DQB

Designated Quality Body
in England

Assessment for Variation of Degree Awarding Powers

Warwickshire College

Review Report

June 2020

Contents

Summary of assessment team findings

Underpinning DAPs criteria	
Criterion A: Academic governance	Met
Criterion B1: Regulatory frameworks	Met
Criterion B2: Academic standards	Met
Criterion B3: Quality of the academic experience	Met
Criterion C: Scholarship and the pedagogical effectiveness of staff	Met
Criterion D: Environment for supporting students	Met
Criterion E: Evaluation of performance	Met
Overarching criterion	
The provider is a self-critical, cohesive academic community with a proven commitment to the assurance of standards supported by effective quality systems	Met

About this report

This is a report of an assessment of Warwickshire College Group conducted by QAA in June 2020 in accordance with the process outlined in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment for Variation and Revocation of Degree Awarding Powers, December 2019.*

Assessment for the variation and revocation of degree awarding powers (DAPs) is the process QAA uses to provide advice to the Office for Students (OfS) about the quality of, and the standards applied to, higher education delivered by a provider in England that has an existing DAPs authorisation and where variation or revocation is to be considered.

The assessment was conducted in order to inform advice to OfS on whether WCG's existing renewable powers be granted on an indefinite basis and whether WCG's existing powers be extended from foundation degree level (up to and including Level 5) to bachelor degree level (up to and including Level 6).

Provider information

Legal name	Warwickshire College
Trading name	WCG
UKPRN	10007859
Type of institution	Further Education College
Date founded	1996

Date of first HE provision	Moreton Morrell College has delivered degree-level programmes since 1987 prior to merger in 1996 Warwickshire College has offered validated foundation degrees since 2002
Application route	Variation of Degree Awarding Powers
Level of powers applied for (if applying for additional levels)	Taught degree (up to and including Level 6)
Locations of teaching	Royal Leamington Spa College, Moreton Morrell College, Pershore College, Warwick Trident College, Rugby College, Evesham College.
Subject(s) applied for (if applying for additional subjects)	All subjects
Current powers held	Foundation Degree Awarding Powers (renewable)
Date current powers granted	2014
Number of current programmes as at 15 January (source: Provider Information Form)	22 x bachelor's degrees 19 x foundation degrees 4 x Higher National Certificates 5 x Higher National Diploma 10 x professional courses
Number of students as at 15 January (source: Provider Information Form)	1,118 students in total: 400 full-time and 718 part-time
Number of staff as at 6 June 2020 (source: provider e-mail).	Managerial: 14; academic: 68 (includes 10 with subject leadership roles); professional support: 28
Current awarding body arrangements	Coventry University, University of Gloucestershire, University of Worcester, Pearson

About Warwickshire College

Warwickshire College Group (WCG) is a large mixed economy further education college. Operating across the neighbouring counties of Warwickshire and Worcestershire, WCG incorporates seven colleges in Royal Leamington Spa, Warwick, Rugby and Moreton Morrell in Warwickshire and Pershore, Evesham and Malvern in Worcestershire. The origins of the Group date back to 1996 when Warwickshire College, Royal Leamington Spa and Moreton Morrell was incorporated following the merger of the then Mid-Warwickshire College (in Leamington Spa) and the Warwickshire Institute of Equine, Agriculture and Horticulture (in Moreton Morrell). Warwickshire College merged with South Worcestershire College in 2016. Higher education is currently taught at six out of the seven colleges which make up the Group.

WCG offers a range of higher education provision at Levels 4, 5 and 6 with courses spanning 13 of the 19 principal subject areas prescribed for higher education delivery. Following the granting of foundation degree-awarding powers (FDAP) in September 2014, WCG has approved foundation degree programmes in a wide range of subject areas, including agricultural technology, engineering, computing, counselling and early years, business and management, and creative arts and design.

WCG has partnership arrangements with four university awarding bodies and Pearson. WCG and Coventry University (CU) have had a collaborative partnership since the late

1980s and WCG currently delivers a range of bachelor's degree programmes in equine and animal sciences and veterinary nursing in partnership with the University. The College has a collaborative partnership with the University of Gloucestershire (UoG) to deliver Level 6 top-up bachelor's degrees in business, computing, engineering, counselling, games art and digital film production courses. For the last six years WCG has worked closely with the University of Warwick (UoW) to develop a model for degree apprenticeships, incorporating a Warwickshire College-approved foundation degree that supports apprentices in the first two years before they progress to UoW to complete a BEng (Hons) Applied Engineering degree. WCG has a partnership agreement with the University of Worcester to deliver Level 6 honours degree programmes in horticulture and works with Pearson to deliver Higher National programmes up to Level 5 in engineering, construction and the built environment, and graphic design. The Group works with a range of professional bodies to deliver programmes at Level 4 and 5 in marketing, human resource management, business administration, education and training, floristry, engineering manufacturing and accounting.

If successful with the BDAP application, WCG intends to progressively rationalise and/or replace its current provision at Level 6 with its own awards while maintaining strategic partnerships with university partners to facilitate progression for WCG students to postgraduate study and develop initiatives to widen access and participation. WCG aspires to implement an approach to Level 6 course design that continues to prioritise applied learning and a student experience that is linked directly to the workplace and extend the scope of this institutional expertise to embed current foundation degrees within the honours degree programmes. Rather than the foundation degree being a stopping off point at Level 5, it is planned that the characteristics of the foundation degree award will be integrated into three-year programmes through the design of degrees that are informed throughout by applied learning. WCG has been reviewing and rationalising its curriculum offer over many years in the context of trends in student demand, local economic priorities and government policy, and wishes to develop new courses that build on its existing strengths and align to growth areas of niche provision.

How the assessment was conducted

The QAA assessment team completed an assessment of the provider according to the process set out in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment for Variation and Revocation of Degree Awarding Powers, December 2019.*

The team appointed to conduct the assessment was as follows:

Name: Alison Blackburn
Institution: University of Salford
Role in assessment team: Institutional assessor

Name: Hastings McKenzie
Institution: University of Northampton
Role in assessment team: Institutional assessor

Name: Cara Molyneux
Institution: Student at Lancaster University
Role in assessment team: Student assessor

Name: Colin Stanfield
Institution: Wigan and Leigh College
Role in assessment team: Institutional assessor

The QAA Officer for the assessment was Judith Foreman.

The size and composition of this 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 subject expertise. 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 WCG prior to the assessment to identify and resolve any possible conflicts of interest.

The team conducted the assessment by reference to a range of evidence gathered according to the process described in the Guidance for Providers. The criteria used in relation to this assessment are those that apply in England as set out paragraphs 215-216 and in Annex C in OfS's regulatory framework. To support the clarity of communication between providers and QAA, the DAPs criteria and evidence requirements from OfS's regulatory framework have been given unique identifiers and are reproduced in Annex 4 of *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment by QAA, October 2019*.

In the course of the assessment, the team read 415 documents presented in support of the application. An initial set of 139 documents was provided as supporting evidence with the College's submission document. Following a desk-based assessment of this initial evidence against the DAPs criteria, a request for additional evidence was made. This request covered areas from five DAPs criteria which had been identified as requiring further evidence and clarification. An additional 145 documents were provided in response. After further desk-based analysis, a request for additional evidence was made relating to areas from B3, C and D of the criteria and in response WCG provided 44 documents. Following receipt of these documents, two further requests for additional information were made focusing on criteria B2 and E and an additional 83 documents were provided. While the assessment had initially been referred by OfS as a desk-based assessment only, the team identified issues relating to criteria B2 and E that it considered warranted further investigation. A visit was granted for the team to explore these areas (which, due to travel restrictions in place at the time, was conducted through videoconferencing technology) and a further five pieces of documentary evidence were provided after the visit in response to the issues discussed. The visit comprised a meeting of the full team with senior managers and staff with programme management responsibilities. The key themes pursued in the later requests for documentary evidence and during the meeting with staff were: the setting and maintenance of academic standards during course approval and review; annual course review and quality improvement planning; use of and responses to external examiner reports; and the conduct of assessment boards and critical self-assessment at institutional level.

Details of the evidence the team considered are provided in the 'Explanation of findings' section below. In addition to the evidence provided by WCG in its initial submission and in response to issues identified, the team made the following requests for samples of documentation:

- a random sample of three Quality Improvement Plans
- a random sample of Quality Review Meeting minutes
- a random sample of annual monitoring reports and a specific report selected on the basis of risk
- a random and representative sample of six external examiner reports to cover Level 6 provision, foundation degree provision and Higher National awards provision
- a random and representative sample of six module descriptors from across foundation degree subject areas and six Level 6 module descriptors from across the range of validating bodies

- a random sample of one verification trail selected from six randomly selected module assessments at Levels 5 and 6, covering different types of assessment.

The samples considered, and how and why they were chosen, are described within the discussion of each criterion in 'How any samples of evidence were constructed'.

Explanation of findings

Criterion A: Academic Governance

Criterion A1 - Academic governance

1   This criterion states that:

A1.1:   *An organisation granted degree awarding powers has effective academic governance, with clear and appropriate lines of accountability for its academic responsibilities.*

A1.2:   *Academic governance, including all aspects of the control and oversight of its higher education provision, is conducted in partnership with its students.*

A1.3:   *Where an organisation granted degree awarding powers works with other organisations to deliver learning opportunities, it ensures that its governance and management of such opportunities is robust and effective and that decisions to work with other organisations are the result of a strategic approach rather than opportunism.*

2   The QAA assessment team conducted an assessment of this criterion according to the process set out in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment for Variation and Revocation of Degree Awarding Powers (December 2019).*

The evidence considered and why the team considered this evidence

3   The QAA team assessed this criterion by reference to a range of evidence gathered according to the process described in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment by QAA (October 2019)*, in particular the suggested evidence outlined in Annex 5 and WCG's submission. The assessment team identified and considered this evidence for the purposes described in Annex 4 and 5 of this Guidance as follows.

a   To test whether WCG's higher education mission and strategic direction and associated policies are coherent, published and applied consistently and are supported by its academic policies, the team reviewed strategic and operational documents namely the WCG Higher Education Strategy 2019-2023 [009], the College Strategy Delivering Successful Futures [004], the WCG Annual Success Indicators 2019-20 [005], the HE Teaching and Learning Strategy [010] and Policy [065], the WCG Learning and Development Strategy 2017-2020 [018], HE Guiding Principles [006], the HE Quality and Enhancement Manual [078]; the Academic Committee Structure 2019-20 [086], and the Management Team Organisation Chart [079]. The team also reviewed recent minutes of the HE Academic Board [087-089] and met with senior staff [M1].

b   To assess whether there is clarity and differentiation of function and responsibility at all levels in the organisation in its academic governance structures and arrangements for managing its higher education provision, and to test that the function and responsibility of the senior academic authority is clearly articulated and consistently applied the team reviewed evidence relating to the governance structure, namely the Corporation Standing Orders [015], the Instrument and Articles of Government [016], the WCG Governance Structure 2020 [008], the WCG Academic Committee Structure 2019-20 [086], HE Schedules of Business 2019-20 [081] and the terms of reference for the HE Academic Board [082], the HE Quality and Academic Standards (HEQAS) committee [083], the HE Teaching, Research and Enterprise Committee (HETREC) [085], the HE Student Experience Committee

(HESEC) [084] and the Further Education Skills Academic Board (FESAB) [127]. The team also considered the organisational charts for the College [003] and the HE Management Team [079] and minutes from HE Academic Board [087-089], HEQAS [032-034], HETREC [097-098], HESEC [031] and FESAB [130]. Reports to the Academic Standards and Quality Assurance (ASQA) committee were also reviewed, including the annual report on higher education awards 2018-19 [118], the HE Annual Quality Report [113], the HE Curriculum Report [114], the HE Curriculum Presentation [115], and the Complaints and Compliments Annual Report [112]. The team also considered the Course Approval and Review Procedures [054], the HE Course Closure and Suspension Procedure [055] and papers to FESAB on apprenticeships, namely the FESAB proposal for new qualifications template [128], FESAB apprenticeship costings template [129]; FESAB approval for HR L5 apprenticeship standard [131], FESAB Apprenticeship delivery model costs [132] and FESAB apprenticeship standard for Level 5 [133].

c   To establish whether there is appropriate depth and strength of academic leadership, the team considered organisational charts [003, 079] and job descriptions and CVs for key posts, namely the Dean of Higher Education [139, 140], Director of Engineering Apprenticeships [141, 142], Head of Engineering [145, 146], Assistant Dean [143, 147], HE Subject Leaders [144, 148-152], Professor in Agri tech [153, 154] and Associate Professor [155, 156].

d   To establish whether WCG develops, implements and communicates its policies and procedures in collaboration with its staff and students and external stakeholders, the team reviewed the Corporation Standing Orders [015], the Instrument and Articles of Government [016] and minutes of the Board [102-103, 106], Audit Committee [104-105] and HETREC [096-098] and the terms of reference for the latter [085]. The team also considered the HE Quality and Enhancement Manual [078], the College website and the approval process for policies [134] and procedures [135].

e   To assess whether WCG will manage successfully the responsibilities that would be vested in it were it to be granted degree awarding powers, the team considered the strategic and operational documents, including the WCG Higher Education Strategy 2019-23 [009], the College Strategy Delivering Successful Futures [004], the College [003] and HE Management Team Organisational Chart [079], the Governance Structure [008], the WCG Academic Committee Structure [086], terms of reference for HESEC [084] and HETREC [093], the Corporation Standing Orders [015], the Instrument and Articles of Government [016], partnership agreements with its awarding bodies [11, 12, 14], and partnership review reports [025, 026, 027]. The team also reviewed minutes of the Board [102-103], HESEC [094-095] and Academic Board [087-089] as well as exploring the College website and meeting senior staff [M1].

f   To determine whether students are engaged and supported in the governance and management of WCG, the team looked at the Corporation Standing Orders [015], the Instrument and Articles of Government [016], HESEC Terms of Reference [084] and minutes of the Board [102, 103], ASQA [099-101], and HESEC [093-095]. The team also considered testimony from the current Sabbatical President [136], the written student submission [SWS], Students' Union officer roles [262], the proposal [137] and role description [138] for Student Envoys and met staff [M1].

g   To test whether the management of learning opportunities delivered in collaboration with other organisations is robust, the team considered the HE Work-based and Placement Learning Procedure [072], annual course reviews and quality improvement plans [021, 170], the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Quality Management report [028] and course approval documents [039g, 040j, 042].

How any samples of evidence were constructed

4   All evidence submitted by the College in respect of this Criterion was considered by the team and provided sufficient information that no further sampling was undertaken.

What the evidence shows

5   The assessment team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

6   The published Higher Education Strategy 2019-2023 [009] and Higher Education Guiding Principles [006] set out WCG's higher education aims and strategic direction and are clearly aligned with the five strategic priorities of the overall College Strategy, Delivering Successful Futures [004]. These are: Student, Economic, Financial, People and Quality success. Each is measured against annual success indicators [005] within which higher education specific indicators are included. For example, within the overall College priorities for Student success there are targets relating to the recruitment of students to higher education programmes from underrepresented groups, the proportion of higher education qualifications achieved and employment outcomes for graduates [005]. The team considered there to be clear alignment between the published higher education strategy and the overall College strategic priorities which ensures that higher education has a high profile within WCG, and enables roles and responsibilities of senior managers, academic staff and professional support teams to be fully aligned with the College's higher education strategy.

7   The Higher Education Strategy [009] is supported by several underpinning strategies which provide a comprehensive framework to support WCG's higher education mission, aims and objectives. For example, the recently updated Higher Education Teaching and Learning Strategy [010] is specifically expressed in terms of student outcomes for engagement, continuation, achievement and progression to employment or further study. The strategy [010] illustrates approaches to teaching and learning which align with the ambitions of the Higher Education Strategy [009] in terms of, for example, innovation in teaching and learning to promote student engagement, employer engagement, employability and transferable skills. The Higher Education Teaching and Learning Strategy [010] also clearly identifies the roles and responsibilities of academic staff and managers involved in the academic governance of the provision and in driving the College's ambition forward.

8   Similarly, the WCG Learning and Development Strategy 2017-20 [018] aligns directly with the Higher Education Strategy [009] in its aims 'to develop staff to be the best in their field, to ensure they are connected to each other and the wider community of business and education and are recognised as leaders in their field of expertise'. This also aligns with the HE Guiding Principles [006] through which WCG plans to cultivate a strong higher education culture of scholarship and research to support high quality teaching. This Strategy [018], is supported by the Higher Education Learning and Teaching Policy [065], recognises the distinctive elements of higher education provision and identifies key actions to ensure that staff engaged in higher education activities are supported and developed through, for example, study for higher level qualifications, recognition through the Higher Education Academy (HEA) fellowships and through continued employer engagement. A further example of how the College policies support its higher education mission, aims and objectives is the HE Quality and Enhancement Manual [078] which sets out in detail how WCG monitors and enhances its provision through its academic committee structure [086] and higher education management team structure [079].

9   The team considered evidence relating to the application of the higher education strategy and policies including, for example, WCG's proactive approach to encouraging an increasing number of staff to achieve HEA fellowship (see paragraph 117); working with employers on the development of vocationally relevant curricula which responds to local and regional needs, as exemplified in the development of the FdSc Agri-Tech [039a-039w] (see paragraph 82); and the engagement of students in deliberation and decision-making, see

paragraphs 27-30). This evidence provided examples of the consistent application of WCG's higher education strategy and associated policies.

10   In respect of its application for indefinite foundation degree awarding powers and for extension of powers to Level 6, WCG's strategies [009, 004] outline plans to extend its degree awarding powers to develop provision that meets local, regional and national demand and to work strategically with existing degree awarding partners as it develops its own distinctive portfolio of programmes based on applied learning and a student experience linked directly to the workplace. These plans were clearly articulated by senior staff whom the team were able to meet and question in this regard [M1]. For example, WCG seeks to build on the success it has had with the University of Warwick regarding its model degree apprenticeships, whereby students study a WCG foundation degree before progressing to the final years of a University of Warwick BEng (Hons) Applied Engineering degree. WCG intends to build on this model to develop and deliver its own BEng Engineering in the future. In preparation for Level 6, WCG has considered the changes required to its current higher education framework and has developed draft academic regulations up to and including Level 6 [024] should it be granted BDAP [M1] (see paragraphs 44-45 in Criterion B1).

11   WCG has considerable experience of delivering higher education to date across Levels 4-6. Following the granting of foundation degree awarding powers in September 2014, and alongside delivering provision with other higher education institutions, WCG has approved a wide range of foundation degree programmes and currently offers 12 foundation degrees, three of which are being taught out. WCG has a long-established partnership with Coventry University from whom it has substantial devolved responsibility in its agreement [011] for delivering a wide range of validated provision [025]. It has also been in partnership with the University of Gloucestershire since 2011 [026] and works closely with the University of Warwick as noted above. Finally, WCG works in partnership with the University of Worcester, delivering courses through what was a franchise agreement but which was amended to a validation arrangement in 2016 [014]. During 2019, WCG's partnership agreements were successfully reviewed and renewed by Coventry University [25], the University of Gloucester [026] and the University of Worcester [027]. WCG's partnerships have exposed it to numerous approaches to higher education governance and management and the increasing devolution of responsibilities from the universities to WCG demonstrates confidence in the delivery and management of its higher education.

12   The Corporation Standing Orders [015], Instrument and Articles of Government [016] and governance structure document [008] outline academic governance arrangements that remain broadly similar to those operating when WCG gained foundation degree awarding powers in 2014. The Corporation Board is the governing body and meets at least seven times a year [008]. It is served by four subcommittees that each meets up to four times a year, including that of the Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee (ASQA). The ASQA subcommittee of the Corporation Board, chaired by an external ex-principal, reviews the educational character and quality of provision on a cyclical basis, by reviewing targets and overseeing achievement and success rates. ASQA also receives annual reports on higher education, for example from the Higher Education Academic Board (Academic Board) in respect of the ratification of foundation degree awards [118], curriculum [114, 115], quality [113] and complaints and compliments [112].

13   Similarly, the higher education committee structure remains broadly similar to that in 2014 [WCG Committee Structure 086], with the Academic Board being the most senior academic committee for higher education. Its terms of reference [082] state its overall responsibility for the strategic direction of WCG's higher education provision; responsibility for academic standards and quality of WCG's own awards and ensuring the maintenance of academic standards and quality of awards delivered on behalf of its awarding body partners. The Academic Board has three subcommittees: the Higher Education Quality and Academic Standards Committee (HEQAS), the Higher Education Teaching, Research and Enterprise Committee (HETREC) and the Higher Education Student Experience Committee (HESEC).

