



Designated Quality Body  
in England

# Assessment for Variation of Degree Awarding Powers

## Blackpool and The Fylde College



Review Report

April 2022

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## Summary of the assessment team's 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 Full DAPs 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 Blackpool and The Fylde College conducted 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 the OfS on whether the provider's existing renewable powers be granted on an indefinite basis and whether the provider'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	Blackpool and The Fylde College
Trading name	Blackpool and The Fylde College
UKPRN	10000754
Type of institution	College of Further and Higher Education
Date founded	1892
Date of first HE provision	1988
Application route	Variation of powers
Level of extended powers applied for (if applicable)	Bachelor Degree Awarding Powers up to and including Level 6 (time-limited)
Location(s) of teaching/delivery	Bispham Campus  University Centre  Lancashire Energy HQ  Fleetwood Nautical Campus
Subject(s) applied for	All subjects
Current powers held	Foundation Degree Awarding Powers (renewable)
Date current powers granted (if applicable)	September 2016
Number of current programmes as at 14 October 2021 [provider submission]	See Annex
Number of students as at 14 October 2021 [provider submission]	Total HE - 2,725 Full time HE - 1,831 Part time HE - 894
Number of staff as at 14 October 2021 [provider submission]	Total HE - 201 HE Academic management - 17 HE Academic staff - 151 HE Professional support staff - 33
Current awarding body arrangements (if applicable)	Validation agreement with Lancaster University

## About Blackpool and The Fylde College

Blackpool and The Fylde College (the College) is a general further education college providing a range of technical and professional education and training courses to approximately 12,000 students annually in Blackpool and at other campuses along the Fylde coastline; around a quarter of these are studying a range of higher education courses at four of the College's campuses. The College was awarded Foundation Degree Awarding Powers (FDAP) in September 2016 and has since then established five awards under these powers. These are FdEng Marine Electrical and Electronic Engineering, FdSc Computer Science and Digital Industries, FdSc Nautical Science, FdSc Physical Activity, Health and Nutrition, and FdSc Sports Coaching and Performance Science. It is now applying for indefinite Foundation Degree Awarding Powers and for an extension to those powers to allow it to award degrees at Level 6 across all subjects.

The College provided a list of 105 higher education programmes that it offers. Of these, 76 are offered through its validation partnership with Lancaster University which saw the first such programme validated in 1992. The College confirms that it plans to continue this partnership which it values and sees as strategically important. It is, therefore, seeking only to exercise its DAPs in new and niche areas as exemplified in the foundation courses listed above. This strategy will also be applied to the Level 6 degree awarding powers (BDAP) that the College is seeking as part of its strategy to meet local, regional, and national skills priorities and current and future education and workforce needs.

The remainder of its portfolio are Higher National, Advanced Certificate and Diploma programmes that are offered in conjunction with Pearson and the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), or other courses that are offered in conjunction with chartered bodies such as the Association for Project Management (APM) and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). A full list of higher education courses offered, and the relevant awarding body or organisation is provided in an annex to this report.

The application to extend the College's degree awarding powers has been part of its longer term strategy since 2014 when the original decision was made to apply for FDAP. Because of this and the fact that the College has long been offering three-year honours programmes, it considers that it already has the capacity to effectively manage the proposed extension to its degree awarding powers with relatively minor adjustments to its current arrangements, as detailed in this report. The College has, therefore, not submitted detailed plans for the extension of its powers to Level 6. However, it did submit a synopsis of its considerations and planning for the additional powers sought.

The College is governed by the Corporation Board which has responsibility for setting the strategic direction of the College. The HE Academic Board, as the senior academic authority reports to the Corporation Board and is responsible for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities as the senior academic authority for the higher education provision. The HE Academic Board is chaired by the Principal, who is also the Chief Executive of the College.

## 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 OfS referred Blackpool and The Fylde College to QAA for an assessment for the variation of powers on 3 November 2021 and the provider's submission and supporting evidence was received on 14 January 2022. The assessment began on 14 January 2022,

culminating in a final report to the Advisory Committee on Degree Awarding Powers on 19 May 2022 and final advice to the OfS.

The team appointed to conduct the assessment was as follows:

Name: Sarah Mullins  
Institution: DN Colleges Group  
Role in assessment team: Institutional assessor

Name: Linda Greening  
Institution: Hartpury University  
Role in assessment team: Institutional assessor

Name: Phil Berry  
Institution: Middlesex University  
Role in assessment team: Institutional assessor

The QAA Officer was Damon Lane.

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. Details of team members were shared with the provider prior to the assessment to identify and resolve any possible conflicts of interest.

The assessment 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 the OfS's regulatory framework. To support the clarity of communication between providers and QAA, the DAPs criteria and evidence requirements from the 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.

During the assessment, the team read 422 documents in support of the application, of which 308 initial documents were provided as supporting evidence with the self-assessment document. Following a desk-based assessment of this initial evidence against the DAPs criteria, a request for additional evidence was made. The request covered areas from all DAPs criteria which had been identified as requiring further evidence including a particular focus on the College's plans for its proposed Level 6 powers. An additional 114 documents were provided in response. The assessment had been referred by OfS as a desk-based assessment only and after the receipt of the additional evidence the team agreed that it had sufficient evidence to reach judgements about the College's provision and a visit was not warranted. As the College initially provided a significant number of evidence documents, the team found that there was no need to request samples of further evidence and instead requested specific examples of evidence following lines of enquiry across all DAPs criteria.

Details of the evidence the assessment team considered are provided in the 'Explanation of findings' below.

## 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 and how 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 the Guidance for Providers, in particular the suggested evidence outlined in Annex 5 and the provider's submission as follows:
- a To determine whether the College's higher education mission and strategic direction and associated policies are coherent, published, understood and applied consistently, the team reviewed the HE Strategy 2020-2025, [002] the College's Strategy 2022-2025, [003] Staff Intranet Oak screenshots, [501] the College website, [B&FC Strategy December 21.pdf (blackpool.ac.uk); HE Strategy Guide 2020 - 2025\_0.pdf (blackpool.ac.uk)] the Revalidation Document Nuclear Engineering [101] and documents related to training new staff including the New Starter Mentoring Guide [401] and the New to HE Teaching agenda. [461]
- b To determine whether the College's academic policies support its higher education mission, aims and objectives, the team reviewed strategy, frameworks and higher education policy, namely the Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2021-22, [013] Student Engagement Strategy 2020-2023, [016] Apprenticeship Strategy, [031] Employability and Careers Strategy, [032] the HE Work-based Learning Framework [018] and the Development and Observation of Learning Teaching and Assessment Policy, [033] and compared these with the College's Strategy 2022-2025 [003] and the HE Strategy 2020-2025. [002]
- c To determine whether there is clarity and differentiation of function and responsibility at all levels of the organisation in relation to academic governance structures and arrangements for managing higher education provision, the team reviewed the Instrument of Government 2020, [004] the Articles of Government 2020, [005] the Committees Handbook, [009] committee Terms of Reference including the Audit Committee ToR [006] and the Quality and Standards ToR, [007]

meeting minutes, [008; 010; 035-038; 041-048; 053-055; 057; 067; 068; 072; 073; 802-805] the Learning Teaching and Equality Committee Agenda, [050] the HEAB Schedule of Business 2021-2022 [012] and the Academic Standards and Development Committee Schedule of Business 2021-22. [040]

- d To explore whether the function and responsibility of the senior academic authority is clearly articulated and consistently applied, the team reviewed the Quality and Standards ToR, [007] the terms of reference within the Committee Handbook [009] and the HEAB Schedule of Business 2021-2022, alongside HE Academic Board Papers [035-037] and example of Academic Board reports, [059; 062-064] and the Annual report of the HEAB to Quality and Standards Committee. [011]
- e To determine whether there is appropriate depth and strength of academic leadership, the team explored the current management structures within the Committees Handbook, [009] considered information provided in the VDAPs Request for Additional Information, [918] and reviewed CVs and documents outlining relevant experience relating to senior staff. [351-356, 806-809]
- f To explore whether the College develops and implements its policies and procedures with staff, students and external stakeholders, the assessment team examined the Student Engagement Strategy, [016] the Committees Handbook, [009] Academic Regulations Advisory Group ToR [022] and HE relevant policy and procedures and plans including the Health and Safety Policy, [014] the Access and Participation Plan 2020-21 to 2024-25, [015] HE Admissions Procedure, [024] the Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Policy 2021-22 [025] and the Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Procedure 2021-22, [026] the Development and Observation of Learning Teaching and Assessment Policy [033] and Development and Observation of Learning Teaching and Assessment Procedure, [034] the Safeguarding Policy Student 2021- 22 [051] and the Equality Diversity and Inclusion strategy - Draft. [066] The team also reviewed HE Academic Board papers, [035-037] the EDI Strategy Consultation [810; 811] and the BDAP student submission. [800]
- g To explore whether the College communicates its policies and procedures in collaboration with its staff, students and external stakeholders, the team examined student handbooks including the Programme Handbook Automotive and Motorsport Engineering Technology, [049] Programme Handbook Maritime Operations Management Electro Technical [136] and the Programme Handbook Commercial Illustration, [149] the College website, Staff Intranet Oak screenshots [501] and Student Life Intranet screenshots, [503] and the BDAP student submission. [800]
- h To determine whether the College will manage successfully the responsibilities that would be vested in it were it to be granted degree awarding powers, the team considered changes to the governance structure as a result of FDAP as outlined in the Variation of Degree Awarding Powers Self-Assessment [001] and the Considerations and planning for BDAP - a synopsis. [801] The team also reviewed the Committees Handbook [009] and considered comments from external accreditation and review including the Quinquennial Partnership Review with Lancaster University 2020-21, [039] the IET Accreditation Visit Report Advanced Engineering Jan 2021, [731] the Maritime Coastguard Agency Audit Report Dec 2019 [732] and British Computing Society Accreditation Report 2021. [741]
- i To explore how students are engaged, individually and collectively, in the governance and management of the organisation and its higher education provision, the team reviewed the HE Strategy 2020-2025, [002] the Student



Engagement Strategy, [016] the SU Annual Quality Report 2020-21, [017] terms of reference within the Committees Handbook. [009] The team also reviewed the Instrument of Government 2020, [004] Student Union information including Student Union Synopsis [814] and Student Union Sabbatical Officer Job Description, [815] minutes of meeting [035-038; 041-048; 053-055; 067; 068; 072; 073; 802; 803] and the BDAP student submission. [800]

- j To explore how students are supported to be able to engage effectively in the governance and management of the organisation and its higher education provision, the team reviewed documentation relating to Student Union and Student Representative training including Student Union Student Rep Canvas Course screenshots, [601] HE Committees - Being the Student Representative, [604] HE Deliberative Committee Student Union Training [812] and HE Student Union Executive Training. [813]
- k To consider how the organisation works with, or proposes to work with, other organisations to deliver learning opportunities, the team examined information provided by the College in the Variation of Degree Awarding Powers Self-Assessment [001] and the Considerations and planning for BDAP - a synopsis. [801]

### **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 College's Strategy [003] and its HE Strategy [002] coherently set out its core mission of providing 'inspirational learning' and 'creating outstanding futures' alongside its values and strategic goals. The vision includes consideration of government policy and local, regional, and national priorities, with higher education embedded throughout. The team found that the HE Strategy is clear and coherent as it articulates the College's overall mission, vision, core aims and strategic themes and provides an overview of how they will monitor success through key metrics. The HE Strategy, developed in 2019, briefly notes exploring further degree awarding powers; however, the content does suggest a commitment to building on the current portfolio of courses to continue to meet local skills priorities, working with employers and other stakeholders to co-create programmes that meet current and future education and workforce needs in line with the strategic goals of the College. [003] When reviewed together, therefore, the College Strategy and the HE Strategy demonstrate an alignment of the higher education mission with the strategic direction of the College. Key strategy documents are published on the College website [Website] and internally on the staff intranet 'Oak' which includes a dedicated higher education area detailing policies and guidance. [Staff intranet screenshots 501]

- 7 The assessment team noted that the values, aims and themes within the HE Strategy [002] are embedded in various documents and processes, including programme specifications, [103] validation documents, [104] and meetings of committees such as the HE Academic Board. [035 Terms of Reference] The College's Strategy [003] and HE Strategy [002] are an agenda item for meetings with teachers who are new to the higher education provision. [461] An introduction to the mission, values and objectives of the College is also part of the onboarding checklist for mentoring new staff as well as the College's policies and procedures. [401]The College therefore ensures that these values are introduced to and understood by staff.

8 Specific policies such as the Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2021-22, [013] Student Engagement Strategy, [016] Apprenticeship Strategy, [031] Employability and Careers Strategy, [032] and the Development and Observation of Learning Teaching and Assessment Policy, [033] consistently reference the College's Strategy 2022-2025 [003] and the contents align effectively with the HE Strategy 2020-2025, [002] showing a high level of coherence and support for the higher education and College-level mission, aims and objectives. Examples of this include the Apprenticeship Strategy [031] and the HE Work-based Learning Framework [018] which articulate the College's approach and align with the strategic theme in the HE Strategy to create a 'career-aligned technical and professional curriculum with employers which provides opportunities for work-based learning'. The Employability and Careers Strategy [032] articulates the College's vision for this aspect of the provision and aligns with the HE Strategy's theme to develop 'sought after graduates with the knowledge, skills, personal attributes and qualifications to succeed, with both confidence and resilience'. The Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy [013] and Development and Observation of Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy [033] articulate the College's values and its resulting approach which aligns with the HE Strategy's theme to deliver 'scholarship informed teaching, incorporating career enhancing learning opportunities'. The Student Engagement Strategy [016] articulates the College's mission and values and outlines a partnership approach that aligns with the HE Strategy's theme of a partnership with students and staff. The team found, therefore, that academic policies support the consistent application of the College's higher education mission, aims and objectives.

9 The Instrument [004] and Articles of Government [005] identify that the Corporation Board has the key responsibility of setting the strategic direction of the College with functions, processes and responsibilities related to oversight and review of the College's mission, character and resources, and senior staffing. These documents are supported by the Corporation Board minutes which demonstrate consideration and discussion dedicated to higher education, [008; 802; 803] with one meeting also including training for Board members consisting of a 'high level overview of Higher Education'. [802]

10 While the Board approves the overall strategy and financial management of the College, it delegates responsibility for specific governance areas to specialist committees in the form of the Audit Committee and the Quality and Standards Committee. The Audit Committee's purpose, clearly set out in its terms of reference, [006] is to give assurance on behalf of the Board in relation to finance and corporate governance with meeting minutes [805 806] confirming this in practice.

11 The functions and responsibilities of the Quality and Standards Committee [Terms of reference 007] are clear with the committee having the remit of monitoring high-quality learning, teaching and assessment, scrutinising performance, quality and standards and monitoring key performance indicators in parallel with the HE Academic Board. Quality and Standards Committee minutes [010; 057] reflect its purpose as identified in its terms of reference and show consideration of higher education embedded throughout, including key higher education quality and standards issues such as the Access and Participation Plan (APP) [010] and consideration of the annual Higher Education Self-Evaluation Document [057] approved by the HE Academic Board.

12 The Committees Handbook [009] provides a clear overview of the academic and executive committee structure outlining function and responsibility at all levels, including where they sit within the wider College committee structure. The handbook includes a brief overview of each committee and definition relating to boards, committees, and groups. The Committees Handbook [009] also includes terms of reference for the HE Academic Board and its subcommittees: Learning Teaching and Equality Committee (LTEC), Academic Standards and Development Committee (ASCD) and Scholarship and Research Committee

(SRC) which identify function and responsibilities clearly. The team finds that the College's academic governance structures are, therefore, clear and show differentiation of function and responsibility.

13 The function of the HE Academic Board as the senior academic authority is clearly articulated. It is chaired by the Principal, with representation from across the College including students, and is responsible for proposing to the Board of Governors the strategic direction of the College's higher education provision. [009.p18] Its responsibilities also include the development and review of the HE Strategy, approval of the annual HE Self-Evaluation Document and monitoring of the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), monitoring compliance with regulatory and quality assurance frameworks, approval of academic regulations and receipt of reports from subcommittees. Meeting agendas and minutes related to the academic committee structure [035-038; 041-048, 050, 053-055; 072; 073] and schedules of business [012; 040] confirm that these responsibilities and functions are consistently applied in practice.

14 The function and responsibility of the HE Academic Board, as the senior academic authority, is consistently applied as evidenced by the HE Academic Board schedule of business, [012] which includes elements outlined in the terms of reference, including consideration of the HE Strategy, College SED, Academic Regulation, and receipt of relevant reports, including validation reports as standing agenda items. This is further supported by HE Academic Board minutes [035-037] where these items have been discussed. Examples of reports submitted to HE Academic Board include: the HE Academic Staffing Profile 2020-21; [059] Student engagement including post induction survey (HE); [062] Review of Student Wellbeing activities and update on plans; [063] and Admissions Cycle Annual Report. [857] The HE Academic Board reports annually on the contents and key discussions from its meetings through the year to the Quality and Standards subcommittee of the Corporation Board, as shown in its terms of reference [007] and the 2021 HE Academic Board report seen by the team, [011] in order that the Quality and Standards Committee can assure itself that institutional academic governance is operating effectively for the College's higher education provision.

15 The College's management structure is led by the Strategic Management Team (SMT), which is the senior management body responsible for cross-College issues, including higher education; the Academic Management Team, which has a key focus on the student experience and sharing of good practice; and the Cross College Management Team which focuses on continuous enhancement. The purpose and terms of reference for these teams is set out clearly in the Committees Handbook [009] with higher education representation at each level in the form of the Director of Higher Education and the Vice Principal, Higher Education and Student Enhancement on SMT.

16 Consideration of relevant CVs shows that the Corporation Board includes members with significant and current higher education expertise. [806; 808] There is also a co-opted specialist member of the Quality and Standards Committee with significant higher education experience and expertise. The Principal of the College, who is also the CEO, is an experienced leader with an academic background. [809] The CV for the Vice Principal for Higher Education and Student Enhancement [351] shows higher education experience, including experience at all levels as well as quality assurance expertise. The CVs of the Director of Higher Education, [352] Head of Digital Learning Resource Centres, [353] Director for Students [354] and two Heads of Curriculum [355, 356] also indicate appropriate higher education experience and an academic background. The team considers, therefore, that there is appropriate depth and strength of academic leadership.

17 There is evidence of the College working with a variety of stakeholders to develop and implement policies. For example, its Health and Safety Policy [014] notes stakeholder

engagement, including employers, staff and students, and the HE Admissions Procedure [024] notes consultation with staff and students. The Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Policy [025] and Procedure [026] notes consultation was undertaken with the Academic Management Team (AMT) and Cross College Management Team (CCMT) as well as student and employer forums, with the addition of SMT for the policy. [025] The Development and Observation of Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy [033] and Procedure [034] states that there was SMT, AMT and employee representatives' consultation and the Safeguarding Policy [051] notes SMT, AMT, CCMT and student consultation. A consultation regarding the draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy [066] was undertaken with members of the National Association for Managers of Student Services (NAMSS) [810] and the College also ran a student focus group. [811] Additionally, a specific student forum was formed to support the development of the Access and Participation Plan (2021-2022) [015.p24] to consult with students on the content of the plan, the groups to target and to endorse the plans for future student engagement with this document. Staff are also included in the membership of meetings throughout the academic governance structure where policies and procedures are developed and discussed as outlined in the Committees Handbook. [009] Additionally, the Academic Regulations Advisory Group terms of reference [022] outline the responsibility for the maintenance and review of the College's academic regulations. This includes the membership of five academic members of staff from outside of the management structure. [022]

18 The College communicates its policies and procedures through the College website, [Website] which ensures relevant policy and procedure is accessible to external stakeholders, alongside staff and students. In addition, policies are communicated and accessible to students through signposting in handbooks, [049; 136; 149] and the Student Life intranet. [503] The student submission [800] confirms students are aware of where to access relevant information. The example screenshots provided for the newly developed staff intranet, [501] alongside accessibility on the College website, suggest effective communication through links for College policies, strategy, and governance. The team concluded, therefore, that the College develops, implements, and communicates its policies and procedures in collaboration with its staff and students and external stakeholders.

19 The College has been managing the delivery of higher education that includes Level 6 provision since 1992 with Lancaster University (the University) as their principal validating partner. The majority of the higher education provision remains validated through this partnership, although core quality assurance procedures are delegated to the College necessitating appropriate oversight from the College's governance structures. The team noted, as an example of the degree of the delegation from the University, that Boards of Examiners for validated programmes are chaired by staff from the College and that the University representative's (Programme Consultant) presence is not required at Reassessment Programme Board of Examiners for them to be quorate, though they are invited. [009 – Terms of Reference] The University confirmed at its most recent institutional review in 2021 [039] that the College adheres to these arrangements to manage the quality and standards of the learning opportunities for its awards securely and effectively. The partnership review highlighted various aspects of the College's activities for commendation including its processes for programme approval, annual programme review, and its approach to consultation with students as part of the annual review of the Student Protection Plan.

