all of the evidence submitted to form a judgement as to whether the provider meets this Core practice. In making this judgement the team followed the process set out in Guidance for Providers and took account of the key statements outlined in Annex 5. In so doing the review team ensured that its judgement was consistent with all other reviews and remained outcomes focused. The team's conclusions, based on the evidence considered, are detailed below.

146 UA92 has a reliable, fair and inclusive admissions system. This is evidenced through UA92's clear and comprehensive admissions policy which provides detailed guidance on the application and selection process. UA92 also has a clear Admissions Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure which clearly explains the grounds for, and procedure to be applied in the event of, dissatisfaction with any aspect of the application and admission process. The Admissions Records demonstrated that UA92's admissions policies were implemented in practice. The only concern from the admission records check is that the Admissions Complaints and Appeals Policy and Process is not explicitly flagged to unsuccessful applicants in rejection communications. UA92's monitoring procedure is in place to ensure the admissions systems are reliable, fair and inclusive. Admissions requirements for specific programmes are available on UA92 website for all applicants, and all information for applicants on UA92's website is transparent, accessible and fit for purpose. UA92 has plans in place that will allow for the effective management of arrangements with recruitment agents, to ensure that its policies and requirements are strictly adhered to. Students agreed that the admissions system was reliable, fair and inclusive. Staff involved in admissions understood their role and were appropriately skilled and trained through formal professional development opportunities, as well as through informal shadowing of relevant staff. The review team therefore concludes, on balance, that this Core practice is met.

147 The evidence underpinning this judgement reflects all the evidence and criteria described in Annexes 4 and 5. Therefore, the review team has a high degree of confidence in this judgement.

Q2 The provider designs and/or delivers high-quality courses

148 This Core practice expects that the provider designs and/or delivers high-quality courses.

149 The QAA review team completed an assessment of this Core practice in line with the principles and outcomes that are detailed in the [Quality and Standards Review for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students: Guidance for Providers](#) (March 2019).

The evidence the team considered

150 The review team assessed the evidence presented, both prior to and at the visit, to determine if the provider could meet this Core practice at a threshold level. The Quality and Standards Review Guidance for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students includes a matrix (Annex 4) which identifies key pieces of evidence that a provider may present and which the team should consider when making a judgement against this Core practice to ensure that the relevant outcomes are being delivered. The review team used that matrix to ensure that the evidence considered was assessed in a way that is clear and consistent with all other reviews and focused on relevant outcomes. A list of the key pieces of evidence seen by the team is below:

- a Lancaster University Academic Regulations for Assessment and Award, for Course Design and approval, Lancaster University Academic Regulations for External Examiner procedures
- b UA92's Academic Regulations
- c UA92 Learning and Teaching Strategy
- d Terms of Reference for UA92 Academic Committee
- e Staff Coaching Handbook
- f Student Coaching Handbook
- g UA92 Quality Assurance and Enhancement: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy
- h Lancaster University Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure
- i Programme specifications
- j Curriculum mapping
- k Assessment matrix
- l Module specifications
- m Module handbook
- n Student submission
- o Student Feedback Block 1 raw data
- p Meeting with senior staff and the University representatives
- q Meeting with students
- r Meeting with academic and professional support staff, and the University's link tutors
- s Observation of two teaching sessions in Sport and in Accounting and Finance.

151 Some of the key pieces of evidence, outlined in Annex 4, were not considered by the review team. These pieces of evidence and the reason why they were not considered during this review are outlined below:

152 Third party endorsements as none are available for the provision on offer at UA92.

153 No formal external examiner reports were available at the time of the review.

How any samples of evidence were constructed

154 To test that all elements of the courses sampled are high quality (curriculum design,

content and organisation; learning, teaching and assessment approaches) and that the teaching, learning and assessment design will enable students to demonstrate the intended learning outcomes, the review team considered a representative sample of programme specifications, module specifications from six programmes covering different subjects, levels of study and a mixture of large and small student cohorts.

155 To identify and assess students' views about the quality of the courses sampled, the review team considered all available student completed module evaluations from two modules: Business Studies (Management and Organisations) and Sport and Physical Education (Introduction to Sports Psychology) that have been delivered in different subjects.

Why and how the team considered this evidence

156 As highlighted, all of the evidence submitted by the provider was considered by the review team either prior to the visit or at the visit itself. As such, several pieces of evidence will have been considered to allow the review team to make its judgement regarding the provider's ability to meet this Core practice. To ensure consistency in decision making and to ensure that those decisions focused on outcomes, the review team considered the key pieces of evidence outlined in Annex 4 of the Guidance for Providers. These key pieces of evidence and the reason for scrutinising them are outlined below.

157 To identify UA92's approach to designing and delivering high-quality courses, the review team considered the Academic Regulations regarding course design, delivery, learning and teaching, including Lancaster University's Academic Regulations for Assessment and Award, UA92's Academic Regulations, Terms of Reference for UA92's Academic Committee, Lancaster University's Academic Regulations for Course Design and Approval, Lancaster University's Academic Regulations for External Examiner Procedures, UA92's Learning and Teaching Strategy, Student Coaching Handbook and Staff Coaching Handbook.

158 To assess whether UA92 has credible, robust and evidence-based plans for designing and delivering high-quality courses, the review team considered UA92's Quality Assurance and Enhancement: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure.

159 To test that all elements of the courses sampled are high-quality (curriculum design, content and organisation, learning, teaching and assessment approaches) and that the teaching, learning and assessment design will enable students to demonstrate the intended learning outcomes, the review team considered programme specifications, curriculum mapping, assessment matrix, module specifications, and module handbook, UA92 Learning and Teaching Strategy.

160 To identify students' views about the quality of the courses, the review team considered evidence from the student submission, Student Feedback Block 1 raw data, Student Coaching Handbook, and met with students.

161 To assess how staff ensure courses are high quality, the review team met with the University representatives, and UA92's senior staff, as well as academic and professional support staff.

162 To test whether course delivery is high quality, the review team observed two teaching sessions in Sport and Accounting and Finance.

What the evidence shows

163 The review team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

164 Lancaster University's Academic Regulations for Assessment and Award stipulate that all aspects of quality assurance are overseen by Lancaster University. They also require Lancaster University link tutor input into programme design and ongoing input in monitoring and delivery to ensure high-quality provision at UA92. Based on the Lancaster University Academic Regulations for Assessment and Award, UA92's Academic Regulations have been developed to outline the process of course design and principles of delivery of high-quality courses. UA92's Academic Committee at the senior level provides oversight of the delivery of high-quality learning and teaching at UA92. Lancaster University's Academic Regulations for Course Design and approval now ensure external input into course design and Lancaster University's Academic Regulations for External Examiner procedures ensure external involvement at all stages of programme design, assessment and review of the quality of module delivery.

165 The UA92 Learning and Teaching Strategy, in line with UA92's Academic Regulations, outlines UA92's pedagogical approach to delivering high-quality courses. Key features of UA92's pedagogical approach include the high number of class contact hours, the unique method of timetabling delivery, 'Digital Wednesdays', small class sizes, the use of the VLE, contextual assessment, and integration of professional expertise in the curriculum. The majority of learning and teaching at UA92 takes place in small groups, with no more than 25 students in one class. Only one module is taught at a time for students, which lasts five-weeks in full-time delivery, and all assessments are contained within the module. Each week includes 16 hours of class contact which take place through a variety of teaching and learning methods including seminars, workshops, practical sessions, insight days, and a 'Digital Wednesday' where students have additional learning facilitated entirely online via a VLE. One week in each block is dedicated to a Target Talent Curriculum module which constitutes a set of short themed exercises designed to develop the students' character and personal development. In addition, Personal Development Coaching also features as a distinct method of personal tutoring, providing more opportunities to foster effective interactive teaching and learning.

166 The review team has some concerns over the workload of 250 hours for a 25-credit module delivered and assessed within five weeks, as this does seem to create a heavy workload for students if they were to devote this amount of time to their studies. Course leaders explained that the workload includes all aspects of students' life outside the classroom that might contribute to their learning experiences and personal development. Course leaders also confirmed that student workload will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure students are not overloaded. Students confirmed that they have not spent 250 workload hours on a 25-credit module so far.

167 UA92 has clear monitoring and review processes with students, external examiners and the University's link tutors' feedback included, to ensure high-quality course delivery. The module/programme evaluation and monitoring and evaluation procedures are outlined in UA92's Quality Assurance and Enhancement: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure. Module evaluations 'consider objectively whether courses are well-designed and high-quality' through reviewing all aspects of the student experience within its scope, including learning and teaching in each block. Module review reports feed into the annual programme monitoring and evaluation procedure and are considered together with all student feedback from module surveys, student performance and outcomes, and feedback from external examiners and the University's link tutors. The annual programme monitoring report and associated action plans will be received by UA92's AQQ and approved by Lancaster University's Academic Standards and Quality Committee. Given that detailed policies and procedures are in place, the review team concludes that UA92's plans for monitoring high-quality course delivery are credible and robust.