HEQAS's terms of reference [083] state its role in leading on the continuous improvement of the quality of WCG's provision through the systematic use of quality assurance information to enhance student learning opportunities. HETREC and HESEC have evolved from what was a single Higher Education Teaching and Learning Committee in 2014. The terms of reference for these bodies reviewed by the team [084-085] confirm that this separation establishes a more distinct focus for these key aspects of higher education provision.

14   Membership of Academic Board consists of the Higher Education Leadership Team (HELT) and representatives from WCG's corporate services [Terms of Reference 082]. Minutes of Academic Board meetings reviewed by the team show that it operates in accordance with its stated terms of reference [087, 088, 089]. This includes examples of the Board considering course proposals, and approving the suspension and closure of foundation degree courses following a decision to adopt a different strategic direction in support of widening access and participation. The Academic Board receives minutes and reports [087, 088, 089] from of each of its three subcommittees, HEQAS [032, 033, 034], HETREC [097, 098] and HESEC [031], along with a verbal update from the Chair of each committee, according to the schedule of business for higher education committees [081]. Subcommittees meet each half term and its reports are received by the Academic Board approximately every six weeks. WCG is confident that the structure in place will be appropriate to deliver and award programmes at Level 6 as Academic Board's responsibilities will extend to cover its new responsibilities for Level 6. For example, Academic Board would consider new or adapted course proposals, suspensions and closures at Level 6 and the current procedures for Course Approval and Review [054] and Course Suspension or Closure [055] accommodate this. The team considered these committee arrangements to operate as intended, with clear responsibilities and meetings convening at intervals that enable timely oversight.

15   For degree apprenticeships, WCG's Further Education and Skills Academic Board (FESAB) undertakes monitoring of such programmes under its wider apprenticeship remit [Terms of Reference 127]. FESAB has oversight of WCG's apprenticeship provision, including that of its apprenticeships at Level 4 and above, and works in conjunction with the Academic Board wherein a degree apprenticeship is monitored for its award characteristics at Academic Board but will be monitored as part of the wider apprenticeship programme at FESAB. All proposals for new or adapted apprenticeships are presented to FESAB and minutes [130] and papers [128-133] reviewed by the team confirm the receipt of proposed new apprenticeship standards [128-133]. Together, the roles of Academic Board and FESAB were considered by the team to provide a robust structure for the oversight of WCG's higher and degree apprenticeships and for progressing its strategy to build on the successful development of Level 5 apprenticeships in engineering and human resources.

16   The College and higher education organisational charts [003, 079] outline that WCG's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) comprises the Chief Executive Officer, the Group Principal and Chief Operating Officer, the Chief Finance Officer, and the Group Deputy Principal. There is a wider College Leadership Team (CLT) which includes the Dean of Higher Education who is also a member of the Higher Education Leadership Team (HELT) which is made up of three members of the CLT plus the Assistant Dean of Higher Education and the Head of Higher Education Quality. The Dean of Higher Education is managed by the Group Deputy Principal, is a member of SLT and HEQT and represents higher education at governing body meetings [102-103, 106]. The team considered this approach to be appropriate in that it enabled clear lines of responsibility for higher education leadership and allowed for a strong representation of higher education at the highest level within WCG.

17   WCG has recently reorganised its academic management structure for higher education and created a Subject Leader role, reporting to the Dean of Higher Education, to take forward its Higher Education Strategy [302]. WCG had recognised that its model for management of the curriculum and its delivery based on large academic units led by a Head of Department was not sufficiently responsive in some subject areas. Academic course

management is now characterised by a flat structure with Subject Leaders reporting directly to the Dean of Higher Education. As members of the College HE Management Team (HEMT), Subject Leaders are able to participate in cross-disciplinary activities, through regular group meetings and attendance at key committees such as HEQAS and HETREC [083, 085, 302], enabling close management of the curriculum and student experience.

18   The College Organisational Chart [003], the WCG Governance Structure [008], WCG Academic Committee Structure [086] and the HE Management Team Organisation Chart [079] demonstrate clarity in the functions and lines of responsibility at all levels. WCG intends to maintain its current structure for the governance and management of its higher education provision if Level 6 powers are awarded. The team formed the view that WCG is managing successfully its responsibilities for foundation degree awarding powers through its academic governance and management functions, and that this structure is likely to continue to provide a strong framework for the continuation of its foundation degree awarding powers and for the extension of powers to Level 6.

19   The team's scrutiny of job descriptions and CVs of current post-holders confirms that there is appropriate depth and strength of academic leadership [147-156]. Many Subject Leaders are Fellows or Senior Fellows of the HEA with some also undertaking Chartered Management Institute leadership training. Job descriptions for Subject Leaders [147] confirm that they are responsible for the management of a specialist subject area and are accountable for the success and positive progression of higher education students. The CVs of Subject Leaders [148-152] reviewed by the team indicate extensive subject sector and educational experience, and while a number have a track record of internal career progression, others have more widely based experience in industry and/or education. For example, the Subject Leader for Counselling and Early Years is qualified to Level 7, has relevant sector registration, including the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy Accreditation, and is a current practitioner and visiting lecturer at another higher education provider [150]. WCG's strategy [004, 009] is to further develop its degree apprenticeship provision and it has established the role of Director of Engineering Apprenticeships [141]. The CV of the current post holder [143] confirms extensive experience of such apprenticeships at all levels and the Head of Engineering for Higher Education Programmes has management qualifications to Level 5 and educational qualifications to Level 7 [146].

20   The Dean of Higher Education appointed in May 2017 is a Principal Fellow of the HEA, was a Teaching Excellence Framework panellist and is also part of the QAA advisory group looking at the academic credit framework [Job description 139 and CV 140]. At institutional level, WCG senior managers are expected to engage with external organisations and groups that set the context for current higher education activities. For example, the WCG CEO is a director on the QAA Board nominated by the College Council and represents the college sector voice on the Industry Strategy Council, a prosperity mapping project with Universities UK. The Group Principal is on the West Midlands Combined Authority Automotive Skills Task Force as an expert in engineering apprenticeships. Additionally, senior staff are members of the Association of Colleges HE Policy Group and attend meetings of the Mixed Economy Group. The Deputy Principal was part of an advisory panel during the initial start-up of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator and also worked with QAA to develop the UK Quality Code advice and guidance [302]. Collectively, this demonstrates sound engagement in sector activities at the highest levels of the organisation.

21   The team found that senior staff with responsibility for the academic leadership of the College's higher education provision are appropriately qualified for their roles and have extensive experience in a variety of educational settings, most frequently in a higher education environment. Many have external engagements in the higher education sector which, in line with job descriptions, brings a wealth of experience in both vocational and academic settings. Staff CVs show that most are qualified to at least Level 7 and all CVs illustrate extensive vocational and educational continuous professional development [CVs

139-156]. When considered as a whole, and as illustrated by the College and HE Management Team organisational charts [003, 079], the staffing structure provides a robust framework that enables academic leadership to be exercised. This gives confidence with regards to WCG's aspiration for indefinite foundation degree awarding powers and the extension of powers to Level 6. The team is of the view that there is appropriate depth and strength of academic leadership as senior staff with responsibility for academic governance have a broad range of relevant experience and qualifications.

22   While the management of WCG policies and procedures is overseen by SLT, HEQT maintains oversight of all higher education specific procedures and leads on communication with staff to ensure compliance. The Policy Approval Process [134] explains that when an existing policy requires updating or a new policy developed, a CLT member is identified to lead a working group to develop or update the policy before the draft is submitted to SLT for approval. The Deputy Principal is responsible for ensuring the approval process is followed and the resulting policy or procedure meets the required standards. Policies or procedures that have a direct impact on students are shared with the Student Union through the Sabbatical President. HETREC, which considers matters relating to teaching and learning, scholarship and the pedagogical effectiveness of higher education staff, is also used to inform policy development [Terms of Reference 085]. HETREC comprises the entire HE management team, including Subject Leaders, and includes research leaders drawn from WCG's professoriate. Minutes [096-098] confirm its role in policy development in respect of teaching, research and enterprise and policy implementation, through staff development and communication.

23   Where policies and procedures require ratification from members of the governing body, for example, those that are published on the external website, a member of SLT takes this to the appropriate subcommittee of the Corporation. The Corporation has a membership of 20 members comprising the Group CEO, 15 external independent members, two staff and two student members [Corporation Standing Orders 015, and Instruments and Articles of Government 016] which ensures that staff and student interests, in respect of policy and procedure development and implementation, are represented at Corporation level. Minutes seen by the team confirm consideration and approval of policy by the Corporation [102, 103, 106].

24   HEQT are members of all higher education committees including Academic Board, HEQAS, HESEC and HETREC. Consequently, members of HEQT attend all course review and approvals and all assessment boards. Additionally, members of HEQT manage the instruction for, and training of, all new external examiners, industry advisers and members for approval and review panels. The team formed the view that the attendance of HEQT staff at key higher education committee meetings supports consistent application and oversight of all higher education specific policies and procedures.

25   The policy [134] and procedure [135] for the approval of policies require updates to be communicated through the College intranet with further communications at relevant committee meetings or by email to key staff. The HEQT produce a HE Quality and Enhancement Manual [078] as an overview reference document to support the information published on the intranet. The manual outlines a policy framework that underpins WCG's higher education provision, including all regulations, policies and procedures that managers and staff require. WCG's website [accessed 10/11 March 2020 - screenshots] sets out the Governance structure, including that of its subcommittees, a calendar of meetings and access to the public minutes of the Corporation meetings. Its 'key information set' webpage provides public access to the Standing Orders [015] and Instrument and Articles of Government for the Corporation [016] and other information pertinent to the governance of WCG. The team formed the view that the publication of the HE Quality and Enhancement Manual and that of the governance structure and minutes are clearly communicated and accessible to key stakeholders, including staff and students.

26   The evidence considered by the team confirms that WCG has effective ongoing experience of developing, implementing and communicating policy and procedures relating to its higher education provision, including that of its own foundation degrees and its current Level 6 provision. In respect of its application for extension of degree awarding powers to Level 6, the team confirms WCG's view that the existing approach is likely to continue to provide a sound framework.

27   Students are engaged in the governance and management of the College. As noted above, there are two student governors on the Corporation Board: one is the Sabbatical President of the Students' Union and the other a higher education student. Student governors are invited to attend all meetings of the Corporation Board where the Student Governors' Report is presented. Minutes from the Board [102, 103] and the student submission [SWS] confirm student attendance at Board meetings. Student governors also attend ASQA Committee meetings, where regular student engagement reports are presented [099, 100, 101], and report on student activities, including keeping ASQA members up to date with Students' Union activities.

28   HESEC considers the quality of the student experience at key points of contact within the organisation and makes recommendations to sustain or improve the quality of that experience [HESEC Terms of Reference 084]. HESEC has a broad membership and includes the Students' Union President [SU Officer Roles 262], the Student Engagement Officer and the Director of Engineering Apprenticeships. Meetings include standing agenda items capturing complaints and their resolution, and feedback from student surveys, both internal and external [093, 094, 095]. While the committee is chaired by the Group Principal, the Deputy Group Principal is also a member, ensuring that there is clear and systematic oversight of all aspects of the higher education student experience between SLT, HEQT and the governing body.

29   WCG has also sought to enhance student engagement more widely through the introduction, albeit unsuccessful to date, of paid higher education student envoys who would be invited to attend specific deliberative committee meetings to provide a professional and representational view of WCG from a student perspective outside of the student representative system [Student envoy proposal 137, 138]. Additionally, WCG has identified a number of enhancements to its current model for student engagement in governance and management and has expressed the intention to amend the schedule of deliberative committee meetings and Academic Board to take place at a time that facilitates greater student attendance [M1] and to amend the terms of reference for both HEQAS and Academic Board to include the Sabbatical President as a member, should student envoys not be recruited.

30   The student submission [SWS] and Testimony [136] from the current Sabbatical President confirm that training for student governors comprises one-to-one training with the Clerk to the Governing Body who explains the role and how the governing body operates, and provides an introduction to other members of the governing body. External governors are appointed as mentors to each of the student governors for the duration of their tenure. The Sabbatical President has also taken part in a training programme with student governors from other colleges. WCG supports and funds the Students' Union President and Vice President to attend NUS leadership training, the NUS annual conference and other external, relevant training. Both are mentored by WCG's Welfare Manager and also work alongside the Student Engagement Officer to recruit and train student representatives. Specific training for the Sabbatical President and Vice President also includes an understanding of the College complaints and appeals procedures and how to support students; additionally, how to support students who are undergoing disciplinary action. The Testimony from the Students' Union President is positive in respect of both the training and support that they and the Student Governor have received to enable them to undertake their roles and also in respect of the role they play within the governance and regulatory

frameworks [SWS, 136]. The team is of the view that students are supported to enable their effective engagement in academic governance.

31   WCG delivers some of its foundation degrees through the provision of work placements and work-based learning at other organisations. The arrangements include placements required for courses carrying professional accreditation, for example, the FdSc Veterinary Nursing which is recognised by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, and work-based learning for students undertaking foundation degree awards where there is a requirement for a minimum number of external workplace hours to be undertaken. Requirements for work-based learning are confirmed at course approval [039g, 040j, 042]. Work-based and placement learning is managed through the HE Work-based and Placement Learning Procedure [072] which is agreed and reviewed by HEQAS. The procedure [072] clearly sets out the roles and responsibilities of WCG and the placement provider, the process for approving placement and arrangements for the supervision and support of students while on placement. The team saw evidence of the monitoring of work placement arrangements at course level in annual course review reports [021] and quality improvement plans [170]. Where work placement is required for professional accreditation, placement arrangements are reviewed by the accrediting body as in the case, for example, of the FdSc Veterinary Nursing programme [028]. The team is of the view that arrangements for delivering learning opportunities through the provision of work placements are clearly outlined and oversight is maintained through the monitoring arrangements that apply to all higher education provision, and any relevant accrediting body.

Conclusions

32   The assessment team formulated its judgement against this criterion according to the process set out in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment by QAA, October 2019*, in particular Annex 4.

33   WCG has a fully developed and articulated strategy for the delivery of its higher education provision. The governance structures, policies and procedures associated with the implementation of this strategy are currently coherent and consistently applied, as exemplified, for example, in the development and delivery of its existing foundation degree provision, and its Level 6 degree provision delivered with its current degree awarding body partners.

34   WCG has a sound governance and management structure wherein there are clear lines of responsibility, with senior staff, such as the Deputy Principal and Dean of Higher Education, engaged in all management groups and so able to discharge their responsibilities effectively for the oversight of higher education provision. There is appropriate depth and strength in academic leadership in that senior staff with responsibility for governance and regulatory frameworks come from a wide range of backgrounds, some having progressed internally and others having been recruited from other organisations, including industry sectors and other higher education providers. All have either recent sector experience or recent relevant higher level qualifications and in some cases both. Many staff are engaged in professional and sector-level academic activities which help to inform the development and delivery of higher education at WCG.

35   WCG is proactive in engaging with its student body in respect of governance and regulation. Students are represented, for example in the form of the Sabbatical Student President, on a number of its deliberative committees and students who represent the student body are supported by WCG to undertake their roles. WCG is committed to improving student engagement and although recent initiatives have not been successful, continues to support students and pursue enhancements to its current model.

36   Policies and procedures are developed in response to external and internal factors, and senior staff are well placed to be alert to such developments through their engagement

in external sector and industry activities. Policies and procedures are overseen by the Senior Leadership Team with the Deputy Principal responsible for ensuring that they are followed and that the policy or procedure meets the required standards. Policies or procedures that have a direct impact on students are shared with the Student Union through the Sabbatical President and communicated through appropriate means such as the College website, intranet and relevant committee meetings. The team concludes, therefore, that the criterion is met.

Criterion B: Academic standards and quality assurance

Criterion B1 - Regulatory frameworks

37   This criterion states that:

B1.1:   An organisation granted degree awarding powers has in place transparent and comprehensive academic frameworks and regulations to govern how it awards academic credit and qualifications.

B1.2:   A degree awarding organisation maintains a definitive record of each programme and qualification that it approves (and of subsequent changes to it) which constitutes the reference point for delivery and assessment of the programme, its monitoring and review, and for the provision of records of study to students and alumni.

38   The QAA assessment team conducted an assessment of this criterion according to the process set out in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment for Variation and Revocation of Degree Awarding Powers (December 2019)*.

The evidence considered and why the team considered this evidence

39   The QAA team assessed this criterion by reference to a range of evidence gathered according to the process described in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment by QAA (October 2019)*, in particular the suggested evidence outlined in Annex 5 and WCG's submission. The assessment team identified and considered this evidence for the purposes described in Annex 4 and 5 of this Guidance as follows.

a   To assess whether WCG's academic frameworks and regulations for higher education are appropriate to its current status and are implemented fully and consistently, the team considered the WCG Foundation Degree Academic Regulations 2019-2020 [023] and the proposed WCG Draft Academic Regulations 2020-2021 BDAP [024]. The team also reviewed higher education policies and/or procedures relating to admissions [050], recognition of prior learning [051, 052], course approval and review [054], assessment [057], academic appeals [058], academic misconduct [059], extenuating circumstances [060], examinations conduct [064] and Assessment Boards [049] and Subject Assessment Board External Examiner Guidance [068]. Minutes of Subject Assessment Boards were also considered [108-110] and the HEQAS Report to Assessment Boards [107, 254].

b   To examine whether WCG has created, in readiness, academic frameworks and regulations which will be appropriate for the granting of its own higher education qualifications up to and including Level 6, the team scrutinised the WCG Draft Academic Regulations 2020-2021 BDAP [024], WCG Academic Regulations 2019-2020 Foundation Degrees [023] and Coventry University regulations [319]. The team also reviewed the collaborative agreement with the University of Gloucestershire [012, 013], the programme approval agreement Coventry University [011], and met senior staff [M1].

c   To test whether definitive and up-to-date records of each qualification to be awarded and each programme being offered by WCG are being maintained, and that these are used as the basis for the delivery and assessment of each programme, and that students and alumni are provided with records of study, the team looked at programme and module specifications and module handbooks [039g, 039i, 040j, 040m], Course Approval and Review Procedures [054], Subject

Assessment Board minutes [108-110, 175-176], and an example transcript [111]. The team also met senior staff [M1].

How any samples of evidence were constructed

40   All evidence submitted by the College in respect of this Criterion was considered by the team and provided sufficient information that no further sampling was undertaken.

What the evidence shows

41   The assessment team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

42   WCG's current regulatory framework for its foundation degrees [023] is appropriate, detailed and comprehensive because it covers the full scope of principles, policies and procedures pertinent to its current higher education provision. These include credit frameworks, academic standards of awards, definitive documentation, programme design and approval, admissions, learning and teaching, student engagement, assessment, monitoring and review, complaints, appeals and conferment of awards and credit. The implementation of the framework is enabled through several policies and procedures which include, for example, the HE Assessment Policy [057], the HE Admissions Policy [050] and HE Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (PLP) [051, 052], Course Approval and Review Procedures [054], HE Assessment Board Procedures [049], the HE Academic Appeals Procedures [058], the Academic Misconduct Procedures [059], the Extenuating Circumstances Procedures [060], Examination Conduct Procedures [064], and External Examiner Guidance [068]. These documents clearly set out the rules and procedures to be followed for the delivery and award of credit and qualifications.

43   The team saw evidence of the consistent application of the regulatory framework and associated policies and procedures. For example, the minutes of Subject Assessment Boards and Course Assessment Boards in June 2019 [108-110] confirm that the Boards were conducted in accordance with the HE Assessment Board Procedures with regard to student achievement at module and programme level [049]. All Assessment Boards were chaired by the Dean of Higher Education, a Director or a member of the College Leadership Team, as required by the procedures. The HEQAS Committee receives reports on the conduct and outcomes of Assessment Boards. The report dated September 2019 [107] for foundation degrees shows that external examiners commented positively on the manner in which Assessment Boards they attended were conducted. The report on the conduct of assessment boards in March 2020, [254], which reflects on a wider range of programmes including bachelor's degrees, is also positive with the exception of one external examiner who raised concerns about a decision of an assessment board (see paragraph 67 and 68 in Criterion B2). The team also saw evidence of the consistent application of regulations and procedures in other areas such as in relation to course approval, assessment, the recognition of prior learning (RPL) and academic appeals (see paragraphs 91 and 99 in Criterion B3).