20 FDAP was granted to the College in 2016, though this does remain a small part of the provision with five programmes currently approved under these powers. Changes implemented at the College because of the granting of these powers included further development of the executive team with the creation of the Director for Students in 2017 [001p6] as well as two new Assistant Academic Registrar posts. [801] In its considerations and planning for additional powers [801] the College states its intention to focus on new and

niche areas only for BDAP, as has been the case with FDAP.

21 The governance structure of the College has also been extended with the granting of FDAP to include a new subcommittee for the HE Academic Board focusing on scholarship and research. [009] The College also introduced a specific annual report detailing the business of HE Academic Board that is received by the Quality and Standards Committee of the Corporation Board to provide additional clarity regarding its activities. The governance structure will remain the same under any extended powers; however, the College does, by September 2022, plan to add a co-opted external member to HE Academic Board drawn from academia. This is to provide greater externality for its deliberations as well as additional assurance for the Corporation Board regarding the sufficiency of the College's internal scrutiny of its higher education academic governance arrangements. [801]

22 Overall, the team is satisfied that the College successfully manages the responsibilities vested in it, having been granted degree awarding powers, so that there can be full public confidence in the integrity of its award. The team is confident that the above arrangements will be appropriate for it to continue to do so for any extension of such powers to awarding degrees at Level 6.

23 The HE Strategy includes student engagement as a theme. [002] The Student Engagement Strategy [016] sets out a partnership approach and outlines expectations for membership of students on deliberative committees, as well as the role of the Student Union, the student representatives and how feedback is collected. This is evident in relevant terms of reference within the Committees Handbook [009] where, for example, student representation is detailed in the membership of the HE Academic Board, Learning Teaching and Equality Committee, HE Academic Standards and Development Committee, and Curriculum Area and Programme Quality Committees and Self Evaluation Panel Event meetings with student union representation additionally included. The Instrument of Government [004] confirms the Corporation will have at least one elected student member, and minutes from the Corporation Board confirm this, showing Student Governor presence and engagement. [008; 802; 803]

24 The Student Union Executive consists of an elected HE President and HE Vice Presidents for each curriculum area, and a Student Union Sabbatical Officer which is a paid role. [814; 815] The Student Union Executive is responsible for liaising directly with student representatives and students on issues that impact on the student experience. [814] Student Union representation is demonstrated in the minutes and papers of the HE Academic Board [035-037] and the Student Union provides an annual report to the HE Academic Board [017] evaluating rates of participation in student engagement opportunities with a resulting action plan. There is evidence of high levels of student representation in meetings and committees within the deliberative committee structure outside of the HE Academic Board, with students identified at 12 out of the 16 meetings for which the team saw documentation. [038; 041-048; 053-055; 067; 068; 072; 073] The student submission [800] confirms Student Union engagement with strategy, policy development and review, and states that students are actively and regularly engaged in consultation. It is also noted that students feel their contributions are acknowledged and valued.

25 Students are supported to engage effectively in the governance and management of the College and its higher education provision through relevant training. The HE Student Union Executive training [813] outlines the role of Student Union Executive, covering the functions of the President, Vice-President and Sabbatical Officer as well as some of the meetings they are involved in. In addition, the Student Representative Training, available on the College's virtual learning environment (VLE) [601] provides links to information about roles and expectations and tips for meetings. This is further supported by the HE Deliberative Meetings Training [812] which sets out the committee structure, outlines the

purpose of a committee generally, the roles in the committee, defines relevant key terms and gives information about what to expect. In addition, the HE Committee Training [604] sets out a commitment to placing the student at the heart of the College's activities and outlines student representation opportunities at relevant boards and committees including HE Academic Board and the College Corporation Board. The team concluded that students are therefore individually and collectively engaged in the governance and management of the College and supported to be able to engage effectively.

26 Outside of its current long-standing relationship with the University, there are no formal arrangements for working with other organisations to deliver learning opportunities. [001; 801] The College does, however, work with employers and other organisations to provide placements and other work-based learning for students. The College makes use of its HE Work-based Learning Framework [018] and HE Work-based Learning Operation Guidance, [019] which oversee key aspects of these relationships including due diligence, risk assessments and guidance for both employers and students and cover a wide range of learning opportunities from work-based projects through to work placements at sea through a shipping company. [106 – Programme Specification Nautical Science FdSc] The operational guidance clearly sets out a risk-based approach to ensuring that any such activity contributes to the overall aims of the programme of study and that named individuals are identified with responsibility for the management, approval and monitoring of workplace learning. The team saw evidence of the monitoring of work placement arrangements at course level in annual course review reports [829, 831, 833] and in the panel discussions of these reports. [830, 832, 834] Work-based learning is also monitored and discussed at various levels of the College's deliberative committee structure, including the HE Academic Board. [035 – 037] Here it has been discussed in general terms, for example in addressing the enabling of student achievement, as well as in its oversight of individual programmes. The team is of the view, therefore, that arrangements for delivering learning opportunities through the provision of work-based learning are clearly outlined, based on a strategic approach and informed by the effective assessment of risk including the carrying out of due diligence.

## **Conclusions**

27 The assessment team formulated its judgement against this criterion according to the process set out in the Guidance for Providers, in particular Annex 4.

28 The College has an effective academic governance structure which clearly outlines lines of accountability for academic responsibilities. This is because it has sound academic governance and management structures supported by appropriate and consistently applied strategies and policies. The HE Academic Board is the senior academic authority and is responsible for proposing the strategic direction for higher education to the Corporation Board and reporting annually to the Quality and Standards Committee. The responsibilities of the HE Academic Board are clearly articulated, alongside those of relevant subcommittees. These align with the discussion and debate apparent within the HE Academic Board papers leading to the team's conclusion that the arrangements are consistently applied and working effectively. The College's governance arrangements are strengthened because of the granting of FDAP and while no changes are expected beyond continuing to strengthen the level of higher education expertise within the governance structure, the team has confidence that the current structure is fit for purpose for the granting of extended degree awarding powers to Level 6.

29 Academic governance is conducted in partnership with the College's students. Student engagement can be seen throughout the academic governance structure to oversee all aspects of the higher education provision and students note they feel that their engagement is valued. The College supports its Student Union Executive and Student

Representatives to engage through relevant training.

30 The College's arrangements for working with other organisations to deliver learning opportunities are robust and effective. Its formal validation relationship with Lancaster University is longstanding and a part of the College's strategic approach to deliver relevant programmes of study for its students. Where other learning opportunities are provided through work-based learning, the relationships that the College maintains with local employers are quality assured and designed to meet programme outcomes of a career-aligned and professional curriculum. The team concludes, therefore, that the criterion is met.

## Criterion B: Academic standards and quality assurance

### Criterion B1 - Regulatory frameworks

31 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.*

32 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 and how the team considered this evidence**

33 The QAA team assessed this criterion by reference to a range of evidence gathered according to the process described in the Guidance for Providers, in particular the suggested evidence outlined in Annex 5 and the provider's submission as follows:

- a To examine whether the academic frameworks and regulations governing the College's higher education provision (covering, for example, student admissions, assessment, progression, award, appeals and complaints) are appropriate to its current status and for granting higher education qualifications up to and including Level 6, the team reviewed the current academic regulations in the form of the Taught Award Regulations Part A [021] and Taught Award Regulations Part B [020] and the DRAFT Taught Award Regulations Part A 2022-23, [816] alongside relevant policy and procedures including the Admissions Policy [023] and the supporting HE Admissions Procedure, [024] the Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Policy 2021-22 [025] and the supporting Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Procedure 2021-22. [026]
- b To determine whether the academic frameworks and regulations governing the College's higher education provision (covering, for example, student admissions, assessment, progression, award, appeals and complaints) are implemented fully and consistently, the team considered External Examiner Reports [201-202, 205-212, 214] and examples of the policy and procedures in practice, including Academic Malpractice Panel Minutes 09-06-21 example, [027] Academic Appeal Panel Minutes 09-02-21 example [028] and Personal Mitigating Circumstances Minutes 16-10-19 example. [029]
- c To explore whether the College has created, in readiness, one or more academic frameworks and regulations that will be appropriate for the granting of its own higher education qualifications, the assessment team considered the current regulations in the form of the Taught Award Regulations Part A [021] and Taught Award Regulations Part B, [020] alongside the DRAFT Taught Award Regulations Part A 2022-23, [816] the Student Protection Plan 2021-25 [821] and information provided in the Considerations and planning for BDAP - a synopsis. [801]



- d To confirm whether definitive and up-to-date records of each qualification to be awarded and each programme being offered by the organisation are being maintained and whether these records are used as the basis for the delivery and assessment of each programme and there is evidence that students and alumni are provided with records of study, the team reviewed the description of the processes as set out in the Variation of Degree Awarding Powers Self-Assessment [001] and both the current Taught Award Regulations Part A [021] and the DRAFT Taught Award Regulations Part A 2022-23. [816] The team also considered the Akari Author Guide, [463] A synopsis of Akari System Version Control, [818] Module Specifications, [102; 108; 110; 116-120; 124; 135; 147; 150] Programme Specifications, [103; 106; 107; 134; 146] Programme Handbooks, [136; 149] the BDAP student submission, [800] an overview of the Student Academic Journey [822] and examples related to student certification, including Student Management screenshot, [823] Student Assessment Details, [824] Degree Award Certificate [825] and HE Achievement Report. [030; 826]

### **How any samples of evidence were constructed**

34 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**

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

36 The current Taught Award Regulations Part A 2021-22 [021] provide the overarching framework and principles for the College's current degree awarding powers at foundation level. It is planned for this to be replaced, in time for the 2022-23 academic year, by the in-prospect Taught Award Regulations Part A 2022-23, [816] which is intended to cater for the extension of the College's powers to Level 6. The current 2021-22 regulations [021] are clear and well structured, covering appropriate topics such as award design, validation and review, assessment and awards, external expertise, admissions, academic malpractice and misconduct, and published information. The team considers that these regulations provide an appropriate framework, for example, in setting out the use of credits and levels of study that are aligned to the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ) in the design and approval of courses.

37 The Taught Award Regulations Part B 2021-22 [020] detail procedural elements to support the consistent implementation of Part A 2021-22. [021] This includes information relevant to course design and development, assessment and feedback, boards of examiners, academic appeals, as well as procedures for areas of the provision such as personal mitigating circumstances and interruption of study, academic malpractice and misconduct, recognition of prior learning (RPL), publishing information, admission appeals and the use of external examiners, as well as monitoring and evaluation of the provision, reference to the FHEQ, including a link to a published version of this document. These are appropriate because they provide clear procedural information that is consistent with the framework established in Part A. Examples include the pro forma for use by external examiners, as part of the process supporting programme boards of examiners, which explicitly requires them to confirm whether the academic standards for the award are appropriately aligned with the standards set in the FHEQ, and another for use in RPL applications.

38 The team noted that the current regulations, [021] in the consideration of award design, include information about modules, credits and levels extending from Level 3 through to Level 7. This takes into account the College's current taught provision including

that which is validated or accredited by other awarding bodies or organisations, such as Lancaster University. However, the qualification structures detailed in this document refer only to those awards that can be made under the College's current degree awarding powers at Levels 4 and 5. They are, therefore, appropriate to the College's current status.

39 The implementation of the above framework is also supported by other College policies. The Admissions Policy [023] and the Higher Education Admissions Procedure [024] detail staff responsibilities, admissions principles and information about the admissions decisions and the process to be followed. The Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Policy [025] and the Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Procedure [026] provide similar information for the College's approach and processes for complaints.

40 The team saw evidence of the consistent application of the regulatory framework and associated policies and procedures throughout the College's submission. These included examples of relevant panel meetings including the Academic Malpractice Panel, [027, 070] the Academic Appeals Panel, [028, 610] and the Personal Mitigating Circumstance Panel. [029] In addition, the team saw evidence of process documentation for programme validations for the FdSc in Nautical Science, [104] Professional Policing (Pre-join), [105] and Commercial Illustration [140-145] and revalidations including the revalidations for Nuclear Engineering, [101] and Automotive & Motorsport Engineering Technology. [151-153]

41 Evidence was also presented of external examiner reports, [201-203, 205-212, 214] internal verification and moderation forms, [301-307] assessment and feedback, [312-331] RPL, [308-311] academic appeals, [609, 610] and the monitoring and evaluation of programmes. [746-759] Evidence of these processes being monitored by the College is found in the minutes of the Academic Standards and Development Committee, [040, 047, 048] which in turn is overseen by the HE Academic Board. [035-037] External examiner reports [201-203, 205-212, 214] confirm that assessment procedures and programme boards of examiners are rigorously and fairly conducted, and in accordance with institutional regulations and do not flag any cases of inconsistency or lack of transparency related to the academic regulations. This is analysed in more detail under criterion B3 in this report.

42 In readiness for the extension of degree awarding powers to Level 6, the College has developed a detailed and comprehensive in-prospect Taught Award Regulations Part A 2022-23 [816] to replace the current version. [021] The updated document provides additional information related to qualification structures, curriculum design and definitions around the classification of both top-up and honours programmes to facilitate the delivery and award of programmes at Level 6 under the College's own degree awarding powers. The FHEQ Level 6 descriptor is now included, and the new regulations detail the additional credit framework for Level 6 awards, the use of modules at Levels 4, 5 and 6, provisions for the RPL for entry to both foundation or bachelor's degree courses, distinct degree classifications for both foundation degrees and bachelor's degrees with honours, and minimum requirements to be applied to discretionary powers for posthumous and aegrotat awards. The draft document was presented to and approved by HE Academic Board in February 2022. [801]

43 The team agreed that the Taught Award Regulations Part B, [020] in detailing procedural elements to support the consistent implementation of Part A, as described above, will continue to be appropriate for the granting of the College's higher education qualifications at Level 6. The version control information within this document confirms that it has been updated, as required, to consider any relevant changes in the provision as well as iterative improvements that are based on operational feedback; the most recent significant example being amendments made in May 2021 relating to the removal of references to provision in partnership with Liverpool John Moores University that had ended. However,

because the College already delivers courses up to Level 7 that are awarded or accredited by other bodies or organisations, this document did not require amending to reflect the approval of the updated Part A document. The team agreed that the above amendments and additions to the in-prospect Taught Award Regulations Part A 2022-23 [816] address the additional requirements for the proposed extension of the College's powers to include Level 6 awards and, considered holistically, the College's academic framework will be appropriate for the granting of its own higher education qualifications at bachelor's level.

44 The College's current [021] and in-prospect regulations [816] make clear that the Academic Standards and Development Committee (ASDC) is responsible for the oversight of the College's HE curriculum including current programmes, those undergoing validation or revalidation, or closure. It is responsible for coordinating amendments to published programme information among all stakeholders in order to maintain accuracy and consistency across all sources. It is supported by the Management, Information and Funding (MIF) department which maintains the definitive records of the programme that include its core specification, title and code, start and end dates, and location of study using curriculum management software. [021, 816] The updating of this information on the College website [Website] is automated, creating the authoritative published version for staff to refer to, with the Admissions department then tasked with the responsibility to ensure that information published on the website of the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) is up to date and accurate, and the Marketing department similarly responsible for the creation and publication of the College prospectus and other associated materials. Staff are supported to manage this information with appropriate user guides for the software [463] and there is a clear process for maintaining version control for any amendments to programmes [818] which is controlled by the HE Directorate.

45 The programme specifications [103, 106, 107, 134, 146] and module specifications [102, 108, 110, 116-120, 124, 135, 147, 150] considered by the team are consistent, detailed and provide evidence of version control in operation. They were also seen as being used as the basis for delivery through the use of programme handbooks which are used to provide students with the key information they require to understand the structure of their course of study. Detailed information provided in programme handbooks, including examples seen for Maritime Operations Management [136] and Commercial Illustration, [149] make use of templates to replicate key information from programme specifications that provide students with accurate information regarding the programmes' content, how individual modules are organised and delivered, how and when students are assessed and how overall grades and final results are determined. This confirms that the College has a robust solution to record keeping, enabling clarity, consistency and accuracy to ensure definitive records are maintained, and the use of these to inform programme handbooks evidence that these are then used as the basis for delivery.

46 The College's current [021] and in-prospect regulations [816] state that each student leaving the College will be provided with a Higher Education Achievement Report, or transcript, detailing each module the student has completed and the level of achievement the student has demonstrated. Information within its curriculum management system informs the College's student record system, which is independently overseen by the College's dedicated MIF department and allows oversight of the learner journey. [823] Grades entered on the system generate the reports considered at the programme boards of examiners, [824] resulting in a certificate, if awarded. [825] The College software to produce transcripts is automated once it has been confirmed that students have met the criteria for the award. These identify the holder of the qualification, the details of that qualification, provide detailed information on the contents and results gained and include space for any relevant additional information to be included, such as any professional status also acquired or any awards the student has merited. The College's transcripts are provided in a digital format allowing students and alumni to access them throughout their careers. The team saw examples of

transcripts provided to students [030, 826] and were satisfied that students are provided with appropriate records of study that are based on the definitive course documentation.

## **Conclusions**

47 The assessment team formulated its judgement against this criterion according to the process set out in the Guidance for Providers, in particular Annex 4.

48 The College has transparent and comprehensive academic regulations to govern how it awards academic credit and qualifications at foundation level. Its current regulations accurately reflect the College's foundation degree awarding powers as well as its current taught provision through to Level 7, covering topics ranging from approval of courses and admissions through to the conduct of assessments and appeals against academic decisions. These regulations are consistently and fully implemented. It has created and approved in-prospect regulations which will be appropriate for the extension of its degree awarding powers to the granting of its own higher education bachelor's qualifications. These take into account the requirements of awarding credit and qualifications at Level 6 and have been approved by the College's senior academic authority.

49 The College maintains a definitive record of each programme and qualification that it approves, including any subsequent changes made, which constitute 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. Its systems are integrated to provide accurate and up-to-date information for each qualification being offered with appropriate oversight within the College to ensure that these are maintained. Students are provided with accessible records of their study that accurately reflect these definitive records. The team concludes, therefore, that the criterion is met.

## Criterion B2 - Academic standards

50 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.*

51 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 and how the team considered this evidence**

52 The QAA team assessed this criterion by reference to a range of evidence gathered according to the process described in the Guidance for Providers, in particular the suggested evidence outlined in Annex 5 and the provider's submission as follows:

- a To establish how the College ensures that its higher education qualifications are offered at levels that correspond to the relevant level of the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies, the team reviewed the College's Taught Award Regulations Part A, [021] DRAFT Taught Award Regulations Part A 2022-23, [816] Taught Award Regulations Part Bs - Combined, [20] Validation Document FdSc Nautical Science, [104] Validation Document Professional Policing Prejoin, [105] Module Specifications Professional Policing Prejoin, [108] New to HE Teaching agenda - example, [461] Curriculum Design and Development Guide, [462] Programme Specifications [106, 107, 134, 146] and Module Specifications, [108, 110, 116, 117-119] External Examiner reports for BSc (Hons) Sports Coaching and Performance Science [202] and FdEng Marine Electrical and Electronic Engineering, [203] and IET Accreditation Visit Report Advanced Engineering Jan 2021. [731]
- b To determine how the College takes appropriate account of relevant external reference points and independent points of expertise, including students, in setting and maintaining academic standards, the team reviewed the College's Taught Award Regulations Part A, [021] DRAFT Taught Award Regulations Part A 2022-23, [816] Taught Award Regulations Part Bs - Combined, [20] Stage 2 External Advisor Report Automotive and Motorsport Engineering Technology, [111] Maritime Coastguard Agency Audit Report Dec 2019, [732] European Maritime Safety Agency Report June 2021, [733] STEM Employer Forum notes 15-07-21, [734] Higher Technical Qualification Employer Support, [204] Stage 2 Revalidation Report Nuclear Engineering 131020, [109] EE Report 2020-21 Aerospace Engineering, [201] EE Report 2020-21 Health and Social Care, [205] and Annual Learning and Teaching Conference 2019. [251]
- c To assess whether the College's programme approval arrangements are robust, applied consistently, and ensure that academic standards are set at a level which

meets the UK threshold standard for the qualification and are in accordance with its own academic frameworks and regulations, the team considered the Taught Award Regulations Part Bs - Combined, [20] Curriculum Design and Development Guide, [462] Akari Author Guide, [463] Validation documents for BA (Hons) Commercial Illustration, [138-149] and Course Design and Development External Advisor Guidance. [464]

- d To verify 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 College have been satisfied, the team reviewed the College's Taught Award Regulations Part A, [021] DRAFT Taught Award Regulations Part A 2022-23, [816] Taught Award Regulations Part Bs - Combined, [20] Programme Specifications [106, 107, 134, 146] and Module Specifications, [108, 110, 116, 117-119] Revalidation Document Nuclear Engineering, [101] Assignment front sheet, Internal Verification Form and Moderation Form for Contemporary Issues BSc Physical Activity Health and Nutrition, [303-305] and Module Review - example, [332] EBS Awards Configuration - example, [307] and examples of assessed student work. [312-314, 837-845, 900-917]
- e To test if its programme approval, monitoring and review arrangements are robust, applied consistently and explicitly address whether the UK threshold academic standards are achieved and whether the academic standards required by the individual degree-awarding body are being maintained, the team reviewed Academic Standards and Development minutes [040, 047-048] and Committee Papers, [072-073] Business Case Commercial Illustration, [138] Outline Planning Permission Commercial Illustration, [139] Programme Approval Letter Nautical Science, [113] Stage 2 Validation EA Report Commercial Illustration, [143] Committees Handbook, [009] APR 2020-21 for Physical Activity Nutrition and Health, [735] SED 2020-21 for Blackpool School of Arts, [736] AAR 2020-21 for Nuclear Scientist and Nuclear Engineer, [737] SED 2020-21 for the Directorate for Students, [738] APR for 2020-21 for FdEng and BEng in Nuclear Engineering, [740] HE Academic Board - Deliberating College SED, [758] and Quinquennial Partnership Review with Lancaster University 2020-21. [039]
- f To identify the College's use of appropriate external and independent expertise in establishing, and then maintaining, threshold academic standards and comparability of standards with other providers of equivalent level qualifications, the team reviewed the College's Taught Award Regulations Part A, [021] DRAFT Taught Award Regulations Part A 2022-23, [816] Taught Award Regulations Part Bs - Combined, [20] Academic Standards and Development Committee Schedule of Business 2021-22, [040] EE Report 2020-21 Aerospace Engineering, [201] EE Report 2020-21 Health and Social Care, [205] Annual Programme Reviews, [735, 751, 752, 753] Quinquennial Partnership Review with Lancaster University 2020-21, [039] and SQA Visit Report 31-07-20. [739]

### **How any samples of evidence were constructed**

53 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**

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

55 The College's current Taught Award Regulations Part A 2021-22 [ 021] and in-

prospect regulations Taught Award Regulations Part A 2022-23 [816] set out in a statement of principles that its higher education awards will be allocated to the appropriate level in the FHEQ, meet the expectations of the UK Quality Code and take account of relevant external reference points including Subject Benchmark Statements, the Higher Education Credit Framework for England: Advice on Academic Credit Arrangements (2021), and any relevant professional regulatory requirements.