168 Programme specifications clearly outline course content for each module learning outcomes, including general and subject-specific knowledge and skills development requirements, teaching, learning, and assessment approaches. Each programme specification includes a curriculum map explaining how the modules contribute to the programme learning outcomes, and an assessment matrix detailing the learning outcomes, the volume of assessment, the range of assessment methods, and the assessment weightings assigned for each module, providing clear links between the learning outcomes and the assessment methods to test student achievement. Module specifications and module handbooks further detail how to put key features of UA92's pedagogical approach outlined in the Learning and Teaching Strategy into practice. Key features of UA92's pedagogical approach including the high number of class contact hours, one module delivered at a time, 'Digital Wednesdays', digital learning, contextual assessment and guests from industry presenting on modules are embedded in modules' teaching, learning and assessment design. The review team therefore concludes that the teaching, learning and assessment design reflected in approved course documentation, including programme specifications, module specifications and module handbooks enables students to meet and demonstrate the intended learning outcomes.

169 Evidence provided in the student submission confirmed students' views on the high quality of teaching at UA92. Examples of student comments include 'the high-quality of student experience', 'I feel it is really high-quality teaching, and 'life-changing'. They feel it develops their personal skills and appreciate the focus on the development of professional and industry experience. Students appreciated the ability to focus on one module at a time and appreciated UA92's innovative teaching method including small group teaching, and the accessibility of digital resources via the VLE. Evidence of students' views was also provided via completed module evaluation surveys where scores relating to teaching were good and qualitative comments were largely positive about the learning experience. All students who met the review team also confirmed that teaching quality was of a high standard. All students in the meeting further agreed that courses were well designed and relevant to their future goals. One student with special learning needs was very satisfied with the support. Students explained the personal coaching system with clear reference to the Student Coaching Handbook.

170 Correspondence from the University representatives confirmed that Lancaster University is satisfied with the quality of the programmes and considered UA92's approach will enable it to design and deliver high-quality courses. UA92's senior staff and academic staff demonstrated a clear understanding of how the pedagogical approach operates and how the key features of the pedagogical approach are reflected in other aspects of UA92's curriculum design and the recruitment of staff. For example, course leaders refer to the requirement for the course team to integrate their industry experiences into the curriculum. Course leaders and academic tutors were able to articulate what 'high quality' means in the context of UA92 and to show how the provision meets that definition. Course leaders explained how to ensure high-quality course delivery through peer support and observation, monitoring and evaluation processes and how the external examiners' reports and student surveys will feed into UA92's quality cycle through the module and programme monitoring and review reports as described above.

171 Observations of two Level 4 teaching and learning sessions demonstrated clarity of objectives and intended learning outcomes, good planning and organisation, a sound method and approach, good delivery, appropriate content, effective use of resources and student engagement. The staff have a good command of their subject content and used resources successfully, using break-out areas where appropriate. The timing and pace were appropriate for Level 4 students.

172 One of the sessions was delivered by an associate tutor who commanded the classroom very well and brought her industry experience into the class. The other was delivered by an academic tutor with professional experience who brought this into the classroom. Both were good examples of the applied nature of the course content. The sessions involved active learning and students were able to participate in the session directly. Students' understanding was formatively assessed during the sessions through question and answer technique and online surveys. When the associate tutor was delivering the academic tutor was present and at times supported delivery in the classroom during periods of group work. The review team found that the sessions were consistent with UA92's pedagogical approach as outlined in the Learning and Teaching Strategy and ensured high-quality course delivery for students.

Conclusions

173 As described above, the review team considered all of the evidence submitted to form a judgement as to whether the provider meets this Core practice. In making this judgement the team followed the process set out in Guidance for Providers and took account of the key statements outlined in Annex 5. In so doing the review team ensured that its judgement was consistent with all other reviews and remained outcomes focused. The team's conclusions, based on the evidence considered, are detailed below.

174 UA92 designs and delivers high-quality courses. The UA92 Learning and Teaching Strategy, in line with UA92's Academic Regulations, outlines the principles of course design and delivery and explains UA92's pedagogical approach to deliver high-quality courses. UA92 has clear monitoring and review processes with students, external examiners and the University's link tutors' feedback included, to ensure high-quality course delivery. Approved course documentation, including programme specifications, module specifications and module handbooks, indicate that the teaching, learning and assessment design enable students to meet and demonstrate the intended learning outcomes. Evidence of student confidence in UA92's provision of high-quality courses is provided in the student submission, completed module surveys, and in the meeting with the team. Staff are able to articulate what 'high quality' means in the context of the provider, and to show how the provision meets that definition. Observations of teaching and learning demonstrate clarity of learning objectives, good planning and delivery, content appropriate to the level of study, appropriate use of resources and consistency with UA92's pedagogical approach. The review team has some concerns around the credit value of modules and the student workload this implies within concentrated periods, but this is mitigated by the strong monitoring and evaluation processes that are in place to ensure that this will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and credible plans for the design and delivery of high-quality courses. The review team therefore concludes that, on balance, this Core practice is met.

175 The evidence underpinning this judgement reflects all evidence described in QSR evidence matrix, with the exception of the third-party endorsement and formal external examiner reports. The rest of the evidence base leads the review team to have a high degree of confidence in this judgement.

Q3 The provider has sufficient appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience

176 This Core practice expects that the provider has sufficient appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience.

177 The QAA review team completed an assessment of this Core practice in line with the principles and outcomes that are detailed in the [Quality and Standards Review for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students: Guidance for Providers](#) (March 2019).

The evidence the team considered

178 The review team assessed the evidence presented, both prior to and at the visit, to determine if the provider could meet this Core practice at a threshold level. The Quality and Standards Review Guidance for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students includes a matrix (Annex 4) which identifies key pieces of evidence that a provider may present and which the team should consider when making a judgement against this Core practice to ensure that the relevant outcomes are being delivered. The review team used that matrix to ensure that the evidence considered was assessed in a way that is clear and consistent with all other reviews and focused on relevant outcomes. A list of the key pieces of evidence seen by the team is below:

- a The Franchise Agreement
- b Lancaster University's Recruitment and Selection Guidance
- c Job descriptions for academic as well as professional support roles
- d Service Level Agreement
- e Assessment Centre/Interviews for Academic Course Leaders and Tutors
- f UA92 Shortlisting procedure document
- g The New Staff Induction List
- h Core Training Log
- i Probation Form
- j Training for staff involved in admissions process
- k List of Staff Development to Date
- l Staff development evidence summary
- m UA92 Academic Workload Model
- n UA92 Learning and Teaching Strategy
- o UA92's Organisational Design and Staffing Structure
- p Teaching Observation Policy
- q UA92 Monitoring and Evaluation procedures
- r CVs of academic staff
- s Evidence of Qualifications Check
- t Block 1 Monitoring and Evaluation Forms
- u Student Feedback Raw Data
- v Student submission
- w Meeting with senior staff and the University representatives
- x Meeting with students
- y Meeting with academic and professional support staff, and the University's link tutors
- z Final meeting with staff
- aa Observation of teaching sessions and accompanying learning materials.

179 Some of the key pieces of evidence, outlined in Annex 4, were not considered by the review team. These pieces of evidence and the reason why they were not considered during this review are outlined below:

180 Third party endorsements as none are available for the provision on offer at UA92.

How any samples of evidence were constructed

181 To assess whether the staff sampled are appropriately qualified and skilled to perform their roles effectively, the review team considered all job descriptions for academics and for professional support staff, and a random sample of 12 academic staff CVs.

182 To identify and assess students' views about sufficiency, qualifications and skills of staff, the review team considered all available student completed module evaluations from two modules: Business Studies (Management and Organisations) and Sport and Physical Education (Introduction to Sports Psychology) that have been delivered in different subjects.

Why and how the team considered this evidence

183 As highlighted, all of the evidence submitted by the provider was considered by the review team either prior to the visit, or at the visit itself. As such, several pieces of evidence will have been considered to allow the review team to make its judgement regarding the provider's ability to meet this Core practice. To ensure consistency in decision making and to ensure that those decisions focused on outcomes, the review team considered the key pieces of evidence outlined in Annex 4 of the Guidance for Providers. These key pieces of evidence and the reason for scrutinising them are outlined below.

184 To identify how UA92 recruits, appoints, inducts and supports staff so that it meets the outcome, the review team considered the Franchise Agreement, Lancaster University's Recruitment and Selection Guidance, job descriptions for academic as well as professional support roles, the Service Level Agreement, Assessment Centre/Interviews for Academic Course Leaders and Tutors, the UA92 Shortlisting Procedure document, the New Staff Induction List, the Core Training Log, the Probation Form, training for staff involved in admissions process, and a list of staff development to date and overall summary, and meetings with senior staff and academic and professional support staff.

185 To assess whether UA92 has credible, robust and evidence-based plans for ensuring that they have sufficient appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality learning experience, the review team considered the UA92's Academic Workload Model, the Learning and Teaching Strategy, UA92's Organisational Design and Staffing Structure, the Teaching Observation Policy, and UA92's Monitoring and Evaluation Procedures, and met with senior staff.

186 To assess whether the staff sampled are appropriately qualified and skilled to perform their roles effectively, the review team considered job descriptions for academic and support staff, the Learning and Teaching Strategy, CVs of academic staff, Evidence of Qualifications Check, and final meeting with staff.

187 To identify students' views about sufficiency, qualifications and skills of staff, the review team held a meeting with students, considered the Block 1 Monitoring and Evaluation Forms, Student Feedback Raw Data, and the student submission.

188 To test whether academic staff are suitably qualified to be able to deliver a high-quality learning experience, the review team observed two teaching sessions in Sport and Accounting and Finance.