44   In readiness for the extension of degree awarding powers to Level 6, WCG has developed a detailed and comprehensive draft regulatory framework [024]. These regulations build on the existing foundation degree regulatory framework [023] but additionally articulate approaches to provision at Level 6 and, as such, provide an appropriate basis for the governance and regulation of honours degree programmes. The regulations identify the credit framework (120 credits) [024 - 3.4.3] and credit requirements for Level 6 awards [024 - 3.6.1], the use of modules at Levels 4, 5 and 6 [024 - 3.5.1], provisions for RPL [024 - 8.5.9], degree classifications [024 - 8.11.1] and discretionary powers for award classification and how these may be applied at Level 6 [024 - 8.13.1]. The draft regulations are currently progressing through the deliberative committee structure and are now subject to ratification by the Academic Board [M1].

45   WCG has extensive experience over many years of developing and implementing regulations for bachelor's degree provision. For example, its longstanding collaborative agreement with Coventry University has enabled it to develop Level 6 regulations [319] for Coventry University validated provision in collaboration with the University, which are customised to WCG's requirements. The Programme Approval Agreement with the University [011] confirms WCG's responsibility for developing and implementing the regulations, subject to University approval. Staff met by the team explained how WCG had developed its new Level 6 regulatory framework by building on the regulations it had already developed in collaboration with Coventry University [M1]. WCG also has experience of implementing regulations at bachelor's level through chairing examination boards at Level 6 on behalf of its awarding bodies. It has delegated authority, as set out in partnership agreement with Coventry University [011], to Chair course and subject assessment boards for the University's Level 6 awards that it delivers and it has exercised this responsibility as demonstrated in the minutes of the Assessment Boards reviewed by the team [175, 176]. WCG also has delegated authority to manage module assessment boards on behalf of the University of Gloucestershire as set out in the partnership agreement [012, 013]. In respect of WCG's strategy to extend its higher and degree apprenticeship provision, experience of assessment regulations and frameworks has been gained through the partnership with the University of Warwick, such that a model for degree apprenticeships that incorporates a foundation degree is currently operating in the areas of engineering [302]. The team therefore considered that the College has relevant and significant experience of developing and applying academic regulations and frameworks for Level 6 provision that supports its intentions to awards its own degree qualifications.

46   WCG uses standardised programme documentation in the course approval and review process for its foundation degrees [054]. There are standard templates for programme and module specifications which record definitive information such as the intended learning outcomes, assessment approaches, and the teaching and learning strategies of modules and programmes. The team's review of recent course approval and review events for the FdSc Agri-Tech and FdA Games Art programmes confirms the use of the standardised documentation as definitive records of programmes and modules [039g, 039i, 040j, 040m]. The approved module and programme specifications are used in the content of information to students regarding the delivery and assessment of courses. For example, the Course Handbook for the FdSc Agri-Tech [039f] includes the full programme specification as an appendix and draws on information from the specification in the text explaining the delivery and assessment of the course. The Module Handbook for the FdSc Agri-Tech programme [039i] provided to students contains the approved module descriptors. The approved course contents, teaching and assessment strategies contained in the programme and module specifications form the basis of monitoring and review through the annual course review process and through periodic course review undertaken every four to six years as described in the Course Approval and Review Procedures [054]. These Procedures also set out clear processes for course and module modifications to be followed by course teams [054]. The Head of HE Quality maintains the definitive documentation of every programme and keeps a register of modules and programmes, which details dates of approval, modification and review, and conducts an annual check to ensure Subject Leaders are using the correct version of modules for the delivery and assessment of programmes [M1]. The team considered that up-to-date definitive records of programmes are maintained effectively and are clearly used as the reference point for the delivery and assessment of programmes.

47   The WCG Academic Regulations [023] state that a transcript will be made available to a student who has successfully completed any element(s) of a course leading to an academic award of Warwickshire College. The Regulations set out requirements for the information to be included on the transcript, which must include as a minimum the full name of the student, mode of study, list of modules studied, Assessment Board decisions and grades, credit and awards achieved and a note of unusual circumstances (such as details of withdrawal from the course). The team saw an example of a transcript provided to a student

[111] which was consisted with the College's requirements and was satisfied that students are provided with records of study that are based on the definitive documentation.

Conclusions

48   The assessment team formulated its judgement against this criterion according to the process set out in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment by QAA, October 2019*, in particular Annex 4.

49   WCG has a comprehensive regulatory framework for the delivery of its foundation degrees which covers the full scope of principles, policies and procedures appropriate to its current higher education provision. The regulations and associated policies are implemented consistently in the examples reviewed by the team. In readiness for the extension of degree awarding powers to bachelor's level it has developed a draft academic framework and regulations which clearly address requirements for programmes up to and including Level 6. WCG has experience over many years of implementing regulations for such provision through its partnerships with its awarding bodies. It also has experience of developing and customising regulations at Level 6 through its partnership with Coventry University which has enabled WCG to develop Level 6 regulations appropriate to its current programmes and proposed Level 6 provision.

50   WCG maintains definitive and up-to-date records of each approved programme in the form of programme and module specifications which are used as the basis for the delivery and assessment of each programme and are used as reference points in the annual and periodic course review process. Students are provided with information about their programmes in course and module handbooks which contain the agreed programme and module specifications. Clear procedures are in place to enable the Head of HE Quality to ensure that documentation is held securely and is maintained. The modification and periodic review process has provisions to ensure that definitive programme documentation is updated. Students are provided with records of study based on definitive documentation, as stipulated in WCG's academic regulations. The team concludes, therefore, that the criterion is met.

Criterion B2 - Academic standards

51   This criterion states that:

B2.1:   An organisation granted degree awarding powers has clear and consistently applied mechanisms for setting and maintaining the academic standards of its higher education qualifications.

B2.2:   Organisations with degree awarding powers are expected to demonstrate that they are able to design and deliver courses and qualifications that meet the threshold academic standards described in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ). Organisations with degree awarding powers are expected to demonstrate that the standards that they set and maintain above the threshold are reliable over time and reasonably comparable to those set and achieved by other UK degree awarding bodies.

52   The QAA assessment team conducted an assessment of this criterion according to the process set out in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment for Variation and Revocation of Degree Awarding Powers (December 2019)*.

The evidence considered and why the team considered this evidence

53   The QAA team assessed this criterion by reference to a range of evidence gathered according to the process described in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment by QAA (October 2019)*, in particular the suggested evidence outlined in Annex 5 and WCG's submission. The assessment team identified and considered this evidence for the purposes described in Annex 4 and 5 of this Guidance as follows.

a   To determine that the setting and maintaining of academic standards takes appropriate account of relevant external points of reference and independent expertise, and that its programme approval arrangements are robust and applied consistently the team considered the Foundation Degree Academic Regulations [023] and draft BDAP Academic Regulations [024]. The team also reviewed documentation relating to programme approval, namely the higher education Course Approval and Review Procedures [054, 367], the Academic Panel Member Briefing [183], Course Approval Panel (CAP) records for FdSc Agri-Tec [039a-w] and the external examiner report and the WCG's response for this programme [165, 166], and also the validation documentation for the BEng (Hons) Engineering programme [158-163], including the University Validation Report [158], the programme specification [162] and modules [164], the Planning Approval for Collaborative Provision Form [163] and staff job descriptions and CVs [139-156]. The team also considered programme specifications [040p, 041-042, 316-318, 327, 329-330], module handbooks [039i, 040o], course handbooks [039f, 040h, 043, 044] and external examiner reports [035-036, 177, 303, 305, 307, 309, 311-313, 315] for other programme areas and reviewed the Course Enhancement Report (CER) submitted to the awarding body for BEng Engineering [167] and the Course Periodic Review of FdA Games Art [040a-p]. The team also used this information to assess whether academic standards are set at a level which meets the UK threshold standard for the qualification, correspond to the relevant levels of the FHEQ and are in accordance with WCG's own academic frameworks, before meeting senior staff at WCG to discuss [M1].

b   To confirm that credit and qualifications will be awarded only where the achievement of relevant learning outcomes has been demonstrated through assessment, and both the UK threshold standards and the academic standards of the awarding body have been satisfied, the team considered the HE Assessment Policy [057], the HE Assessment Guide [188b], course approval and review

documentation [039a-w, 040a-p, 159-163], teaching staff CVs [139-156], external examiner reports [035, 036, 303, 305, 307, 309, 311-313, 315], the College's HE Assessment Board Procedures [049], the Academic Regulations for Coventry University Awards [319], the Conduct of Assessment Boards report [254], College Assessment Board minutes [110, 175, 176], WCG's partnership agreement with CU [11 3.4h] and notes of the team's meeting with staff [M1].

c   To assess that its programme approval, monitoring and review arrangements are robust, applied consistently and explicitly address whether the UK threshold academic standards are achieved and the standards required by the individual degree awarding body are being maintained, the team considered the Foundation Degree Academic Regulations [023], draft BDAP Academic Regulations [024] and the HE Course Approval and Review Procedures [054, 367]. It also considered the Academic Panel Member Briefing [183], CAP documentation for FdSc Agri-Tech [039a-w], documentation relating to the approval of the BEng (Hons) Engineering programme [158-163], the BEng (Hons) Engineering external examiner report [165] and WCG's response [166], the Course Enhancement Report (CER) Form for BEng (Hons) Engineering [167], the Course Periodic Review (CPR) of FdA Games Art [040a-p], Annual Course Review (ACR) reports [020, 022, 324, 326], Quality Improvement Plans (QIP) [168-170, 323, 325], university partner annual monitoring reports [171-173], and Quality Review Meeting (QRM) minutes [180-182]. The team also met WCG staff [M1].

d   To determine that WCG makes use of appropriate external and independent expertise in establishing, and then maintaining, threshold academic standards and comparability of standards with equivalent level qualifications elsewhere, the team considered external examiner reports [035-036, 177, 303, 305, 307, 309, 311-313, 315], course team response letters to external examiners [119, 120, 178], the Review of 2018-19 external examiner reports document [034] and minutes of HEQAS [090], Academic Board [088] and CCQEM [179]. The team also met senior staff [M1].

How any samples of evidence were constructed

54   Three random examples of Quality Improvement Plans for 2019-20 were requested to help determine the efficacy of the annual review and planning process and its impact on maintaining academic standards. Three random samples of Quality Review Meeting minutes were also requested to understand how the College responds to these plans in-year. Two random Level 6 top-up annual monitoring reports to awarding bodies and one specific report for BSc Engineering (Level 6) were requested to further determine how course teams review and respond to issues regarding the maintenance of academic standards for Level 6 provision. To help confirm the standards at which programmes are offered, six random external examiner reports, in addition to the relevant programme specifications, were requested to include two Level 6 programmes, two foundation degree programmes and two Pearson programmes.

What the evidence shows

55   The assessment team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

56   WCG's foundation degree regulations [023] and the draft BDAP regulations [024] set out the principle that higher education awards will be allocated to the appropriate level in the FHEQ, meet the expectation of the UK Quality Code and take account of relevant external reference points, including Subject Benchmark Statements and professional regulatory requirements. The Higher Education Course Approval and Review Procedures [054, 367] set out the systems and processes to ensure that courses are offered at the relevant levels of the FHEQ and take account of external reference points. The Procedures

describe mechanisms and documentary requirements for the design, approval, modification, monitoring and review of courses [054] and includes direction to course teams to take account of the FHEQ and external reference points in the design of learning outcomes and to engage in consultation with students, employers and external academics in the course development process [054, 367]. Arrangements for course approval described in the Procedures include student, external academic and employer membership of approval panels and the engagement of panel members in checking that intended learning outcomes for modules and programmes are appropriate for the level of the course. The Procedures [054, 367] also describe mechanisms for periodic review of courses which takes place every four to six years and which includes engagement with students, external examiners and employers in the evaluation of the programme through feedback and membership of periodic review panels. The academic regulations [023] and course approval and review procedures [054, 367] are comprehensive and set out clear rules and mechanisms for setting and maintaining academic standards. WCG intends to use this approach for the approval and review of Level 6 provision and in readiness has developed draft academic regulations [024] which extend the principles, regulations and procedures for setting and maintaining academic standards to Level 6 degree provision.

57   To establish whether WCG consistently applies its procedures for course design and that the procedures are effective for setting academic standards, the team examined reports and associated documentation for the approval of the FdSc Agri-Tech held in 2018 [039a-w]. The Application for Approval and Resources Statement [039b] required in advance of approval demonstrates the involvement of employers in programme design, alignment with the FHEQ and detailed mapping to external reference points. Standard templates as stipulated in the Course Approval Procedures [054] are used for the programme specification and module descriptors which describe the expected learning outcomes for students. Course Approval Panel members are provided with briefing notes to assist them in preparation for their roles [183, 184, 185, 186]. The briefing note for academic panel members [183] confirms that members will be expected to check that module and programme learning outcomes are appropriate to the level of the course. The Approval Panel Minutes [039h] confirm that panel membership for the FdSc Agri-Tech included student, external academic and industry representation and record the outcome of the panel's deliberations. However, while the agenda [039a] includes provision for comments on learning outcomes and the minutes [039h] confirm that the programme was approved, the minutes do not explicitly state or otherwise confirm that the qualification is offered at levels that correspond to the FHEQ. Instead, the panel's consideration of qualification levels is addressed indirectly through the commentary on amendments required to module learning outcomes [039h, 039l-w].

58   Senior staff met by the team acknowledged that the decision in relation to academic standards could have been recorded more explicitly in the minutes [M1]. Further clarification of the process for approving the amended modules was also provided and it was confirmed that both external members of the panel had been sent the rewritten modules by email and that their responses, and those of relevant internal staff members, were considered prior to the Chair's approval [M1]. The team formed the view that WCG's regulations and course approval procedures set an effective framework within which course teams are able to consistently set academic standards and that evidence of the approval process reviewed by the team confirmed that the procedures are applied consistently. While the record of the approval event did not explicitly confirm the standards of the programme, the team was assured that this was a weakness in the minuting of the outcomes and did not present a risk to the setting of standards.

59   The teams' scrutiny of the approved programme specification [039g] for the FdSc Agri-Tech, confirms that the learning outcomes for the programme are set at the appropriate level. Programme specifications of other currently offered WCG foundation degrees [040j], [316-318] reviewed by the Team also demonstrate that the qualifications have outcomes relevant to the levels at which they are offered. External examiner reports reviewed by the

team [035, 036, 177, 303, 305, 307, 309, 311, 312, 313, 315] comment positively on the academic standards set for the programmes. The team's consideration of the wider evidence base for the FdSc Agri-Tech, and other programme specifications and external examiner reports assured the team that the programme-level and module learning outcomes are appropriately aligned to FHEQ level descriptors.

60   In addition to setting academic standards on WCG foundation degrees, staff also design and develop Level 6 programmes that are validated by partner awarding bodies. The curricula is developed by WCG staff who are routinely engaged in course development, design and review [039a-t, 040a-p, 159-163] as part of their roles. Consequently, teaching staff are experienced in the design and delivery of programmes up to Level 6 and have the appropriate skills and expertise [139-156] to teach and assess effectively at degree level as borne out by supportive external examiner reports for provision at this level [165, 303, 305]. The team reviewed the programme specification and module descriptors relating to the BEng (Hons) Engineering (Level 6) top-up course validated in partnership with the University of Gloucestershire in 2018 [159-163]. The University validation report for this programme [158] confirms that the course enables students to meet the appropriate academic level and the external examiner report [165] confirms that the standards of the award are appropriate and comparable with similar awards in the sector. The team concluded that staff experience of developing and gaining approval for courses at Level 6 gives confidence in WCG's ability to set standards for their own awards at this extended level.

61   The Foundation Degree Regulatory Framework [023] sets out comprehensive rules for the award of credit and qualifications based on the achievement of learning outcomes demonstrated through assessment. The HE Assessment Policy [057] and the HE Assessment Guide [188b] provide guidance for staff in the development of effective assessment practices to support the implementation of the regulatory framework. The team reviewed the assessment and verification process in operation across a random sample of seven modules at Levels 5 and 6 to test alignment of practice with policy (see paragraph 90 in B3). The sample seen confirmed that the assessment processes set out in the HE Assessment Policy [057] and HE Assessment Guide [188b] were closely and consistently followed by staff ensuring that learning outcomes were assessed to the appropriate standard.

62   WCG operates subject and course assessment boards to check the accuracy of assessment grades and marks recorded and to formally agree student progression and award decisions. The HE Assessment Board Procedures [049] provide detailed guidance on the operation of assessment boards for WCG foundation degree awards. WCG also has delegated responsibility to convene and chair assessment boards for its Coventry University [111; 319] and Pearson awards, and to convene assessment boards for its University of Gloucestershire awards which are chaired by a member of staff from the University [012, 049]. The minutes of assessment boards conducted in 2019 reviewed by the team [108-110, 175, 176] provide a detailed record of individual student achievement and award decisions and demonstrate that the boards are conducted in accordance with the published procedures [049, 319]. The Higher Education Quality and Standards Committee (HEQAS) - a subcommittee of the Academic Board - oversees the operation of assessment boards and receives reports on their conduct. The report presented to HEQAS in March 2020 [254] provides a detailed summary of external examiner feedback on the operation of boards in 2018-19 and this confirms, with one exception (see paragraphs 66-69), that the boards were conducted appropriately. The team concluded that credit and qualifications are awarded where the achievement of relevant learning outcomes at the appropriate standard has been demonstrated through assessment.

63   WCG's arrangements for maintaining academic standards through monitoring and review are set out in the Course Approval and Review Procedures [054] and include periodic review of programmes undertaken every four to six years (see paragraph 65 below) and annual course review. Subject Leaders produce Annual Course Reports (ACRs) and Quality

Improvement Plans (QIPs) for each programme. Quality Review Meetings (QRMs) held during the spring and summer terms monitor the implementation of the QIPs and review in-year performance, including student progression and achievement data. The ACRs reviewed by the team [020-022, 324, 326] do not explicitly comment on academic standards; however, the review process is evidence-based, drawing on external examiner feedback and addresses student achievement. The reports confirm that course teams reflect on external examiner comments and recommendations although the team noted some inconsistency between reports in the level of detail in the commentary on external examiner feedback and recommendations. The associated QIPs [168-170, 323, 325] identify actions in response to issues raised by external examiners and also include actions identified by the course team. The team noted that some ACRs raise actions to be considered by the course team or WCG [324, 326] but these observations do not then form part of the associated QIP [323, 325]. Furthermore, the team noted that the depth of reflective commentary on student achievement data within the ACRs is inconsistent, although the data is included in all the reports [020, 022, 324, 326]. At the meeting with senior staff at the College [M1], the team asked questions about the completion of the ACRs and QIPs and staff explained that the process of producing the QIPs is new to the recently appointed Subject Leaders responsible for their production and that the process is undergoing ongoing consideration for improvement by the HE Quality Team. Overall, the ACRs, QIP reports sampled [168-170, 323, 325] and the HEQT Overview Report [174] demonstrate that WCG annually monitors issues that can affect the academic standards of its courses [180-182] and that, while the relationship between ACRs, external examiner responses and QIPs was sometimes difficult to determine, the HE Quality Team maintained effective oversight across all courses.

64   The minutes of the Quality Review Meetings (QRMs) led by HEQT and attended by the Dean of Higher Education with Subject Leaders for February 2020 [180-182] which were read by the team, confirm that in-year monitoring of student performance data, responses to external examiner reports and actions relating to the QIPs, take place. In addition to operating its own annual course review and monitoring processes, WCG staff also provide annual monitoring reports on programmes delivered in partnership with University awarding bodies. The reports for Coventry University and the University of Gloucestershire [171-173] read by the team contain commentary and data, including statistical analyses of that data to support the oversight of academic standards.

65   To evaluate WCG's arrangements for periodic review, the team examined reports and associated documentation from the Course Periodic Review (CPR) of FdA Games Art in 2020 [040a-p]. The external examiner reports for the previous two years [040k, 040l] provided to the panel both confirmed that academic standards were set and maintained. Other documentation used in the CPR included panel member's written reports submitted in advance of the event. The team noted that the reports from the external and the internal academic experts [040d, 040f] were incomplete in that the section for commentary on external reference points was blank, although the latter's report [040f] did provide comment on learning outcomes across Levels 4 and 5. The CPR minutes [040b] demonstrate appropriate deliberation drawing on student, external and internal academic, and industry expert feedback. Detailed feedback was provided to the course team in addition to the panel report to assist meeting the conditions [040m, 040n]. The CPR minutes [040b] conclude that the course continues to meet standards for an award of the level concerned. While the team identified a gap in the written records submitted to the event, on the basis of the wider evidence reviewed above, the team found that WCG's programme monitoring and review arrangements are applied consistently and address whether the UK threshold academic standards are achieved.