56 Section 4 of the Taught Award Regulations: Part B [020] sets 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. This document describes the process and requirements from initial development through to final approval for the design, modification, and annual review of programmes to reflect on the quality of a programme. It sets out the roles of contributing stakeholders such as students and external examiners in the course development process and their membership of approval panels, including panel responsibility to check that intended learning outcomes for modules and programmes are appropriate for the level of the course and align with the relevant level of the FHEQ. This process is also applied to the mechanisms for periodic revalidation of courses which normally takes place every five years.

57 Records of validation seen by the team for the approval of the College's Nautical Science FdSc, [104] as well as Professional Policing BA with Honours, [105] Commercial Illustration BA with Honours, [145] and Maritime Operations Management BSc with Honours (Top-up), [133] all of which are validated with Lancaster University, clearly demonstrate the appropriate use of the FHEQ, which is explicitly referenced in the documentation. The detailed nature of the records demonstrates the College's experience at designing courses for awards at Level 6. The College intends to use this approach for the approval and review of its own Level 6 awards, and the College's in-prospect Taught Award Regulations Part A 2022-23 [816] will provide for the principles and procedures for setting and maintaining academic standards to be extended to that Level 6 provision. External examiner reports seen by the team [201-214] comment positively on the academic standards set for the programmes. The team concluded, therefore, that the College's academic regulations [021, 816] and course approval and review procedures [020] are comprehensive and set out clear rules and mechanisms for setting and maintaining academic standards at levels that correspond to the relevant levels of the FHEQ.

58 In excess of 50 of the programmes offered in partnership with the University, referred to in the Annex to this report, are awards at Level 6 demonstrating that the College has significant experience in the design and delivery of programmes up to Level 6. The team concluded that staff experience of developing and gaining approval for delivering courses at Level 6 can give confidence in the College's ability to set standards for their own awards at this level.

59 In setting and maintaining standards the Taught Award Regulations Part B [020] set out that the approval of programmes is dependent upon external involvement by external academic advisers, employers, and students and through assurances that quality assurance mechanisms meet the requirements of relevant external regulatory and professional bodies.

60 External advisers' guidance [464] sets out that advice is to be provided on areas such as curriculum design, content and organisation; learning environment and resources; and the potential for achievement of the programme's educational aims and learning outcomes. The template form provided [464] does not require the external adviser to explicitly address academic standards; however, the team noted that the regulations direct that the panel should do so as part of its deliberations. The external adviser for the validation of the Maritime Operations Management BSc (Hons) [131] references employer engagement; teaching, learning and assessment; the programme's alignment with College

strategy; and the QAA Subject Benchmark Statements. The external adviser for the Stage 2 Automotive and Motorsport Engineering Technology FdEng and BEng (Top-up) revalidation [111] provided constructive comments and recommendations in relation to the content of modules, the assessment scheme, and the use of industry-standard software.

61 Employers inform on matters relating to industry such as technical requirements, graduate skills gaps, and local, national and international demand. Employer contributions to programme development were evidenced through the STEM Employer Forum, [734] which demonstrated the College's approach to identifying skills gaps and gaining a broad understanding of the drivers, pressures and skills needs of employers, to help inform curriculum development.

62 Students influence the development of programmes through the deliberative committee structure and in the quality cycle at programme and curriculum level where student involvement in the course validation processes is evident in Programme Design and Approval Reports including examples for the validations of Nautical Science FdSc, [126] Automotive & Motorsport Engineering Technology Fd & BEng, [152] and the revalidation of Nuclear Engineering Fd & BEng (Top-up). [109]

63 Validation documents seen by the team include details of the external reference points, such as reviews and audits from professional bodies, including the Maritime Coastguard Agency<sup>16</sup> (MCA), [732] and the European Maritime Safety Agency<sup>17</sup>, [733] which contribute to alignment of delivered content and assessments with industry requirements and in doing so help to further develop students' knowledge and industry-relevant skills. The team finds, therefore, that the setting and maintaining of academic standards take appropriate account of relevant external points of reference and external and independent points of expertise, including students.

64 The College's Taught Award Regulations: Part B [020] detail the process for programme approval, which includes a preliminary phase with a business case reviewed by the College's Executive. An Outline Planning Permission (OPP) document is subsequently submitted to the Academic Standards and Development Committee (ASDC) for endorsement of the programme. That for BA (Hons) Commercial Illustration [139] includes a summary of the proposal; recruitment targets; entry requirements; an overview of the programme; its alignment with College strategy; programme learning outcomes; programme design and structure including modules, levels and credit values; teaching learning and assessment; resource requirements and support for students with specific needs among other elements.

65 The OPP is followed by a three-stage formal process where Stage 1 is to ensure through validation documentation and a programme specification that the expectations of the sector are met through engagement with external academic advisers and employers and that quality assurance mechanisms meet the requirements of relevant external regulatory and professional bodies. This is followed by a second stage development review panel which requires the completion of all module specifications so that the academic standards of the awards and qualifications can be properly assessed. A final approval event scrutinises the work of the development review and checks that any amendments, additions or deletions required following the Stage 2 panel have been carried out.

66 Detailed procedures and guidance for staff on approval arrangements are supplied in the College's validation documentation version control software Author Guide [463] and Curriculum Design and Development Guide [462] which directs and guides staff that all learning outcomes will be written at 'threshold standard': the minimum standard for a pass, making use of the structure of the FHEQ. The College has programme approval arrangements which feature clear guidance, systematic processes and template documents,



with opportunities for appropriate challenge, which provides a framework to ensure awards are set at the appropriate level.

67 The team saw evidence of the consistent application of these procedures in the planning approval templates submitted to the ASDC for BA (Hons) Commercial Illustration, [140] the Stage 2 report [141] and the Stage 3 final validation report. [144] The report of the Stage 2 programme is detailed, recording consideration of admissions criteria, teaching, learning and assessment strategies, programme content and learning outcomes. It confirms the use of external expertise at this stage. The Stage 3 validation report confirms the presence of an external academic and subject specialist on the validation panel, as required by the regulations, and records detailed consideration of programme content, modules and their suitability to deliver the aims and learning outcomes for the course. The College has developed appropriate standard template documents to support each stage of its approval and validation process and to promote consistency in the application of validation arrangements. The team formed the view that the College's programme approval procedures are robust, consistently applied and ensure that academic standards are set at a level which meets the UK threshold standard for the qualification. They are, therefore, in accordance with their own academic regulations.

68 The College's current Taught Award Regulations Part A 2021-22 [021] and in-prospect regulations Taught Award Regulations Part A 2022-23 [816] contain the higher education academic framework which sets out comprehensive rules for the award of credit and qualifications based on the achievement of learning outcomes demonstrated through assessment. This framework is aligned to the FHEQ as it details the relevant qualifications descriptors for each level and clearly states the centrality of assessment practices that are appropriate and meet each of the programme's aims and learning outcomes, ensuring that assessment measures objectively, records, and reports on the achievement of programme and module learning outcomes. The regulations provide primary grade descriptors to support in standardising the nature of achievement expected at each academic level and the grading of student performance.

69 These descriptors are used by staff to produce appropriately contextualised grade descriptors for individual assessments. The regulations also make explicit the requirement for students to have met the learning outcomes to achieve threshold standards. Programme specifications [106, 107, 134, 146] clearly state the intended learning outcomes for each level of the award. Module specifications [108, 110, 116, 117-119] similarly state learning outcomes for each module, mapped to overall programme outcomes and the assessments that will be used to assess these. In this way, learning outcomes described in programme specifications are set at standards that are consistent with the College's regulations and aligned to the FHEQ.

70 The College's regulations [021, 819, 020] set out the College's approach to assessment and moderation practices to support the implementation of its regulatory framework for the award of credit and qualifications. This is supported by a suite of documents which provides templates and key information to support the process. The Assignment Front Sheet [303] provides accurate information for staff and students drawing directly from the College's systems including learning outcomes, grade descriptors, and assessment tasks. The Internal Verification Form [304] again draws directly from the College's systems supporting internal verifiers in ensuring assessments are being set at the correct level while being valid and reliable. The Moderation Form [305] provides a mechanism for moderators to record discussions about the outcomes for students. The team examined examples of assessment briefs, submissions and assessed student work at Levels 4, 5 and 6 [312-314, 837-845, 900-917] (see discussion in B3). The examples seen confirmed that the assessment processes set out in the College's regulations, [021, 819] including its Assessment and Feedback procedures, [020] are consistently followed by staff

ensuring that learning outcomes are assessed at the appropriate standard and that grades reflect the achievement of relevant learning outcomes. The team concluded, therefore, that credit and qualifications are awarded only where the achievement of relevant learning outcomes at the appropriate standard has been demonstrated through assessment.

71 The College operates programme boards of examiners to check the accuracy of assessment grades and marks recorded and to formally agree student progression and award decisions. The College's HE Taught Award Regulations: Part B [020] provide guidance on the operation of these boards. In addition to being used for the College's current foundation degree awards it also has delegated responsibility to convene and chair boards for its validated University awards including those at Level 6 [001] and these arrangements are also encompassed in the regulations. The HE Academic Board maintains oversight of these processes and receives reports on their conduct. [037] It also receives an annual report on the consistency of assessment. Both these reports confirm that examination boards were conducted appropriately. This is supported by individual external examiner reports [201-214] which also confirm that boards were conducted appropriately and that assessment, examination and the determination of awards were sound and fairly conducted.

72 Part B of the Taught Award Regulations [020] sets out the principles and processes involved in the College's approach to the monitoring and review of programmes that include periodic review and revalidation of programmes, undertaken normally every five years, and annual programme reviews (APR) that are used to reflect on the quality of a programme as well as to allow for iterative developments over the programme's five-year cycle to be considered during any revalidation event. Programme leaders produce the Annual Programme Review Reports [735, 740, 743, 746-749, 751-753, 866] and monitor the implementation of the Programme Quality Improvement Plans that are produced through the process. These reports consider academic standards including external examiner comments and any response or actions that result from these. The process is evidence-based in that annual programme reviews also include consideration of student data from entry profiles, retention and continuation, achievement and attainment, through to progression and graduate outcomes for cohorts, as well as module evaluations and National Student Survey results. The APRs examined by the team, [735, 740, 743, 746-749, 751-753, 866] which include programmes delivered at Level 6 in partnership with the University, demonstrated this as well as an evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment strategies in enabling students to demonstrate programme learning outcomes. The team noted that there was some variance in the presentation of data and the depth of the reflective commentary. However, all the APRs seen were focused on student achievement and included the consideration of external examiner comments regarding the maintenance of academic standards.

73 Periodic review of programmes takes place as part of a programme's revalidation cycle. The team examined revalidation documents for the College's Nuclear Engineering [101, 103, 109, 115, 122] and Automotive and Motorsport Engineering Technology programmes. [111, 151, 152, 153] These demonstrated that programmes subject to this periodic review follow the validation process described above with the addition of reflection on the five years of the delivery, including the explicit consideration of academic standards, particularly through the reports provided by external examiners. [201-214] The records from these processes demonstrate that there was appropriate deliberation drawing on student, external and internal academic, and industry expert feedback and that both programmes continue to meet standards for the awards at the relevant level. As with the College's validation processes, these also demonstrate the College's experience in the annual and periodic review of its provision including that at Level 6. The team agreed that this can give confidence in the College's ability to maintain standards for their own awards at this extended level. On the basis of the evidence reviewed above, the team found that the

College's programme monitoring and review arrangements are applied consistently and address whether the UK threshold academic standards are being maintained.

74 External examiners provide a key source of external and independent expertise in the College's mechanisms for monitoring and maintaining academic standards. The ASDC is responsible for the appointment and/or endorsement (for other awarding bodies as appropriate) of external examiners for programmes of study, and external advisers, for curriculum development and approval and this aspect of the committee's responsibilities is a standing item at each meeting as defined on its Schedule of Business [040] and is evidenced in the minutes seen from the committee's meetings. [038, 047, 048]

75 External examiners' reports [201-214] use a standard template and examiners are, therefore, consistently required to confirm that academic standards set for the award(s) 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. Those reviewed by the team confirm that the standards are appropriate for the award, align with the subject benchmarks and qualifications framework as set out in the programme specification and that the quality of students' work is comparable with their peers.

76 The evidence examined by the team showed that the College takes systematic and appropriate account of comments and recommendations by external examiners (see discussion in B3) and that analysis of this feedback on the College's foundation degrees is considered as part of the annual self-evaluation process, Annual Programme Reviews. [735, 751, 752, 753] External examiner reports are monitored at institutional level through the Annual Board of Examiners Annual Report which is received by the HE Academic Board. [036] As well as noting the comments from external examiners, this report also tracks their engagement with academic teams and attendance at Programme Board of Examiners. The team also scrutinised the College's external examiner response tracker which is maintained by the HE Directorate and records both formal and informal communications between external examiners and programme leaders with any actions that result. The team concluded that the College is making secure use of external and independent expertise to support the setting and maintaining of academic standards.

## **Conclusions**

77 The assessment team formulated its judgement against this criterion according to the process set out in the Guidance for Providers, in particular Annex 4.

78 The College has clear and consistent mechanisms for setting and maintaining the academic standards of its higher education programmes through course approval, annual course review and periodic review. These processes are set out clearly in the College's regulations, which require that the processes of setting and maintaining academic standards takes appropriate account of relevant external reference points, independent external expertise and student feedback. The examples of programme approvals demonstrate that the College procedures are applied consistently taking account of external reference points and drawing on independent external academic and employer input.

79 The team's scrutiny of course documentation, which defines the characteristics and learning outcomes of the College's programmes, confirms the College is able to design and deliver courses and that it offers qualifications that meet the threshold academic standards described in the FHEQ. External examiner reports confirm that appropriate standards are set for the awards and that these are reliable over time and are reasonably comparable to those set and achieved in other UK degree-awarding bodies. This is for both awards made by the College under FDAP and those it delivers in partnership, including at Level 6.

80 There are comprehensive regulations relating to the award of academic credit and qualifications. The evidence relating to the assessment of students and external examiner comments on the conduct of examination boards demonstrates that the regulations are consistently applied, and that credit and qualifications are only awarded where students have achieved the relevant learning outcomes. External examiners provide a key source of external and independent expertise in the College's mechanisms for monitoring and maintaining academic standards. The evidence confirmed systematic use of external examiner reports in annual programme review and that recommendations from external examiners are addressed to support the maintenance of standards. The team concludes, therefore, that the criterion is met.

## Criterion B3 - Quality of the academic experience

81 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.*

82 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 and how the team considered this evidence

83 The QAA team assessed this criterion by reference to a range of evidence gathered according to the process described in the Guidance for Providers, in particular the suggested evidence outlined in Annex 5 and the provider's submission as follows:

#### Design and approval of programmes

- a To determine whether the College operates effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes, the team reviewed the processes involved in validation/revalidation of programmes including the provider submission, [001] Taught Award Regulations Part A [021, 816] and Part B, [020] alongside documents that evidence how these were operationalised for revalidation [for example, nuclear engineering 101, 109, 114, 115, 122] and validation. [for example, 127-133 and 138-148] The team also reviewed documentation evidencing the involvement of external experts included external adviser reports, [111, 115] revalidation reports [109, 126] and the revalidation/validation reports from Lancaster University. [122, 144]
- b To verify that relevant staff are informed of and provided with guidance and support on the processes for approval and of their role within them, the team reviewed the Taught Award Regulations [020, 021] and Guidance for Curriculum Design [462] and Development.
- c To determine that coherence of programmes with multiple elements is secured and maintained, the team reviewed the Maritime Operations Management programme cluster and all background documents. [127-137]
- d To understand how the College maintains links with learning support services during the curriculum validation process, the self-assessment document, [002] and Academic Standards and Development Committee meeting minutes were reviewed.

#### Learning and Teaching

- e To determine how the organisation articulates and implements a strategic approach to learning and teaching, the team reviewed the HE Strategy, [003] College Strategy, [003] the Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy [013] and the Committees Handbook, [009] along with the Development and Observation of Learning and Teaching Policy [033] and an example of a learning walk. [252]

- f To review how the organisation maintains physical, virtual and social learning environments that are safe, accessible and reliable for every student, the team considered the Safeguarding Policy, [051] the Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, [013] the Digital Strategy [061] and NSS results within the HE SED. [744]
- g To ensure that robust arrangements exist for distance learners, the team reviewed the Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy [013] and the Digital Strategy. [061]
- h To verify that every student is enabled to monitor their progress and further academic development, the team looked at tutorial records, [505-507] programme handbooks and student-facing guides, [for example, 606, 607] alongside the student submission [800] and Partners for Success Framework. [671]

### **Assessment**

- i To verify that the College operates valid and reliable processes of assessment including for the recognition of prior learning (RPL), which enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification being sought, the team considered the Taught Award Regulations, [020, 021] internal verification and moderation documents, [301, 320, 304, 305] along with RPL documentation. [308-310]
- j To understand how staff and students engage in dialogue about academic judgements, the team reviewed programme handbooks, [049] tutorial records [505] and guidance on assessment and feedback, [317] alongside the Partners for Success Framework. [671]
- k To evidence that students are provided with opportunities to develop an understanding of skills to demonstrate good academic practice, the team considered the academic skills module, [110] the Power to Progress modules [510] and progression tutorials. [506]
- l To ensure the organisation operates processes for preventing, identifying and investigating academic malpractice, the team reviewed HE Academic Board minutes, [036] Taught Award Regulations [020] and examples of guidance on resources provided to students. [510, 511, 512]
- m To determine whether processes for marking and moderating are clearly articulated and consistently operated, the team considered taught award regulations, [020, 021] alongside examples of assessment briefs, submissions and graded feedback (assessed student work) at Levels 4, 5 and 6. [312-314, 837-845, 900-917]

### **External examining**

- n To verify that the College makes scrupulous use of external examiners including in the moderation of assessment tasks and student assessed work and that it gives full and serious consideration to the comments and recommendations contained in external examiners' reports and provides external examiners with a considered and timely response to their comments and recommendations, the team considered the HE SED [744] along with module, [202] programme [735, 865, 866] and curriculum-level [754] reports, Stage 2 external adviser reports in curriculum development [111, 115, 131, 143] and external examiner reports, [201-203, 202, 205-212, 214] alongside the Taught Award Regulations. [020, 021]

## **Academic appeals and student complaints**

- o To verify that the College has effective procedures for handling academic appeals and student complaints about the quality of the academic experience, that these procedures are fair, accessible and timely, and enable enhancement, and that appropriate action is taken following an appeal or complaint, the team considered programme handbooks, [049] the Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Policy [025] and procedure, [026] complaints guide [611] and the Complaints log, [058] Appeal Panel minutes [028, 610] and a complaint response letter. [612]

### **How any samples of evidence were constructed**

84 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**

85 The College, in response to a request from the team in relation to the College's plan to operate extended powers at Level 6, provided a synopsis of its considerations and planning for extending its degree awarding powers to Level 6. In addressing the quality of the academic experience that it provides, the College highlighted that it has been delivering higher education courses to Level 6 since 1992 and asserted that, within its strategic approach to continuously build capacity, infrastructure, systems and depth of experience across all levels of higher education delivery, it has not identified any specific requirements for additional investment associated with extension of degree awarding powers to Level 6. The assessment team, therefore, made its assessment of the following on this basis.