What the evidence shows

189 The review team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

190 The Franchise Agreement confirms that Lancaster University has oversight of all teaching appointments for UA92 programmes. There is Lancaster University representation on all recruitment panels. Lancaster University's Recruitment and Selection Guidance establishes the framework for UA92's recruitment process. All interview panels must be constituted in accordance with the guidance provided in this document and members of interview panels must have completed diversity training. All job descriptions for academic as well as professional support roles reflect selection criteria approved by Lancaster University. There is a Service Level Agreement in place for Provision of a Managed Transactional HR and Payroll Service to UA92 in which Lancaster University outlines details of its institutional support for UA92's HR administration in the recruitment and appointment process.

191 As explained in the Assessment Centre/Interviews for Academic Course Leaders and Tutors document, shortlisted applicants are interviewed and required to undertake a micro-teaching exercise, a writing exercise and a 3-minute personal statement, in order to review their competencies in teaching and assessment. This was also confirmed in a meeting with staff and the UA92 Shortlisting Procedure document.

192 The New Staff Induction List specifies the induction process. Each new member of staff is assigned to a mentor as well as a line manager who provides oversight of the induction process. Induction includes HR and administrative processes (for example, introduction to IT systems and the VLE) as well as an overview of UA92's culture and safe working practices. Throughout the induction process, staff are checked for their completion of mandatory training, including sessions on Equality and Diversity, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Health and Safety, Immigration Compliance for Tier 4 and Tier 2, Consumer and Marketing Authority (CMA) Guidance, and financial regulations and procedures in UA92. A list of staff who have completed their training sessions is kept and monitored by HR.

193 All new staff have a probation period (six months for support staff and 12 months for academic staff) during which all staff have formal regular review meetings with line managers to set and review objectives, and to identify any training and development needs. All review meetings, including discussions of objectives and training needs, are recorded in a structured Probation Form.

194 There is no policy on staff development and no obvious career path for staff. There is no formal allowance within any workload model to facilitate staff to achieve the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice, Postgraduate Certificate in Education or HEA fellowship. The team noted that to date, staff needs have been considered on an ad hoc basis and are not linked formally to systems for peer observation, appraisal or teaching evaluation. It was acknowledged by the senior management team that staff developmental needs have been identified only on an informal basis so far. Senior management confirmed that moving forward further policies for a strategic approach would be developed to ensure staff training needs are identified and addressed in a more systematic way. The team recognised that despite a lack of formal policy some training and development opportunities have been provided in response to staff needs, including training for staff involved in the admissions process, academic staff having access to Lancaster University's staff development resources, one tutor being given study time to undertake a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), and one tutor having costs covered to take an online module to enhance their digital skills. All staff are offered First Aid training and staff were proud of UA92's commitment to mental health awareness training for all staff.

195 Staff confirmed that the recruitment process had taken place as outlined in the final meeting with staff. Staff were very satisfied that the induction process was thorough and useful and the review team acknowledged that most academic staff had started at around

the same time so it facilitated group sessions, for example on how to use the HR databases, how to use the VLE as a platform, how academic quality and standards are set and maintained, on the relationship with Lancaster University. Senior staff confirmed that these induction sessions would take place regularly, both individually and in groups where appropriate. Those on probation confirmed that they did use the checklist provided and that they found the process supportive. Some confirmed that their induction and probation reviews had already been used to identify developmental needs, including some of those outlined in the List of Staff Development to Date document.

196 As outlined in the UA92 Academic Workload Model, expectations in terms of contact hours for academic tutors are consistent with UA92's desired 25 students-to-1 tutor ratio as required in the UA92 Learning and Teaching Strategy. UA92's Organisational Design and Staffing Structure provides evidence of future planning for staff sufficiency and outlines firm plans for appointments in the next 12-18 months. This provides reassurance of staff sufficiency. The plans look forward to a scenario where student recruitment increases in line with the number of programmes, alongside expanding the student support infrastructure as well as the number of academic staff. Posts such as academic tutors in Computing and in Public Health are already being planned.

197 From what has been discussed above, the review team found that UA92's approaches to staff recruitment, appointment, induction and support ensure sufficient staff in place to deliver a high-quality learning experience.

198 UA92 has a Teaching Observation Policy to ensure that staff are meeting high standards of teaching. All staff who engage in any teaching activity fall within the scope of the policy and must be observed at least twice per academic year. For all observations, the Teaching Observation Form should be completed to record the observation and feedback given. Observation records are kept on the VLE and only visible to the participants and the Dean of Academic Studies. Observation records are monitored and analysed by the Dean of Academic Studies. Issues identified from observations and a summary of observation data feed into the module and programme monitoring and evaluation processes. There is no evidence so far to demonstrate a clear mechanism of how the records of peer observation feed into staff appraisals to identify areas for development. UA92 senior staff acknowledged this issue and confirmed that there is a need to develop a more strategic approach to identifying staff development needs.

199 Job descriptors for academic and professional support staff provide evidence that the roles enable adequate support for students and are appropriate for the delivery of the particular pedagogical approach outlined in the Learning and Teaching Strategy: specifically, they require not only appropriate academic experience and qualifications but also staff engagement with industry and expertise and interest in digital learning technologies.

200 The sample of staff CVs provides evidence that UA92 has appointed appropriately qualified staff to fulfil the roles, and that these appointments are consistent with the role descriptors. For example, all academic tutors appointed to date are educated to higher degree level and all academic tutors have experience of engaging with industry. Similarly, the CVs of staff appointed to deliver support services are consistent with the role descriptors and the appointees are suitably qualified and highly experienced, and this was confirmed in the meeting with staff. Staff records of recruitment demonstrate that staff are recruited according to Lancaster University's and UA92's policies and procedures. For example, prior qualifications and experience of the staff were properly checked. This was confirmed in the final meeting with staff.

201 Student feedback in the student meeting regarding the quality of teaching was positive. Quantitative data on teaching-related questions ranged between 72- 95%

satisfaction but were generally at the higher end of this spectrum. Evidence of positive student satisfaction is reflected also in the module evaluations where the feedback is summarised. The student submission provides further evidence of student satisfaction in the quality of teaching. Students appreciated, in particular, the experiences of academic staff as practitioners with strong links to industry.

202 In one case, students expressed concerns regarding the teaching standard of one associate tutor in one particular module. This raised a query within the team about the effectiveness of policies and procedures outlined above that are supposed to be designed to ensure high-quality teaching. The team explored the context for this query in the meeting with students and the course leader, noting that action was taken promptly and the situation was resolved to the students' satisfaction.

203 The evidence provided by the observation of teaching confirmed that the teaching was of high quality and carried out by academic tutors and associate tutors who were suitably qualified to provide a high-quality learning experience. The tutors were engaging and knowledgeable about their subject. They explained clearly to students how to apply each concept to the relevant industry. They used appropriate learning resources to support their delivery. For example, in a class on accounting, the tutor explained principles and used professional experience to explain how they would operate in practice, then students worked in groups to apply those concepts learned using the VLE to access datasheets. Students were encouraged to engage throughout. The member of staff had appropriate accounting qualifications. In a physical education module, the member of staff had a PG Cert and sufficient knowledge of the subject to be able to deliver the module to students. Resources were used effectively, and the tutor demonstrated and communicated to students a strong awareness of the professional contexts in which they might be required to operate. The observations of teaching provided evidence that academic staff are suitably qualified to deliver a high-quality learning experience.

Conclusions

204 As described above, the review team considered all of the evidence submitted to form a judgement as to whether the provider meets this Core practice. In making this judgement the team followed the process set out in Guidance for Providers and took account of the key statements outlined in Annex 5. In so doing the review team ensured that its judgement was consistent with all other reviews and remained outcomes focused. The team's conclusions, based on the evidence considered, are detailed below.

205 UA92 has sufficient appropriately qualified staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience. UA92's policies for the recruitment, appointment, induction and support for staff provide for a sufficient number of suitably qualified and skilled staff. The regulations for the recruitment and appointment of staff is overseen by the awarding body, Lancaster University, and strong processes are in place to ensure there are sufficient staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience. There are some opportunities for staff development, but at the current stage there is no policy or strategic approach to ensure staff training needs are identified and addressed in a systematic way. UA92's senior staff were aware of this issue and confirmed in the meeting that there is a need to develop a more strategic approach to identifying staff development needs. UA92 has realistic and credible plans to ensure both academic and support staff are appropriately qualified and skilled and that there is sufficient staffing as student numbers grow. The teaching observation process is in place and the summary of observation records will feed into UA92's monitoring and evaluation process to ensure that staff are meeting high standards of teaching. Staff sampled and met by the review team have been recruited, appointed and inducted according to UA92's academic regulation and policies. Observations of teaching by the team confirm that staff are appropriately skilled and have appropriate experience to deliver a high-quality course that

is consistent with the pedagogical approach of UA92. Students tend to agree that staff are sufficiently skilled to deliver a high-quality academic experience. The review team therefore concludes that, on balance, this Core practice is met.

206 The evidence underpinning this judgement reflects all of the evidence described in QSR evidence matrix with the exception of the third-party endorsements. Therefore, the review team has a high degree of confidence in its judgement.

Q4 The provider has sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning resources and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience

207 This Core practice expects that the provider has sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning resources and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience.

208 The QAA review team completed an assessment of this Core practice in line with the principles and outcomes that are detailed in the [Quality and Standards Review for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students: Guidance for Providers](#) (March 2019).