66   External examiners provide a key source of external and independent expertise in WCG's mechanisms for monitoring and maintaining academic standards. External examiner reports for WCG's foundation degree awards use a standard template and examiners are asked to confirm that threshold academic standards set for the awards are in accordance with the FHEQ and that the academic standards and the achievements of students are

comparable with those in other UK higher education institutions of which the examiner has experience [058, 069]. WCG also uses a standard template to reply to external examiners indicating the actions being taken in response to issues and recommendations identified in the report. The response letters read by the Team [119, 211, 212, 304, 306, 308, 310, 312, 314] confirm that detailed responses are provided to external examiners. The external examiner reports read by the team [035, 035, 311-315] generally comment positively on the academic standards achieved on WCG's foundation degrees and the qualifications it delivers in partnership with its awarding bodies. The team noted an exception in an external examiner report for 2018-19 [177] which raised serious concerns about the achievement of appropriate standards. WCG's handling of this external examiner report is discussed below.

67   External examiner reports are monitored at institutional level through HEQAS which receives reports on external examiner feedback. The initial summary report on external examiner feedback [034] presented to HEQAS in December 2019 read by the team indicated that one course had not met academic standards. However, the text of the summary does not identify which course. The minutes of HEQAS [090] confirming receipt of the summary report [034] do not record discussion of the underlying issues raised in the negative report or name it specifically although the minutes do identify a number of courses by name 'requiring improvement' and identifies one programme as requiring 'significant improvement' (see also paragraph 96 in Criterion B3). The Academic Board minutes of 12 December 2019 [088] which received the report on the HEQAS meeting does clarify the name of the course deemed by the external examiner not to be meeting expected standards. Academic Board minutes record that the Chair asked for assurances regarding the quality of the provision and state that the issue was being followed up with the university link tutor. In order to better understand the external examiner's report [177] and how the issues raised in the report had been managed the team requested further evidence from WCG as discussed in the following paragraphs.

68   WCG provided two documents in response to the team's request for further evidence: a letter written by the Dean of Higher Education to the external examiner in response to the report [178], and the Course Quality Enhancement and Monitoring (CQEM) report [179] completed by WCG and sent to the University as part of the annual course monitoring process [179]. WCG's response to the external examiner report (written by the Dean of Higher Education rather than the Subject Leader due to the negative nature of the report) is detailed, addresses the points made by the examiner and indicates the action taken by the course team in response to the issues raised [178]. However, the Course Quality Enhancement and Monitoring (CQEM) report [179] completed by WCG for the University appeared to the team to present an interpretation of the external examiner feedback which was different to the report. For example, the CQEM states: 'Whilst assessment decisions have been found to be valid, reliable and comparable with other UK Higher Education Institutions (HEI's), action does need to be taken to ensure that the verbs chosen and used within assessment feedback reflect the assessment decisions made.' This statement is at odds with the external examiner report [177] which stated that academic standards and the achievements of students were not comparable with those in other UK higher education institutions, and provided a negative reply in answer to the question 'do the processes for assessment, examination and the determination of grades measure student achievement rigorously and fairly against the intended outcomes of the programme(s)?'. The team found that the CQEM did not appear to directly refer to the standards issue raised in the external examiner report although actions in relation to assessment and feedback to students in response to the external's concerns are recorded in the report to HEQAS [210].

69   Staff who met the team explained that communication with the external examiner had proved problematic and the report was submitted late [M1]. Staff considered the report to be contradictory, so an attempt was made by the course team to respond to it in a balanced way. In particular, staff felt that it was unclear from the external examiner report where the standards issues resided. An investigation led them to conclude that it involved one module for which changes to assessment practices had now been made. Staff

confirmed that the University received both the external examiner report and the CQEM for consideration and that the changes had been discussed extensively both within WCG and with the University link tutor [M1]. As discussed above, although the team noted a potential weakness in reporting and oversight at HEQAS because of a lack of transparency in discussion of external examiner reports, WCG's monitoring and oversight of external examiner recommendations does not otherwise raise concern and reports are broadly positive and responded to adequately. The team formed the view that the handling of the external examiner issues in WCG's report to the University was an isolated occurrence in response to specific circumstances. The team also noted that the University received a copy of the external examiner report and that WCG had provided a detailed letter [178] to the external examiner outlining its response to the concerns expressed in the report [177]. The team concluded overall that in maintaining threshold academic standards and comparability of standards with other providers of equivalent level qualifications, WCG makes use of appropriate external and independent expertise.

Conclusions

70   The assessment team formulated its judgement against this criterion according to the process set out in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment by QAA, October 2019*, in particular Annex 4.

71   There are clear mechanisms for setting and maintaining the academic standards of programmes through course approval, annual course review and periodic review. These processes are set out clearly in the Course Approval and Review Regulations which require that the processes of setting and maintaining academic standards take appropriate account of relevant external reference points, independent expertise and student feedback. The examples of course approval and review considered by the team demonstrated that the procedures are applied consistently, drawing on external academic, employer and student input. The team noted that the minutes recording the outcome of the course approval event for the FdSc Agri-Tech did not include confirmation explicitly of whether academic standards had been met. However, the team's scrutiny of course documentation which defines the characteristics and learning outcomes of the FdSc and other awards confirms that it offers qualifications at levels that correspond to the relevant levels in the FHEQs. External examiners confirm that appropriate standards are set for the awards.

72   There are comprehensive regulations relating to the award of academic credit and qualifications. The evidence relating to the assessment of students and the conduct of assessment boards demonstrates that the regulations are consistently applied and that credit and qualifications are only awarded where students have achieved the relevant learning outcomes.

73   External examiners provide a key source of external and independent expertise in WCG's mechanisms for monitoring and maintaining academic standards. The evidence confirmed systematic use of external examiner reports in annual course review and that recommendations from external examiners are addressed at course and institutional level to support the maintenance of standards. The team noted a potential weakness in reporting on external examiner comments on academic standards at HEQAS because of a lack of transparency in discussion of external reports. The team also found one instance in which WCG's report to an awarding body in response to an external examiner report did not explicitly address the external's comments related to the achievement of standards. However, through discussion with staff and in consideration of the wider evidence base the team formed the view that the handling of the external examiner issues in WCG's report to the University was an isolated occurrence in response to specific circumstances. The team also noted that the University received a copy of the external examiner report and that discussion had been held with University staff. The team concludes, therefore, that the criterion is met.

Criterion B3 - Quality of the academic experience

74　This criterion states that:

B3.1:　Organisations with degree awarding powers are expected to demonstrate that they are able to design and deliver courses and qualifications that provide a high quality academic experience to all students from all backgrounds, irrespective of their location, mode of study, academic subject, protected characteristics, previous educational background or nationality. Learning opportunities are consistently and rigorously quality assured.

75　The QAA assessment team conducted an assessment of this criterion according to the process set out in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment for Variation and Revocation of Degree Awarding Powers (December 2019).*

The evidence considered and why the team considered this evidence

76　The QAA team assessed this criterion by reference to a range of evidence gathered according to the process described in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment by QAA (October 2019)*, in particular the suggested evidence outlined in Annex 5 and WCG's submission. The assessment team identified and considered this evidence for the purposes described in Annex 4 and 5 of this Guidance as follows.

a　To consider how the College operates effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes, the team reviewed Course Approval and Review Procedures [054], the terms of reference [082] and minutes of Academic Board [087, 088, 089], the Collaborative Provision Course Enhancement Report [167], programme approval documentation [039 a-g, 158-163] and programme and module specifications [041, 042, 162, 164]. The team also analysed the programme approval documentation, including programme and module specifications, to assess how the coherence of programmes is secured and maintained. In addition, the team used the documentation above to consider how relevant staff are guided and support in their responsibilities for programme design and approval and specifically reviewed the separate briefing documents for the chair and for academic, industry and student panel members [183-186] and considered a panel member feedback form [187].

b　To ensure that responsibility for approving new programme proposals is clearly assigned, including the involvement of external expertise, and subsequent action is carefully monitored, the team reviewed the Course Approval and Review Procedures [054], terms of reference [082] and minutes of the Academic Board [087-089], and programme planning approval documentation [163]. The team also reviewed examples of programme approval documentation [039e, 158, 160] and minutes of the Academic Board [088] to identify how links are maintained between learning support services and WCG's programme planning and approval arrangements.

c　To establish how the College articulates and implements a strategic approach to learning and teaching consistent with its stated academic objectives the team reviewed the College's Teaching and Learning Strategy for Higher Education [010], the WCG corporate strategy [004], the WCG Higher Education Strategy 2019-2023 [009] and the terms of reference for HESEC [084] and HETREC [085]. The team also analysed information on teaching and learning from a range of module descriptors [277, 280, 283, 285, 287, 291, 293, 281, 295, 297, 299] and module guides [278, 280, 282, 284, 286, 290, 292, 294, 296, 298].

d   The team reviewed the HE Tutorial Policy [067], examples of guidance notes and study skills support used in academic tutorials [189-198] and information on the ASSET module (see paragraph 88) [056, 193-194] to verify that students are enabled to monitor their progress and further their academic development.

e   To confirm that the organisation operates valid and reliable processes of assessment, including for the recognition of prior learning (RPL), the team reviewed the Assessment Policy [057] and HE assessment guide [188b], the HE Recognition of Prior Learning Policy [051] and examples of the implementation of the RPL process [206-209]. The team also reviewed a range of course handbooks [043, 044, 039f, 161, 203] and student survey feedback [031, 033] to analyse the means by which staff and students engage in dialogue to promote a shared understanding of the basis on which academic judgements are made.

f   To confirm that students are provided with opportunities to develop an understanding of, and the necessary skills to demonstrate, good academic practice the team reviewed the higher education academic misconduct guidance [200, 201], a range of course handbooks [043, 044, 039f, 161, 203], the ASSET module guide [202], library induction material [199] and screenshots of relevant intranet pages [200]. The team also reviewed the HE Academic Misconduct Procedure [059] and Guidance [201] and the HE Assessment to establish how the College operates processes for addressing unacceptable academic practice.

g   To confirm that processes for marking assessments and for moderating marks are clearly articulated and consistently operated by those involved in the assessment process, the team reviewed the HE Assessment Policy [057] and its HE Assessment Guide [188b] evidence of the verification and moderation of assessed work [336-340; 342-344, 311; 345-348, 036; 349-352, 035; 353-357; 358-361, 177; 362-366] and examples of the enhancement of assessment practices [265-266].

h   To assess how the College makes use of external examiners, including in the moderation of assessment tasks and student assessed work, the team reviewed the Academic Regulations [023], the HE Assessment Policy [057] and its HE Assessment Guide [188b] and a range of external examiner reports [340, 311, 036, 035, 357, 177, 366]. The team also reviewed external examiners' reports and responses to these [035-036, 177, 178, 191, 211-212], annual course reports [020-022], summary reports to HEQAS [034, 210, 254] and minutes of this committee [090, 091, 092, 255], minutes of Quality Review Meetings [180, 181] and the cross-College Quality Improvement Plan [370] to assess whether WCG gives full and serious consideration to the comments and recommendations contained in external examiners' reports and provides considered and timely responses to their comments. Further information was obtained through discussions with WCG staff [M1].

i   To confirm that the College has effective procedures for handling academic appeals and complaints and that these procedures are fair, accessible, timely and enable enhancement, the team reviewed the HE Student Handbook [080], the Academic Appeal Procedure [058] and the Complaints Procedure [074], the First Impressions survey report 2019-20 [032] and screenshots of intranet pages on academic appeals and complaints [204]. The team also reviewed an example of an appeal [205] and the College's Complaints and Compliments annual report [112] and minutes of HEQAS [090, 091, 092] to verify that appropriate action is taken following an appeal or complaint.

How any samples of evidence were constructed

77   In order to establish that a range of teaching strategies was used as stated in the HE Teaching and Learning Strategy [010], a random sample of six module descriptors from across the College foundation degree programmes [277, 280, 281, 283, 285, 287] and a random sample of module descriptors from across the range of University-validated Level 6 programmes [289, 291, 293, 295, 297, 299] was requested.

78   In order to confirm that processes for marking assessments and for moderating marks are clearly articulated and consistently operated by those involved in the assessment process, one verification trail from each of six randomly selected Level 5 and Level 6 module assessments, covering different types of assessment, was requested [336-340; 342-344, 311; 345-348, 036; 349-352, 035; 353-357; 358-361, 177; 362-366].

What the evidence shows

79   The assessment team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

Design and approval of programmes

80   The Course Approval and Review Procedures [054] clearly set out WCG's expectations for course development which include alignment with external reference points such as the FHEQ and engagement with students and external stakeholders. The course approval process includes strategic planning, course development with student and employer engagement and scrutiny by a course approval panel which includes external academic expertise, employers and students [054].

81   The Academic Board minutes reviewed [087, 088] show that, in line with its terms of reference [082], strategic planning decisions are made by the Board as a first stage of approval for new courses. The Course Approval and Review Procedures [054] state that scrutiny of the curriculum is undertaken by a Course Approval Panel which should include external academic expertise, employers and students. The panel considers a proposed programme through evaluation of its alignment with QAA-published Subject Benchmark Statements and the FHEQ [054]. A structured panel member feedback form [187] is used to evaluate the course documentation prior to the approval or review event. Written guidance for academic [183], industry [184] and student [185] panel members and for the Chair of the panel [186] is provided to enable them to fulfil their roles in the approval and review process, with student and external industry members additionally being given face-to-face briefings by the Head of HE Quality [184, 185]. The Course Approval and Review Procedures [054] also contain clear guidance to course teams on the development and approval process, including explanation of the stages involved, the use of external reference points in course design, the necessity of consultation with employers, expectations in relation to course structure, and documentary requirements for final approval.

82   Programme approval documentation reviewed by the team for a foundation degree and a BEng programme [039 a-g, 158-164] show WCG's practices to be in line with its stated processes [054]. The team found that the Application for Approval and Resources Statement for FdSc Agri-Tech [039b], required in advance of approval, describes the involvement of employers in programme design. The Course Approval Panel was provided with a programme specification [039g] and module descriptors [039i] which describe the curriculum content and structure, learning outcomes, teaching and learning strategies and assessment. Minutes of the Panel meeting [039h] confirm that panel membership for the FdSc Agri-Tech included student, external academic and industry representation and that a thorough consideration of the proposed curriculum was undertaken, drawing on panel members' input. The minutes also provide detailed feedback to the course team for module amendments to meet the conditions of approval [039h].

83   In the case of the BEng Engineering, a course proposed to the University of Gloucestershire by WCG staff in June 2018 [158], there had been an initial unsuccessful validation event a year earlier. Following that event, WCG's higher education management team worked with the course team to ensure it met the requirements for a Level 6 award. The team reviewed programme documentation relating to the successful approval event in 2018 [159-163]. The University validation report [158] confirms that the course enables students to meet the appropriate academic level, and that the curriculum is coherent and relevant. The Collaborative Provision Course Enhancement Report [167] for September 2019 confirms that the programme has been successfully delivered with the first cohort all completing the award and the external examiner report [165] confirms that the standards of the award are appropriate and comparable with similar awards in the sector.

84   Review of the coherence of the course structure by the Course Approval Panel is part of the course approval procedure [054], and examples of clear curriculum maps within the programme specification were seen for the FdA Digital Film Production [041], the FdSc Counselling and Psychotherapy [042], the FdSc Agri-Tech [039g] and the BEng Engineering Level 6 [162]. These maps identify where each intended learning outcome of the programme is covered within the modules, to ensure that all areas of knowledge and understanding of the subject, cognitive skills, practical and/or professional skills are delivered. In addition, the mapping identifies the location of delivery of 'T-shaped' learner skills (the WCG framework for embedding core skills, including enterprise, entrepreneurship and employability, into all its programmes) which is important to the College's higher education strategy [056].

85   In seeking strategic planning approval, the resource required to develop and deliver the proposed curriculum is considered. Consideration of staffing, physical space and equipment, library and IT resources was evident in the examples of programme approval documentation reviewed for the FdSc Agri-Tech [039e] and the BEng Engineering [158] programmes. The Approval Process for New Qualifications document [039e] presented to Academic Board for strategic planning approval, confirms that discussion had taken place with the heads of library and information services as part of the strategic approval process for the FdSc Agri-Tech programme. The Application for Approval and Resources statement for the FdSc [039b] provides the Course Approval Panel with a list of resources available to support the programme. In the case of the BEng, a course delivered under the awarding powers of the University of Gloucestershire, a University checklist was completed [160] to provide the awarding body with an overview of the library and information support available and to enable WCG to understand the learning resource required. WCG provides its own learning resources to support its current Level 6 provision and WCG stipulates that resources are made available prior to commencement of the course [160]. The terms of reference of the Academic Board [082] include 'to review sufficiency and accessibility of resources available for HE and make recommendations to Senior Leadership Team as appropriate' [082]. The Academic Board minutes seen by the team [087, 088, 089] confirm that consideration of resources for new course proposals takes place, although the record of this consideration in the minutes is not detailed. For example, when giving approval to develop a new BSc in Animal Assisted Therapy, the minutes record that 'some work will need to be done on the current facilities and resources' [088]. However, based on the evidence provided, the team was able to confirm that learning support services are involved at key stages in the programme planning and approval process.

Learning and teaching

86   WCG articulates and implements a strategic approach to learning and teaching through its specific Teaching and Learning Strategy for Higher Education [010]. This aligns with the WCG corporate strategy [004], and the WCG Higher Education Strategy 2019-2023 [009] in their shared commitment to delivery of a curriculum designed to maximise student outcomes and local and regional economic impact. WCG's Higher Education Strategy [009] has a particular focus on the development of vocational curricula that is relevant and current. This is reflected in the HE Teaching and Learning Strategy [010] which articulates principles

for all of WCG's provision, including support for students to engage with theory and practice drawing on developments in research, scholarship and/or professional and industry practice; employability skills, embedded throughout the student journey; and teaching, learning and assessment methods informed by industry advisers and/or relevant professional bodies, and support for work-based and applied learning. Two subcommittees of the Academic Board have oversight of teaching and learning and the student experience. The Higher Education Teaching, Research and Enterprise Committee (HETREC) [085] is responsible for leading academic debate and promoting the sharing of good practice to support the delivery of teaching and learning, and the Higher Education Student Experience Committee (HESEC) [084] monitors the quality of the student experience.

87   WCG is committed to inclusivity through course content that is free from cultural bias and stereotyping and through the use of a range of teaching strategies, which is consistent with the approach outlined in the HE Teaching and Learning Strategy [010]. The College claims that 'lecturers use a multiplicity of teaching strategies to create a range of challenges for students to enhance their capacity for analytical, critical and creative thinking' [302] and in order to verify this the team reviewed module descriptors from across the foundation degrees [277, 279, 281, 283, 285, 287] and the validated Level 6 programmes [289, 291, 293, 295, 297, 299]. The team found that, with a minority of exceptions [281, 295, 297, 299], a heading of 'learning and teaching activities' referred to the hours spent in scheduled activities or independent study and not to what the learning activities themselves comprised [277, 279, 283, 285, 287, 291, 293]. The College asserts that 'module guides expand on the information within the module descriptors' but in the sample seen by the team [278, 280, 282, 284, 286, 290, 292, 294, 296, 298] this was not done consistently with regard to explaining the teaching and learning activities: in a number of cases the same standard form of words was used for several modules, advising students across a number of subject areas that 'taught sessions combine lectures (typically introducing you to new concepts or exploring key issues) case studies, collaborative investigations, plenaries and seminars' [280, 284, 286, 288, 290, 296]. This common phrase does not always align with the intended learning outcomes of the module and seems particularly ill-matched, for example, to a module where the aims include the practice of vocal delivery [287, 288] and to a module on generating sound, where this standard text is used despite elsewhere describing practical workshops and use of relevant software packages as the learning approach [296]. In other examples, however, a range of teaching and learning strategies appropriate to the subject area was shown to be used [281, 297, 198, 299]. In the view of the team, the College is using an appropriate range of teaching and learning strategies across and within its programmes but these are not always well articulated in the module guides.

88   To support their progress, students have a named academic tutor (who is both course leader and personal tutor) who meets with them on a one-to-one basis a minimum of three times per year, as described in the HE Tutorial Policy [067]. In considering the way in which students are enabled to monitor their progress and further their academic development, the team saw evidence of clearly structured and helpful materials being used in tutorials. Examples include materials on effective note taking [189] and writing skills [195] which support students in developing their study skills and they are encouraged to reflect on strengths, weaknesses and what might be done to improve through a SWOT analysis of Level 4 with action planning for Level 5 [190]. 'Step up to Level 5' [191] and 'Step up to Level 6' [192] tutorials provided by staff to groups set out student expectations at each level. Ongoing one-to-one academic tutorials involving the student and personal tutor are recorded through an online learner monitoring system [197], where tutors can set targets for further academic development. The team saw an example of a tutorial record on the online system which confirmed that targets with review dates were set [198]. These structured reviews reinforce the work done through the T-shaped learning model (the WCG framework for embedding core skills) [056] and ASSET module. The ASSET module is a common Level 4 module which embeds core skills through the filter of the student's discipline, as seen by the team in examples from the Foundation Degree in Early Years [193, 194], and is used by

WCG to develop students' critical thinking and self-efficacy. The team considered there to be robust arrangements in place to support students' academic development and to enable them to monitor and reflect on their own progress.