### **Design and approval of programmes**

86 The College's current Taught Award Regulations Part A 2021-22, [ 021] Taught Award Regulations: Part B [020] and in-prospect regulations Taught Award Regulations Part A 2022-23 [816] describe clear processes for programme design and validation including clear guidance for internal and external panel members and the programme validation team on roles, the stages involved in validation and the documentation required for each stage of the process. Regulations set out how curricula must align with the FHEQ and meet the expectations of any relevant external partners. The College makes use of the same document templates across the entire provision including foundation degree courses awarded under its own powers and those courses validated by the University including at Level 6.

87 The process described in the Taught Award Regulations: Part Bs [020] includes a preliminary phase to produce an Outline Planning Permission Document (OPP) that is submitted to the Academic Standards and Development Committee (ASDC) which scrutinises the proposal to ensure that it aligns to the College's strategic approach to the provision. If approved, the more formal process involves an iterative three-stage process to allow for initial development of the programme, developmental review and final approval. At each stage, panels are required to scrutinise the programme as its development progresses and to check that panel feedback is actioned and to judge whether the programme may be permitted to proceed to the next stage. The final panel, acting by delegated authority on behalf of the HE Academic Board, has the power to approve or reject the programme including the possibility of including specific conditions that must be met before the Chair of the panel will sign the final approval letter to complete the process.

88 The team examined examples of the process in action for the Nautical Science FdSc [104, 113, 126] awarded under the College's existing powers, as well as Professional Policing BA with Honours, [105] Commercial Illustration BA with Honours, [145] and Maritime

Operations Management BSc with Honours (Top-up), [130, 133] which are programmes validated at Level 6 by the College's university partner. In each case course validation documentation was completed in line with the process described and to the satisfaction of approval panels that included external members. The team noted that records of panel meetings demonstrated extensive and robust panel discussions taking place resulting in conditions or recommendations being assigned in allowing a programme to proceed to the next stage of the process. Minutes from the ASDC [037, 047, 048] demonstrate it discharging its responsibilities for oversight, and HE Academic Board minutes [035, 036, 037] show that the progress of programmes undergoing each stage of the process are monitored through to approval. The team considers, therefore, that the College has effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes including those at Level 6.

89 In addition to the College's regulations that describe the validation process and provide a process overview flowchart, [Taught Award Regulations: Part B 020] College staff are provided with a Curriculum Design and Development Guide. [462] The guide provides extensive information regarding the detail of the process, including the specific documents that need to be provided at each stage, as well as advice regarding how external reference points and the standards set out in the FHEQ should be incorporated into the design courses. For example, Appendix 1 of this guide breaks down the approach and construction of learning outcomes into component parts to aid in the writing of learning outcomes that are clear and unambiguous for all concerned. The College has also produced guidance notes for external advisers [464] regarding the operation of the process and their role in this, including templates for the documents that they are required to use. The Taught Award Regulations: Part B [020] themselves provide panel members with clear guidance regarding the decisions available to them at each stage of the process to reject or approve a programme to proceed to the next stage, with or without conditions. It also provides criteria by which panels should make their decisions including, for example, that programme learning outcomes should be appropriate to the aims of the award in keeping with the FHEQ and any other relevant external reference points. These processes, as discussed under B2, already provide for Level 6 as the College has offered such courses under its validation agreement with the University since 1992. The team therefore finds that the College provides support and guidance so that relevant staff and external advisers are informed about its procedures and their roles and responsibilities in relation to them.

90 Responsibilities for approving new programmes is clearly assigned. This is because the College regulations [Taught Award Regulations: Part B 020] make clear that the ASDC has responsibility for directing that a proposed programme proceed to the approval process and the constitution of the panels through the process. The Chair of the panel at each stage of the process is a named role within the College with the Vice Principal Higher Education and Student Enhancement having the responsibility of chairing the Stage 3 Panel and signing the letter that confirms a programme has received approval to be delivered by the College, an example of which was viewed by the team. [FdSc Nautical Science 113]

91 The regulations also make the involvement of external expertise clear in this process. An external adviser is a requirement of the membership of the Stage 2 and Stage 3 (final approval) panels. Their role on these panels includes the mandatory completion of a report on the proposed programme that should address topics including curriculum design, content and organisation, quality assurance and enhancement.

92 The team noted that the processes seen allow for validation panels to monitor and comment on actions that arise during the process. For example, the team noted that in the documentation for the Stage 2 Panel (developmental review) of the validation of the Nautical Science FdSc [126] seven conditions were added to the approval for the programme to proceed to Stage 3. These included further development of the transversal skills section of



the programme documentation, refinement of the language of the programme learning outcomes and completion of referencing lists. All seven of these conditions are recorded as having been addressed in the Stage 2 documentation, with actions detailed and the location within the course documentation identified so that these could then be scrutinised by the panel before final approval is given. The team was satisfied, therefore, that responsibility for approving new programme proposals is clearly assigned, including the involvement of external expertise and subsequent action is carefully monitored.

93 Ensuring the coherence of the structure of programmes is a part of the course approval procedure. [Taught Award Regulations: Part B 020] Panels are directed to consider whether the module structure, curriculum content and module learning outcomes will ensure that students completing the programme will have met the programme learning outcomes. Programme specifications seen by the team [103, 106, 107, 134, 146] include clear diagrams of the programme structure and detail whether a module is mandatory, its level, credit value and summary information about modes of assessment so that multiple elements are made clear. Of the programme specifications seen, no alternative pathways were offered; however, the team was satisfied that the approach taken with a standard template would allow for these to be clearly identified by students. The regulations also make clear that maintenance of the coherence of the overall course structure must also be considered should any amendments to the programme be considered during the five-year period between scheduled periodic reviews. The team, therefore, is of the opinion that coherence of the programme is secured and maintained.

94 The team considers that close links are maintained between learning support services during the programme planning and approval process. This is most directly seen in the Digital and Learning Resources Manager conducting a desk-based assessment of the accessibility of resources to support the programme at Stage 2 of the process. [Taught Award Regulations: Part B 020] Any revisions suggested must be made prior to the final approval stage allowing for them to be properly assessed. The team saw a report provided during the development of the Maritime Operations Management BSc (Top-up) [137] Level 6 programme that itemised the resources required for the course. This included those that were currently stocked and those that would have to be sourced or updated to current editions of a publication with costings and how the resource would be provided, for example as an eBook physical resource.

95 The Student Support and Wellbeing Manager and Head of Digital and Learning Resources Centres both sit on ASDC that receives and approves the business planning schedule which provides a definitive list of programmes being validated or revalidated. The committee also receives updates on progress made on curriculum development, which include assessments of how learning support services are involved in the curriculum development process. Consideration of staffing and equipment, library, IT and media resources was evident in the examples of programme approval documentation reviewed. These also take into account the College's Partners for Success framework through which it includes specific support for students from Higher Education Learning Mentors, Student Support and Wellbeing services and the College's library resources (Learning Resource Centres).

## **Learning and teaching**

96 The HE Strategy (2020-25) [002] clearly articulates the vision and ambition behind the College's higher education provision in alignment with the values and strategic goals in the overall strategy of the College, [003] as discussed in Criterion A. Of the five values stated in the HE Strategy, one specifically refers to learning, teaching and assessment being the key to the College's success. The College has an Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy [013] which articulates the above value as a framework within which

the College's expectations with regard to learning, teaching and assessment are realised. Inclusivity is a theme that runs through this document. It includes, for example, a commitment to use a variety of assessment approaches with clearly articulated assessment criteria that is to be inclusive as well as to provide assessment feedback that is accessible, interactive, ongoing and timely to support students. This document links to, and is consistent with, the higher level strategic themes set out in the HE Strategy. However, it is clearly intended to be a strategy for the whole College and not just for the higher education provision. So, while it articulates a strategic approach to learning and teaching which is consistent with the College's stated academic objectives, it does not detail how these will be implemented. The implementation of the HE Strategy [002] and Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy [013] can be seen in other documentation, however.

97 Course validation processes require all proposed courses to demonstrate that the programme is aligned with the College's HE strategy. For the processes seen, [Validation documentation 104, 105, 133, 145] this involves making a case to demonstrate how the provision of a course addresses the strategic aims of the College, such as the creation of a career-aligned technical and professional curriculum.

98 The Committees Handbook [009] makes clear that Learning Teaching and Equality Committee (LTEC) has the responsibility for enhancing the provision using the Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy. [013] Records of its meetings [050, 067, 068] demonstrate that this includes the consideration of a wide range of topics and initiatives including the monitoring and discussion of student feedback about learning and teaching at the College, differences in attendance rates for BAME students and the implications for inclusive practice, through to national trends in learning, teaching and assessment and matters such as the use of technology to enhance learning and teaching. Actions resulting from these discussions include examples such as the investigation of new technologies to be implemented to enhance the provision and initiatives to support attendance for specific groups of students. Assessed holistically, the above activities support the implementation of the College's strategic approach to learning and teaching.

99 The College has clearly strategically invested in campus and teaching facilities to maintain the physical learning environment for students and enhance the practical and theoretical knowledge of its students across all areas. Specialist campuses such as the Fleetwood Nautical Campus where the Nautical Science FdSc [106] is delivered and the Lancashire Energy HQ that is the delivery campus for the College's Nuclear Engineering programmes, provide specialist facilities such as simulators and engineering equipment, but also allow staff and students to forge industry partnerships which also offer the prospect of improved employment opportunities for those who graduate.

100 The team also saw evidence of how the College is addressing its digital environments, especially following on from the developments and experience during the pandemic that highlighted how digital pedagogy represents a significant opportunity to meet a diverse range of digital learning needs. The College's draft Digital Learning Strategy [061] has recently been updated to acknowledge some of the developments that have occurred and aims to build new academic delivery models that will integrate the College's existing technologies, such as its virtual learning environment (VLE) and other tools such as conferencing software, to be able to deliver blended or flipped teaching approaches more effectively. The strategy includes commitments to staff training, student engagement and investment to support the creation of an inclusive teaching, learning and assessment experience. The College acknowledges that work will be required to understand how best to operate a hybrid learning environment once the digital strategy is approved. However, it has also started to consider how to monitor and assess the success of these initiatives through improved progression rates.

101 One of the College's core values is to show fairness, courtesy and mutual respect, which is repeated in the HE strategy, [002] highlighting how the College is committed to promoting dignity and respect. This is further enacted through the Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment (ILTA) Strategy [013] which addresses inclusivity in learning as detailed above. The College's performance is reviewed annually by the Learning Teaching and Equality Committee. [050] Meeting minutes for the LTE Committee highlight discussion of robust projects and activity, including strategy updates and summaries of Access and Participation activity and its activities are reported to the HE Academic Board. [009] The College has a Safeguarding Policy [051] that provides a framework so that students know how to work in a safe environment, including working safely in a digital environment. Student representatives were consulted in the formation of the policy, and it links to a suite of supporting policies that include IT Systems Acceptable Use, Anti-bullying, and student misconduct processes. The team is of the opinion, therefore, that the College maintains physical, virtual and social learning environments that are safe, accessible and reliable for every student, promoting dignity, courtesy and respect in their use.

102 The HE Self-Evaluation Document [744] details how digital resources and the learning resource centre underwent considerable revision during the pandemic, as the College transitioned to providing online learning during this period. Efforts revolved around increased resourcing of the VLE including the provision of exemplar courses and other digital CPD for staff including one-to-one sessions. Training resources were also made available for students in the form of refresher videos. The College also worked to emphasise the availability of accessibility software and other existing resources such as reference management software solutions. Safe distance study environments were implemented in the Learning Resource Centre along with digital lounges, loan laptops and lockers, and SIM cards for students.

103 Academic staff are asked to make use of a checklist [473] to evidence quality assurance and standards for blended delivery that includes assessments of planning and delivery, student learning and support and the development of an online community for a course. The HE Self-Evaluation Document [744] also highlights the support provided for students from under-represented or marginalised groups to facilitate their academic success, and presents student demographic data in a visual format. These activities highlight the College's commitment to and success in ensuring students have access to technology and online learning resources to facilitate learning at distance.

104 The team saw evidence of how students are supported to monitor their progress through tutorial records using a web-based student electronic individual learning plan system. [505-507] Progress tutors support students to monitor their studies through scheduling a series of meetings with them and using these as a basis to discuss their progress and update plans with new targets for students to further their academic development. The team also noted the online service that provides students with their Higher Education Achievement Report upon graduation [030, 826] is integrated to the College's student information system to allow students to access a record of their verified grades throughout their studies, allowing them to accurately monitor their progress as modules of study are assessed and completed.

105 The student submission [800] confirmed that students know where their review and progress documents are kept and how to access them. The team concluded, therefore, that they are enabled to monitor their progress and further their academic development.

## **Assessment**

106 Processes for marking assessments and for moderating marks are set out in

Section 6 of Part B of the College's HE Taught Award regulations. [020] The purposes of the verification of assessment briefs, and moderation of marking are clearly articulated in these documents. Verification is the process by which the College ensures assessment instruments (assignments and examinations) are fit for purpose, that they enable the student to produce evidence that meets the assessment criteria and intended learning outcomes and that students are provided with all pertinent details, including submission dates. Moderation is the process by which the College ensures that assessment decisions accurately judge the students' work against the module grading criteria and intended learning outcomes and that assessment and grading are consistent across an individual programme. The regulations make clear that external examiners should be involved in both of these processes.

107 The team reviewed the verification process through examples of assessed student work that included assessment briefs as well as associated submissions and graded feedback of this work. [312-314, 837-845, 900-917] The team also viewed examples of internal verification forms used by staff prior to the distribution of assessments to students. [301, 304, 321, 325, 329] The internal verification forms make use of a standard template and are used to confirm or address any issues regarding whether the assessment covers all intended learning outcomes adequately, that there is a detailed marking scheme, and that the language and level of the assessment is appropriate, as well as that the appropriate administrative requirements have been met. These included individual comments that addressed the specific nature of the assessment and responses from the tutor to address any concerns or questions raised. As such, these provided evidence of an active verification process to support a valid and reliable process for assessment which enables every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification being sought.

108 The assessment briefs record that an assessment has been internally verified and provide the relevant information for students to undertake that assessment. The assessed student work seen by the team demonstrated that marking and moderation are operated in accordance with the College's regulations. Moderation forms [302, 305, 323, 327, 330] seen by the team all evidenced a consensus between the first marker and moderator. In each case detailed reasoning was provided to support these judgements and there was evidence of discussions taking place between staff regarding these. External examiner reports [201-214] commented positively on the College's conduct of marking and moderation processes and this, together with the team's review of the above evidence, confirms that they are consistently operated by those involved at the College to ensure a valid and reliable assessment process.

109 Section 8 of Part B of the College's HE Taught Award regulations [020] details the College's processes for the recognition or prior learning (RPL). These are clearly stated including the quantity of RPL permitted, definitions of certificated learning and experiential learning, the procedure for the award of RPL credit, the evidence required to support an application for RPL, the membership of the RPL panel and the process for appeal of RPL decisions and the process involved to make an application and assessment. A visual map of the process is provided including roles involved in the process. A pro forma is also provided for applications to be made. The College reports [001] that, to date, only one application for RPL has been made to a College validated award since 2016. The team inspected the documentation for this application which was for a student in September 2020 who had previously attended another institution and was seeking RPL for three 20-credit modules on the Nautical Science foundation degree. The team viewed the application, [308] evidence of prior achievement offered in the form of a transcript, [309] the mapping exercise, [310] and evidence of the written support from the external examiner for the Fd Nautical Science [311] that resulted in the application being approved confirming that the assessment process was appropriately implemented.

110 All students are enabled to understand the basis on which academic judgements are made through the information contained in their programme handbooks. The handbooks considered by the team [049, 136, 149] contain information on assessment that is comprehensive in that it covers the purpose of assessment, assessment practices, including arrangements for marking and feedback, the role of the external examiner, marking criteria, and what happens if the student fails an assessment. This information is contextualised where appropriate to programmes. Students are also directed that they can discuss assessment processes with staff including the programme team and their progress tutor. Evidence was seen of the records from tutorials where discussions about academic judgements occur [506] and, together with the above documentation, the team was satisfied that this promotes a shared understanding of the basis on which academic judgements are made.

111 The College has developed a range of both cross-College and subject-focused strategies to support students to understand the importance of good academic practice. Evidence from tutorial records [505-507] with progress tutors demonstrates that this is included in topics that are discussed with students, while the Flying Start workshops, [515] run by HE Learning Mentors, help students to develop skills including developing good academic practice.

112 Further information to support the development of good academic practice is provided in online resources [Power to Progress programme 510] where specific modules cover, for example, preparing for assessment, and researching and referencing. Contextualised information is also provided in programme handbooks [049, 136, 149] as well as signposting for students to seek further support.

113 Foundation degree courses include an academic skills module at Level 4. The team examined the module specification for the Introduction to Academic Study [110] offered as part of the Early Childhood Studies programme. This is designed to focus on the importance of good academic practice and is contextualised for the subject-specific material that students will encounter on their programme of study. As such, the team agreed that this would support students to be successful and that the College provides students with opportunities to develop an understanding of, and the necessary skills to demonstrate, good academic practice.

114 The College has processes for preventing, identifying, investigating and responding to unacceptable academic practice. A proactive approach is taken to address unacceptable academic practice including guidance introduced during progress tutorials. [505-507] Students receive information about unacceptable academic practice in academic skills modules at Level 4 [110] in the Power to Progress programme, [510] on the Student Life webpages [511] and in the referencing guidance. [512] The College makes use of anti-plagiarism software alongside academic judgement to identify malpractice. [001] Section 3 of Part B of the College's Higher Education Taught Award regulations [020] details the Academic Malpractice and Misconduct Procedure. This sets out the investigation, outcomes and appeal process to be followed in the case of unacceptable academic practice. The team scrutinised the minutes of a meeting of the Academic Malpractice and Misconduct Panel [027] which dealt with a single case of academic malpractice. This provided evidence that the College's processes were implemented correctly with appropriate discussions taking place privately at the panel and with the student concerned before a judgement was reached and communicated to the student.

### **External examining**

115 Section 5 of Part B of the College's HE Taught Award regulations [020] details the College's External Examiner Procedure. This sets the process for appointment or nomination

(for the University provision), briefing and support of external examiners. The CVs of all potential external examiners are scrutinised by ASDC to ensure they meet the criteria and confirm no conflicts of interest before they can be appointed.

116 The regulations [020] make clear that the role of external examiners includes approval of proposed assessment instruments, being consulted about any proposed changes to the structure of assessments, advising module and programme boards where specific actions may be required, and providing informative comment and recommendations on standards and the rigour of assessment practices. The regulations also confirm that College awards cannot be made on a programme without the scrutiny of an external examiner. External examiners are provided with guidance and information about the College, [478] which includes criteria for appointment and confirmation of their role and responsibilities.

117 External examiners are provided with a template for use in compiling their reports. [Higher Education Taught Award regulations: Part B 020] This requires external examiners to confirm that academic standards are being maintained in line with similar programmes or subjects in other UK institutions and are set at the correct level of the FHEQ. Examination of external examiner reports [201-214] seen by the team provided evidence that processes for the grading and moderation of marks and the conduct of examination boards were properly implemented and that academic standards were being maintained at the standards described above confirming the scrupulous use of external examiners including in the moderation of assessment tasks and student assessed work.

118 There is evidence that the College gives serious consideration to the comments and recommendations contained in external examiner reports. A written response from the College is provided to any recommendations addressing the comments and actions planned and the team saw evidence of these in Annual Programme Reviews (APR), [746-749] providing a mechanism for recommendations to be actioned and tracked through the Quality Improvement Plan for that programme and to ensure that responses are timely. These actions are also collated and tracked through Curriculum Area Self-Evaluation Documents (SEDs) [736] and the institutional Higher Education SED. [744] The team also noted that formal and informal responses to external examiners are recorded in a tracker [213] to ensure that the College has oversight of individual communications between external examiners and programme leaders. The HE Academic Board also annually reviews reports through the Annual Report on External Examiner Comments [035] to determine general themes and issues that emerge from this feedback. The team is of the view that the College gives full and systematic consideration to the comments and recommendations contained in external examiners' reports and provides external examiners with a considered and timely response to their comments and recommendations.

### **Academic appeals and student complaints**

119 The College's academic appeals procedure is clearly outlined in Section 9 of the Taught Awards Regulations: Part B. [020] Academic appeals are dealt with independently of the relevant curriculum area and consist of a two-stage process. There is an informal stage where a meeting is arranged with the HE Academic Registrar to discuss the circumstances with the student. Should this not resolve the issue a formal panel is convened at the second stage. Each stage aims to be implemented within 10 working days and the formal panel does not include anyone who has been involved in the first stage. Should the College's formal process not resolve matters to a student's satisfaction, there is the option of appeal to any applicable university or awarding organisation or directly to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for higher Education (OIA). Information on the appeals process is documented in programme handbooks [049, 136, 149] and the regulations and an appeals form are available on the College website [Website] and on the Student Life intranet. [001]

120 The Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Policy [025] and Procedure [026] details a three-stage process for complaints. Informal complaints are encouraged to be addressed to lecturers or programme leaders. However, should this not satisfy a complainant, then formal complaints are addressed to the Head of Curriculum at Stage 2. Stage 3 is a review conducted by the Vice Principal, Quality and Curriculum. The College aims to complete each stage of the process within 10 working days and, as with the appeals process, once the College issues a completion of procedures letter, should a student still not be satisfied with the outcome students are provided with information regarding a further review by the OIA or any partner university. A student-facing summary of this process is provided in programme handbooks [049, 136, 149] and on the College website. [Website]

121 The most recent report to the HE Academic Board [036] covering the previous academic year noted that there had been three academic appeals, of which one was upheld. During the same period a total of 23 higher education complaints were recorded that progressed as far as either Stage 1 or Stage 2. The team also noted that the current year's log of complaints included a total of seven through to January 2022 to the same stages. They could also see that these were tracked and dealt with within the College's stated timelines. With these relatively low numbers it was difficult to discern any trends or themes that could be identified. However, it was clear that the review of complaints and appeals would allow for enhancements to be noted, should these be identified.