The evidence the team considered

209 The QAA review team assessed the evidence presented, both prior to and at the visit, to determine if the provider could meet this Core practice at a threshold level. The Quality and Standards Review Guidance for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students includes a matrix (Annex 4) which identifies key pieces of evidence that a provider may present and which the team should consider when making a judgement against this Core practice to ensure that the relevant outcomes are being delivered. The review team used that matrix to ensure that the evidence considered was assessed in a way that is clear and consistent with all other reviews and focused on relevant outcomes. A list of the key pieces of evidence seen by the team is below:

- a Plans for facilities, learning resources and student support services
- b The Franchise Agreement
- c VLE demonstration
- d UA92 Learning and Teaching Strategy
- e Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure
- f UA92's organisational chart
- g Job descriptions for academic staff
- h Job descriptions for professional support staff
- i CVs of academic staff
- j Student feedback Block 1 raw data
- k Meeting with senior staff and the University representatives
- l Meeting with students
- m Meeting with academic and professional support staff, and the University's link tutors
- n Final meeting with staff.

210 Some of the key pieces of evidence, outlined in Annex 4, were not considered by the review team. These pieces of evidence and the reason why they were not considered during this review are outlined below:

211 Third party endorsements, as none are available for the provision on offer at UA92.

How any samples of evidence were constructed

212 To determine whether staff roles are consistent with the delivery of a high-quality learning experience, the review team considered all job descriptions for academics and for professional support staff, and a random sample of 12 academic staff CVs.

213 To identify and assess students' views about facilities, learning resources and support services, the review team considered all available student completed module

evaluations from two modules: Business Studies (Management and Organisations) and Sport and Physical Education (Introduction to Sports Psychology) that have been delivered in different subjects.

Why and how the team considered this evidence

214 As highlighted, all of the evidence submitted by the provider was considered by the review team either prior to the visit, or at the visit itself. As such, several pieces of evidence will have been considered to allow the review team to make its judgement regarding the provider's ability to meet this Core practice. To ensure consistency in decision making and to ensure that those decisions focused on outcomes, the review team considered the key pieces of evidence outlined in Annex 4 of the Guidance for Providers. These key pieces of evidence and the reason for scrutinising them are outlined below.

215 To identify how UA92's facilities, learning resources and student support services contribute to delivering a high-quality academic experience, the review team considered UA92's facilities, resources and support services plans, the Franchise Agreement, the VLE demonstration, and the Learning and Teaching Strategy.

216 To assess whether UA92 has credible, robust and evidence-based plans for ensuring that they have sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning resources and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience, the review team considered Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure and UA92's facilities, resources and support services plans.

217 To test whether staff are appropriately qualified and skilled, and understand their roles and responsibilities, the review team considered comments from meetings with senior staff and academic and professional support staff.

218 To assess students' views about facilities, learning resources and support services, the review team considered student feedback Block 1 raw data and met with students.

219 To test that the facilities, resources or services under assessment deliver a high-quality academic experience, the review team observed the facilities and learning resources, and considered the VLE demonstration.

What the evidence shows

220 The review team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

221 UA92's facilities, resources and support services plans set out the strategy for the development of facilities, learning resources, and student support services for the initial three years after opening. There is a short section at the end of the document that discusses the intentions for developing additional campus buildings and facilities subject to demand in the longer term.

222 As confirmed in the Franchise Agreement, UA92 students are permitted to access all of the digital library resources at Lancaster University. The review team had some concerns that students might need further induction into how to access and interrogate, for example, specialist databases, but the Lancaster University Librarian provided reassurances of ongoing support in the medium term. Other services offered by Lancaster University include an appropriate induction to University facilities, IT support, degree certificates and final transcripts.

223 As demonstrated during the visit, UA92's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE is a one-stop portal in which students can communicate with academic staff and peer groups,

find out about modules, discuss assessments and engage with UA92 in a wide range of ways. The VLE allows any member of staff or student to communicate directly using a 'chat and messaging service' where key messages can be liked or shared. All module content is easily communicated and collaborated with, it acts as a submission point for assessment, marking, feedback and similarity checking using Turnitin, a plagiarism-detection software. It is a key component for remote student access to tasks each Wednesday when all learning will be supported by the digital environment as confirmed in the Learning and Teaching Strategy. It can also act as a reference point for external examiners. As a part of providing a high-quality academic experience, the platform acts as a 'one-stop-shop' for students where they can access web resources from 'one-search' as well as providing a direct link to the library resources at Lancaster University as a part of the Franchise Agreement. Contact can be made immediately with the Student Helpdesk and appointments can be made with the Student Well-Being Officer, as well as provide a clear platform for the student's voice, feedback, and complaint should this arise.

224 UA92's facilities, resources and support services plans confirm in Section 3 that the Student Affairs team will be responsible for all student services across programmes, including a student helpdesk as a highly accessible first point of contact for all student needs. The team is led by a Director of Student Affairs and a dedicated Student Well-Being Officer with the intention of adding to the team as the student population grows. The student meeting confirmed that the Student Helpdesk was an effective point of contact, helping students to set up bank accounts, borrow laptops, and resolve any issues affecting the academic experience. Students noted that the Student Well-Being Officer had already made a difference by ensuring that a disabled student had all their needs met after agreeing with them at the application stage, and other students confirmed the ease of contact or drop-in support.

225 UA92's Learning and Teaching Strategy explains UA92's personal coaching system to support student personal development and career path. Coaches will be allocated and resourced from a staff member outside of the student's programme to be distinct from the Academic Tutor. Coaches will undergo bespoke UA92 training and meet with students twice during each module to advise on student progressions and career opportunities. So far it would appear that this process has generated a positive and supportive experience for students. The University's link tutor and UA92's senior staff confirmed that there is no intention to create a generic Careers Advice team as this support would be subject-specific from academic tutors and more general from the personal development coaches. The team noted that this may be a weakness over time when graduates wish to consider a range of graduate employment options that may not be related to their programme, but the outcomes of this UA92 strategy may only be analysed when the first cohorts graduate.

226 Noting that the initial investment in facilities, learning resources and student support services will require ongoing observation and maintenance, UA92 has a clear monitoring and evaluation procedure in place which takes physical and staffing resources into consideration. Feedback from staff, students, external examiners, the University's link tutors on the provision of facilities, learning resources and student support services would feed into the Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure to underpin the delivery of a high-quality academic experience. Annual programme monitoring reports and associated action plans will be received by UA92's AQG and approved by the University's Academic Standards and Quality Committee. In addition, the Principal confirmed that current facilities provision is aligned to UA92's facilities, resources and support services plans, which are reviewed on an annual basis by the UA92 Board to ensure that the resourcing model matches development and expansion requirements.

227 The proposed staffing structure suggests that appropriate structures and resources are made available based on student numbers, in accordance with UA92's facilities,

resources and support services plans. Job descriptions for academic staff and professional support staff include detailed requirements on qualification, experience and skills, ensuring staff recruited are appropriately qualified and skilled to support students. CVs of academic staff demonstrate that UA92 has appointed appropriately qualified and experienced staff to fulfil the roles and that these appointments are consistent with the role descriptors. The target teaching group size assumption of 25 students to 1 tutor, as confirmed in UA92's facilities, resources and support services plans, has been allocated since the start of the academic year. The Principal was clear that the target teaching group size will be maintained through the recruitment of additional associate tutors and support services staff to supplement or add unique specialisms to the substantive staffing at each level of the degree programme.

228 Correspondence from the University representatives confirmed that Lancaster University is confident that UA92's commitments being made both now and for the future would ensure that facilities, learning resources and student support services are sufficient and appropriate to support the delivery of a high-quality learning experience. UA92's staff involved in student support, including the Head of Registry and Quality, and Well-Being Officer, and Student Experience Assistant provided details of student support services and their contribution to supporting a high-quality student experience. For example, UA92's Well-Being Officer clearly articulated her role in pastoral care, including offering well-being drop-in sessions and arranging appointments for students, presenting mental health knowledge to all student programmes, monitoring the student support engagement reports for every block, establishing relationships with the local NHS, and working with an external provider to deliver mental health first-aider training to staff. All academic and professional support staff confirmed that their roles are an integral part of the delivery of a high-quality learning experience and were familiar with student support plans in place.

229 Student views about the facilities, learning resources, and support services showed overall satisfaction on the first two modules presented. However, some elements fell below the satisfaction threshold, including Digital Wednesdays, library resources, and educational visits. The review team discussed these areas with students and academic and professional support staff and found that the areas for development have been acted upon quickly. For example, adjustments were being made to Digital Wednesdays to ensure more relevant content of learning activities is provided for students' weekly module study. The Lancaster University Head of Library gave assurances that UA92 students had full digital access to all library resources at Lancaster, with supplementary arrangements provided by UA92 for use of the Salford Town Hall Library. UA92 students can have access to library resources through the VLE which connects to the weblinks of the online journals and books, for searching subject-specific reading materials. Educational visits and links with employers will be frame-worked around visits to a variety of significant subject-related employers based in the Greater Manchester area.

230 A direct examination by the team of physical facilities and resources revealed appropriate and well-equipped teaching facilities, including the comprehensive provision of IT, projection and display arrangements, break-out spaces suitable for teaching, workshops, small seminars and specialist facilities such as sports laboratories, the MediaLab, as well as social and workspace for students.

231 The bespoke campus has been created on two floors of a large building to accommodate UA92's needs. The tour of the campus confirmed that the building had been designed to match UA92's strategy and approach to learning, student support and inclusivity. UA92 has designed and built a ground floor that provides a focal point for the campus with a single point of contact help desk (with autonomous laptop hire) and support services staff housed immediately behind this. The large open multi-use atrium leads to some specialist facilities with two hi-tech auditoriums, one of which can be used as a flexible

space, as well as an easily accessible multi-sport performance room with research capability, and an industry-standard multi-purpose media suite for vision and sound mix.