Assessment

89   Processes for marking assessments and for moderating marks are set out in the HE Assessment Policy [057] and the HE Assessment Guide [188b]. These are comprehensive in that they clearly articulate the purposes and processes for assessment practices such as the verification of assessment briefs, standardisation and verification of marking (moderation). The team tested the clarity of information in these documents with regards to verification and moderation. The term 'verification' is used by WCG to describe the checking of assessment briefs to ensure that the form and content of assessment tasks are appropriate, fair and valid and will effectively assess the achievement of the specified learning outcomes. Standardisation is used in particular for a new module or with a new team of staff to ensure that all assessors are familiar with, and have a common understanding of, the marking standards and the assessment feedback conventions. It is completed in advance of marking and involves a group of assessors all independently marking a sample of student work and assigning grades using agreed criteria, and then comparing and discussing the outcomes. 'Moderation' is a check on standards and consistency of marking and quality of feedback which may take place through double marking (blind or otherwise) or through internal verification where a second assessor reviews a sample of marked assignments from across the grade profile [057]. Detail on these aspects of assessment practices were considered transparent and comprehensive in that clear definitions and instructions are provided to staff.

90   The team reviewed the verification process in operation across a random sample of seven modules at Levels 5 and 6 to test alignment of practice with policy. The sample seen confirmed that the processes set out in the HE Assessment Policy [057] and HE Assessment Guide [188b] were closely and consistently followed by the College: assignment briefs were clearly set out in a standard template, with prompts for completion, and included intended learning outcomes, mark allocation and grading criteria [336, 341, 345, 349, 353, 358, 362]. These were signed off by the Internal Verifier, using a (separate) standard template which asks for confirmation of the appropriateness of the assignment through a detailed range of questions, including that it enables the student to develop as a T-shaped learner (see paragraph 88 above) [337, 342, 346, 350, 354, 359, 363]. The feedback to students on their assessed work, seen by the team across a range of courses, was clear and comprehensive, included constructive 'feedforward' comments to aid improvement and was again signed off by an Internal Verifier [338, 343, 347, 351, 355, 360, 364]. In those cases where the assignment was a group project, individualised feedback and differentiated marking was evident [343, 349]. The team therefore concluded that practice was consistent with the WCG policy and guide in the examples scrutinised.

91   The HE Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy [051] recognises that RPL is a form of assessment which must be transparent, fair, rigorous and reliable, and outlines clear and appropriate arrangements to achieve this. The RPL examples reviewed by the team [206-209] confirmed a structured assessment undertaken by the relevant module leader and signed off by the Chair of the Subject Assessment Board confirming appropriate implementation of the policy.

92   Information to students on how academic judgements are made are available in the Course Handbooks issued to students. The Handbooks considered by the team [039f, 043, 044, 161, 203] contained information on assessment that was comprehensive in that it covered the purpose of assessment, assessment practices, including arrangements for marking and feedback, the role of the external examiner, the marking criteria, and signposted students to the academic regulations for further details of how overall module and course marks/grades are calculated, and what happens if the student fails an

assessment. Students can also discuss assessment processes with staff as part of the WCG Tutorial Policy arrangements [067]. WCG's report on the National Student Survey (NSS) results for 2019 [031] show that 72% of students who completed the survey agreed that the criteria used in marking their work was clear to them in advance, and 70% agreed that they received helpful comments on their assessed work. The outcomes of WCG's own survey [033] of students who were not eligible to complete the NSS in 2019 show that 85% agreed that they knew the marking criteria in advance and 88% found the feedback on their work helpful. WCG is taking steps to enhance assessment practice, for example, one of the Higher Education Conferences for staff included a workshop on assessment rubrics led by an external expert [265] and a Subject Leader has undertaken an action research project to understand how students engage with feedback [266]. The team concluded that WCG promotes a shared understanding between staff and students of the assessment process and how academic judgements are made.

93   The HE Academic Misconduct Procedure [059] sets out the investigation, outcomes and appeal process to be followed in the case of unacceptable academic practice. The procedure is referenced in the HE Assessment Guide [188b] and published on the intranet for staff and students on all programmes [200, 201]. In addition, library staff deliver tutorials for all higher education students on referencing, academic misconduct and plagiarism as part of their induction and on an ongoing basis [199]. Students on WCG foundation degree courses and courses validated by Coventry University also learn about good academic practice through the delivery of the ASSET module which forms part of their programmes. The indicative content includes, 'good and poor' academic practice: identifying sources; Harvard referencing; plagiarism, collusion and other forms of academic misconduct' [202]. The team considered that students are provided with appropriate opportunities to develop an understanding of good academic practice and support is given by the College in developing the necessary skills to demonstrate such practice.

External examining

94   The WCG Academic Regulations for Foundation Degrees [023] sets out the role and remit of external examiners. The Regulations determine that external examiners must be appointed by the HE Quality and Academic Standards Committee (HEQAS), subject to criteria approved by the Academic Board. The team considered the annual report to HEQAS [034] on external examiner profiles which demonstrates that careful consideration is given to their experience and qualifications for the role. As outlined in the HE Assessment Policy [057] and the HE Assessment Guide [188b], external examiners have access to, and are encouraged to review, a wide range of assessment tasks, assessed work including grades, assessor feedback to students and internal verification records relating to those assessments. The expectation for external verification is that 'in principle, external examiners should see a range of internally verified assessment tasks (usually including all exam papers) and a range of assessed work' [188b]. With one exception [177] (see paragraphs 67 and 68), the external examiner reports scrutinised by the team [035, 036, 311-315, 340, 366] showed confirmation that external examiners had seen samples of work, that the work had been internally verified and moderated, and that the academic standards and achievements of students were comparable with those in other UK higher education institutions of which the external examiner had experience.

95   There is evidence that WCG gives serious consideration to the comments and recommendations contained in external examiner reports. The pro forma for the external examiner report provides for an initial response by the course team to the external's recommendations, which is then followed up by response letters addressing the comments and actions planned. The response letters read by the team [119, 211-212, 304, 306, 308, 310, 312, 314] confirm that detailed responses are provided to external examiners. The Annual Course Reports [020-022, 324, 326] the team reviewed also note and respond to external examiner comments and form part of the quality improvement plans (QIPs) for the following year. Monitoring of progress against actions identified in the QIPs is discussed at

twice-yearly Quality Review Meetings (QRMs) involving Subject Leaders, the Dean of Higher Education and HEQT [180, 181]. There is also evidence of detailed monitoring of responses to external examiner reports institutionally in the higher education cross-college Quality Improvement Plan [370].

96   HEQAS receives regular reports on external examiner feedback. In order to evaluate how WCG monitored and responded to external examiner feedback the team considered three reports provided to HEQAS which reflect on and monitor external examiner comments and recommendations: an initial summary report of external examiner feedback for 2018-19 presented to HEQAS in December 2019 [034, 090]; a report summarising actions arising from the 2018-19 external examiner reports [210], considered by HEQAS in March 2020 [255]; and a report on the conduct of assessment boards [254] presented to HEQAS in March 2020 [255]. The initial summary report on external examiner feedback [034] grades external examiner's views on programmes as 'commended', 'meets expectations' or 'requires improvement'. Twelve reports were evaluated by WCG as being commended; 15 reports were evaluated as meeting expectations, and four reports were evaluated as requiring improvement, although the text of the overview report of external feedback does not identify the specific issues raised on those programmes 'requiring improvement', nor are those courses named in the text (although these are clearly identified by name in the appendix to the report). The minutes of HEQAS [090] confirming receipt of the summary report [034] does not record detail of discussion of the underlying issues raised in the negative reports, although the minutes do identify the courses requiring improvement and identifies one programme as requiring 'significant improvement'. HEQAS members are asked to note the content of the report and academic teams are asked to ensure that the comments from external examiners' reports are considered carefully when evaluating the annual course reports and reviewing course development [034].

97   The second report considered by the team was a report summarising actions arising from 2018-19 external examiner reports [210], considered by HEQAS in March 2020 [255]. This shows a detailed consideration of external examiner recommendations contained in the 2018-19 reports, identifying which external examiner report raised the issue, the action to be taken at subject level, and proposed actions at institutional level to address common themes. The HEQAS minutes [255] recording receipt of the report, although brief, note that some of the issues arising from the report relating to assessment will feature in the summer higher education staff conference.

98   The third report considered by the team was on the Conduct of Assessment Boards [254] and was presented to the March 2020 HEQAS meeting [255]. The report shows a detailed analysis of external examiner feedback on the conduct of the subject and course assessment boards and demonstrates that, with the exception of one report, the feedback was positive. The report includes reference to a 'very negative' comment from an external examiner (the same examiner who had also deemed a course to require substantial improvement as outlined in paragraph 67) and provides the wording from the external examiner report describing the issues. While there was no recorded discussion in the HEQAS minutes [255] of the actions taken in response to the issues raised by this examiner, the team was provided with the detailed response which had been sent by the Dean of Higher Education to the external examiner [178] and was able to discuss the specific circumstances of the external examiner comments in their meeting with senior staff [M1] (see paragraphs 66-69 in Criterion B2). The team identified some weakness in the recording of discussion on external examiner feedback in the minutes of HEQAS meetings, and a lack of clarity in a summary report on external examiner feedback presented to HEQAS. However, the team was assured by the overall evidence of reporting on external examiner feedback at institutional level and actions taken at course and institutional level that WCG takes its responsibilities to external examiners seriously and makes conscientious use of external examiner feedback.

Academic appeals and student complaints

99   WCG's Academic Appeals [058] and Complaints [074] procedures are clear and in line with guidance from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). Both are signposted for students from the Student Handbook [080] to the intranet [204], and, in addition, the Complaints Procedures [074] is published on the external College website [204]. Reference is made in both Procedures to a final route of external appeal being available through the OIA. From the First Impressions survey completed by the majority of new higher education students [032], 87.5% agreed that they know where to find information regarding the student handbook on the intranet and 89.8% confirmed that they had read and understood their course handbook. The procedures for academic appeals and complaints currently apply to all WCG's provision up to and including Level 6 in accordance with the degree awarding bodies' requirements. The team considers the experience of operating these procedures over many years has prepared WCG to take on these responsibilities for Level 6.

100   A Complaints and Compliments annual report [112], which reviews complaints and academic appeals by theme and identifies actions to address them, is considered by ASQA. The report states that there were 40 complaints relating to WCG's higher education provision for 2018-19. These were mainly related to two courses: poor communication on one course; and staff changes and poor teaching on one module on another course. The report describes the actions taken in response. The report also confirms that three complaints were received by the OIA against Warwickshire College Group in 2019: two were not eligible for OIA investigation and the third complaint is still being investigated. The Complaints report for 2018-19 [112] also states that there were five academic appeals from higher education students, three of which involved students from the same course where there were a large number of complaints as mentioned above. The team reviewed one example of an appeal, which had been dealt with and resolved in accordance with the procedure and to the satisfaction of the appellant [205].

Conclusions

101   The assessment team formulated its judgement against this criterion according to the process set out in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment by QAA, October 2019*, in particular Annex 4.

102   There are thorough procedures for course design, development and the approval of programmes with clearly assigned responsibilities at each stage of the process and the College has considerable experience of applying these through the validation of its own foundation degrees and through the design of Level 6 provision currently delivered under its partnership arrangements. WCG staff, students and external advisers involved in the development and approval of courses are provided with guidance and support on the procedures and their roles and responsibilities in relation to them. The development and approval process involves student, external academic and employer engagement, and close links are maintained with the learning and support services to ensure that programmes are appropriately resourced.

103   WCG demonstrates a strategic approach to learning and teaching through its specific Teaching and Learning Strategy for Higher Education which aligns with its corporate strategy and the Higher Education Strategy. HETREC and HESEC monitor the student experience and oversees the enhancement of student learning. There is evidence of the use of a wide range of appropriate teaching and learning approaches. While there is a lack of detail in the articulation of learning and teaching activities in some module descriptors and module guides, this was viewed by the team as a weakness in documentation rather than reflecting a limited range of approaches or poor alignment with intended learning outcomes.

104   There are robust arrangements in place to enable students to monitor their progress and further their academic development, in particular through the helpful materials used in tutorials to encourage students to reflect on strengths and weaknesses, on what might be done to improve, and on what is expected of them at each level. The HE Assessment Policy

and HE Assessment Guide give clear and comprehensive information to staff on the expectations for assessment, with definitions and instructions that enables processes to be valid and reliable. Recognition of prior learning has clear procedures for assessment which were seen by the team to have been implemented appropriately.

105   Students are supported in their understanding of the basis on which academic judgements are made through the information contained in their course handbooks and through signposting to intranet sources. There are processes in place for the prevention of, identification of and response to unacceptable academic practice and WCG educates students on good academic practice through specific tutorial sessions as part of their induction and on an ongoing basis.

106   External examiners are appointed for all courses and careful consideration is given to their experience and qualifications for the role. External examiners have access to, and are encouraged to review, a wide range of assessment tasks, assessed work including grades, assessor feedback to students and internal verification records relating to those assessments. The team saw evidence of the careful consideration of external examiner reports at course level, with conscientious tracking, points raised by the external examiner being responded to directly and promptly, and the inclusion of these recommendations and responses in Annual Course Reports and in quality improvement plans and actions for the following year. External examiner reports and responses are also closely monitored through the HE Cross-College Quality Improvement Plan. The team found some weakness in the recording of discussion on external examiner feedback in the minutes of HEQAS meetings, and a lack of clarity in a summary report on external examiner feedback presented to HEQAS. However, the team was assured by the overall evidence of reporting on external examiner feedback at institutional level, and actions taken, that WCG makes conscientious use of the feedback obtained from external examiners.

107   From the evidence seen by the team, the College's academic appeals and student complaints procedures are accessible and annual reporting on cases enables enhancement. Oversight of complaints and appeals is exercised through the committee structure on the basis of detailed reports which includes information on how WCG has responded to complaints. The example of an academic appeal scrutinised by the team had been dealt with and resolved in accordance with the procedure and to the satisfaction of the appellant.

108   WCG has worked closely with its University partners to deliver Level 6 provision since 2011 and has benefited from the awarding bodies' support and guidance over this period of time, taking on significant devolved responsibilities. The team identified strengths in the way in which WCG provides a high quality supportive academic experience for its students and it was assured that the procedures in place and their implementation by the College were appropriate and would provide a credible foundation for the extension of powers to Level 6.

109   While the team noted some weaknesses in the recording of discussion in HEQAS committee meetings relating to external examiner reports, and lack of clarity in some module information regarding the teaching and learning approaches used, these were not considered to present a significant risk to the achievement of the criterion. The team concludes, therefore, that the criterion is met.

Criterion C: Scholarship and the pedagogical effectiveness of staff

Criterion C1 - The role of academic and professional staff

110   This criterion states that:

C1.1:   *An organisation granted powers to award degrees assures itself that it has appropriate numbers of staff to teach its students. Everyone involved in teaching or supporting student learning, and in the assessment of student work, is appropriately qualified, supported and developed to the level(s) and subject(s) of the qualifications being awarded.*

111   The QAA assessment team conducted an assessment of this criterion according to the process set out in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment for Variation and Revocation of Degree Awarding Powers (December 2019)*.

The evidence considered and why the team considered this evidence

112   The QAA team assessed this criterion by reference to a range of evidence gathered according to the process described in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment by QAA (October 2019)*, in particular the suggested evidence outlined in Annex 5 and WCG's submission. The assessment team identified and considered this evidence for the purposes described in Annex 4 and 5 of this Guidance as follows.

a   To determine WCG's approach to the role of academic and professional staff in higher education provision, the team considered strategic and policy documentation namely the WCG Strategy [004], Higher Education Strategy 2019-2023 [009] and the HE Teaching and Learning Strategy [010], Learning and Teaching Policy [065] and operational documentation from the bodies that oversee learning, teaching and assessment practices, including the terms of reference [085], minutes [096-098] and papers [097] for HETREC. The team also reviewed the Report to ASQA on higher education [114], details of the four HE Staff Conferences held since 2018 [265, 267-269], external events [273, 275], details on WCG Advance HE Fellowships 2018-19 [264] and annual quality reports covering peer observation [113, 117] to ascertain the opportunities that exist for enabling staff to enhance and inform their practice and scholarship through reflection, evaluation of professional practice, and subject-specific and educational scholarship.

b   To establish whether staff have relevant academic and professional expertise, are involved with the pedagogic development of their discipline and have an understanding of current research and advanced scholarship in their discipline, the team examined the ASQA Report on Higher Education [114], the staff qualifications overview report [255], details on WCG Advance HE Fellowships 2018-19 [264], staff job descriptions and CVs [139-156], HETREC terms of reference [085] and minutes [096-098], the Higher Education Strategy 2019-2023 [009], the HE Teaching and Learning Strategy [010] records of the FdSc Agri-Tech programme approval [039], details of the Action Research Project [266] and HE Staff Conference details [265, 267-269].

c   To determine whether teaching staff have opportunities to gain experience in curriculum development and assessment design and to engage with the activities of other higher education providers, the team considered the Learning and Development Strategy 2017-2020 [018], the ASQA Report on Higher Education [114], the Higher Education Strategy 2019-2023 [009], the Course Development

and Approval process [054], approval documentation for FdSc Agri-Tech [039] and the BSc Engineering validation documents [158-167].

d   To confirm that teaching staff have expertise in assessment design and providing feedback on assessment, the team considered the ASQA Report on Higher Education [114], the Review of 2018-19 external examiner reports document [034], external examiner's reports [035-036, 303, 305, 307, 309, 311, 313, 315] and examples of feedback on assessed work [343, 347, 351, 355, 360].

e   To ensure that the College undertakes assessment of the skills and expertise required to teach all students and the staff resources required, and that there are appropriate staff recruitment practices, the team reviewed the Recruitment and Selection Strategy 2016-2020 [019], staff job descriptions and CVs [139-156], the Learning and Teaching Policy [65], the HE Management Team Organisation Chart [079], the Course Approval and Review Procedures [054], an Application for Approval and Resources Statement [039b] and the ASQA Report on Higher Education [114].

How any samples of evidence were constructed

113   All evidence submitted by the College in respect of this criterion was considered by the team and provided sufficient information that no further sampling was undertaken.

What the evidence shows

114   The assessment team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

115   The Learning and Teaching Policy [065] sets out a clear framework for the effective delivery of teaching, learning and assessment within WCG, concisely detailing the aims of the policy and providing explicit guidance on staff responsibilities and on how WCG monitors the policy's effectiveness. The HE Teaching and Learning Strategy [010] supports the overall College strategy [004] and also contains a commitment to engage with pedagogic and discipline-specific staff development opportunities to support the delivery of higher education. This is further supported by the Higher Education Strategy 2019-2023 [009] which has aims in relation to 'People Success' that place an emphasis on developing and supporting academic and professional practice. The aims of the Higher Education Strategy include increasing HEA fellowships, supporting higher education staff to undertake research worthy of publication, the inclusion of an annual scholarly activity and/or research performance objective in staff performance review, maintaining a regular schedule and support for research or scholarship projects, publications and conferences, and working with sector groups and bodies, including the Association of Colleges Scholarship Framework [009].

116   The terms of reference [085] for the Higher Education Teaching, Research and Enterprise Committee (HETREC) outline a clear purpose to 'lead academic debate and share good practice that underpins the delivery of teaching and learning of HE at Warwickshire College Group' and to monitor staff qualifications and engagement with research and scholarly activity. One of its roles is to organise regular higher education staff conferences to develop and share good practice. Themes covered in recent conferences in 2018 and 2019 include, for example, Advance HE engagement and HEA fellowship, enhancing student progression, assessment rubrics, using plagiarism-detection software, reflecting on the student experience and using statistical software with students [267-269]. HETREC minutes indicate [096, 097, 098] that staff actively engage and find value in the higher education conferences, although the team did not see any statistical evidence of staff taking up conference opportunities. In addition to internal staff conferences, WCG has also organised external conferences on the themes of Interactive Futures [273] and Let's Talk Games [275] with invited academic and industry speakers.