122 Complaints from the current year related to matters such as fees and funding eligibility, the approach taken to mask mandates on campus and one relating to the provision of learning support. Individual examples of complaints and appeals seen by the team [609, 610, 612] were dealt with appropriately with prompt written communications sent to students within the timescales specified by the relevant policy. Appropriate action was taken in each case. For example, in the case of the academic appeal which related to the outcome from an academic malpractice case, the decision by the panel was moderated and the student was allowed to submit for reassessment with no penalty. The team concluded that the College has effective procedures for handling academic appeals and student complaints about the quality of the academic experience and that these procedures are fair, accessible and timely.

## **Conclusions**

123 The assessment team formulated its judgement against this criterion according to the process set out in the Guidance for Providers, in particular Annex 4.

124 The College is 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.

125 The College when designing and approving its provision carefully considers the objectives of the programmes in the context of its strategy to allow students to develop skills, knowledge and attributes to secure career opportunities. It has thorough procedures in place for course design, development and approval. There are clearly assigned responsibilities at each stage of its process and the College has experience of applying these through the validation of its own foundation degrees and considerable experience of doing this through the design of Level 6 provision currently delivered under its partnership arrangements. The development and approval process involves students, external academic and employer engagement and close links are maintained with the learning and support services to ensure that programmes are appropriately resourced.

126 There is a strategic approach to learning and teaching. The College has

strategically invested in campus and teaching facilities and its courses are designed to support students to develop good academic practice. It adapted well to pivoting to its online approach during the pandemic and it makes effective use of its self-evaluation processes to ensure that its overall approach remains consistent with its objectives that place a particular emphasis on inclusive learning.

127 There are robust arrangements in place to enable students to monitor their progress and further their academic development. These include useful resources and progression tutorials. Students are provided with clear and comprehensive information on the expectations for assessment processes and these are valid and reliable. Recognition of prior learning has only been used once since foundation degree awarding powers were granted but there are clear processes in place for assessment which were seen by the team to have been implemented appropriately.

128 Students are supported in their understanding of the basis on which academic judgements are made through the information contained in their programme handbooks and through tutorials. There are processes in place for the prevention, identification of and response to academic misconduct and the College takes a proactive approach to educate students in good academic practice.

129 External examiners are appointed for all programmes and careful consideration is given to their experience and qualifications for the role. The team saw evidence of the careful and systematic consideration and tracking of external examiner reports at programme level, and the inclusion of these recommendations and responses in Annual Programme Reports and quality improvement plans. External examiner reports are also monitored through to the HE Academic Board.

130 The College's academic appeals and student complaints procedures are accessible and annual reporting on cases will enable enhancement, though overall numbers are low. Oversight of complaints and appeals is exercised through the committee structure. Examples of an academic appeal and a complaint scrutinised by the team had been dealt with and resolved in accordance with the procedure.

131 Since 1992 the College has developed considerable experience in delivering its Level 6 provision in partnership with its validating university taking on significant devolved responsibilities. The team 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 degree awarding powers to Level 6. 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

132 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.*

133 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 and how the team considered this evidence

134 The QAA team assessed this criterion by reference to a range of evidence gathered according to the process described in the Guidance for Providers, in particular the suggested evidence outlined in Annex 5 and the provider's submission as follows:

- a To assess whether relevant learning, teaching and assessment practices are informed by reflection, evaluation of professional practice, and subject-specific and educational scholarship, the team considered the HE Education Strategy 2020-2025, [002] Considerations and planning for additional powers sought - a synopsis, [801] Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, [013] Development and Observation of Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy, [034] Development and Observation of Learning, Teaching and Assessment Process, [035] Graded observation records, [253, 257] Peer observation record, [254] Performance Management Guidance 2021-22, [409] and the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Report 05-10-21. [835]
- b To evaluate staff understanding of current research and advanced scholarship in their discipline and that such knowledge and understanding directly inform and enhance their teaching and determine that staff actively engage with research and/or advanced scholarship to a level commensurate with the level and subject of the qualifications being offered, the team reviewed the Annual Learning and Teaching Conference 2019, [251] New to HE Teaching agenda, [461] Thinking about Pedagogies session, [255] HE Professional Development event agenda - October 2020, [476] Annual Teaching and Learning Conference 2019, [474] Inclusive Practice - Self-paced resources Professional Development Hub, [469] Committees Handbook, [009] Scholarship and Research Committee Papers, [053-055] DAP staffing spreadsheet, [402] Sample of Academic CVs, [373] and the Scholarship Review Journal 2020. [452]
- c To assess whether staff actively engage with the pedagogic development of their discipline knowledge, the team considered the Sample of Academic CVs, [373] DAP staffing spreadsheet, [402] and the Variation of Degree Awarding Powers Self-Assessment. [001]
- d To assess whether the College has appropriately qualified staff with relevant academic and professional expertise to deliver its programmes, the team reviewed

the DAP staffing spreadsheet, [402] staff CVs [351-356, 362, 364-366, 373] and the Variation of Degree Awarding Powers Self-Assessment. [001]

- e To assess the College's approach to development opportunities aimed at enabling staff to enhance their practice and scholarship, the team reviewed the HE Continuing Professional Development Framework 2021-22 [465] and Employee Survey 2021 confidential summary for Executive. [408]
- f To evaluate the College's approach to giving staff opportunities to gain experience in curriculum development and assessment design and to engage with the activities of other higher education providers (for example, through becoming external examiners, validation panel members or external reviewers), the team reviewed the DAP staffing spreadsheet, [402] staff CVs, [351-356, 362, 364-366, 373] programme validation documentation, [122, 132, 144, 153, 887, 888, 892, 893, 894] assessment verification forms, [301, 304, 321, 325, 329] and the Variation of Degree Awarding Powers Self-Assessment. [001]
- g To assess whether staff have expertise in providing feedback on assessment, which is timely, constructive and developmental, the team considered assessment briefs, student submissions and graded feedback, [312-314, 837-845, 900-917] and external examiner reports. [201-214]
- h To assess whether the College has appropriate staff recruitment practices, the team reviewed the Employee Resourcing Policy, [404] Job descriptions, [357-361, 363, 367-374, 374] Staffing Approvals Process 2021-22, [403] DAP staffing spreadsheet, [402] staff CVs, [351-356, 362, 364-366, 373] and HE Academic Board report - HE Academic Staffing Profile 2020-21. [059]
- i To determine whether the College makes a rigorous assessment of appropriate staff/student ratios, the team reviewed the Variation of Degree Awarding Powers Self-Assessment, [001] and HE Academic Board report - HE Academic Staffing Profile 2020-21. [059]

### **How any samples of evidence were constructed**

135 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**

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

137 In its synopsis to the team [801] the College asserts that it has been building the strength and depth of its staffing capacity over a number of years so that its existing depth of teaching experience and engagement with scholarly activity are appropriate for the extended powers sought. It also considers that its existing policies and processes that address the scholarship and the pedagogical effectiveness of staff are also well established, thorough, and will remain fit for purpose for the proposed extension of powers. The team's analysis, therefore, has taken this into account in making its assessment.

138 The College's approach to supporting an academic community is established in its HE Education Strategy 2020-2025. [002] One of the strategic themes within the strategy is delivering inspirational scholarship-informed teaching, incorporating career-enhancing learning opportunities, which both challenge and inspire. This underpins the College's core aim of excellence in curriculum design and innovation and is supported through the academic community. The College's Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

[013] emphasises professional development to support the delivery of innovative learning, teaching and assessment and commits the College to provide scholarship and development opportunities to employees through funded projects, the College's Scholarship and Research Development Scheme (SRDS), research networks, and externality.

139 The College's approach to providing opportunities for reflection and evaluation of practice is contained within the Development and Observation of Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy and Procedures. [034, 035] This demonstrates that there is a robust approach in place for peer observation of learning and teaching which supports reflection of learning, teaching and assessment for staff. Graded observations are also used at the College. These are conducted by academic management staff who hold a recognised teaching qualification and have successfully completed initial and annual refresher training and lead to a graded judgement about the quality of learning and teaching. Staff who receive a top grade are encouraged to share their best practice and those who receive lower grades are provided with feedback that includes actions to support their development which are then monitored by senior tutors. The records provided of graded observations [253, 257] confirmed that this form of appraisal is happening in practice and the feedback was constructive and appropriately pitched to support staff development. The team also viewed an example of a peer observation record [254] which makes use of a similar template that focuses on feedback only. In both cases it is clear that the process allows the staff member being observed the opportunity to discuss their feedback and time to reflect on their practice. The Director of Quality and Standards is responsible for all observations and these feed into objective setting for staff as part of the College's performance management processes [409] to support staff and their line managers to identify areas for professional development and agree how this will be measured and achieved through the use of a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Plan.

140 The Director of Quality and Standards reports to the Quality and Standards Committee regarding the findings from the lesson observations, and the broader feedback around learning, teaching and assessment. The team viewed the most recent report from October 2021. [835] The team noted that much of the report did not distinguish between the College's higher and further education provision, for example, in providing information about the number of observations that were conducted. However, there was some specific feedback regarding strengths and areas for development among higher education teaching staff including how staff can enhance in-class methods to assess and give feedback to students and to design and plan learning activities. Overall, though the report did not have any specific recommendations, the team agreed that through individual reflection between peer reviewers and those who are tasked with conducting graded observations, teaching staff do have opportunities to engage in reflection and evaluation of their learning, teaching and assessment practice.

141 The College makes use of initiatives such as its Annual Learning and Teaching Event to give staff opportunities to reflect on and evaluate their professional practice with colleagues to inform their approaches to teaching and assessment. The 2021 event [251] included addresses and workshops led by College academic and professional support staff and external contributors. Topics included using career theory and models to support graduate employability, developing graduate attributes through undergraduate research activities, an evaluation of a bespoke progress meeting scheme of work to improve student retention and achievement at Level 4 study, and redefining resilience in a college-based higher education environment. The team noted that these and other topics were relevant to both academic and professional support staff and the context of the College's delivery through to Level 6 and included opportunities for the evaluation of professional practice and educational scholarship.

142 The College provides a range of training and development which supports staff

development of learning, teaching and assessment practices. The New to HE Teaching agenda [461] demonstrates that the College has in place a broad induction covering the requirements to deliver higher education including sessions on assessment, scholarship, academic standards and quality, and evaluation. The document includes links to a range of further resources, such as the College's Student Protection Plan and information about the OfS, providing further support for staff. The Thinking about Pedagogies session [255] is a further staff development session that focuses on the College's approach to teaching. The HE Professional Development event agenda - October 2020 [476] and Annual Teaching and Learning Conference 2019 [474] provide examples of the College's ongoing opportunities for staff to engage in reflection and evaluation of their learning, teaching and assessment practice. The Inclusive Practice - Self-paced resources Professional Development Hub [469] provided an example of the resources in place to support inclusive curriculum development and demonstrated inclusion of current sector approaches to this area by the College for its staff.

143 The College's Scholarship and Research Committee (SRC) terms of reference detail that it is responsible to the HE Academic Board for encouraging the application and process of research to learning and teaching. [009] One way it does this is through the SRDS. This scheme provides funding for individual projects up to the value of £5,000 for members of academic and support staff who wish to engage in scholarship and research activity to enhance their role in the College, the curriculum, and the student learning experience. Proposals are evaluated against criteria that include relevance to the curriculum and the enhancement of teaching quality, particularly across academic areas. The team noted the consideration of the planned Annual Learning and Teaching Event by SRC [054] as well as a variety of other activities in the SRC papers seen, [053-055] including receiving extended study applications for postgraduate qualifications including PhDs and the monitoring of SRDS-funded projects, such as one related to the session on progress meeting schemes of work to improve student retention and achievement at Level 4. The team agreed that these activities were evidence of an approach to supporting both academic and professional support staff so that learning, teaching and assessment practices can be informed by reflection, evaluation of professional practice, and subject-specific and educational scholarship.

144 The College can demonstrate through the DAP staffing spreadsheet [402] that staff are active in research and advanced scholarship in their discipline and further detail about these activities can be gleaned from the CVs the team examined. [373] The College self-evaluation highlights that 57 members of staff have published output including journal articles and the College itself is in the eleventh year of publishing its own annual Scholarship Review Journal that accepts articles relating to the discovery, integration, application and the scholarship of teaching. The team inspected the most recent issue [452] and noted that there were articles on topics such as exploring the language of higher education, and a maths pilot scheme at Blackpool School of Arts. Staff publications evident in the CVs include topics such as Impacts on Assessment, Student Engagement and Success During Lockdown and the value of mindfulness training for students. The team is of the view that academic staff have an understanding of current research and advanced scholarship in their discipline and that such knowledge and understanding directly inform and enhance their teaching. Much of this engagement is at a level that is commensurate with the levels and subjects being offered, up to and including Level 6.

145 Academic staff are actively engaged with the pedagogic development of their discipline knowledge. CVs [373] scrutinised by the team demonstrate that these are frequently updated, and that staff are engaged in scholarly activities that inform their approach. The team saw numerous recent examples of staff attending conferences and courses, producing publications and other activities to support their development. Examples include attending a conference about inspiring careers in Science, Technology, Engineering,

and Mathematics (STEM), attendance at courses on best practice in the utilisation of digital technologies to support learning, and visits to other higher education institutions to assess contemporary provision standards in the sector. Data from the DAP staffing spreadsheet [402] demonstrates that 25 members of staff are Fellows of AdvanceHE, including one Senior Fellow and the College notes that the Vice Principal Higher Education and Student Engagement, and the Head of Digital and LRCs are also Senior Fellows. The spreadsheet details that 23 curriculum staff are members of a subject association such as the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology or the Chartered Management Institute. [001]

146 The College makes use of its DAP staffing spreadsheet [402] to track how its academic and professional support staff have developed their range of experience and qualifications. As well as tracking their qualifications, the College asks staff to highlight activities that have contributed to them, for example being able to use advanced scholarship to inform and enhance their teaching. The spreadsheet can only categorise this information without providing any detail. Staff can highlight whether they have undertaken activities under four headings of Creative work, Consultancy, Professional practice, and Other. However, it provides an overview of the staffing profile including for curriculum areas and those occupying teaching or leadership roles and the highest level taught by individual staff members. The team could see that under each curriculum area and for professional support staff there are records of staff taking part in activities such as membership of professional bodies, professional practice, and conference attendance and more information about these activities can then be scrutinised in staff CVs.

147 The staffing spreadsheet also confirms that professional support staff are generally educated to Level 6, with only two qualified to Level 5, although one of these does have a teaching qualification. Other professional support staff occupying specialist roles, for example in counselling roles within Student Support and Wellbeing have appropriate academic and professional qualifications. [366-CV]

148 In addition to the staffing spreadsheet, the team examined 35 CVs of staff from across the provision and all levels including lecturers, curriculum managers, programme leaders and senior tutors, as well as senior management staff [351-356, 362, 364-366, 373] to gain a more detailed understanding of academic and professional expertise. The CVs examined demonstrated a wide range of experience with academic staff possessing an appropriate postgraduate subject and professional qualifications as well as a teaching qualification such as a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) or Qualified Teacher Status that is appropriate to teaching to Level 6. The College reports that 92% of teaching staff have a teaching qualification with the remainder currently studying or awaiting the next intake for such a qualification [001] with 57% of curriculum staff currently having either a Level 7 or 8 qualification as their highest qualification and a further 26 studying for one. Staff teaching specialist courses with a specific employment focus are also appropriately qualified with staff teaching of nautical science programmes, for example, possessing professional certification from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

149 The College acknowledges in its consideration of the skills and expertise required to teach all students, that 28 of its staff are teaching at the same level as that of their highest qualification. Several are in the maritime curriculum area where the highest qualification delivered is Level 5 and, typically, these are former seafaring professionals with professional accreditation who the College asserts bring invaluable experience and expertise to the student experience. The team concluded that, overall, staff involved in teaching or supporting student learning, and in the assessment of student work, have appropriate academic and professional expertise.

150 The HE Continuing Professional Development Framework 2021-22 [465] confirmed the College has a specific approach to development of staff delivering higher education level

provision and a strategy to raise the profile of advanced practitioners. It confirms that there are opportunities for staff to enhance their practice and scholarship through formal, self-paced, on-the-job, and self-reflective activities. It also confirmed higher education teaching staff have 50 hours remission to undertake research and scholarship, and funding for small action research or evaluative projects which will have an impact on teaching and learning. The reflective approach was also demonstrated by the College's expectation of development logs linked to the performance review process. The Employee Survey [408] notes that 88% of staff feel they get sufficient training to do their job effectively, although the results were not able to be broken down to assess higher education staff. However, the team agreed that the above approach does provide development opportunities that are aimed at enabling staff to enhance their practice and scholarship.

151 Evidence of the College giving staff opportunities to engage with the activities of other higher education providers and having staff with experience of curriculum development and assessment design is to be found in the DAP staffing spreadsheet [402] and CVs that were seen by the team. [351-356, 362, 364-366, 373] The College reports that 64% of curriculum staff have experience of curriculum development and 68% have experience of assessment design. [001] This figure rises to 98% of staff with programme leadership responsibilities at the College. The proportion of the former is evidenced in validation documents seen by the team [122, 132, 144, 153, 887, 888, 892, 893, 894] and the latter in assessment verification documentation. [301, 304, 321, 325, 329] The College reports that its staff have found it difficult to be appointed to external examining posts in the past; however, 24 have occupied such roles with 12 staff having been involved in programme validation processes at other providers. [001] This supports the conclusion that staff do engage with the activities of providers of higher education in other organisations.

152 To assess the College staff expertise in providing feedback on assessment, the team inspected examples of assessed student work that included assessment briefs as well as associated submissions and graded feedback of this work. [312-314, 837-845, 900-917] The team considered that the feedback seen was detailed, constructive and developmental. This assessment is in accordance with feedback in external examiners' reports seen by the team. [201-214] It was not possible to make a judgement regarding the timeframe within which assessment feedback is provided. However, the team noted that feedback was dated which would make it possible for the College to monitor this and the student submission confirmed that this was received within three weeks of submission. Students also confirmed that they feel that feedback is effective and helpful. The team concluded that staff have expertise in providing feedback that is timely, constructive, and developmental.

153 The College's approach to recruitment, articulated in the employee resourcing policy, [404] sets out the responsibility for all those involved in recruitment to undertake fair selection based on merit. Job descriptions [357-361, 363, 367-374, 374] inspected by the team demonstrated staff were required to have a range of practice and expertise which would be applicable to their role and, for academic staff, the level at which they teach. The Staffing Approvals Process 2021-2022 [403] sets out how individual staff are approved in respect of the subjects and modules that they deliver. Detailed guidelines are provided regarding qualifications (academic and teaching), engagement in scholarship, experience of teaching and relevant professional practice. This demonstrates a robust approach to ensuring programmes and modules are staffed by those who have the relevant experience and expertise. The DAP staffing spreadsheet [402] and CVs seen by the team [351-356, 362, 364-366, 373] allowed them to confirm that staff filling the post detailed in the job descriptions met the requirements stated for the posts. The HE Academic Board report - HE Academic Staffing Profile 2020-21 [059] demonstrated that there was oversight by the senior academic authority that the College has sufficient appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience. The report gave an overview of staffing, trends in qualifications held (both academic and teaching) and engagement in relevant professional

development, such as AdvanceHE Fellowships and external examining. The team concluded, therefore, that the College has appropriate staff recruitment practices.

154 The College's approach to assessing the appropriate student/staff ratios at the College is complicated by the fact that some staff teach on both the further and higher provision and that student/staff ratios for further education cohorts are calculated to different expectations. [001] It is also the case that professional support staff work across the College's entire provision. For example, the placements team engages with employer partners to provide a range of placements at different levels that include further education students. It has therefore taken a hybrid approach to calculating a student/staff ratio of 16.6:1, assuming a total higher education cohort of 3,000 higher education students per annum. This is monitored by the HE Academic Board through an annual report from the Director of Higher Education [059] and the team noted that beyond the basic ratio the College monitors the ratio of colleagues on full-time contracts, which has increased as the College builds capacity for its higher education provision and with the extension of its degree awarding powers in mind. The report also monitors the ratio of academic leaders to teaching staff, the qualification levels of the staff, the percentage of those holding teaching qualifications and fellowships of AdvanceHE and numbers who hold memberships of professional bodies associated with their subject specialism. The team noted that with the exception of the proportion of staff with a teaching qualification which had dropped slightly, the report to the HE Academic Board recorded improving trends in all metrics. This supports the conclusion that the College is developing the qualifications and experience of its staff as part of a rigorous assessment of the skills and expertise required to teach all students and the appropriate student/staff ratios.