232 Additional external sports facilities are being used at the Stretford Leisure Centre which provides a threshold practical teaching and learning experience for students, while outdoor sport and leisure spaces are considered in the longer term. The second floor has been designed and built to a high specification with all teaching rooms following a set of standard principles to create a consistent learning environment for students, and for staff to work within. The specialist spaces offer high-quality audio-visual equipment, low-level lecterns, short-throw projectors, and ceiling baffles to provide a high-quality auditory experience. Tutors are also able to control A/V using wireless technology from their mobile devices anywhere in the room.

233 UA92 operates a VLE which contains all the module information for students, and course materials are uploaded in advance of teaching sessions. The discussion forums on the VLE are easily accessed. The navigation of the VLE is intuitive and easy to follow. From the observations of the VLE, the review team found that it is well-structured and supports course delivery with appropriate teaching materials, guidance on module structures and links to further resources. The level of detail of learning materials provided, which were prepared by academic staff, indicates that teaching staff are appropriately qualified and skilled to deliver high-quality learning.

Conclusions

234 As described above, the review team considered all of the evidence submitted to form a judgement as to whether the provider meets this Core practice. In making this judgement the team followed the process set out in Guidance for Providers and took account of the key statements outlined in Annex 5. In so doing the review team ensured that its judgement was consistent with all other reviews and remained outcomes focused. The team's conclusions, based on the evidence considered, are detailed below.

235 UA92 has sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning resources, and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience. UA92's facilities, resources and support services plan demonstrated UA92's strategy for the credible and realistic development of provision that supports and future proofs the objective to deliver successful academic and professional outcomes for students. Academic and professional support staff demonstrated a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for maintaining and developing student support services to ensure a high-quality student experience is maintained over time. Student feedback from completed module surveys, the student submission and the meeting with the review team confirmed that students considered facilities, learning resources, and student support services to be sufficient and appropriate, and facilitating a high-quality academic experience. During the review visit, the team was able to conduct teaching observations and tour the facilities to be able to confirm with confidence that UA92 provides a high-quality academic experience. The review team therefore concludes that this Core practice is met.

236 The evidence underpinning this judgement reflects all of the evidence described in QSR evidence matrix with the exception of the third-party endorsements. Therefore, the review team has a high degree of confidence in its judgement.

Q5 The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience

237 This Core practice expects that the provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience.

238 The QAA review team completed an assessment of this Core practice in line with the principles and outcomes that are detailed in the [Quality and Standards Review for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students: Guidance for Providers](#) (March 2019).

The evidence the team considered

239 The review team assessed the evidence presented, both prior to and at the visit, to determine if the provider could meet this Core practice at a threshold level. The Quality and Standards Review Guidance for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students includes a matrix (Annex 4) which identifies key pieces of evidence that a provider may present and which the team should consider when making a judgement against this Core practice to ensure that the relevant outcomes are being delivered. The review team used that matrix to ensure that the evidence considered was assessed in a way that is clear and consistent with all other reviews and focused on relevant outcomes. A list of the key pieces of evidence seen by the team is below:

- a UA92 Student Voice Policy
- b UA92 Quality Assurance and Enhancement: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy
- c Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure
- d Student Feedback: Block 1 Modules
- e UA92 Governance Structure
- f Terms of Reference of the Student Engagement Forum
- g Terms of Reference of UA92 Committees Responsible for Quality Assurance
- h Block 1 Monitoring and Evaluation Forms
- i Student submission
- j Meeting with senior staff and the University representatives
- k Meeting with students.

How any samples of evidence were constructed

240 To identify and assess students' views about student engagement in the quality of their educational experience, the review team considered all available student completed module evaluations from two modules: Business Studies (Management and Organisations) and Sport and Physical Education (Introduction to Sports Psychology) that have been delivered in different subjects.

Why and how the team considered this evidence

241 As highlighted, all of the evidence submitted by the provider was considered by the review team either prior to the visit, or at the visit itself. As such, several pieces of evidence will have been considered to allow the review team to make its judgement regarding the provider's ability to meet this Core practice. To ensure consistency in decision making and to ensure that those decisions focused on outcomes, the review team considered the key pieces of evidence outlined in Annex 4 of the Guidance for Providers. These key pieces of evidence and the reason for scrutinising them are outlined below.

242 To identify how UA92 actively engages students in the quality of their educational experience and to assess whether UA92 has credible, robust and evidence-based plans for

engaging students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience, the review team considered the UA92's Student Voice Policy, Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure, UA92's Quality Assurance and Enhancement: Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, Student Feedback: Block 1 Modules, Block 1 Monitoring and Evaluation Forms, UA92's Governance Structure, Terms of Reference of the Student Engagement Forum, Terms of Reference of UA92's Committees Responsible for Quality Assurance, and meeting with senior staff.

243 To illustrate the impact of UA92's approach to acting on the student voice, the review team considered Student Feedback: Block 1 Modules, Block 1 Monitoring and Evaluation Forms.

244 To identify students' views about student engagement in the quality of their educational experience, the review team considered the student submission and met with students.

What the evidence shows

245 The review team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

246 UA92's Student Voice Policy clearly outlines UA92's approach to engaging students in the quality of their educational experience. It explains how individual and collective feedback is obtained at module, programme and institutional levels, and how student feedback feeds into relevant groups, committees and bodies.

247 Individual feedback is gathered through anonymous surveys at the end of each subject module, and the end of each Target Talent Curriculum module. The outcomes of student surveys will feed into Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure, as well as being reported directly to the UA92 Executive Committee. Individual students can also provide feedback through student representatives. At programme level, each course has at least one student democratically elected to represent their peers as a student representative. Student representatives are members of Course Boards and join the Course Boards meetings to share student views and to represent the student voice for their fellow students. Feedback from students' representatives at Course Boards will feed into the Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure. In the meeting with senior staff, the review team was advised that student course representatives had been provided with training by Middlesex University's Student Union. This was confirmed by student representatives in the meeting.

248 UA92 has detailed plans for monitoring and reviewing student engagement within the quality cycle. UA92's Monitoring and Evaluation Policy confirms that student feedback collected from module surveys feeds into module evaluations carried out at the end of each module. The review team found that the student feedback analysis is an accurate summary of actual raw data and is considered in module evaluation reports. Student feedback collected from surveys and student representation at Course Boards meetings will feed into annual programme monitoring and evaluation procedure which had not yet taken place at the time of the visit. The annual programme monitoring and evaluation procedure is clearly outlined in Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure: it is an evidence-based process, using student feedback alongside other key data sources, to evaluate programmes and identify key themes, any areas for concern, and to agree on action plans. The annual programme monitoring reports and associated action plans will be received by UA92's AQG and approved by Lancaster University's Academic Standards and Quality Committee. Evidence that student feedback is considered by the AQG is also reflected in the Terms of Reference of AQG. In addition, at institutional level, the UA92 Governance Structure includes a dedicated Student Engagement Forum, which is chaired by the Director of Student Affairs and includes student representatives. The Student

Engagement Forum will meet every block to consider all student feedback collected from various mechanisms. Issues identified from student feedback will be reported directly to UA92 Executive.

249 The Student Voice Policy also confirms that UA92 will close the loop in relation to all student feedback, so that any action taken as a result of student feedback is communicated to students through direct feedback to all students and via key committees and groups.

250 From what has been discussed above, the review team found that it is clear how student feedback is individually and collectively sought, how actions resulting from student feedback is taken, which bodies are accountable for such actions, and how actions taken are communicated back to students. Given that the detailed policies and procedures to student engagement are in place, the review team considers UA92's plans to individually and collectively engage students in the quality of their educational experience are credible and robust.

251 Student feedback from two modules from the first block of teaching had been obtained and summaries of this feedback demonstrated that UA92 had identified some areas for development from student feedback. Block 1 Monitoring and Evaluation Forms demonstrate that module evaluations have considered student feedback from completed student surveys and UA92 has identified appropriate action plans as a result of student feedback. Students provided specific illustrations of where UA92 had acted on module evaluation feedback. This included an associate tutor whose teaching was viewed as unsatisfactory: this situation was reported through course representatives leading to the associate tutor being replaced mid-way in the module. Students explained that they had been dissatisfied with the first TTC module and that as a direct result of their feedback, subsequent TTCs have been modified to include more practical exercises. Another example is that some students noted in Block 1 Student Feedback that during Digital Wednesdays the content of learning activities was not seen as clearly relevant to their programmes. Students confirmed that as a result of their feedback, each Digital Wednesday activity is now clearly justified and explained so that they can see the relevance to the rest of the programme. The review team found these examples demonstrate that UA92 makes changes and improves students' learning experience as a result of student engagement.

252 Students reported in the meeting and in the student submission that they felt engaged in the quality of their learning experience and that their feedback was listened to and acted upon by UA92 in an effective and timely manner. Students demonstrated a clear understanding of the procedures in which they could be involved in improving the quality of their educational experience, including through surveys, student representations and the Student Engagement Forum. Students also referred to the informal engagement that is facilitated by the accessibility and approachability of staff.