117   The minutes of HETREC [096-098] provide a useful insight into staff activities in each subject area and their engagement in pedagogy and the development of their discipline. Subject Leaders and professorial staff are specifically required to comment on these developments in their subject areas at each HETREC meeting. As such, the Committee is active in promoting and tracking the growth of higher education staff research and advanced scholarship. For example, the committee monitors and reports upon the number of staff with teaching and higher degree qualifications, and the level of engagement with Advance HE [097]. ASQA receives an annual report on progress against the higher education strategy that uses data drawn from HETREC. The report presented to ASQA in November 2019 [114] identifies that by 2018-19 around 35% of HE staff (defined as those who teach over 50% at Level 4 or above) had achieved HEA fellowship, including 13 who had progressed their applications that year. In addition, five staff are reported as active in conference presentation and the publishing of research work. WCG has also recruited research professorial staff [153-156] who support the design and delivery of courses and staff at WCG have been successful in gaining external funding for research projects [096-097]. The staff qualifications overview contained in the HEQAS minutes in March 2020 [255] record that 39 out of 73 (53%) teaching staff have a qualification of Level 7 or above; 56 out of 73 (80%) teaching staff have a teaching qualification; and seven teaching staff have PhDs.

118   To evaluate and promote reflection on learning, WCG operates a higher education lesson observation process taking account of the UK Professional Standards Framework [302]. Most higher education lecturers are observed by a peer although those working in areas where there are lower NSS outcomes in the previous year are observed by WCG's Teaching and Learning Improvement team. Following the observation, the observer and lecturer undertake a professional dialogue to promote reflection and enhancement. The observer provides a detailed report of the observation identifying strengths and areas for improvement. Summary reports are prepared for the Deputy Principal each year and the quality of teaching and learning is part of the annual quality reports [113, 117] presented to ASQA. From the various activities outlined in the paragraphs above, the team concludes that staff have development opportunities that are aimed at enabling them to enhance their practice and scholarship and encourage engagement in reflection and evaluation of their learning, teaching and assessment practice.

119   Linked to the WCG Human Resource Strategy, the Recruitment and Selection Strategy [019] details how WCG will achieve the 'Right People in the Right Place at the Right Time'. Through reference to the government's Workforce Strategy and Coventry and Warwickshire, and Worcestershire LEP strategies, WCG focuses on attracting, recruiting and retaining staff with the skills necessary to undertake their roles. The Recruitment and Selection strategy specifies that this is to be achieved by recruitment planning taking place alongside curriculum planning and through the implementation of succession plans. WCG recently undertook a reorganisation of its higher education management team, creating the post of Subject Leader to focus on the management and development of discipline areas, each with performance objectives and course development and review objectives focused on underpinning the success and relevance of their subject curricula. The job description of the new Subject Leader posts [147] confirms that the qualifications and experience specified are appropriate for the role, including essential criteria such as a relevant honours degree, a teaching qualification or HEA Fellowship, and a proven industrial and academic track record in their subject field [147]. The team studied Subject Leader staff CVs of post-holders to determine if the recruitment process had led to appropriately skilled and qualified staff being appointed to these new roles. Five CVs were provided, all of which demonstrate achievement of the relevant essential criteria [148-152] and relevant academic and industrial experience in the subject area, with two having previous university teaching experience and all having relevant industrial-related work experience. The job descriptions and CVs [139-156] for six further roles, including the Dean of Higher Education and those of associate professor and professor, were analysed by the team and likewise determined that all essential and additional desirable criteria were met in all cases. The team formed the view

that WCG has appropriate staff recruitment practices, staff have relevant academic and professional expertise, and are engaged with the pedagogic development of their discipline knowledge.

120   WCG is active in reviewing and updating its degree portfolio [114] and staff gain direct experience of curriculum and assessment design through participation in course development, approval and review processes [054]. For example, the documents recording the approval of the FdSc Agri-Tech [039a-039w] and the periodic review of the FdA Games Art [040a-040p] demonstrate staff involvement in the design of curricula, teaching and learning strategies and assessment practices. WCG staff also have experience of designing courses at Level 6, as demonstrated in the BEng Engineering example, developed by WCG and validated by the University of Gloucestershire [158-167]. In addition, as the higher education report to ASQA demonstrates [114], in 2018-19 four staff were active external examiners, four were involved in external reviews and 10 were members of external groups or committees, including membership of the Association of Colleges (AoC) HE Policy Group and a QAA advisory group looking at the academic credit frameworks [362]. The team formed the view that staff have opportunities to gain experience in curriculum development and assessment design and engage with the activities of other higher education providers.

121   External examiner reports [035, 036, 303, 305, 307, 309, 311, 313, 315] (with one exception discussed in paragraph 67), and examples of feedback on assessed work [343, 347, 351, 355, 360] read by the team confirm that assessment feedback is considered constructive and developmental (see also paragraph 90 in Criterion B3). External examiner reports confirm that courses are well designed [034, 035, 303] with a varied range of assessment strategies [035, 036, 315] and projects available for students [035]. External examiners also comment positively on assessment practice [311, 315] and the strength of internal verification [303, 315], that students were positive about their learning experience [035, 303, 307] and felt well supported by staff [035, 036, 311, 313]. Based on this evidence, the team considered that staff are experienced in assessment design, support students in assessment tasks and provide feedback on assessment that is developmental and constructive.

122   WCG assesses the skills and expertise required to teach students prior to approval and through its monitoring activities. Before any new course is approved, the subject area must submit an Application for Approval and Resources Statement to the Academic Board [054] which makes detailed reference to the staffing resource available and the likely student demand. This statement, as, for example, the statement developed for the validation of the FdSc Agri-Tech [039b], also forms part of the evidence base for course approval and is hence subject to external scrutiny. The College also provides all staffing resource for its Level 6 provision currently and this is also assessed through the programme approval procedures. As outlined in paragraphs 116 and 117 above, the College also maintains oversight through HETREC and ASQA of the skills and development of its staff and designs job descriptions to match its skills needs. The team concluded that WCG has effective mechanisms in place to assess that it has staff with the capacity and capability to deliver its programmes.

Conclusions

123   The assessment team formulated its judgement against this criterion according to the process set out in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment by QAA, October 2019*, in particular Annex 4.

124   The Higher Education Teaching, Research and Enterprise Committee (HETREC) is active in overseeing that learning, teaching and assessment practices are informed by reflection, evaluation of professional practice, and subject-specific and educational scholarship. This is backed up by recruitment practices that seek to ensure that staff have the appropriate academic and professional expertise. Academic staff are appropriately

academically qualified for the level at which they teach, many with teaching qualifications and/or HEA fellowship. WCG has taken care to recruit Subject Leaders and professorial staff who can demonstrate current research and/or advanced scholarship in their discipline.

125   External examiner reports and the outcomes of course approvals demonstrate that staff knowledge and understanding directly informs and enhances their teaching, and that their engagement with research and/or scholarship is commensurate with the level and subject of the qualifications being offered both at foundation degree and bachelor degree level. Staff are able to gain experience in curriculum development and assessment design through involvement in course development processes, and engage in activities with other higher education providers as external examiners and review panel members.

126   Staff development and training is available through, for example, twice yearly higher education staff conferences and the operation of a teaching observation scheme, which provide opportunities to engage in reflection and evaluation of learning, teaching and assessment practice. In addition, development opportunities aimed at enabling staff to enhance their practice and scholarship are presented and discussed by Subject Leaders at each meeting of HETREC. The team concludes, therefore, that the criterion is met.

Criterion D: Environment for supporting students

Criterion D1 - Enabling student development and achievement

127   This criterion states that:

D1.1:   Higher education providers have in place, monitor and evaluate arrangements and resources which enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.

128   The QAA assessment team conducted an assessment of this criterion according to the process set out *in Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment for Variation and Revocation of Degree Awarding Powers (December 2019*).

The evidence considered and why the team considered this evidence

129   The QAA team assessed this criterion by reference to a range of evidence gathered according to the process described in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment by QAA (October 2019)*, in particular the suggested evidence outlined in Annex 5 and WCG's submission. The assessment team identified and considered this evidence for the purposes described in Annex 4 and 5 of this Guidance as follows.

a   To establish that WCG takes a comprehensive strategic and operational approach to enabling student development and achievement, the team reviewed strategic and policy documentation namely WCG's overall strategy [004], the HE Strategy 2019-2023 [009], the HE Guiding Principles [006], the HE Teaching and Learning Strategy [010], the WCG 'T shaped' Framework [056], the Digital Strategy [213], the Equality and Diversity Policy [053], and the Access and Participation Plan [250]. The team also reviewed the Service Standards Annual Report [221], Service Level Agreements [241-243], terms of reference for HEQAS [083], Academic Board [082], and HESEC [084] including minutes of the latter two [087-089, 093-095], HE Course Approval and Review Procedures [054] and WCG's Teaching Capital Investment Framework returns [223, 224]. The team also met senior staff [M1].

b   To confirm that students are advised about, and inducted into, their study programmes in an effective way and account is taken of different students' choices and needs, the team reviewed the HE Course Guide [225], the Induction Programme Overview [215], Orientation information [216], Induction Information [217], Student Symposium Activity [218], the Careers Presentation [219], the report from the First Impression Survey [032] and the HE Student Handbook 2019-20 [233].

c   To understand and evaluate how the effectiveness of advisory, support and counselling services is monitored, and any resource needs arising are considered, the team reviewed annual self-assessment reports and improvement plans from the Library [222], Welfare and Safeguarding [238], IT Services [240], Admissions and Registry [244], Careers Services [245] and other related information, namely service level agreements [241-243], the Service Standards Annual Report [221], the HE Tutorial Policy [067] and counselling support at WCG [243]. The team also reviewed the minutes of ASQA [100] and HESEC [093-095], information on higher education Inclusion Student Journey [253], higher education Inclusion Support data [252] and the student submission [SWS].

d   To verify that the administrative support systems enable WCG to monitor student progression and performance accurately and provide timely, secure and accurate management information, the team reviewed the ICT Systems and Security Strategy [214], meeting minutes for ASQA 2019-2020 [099-101], HEQAS [090-092],

Senior Leadership Team [256-258], statistical reports to those meetings [048, 113, 117] Annual Course Reports [020-022, 324, 326] and Quality Improvement Plans [168-170, 323, 325].

e   To determine that WCG provides opportunities for all students to develop skills that enable their academic, personal and professional progression, for example academic, employment and future career management skills, the team reviewed the 'T-shaped' framework [056], the ASSET module specification [193], work-based learning procedures [072], foundation degree programme specifications [039i, 040i, 041-047, 195], the higher education Student Handbook for Writing Skills [195], tutorial materials [189-195], external examiner reports [034-036, 040k, 040l], industry adviser reports [037, 038], HE Student Conferences programmes from 2017-2019 [270-272], academic conferences details [273-276], online careers reports [247-249], and the Self-Assessment Report and Improvement Plan for Careers [245] and the Library [222].

f   To establish that the College provides opportunities for all students to develop skills to make effective use of the learning resources provided, including the safe and effective use of specialist facilities, and the use of digital and virtual environments the team reviewed the Digital Strategy [213], the Higher Education Strategy [010], induction materials [215], the Student Handbook [080] and the Library Annual Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan [222].

g   To verify that the College's approach is guided by a commitment to equity, the team reviewed the College Strategy [004], the Equality and Diversity Policy [053], the Access and Participation Plan [250], an extract from the Equality and Diversity Annual Report [251], higher education Inclusion support data [252], higher education Inclusion Student Journey [253], course-level annual reviews [020-022, 324, 326], pastoral and financial support information [114, 250] and minutes of HEQAS [090-092].

How any samples of evidence were constructed

130   All evidence submitted by the College in respect of this criterion was considered by the team and provided sufficient information that no further sampling was undertaken.

What the evidence shows

131   The assessment team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

132   WCG's strategy 'Delivering Successful Futures 2017-22' [004], the Higher Education Strategy 2019-23 [009] and the Higher Education Guiding Principles [006] set out its commitment to provide a learning environment suitable to support the academic, personal and professional development of all students. This includes the provision of personal and professional development opportunities such as work-related learning, academic and pastoral support, additional support for students with learning difficulties and disabilities, counselling and careers advice. The implementation of WCG's approach to enabling student development is also supported by additional strategies and policies, including the Higher Education Teaching and Learning Strategy [010] which focuses broadly on developing students' academic, personal and professional potential. Other policies related to this include the College's Digital Strategy [213], the Equality and Diversity Policy [053] and the Access and Participation Plan [250]. Staff met by the team also cited the WCG T-shaped Framework [056] as specifically setting out its commitment to develop students' enterprise, entrepreneurship and employability skills [M1] which the team confirmed was aligned with the strategic intent for higher education and provided a coherent approach to the development of students' knowledge and skills.

133   The arrangements for enabling student development and achievement are monitored through WCG's higher education committee structure which was amended in 2017 to create the Higher Education Student Experience Committee (HESEC). HESEC has a remit to oversee the student journey from admissions to graduation and to make recommendations for improvement, as outlined in its terms of reference [084]. The Committee is chaired by the Group Principal and includes membership from across the organisation, including academic departments, professional services and the Students' Union, to ensure an integrated and coherent approach to the determination and evaluation of student support. The Higher Education Quality Assurance and Academic Standards Committee (HEQAS) terms of reference [083] confirms that it is responsible for improving quality and performance in higher education through the receipt and scrutiny of annual and periodic reports relating to higher education quality and student achievement [048, 093-095]. Both HESEC and HEQAS report to the Academic Board which has a remit [082] to review the sufficiency and accessibility of resources available for higher education.

134   As part of the WCG annual planning process, service level agreements (SLAs) are agreed by the WCG leadership team for student support areas such as careers, library, counselling and welfare. Consideration of these agreements by the team demonstrated that each agreement [241, 242, 243, 255] is aligned with WCG's corporate strategy [004] and has clearly defined performance targets. The SLAs are overseen and monitored by the Academic Standards and Quality Assurance committee (ASQA). The higher education Course Approval and Review Procedures [054] require course teams to seek strategic planning approval from the Academic Board [082, M1] before developing new programmes in order to ensure that resources required to develop and deliver the proposed curricula are sufficient and can be provided. The team reviewed the minutes of the Academic Board which met during 2019 and early 2020, which confirm that strategic planning decisions are made at the first stage of approval for new courses, including those at Level 6 validated by university partners, and that consideration includes staff, physical space and equipment, library and IT resources [087-089].

135   Students are advised about and inducted into their study programme in a variety of ways. The HE Course Guide [225] and the College website provide a range of information on support services for prospective students. Details of the student induction programme [215] indicate that this is comprehensive in that it includes introduction to all relevant services and facilities at WCG, including counselling and health services, support for students with additional support needs, residential services, library services and careers advice [216, 217, 219]. All students receive a copy of the Higher Education Student Handbook [233] which contains useful information about support services available to students, including the Students' Union. The report to HEQAS on the First Impressions Survey from November 2019 [032] confirms that the majority of students (over 90%) felt that the induction process had assisted them in settling in to their course and that they knew what support was available and where to seek it. The team concluded from this evidence that students are advised about and inducted into their courses in an effective way.

136   The effectiveness of student support services is monitored through the WCG self-assessment and committee structures and is considered by the team to be systematic in that self-assessment reports and quality improvement plans [222, 238, 240, 243, 244, 245] are produced annually by each student service area, reflecting on performance against standards agreed in SLAs [241-243]. The process is overseen by the Deputy Principal and the outcomes, brought together in the Service Standards Annual Report [221], are presented to the ASQA Committee as confirmed in the minutes [100]. The self-evaluation reports for library, welfare, counselling and careers services reviewed by the team [221, 222, 238, 243, 245] confirm consideration of student satisfaction data gathered from the NSS, cross-College surveys and services area surveys, and that actions to improve student support are identified in response to feedback and self-evaluation. For example, the Library Annual Self-assessment and Improvement Plan [222] draws on the 2019 WCG NSS results which show that 78% of students agreed that library resources supported their learning. The library also

conducts its own monthly user surveys to assist in the identification and implementation of specific improvements. In 2018-19, improvements in response to student survey feedback included the provision of a water fountain, new CAD software, new databases and the creation of dedicated higher education study zones. In addition to internal review, some support services are also subject to external monitoring and WCG's careers advice service was Matrix accredited in 2018 [245].

137   The Director of Student Services is a member of HESEC which receives data from the NSS, internal student surveys conducted by the College, feedback from Higher Education Student Councils, focus groups, Course Consultative Committee meetings and input from the Students' Union representative. Consideration of student complaints is also a standing item on HESEC agendas [093, 094, 095]. The team reviewed the minutes of HESEC meetings held in 2019 and early 2020 and noted discussion of student feedback and the identification of actions that were designed to improve support for students, drawing on feedback from internal and external sources, Students' Union consultation and student focus groups [093, 094, 095].

138   WCG's commitment to monitoring student services and identifying emerging resource needs is clearly demonstrated in several changes introduced since it was granted FDAP in 2014. This includes, for example, the establishment in 2017 of a dedicated Higher Education Inclusion Service in response to evidence of the increasing number of students with additional learning needs on higher education courses [253]. The Higher Education Inclusion report 2020 [252] demonstrates that since its inception the service has supported increasing numbers of students with a variety of special educational needs. Steps have also been taken to strengthen and extend careers advice and guidance. As well as developing a new lead Careers Adviser role for higher education, WCG has invested in a new WCG Career Launchpad platform for students and alumni, providing access to mock interview recording, industry updates, aptitude tests, networking opportunities and a job search engine [245]. WCG has also recently reviewed its Tutorial Policy and in 2019 strengthened this by introducing Pastoral Tutors to support students with non-academic issues and to provide signposting to other services such as counselling, mental health support, bursaries and financial support [067, 302]. The role of the pastoral tutor was highlighted as a very positive contribution to students' wellbeing in the student submission [SWS].

139   In order to monitor student progression and performance, and identify at-risk students, WCG uses an online learning monitoring system to track students and produce reports at managerial and programme level [214]. The system also allows students to monitor their own progress through access to tutorial and performance information. The team's review of ASQA Committee minutes [099-101] confirm that this body receives statistical reports on higher education outcomes (progression and awards) [113] and attendance and retention [117] which use data generated through the online system. The minutes of Senior Leadership Team meetings [256-258] also confirm that higher education student performance data is reviewed and discussed on a monthly basis. Furthermore, HEQAS minutes for 2019 and early 2020 [090-092] confirm that student progression and achievement is a standing item on the agenda, enabling the committee to monitor student performance data throughout the year. These minutes also reveal that the Head of HE Quality has developed a higher education Performance Scorecard which provides ongoing data on attendance, retention and progression to HEQAS. This committee receives an overview report at the beginning of the academic year on Higher Education Outcomes [048] analysing the previous years' progression and achievement statistics. The team noted that while the student performance data provided to ASQA and HEQAS is detailed and analytical, the minutes recording discussion of data are brief and do not always indicate action in response to the reporting (see paragraph 160 in Criterion E). Student performance data is also reported on at course level in the annual course review process [020-022, 324, 326] and is used to identify actions for Quality Improvement Plans [168-170, 323, 325] for the following year. The team concluded that WCG has administrative systems which enable

it to monitor student progression and performance at course and institutional level and that it does so regularly through its reporting structures.

140   WCG considers that opportunities to engage in work-related learning and develop transferable and employability skills to support progression are fundamental to its approach to course design. Work placement and work-related learning form part of all WCG's foundation degrees as outlined in the Work Based and Placement Learning Procedures [072]. In addition, the T-shaped Framework [056] describes a model of curriculum design for developing enterprise, entrepreneurship and employability skills alongside academic and technical skills. In order to implement this, WCG has developed a common ASSET module [193] which forms part of the curriculum of its foundation degrees in addition to work placement [039i, 040i, 041-047, 194]. External examiner reports [034, 035, 036, 040k, 040l] and recent external industry advisers reports from, for example, the periodic review of FdA Digital Film Production [037] and FdA Games Art [038] comment positively on the embedding of relevant employability skills and attributes in curriculum design.

141   In addition to programme-level activities designed to develop students' employability skills and understanding, WCG has instituted since 2018 an annual higher education student conference focusing on a variety of contemporary industry themes with external speakers and opportunities for students to engage in interdisciplinary discussion [270-272], and in 2019 convened an academic conference on the theme of 'game play' and 'serious gaming' [274-276]. The Careers Self-assessment [245] and the Online Careers Service Reports [247-249] demonstrate that WCG maintains a comprehensive cross-College careers advice service with access to electronic resources and one-to-one support from careers advisers. In the student submission, students commend the careers advice available in the College [SWS]. Study skills support is embedded within the curriculum through the ASSET module on WCG foundations degrees and Coventry University Level 6 provision. Support is also available through the Library [222] and all students receive a useful Student Handbook for Writing Skills [195]. The team also saw evidence of clearly structured and helpful materials being used in tutorials to support the development of students' academic skills [189-195]. With regards to digital skills, WCG's Digital Strategy 2019 [213] and the Higher Education Strategy [010] include objectives to create technology-enhanced learning and students are introduced to digital resources and the use of the virtual learning environment during induction [215] and receive pertinent information through the Student Handbook [080]. Library services staff also provide guidance on accessing electronic resources and developing research skills [222]. The team considered that opportunities for the development of students' academic and professional skills was strategically led and embedded within the student experience from induction, and throughout their studies.