## Conclusions

155 The assessment team formulated its judgement against this criterion according to the process set out in the Guidance for Providers, in particular Annex 4.

156 The HE Education Strategy underpins the core aim of excellence in curriculum design and innovation and is supported through the academic community. The HE Academic Board is active in ensuring that learning, teaching and assessment practices are informed by reflection, evaluation of professional practice, and subject-specific and educational scholarship. This is supported by recruitment policies and practices that seek to ensure staff have the appropriate academic and professional expertise. The evidence confirms that academic staff are appropriately qualified for the level at which they teach, including Level 6 provision which is currently validated by Lancaster University.

157 There is evidence to demonstrate that staff are engaged in reflection and evaluation of their learning, teaching and assessment practice. The College operates a peer observation of teaching process providing an opportunity for staff to reflect in and on practice, and there is a system of annual performance development review in place between staff and line managers to facilitate reflection and identify development needs. This is supported by a range of development opportunities for staff which supports them in their own practice, as well as providing opportunities to share with their peers internally and externally to the College. The College ensures that staff are supported and developed in the assessment of student work to all levels of the subjects it currently awards up to Level 5 and those of higher levels currently awarded by other organisations. External examiner reports and feedback on assessed student work confirm this practice, which is supported by a range of resources, policies and processes.

158 The evidence confirms that staff have opportunities to enhance their practice and scholarship. The HE Continuing Professional Development Framework provides a specific approach to development of staff delivering HE level provision and a strategy to raise the

profile of advanced practitioners. The team concludes that the College 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 levels and subjects of the qualifications being awarded. The assessment team concludes, therefore, that the criterion is met.



## Criterion D: Environment for supporting students

### Criterion D1 - Enabling student development and achievement

159 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.*

160 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 and how the team considered this evidence

161 The QAA team assessed this criterion by reference to a range of evidence gathered according to the process described in the Guidance for Providers, in particular the suggested evidence outlined in Annex 5 and the provider's submission as follows:

- a To determine whether the College takes a comprehensive strategic and operational approach to determine and evaluate how it enables student development and achievement for its diverse body of students, the team considered the Property Strategy, [701] Capital Bid Process 2021-22, [703] Capital Bid Business Case 2021-22 template, [704] Performance monitoring (P3) 2021-22 - template, [762] Digital Strategy (DRAFT) - Jan 2022, [061] Career Centre screenshots, [514] Partners for Success Framework Guide for HE Colleagues, [671] Partners for Success Group ToR 2021, [672] Annual HE Self-Evaluation Documents, [736,754,763] HE Academic Achievement Manager, [367] Capital Bids, [848, 849] Capital Bid Summary and Panel Decisions 2020-21, [850] notes from Partners for Success meetings. [854-856]
- b To confirm that students are advised about, and inducted into, their study programmes in an effective way and account taken of different students' choices and needs, the team considered the admissions information on their website, [<https://www.blackpool.ac.uk/highereducation/admissions>] JD Partnerships and Careers Team Leader, [368] Principles of Providing Effective IAG, [471] Flying Start opportunities webpage screenshot, [515] JD HE Learning Mentor, [369] HE Student Canvas Induction screenshots, [516] HE Academic Board report 24-11-21 and Student engagement including Post Induction Survey results Nov 2021, [062] Admissions Policy, [023] HE Admissions Procedure, [024] Admissions Cycle Annual Report - 2019-20 to HE Academic Board, [857] Student Induction Synopsis, [858] BFC Staff Guide to Induction, [859] Power to Progress Induction Module, [860] Induction Level 4 Early Childhood Studies, [861] Induction Level 6 Computing. [867]
- c To confirm how the effectiveness of student and staff advisory, support and counselling services is monitored, and any resource needs arising are considered, the team considered CV of Director for Students, [354] SED 2020-21 for the Directorate for Students, [738] Employee Portal screenshots, [517] Employee Assistance Programme provider screenshots, [407] Employee Survey 2021 confidential summary for Executive, [408] HE Academic Board report 24-11-21, Student engagement including Post Induction Survey results Nov 2021, [062] HE Academic Board report 30-06-21, Review of Student Wellbeing Mental Wealth activities in 2020-21. [063]

- d To confirm that the College's administrative support systems enable it to monitor student progression and performance accurately and provide timely, secure and accurate information to satisfy academic and non-academic management information needs, the team considered Power BI dashboards screenshots, [750] HE SED, [744] Annual Programme Reviews, [735, 751, 752, 753] and Power BI reports. [862, 863]
- e To confirm the College 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 considered HE Student Canvas Induction screenshots, [516] Power to Progress individual progress tutorials - screenshots, [506] Power to Progress Canvas tutorial programme - screenshot, [507] Student Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2024, [071] HE Academic Board report 30-06-21, Review of Student Wellbeing Mental Wealth activities in 2020-21, [063] The DegreePlus Employability Award, [518] Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR), [030] HE Academic Board report 15-09-21, Annual Graduate Outcomes 2020-21, [064] Career Centre screenshots, [514] Partners for Success Framework Guide for HE Colleagues, [671] Flying Start opportunities webpage screenshot. [515]
- f To evaluate whether 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 considered the Student Canvas Induction screenshots, [516] Health and Safety Policy, [014] Risk Assessment for external activity FdSc Marine Biology, [702] Health and Safety Information Sheet relating to use of print room BSoA, [705] Scheme of Work for a practical workshop - Engineering, [706] Digital Strategy (DRAFT) - Jan 2022, [061] Student Life Intranet screenshots, [503] Programme Handbooks, [049, 136, 149] and Power to Progress individual progress tutorials - screenshots. [506]
- g To confirm the College's approach to enabling student development and achievement is guided by a commitment to equity, the team considered the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Statement, [065] Equality Diversity and Inclusion strategy - Draft 2, [066] Student Charter, [602] Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2021-22, [013] Learning Teaching and Equality Committee Papers, [067, 068] and Access and Participation Plan 2020-21 to 2024-25. [015]

### **How any samples of evidence were constructed**

162 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**

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

164 In its synopsis [801] the College notes that resourcing the delivery of its degree courses to Level 6 under its validation arrangements has long been its responsibility. It asserts that while it continues to assess and develop its resources, much is already in place to facilitate the additional responsibilities of degree awarding powers being extended to Level 6. The team's analysis, therefore, has taken this into account in making its assessment.

165 The College's HE Strategy [002] sets out a commitment to provide an engaging,

stimulating and inclusive learning environment coupled with world-class facilities, resources and flexible study options for students. The main strategy to operationalise this is the Partners for Success Framework, [671] which addresses the College's strategic approach to the provision of advisory and support services. The Property Strategy, [701] Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement [065] and the accompanying strategy [066] also contribute to the College's strategic approach and are discussed further below.

166 The Partners for Success Framework provides the overarching strategy for the Directorate for Students that was created after the award of FDAP to coordinate Digital and Learning Resource Centres, Employability and Careers, Student Support, Wellbeing and Inclusion, Safeguarding and Prevent and higher education academic achievement support. The framework outlines a holistic approach to cross-College activities that are designed to advise and support students and incorporates pre-entry, enrolment and induction activities and processes with ongoing support once students are studying. These include the provision of progress meetings with students to support their attendance, academic performance, any additional learning needs, counselling and support, as well as graduate skills and employability services.

167 At the heart of the framework progress tutors (who act in a personal tutor capacity) support student retention, satisfaction and achievement through scheduling a series of meetings with students and using these as a basis to identify and then signpost any additional support required, monitor progress and set new targets for students based on their progress. The framework is designed to create a cooperative approach to support between staff and students and incorporates student engagement to ensure this.

168 The Director of Students chairs meetings of the Partners for Success Group whose terms of reference [672] state its purpose is to monitor and support the implementation of the Partners for Success Framework and includes student representation. Notes from the meetings of this group [854-856] demonstrate that it fulfils this role with active discussions taking place to track engagement with processes, such as the number of students completing their progress meeting questionnaires prior to their scheduled meetings, the development and implementation of new initiatives, such as the launch of a new career platform, and the assessment of performance through various metrics including student feedback. The team agreed that this represented a comprehensive strategic and operational approach to determine and evaluate how the College enables student development and achievement for its diverse body of students.

169 The College's strategic approach to providing a suitable learning environment for all its students is set out within its Property Strategy [701] which demonstrates a planned approach to the resources the College puts in place to support students' development and achievement. It considers the range of students in terms of both further and higher education provision, and subject area, taking account of educational drivers, balancing capital developments and upgrading of estate. Throughout the strategy there is clear consideration of higher education provision. For example, the team noted ongoing discussions taking place with the local council about the possibility of relocating some of the higher education provision to a bespoke new campus in Blackpool town centre [039] as part of a regeneration plan being discussed by the council. This, however, was a proposal that was at a very early stage in discussions at the time of the College's submission.

170 More substantive investment in the College's estate makes use of the Capital Bid Process 2021-22 [703] and Capital Bid Business Case 2021-22 template, [704] which the team agreed demonstrates a robust and structured operational approach to investment by considering the full selection of options, costs, benefits, resources and risks associated with a process.

171 The College demonstrates that within its Performance Monitoring template [762] it has a standardised approach to curriculum business planning which includes the identification of issues and opportunities. The College demonstrates that this happens in practice from the Capital Bids [848, 849] with the Capital Bid Summary and Panel Decisions 2020-21 [850] demonstrating the decision-making taken which includes considerations on the needs of a diverse student body, for example the provision of quiet working areas in the University Learning Resource Centre responding to student concerns over noise pollution. The team agreed that developments such as the College's Fleetwood Nautical Campus and Lancashire Energy HQ campus, [001] which provide both specialist and niche facilities for the study of nautical science, nuclear engineering, and other programmes, was evidence of the College's approach to investing successfully in facilities that are provided to maximise students' chances of developing their potential and of obtaining the qualification they are seeking.

172 The Partners for Success Framework [671] sets out how students are to be advised about and inducted into the College and their programmes of study. The framework describes how prospective students should be engaged through the website, social media and the marketing team and how this is to be used as the foundation for the effective implementation of further student support. This may include early signposting to specialist support or the Careers Team. Once enrolled, inductions are contextualised for students. There is a central induction schedule to provide information and access details to the College, support services and the programme of study. Additionally, self-paced induction resources differentiated by level through to Level 6 for top-up degree students are provided on the College VLE and all new students will meet with their progress tutor in the first week.

173 The team viewed a range of induction materials including for Level 6 Computing and Digital Technologies, [867] Foundation Degree Early Childhood Studies, [861] and screenshots of the VLE induction resources. [516] They found them to be thorough and effective in providing information about the course, timetable, policies and support and careers services. The inductions are tailored to different students' needs. For example, Level 6 students receive information about their dissertations and there is contextualised information about referencing that include referencing management software and accounts for these students having completed Level 4 and 5 courses. Students are therefore appropriately advised about, and inducted into, their study programmes in an effective way and account is taken of their different choices and needs.

174 The Annual HE Self-Evaluation Documents for the College [736, 754, 763] and the central Higher Education Self-evaluation Document [738] demonstrate that the College takes an evaluative approach to the effectiveness of student and staff advisory, support and counselling services. An example is building on the success of integrating the HE Learning Mentor within each curriculum area; last year saw the earlier use of HE Learning Mentor support during inductions and immediately before and after the first assignment. Each of the three self-evaluation documents [736, 754, 763] has a specific section that addresses enabling student achievement detailing several actions which have been taken from reflecting on practice, such as continuation of Specialist Support Practitioners. These sections also considered various student groups such as those with specific learning difficulties. Actions are included within curriculum area Quality Improvement Plans with actions for the previous year being reported on in the current self-evaluation document. An example of the self-evaluation document's evaluative approach to student support is the data provided in the HE Self-Evaluation Document that analyses HE Learning Mentor interventions by curriculum area so that the College can plan to provide a more targeted approach to improve the consistency of support provided to those students who need this.

175 The new role of HE Academic Achievement Manager [367] introduced in 2020 [001] demonstrates the College investing in its approach and responding to an identified need to

focus on student progress and achievement. The HE Academic Achievement Manager focuses on student progress and achievement working with academic colleagues and complementing support from the Student Support and Wellbeing team. In this way resource needs arising from the College's effective monitoring of its support services are considered.

176 The College uses its metrics from its databases seen by the team [750, 862, 863] to monitor student progression and performance with a range of data being presented visually, incorporating the ability to drill down into the detail as required. This information flows from the College's student records system ensuring it is accurate and secure and it can be tailored to address academic and non-academic management information needs. Staff can access the reports provided. As one example, data from this system is combined with the caseload data of the HE Learning Mentor team to identify, for example, issues related to attendance to address them as quickly as possible should a problem be identified. The HE Self-Evaluation Document [738] shows the use of data in the evaluation of the delivery of provision and demonstrates a data-led strategic approach. For example, there is evaluation of differing trends in retention across curriculum areas, and specific actions within the HE Quality Improvement Plan are implemented to improve continuation. The College's approach can also be seen at the programme level, Annual Programme Reviews, [735, 751, 752, 753] where data is used within the annual review process. The team was satisfied that this provides for an effective system to monitor student performance accurately and provide timely, secure and accurate information to satisfy staff information needs.

177 The team considered the approach to skills development to evaluate whether the College provides opportunities for all students to develop skills that enable their academic, personal and professional progression. The induction, [516] as discussed above, demonstrates that the College signposts a range of opportunities for students to develop skills that enable their academic, personal and professional progression. This includes introducing students to the Careers Team and other career support. The templates for tutorials with progress tutors [506, 507] include the identification of career aspirations and opportunities. Students can access a range of short core modules which are complementary to their main study programme. These cover areas such as using assessment and feedback. There is also a range of elective modules such as Planning your Career and Digital Fluency which students can use to enhance their experience, demonstrating the extent of the support provided. It is also the case that many courses delivered by the College have work-based learning elements embedded in them, and that there are learning outcomes on programme specifications, [103, 106, 107, 134, 146] which specify the range of professional skills students will acquire during their course of study.

178 The Student Wellbeing Strategy [071] demonstrates the College approach to supporting students in developing their skills in a holistic way with a commitment to empowering students to become adaptable, autonomous and resilient. For example, students can use self-assessment software as a conversation starter to empower them to identify strategies they already have and develop those they may need in the future to support their resilience. The College evaluated this aspect of its provision [063] and plans further enhancement. For example, it has evaluated the use of the College-wide Student Life resource and looks to introduce support for mental health through developments such as the use of an online mental fitness app. The provision of this wellbeing support enables students to make the most of their academic, personal and professional skills and engage with their progress tutor to give direction to this.

179 The DegreePlus Employability Award [518] offers a formal opportunity to recognise skills and achievements gained through extracurricular activities at the College. These awards are recognised and outlined on the student's Higher Education Achievement Report [030] and supporting their career prospects. The most recent Graduate Outcomes data [064] demonstrates the College's use of this information to monitor and evaluate the impact of the

opportunities provided for employability, although an area of improvement identified was to improve survey response rates to increase the College's confidence in the results that its data accurately reflects graduates' employment and ongoing study status. While noting this caveat, however, the team agreed that the College provides opportunities for its students to develop skills that enable their academic, personal and professional progression, for example academic, employment and future career management skills.

180 The College's approach to developing student skills to make effective use of the learning resources is set out in both College-wide processes, for example Canvas Induction, [screenshots 516] and the Health and Safety Policy, [014] and at curriculum level where there is specific guidance and procedures related to different specialist facilities and activities. For example, in Blackpool School of Arts there is a health and safety information sheet relating to use of the print room. [705] In Engineering, the scheme of work for a practical workshop [706] clearly focuses on students developing key practical skills. As an example of a risk assessment for an external activity to sample water quality as part of FdSc Marine Biology, [702] clear identification of potential hazards and actions is evident. This demonstrates the range of information provided by the College to support students in developing skills to make effective use of the resources provided.

181 Programme handbooks [049, 136, 149] set out to students the College's approach to supporting them with the required skills development, for example sessions arranged by tutors for in-depth sessions on key skills such as effective searching of online resources and referencing. Students are provided with opportunities to develop digital skills and utilise associated resources in a number of ways. For example, the Student Life portal [503] has key guidance on how to develop skills to use electronic learning resources effectively. The Power to Progress tutorial package [506] of programmes supports improvement of digital fluency for students who feel they would benefit from this. This includes introductory sessions to Microsoft programmes such as PowerPoint and Excel, plus more advanced tools such as video editing and coding. The College therefore 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.

182 The College stated in its self-assessment that a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion is based on its vision, mission and values, specifically 'showing fairness, courtesy and respect' and permeates all areas of the organisation. This is supported by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Statement [065] which is published on the College website and references the key objectives which underpin the approach. These include targeting and encouraging potentially disadvantaged or under-represented groups and assessing the impact of any new way of working to identify any disadvantage to actual or potential stakeholders.

183 The College has a proactive approach and significant aims and objectives to improve the access and success outcomes of targeted demographics in the context of Blackpool being one of 12 national Opportunity Areas identified by government. It highlights the intersections of characteristics of disadvantage which can lead to particular groups experiencing barriers in higher education [001] and addresses these in its Access and Participation Plan. [015] The College then monitors its performance against these targets annually through its Higher Education Self-Evaluation Document [738] and through its Learning, Teaching and Equality Committee (LTEC). LTEC systematically monitors the College's performance and identifies good practice and areas for enhancement. Notes from meetings [067, 068] demonstrate that it monitors attendance and retention data to track any attainment gaps, particularly among groups already identified by the College, such as by ethnicity and students from areas of low participation. The College's responsiveness to the needs of students is demonstrated, for example, by developments during COVID-19

lockdowns to provide additional financial support for some students which they particularly valued. [800] The team concluded that the College's approach is guided by a commitment to equity.

## **Conclusions**

184 The assessment team formulated its judgement against this criterion according to the process set out in the Guidance for Providers, in particular Annex 4.

185 The College has in place, monitors and evaluates arrangements and resources that enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential. The College has a strategic, coherent and integrated approach to the provision of a learning environment to support achievement and progression, having brought together the key services and functions (under the leadership of the Director for Students) which work in partnership with Support, Wellbeing and Inclusion. There is evidence of planning, development and evaluation of these services in the records of meetings and reports seen and the College has considerable experience of delivering the above through to and including Level 6.

186 Student inductions are effective and take account of the students' different choices and needs with, for example, Level 6 students for top-up degrees receiving information tailored for specific aspects of their course such as preparing for dissertations. There are effective systems to monitor student performance accurately and provide timely, secure and accurate information to satisfy staff information needs under a new lead role of Academic Achievement Manager.

187 The College has a strong focus on the development of transferable skills supported through the Partners for Success Framework which embeds the student contribution as partners in their learning and development. Its tutorial programmes further supplement these opportunities through engagement with a progress tutor. Students are able to access a range of short core modules which are complementary to their main study programme.

188 The College provides opportunities, principally through induction and on programme learning, for students to develop skills to make effective use of the learning resources provided, including the safe use of specialist facilities and the use of digital and virtual environments. These include support for students studying at Level 6 through its existing validation arrangements.

189 The College's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, is evident in the provision of a comprehensive and responsive range of services to support students, and the College's aims and objectives to improve the access and success outcomes of its students through its Access and Participation Plan and the Learning, Teaching and Equality Committee. The assessment team concludes, therefore, that the criterion is met.

## Criterion E: Evaluation of performance

### Criterion E1 - Evaluation of performance

190 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.*

191 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 and how the team considered this evidence

192 The QAA team assessed this criterion by reference to a range of evidence gathered according to the process described in the Guidance for Providers, in particular the suggested evidence outlined in Annex 5 and the provider's submission as follows:

- a To verify that critical self-assessment is integral to the operation of the College's higher education provision and that action is taken in response to matters raised through internal or external monitoring and review, the team considered relevant sections of the HE Taught Award Regulations: Part B, [020] the SED Panel Event - ToR [755] and the SED Panel Review Guidance 2020-21, [756] the HE Self-Evaluation Document, [744] examples of review documentation, [735-737; 740; 743; 745-749; 751-754; 757; 829-834; 864-866] synopsis re actions from self and external evaluations [895] and documents related to external review including the British Computing Society Accreditation Report 2021, [741] the Quinquennial Partnership Review with Lancaster University 2020-21, [039] and the BFC Partnership Review Action Plan Oct 2021. [871]
- b To verify that clear mechanisms exist for assigning and discharging action in relation to the scrutiny and monitoring of its academic provision, the team reviewed the roles and responsibilities outlined in the HE Taught Award Regulations Part B, [020] Quality Assurance Meeting minutes, [041-043; 872-876] Programme Quality Meeting minutes, [044-046; 877-884] Self-Evaluation Documents [736; 754; 763; 829; 831; 833] and SED Panel meeting notes, [745; 757; 830; 832; 834] APR QIPs [735; 740; 743; 746-749; 751-753; 864-866] and examples of actions provided by the College in the synopsis re actions from self and external evaluations. [895]
- c To verify that ideas and expertise from within and outside the organisation (for example on programme design and development, on teaching, and on student learning and assessment) are drawn into the College's arrangements for programme design, approval, delivery and review, the team reviewed the HE Taught Award Regulations Part B, [020] the Student Engagement Strategy 2020-2023, [016] programme design and approval documentation, [101; 104; 105; 111; 115; 122; 131; 132; 143; 144; 153; 885; 887-890; 892-894] relevant event agendas including the Progress Tutor Conference Agenda August 2020, [258] BFC Teaching and Learning Event 2021 [259] and the Annual Teaching and Learning Conference 2019, [474] the SED Panel Event - ToR, [755] annual review process documentation, [735-737; 740; 743; 745-749; 751-754; 757; 829-834; 864-866] HE Quality Assurance Meeting minutes, [041-043; 872-876] Programme Quality Meeting minutes [044-046] and the BDAP student submission. [800]



## How any samples of evidence were constructed

193 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

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

195 Critical self-assessment is built into the College's monitoring and review cycle. The processes are detailed in Section 12 of the HE Taught Award Regulations: Part B [020] which sets out a commitment to monitoring and review and critical self-assessment with the intention of considering 'how learning opportunities for students can be improved'. The regulations outline the types of internal and external feedback sought and the mechanisms used, including key meetings, the deliberative structure and five key processes which are Annual Programme Reviews, Annual Self-Evaluations (SED) and Periodic Reviews, Programme Revalidations and institutional annual self-assessment.