Conclusions

253 As described above, the review team considered all of the evidence submitted to form a judgement as to whether the provider meets this Core practice. In making this judgement the team followed the process set out in Guidance for Providers and took account of the key statements outlined in Annex 5. In so doing the review team ensured that its judgement was consistent with all other reviews and remained outcomes focused. The team's conclusions, based on the evidence considered, are detailed below.

254 UA92 actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience. This is because UA92's Student Voice Policy clearly explains how student feedback is individually and collectively sought, how actions resulting from student

feedback are taken, which bodies are accountable for such actions, and how actions taken are communicated back to students. Given that the detailed policies and procedures to student engagement are in place, the review team considered UA92's plans for engaging students individually and collectively in the quality of their educational experience are credible and robust. There are examples of UA92 changing and improving students' learning experience in response to student feedback from module surveys. Students reported that UA92 engages them in the quality of their educational experience. Students agreed that their voice is heard and valued, and their feedback was listened to and acted upon by UA92 in an effective and timely manner. The review team therefore concludes that this Core practice is met.

255 The evidence underpinning this judgement reflects all of the evidence described in the QSR evidence matrix. Therefore, the review team has a high degree of confidence in its judgement.

Q6 The provider has fair and transparent procedures for handling complaints and appeals which are accessible to all students

256 This Core practice expects that the provider has fair and transparent procedures for handling complaints and appeals which are accessible to all students.

257 The QAA review team completed an assessment of this Core practice in line with the principles and outcomes that are detailed in the [Quality and Standards Review for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students: Guidance for Providers](#) (March 2019).

The evidence the team considered

258 The review team assessed the evidence presented, both prior to and at the visit, to determine if the provider could meet this Core practice at a threshold level. The Quality and Standards Review Guidance for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students includes a matrix (Annex 4) which identifies key pieces of evidence that a provider may present and which the team should consider when making a judgement against this Core practice to ensure that the relevant outcomes are being delivered. The review team used that matrix to ensure that the evidence considered was assessed in a way that is clear and consistent with all other reviews and focused on relevant outcomes. A list of the key pieces of evidence seen by the team is below:

- a UA92 Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure
- b UA92 Student Complaints Policy and Procedure
- c Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure
- d UA92 Student Guide to the Academic Regulations
- e VLE demonstration
- f Meeting with senior staff and the University representatives
- g Meeting with students
- h Final meeting with staff.

259 Some of the key pieces of evidence, outlined in Annex 4, were not considered by the review team. These pieces of evidence and the reason why they were not considered during this review are outlined below:

260 The team did not consider examples of complaints and appeals as UA92 reported that no complaints or appeals have been received at the time of the review visit.

How any samples of evidence were constructed

261 UA92 senior staff confirmed in the meeting that no complaints or appeals have been received so far.

Why and how the team considered this evidence

262 As highlighted, all of the evidence submitted by the provider was considered by the review team either prior to the visit, or at the visit itself. As such, several pieces of evidence will have been considered to allow the review team to make its judgement regarding the provider's ability to meet this Core practice. To ensure consistency in decision making and to ensure that those decisions focused on outcomes, the review team considered the key pieces of evidence outlined in Annex 4 of the Guidance for Providers. These key pieces of evidence and the reason for scrutinising them are outlined below.

263 To identify UA92's processes for handling complaints and appeals and to confirm that these processes are fair and transparent, the review team considered UA92's Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure and Student Complaints Policy and Procedure.

264 To assess whether UA92 has credible, robust and evidence-based plans for developing and operating fair and transparent procedures for handling and recording complaints and appeals which are accessible to all students, the review team considered the Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure, the Student Complaints Policy and Procedure, Lancaster University Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure. The review team had a discussion with staff in the final meeting regarding clarification of the recording mechanism of complaints.

265 To assess whether information for potential and actual complainants and appellants is clear and accessible, the review team considered the UA92 Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure, the UA92 Student Complaints Policy and Procedure, the UA92 Student Guide to the Academic Regulations, and the VLE Demonstration.

266 The review team met with students to identify students' views about the clarity and accessibility of UA92's complaints and appeals procedures.

What the evidence shows

267 The review team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

268 UA92's Student Complaints Policy and Procedure sets out UA92's approach to handling complaints. It explains the purpose of the policy, the scope of what it applies to in terms of what is and what is not considered a complaint, and what can and cannot be complained about. It includes details of complainants' rights and time limits within which complaints must be lodged. It explains the adjustments that may be made for complainants with additional support needs. It explains the three-stage process that will be followed. Stage 1 is an informal investigation, which may lead to a resolution without a need for escalation to Stage 2, which is a formal investigation. Stage 3 comes into play if the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 2. If the complaint is a non-academic one, it will be dealt with solely by UA92. If it is an academic complaint, then Lancaster University may be involved in Stage 3. The UA92 Complaints Coordinator will consult with Lancaster University's Complaints Coordinator to determine whether the complaint should be referred to Lancaster for Stage 3 review. The Student Complaints Policy and Procedure specifies the student's right to escalate to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) if they remain dissatisfied with the outcome after Stage 3, and details of how to do this. The document specifies the timelines within which each stage will be completed. The document makes special provision for complaints which may require more speedy resolution, for example, where there may be a risk of harm. The review team concludes that UA92's procedures for handling complaints are reliable and fair, and likely to deliver timely outcomes.

269 The Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure explains UA92's approach to the handling of appeals. It explains the scope of what can and cannot be the subject of an academic appeal, who it applies to, the rights of an appellant, the time limits that apply to lodging an appeal, the timelines within which appeals will be investigated and outcomes notified, and adjustments that can be made to the process for appellants with additional support needs. It specifies the two-stage process and procedure, which includes the Formal Investigation Stage and the Review Stage. The first stage may involve convening an Appeal Panel, the constitution of which is also defined. The conduct of the panel is explained, and the possible outcomes of the panel meeting are identified, with associated actions specified. The outcome of the first stage should be completed within 30 days. The second stage applies if the appellant is dissatisfied with the outcome of stage 1. Stage 2 will be completed

within 36 days by Lancaster University. The Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure specifies the student's right to escalate to the OIA if they remain dissatisfied with the outcome after stage 2, and details of how to do this. The review team concludes that UA92's processes for handling appeals are reliable and fair, and likely to deliver timely outcomes.

270 UA92's Student Complaints Policy and Procedure and Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure explain that the Stage 2 (formal) complaints and the academic appeals will be recorded, monitored and analysed by the UA92 Complaints/Appeals Co-ordinator to ensure that appropriate action is taken. The outcomes of the analysis will be considered internally by UA92's Academic Committee and reported to Lancaster University's Academic Quality and Standards Committee as part of annual monitoring and evaluation procedure to ensure that decisions have been made consistently and at the right level.

271 There is some lack of clarity about how informal Stage 1 complaints will be recorded and tracked. UA92's Student Complaints Policy and Procedure does not specify how UA92 will be made aware of informal complaints, nor how these informal complaint cases will be recorded locally. At the final meeting it was explained that staff at the local level will notify the UA92 Complaints Coordinator of any informal complaints that arise and that the Complaints Coordinator will keep a central record of informal complaints as well as formal complaints, but student dissatisfaction or concerns that are raised through normal student feedback mechanisms or representation processes (for example, surveys, course representatives, Student Engagement Forum) are not treated or recorded as informal complaints.

272 UA92's Student Complaints Policy and Procedure and Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure are accessible via the UA92 website, the VLE and are well-explained at induction. UA92's Student Guide to the Regulations also cross-references students to the Complaints Policy and Procedure and the Appeals Policy and Procedure. Both policies are written in easy-to-understand language, with clear explanations and without exclusionary terminology. In addition, both policies provide contact details of the UA92 Complaints/Appeals Coordinator who is not an advocate for any party, but who is available to provide advice to all parties on policy and procedural details. Students explained in the meeting that they had sought initial advice from the UA92 Helpdesk in relation to a complaint that they wanted to make, and that they were satisfied with the advice and guidance they received on how to proceed, though that complaint was not actually made. The review team therefore concludes that information for potential and actual complainants and appellants is clear and accessible.

273 Students did not raise any concerns regarding the fairness, transparency or credibility of UA92's procedures and approaches for handling complaints and academic appeals. Students who met the team had no experience of making complaints or appeals, but they confirmed that they were aware of the procedures in making complaints and academic appeals and where to access the policies and forms.

Conclusions

274 As described above, the review team considered all of the evidence submitted to form a judgement as to whether the provider meets this Core practice. In making this judgement the team followed the process set out in Guidance for Providers and took account of the key statements outlined in Annex 5. In so doing the review team ensured that its judgement was consistent with all other reviews and remained outcomes focused. The team's conclusions, based on the evidence considered, are detailed below.

275 UA92 has fair and transparent procedures for handling complaints and appeals which are accessible to all students. This is because UA92's Academic Appeals Policy and

Procedure and Student Complaints Policy and Procedure clearly explain what situations can or cannot be the subject of complaints or appeals, what process should be followed or when they should be escalated to the University or OIA, and what is the deadline for each step. All complaints and appeal records will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that decisions have been made consistently and at the right level and also to identify any action required to improve student experience. All relevant policies and procedures regarding complaints and appeals, as well as forms for completion, are available on the UA92 website and within the VLE , so these can be found easily by students. They are written in plain language so can be easily understood. Although no complaints or appeals have been lodged, students did not raise any concerns or doubts about their ability to access details of the relevant procedures. The review team therefore concludes that, on balance, this Core practice is met.