142   WCG has a strong commitment to fairness and impartiality, and the removal of barriers to learning in its approach to enabling student development and achievement. This commitment is evident in its overall corporate strategy [004], supported by its Equality and Diversity Policy [053] and its Access and Participation Plan [250]. The College takes active steps to monitor the recruitment, progression and achievement of students with regard to ethnicity, gender, age, disability and socio-economic background, to ensure that it supports the development and achievement of all students. Student performance data reported on at institutional level at ASQA and HEQAS [090-092], and at course level in annual course reviews [020-022, 324, 326], is presented and analysed by student characteristics. The minutes of HEQAS [090-092] also demonstrate that monitoring progress against Access and Participation Plan [250] targets is a standing item on the HEQAS agenda. WCG's responsiveness to the needs of students is demonstrated, for example, by developments to improve services for students with learning difficulties through the creation of a dedicated higher education Inclusion Services [252, 253], enhanced induction activities to identify and assess students with additional learning needs, the development of an integrated foundation year on some degree programmes to promote access to underrepresented groups, the creations of the role of HE Pastoral Tutor and the maintenance of bursaries and a student hardship fund [114; 250].

143   As part of its partnership agreements with its degree awarding bodies [011, 012, 013, 014] WCG currently has devolved responsibility for the provision of resources to support students at Level 6 and, as the evidence above demonstrates, has effective systems in place to determine and evaluate resources required to enable students' development and achievement. In recent years, WCG has allocated money, as evidenced in its Teaching Capital Investment Framework returns [223, 224], in new course developments at Level 6 in the specialist areas of provision it intends to focus on in the future. This has included the purchase of equipment for creative arts and animal therapies; the refurbishment of classrooms; and investment in statistical software packages to support students' research activities. WCG has further plans, as outlined in its application for BDAP, to invest in additional computer labs and further develop dedicated higher education study spaces to support Level 6 provision [302]. The team formed the view that WCG's current approach and plans for the future would provide an effective foundation to support the development and achievement of all students up to and including Level 6.

Conclusions

144   The assessment team formulated its judgement against this criterion according to the process set out in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment by QAA, October 2019*, in particular Annex 4.

145   WCG has a strategic, coherent and integrated approach to the provision of a learning environment to support all students with evidence of internal cooperation between professional services, academic departments and student representatives in the planning, development and evaluation of student support. The strategic approach is supported by the use of service level agreements with clear targets and action plans. Effective monitoring and evaluation of support services is undertaken through the management and committee structure and annual self-assessment process, and involves consideration of student and other stakeholder feedback. Students are effectively inducted into their courses of study and arrangements are in place to identify and assess individual learning needs early in the student journey. Administrative systems maintained by the College provide data and reports on student progression and performance which are reviewed as part of the annual quality monitoring and self-assessment process.

146   WCG has a strong focus on work-related learning and the development of transferable skills, and in addition to providing work-placement opportunities has developed a model of curriculum at foundation degree level to embed a range of employability, personal, professional skills and career management skills into the curriculum. WCG's commitment to fairness and impartiality, and the removal of barriers to learning, is evident in the provision of a comprehensive and responsive range of services to support students which take into account the needs of a diverse student body.

147   If granted degree awarding powers to Level 6, WCG proposes to continue to develop the environment for enabling student development and achievement by building on its current strategic and operational approach. The team formed the view that this is credible in view of WCG's experience of providing effective support for student development and achievement on its own foundation degrees and Level 6 programmes developed in partnership with its university partners over many years. The team concludes, therefore, that the criterion is met.

Criterion E: Evaluation of performance

Criterion E1 - Evaluation of performance

148   This Criterion states that:

E1:   *An organisation granted degree awarding powers takes effective action to assess its own performance, respond to identified weaknesses and develop further its strengths.*

149   The QAA assessment team conducted an assessment of this criterion according to the process set out in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment for Variation and Revocation of Degree Awarding Powers (December 2019*).

The evidence considered and why the team considered this evidence

150   The QAA team assessed this criterion by reference to a range of evidence gathered according to the process described in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment by QAA (October 2019)*, in particular the suggested evidence outlined in Annex 5 and WCG's submission. The assessment team identified and considered this evidence for the purposes described in Annex 4 and 5 of this Guidance as follows.

a   To assess whether critical self-assessment is integral to the operation of its higher education provision and that action is taken in response to matters raised through internal or external monitoring and review, the team reviewed the WCG academic committee structure [086], the HE Quality and Enhancement Policy [075], the Course Approval and Review Procedures [054], the Higher Education Quality Improvement Plan [370], reports of periodic reviews with partners [025-027], documents relating to a Course Periodic Review [040a-p], annual course reports [020, 021, 022, 324, 326], and associated Quality Improvement Plans [168-170, 323, 325], responses to external examiners [119, 120, 211, 212, 178] and institutional reports on higher education outcomes [048], on the conduct of assessment boards and on external examiner reports [034, 090, 107, 210, 254, 255]. The team also read a range of reports prepared for WCG committees on the higher education scorecard [259], complaints [112], higher education quality [113, 117], resources [125], access and participation [116], higher education curriculum [114], service standards [221, 222, 238, 240-245, 250], and on apprenticeships [124]), student satisfaction [032-033], progression and achievement [048], higher education awards [118] and on external examiners [034, 210]. Minutes of HEQAS [090, 255], of Quality Review Meetings [180, 182], ASQA [099, 100, 101] and of the Senior Leadership Team [256, 257, 258] were also considered.

b   To establish that clear mechanisms exist for assigning and discharging action in relation to the scrutiny and monitoring of its academic provision, the team reviewed organisational and governance structure charts [002, 008, 086]; terms of reference of relevant committees (Academic Board, HEQAS, HESEC, HETREC) [082, 083, 084, 085] and minutes of Academic Board, HEQAS, HESEC, HETREC, ASQA and the Board of the Corporation [087, 088, 090-100, 102, 103, 373-377].

c   To identify how ideas and expertise from within and outside the College are drawn into its arrangements for programme design, approval, delivery and review, the team reviewed minutes of HEQAS and HETREC [090, 096, 255, 375], external examiner and industry adviser reports [037-038], Course Approval and Review procedures and examples of two course approvals [054, 037-039] and a periodic review [040a-p], engagement with Advance HE [255, 264] and evidence of higher education conferences organised and contributed to by WCG [265, 267-269].

How any samples of evidence were constructed

151   All evidence submitted by the College in respect of this criterion was considered by the team and provided sufficient information that no further sampling was undertaken.

What the evidence shows

152   The assessment team's analysis of the evidence led to the following observations.

153   There are clearly articulated mechanisms and structures for the evaluation of performance. The HE Quality and Enhancement Policy [075] and the Course Approval and Review Procedures [054] describe the mechanisms used in the operation of WCG's higher education provision aimed at ensuring critical self-assessment. The mechanisms of self-assessment include course approval and review, annual course review, the use of external examiner and industry adviser reports, reflecting on student evaluation and feedback, monitoring course performance through the use of data, and a cycle of quality review meetings [075]. The mechanisms for the evaluation of higher education performance sit within the overall WCG framework for monitoring and review which includes self-assessment of cross-College services such as library, admissions, careers, counselling and welfare through a Services Standards annual report [221].

154   The team's review of arrangements for annual course review of WCG's foundation degree provision (also discussed in B2) confirmed that Subject Leaders produce Annual Course Reports (ACRs) and Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs). The ACRs reviewed by the team [020-022, 324, 326] demonstrate that the review process is evidence-based, drawing on student data provided by HEQT to course teams, external examiner and student feedback. A well-structured standard template with clear instructions for completion is used. Data reported on includes student attendance, student characteristics and student achievement at module and course level. Although the team noted some inconsistency in the depth of reflective commentary, the reports contained review and evaluation of a wide range of issues, including student engagement, the effectiveness of teaching and assessment, student feedback mechanisms, resources, staff research and scholarly activity and student achievement. ACRs are scrutinised by the HE Quality Team before being approved. The associated QIPs [168-170, 323, 325] considered by the team were comprehensive, identifying actions, cross-referenced in most cases with the ACRs, with timelines, and responding to issues raised by external examiners and the course team's review. Quality Review Meetings (QRMs) [180-182] held during the spring and summer terms involving HEQT, the Dean of Higher Education and the Subject Leader monitor the implementation of the QIPs and review in-year performance, including student progression and achievement data. The minutes of the Quality Review Meetings (QRMs) reviewed by the team [180-182] confirm that such in-year monitoring takes place with careful consideration of student retention, attendance and performance data, emerging student feedback from surveys, and progress in relation to responses to external examiner reports and actions relating to the QIPs.

155   In addition to annual course review, WCG also undertakes periodic review of its foundation degrees every four to six years. Periodic/partnership review is also undertaken by the awarding bodies in respect of their awards [025, 026, 027]. The team's review of the documents recording the Course Periodic Review (CPR) of WCG's FdA Games Art in 2020 [040a-p] demonstrates a systematic and evidence-based approach to review with student, external and internal academic, and industry expert membership of the review panel. Panel members provide their evaluation of the programme prior to the review event in the form of a standard template covering programme structure, curriculum content, learning, teaching and assessment, employer engagement, resources and staffing [040 e-g]. The minutes of the FdA Games Art periodic review [040b] record consideration of external and internal feedback and identification of areas for further development based on the panel deliberations. The HE Quality Improvement Plan [370] demonstrates that actions from annual course review and

periodic course review are gathered together, overseen and monitored by the Dean of Higher Education and Deputy Principal [370].

156   The institutional annual self-assessment process includes review and evaluation of student support areas such as library, careers, welfare and counselling. Self-assessment reports and improvement plans [222, 238, 243, 244, 245] are produced annually by each student service area and demonstrate reflection on performance against standards agreed in service level agreements [241, 242, 243]. The process is overseen by the Deputy Principal and the outcomes, brought together in the Service Standards Annual Report [221], and minutes confirm that these are presented to ASQA [100]. The self-evaluation reports for library, welfare, counselling and careers services reviewed by the team [221, 222, 238, 243, 245] confirm consideration of student satisfaction data gathered from cross-College surveys and services area surveys, and that actions to improve service to students are identified in response to feedback and self-evaluation. On the basis of the evidence reviewed above, the team formed the view that WCG's approaches to self-assessment at course and institutional level are systematic, evidence based and responsive to matters raised through internal and external monitoring and review.

157   The WCG organisation chart [003], the governance structure [008] and the academic committee structure [086] set out a clear framework for assigning responsibilities for the monitoring and scrutiny of higher education provision. The operation of higher education provision is overseen through a committee structure which comprises the Higher Education Academic Board and its three subcommittees. Academic Board reports to the Governors' Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee (ASQA). The terms of reference [082, 083, 084, 085] for Academic Board and the subcommittees indicate that each plays a role in the monitoring and enhancement of higher education with HEQAS's main purpose being to 'lead academic debate to underpin the quality and standards of higher education at WCG' and monitor and review higher education provision, through receipt of annual and periodic reports on higher education quality and academic standards [083].

158   The team saw evidence of systematic reporting on higher education provision within the committee structure in accordance with the remit of each committee. The Higher Education Quality and Academic Standards Committee (HEQAS), chaired by the Deputy Group Principal, receives an annual summary report on external examiner feedback [034] and a detailed report on actions taken in response to external examiner feedback [210]. It also receives reports on the results of student satisfaction surveys [032, 033], the conduct of assessment boards [107, 254], a higher education 'scorecard' which reports at each meeting on attendance and retention [259] and higher education outcomes reports with analysis of retention, progression and achievement data [048]. The AQSA Committee, where governors consider reports relating to quality and performance across the College Group, including higher education strategies and risks, also receives regular reports on higher education such as analysis of complaints and compliments [112], higher education curriculum and quality [113, 115, 117], updates on the Access and Participation Plan [116], higher education awards [118] and higher education apprenticeships [124]. The HE Annual Quality 2018-19 report made to ASQA [113] gives a detailed breakdown of student progression and success and refers to following up the recommendations of the periodic reviews undertaken by partners. The HE Curriculum Report presented by the Dean of Higher Education in 2019 [114] addresses the organisational restructure of higher education management, progress against the WCG access and participation plan, curriculum rationalisation and areas for development, and an update on academic staff research and scholarly activities. Reports reviewed by the team were clear and detailed and demonstrated good knowledge of the data presented, although in some cases lacked information on action [048, 107]. For example, the HE Annual Quality Report [113] gives a detailed breakdown of student progression and success and refers to following up the recommendations of the periodic reviews undertaken by partners. However, the actions listed in the report do not address all the issues such as gender attainment gaps, and it is therefore unclear from this report what, if any, action is

being taken. Similarly, a presentation on access and participation [116] shows good knowledge of the data and the targets for improving access, progression and success but does not outline the actions to be taken. WCG confirmed that discussion on student progression and achievement takes place in working groups established to report into HEQAS, and that debate also takes place in HESEC [M1].

159   The minutes of committees reviewed by the team [087-103] largely demonstrated a conscientious approach and alignment with terms of reference [082-085]. The minutes of HEQAS considered by the team [090-092] for 2019-20 confirm consideration of reports by the Committee relating to, for example, student performance data, NSS survey results and external examiner feedback. However, the team noted that critical self-assessment is not well evidenced in the minutes which were brief, tended not to provide a detailed record of debate and were not always clear on the actions being taken in response to the analyses provided in the reports. For example, the minutes of the HEQAS meeting [090] which considered the HE Outcomes Report [048] records positive outcomes for retention and for degree outcomes but do not give any indication of what actions might be taken to address weaknesses in other areas such as discrepancies in gender or BAME achievement noted in the report [090]. The minutes of the consideration by HEQAS [091] of the report on foundation degree assessment boards [107] record that the assessment boards were run professionally but do not comment on points made within the report about, for example, percentages of students who have passed or recommend any actions in this regard. In contrast, at a governor level at ASQA [099, 100, 101] and at the Board of the Corporation [102, 103], the team saw evidence in minutes of detailed recording of robust debate on the content of reports.

160   The team discussed the recording of debate and actions at HEQAS in their meeting with senior staff. Staff acknowledged that the minuting of committee meetings does not fully reflect the level of debate [M1]. However, they were also able to provide evidence of ongoing debate and oversight and allocation of actions involving other groups and committees which feed into the work of HEQAS. For example, the team saw evidence in the minutes of Senior Leadership Team meetings [256-258] that higher education student performance data is reviewed and discussed on a monthly basis. The minutes of HESEC [093-095] confirm that debate and action planning in relation to NSS results takes place and that updating on progress against the NSS action plan is a standing item on the agenda. The team also saw evidence of the full consideration of, and action planning in relation to, equality and diversity in its reports and monitoring of the Access and Participation Plan [250] through the Equality and Diversity Committee and other bodies responsible for the Plan [373-377]. The team concluded that there are clear mechanisms and the assignment of responsibilities for the scrutiny and monitoring of higher education provision.

161   WCG is responsive to, and proactive in seeking, external ideas and expertise to inform programme design, approval, delivery and review. This is demonstrated at course and institution level, where the team saw evidence of conscientious use of external examiner reports in programme delivery and review through clear and detailed responses to their reports [119, 120, 178, 211, 212]; recommendations are addressed at course level in the annual course reports [020, 021, 022], Quality Review Meeting minutes seen by the team show careful consideration of external examiners' comments in review [180, 181], and action is taken at institutional level to identify common themes from external examiner reports which become topics for regular higher education conferences [210, 267-272]. The conference agendas [265, 267-269] for 2018-20 confirm the involvement of internal and external speakers and staff from across WCG to share good practice and develop ideas on such topics as employability, assessment, research methods and the professional standards framework delivered by Advance HE.

162   External academic and employer expertise is drawn into the design, approval and periodic review of programmes. This is demonstrated in the approval process of the FdSc Agri-Tech which included employer consultation in the development of the programme as

well as external academic and industry advisers on the approval panel [039d, 039h], and the recent periodic review of the FdA Games Art where, again, there was external representation on the review panel [040a-p] (see paragraphs 57 and 82). Industry advisers are also appointed to each foundation degree to provide ongoing feedback on whether the programmes are meeting objectives in relation to preparing students for employment. Advisers are invited to meet staff and students, read through course and placement handbooks, look at examples of student work and information related to the student experience related to their work-based and placement learning. The adviser reports read by the team for Digital Film Production and Games Art [037, 038] comment positively on 'tutors' active engagement with industry and their willingness to respond to feedback' [038] and on the course 'reflecting industry standards' [037]. WCG is also a member of LANDEX (Land Based Colleges & Universities Aspiring to Excellence) and participates in peer review processes with other members. The main points arising from the peer review in 2019 are reported in the WCG annual higher education report to ASQA [113].

163   Evidence of staff involvement in research and scholarly activity contained in, for example, the minutes of HETREC [096-098] and the higher education report to ASQA [114] demonstrates that teaching staff who design and deliver programmes have access to development opportunities which enable them to bring a range of professional experience gained externally and internally to inform the curriculum, teaching and student learning, and assessment (also see paragraph 117 in Criterion C). WCG has actively pursued HEA fellowship for its staff, with 20 having achieved that status in 2018-19 and 15 staff having indicated their intention to complete their HEA application by December 2020 [255, 264]. The CEO and Group Principal both serve on sector bodies and other members of the leadership team also engage with groups such as the Association of Colleges and acting as Teaching Excellence Framework panellists. On the basis of the evidence reviewed above, the team found that WCG effectively draws on ideas from within and outside the organisation in the operation of its arrangements for course design, approval, delivery and review.

Conclusions

164   The assessment team formulated its judgement against this criterion according to the process set out in *Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment by QAA, October 2019*, in particular Annex 4.

165   WCG undertakes systematic and thorough monitoring of its programmes and support services through its internal processes and in partnership with awarding bodies. The review processes are comprehensive and evidence-based, drawing on internal and external feedback. It is aware of how it performs in comparison with other similar providers through its external examining process and engagement with external advisers and peers and makes effective use of external feedback in responding to identified weaknesses and further developing its curriculum, teaching and assessment practices.

166   The WCG governance and committee structures are clear and identify the allocation of responsibility for the scrutiny and monitoring of its academic provision. Although the team noted a lack of detail in the recording of debate and action planning relating to reports presented to the HEQAS, the team was assured through discussion with senior staff, and evidence relating to the operation of monitoring mechanisms, that action is assigned and discharged effectively within the committee structure.

167   WCG actively seeks ideas and expertise from within and outside the organisation to support its arrangements for programme design, approval, delivery and review. Senior staff are engaged in a number of external fora and teaching staff are supported to undertake a range of qualifications, professional and scholarly activities, including conference attendance, engagement as external examiners and fellowship of the HEA. WCG draws on external academic and industry feedback in course design and the approval processes and

engages industry advisers for ongoing feedback on the currency and relevance of curricula. The team concludes, therefore, that the criterion is met.

Full DAPs overarching criterion

168   The Full DAPs overarching criterion is that 'the provider is a self-critical, cohesive academic community with a proven commitment to the assurance of standards supported by effective quality systems'.

Conclusions

169   WCG has in place effective means of critically reviewing its own performance, responding to identified weakness and building on its strengths. There is appropriate allocation of responsibilities and clear mechanisms for the scrutiny and monitoring of academic provision at course and institutional level. The mechanisms include, for example, the annual course review and cross-College self-assessment process and the preparation of monitoring reports for its governance and deliberative committees. WCG is proactive in seeking and taking action in response to ideas and expertise from within and outside the institution, engaging staff, students, external examiners, employers, external academics and industry advisers in programme design, the development of teaching and learning, course approval and review. WCG is outward-facing and well connected across the sector and actively engages with external bodies. The team found critical self-assessment is not always well evidenced in the minutes of HEQAS which has a remit to monitor and review higher education provision through the receipt of annual and periodic reports relating to higher education quality and academic standards. The team also noted inconsistencies in the level of reflective commentary in annual course reviews and some discrepancies between the course reviews and the subsequent Quality Improvement Plans. However, the team was assured from its discussions with staff, and the wider evidence base, that rigorous debate and action planning takes place in response to monitoring and reporting and that WCG is aware of and addressing the need to improve the annual course review process. The team formed the view that WCG has a self-critical approach enabling it to assess its performance, identify deficiencies and take timely and effective remedial action.