196 The terms of reference of the HE Academic Board [009] state that the board is to monitor through a specified schedule of reporting, compliance with the requirements of the College's regulatory and quality assurance frameworks. The team examined the board's schedule for 2021-22 [012] and confirmed that this includes receiving a series of annual reports including, for example, that for HE Student Complaints and Academic Appeals 2020-21 and that from the Learning, Teaching and Equality Committee 2020-21 and other reports that assess aspects of the provision such as assessment, the graduate outcomes, academic malpractice and from external examiners. It also considers the HE Self-Evaluation Document which is the institutional-level annual report and strategic commentary on the performance and management of higher education provision for the academic year. This includes a series of resulting actions as part of the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and a review of the preceding year's QIP to assess the success in implementing actions from that year. Through the above approach, the College's regulations clearly articulate the expectation and processes that critical self-assessment and review is integral to its higher education operation and that action is taken in response to matters raised.

197 The programme monitoring and review process takes the form of Annual Programme Review (APR) which is undertaken by all programmes. Evidence of APRs [735, 740, 743, 746-749, 751-753, 864-866] shows reports are generally detailed, showcase critical reflection and make good use of data and results to create appropriate Quality Improvement Plans. The process aligns with the requirements of the principal awarding partner, Lancaster University and serves the needs of the College as a foundation degree awarding body. All reviews use a consistent format, and no differences were noted in the level of detail or oversight between programmes awarded internally [735, 864-866] and externally. [740, 743, 746-749, 752-753] The team agreed that these reports evidence critical reflection at programme level and that actions are taken in response to identified issues or recommendations for enhancement with the previous year's QIP being reviewed to ensure that actions are implemented.

198 The Annual Apprenticeship Review (AAR) [737] considered by the team is an example of the equivalent process for apprenticeship programmes. The overall content of APRs and AARs is detailed and critical; however, the team noted occasional examples, such as the APR for Criminology, where monitoring against previous QIP actions was not as detailed in comparison to other APRs seen. In addition, the APR 2020-21 for Teaching and Learning Support [752] shows evidence of self-critical assessment; however, it does present as positive some results that may be considered below target. The team noted that while the narrative of the report referred to the 'high rate of responses' and a 'high level response rate'

for Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs) there is an action in the QIP to increase the response rate, suggesting that there is room for improvement in this regard. The monitoring for the previous year's QIP again lacks detail. The APR 2020-21 for PGCE [753] similarly shows evidence of criticality but in areas where the positives were presented more explicitly than any areas for development. For example, in the section for external examiner comments the narrative reads positively while two areas identified for development are identified but not detailed. The resulting QIP, however, does show clear consideration of areas for development. The assessment team concluded that these individual issues do not detract from the overall level of critical self-assessment and resulting actions at the programme level.

199 Annual self-evaluation also takes place at a curriculum and service area level and is reviewed by an internal SED Panel, providing further opportunity for critical self-assessment. The same process for annual self-evaluation documents is also followed for the College's periodic review, typically every five years and with the addition of scrutiny from an external specialist. The SED Panel terms of reference [755] set out membership, including Student Union representation, and the addition of the external specialist for periodic review. These terms of reference also state a purpose for these processes to provide challenge and support and the SED and Periodic Review Event Guidance [756] sets out the documentation to be used and panel expectations. The guidance outlines that prior to the meeting the panel meets with students to gather feedback. Evidence of SEDs for Leadership, Management and Lifestyle, [754] Engineering and Science, [763] Computing and Digital Technologies, [829] Maritime Operations, [833] and a periodic review for Blackpool School of Arts [736] show detailed and critical reports, which build effectively into actions within the QIP. There is also evidence of effective monitoring of previous QIP actions from the previous year. The SED Panels that review the reports evidence discussion with students and critical consideration of the reports in the notes from their meetings. [757, 830, 832, 834] The panel notes for Blackpool School of Arts [745] demonstrated that, as a periodic review, an external adviser was included on the panel. The SED and periodic review processes are used for both College foundation degree awards and validated provision. There is no variance seen in reports that include programmes validated internally versus externally, providing confidence that the College practises critical assessment related to all programmes and monitors actions effectively throughout the provision including at Level 6.

200 Programme revalidations also form part of the College's approach to critical self-assessment and are also detailed in the College's regulations. [020] As with periodic reviews, these typically take place every five years and offer the College the opportunity to update the programme and draw together any minor amendments made during the previous five years to ensure the coherence of the programme. The process itself follows the initial approval validation process used by the College but with the ability to reflect on the delivery over five years and incorporate more feedback from students. The team examined revalidation processes for Auto Motorsport Engineering [151] and Nuclear Engineering [101, 109, 122] and found these to have been carried out appropriately. More detail about this process and the setting and maintaining of academic standards is found in B3 of this report.

201 The institutional-level annual self-assessment process for the higher education provision at the College takes the form of the HE Self-Evaluation Document, the most recent example of which was inspected by the team from 2020-21. This collates the content of range of assessments of the provision assembled through the year and presented to the HE Academic Board in a single self-critical document with an associated QIP and a review of the preceding year's QIP. It includes a review and evaluation of a range of topics including student recruitment, academic standards, graduate outcomes, student engagement and an analysis of cohort trends over time. It demonstrates reflection on performance against targets set for these areas. The process is overseen by the HE Academic Board that ultimately reports to the College Corporation Board. The HE Self-Evaluation Document

includes consideration of student satisfaction data gathered from cross-College surveys and services area surveys, and that actions to improve services to students are identified in response to feedback and self-evaluation. The team formed the view that, as with the other processes described above, the HE SED demonstrated a clear mechanism for assigning and discharging action in relation to the scrutiny and monitoring of the College's academic provision and that all processes are consistently followed.

202 The College incorporates ideas and expertise from within and outside the organisation into its arrangements for programme design, approval, delivery, and review in a number of ways. These are principally through its use of external examiners, its relationship with its partner university and with other external bodies.

203 The College receives reports from external examiners for all of the programmes awarded and delivered through to Level 6. External examiner reports seen by the team [201-214] demonstrate that the College makes conscientious use of external examiner reports in programme delivery and review through clear and detailed responses to their reports. Recommendations are addressed at course level in the APRs and associated papers show careful consideration of their comments. This is discussed further under B3.

204 The Lancaster Partnership Review takes place every five years and is an institutional review of the College's provision as a validated partner of the University. The most recent review, [039] from 2020-21, outlines various commended areas, including that the APR process followed by the College was an area of good practice. The action plan [871] related to this event shows consideration of the recommendations and actions agreed as a result. The British Computing Society (BCS) Accreditation visit in April 2021 [741] was also considered by the team. This was a positive report that did not highlight any action required by the College.

205 Internal and external ideas and expertise are utilised in relation to programme design and approval. Programmes are developed by College programme teams and go through a robust process of approval that includes panels with external subject specialists [122, 132, 144, 153, 887, 888, 892, 893, 894] and external adviser reports. [111, 115, 131, 143] Validation documentation includes clear consideration of employer engagement, external reference points and academic guidelines. [104, 105, 885, 889, 890] The student submission also confirms that students are actively engaged in programme revalidation and states this has resulted in positive changes. [800] This process is discussed in more detail under B2. The use of internal and external expertise in relation to programme delivery is evidenced by discussions about teaching and learning at the Annual Teaching and Learning Conference [474] detailed under C1 in this report. The team concluded, therefore, that ideas and expertise from within and outside the organisation (for example on programme design and development, on teaching, and on student learning and assessment) are drawn into its arrangements for programme design, approval, delivery, and review.

206 In its synopsis to the team [801] the College asserted that, as its existing mechanisms for critically reviewing performance, responding to weaknesses and developing its strengths are robust and well understood and used for its current Level 6 provision delivered in partnership with its University partner, they would be fit for purpose for the proposed extension of its degree awarding powers to Level 6. The team, therefore, has made its assessment in line with the College's approach.

## **Conclusions**

207 The assessment team formulated its judgement against this criterion according to the process set out in the Guidance for Providers, in particular Annex 4.

208 The team concluded that the College has clear and robust monitoring and review

processes that build into the annual HE Self-Evaluation Document, identifying critical self-assessment as integral to the College's provision of higher education and providing the opportunity to assess its own performance. Consideration at all stages within this process provides evidence of critical self-assessment, identifying both weaknesses and strengths, that results in relevant plans for development in the form of programme, curriculum and HE QIPs. Although occasional inconsistencies were noted in terms of depth and criticality these do not impact on the team's confidence in the implementation of these processes. Examples of action taken as a result of monitoring and review can be identified that aim to improve the student experience, access to resources and to support staff development. This supports the conclusion that critical self-assessment is integral to the operation of its higher education provision.

209 Ideas and expertise from both within and outside of the College are drawn into arrangements for programme design and approval. This is evident in approval panels and validation documentation. The College utilises external and internal expertise in relation to programme delivery, which is evidenced by the speakers at a variety of conferences to aid staff development including the Progress Tutor Professional Development Day. Additionally, the annual review processes show clear evidence of staff, student and external engagement. The assessment team therefore concludes that the College incorporates a wide range of internal and external expertise throughout its higher education provision which aids assessment of performance, ability to respond to weaknesses and sharing of good practice that allows further development of strengths. The team concludes that the College takes effective action to assess its own performance, responds to identified weaknesses and develops further its strengths. The team concludes, therefore, that this criterion is met.

## Full Degree Awarding Powers overarching criterion

210 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

211 The College has in place effective means of critically reviewing its own performance. It has a robust review process that builds into an annual critical self-assessment that identifies both weaknesses and strengths in the provision that lead directly to plans to enhance its activities and improve the student experience through its Quality Improvement Plan. The College's self-critical approach to its provision is also reflected at programme and curriculum level with QIPs being employed across the higher education provision. It has well developed processes for gathering student feedback through a range of student surveys and its student representative structures include membership of key deliberative committees at the College up to the Corporation Board. These mechanisms clearly assign and discharge actions in response to matters raised through internal monitoring, and progress is monitored through to completion.

212 The College has a clear ethos supporting a cohesive academic community. The Higher Education Strategy underpins the core aim of excellence in curriculum design and innovation. The HE Academic Board is active in overseeing the provision. There are well defined processes and events through which staff are actively engaged in reflection and evaluation of their learning, teaching and assessment practice. The College's Research Framework and Scholarship and Research Committee support and monitor the ongoing development of the staff activities through mechanisms such as annual overviews of scholarship and research activity. Staff also come together in other activities such as working on the design and development of modules and programmes or in observations of teaching and learning providing more opportunities to share good practice. There is sufficient research and scholarly activity taking place across the College to ensure that its courses are appropriately informed by subject-specific and educational scholarship.

213 The College has clear and effective quality systems in place for the setting and maintenance of academic standards. Its academic governance systems, regulations and course design processes include clear references to the assurance of standards and the maintenance of effective quality systems. Principles that underpin academic standards and quality are transparent, and reporting lines are clear. The regulations provide for adequate safeguards to ensure academic standards, are periodically reviewed and deliberative bodies have a mandate in their terms of reference to maintain and enhance quality. Programme approval and review arrangements are robust and demonstrate the use of independent external 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 and that they meet professional accreditation requirements, where appropriate. Credit and qualifications are awarded only where the achievement of learning outcomes has been demonstrated and full use is made of external examiners and advisers during the validation process and ongoing running of programmes to ensure that standards are fully maintained. The College has well-developed strategies regarding learning, teaching and assessment and provides guidance for staff to ensure that the strategic goals are understood and operationalised. All the above points to a commitment to the assurance of standards and student learning opportunities.

214 These observations, along with the conclusions for each of the DAPs criteria A-E in this report, demonstrate that the College meets the overarching criterion and is a self-critical, cohesive academic community with a proven commitment to the assurance of standards, supported by effective quality systems.

## Annex

### Evidence

- 001 Variation of Degree Awarding Powers Self-Assessment
- 002 HE Strategy 2020-2025
- 003 BFC Strategy 2022-2025
- 004 Instrument of Government 2020
- 005 Articles of Government 2020
- 006 Audit Committee ToR - Dec 2020
- 007 Quality and Standards ToR - April 2021
- 008 Corporation Board Minutes 28-09-21
- 009 Committees Handbook
- 010 Quality and Standards Committee meeting minutes 23-03-21
- 011 Annual report of the HEAB to Quality and Standards Committee Oct 2021
- 012 HEAB Schedule of Business 2021-2022
- 013 Inclusive Learning Teaching Assessment Strategy 2021-22
- 014 Health and Safety Policy
- 015 Access and Participation Plan 2020-21 to 2024-25
- 016 Student Engagement Strategy 2020-2023
- 017 SU Annual Quality Report 2020-21
- 018 HE Work-based Learning Framework
- 019 HE Work-based Learning Procedural Guidance
- 020 Taught Award Regulations Part Bs - Combined
- 021 Taught Award Regulations Part A
- 022 Academic Regulations Advisory Group ToR - Sept 2021
- 023 Admissions Policy
- 024 HE Admissions Procedure
- 025 Compliments Complaints and Feedback Policy 2021-22
- 026 Compliments Complaints and Feedback Procedure 2021-22
- 027 Academic Malpractice Panel Minutes 09-06-21 example
- 028 Academic Appeal Panel Minutes 09-02-21 example
- 029 Personal Mitigating Circumstances Minutes 16-10-19 example
- 030 HE Achievement Report - example
- 031 Apprenticeship Strategy
- 032 Employability and Careers Strategy
- 033 Development and Observation of Learning Teaching and Assessment Policy
- 034 Development and Observation of Learning Teaching and Assessment Procedure
- 035 HE Academic Board Papers 30-06-21
- 036 HE Academic Board Papers 15-09-21
- 037 HE Academic Board Papers 24-11-21
- 038 Academic Standards and Development Committee Minutes 06-05-20
- 039 Quinquennial Partnership Review with Lancaster University 2020-21
- 040 Academic Standards and Development Committee Schedule of Business 2021-22
- 041 Quality Assurance Meeting Minutes 01-12-21
- 042 Quality Assurance Meeting Minutes 19-11-21
- 043 Quality Assurance Meeting Minutes 24-11-21
- 044 Programme Quality Assurance Meeting minutes 19-10-21
- 045 Programme Quality Assurance Meeting Minutes 10-11-21
- 046 Programme Quality Assurance Meeting Minutes 19-10-21
- 047 Academic Standards and Development Committee Minutes 11-03-20
- 048 Academic Standards and Development Committee Minutes 31-01-18
- 049 Programme Handbook Automotive and Motorsport Engineering Technology
- 050 Learning Teaching and Equality Committee Agenda 25-09-20

051 Safeguarding Policy Student 2021- 22  
052 SMT Mid-year Summary of Complaints and Compliments 2020-21  
053 Scholarship and Research Committee Papers 18-09-20  
054 Scholarship and Research Committee Papers 07-05-21  
055 Scholarship and Research Committee Papers 15-10-21  
056 SRC Paper - Annual review of 5 days in Industry for HE Colleagues  
057 Quality and Standards Meeting Minutes 24-11-20  
058 HE Complaints log 2021-22 as at Jan 2022.xlsx  
059 HE Academic Board report - HE Academic Staffing Profile 2020-21  
060 SRC Paper - Senior Tutors Scholarship and Research Review of 2020-21  
061 Digital Strategy (Draft) - Jan 2022  
062 HE Academic Board report 24-11-21 Student engagement including Post Induction Survey results Nov 2021  
063 HE Academic Board report 30-06-21 Review of Student Wellbeing Mental Wealth activities in 2020-21  
064 HE Academic Board report 15-09-21 Annual Graduate Outcomes 2020-21  
065 Equality Diversity and Inclusivity Statement screenshot  
066 Equality Diversity and Inclusion strategy - Draft 2  
067 Learning Teaching and Equality Committee Papers 14-05-21  
068 Learning Teaching and Equality Committee Papers 24-09-21  
069 Organisational Risk Assessment  
070 Academic Malpractice Panel Minutes 26-05-21 and student notification  
071 BFC Student Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2024  
072 Academic Standards and Development Committee Papers 12-05-21  
073 Academic Standards and Development Committee Papers 23-06-21  
101 Revalidation Document Nuclear Engineering  
102 Module Specifications Nuclear Engineering  
103 Programme Specification Nuclear Engineering  
104 Validation Document FdSc Nautical Science  
105 Validation Document Professional Policing  
106 Programme Specification Nautical Science  
107 Programme Specification Professional Policing  
108 Module Specifications Professional Policing  
109 Stage 2 Revalidation Report Nuclear Engineering 131020  
110 Module Specification Level 4 Introduction to Academic Study - example  
111 Stage 2 External Advisor Report Automotive and Motorsport Engineering Technology  
113 Programme Approval Letter Nautical Science  
114 Outline Planning Permission Nuclear Engineering  
115 Stage 2 External Advisor Report Nuclear Engineering  
116 Module Specification SOE421 Front End Graphic Design Draft  
117 Module Specification SOE421 Mobile Graphics and Animation Current  
118 Module Specification WTM503 Developing Front End Experiences Draft  
119 Module Specification WTM503 Advanced Scripting and Animation Current  
120 Module amendment form for SOE421 and WTM503  
121 EE and PC Consultant Module Amendment Comments SOE421 and WTM503  
122 Stage 3 Revalidation Report Nuclear Engineering 12-01-21  
123 Chartered Institute for IT Amendment Comments SOE421 and WTM503  
124 Module Specification CMP604 Entrepreneurial Management and Project Control  
125 Module amendment form for CMP604  
126 Stage 2 Validation Report Nautical Science 02-05-18  
127 Outline Planning Permission BSc Maritime Operations Management  
128 Business Case Maritime Operations Management  
129 Stage 1 Validation Report Maritime Operations Management 10-02-21  
130 Stage 2 Validation Report Maritime Operations Management 12-03-21  
131 Stage 2 External Advisors Report Maritime Operations Management

132 Stage 3 Validation Report Maritime Operations Management 11-05-21  
 133 Validation Document Maritime Operations Management Electro Technical  
 134 Programme Specification Maritime Operations Management Electro Technical  
 135 Module Specifications Maritime Operations Management  
 136 Programme Handbook Maritime Operations Management Electro Technical  
 137 Stage 2 Learning Resources Centre Report Maritime Operations Management  
 138 Business Case Commercial Illustration  
 139 Outline Planning Permission Commercial Illustration  
 140 Stage 1 Validation Report Commercial Illustration 01-09-20  
 141 Stage 2 Validation Report Commercial Illustration 03-12-20  
 142 Stage 2 Validation Report appendices Commercial Illustration  
 143 Stage 2 Validation EA Report Commercial Illustration  
 144 Stage 3 Validation Report Commercial Illustration 04-03-21  
 145 Validation Document Commercial Illustration  
 146 Programme Specification Commercial Illustration  
 147 Module Specifications Commercial Illustration  
 148 Senate Approval Letter Commercial Illustration  
 149 Programme Handbook Commercial Illustration  
 150 Module Specification Level 4 Engaging the Archive - example  
 151 Revalidation Document Auto Motorsport Engineering Tech  
 152 Stage 2 Validation Report Auto Motorsport Eng Tech 31-10-19  
 153 Stage 3 Validation Report Auto Motorsport Eng Tech 16-01-20  
 201 EE Report 2020-21 Aerospace Engineering  
 202 EE Report 2020-21 Sports Coaching and Performance Science  
 203 EE Report 2020-21 Marine Electrical and Electronic Engineering  
 204 Higher Technical Qualification Employer Support  
 205 EE Report 2020-21 Health and Social Care  
 206 EE Report 2020-21 Nuclear Engineering  
 207 EE Report 2020-21 Public Services  
 208 EE Report 2020-21 English Language Literature and Writing  
 209 EE Report 2020-21 Human Biosciences  
 210 EE Report 2020-21 Marine Engineering  
 211 EE Report 2020-21 Youth Studies  
 212 EE Report 2020-21 Software Engineering and Web Technologies  
 213 External Examiner response tracker 2020-21.xlsx  
 214 EE Report 2020-21 Business Management  
 251 Annual Learning and Teaching Conference 2019  
 252 Learning Walks records physical and remote 2020-21  
 253 Graded observation record 04-11-21 example  
 254 Peer observation record 22-11-21 example  
 255 Thinking about pedagogies session  
 256 Art and design pedagogy  
 257 Graded observation record 10-11-21 - example  
 258 Progress Tutor Conference Agenda August 2020  
 259 BFC Teaching and Learning Event 2021  
 260 Questioning Techniques session  
 301 Internal Verification Form Professional Engineer Adv Eng - example  
 302 Moderation Form Professional Engineer Adv Eng - example  
 303 Assignment front sheet Contemporary Issues BSc Physical Activity Health and Nutrition  
 304 Internal Verification Form Contemporary Issues BSc Physical Activity Health And Nutrition  
 305 Moderation Form Contemporary Issues BSc Physical Activity Health and Nutrition  
 306 Assessment Brief Introduction to Academic Study - example  
 307 EBS Awards Configuration - example  
 308 RPL Application