276 The evidence underpinning this judgement reflects most of the evidence described in the QSR evidence matrix. UA92 reported that no complaints or appeals had been received at the time of the review visit. However, the review team considers that UA92's plans for delivering fair, accessible and transparent complaints and appeals are robust and credible and that the procedures are definitive, fair and transparent and will deliver timely outcomes. The review team, therefore, has a high degree of confidence in this judgement.

Q8 Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the academic experience is high-quality irrespective of where or how courses are delivered and who delivers them

277 This Core practice expects that where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the academic experience is high-quality irrespective of where or how courses are delivered and who delivers them.

278 The QAA review team completed an assessment of this Core practice in line with the principles and outcomes that are detailed in the [Quality and Standards Review for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students: Guidance for Providers](#) (March 2019).

The evidence the team considered

279 The QAA review team assessed the evidence presented, both prior to and at the visit, to determine if the provider could meet this Core practice at a threshold level. The Quality and Standards Review Guidance for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students includes a matrix (Annex 4) which identifies key pieces of evidence that a provider may present and which the team should consider when making a judgement against this Core practice to ensure that the relevant outcomes are being delivered. The review team used that matrix to ensure that the evidence considered was assessed in a way that is clear and consistent with all other reviews and focused on relevant outcomes. A list of the key pieces of evidence seen by the team is below:

- a The Franchise Agreement
- b The Link Tutor Guidance
- c UA92 Assessment Policy
- d Internal moderation form and minutes of the Board of Examiners
- e Lancaster University Senate Approval document
- f UA92's Academic Regulations
- g Lancaster University Academic Regulation for assessment
- h Course handbook- the Introduction to Sports Psychology
- i Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure
- j Student submission
- k Student feedback raw data
- l Meeting with senior staff and the University representatives
- m Meeting with students
- n Meeting with academic and professional support staff, and the University's link tutors.

280 Some of the key pieces of evidence, outlined in Annex 4, were not considered by the review team. These pieces of evidence and the reason why they were not considered during this review are outlined below:

281 Third party endorsements, as none are available for the provision on offer at UA92.

282 No formal external examiner reports were available at the time of the review.

How any samples of evidence were constructed

283 To identify and assess students' views about the quality of courses delivered in partnership, the review team considered all available student-completed module evaluations from two modules: Business Studies (Management and Organisations) and Sport and

Physical Education (Introduction to Sports Psychology) that have been delivered in different subjects.

Why and how the team considered this evidence

284 As highlighted, all of the evidence submitted by the provider was considered by the review team either prior to the visit or at the visit itself. As such, several pieces of evidence will have been considered to allow the review team to make its judgement regarding the provider's ability to meet this Core practice. To ensure consistency in decision making and to ensure that those decisions focused on outcomes, the review team considered the key pieces of evidence outlined in Annex 4 of the Guidance for Providers. These key pieces of evidence and the reason for scrutinising them are outlined below.

285 To assess how UA92 ensures courses are high quality irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them, the review team considered the Franchise Agreement, the Link Tutor Guidance, UA92 Assessment Policy, internal moderation form and minutes of the Board of Examiners, Lancaster University Senate Approval document, UA92's Academic Regulations, Lancaster University Academic Regulation for Assessment, and the course handbook for 'the Introduction to Sports Psychology module'.

286 To assess whether UA92 has credible, robust and evidence-based plans for ensuring a high-quality academic experience in partnership work, the review team considered Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure.

287 To assess students' views about the quality of courses delivered in partnership, the review team considered the student submission, student feedback raw data, and comments from a meeting with students.

288 To test whether staff understand and discharge effectively their responsibilities to Lancaster University, the review team met with UA92's senior staff and Lancaster University representatives, UA92's academic and professional support staff, and the University's link tutors.

What the evidence shows

289 The review team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

290 The responsibilities between UA92 and Lancaster University are clearly defined in the Franchise Agreement for ensuring a high-quality academic experience for students. Lancaster University, as the awarding body for UA92, retains overall ultimate responsibility for academic quality and standards issues relating to the UA92 programmes, including 'entry standards, teaching quality, module and programme development, approval and reapproval, assessment methods and outcomes and progression and award criteria'.

291 The University's oversight is operationalised via the input of link tutors in all aspects of quality assurance. The role of the link tutor from Lancaster University is outlined in the Link Tutor Guidance. In practice, Lancaster University link tutors are heavily involved in quality assurance at UA92 by overseeing all course documentation, moderating all assessments and involvement in the annual review of all courses. For example, UA92 Assessment Policy confirmed that following completion of marking and moderation by UA92, all assessments will be subject to moderation by the Lancaster University link tutor. Internal moderation forms also demonstrate that any actions needed before marks are confirmed should be considered by the University link tutor together with UA92's internal moderation panel.

292 UA92's Academic Regulations specify how the partnership has planned to deliver a

high-quality academic experience. An example of this is shown in section 2B (5) for the Setting and Approving of Assessment for programmes where course leaders, working with the University link tutors, are expected to ensure course documentation accurately describes the assessment scheme in line with Lancaster University's Academic Regulation for Assessment. This is demonstrated in the course handbook for the module: 'the Introduction to Sports Psychology'.

293 UA92 has credible and robust plans for monitoring and reviewing the quality of partnership work within the quality cycle. As detailed in Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure, the annual programme monitoring procedure will review the partnership arrangements through the consideration of the module evaluation forms conducted throughout the year, UA92 staff and students' feedback, the University's link tutors' feedback, external examiner reports, and data provided by Admissions and Registry. The annual programme monitoring reports and associated action plans will be received by UA92's AQG and approved by Lancaster University's Academic Standards and Quality Committee.

294 Students the review team met spoke positively about their experiences and said that courses were well designed and relevant to their future goals. Students also confirmed in the student submission that the courses were of high quality. Documentary comments from students in module surveys similarly confirmed that overall satisfaction of learning experience was high.

295 Both Lancaster University representatives and UA92 staff the review team met demonstrated a clear understanding of partnership arrangements and their responsibilities in partnership work. One example is that the University's link tutor roles in developing course documentation, moderating all assessments and involving in course reviews can not only be articulated by the link tutor from Lancaster University, but by UA92 senior staff, course leaders, and academic tutors as well. The University's link tutors confirmed that the University is satisfied with the development of the partnership to date and that UA92's course arrangements have met all their requirements as confirmed by Lancaster University's Senate Office. UA92's senior staff and academic staff explained how UA92 fulfils its responsibilities to the University for maintaining the quality of the academic experience through high-quality teaching by subject specialist staff, and providing student academic support, advice and guidance.

Conclusions

296 As described above, the review team considered all of the evidence submitted to form a judgement as to whether the provider meets this Core practice. In making this judgement the team followed the process set out in Guidance for Providers and took account of the key statements outlined in Annex 5. In so doing the review team ensured that its judgement was consistent with all other reviews and remained outcomes focused. The team's conclusions, based on the evidence considered, are detailed below.

297 UA92 has in place effective partnership arrangements with Lancaster University to ensure that the academic experience is high-quality for the students. This is because the franchise agreement is clear and comprehensive in its articulation of the respective roles of UA92 and Lancaster University. UA92 has clear and comprehensive regulations for the management of partnerships with Lancaster University to ensure that the academic experience is high quality. It has robust and credible plans to ensure a high-quality academic experience for provision delivered in partnership through monitoring and evaluation processes. Students are satisfied with their academic experience. Staff from both UA92 and Lancaster University clearly understand their respective responsibilities for working in partnership to deliver a high-quality academic experience. The review team therefore

concludes that this Core practice is met.

298 The evidence underpinning this judgement reflects all of the evidence described in the QSR evidence matrix and therefore the review team has a high degree of confidence in its judgement.

Q9 The provider supports all students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes

299 This Core practice expects that the provider supports all students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes.

300 The QAA review team completed an assessment of this Core practice in line with the principles and outcomes that are detailed in the [Quality and Standards Review for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students: Guidance for Providers](#) (March 2019).

The evidence the team considered

301 The review team assessed the evidence presented, both prior to and at the visit, to determine if the provider could meet this Core practice at a threshold level. The Quality and Standards Review Guidance for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students includes a matrix (Annex 4) which identifies key pieces of evidence that a provider may present and which the team should consider when making a judgement against this Core practice to ensure that the relevant outcomes are being delivered. The review team used that matrix to ensure that the evidence considered was assessed in a way that is clear and consistent with all other reviews and focused on relevant outcomes. A list of the key pieces of evidence seen by the team is below:

- a UA92 Learning and Teaching Strategy
- b UA92 Inclusive Curriculum Guidelines
- c Inclusive Support Flowchart
- d UA92 Target Talent Curriculum Module Descriptors
- e UA92 Organisational Design and Staffing Structure
- f Staff Coaching Handbook
- g Student Coaching Handbook
- h Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure
- i Student Feedback: Block 1 modules
- j Assessed student work: Business, Sport and Physical Education
- k Module handbooks
- l Block 1 Monitoring and Evaluation Forms
- m Student submission
- n Meeting with senior staff and the University representatives
- o Meeting with students
- p Meeting with academic and professional support staff, and the University's link tutors.

How any samples of evidence were constructed

302 To test whether students are given comprehensive, helpful and timely feedback, the review team considered a random sample of 16 assessed student work from two modules: Business Studies (Management and Organisations) and Sport and Physical Education (Introduction to Sports Psychology) and the module handbooks for these two modules which include assessment briefs.