170   There is a cohesive academic community, enabled through the higher education strategy that articulates a clear vision and purpose for the provision of higher education. There are clearly defined deliberative structures which facilitate debate and the sharing of ideas. Staff are brought together as members of deliberative committees and are involved in the development of strategy and policy. Staff involved in the delivery and support of higher education are also involved in the design of curricula and the development of student support services. WCG actively promotes the development of curricula and pedagogy informed by research and best academic, professional and industry practice and ensures that staff are appropriately qualified and supported to engage in a range of professional activities. Regular higher education conferences organised through HETREC provide opportunities to share subject and pedagogic practice and learn about colleagues' research and scholarly activity. Students are effectively engaged as members of the academic community through involvement in academic governance and deliberative committees, and the provision of feedback on their experience. WCG's approach to supporting its academic community is guided by a demonstrable commitment to equity for staff and students.

171   There are clear systems in place for the setting and maintenance of academic standards of WCG's foundation degrees and the qualifications it offers in partnership with other awarding bodies. Programme approval and periodic review arrangements are robust and demonstrate the use of external and independent expertise and take account of external reference points to ensure that standards are set at levels which correspond to the relevant levels of the FHEQ. The team found that records of course approval and review events did not always explicitly confirm academic standards. However, the team was assured from the wider evidence base that qualifications are defined and offered at the appropriate level. Processes of assessment of student work and the conduct of assessment boards ensure that credit and qualifications are awarded in accordance with its academic regulations and

only where the achievement of relevant learning outcomes and academic standards have been demonstrated. Annual course review arrangements and reporting structures are in place to provide ongoing monitoring of standards. WCG makes appropriate use of external examiners in assessment and confirming that standards are met. The team found one instance in which WCG's report to an awarding body in response to an external examiner report did not explicitly address the external's comments but was satisfied from the wider evidence base that actions taken in response to external examiner feedback are appropriate.

172   The assessment team formed the view that WCG has a self-critical, cohesive academic community with a proven commitment to the assurance of standards supported by effective quality systems.

Annex

Evidence

	Warwickshire College - Evidence List
Ref	**Document**
000	WCG Self Assessment (submitted 090320)
001	WCG Annual Report for Stakeholders 2019
002	WCG Map and College Directors
003	College Organisational Chart
004	College Strategy Delivering Successful Futures
005	WCG Annual Success Indicators 2019-20
006	HE Guiding Principles
007	Higher Education Timeline
008	WCG Governance Structure Feb 2020
009	WCG Higher Education Strategy 2019-2023
010	HE Teaching and Learning Strategy
011	Programme Approval Agreement Coventry University
012	Collaboration Agreement University of Gloucestershire
013	University of Gloucestershire Schedules 2019-2020
014	Partnership Agreement University of Worcester
015	Corporation Standing Orders
016	Warwickshire College Instrument and Articles of Government 2019
017	WCG Advisory Board Structure
018	WCG Learning and Development (HR) Strategy 2017-2020
019	WCG Recruitment and Selection Strategy 2016-2020
020	WCG Annual Course Report - Counselling 2019-20
021	WCG Annual Course Report - Business and Computing 2019-20
022	WCG Annual Course Report - Digital Film Production 2019-2020
023	WCG Academic Regulations 2019-2020 Foundation Degree
024	WCG Draft Academic Regulations 2020-2021 BDAP
025	Coventry University - WCG Periodic Review Report May 2019
026	University of Gloucestershire - 5 Yearly Partnership Review Report June 2019
027	University of Worcester - WCG Partnership Review Report March 2019
028	Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Quality Monitoring Report November 2015
029	CCC minutes FdA & BA (Hons) Digital Film Production December 2019
030	CCC minutes FdA Early Years Educator Level 4 November 2019
031	NSS Report 2019
032	Report on First Impressions Survey 2019-20
033	HE Course Survey Feedback 2018-19
034	HEQAS Report - External Examiner Summary Report 2018-2019
035	External Examiner Report FdA Digital Film Production 2018-2019
036	External Examiner Report FdA Early Years Educator 2018-2019
037	Industry Advisor Report FdA Digital Film Production 2018-2019
038	Industry Advisor Report FdA Games Art 2018-19
	Agri-Tech Approval August 2018
039a	Agenda for Course Approval Panel
039b	Application for Approval and Resources Statement
039c	Approval Letter for FdSc Agri-Tech
039d	FdSc Agri-tech Panel Decision 14-8-18
039e	FdSc Agri-tech AP1H Approval Request
039f	Course Handbook FdSc Agric-tech approved
039g	Prog Spec-FdSc Agri-tech approved
039h	FdSc AgriTech Approval Panel Minutes

039i	FdSc AgriTech Module Handbook - approved
039j	Programme Spec Agri Tech - pre-approval
039k	Course Handbook Agri Tech - pre-approval
039l	Module 402HOR - pre-approval/with conditions
039m	Module 407HOR - pre-approval/with conditions
039n	Module 412HOR - pre-approval/with conditions
039o	Module 413HOR - pre-approval/with conditions
039p	Module 414HOR - pre-approval/with conditions
039q	Module 499HOR - pre-approval/with conditions
039r	Module 501HOR - pre-approval/with conditions
039s	Module 502HOR - pre-approval/with conditions
039t	Module 510HOR - pre-approval/with conditions
039u	Module 503HOR - pre-approval/with conditions
039v	Module 509HOR - pre-approval/with conditions
039w	Course team presentation at approval panel
	Games Art Periodic Review February 2019
040a	Agenda for Periodic Review - FdA Games Art
040b	FdA Games Art Periodic Review Minutes
040c	Games Art - Subject Leader Presentation
040d	Panel - External academic feedback
040e	Panel - Industry expert feedback
040f	Panel - Internal academic feedback
040g	Panel - Student feedback
040h	Course Handbook FdA Games Art
040i	Module Handbook FdA Games Art
040j	Prog Spec Fda Game Art
040k	External Examiner Report FdA Games Art 2017-18
040l	External Examiner Report FdA Games Art 2018-19
040m	FdA Games Art Modules with tracked changes
040n	FdA Games Art Programme Spec with tracked changes
040o	FdA Games Art Module Handbook draft
040p	FdA Games Art Programme Spec draft
041	FdA Digital Film Production Programme Specification
042	FdSc Counselling and Psychotherapy Programme Specification
043	FdA Business and Management Course Handbook 2019-2020
044	FdSc Counselling and Psychotherapy Course Handbook 2019-2020
045	Module Guide 415CIT Computing and Emerging Technology
046	Module Guide 573BMT The Financial Manager
047	Module Descriptors FdA Performing Arts
048	HEQAS Report - HE Outcomes Report 2018-19
049	HE Assessment Board Procedures v2
050	HE Admissions Policy v2
051	HE Recognition of Prior Learning Policy v2
052	RLP Procedures v2
053	Equality and Diversity Policy v4
054	Course Approval and Review Procedures v3
055	HE Course Closure and Suspension Procedure v2
056	WCG T shaped framework
057	HE Assessment Policy v5
058	HE Academic Appeal Procedure v2
059	HE Academic Misconduct Procedure v2
060	HE Extenuating Circumstances Procedure v2
061	HE Ethics Procedure v2
062	Secure Certification Procedure v2

063	HE Access Arrangements for Examinations v2
064	HE Examinations Conduct Procedure v2
065	HE Learning and Teaching Policy v3
066	HE Fitness to Study Policy v1
067	HE Tutorial Policy V3
068	External Examiner Guidance
069	WCG EE Report Template
070	Industry Advisor Guidance
071	WCG IA Report Template
072	HE WBPL Procedure v2
073	Course Consultative Committee Guidelines
074	HE Complaints Procedure v4
075	HE Quality Enhancement Policy v6
076	HE Quality Framework 2019-20
077	HE Quality Improvement Cycle 2019-20
078	HE Quality and Enhancement Manual
079	HE Management Team Organisation Chart
080	HE Student Handbook 2019-2020
081	HE Schedules of Business 2019-20
082	HE Academic Board Terms of Reference 2019-20
083	HE Quality and Academic Standards Terms of Reference
084	HESEC Terms of Reference
085	HETREC Terms of Reference
086	WCG Academic Committee Structure 2019-20
087	HE Academic Board Minutes 3.10.19
088	HE Academic Board Minutes 12.12.19
089	HE Academic Board minutes 30.1.20
090	HEQAS Minutes 2.12.19
091	HEQAS Minutes 9.9.19
092	HEQAS Minutes 27.1.20
093	HESEC Minutes 12.9.19
094	HESEC Minutes 16.1.20
095	HESEC Minutes 28.11.19
096	HETREC Minutes 13.1.20
097	HETREC Minutes 18.11.19
098	HETREC Minutes 23.09.19
099	ASQA Minutes 8 October 2019
100	ASQA Minutes 10 December 2019
101	ASQA Minutes 11 February 2020 Draft
102	Board Minutes 17 December 2018
103	Board Minutes 13 February 2018
104	Audit Minutes 6 December 2019
105	Audit Minutes 13 February 2019
106	Board Minutes Special Board 22 May 2018
107	HEQAS Report on Assessment Boards
108	SAB minutes June 2019 Series BMT-CIT
109	CAB Minutes June 2019 Series BMT-CIT
110	(re)Assessment Board Minutes August Series BMT-CIT
111	Example Transcript
112	Report to ASQA Complaints and Compliments Annual report
113	Report to ASQA HE Annual Quality Report
114	Report to ASQA HE Curriculum Report November 2019
115	Presentation to ASQA HE Curriculum Report
116	Presentation circulated to ASQA APP E&D Committee

117	Report to ASQA Quality Monitoring Report for Higher Education	
118	Report to ASQA WCG HE awards 2018-19	
119	EE Response Letter WCG FdA Early Years 2018-19	
120	EE Response Letter WCG Fd Business and Management 2019-20	
121	HE Student Outcomes Analysis 2016	
122	HE Student Outcomes Analysis 2017	
123	HE Student Outcomes Analysis 2018	
124	Report to ASQA Annual Apprenticeship Report	
125	Report to Resources Committee - Higher Education	
126	WCG Self-Assessment (submitted 080420)	
127	FESAB Terms of Reference	
128	FESAB Template - proposal for new courses	
129	FESAB Template - apprenticeship costing	
130	FESAB Minutes for L5 Apprenticeship approval	
131	FESAB Approval proposal for L5 apprenticeship	
132	FESAB Apprenticeship delivery model costs for L5	
133	FESAB HR Apprenticeship Standards L5	
134	Policy Approval Process	
135	Procedure Approval Process	
136	Testimony from Sabbatical President	
137	Student Envoy proposal	
138	Role description for Student Envoy	
139	Job description for Dean of Higher Education	
140	CV for Dean of Higher Education	
141	JD for Director of Apprenticeships (Engineering)	
142	CV for Director of Apprenticeships (Engineering)	
143	JD for Assistant Dean	
144	CV for Assistant Dean	
145	JD for Head of Engineering	
146	CV for Head of Engineering	
147	JD for HE Subject Lead	
148	CV for SL Digital Film and Media	
149	CV for SL Business, Computing, Professional Studies	
150	CV for SL Counselling and Early Years	
151	CV for SL Veterinary Physiotherapy	
152	CV for SL Veterinary Nursing	
153	JD Professor in Agri-tech	
154	CV Professor in Agri-tech	
155	JD Associate Professor	
156	CV Associate Professor	
157	Article from Worcestershire LEP	
158	UoG Validation Report Engineering	
159	UoG Overview Report Engineering	
160	UoG Library Resources Engineering	
161	UoG Handbook for Engineering	
162	UoG Programme Specification Engineering	
163	UoG Planning Approval	
164	UoG Engineering Modules	
165	UoG EE Report Engineering	
166	UoG EE Response	
167	UoG CER for Engineering	
168	QIP for Digital Film	
169	QIP for Business and Computing	
170	QIP for Early Years and Counselling	

171	UoG CER for Business
172	UoG CER for Games Art
173	CU CQEM for Early Years
174	HEQT Overview Report
175	CU June Series SAB minutes Veterinary Physiotherapy
176	CU June Series CAB minutes Veterinary Physiotherapy
177	CU EE Report Veterinary Physiotherapy
178	CU Response to EE
179	CU CQEM Report for Veterinary Physiotherapy
180	QRM Minutes Business and Computing
181	QRM Minutes Counselling and Early Years
182	QRM Minutes Games Art
183	Academic Panel Member Briefing
184	Industry Panel Member Briefing
185	Student Panel Member Briefing
186	Course Approval Chair Briefing
187	Panel Member Feedback Form
188	HE Academic Tutorial Schedule
188b	HE Assessment Guide
189	Academic Tutorial Presentation - L4 Note Taking
190	Academic Tutorial Presentation - SWOT Analysis
191	Academic Tutorial Presentation - Step up to L5
192	Academic Tutorial Presentation - Step up to L6
193	ASSET Module Guide example
194	ASSET Presentation example
195	Student Handbook for Writing Skills example
196	Example of contextualised grading criteria
197	One-to-one academic tutorial template on ProMonitor
198	One-to-one academic tutorial example from ProMonitor
199	Academic conduct as part of library induction
200	Intranet pages for academic misconduct
201	HE Academic Misconduct
202	Academic Misconduct as part of ASSET module
203	Academic Misconduct within course handbook
204	Intranet pages for academic appeals and complaints
205	Example of an appeal-complaint
206	RPL Games Art Form - one example
207	Mapping the modules for Games Art
208	Mapping the modules for Business
209	RPL Business Form
210	Report to HEQAS regarding EE Actions
211	EE Response Letter to UoG Games Art
212	EE Response Letter to CU Early Years
213	Digital Strategy
214	ICT Systems and Security Strategy Draft
215	Induction 2019 Overview
216	Orientation
217	Induction Information
218	Student Symposium Activity
219	Careers Presentation
220	Student Terms and Conditions
221	Service Standards Annual Report
222	Library annual self-assessment and improvement plan
223	TCIF Return 2017-18

224	TCIF Return 2018-19
225	HE Course Guide 2020-21
226	Approval to publish course guide
227	CMA Panel Meeting notes for course guide
228	CMA Panel Meeting minutes
229	CMA Panel Meeting minutes
230	CMA Panel Meeting minutes
231	Approval to publish student handbook
232	Example of draft feedback
233	HE Student Handbook 2019-20
234	Resources Committee Terms of Reference
235	Resources Committee minutes October 2019
236	Resources Committee minutes December 2019
237	Resources Committee minutes March 2020 draft
238	Welfare and safeguarding annual SAR and improvement plan
239	Library resource statement
240	IT Services annual SAR and improvement plan
241	Service level agreement IT Services
242	Service level agreement welfare and safeguarding
243	Counselling support
244	Admissions and Registry SAR and improvement plan
245	Careers SAR and improvement plan
246	HE Support Bursary Summary
247	Online Careers Platform report December 2019
248	Online Careers Platform report January 2020
249	Online Careers Platform report March 2020
250	WCG Access and Participation Plan
251	Extract for annual Equality and Diversity Report
252	Inclusion Support data
253	Inclusion Student Journey
254	Report to HEQAS on Conduct of Assessment Board
255	Draft HEQAS minutes 16-03-2020
256	SLT Minutes December 2019
257	SLT Minutes January 2020
258	SLT Minutes February 2020
259	HE Scorecard February 2020
260	Report to ASQA - Committee Success Indicators
261	Clarification of Evidence - student involvement
262	Student Union Officer Roles
263	BDAP Self-Assessment (submitted 210420)
264	WCG Advance HE Fellowship 2018-19
265	HE Staff Conference December 2018
266	Action Research Project by Staff
267	HE Staff Conference December 2019
268	HE Staff Conference July 2018
269	HE Staff Conference July 2019
270	HE Student Conference January 2018
271	HE Student Conference 2019
272	HE Student Conference 2020
273	Interactive Futures Programme 2019
274	Interactive Futures Reviews and Reach 2019
275	Let's Talk Games April 2019
276	WCG - BAU Summer School 2019
277	Foundation Degree Business Module Descriptor

278	Foundation Degree Business Module Guide
279	Foundation Degree Computing Module Descriptor
280	Foundation Degree Computing Module Guide
281	Foundation Degree Counselling Module Descriptor
282	Foundation Degree Counselling Module Guide
283	Foundation Degree Digital Film Module Descriptor
284	Foundation Degree Digital Film Module Guide
285	Foundation Degree Early Years Module Descriptor
286	Foundation Degree Early Years Module Guide
287	Foundation Degree Performing Arts Module Descriptor
288	Foundation Degree Performing Arts Module Guide
289	Level 6 Degree Animal Module Descriptor
290	Level 6 Degree Animal Module Guide
291	Level 6 Degree Business Module Descriptor
292	Level 6 Degree Business Module Guide
293	Level 6 Degree Counselling Module Descriptor
294	Level 6 Degree Counselling Module Guide
295	Level 6 Degree Digital Film Module Descriptor
296	Level 6 Degree Digital Film Module Guide
297	Level 6 Degree Early Years Module Descriptor
298	Level 6 Degree Early Years Module Guide
299	Level 6 Degree Equine Module Descriptor
300	Level 6 Degree Equine Module Guide
301	Draft - Enabling Student Achievement
302	BDAP Self-Assessment (submitted 260520)
303	UoG EE Report Business
304	UoG EE Response Business
305	UoG EE Report Counselling
306	UoG EE Response Counselling
307	Pearson EE Report Engineering
308	Pearson EE Response Engineering
309	Pearson EE Report Graphic Design
310	Pearson EE Response Graphic Design
311	WCG EE Report Counselling
312	WCG EE Response Counselling
313	WCG EE Report Engineering
314	WCG EE Response Engineering
315	WCG EE Report Business
316	UoG Programme Specification BA (Hons) Counselling
317	WCG Programme Specification FdA Business
318	WCG Programme Specification FdEng Engineering
319	CU approved WCG regulations
320	CU Periodic Review letter May 2019 - Animal and Equine
321	CU Periodic Review Report May 2019 - Animal and Equine
322	CU Periodic Review Report April 2020 - Early Years
323	WCG FdEng QIP for Engineering - Apprenticeship version
324	WCG FdA ACR for Games Art
325	WCG FdA QIP for Games Art
326	WCG FdEng ACR for Engineering
327	UoG Programme Specification BA (Hons) Business
328	WCG Periodic Review FdA Games Art - Team submission
329	Pearson Programme Spec HN Graphic Design
330	Pearson Programme Spec HN Engineering
331	WCG Course Approval flowchart

332	WCG Checklist Foundation Degree characteristics
333	WCG Guidance on writing module descriptors
334	WCG Guidance on Cognitive and Psychomotor verbs
335	WCG Overview of FHEQ
336	Level 6 Animal Assignment Brief
337	Animal Internal Verification of Assignment Brief
338	Animal Feedback to Student
339	Animal Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions
340	Animal External Verification - EE Report
341	Level 5 Counselling Assignment Brief
342	Counselling Internal Verification of Assignment Brief
343	Counselling Feedback to Student
344	Counselling Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions
345	Level 5 Early Years Assignment Brief
346	Early Years Internal Verification of Assignment Brief
347	Early Years Feedback to Student
348	Early Years Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions
349	Level 5 Digital Film Assignment Brief
350	Digital Film Internal Verification of Assignment Brief
351	Digital Film Feedback to Student
352	Digital Film Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions
353	Level 6 Veterinary Nursing Assignment Brief
354	Veterinary Nursing Internal Verification of Assignment Brief
355	Veterinary Nursing Feedback to Student
356	Veterinary Nursing Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions
357	Veterinary Nursing External Verification - EE Report
358	Level 5 Veterinary Physiotherapy Assignment Brief
359	Veterinary Physiotherapy Internal Verification of Assignment Brief
360	Veterinary Physiotherapy Feedback to Student
361	Veterinary Physiotherapy Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions
362	Level 6 Digital Film Assignment Brief
363	Digital Film Internal Verification of Assignment Brief
364	Digital Film Feedback to Student
365	Digital Film Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions
366	UoG EE Report for Digital Film
367	WCG Course Approval and Review Procedures v4
368	WCG Periodic Review Procedures 2020
369	WCG Panel Member Feedback - Reading Group
370	HE Quality Improvement Plan
371	Annual Course Monitoring Guide
372	How to complete your ACR
373	Report to HE Academic Board APP Progress Report
374	Report to HEQAS APP monitoring of Activity - May 2020
375	Draft HEQAS minutes 040520
376	Access and Participation Plan
377	Equality and Diversity Committee minutes 2619
378	Equality and Diversity Report
379	Request for additional information 260520
SWS	Student Written Submission
WSS1	Website screen shot 1 - WCG Corporation
WSS2	Website screen shot 2 - WCG KIS - Governance (1)
WSS3	Website screen shot 3 - WCG HE page
M1	Meeting with College staff