309 RPL Evidence of Prior Achievement  
310 RPL Mapping Exercise  
311 RPL External Examiner Support  
312 Assessment Brief - Level 4 Homeostasis  
313 Assessment Feedback - Level 4 Homeostasis  
314 Assessment Feedback - Level 6 Dissertation  
315 Assessment Feedback Introduction to Academic Study - example  
316 Assessment Feedback Staff Guide to Professional Practice  
317 Student Guide to Assessment and Feedback  
318 Assessment - Trust Inclusivity and Clarity session BSoA  
319 Assessment and feedback - Best practice using Teams session Computing  
320 Assessment Brief Risk and Prevention Health and Social Care  
321 Internal Verification Form Risk and Prevention Health and Social Care  
322 Student Feedback Risk and Prevention Health and Social Care  
323 Moderation Form Risk and Prevention Health and Social Care  
324 Assessment Brief Shipboard Management AdDip Nautical Science  
325 Internal Verification Form Shipboard Management AdDip Nautical Science  
326 Student Feedback Shipboard Management AdDip Nautical Science  
327 Moderation Form Shipboard Management AdDip Nautical Science  
328 Assessment Brief Genetic Disease Human Bioscience  
329 Internal Verification Form Genetic Disease Human Bioscience  
330 Moderation Form Genetic Disease Human Bioscience  
331 Student Feedback Genetic Disease Human Bioscience  
332 Module Review - example  
351 CV VP HE and Student Enhancement  
352 CV Director of Higher Education  
353 CV Head of Digital and LRC  
354 CV Director for Students  
355 CV Head of Maritime Operations  
356 CV Head of Society Health and Childhood Studies  
357 JD Director of HE  
358 JD Director for Students  
359 JD Director of Quality Standards  
360 JD Senior Tutor Learning Teaching and Assessment  
361 JD Senior Tutor Scholarship and Research  
362 CV Student Support and Wellbeing Manager  
363 JD Lecturer  
364 CV Partnerships and Careers Manager  
365 CV Higher Education Learning Mentor  
366 CV Lead Counsellor Student Support and Wellbeing  
367 JD Academic Achievement Manager  
368 JD Partnerships and Careers Team Leader  
369 JD HE Learning Mentor  
370 JD Head of SSW and Inclusion  
371 JD HE Disability Specialist Student Support and Wellbeing  
372 JD Programme Leader  
373 Sample of Academic CVs  
374 JD Student Support and Wellbeing Manager  
401 New Starter Mentoring Guide  
402 DAP Staffing spreadsheet.xlsx  
403 Staffing Approvals Process 2021-22  
404 Employee Resourcing Policy  
405 Academic CV Guidance 2021-22  
406 Resourcing Overview from HR 2021-22  
407 Employee Assistance Programme provider screenshots

408 Employee Survey 2021 confidential summary for Executive  
409 Performance Management Guidance 2021-22  
451 Scholarship and Research Framework 2020-25  
452 Scholarship Review Journal 2020  
453 SRDS Guidance 2021-22  
461 New to HE Teaching agenda - example  
462 Curriculum Design and Development Guide  
463 Akari Author Guide  
464 Course Design and Development External Advisor Guidance  
465 HE Continuing Professional Development Framework 2021-22  
466 Annual Learning and Teaching Conference Programme July 2021  
467 Moderation Refresher Training - Nov 2021  
468 Professional Development Procedure  
469 Inclusive Practice - Self-paced resources Professional Development Hub  
470 New to HE Assessment Practice Session  
471 Principles of Providing Effective IAG  
472 QAM and PQAM refresher 2021-22 professional development  
473 Checklist for online delivery Project Management - example  
474 Annual Teaching and Learning Conference 2019  
475 Guide for Dissertation Supervisors  
476 HE Professional Development event agenda - October 2020  
477 HE Assessment and Feedback  
478 External Examiners Guidance and Information  
501 Staff Intranet Oak screenshots  
502 Big Student Meeting HE 25-11-21 screenshots  
503 Student Life Intranet screenshots  
504 Electronic Keylinks reading list screenshot  
505 Individual progress tutorials recorded on Etrackr  
506 Power to Progress individual progress tutorials - screenshots  
507 Power to Progress Canvas tutorial programme - screenshots  
508 OneFile Individual Progress Review - Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship  
509 EBS Digitised Report screenshot  
510 Student Support Power to Progress and Student Life screenshots  
511 Student Life - preventing unacceptable academic practice - screenshots  
512 MS Teams Power Up site for staff screenshot  
513 Good Practice Site - Teams screenshots  
514 Career Centre screenshots  
515 Flying Start opportunities webpage screenshot  
516 HE Student Canvas Induction screenshots  
517 Employee Portal screenshots  
518 Degree Plus Employability Award screenshots  
519 Quality Cycle information on the staff intranet - screen shots  
601 Student Union Student Rep Canvas Course screenshots  
602 Student Charter  
603 Student Code of Conduct August 2021  
604 HE Committees - Being the Student Representative  
605 Report Writing and Critical Analysis HELM workshop - example  
606 Guide to Critical Thinking  
607 BFC EndNote Referencing Guide  
608 Poor Academic Malpractice Level 4 warning letter - example  
609 Academic Appeal 27-04-21 example  
610 Academic Appeal Meeting Minutes 20-05-21  
611 Compliments Complaints and Feedback A Brief Guide - Oct 2022  
612 Stage 1 complaint response - Dec 21  
671 Partners for Success Framework Guide for HE Colleagues

672 Partners for Success Group ToR 2021  
701 Property Strategy 2021-2025  
702 Risk Assessment for external activity FdSc Marine Biology  
703 Capital Bid Process 2021-22  
704 Capital Bid Business Case 2021-22 template  
705 Health and Safety Information Sheet relating to use of print room BSoA  
706 Scheme of Work for a practical workshop - Engineering  
731 IET Accreditation Visit Report Advanced Engineering Jan 2021  
732 Maritime Coastguard Agency Audit Report Dec 2019  
733 European Maritime Safety Agency Report June 2021  
734 STEM Employer Forum notes 15-07-21  
735 APR 2020-21 for Physical Activity Nutrition and Health  
736 SED 2020-21 for Blackpool School of Arts  
737 AAR 2020-21 for Nuclear Scientist and Nuclear Engineer  
738 SED 2020-21 for the Directorate for Students  
739 SQA Visit Report -31-07-20  
740 APR for 2020-21 for FdEng and BEng in Nuclear Engineering  
741 British Computing Society Accreditation Report 2021  
742 NSS 2022 You Said We Did campaign  
743 APR 2020-21 for Human Biosciences  
744 HE Self Evaluation Document  
745 SED Panel Notes for Blackpool School of Arts  
746 APR 2020-21 for Marine Engineering  
747 APR 2020-21 for Health and Social Care  
748 APR 2020-21 for Youth Studies  
749 APR 2020-21 for Software Engineering  
750 Power BI dashboards screenshots  
751 APR 2020-21 for Criminology  
752 APR 2020-21 for Teaching and Learning Support  
753 APR 2020-21 for PGCE  
754 SED 2020-21 Leadership Management and Lifestyle  
755 SED Panel Event - ToR  
756 SED Panel Review Guidance 2020-21  
757 SED Panel Notes for Engineering and Science  
758 HE Academic Board - Deliberating College SED  
759 Audit Strategy and Annual Internal Audit Plan 2021-22  
760 Institute of Engineering and Technology Accreditation Visit Report Nuclear 2021  
761 Institute of Engineering and Technology Accreditation Visit Report Aerospace 2021  
762 Performance monitoring (P3) 2021-22 - template  
763 SED for 2020-21 for Engineering and Science  
764 Quality Management cycle monthly checklists HE  
800 BDAP Student Submission  
801 Considerations and planning for BDAP – a synopsis  
802 Corporation Board Minutes 02\_02\_2021  
803 Corporation Board Minutes 06\_07\_2021  
804 Audit Committee Minutes 16\_06\_2021  
805 Audit Committee Minutes 03\_03\_2021  
806 LU Staff Bios  
807 Partners CV1  
808 Partners CV2  
809 CV Principal  
810 EDI Strategy Consultation with NAMSS  
811 EDI Strategy Consultation with Students  
812 HE Deliberative Committee Student Union Training  
813 HE Student Union Executive Training

814 Student Union Synopsis  
815 Student Union Sabbatical Officer Job Description  
816 DRAFT Taught Award Regulations Part A 2022-23  
818 A Synopsis of Akari System Version Control  
819 BFC Academic Regulations Part A 2019-20  
820 BFC Academic Regulations Part Bs Combined 2019-20  
821 Student Protection Plan 2021-25  
822 Student Academic Journey  
823 Student Management screenshot  
824 Student Assessment Details  
825 Degree Award Certificate  
826 HE Achievement Report (transcript)  
827 OPP Nuclear External Examiner and Programme Consultant Comments  
828 OPP Nuclear Student Consultation  
829 SED Computing and Digital Technologies 2020-21  
830 SED Panel Review Report Computing and Digital Technologies  
831 SED Leadership Management and Lifestyle 2020-21  
832 SED Panel Review Report Leadership Management and Lifestyle  
833 SED Maritime Operations 2020-21  
834 SED Panel Review Report Maritime Operations  
835 Learning Teaching and Assessment Report 05\_10\_21  
836 Customer Satisfaction Report 05\_10\_21  
837 Project Management level 4 Assessment Brief  
838 Project Management level 4 Submission  
839 Project Management level 4 Feedback  
840 Project Management level 5 Assessment Brief  
841 Project Management level 5 Submission  
842 Project Management level 5 Feedback  
843 Project Management Level 6 Assessment Brief  
844 Project Management Level 6 Submission  
845 Project Management Level 6 Feedback  
846 Evidence Request 23 Synopsis  
847 Consistency of Assessment Report April 2021  
848 Capital Bid for Engineering and Science.xlsx  
849 Capital Bid for Learning Resource Centre UC.xlsx  
850 Capital Bid Summary and Panel Decisions 2020-21.xlsx  
851 Performance Monitoring Engineering and Science 2020-21  
852 Performance Monitoring Leadership Management and Lifestyle 2020-21  
853 Performance Monitoring Maritime Operations 2021-22  
854 Partners for Success Notes 25\_03\_21  
855 Partners for Success Notes 14\_10\_21  
856 Partners for Success Notes 09\_12\_21  
857 Admissions Cycle Annual Report April 2021  
858 Student Induction Synopsis  
859 BFC Staff Guide to Induction  
860 Power to Progress Induction Module  
861 Induction Level 4 Early Childhood Studies  
862 Power BI Report Attendance and Retention  
863 Power BI Report at risk Students  
864 APR 2020-21 Marine Electrical and Electronics Engineering  
865 APR 2020-21 Nautical Science  
866 APR 2020-21 Sport Coaching and Performance Science  
867 Induction Level 6 Computing  
868 SED Panel Notes Maritime Operations 2018-19  
869 SED Maritime Operations 2019-20

871 BFC Partnership Review Action Plan Oct 2021  
872 Blackpool School of Arts HE Quality Assurance Meeting Minutes 1 2021-22  
873 Engineering HE Quality Assurance Meeting Minutes 1 2021-22  
874 Leadership Management and Lifestyle HE Quality Assurance Meeting Minutes 1 2021-22  
875 Computing and Digital Technologies HE Quality Assurance Meeting Minutes 1 2021-22  
876 Maritime Operations HE Quality Assurance Meeting Minutes 1 2021-22  
877 Acting Programme Quality Assurance Meeting 1 2021-22  
878 Computer Science and Digital Technologies Programme Quality Assurance Meeting 1 2021-22  
879 Engineering and Science Programme Quality Assurance Meeting 1 2021-22  
880 Filmmaking Programme Quality Assurance Meeting 1 2021-22  
881 Health and Social Care Programme Quality Assurance Meeting 1 2021-22  
882 Marine Engineering Programme Quality Assurance Meeting 1 2021-22  
883 Nautical Science Programme Quality Assurance Meeting 1 2021-22  
884 Sports Programmes Programme Quality Assurance Meeting 1 2021-22  
885 Computer Science and Digital Technologies Fd Validation Document  
886 Computer Science and Digital Technologies Stage 1 Report  
887 Computer Science and Digital Technologies Stage 2 Report  
888 Computer Science and Digital Technologies Stage 3 BFC Report  
889 Physical Activity Health and Nutrition Fd Validation Document  
890 Sports Coaching and Performance Science Fd Validation Document  
891 Sports Programmes Stage 1 Report  
892 Physical Activity Health and Nutrition Stage 2 Report  
893 Sports Coaching and Performance Science Stage 2 Report  
894 Sports Programmes Stage 3 BFC Report  
895 Synopsis re actions from self and external evaluations  
896 Evidence MCA Audit Closing Letter Feb 2021  
900 Business Management level 4 Assessment Brief  
901 Business Management level 4 Submission  
902 Business Management level 4 Feedback  
903 Business Management level 5 Assessment Brief  
904 Business Management level 5 Submission  
905 Business Management level 5 Feedback  
906 Business Management Level 6 Assessment Brief  
907 Business Management Level 6 Submission  
908 Business Management Level 6 Feedback  
909 Filmmaking L4 Assessment Brief  
910 Filmmaking L4 Submission annotated  
911 Filmmaking L4 Student Feedback  
912 Filmmaking L5 Assessment Brief  
913 Filmmaking L5 Submission  
914 Filmmaking L5 Student feedback  
915 Filmmaking L6 Assessment Brief  
916 Filmmaking L6 Submission annotated  
917 Filmmaking L6 Student Feedback  
918 VDAPs Request for Additional Information

## List of Courses offered by the College (and awarding organisation/body)

### Offered as Apprenticeships

FdA & BA (Hons) in Business Management (Digital Marketing) (LU)  
FdA & BA (Hons) in Business Management (Financial Management) (LU)  
FdA & BA (Hons) in Business Management (Human Resource Management) (LU)  
FdA & BA (Hons) in Business Management (Leadership) (LU)  
FdEng & B BEng (Hons) Aerospace Engineering (LU)  
FdEng & B Eng (Hons) in Nuclear Engineering (LU)  
FdSc Project Controls Professional (LU)  
BEng (Hons) Manufacturing Engineering (LU)  
BSc (Hons) Digital and Technology Solutions - Cyber Security Analyst (LU)  
BSc (Hons) Digital and Technology Solutions - Network Engineer (LU)  
BSc (Hons) Digital and Technology Solutions - Software Engineer (LU)  
BSc (Hons) Digital and Technology Solutions (Data Analyst) (LU)  
FdSc & BSc (Hons) Project Management (LU)  
BTEC Higher National Certificate in Construction and the Built Environment (BTEC)  
BTEC Higher National Certificate in Engineering (BTEC)  
Certificate in Data Analysis Tools - Data Analyst (BCS)  
Certificate in Human Resource Management (CIPD)  
Diploma in Data Analysis Concepts (BCS)  
Diploma in Human Resource Management (CIPD)  
Diploma in Management and Leadership (CMI)  
Professional Diploma in Accounting (AAT)  
Project Management Certificate (APM)  
Retail Manager - Retail Manager

### Offered as academic courses

FdA Business Management (Digital Marketing) (LU)  
FdA Business Management (Financial Management) (LU)  
FdA Business Management (Human Resource Management) (LU)  
FdA Business Management (Leadership) (LU)  
FdA Criminology and Criminal Justice (LU)  
FdA Early Childhood Studies(LU)  
FdA Family Support and Wellbeing (LU)  
FdA Health and Social Care (LU)  
FdA Hospitality and Events Management (LU)  
FdA Public Services (LU)  
FdA Teaching and Learning Support(LU)  
FdA Tourism Management (LU)  
FdA Youth Studies (LU)  
FdEng Automotive and Motorsport Engineering Technology (LU)  
FdEng Marine Electrical and Electronic Engineering (BATFC)  
FdEng Marine Engineering (LU)  
FdSc Web Technologies and Digital Media(LU)  
FdSc Computer Science and Digital Industries (BATFC)  
FdSc Human Biosciences (LU)  
FdSc Marine Biology (LU)  
FdSc Nautical Science (BATFC)  
FdSc Network Engineering (Cyber Security)(LU)  
FdSc Network Engineering (Systems Administration) (LU)  
FdSc Physical Activity, Health and Nutrition(BATFC)

FdSc Project Management (LU)  
 FdSc Software Engineering (Game Development) (LU)  
 FdSc Sports Coaching and Performance Science (BATFC)  
 BA (Hons) Acting (LU)  
 BA (Hons) Commercial Illustration (LU)  
 BA (Hons) Criminology and Criminal Justice (top-up) (LU)  
 BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies (top-up)(LU)  
 BA (Hons) English: Language, Literature and Writing (LU)  
 BA (Hons) Family Support and Wellbeing (top-up) (LU)  
 BA (Hons) Fashion Design (LU)  
 BA (Hons) Fashion Design (Contemporary Costume) (LU)  
 BA (Hons) Filmmaking (LU)  
 BA (Hons) Fine Art and Professional Practice (LU)  
 BA (Hons) Health and Social Care (top-up) (LU)  
 BA (Hons) Hospitality and Events Management (top-up) (LU)  
 BA (Hons) in Business Management (Financial Management) (top-up) (LU)  
 BA (Hons) in Business Management (Human Resource Management) (top-up) (LU)  
 BA (Hons) in Business Management (Leadership) (top-up)(LU)  
 BA (Hons) in Graphic Design(LU)  
 BA (Hons) in Professional Policing (LU)  
 BA (Hons) Musical Theatre (LU)  
 BA (Hons) Photography (LU)  
 BA (Hons) Public Services (top-up) (LU)  
 BA (Hons) Teaching and Learning Support (top-up)(LU)  
 BA (Hons) Tourism Management (top-up) (LU)  
 BA (Hons) Youth Studies (top-up) (LU)  
 BEng (Hons) Aerospace Engineering (top-up) (LU)  
 BEng (Hons) Engineering (Mechanical Engineering) (LU)  
 BEng (Hons) Engineering (Mechatronics Engineering) (LU)  
 BEng (Hons) Engineering (Aerospace) (LU)  
 BEng (Hons) Engineering (Electrical and Electronic Engineering) (LU)  
 BEng (Hons) Engineering (Industrial Engineering) (LU)  
 BEng Hons Automotive and Motorsport Engineering Technology (top-up)(LU)  
 BSc (Hons) Computer Science and Digital Technologies (top-up) (LU)  
 BSc (Hons) Human Biosciences (top-up) (LU)  
 BSc (Hons) in Marine Biology (top-up) (LU)  
 BSc (Hons) Network Engineering (Cyber Security) (top-up)(LU)  
 BSc (Hons) Network Engineering (Systems admin) (top-up) (LU)  
 BSc (Hons) Physical Activity, Health, and Nutrition (top-up)(LU)  
 BSc (Hons) Project Management (top-up) (LU)  
 BSc (Hons) Software Engineering (Game Development) (top-up) (LU)  
 BSc (Hons) Sports Coaching and Performance Science (top-up) (LU)  
 BSc (Hons) Web Technologies and Digital Media (top-up) (LU)  
 BTEC Diploma in Education and Training (BTEC)  
 BTEC Higher National Certificate in Construction and the Built Environment (BTEC)  
 BTEC Higher National Certificate in Engineering (BTEC)  
 Certificate in Human Resource Management (CIPD)  
 Diploma in Human Resource Management (CIPD)  
 Diploma in Management and Leadership (CMI)  
 HNC in Nautical Science (SQA)  
 HND in Nautical Science (SQA)  
 Advanced Certificate Marine Engineering (SQA)  
 Advanced Certificate Nautical Science (SQA)  
 Advanced Diploma Marine Engineering (SQA)  
 Advanced Diploma Nautical Science(SQA)

Associate Diploma in People Management (CIPD)  
Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) (LU)  
Professional Diploma in Accounting (AAT)

**Awarding organisation/body**

AAT – Association of Accounting Technicians  
APM – Association for Project Management  
BATFC – Blackpool and The Fylde College  
BCS – British Computer Society  
CIPD – Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development  
CMI – Chartered Management Institute  
LU – Lancaster University  
BTEC – Pearson

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