303 To identify and assess students' views about student support mechanisms, the review team considered all available student-completed module evaluations from two modules: Business Studies and Sport and Physical Education that have been delivered in different subjects.

Why and how the team considered this evidence

304 As highlighted, all of the evidence submitted by the provider was considered by the review team either prior to the visit, or at the visit itself. As such, several pieces of evidence will have been considered to allow the review team to make its judgement regarding the provider's ability to meet this Core practice. To ensure consistency in decision making and to ensure that those decisions focused on outcomes, the review team considered the key pieces of evidence outlined in Annex 4 of the Guidance for Providers. These key pieces of evidence and the reason for scrutinising them are outlined below.

305 To identify UA92's approach to student support, including how it identifies and monitors the needs of individual students, the review team considered UA92 Learning and Teaching Strategy, Inclusive Curriculum Guidelines, the Inclusive Support Flowchart, Target Talent Curriculum Module Descriptors, UA92 Organisational Design and Staffing Structure Staff Coaching Handbook, Student Coaching Handbook, and Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure.

306 To assess whether UA92 has credible, robust and evidence-based plans for ensuring that all students are supported to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes, the review team considered Block 1 module evaluation survey raw data, analysis, and Lancaster University's Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure.

307 To test whether students are given comprehensive, helpful and timely feedback, the review team considered student work, module handbooks, assignment rubrics, Block 1 Monitoring and Evaluation Forms.

308 To test whether staff understand their responsibilities and are appropriately skilled and supported, the review team met with senior staff and academic and professional support staff.

309 To identify and assess students' views about student support mechanisms, the review team considered the student submission video, the meeting with students, Student Feedback: Block 1 modules.

What the evidence shows

310 The review team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

311 UA92's Learning and Teaching Strategy, Inclusive Curriculum Guidelines and Target Talent Curriculum Module Descriptors provide details of UA92's approaches to student support. UA92's approach to supporting students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes is based on sound pedagogical principles of inclusive curriculum design, and an approach to embedded support. Academic and non-academic support is built in at the level of the design of the curriculum in all programmes, so that student support is not offered as an 'extra' or an 'add on'. This applies to all students, including those with specific additional support needs.

312 The Inclusive Curriculum Guidelines and the Inclusive Support Flowchart explain how additional learning support is provided. Students with dyslexia, medical conditions, mental health difficulties and other disabilities are asked to register with the Inclusive Support Service. The Inclusive Support Service then has one-to-one meetings with students to discuss their disability or learning difficulties and the reasonable adjustments for learning, teaching and assessment. Action plans of supporting students' additional learning needs are recorded in individual students' learning plans and shared with the course team to ensure students' needs will be met in programme delivery, and access to resources and facilities.

313 With the exception of the support provided through the Librarian and through online academic referencing support software, there is no specialist support available to students on learning skills, academic reading and note-taking, and academic writing. Instead, UA92's approach to developing students' academic skills will be through students' academic tutors and through static video/audio resources provided within the VLE. Students confirmed that they had no access to specialist support but only support from academic tutors on learning skills, but they felt adequately supported by this approach.

314 There is no specialist careers service at UA92. Instead, UA92 identifies and monitors students' professional development needs through the TTC, which covers generic professional development topics such as resilience, health and wellbeing, problem-solving, communication skills, career preparedness, financial literacy, leadership, professionalism, reflective practice, and team working. To support students to achieve professional outcomes, the TTC includes a Career Preparedness module, where students will have opportunities to network and do mock interviews with expertise from their chosen industry or sector. This enables them to develop a clear understanding of their chosen industry or profession and how new graduates will be recruited and developed in the industry. Students confirmed that they did not have access to specialist careers advice, but that UA92 staff are able to provide information, advice and guidance on areas of their own expertise. One example was given of a student who had an interest in pursuing a career in teaching and who approached their coach for advice on this, the coach directed them to the UA92 Helpdesk. The Helpdesk then supported the student to research and identify teacher education courses in the area. The student felt supported to achieve their professional outcomes in this regard. The review team found, therefore, that UA92's approach to student professional development tends to facilitate students to achieve successful professional outcomes.

315 The Learning and Teaching Strategy explains the approach to identifying and monitoring the needs of individual students through the personal coaching system. Each student is allocated a coach, who may be any member of UA92 staff and who is distinct from the student's academic tutors (although they may be a tutor on another programme or work in a different part of the institution). Each student meets their personal coach twice each module to reflect on their progress with clear targets and support needs to be agreed for improvement. Concerns about individual student progress and additional needs are identified from the personal coaching meeting and subsequent plans are developed by personal coaches to support underperforming students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes. The personal coaches may arrange one-to-one meetings to provide support and guidance, or signpost students to additional academic as well as non-academic support, including UA92's Well-Being Service for specialist advice in relation to mental and physical well-being if required. Issues about the progress of individual students identified from personal coaching meetings and in progression and completion data will be considered by Course Boards which feed into the Annual Programme Monitoring Procedure. The annual programme monitoring reports and associated action plans will be received by UA92's AQG and approved by Lancaster University's Academic Standards and Quality Committee.

316 To ensure that all students are supported to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes, the effectiveness of student support services is monitored and reviewed within the quality cycle. Student feedback on student support is gathered through module evaluation surveys. The analysis of student survey outcomes will be considered by Course Boards which feed into the annual programme monitoring and evaluation procedure. The annual programme monitoring reports and associated action plans will be received by UA92's AQG and approved by Lancaster University's Academic Standards and Quality Committee. Given that detailed policies and procedures are in place, the review team agreed that UA92 has a credible and robust approach to monitoring student support to ensure students achieve successful academic and professional outcomes.

317 Assessed student work reviewed by the team demonstrates that students were provided with both in-text comments on their work and with overarching summary comments for each assignment. The feedback provided to students was helpful and constructive, indicating strengths as well as weaknesses, and giving suggestions for improvement. External examiners' reports also confirm that external examiners were broadly satisfied with the quality of feedback provided to students. Students agreed that the feedback they had received on assessed work was high quality.

318 The review team, however, identified that the feedback on assessed work does not always align with the assessment criteria for each assignment, nor with the descriptors for each grade band as specified in module handbooks. For example, one of the assignments on the Introduction to Sports Psychology module is a group presentation. The rubric in the module handbook identifies 'Teamwork and individual organisational skills' as one of the key criteria against which such an assignment should be graded, with details of how performance against this criterion should be reflected in different marks or grade bands awarded. However, the feedback for students does not refer explicitly to teamwork or individual organisational skills as one of the criteria against which the student work was being evaluated. The external examiner also commented in the Block 1 Module Evaluation Form – Introduction to Sports Psychology that staff should 'consider/identify how students are supported in matching the assessment criteria as noted in the grading rubrics with the assessment briefs', and 'feedback...needs to more clearly identify the reasons for the marks awarded'. The review team concludes, therefore, that the feedback was helpful, though not always comprehensive.

319 The academics recognise the importance of returning the grade and feedback to UA92 students in a timely manner, but realised that there was no set period consistent across programmes for returning student grades and feedback. They suggested that the existing moderation timeline could be used to provide a consistent approach. From reviewing assessed student work and discussion with students, the review team confirmed that all feedback and provisional grades have been communicated in a timely manner thus far after the Block 1 modules.

320 All staff understand their role in supporting student achievement. Both academic and non-academic staff were able to explain competently and confidently their role and the responsibility that they each have for supporting student wellbeing and success. For example, both senior management and academics and professional support staff confirmed that everyone had completed mental health first-aid training and identified their personal role in, and accountability for, student wellbeing.

321 Students' views expressed in the student video submission and the module surveys demonstrate that students feel adequately supported to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes. The results of module surveys include some lower-than-average ratings concerning Digital Wednesdays and library resources, but students and staff confirmed in the meeting that these areas for development have been addressed quickly. Students' feedback on IT support, academic guidance and staff availability are very positive. At the meeting with students, all of them expressed the view that they are more than adequately supported to achieve academic and professional outcomes. The review team had the opportunity to meet with a disabled student who confirmed that UA92's approach to identifying specific needs for individual students through the application and admissions process, through the development of individual learning plans, and putting appropriate support in place for such students, is working effectively.

Conclusions

322 As described above, the review team considered all of the evidence submitted to

form a judgement as to whether the provider meets this Core practice. In making this judgement the team followed the process set out in Guidance for Providers and took account of the key statements outlined in Annex 5. In so doing the review team ensured that its judgement was consistent with all other reviews and remained outcomes focused. The team's conclusions, based on the evidence considered, are detailed below.

323 UA92 supports all students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes. UA92's approaches to supporting students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes are explained in the Learning and Teaching Strategy, Inclusive Curriculum Guidelines and Target Talent Curriculum Module Descriptors. The Learning and Teaching Strategy also specifies UA92's approach to identifying and monitoring the needs of individual students through the personal coaching system. Given that detailed policies and procedures for student support are in place and the effectiveness of student support services is monitored and reviewed within the quality cycle, the review team considered that the approaches to supporting students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes are credible and robust. Assessed student work demonstrates that students are given feedback that is helpful, timely, and broadly comprehensive. All staff (both academic and professional support staff) understand their role in supporting students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes. Students tend to agree that they are adequately supported to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes. The review team therefore concludes that on balance this Core practice is met.

324 The evidence underpinning this judgement reflects all of the evidence described in the QSR evidence matrix, therefore the review team has a high degree of confidence in its judgement.

QAA2569 - R10955 - Jan 21

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