Name of Provider: New College Durham
UKPRN: 10004576

TEF Year Three provider submission

Provider Context

This submission is intended to show additional context using quantitative and qualitative information, to demonstrate the level of excellence being attained by the College with respect to each of the three main TEF assessment criteria. Whilst the initial starting point of the TEF metric awards the College a Silver we have a strong belief that our provision is of the highest quality in meeting the needs for all students and the TEF descriptor for Gold.

New College Durham, situated in the North East of England, is a mixed economy college, with a long and successful history of delivering Higher Education programmes. Our Higher Education Strategy has a clear focus on delivering high quality professional and technical programmes which clearly align to employer demand and student needs in the North East region. The North East LEP (NELEP) priorities are Innovation, Business Growth and Access to Finance, Skills, Employability and Inclusion, Economic Assets and Infrastructure and Transport and Connectivity.

Over the years, the Higher Education provision offered by the College has increased in size and range and currently provides for over 1300 (FTE) students studying in both full time and part time study mode. In the academic year 2016/17 60% of our HE students were female and 40% male. This proportion has moved slightly in 2017/18 with 58% being female and 42% male.

A high proportion of our HE student cohort are mature students with 67% being 21 or over, and as the TEF data shows 60% of the Colleges full-time HE students are recruited from POLAR quintiles 1 and 2 this is almost as high for our part-time students at 57%. As a community based college New College Durham ensures that it's strategy is fully conscious of the needs of the regional economy by designing and delivering a "career driven" HE curriculum which focuses on offering and developing programmes and apprenticeships at undergraduate level and first degrees that support employers in achieving economic growth which in turn, contribute to overall regional and national prosperity.

Our HE strategic aims are;

a. to enable students to aspire, succeed and progress through providing the highest quality HE learning opportunities in an environment which is both supportive and challenging;

b. to ensure the curriculum meets the needs of the regional economy, all programmes are initiated, designed and delivered in partnership with a range of employers and other key stakeholders;

c. through the continuous development of our higher education curriculum, enable students to develop higher level knowledge and skills which will prepare them with confidence for future success in work and life;

d. to continue to develop our strategic relationships with industry, employers, awarding bodies and the wider sector, enhancing our external visibility and reputation and impacting positively on the student experience;

e. to grow our HE provision and student numbers through widening participation, and access, targeted advice and guidance and providing clear progression opportunities for young people and adults into higher education;

f. to work in partnership with our students and staff, empowering them to further develop our dynamic and engaged academic community;

g. to maintain and develop accommodation and resources to support a distinctive, high quality HE experience.

New College Durham Higher Education Strategic Aims 2016 -2019

This continued and sustained strategic approach to HE, enables the College to meet the needs of government, employers, the regional economy, and most importantly our students, as dynamic and technically skilled professionals. By working in partnership with the NELEP, the College continues to invest in facilities in response to emerging and known employer needs this includes:

- continuing to seek advice and support from employers, to ensure our investment in equipment and resources are fit for purpose and meet local and regional sector needs.
- use effective Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) to inform future curriculum planning ensuring the needs of employers, sector lead bodies, NELEP and student needs are supported.
- increasing employer involvement in the assessment process to support students in being work ready.

As an example, the College continues to work in partnership with Business Durham, Durham County Council Business Development Company, in developing Higher Education modules and study opportunities in innovation and enterprise which supports the County Durham Business Strategy to create higher skilled and better paid jobs within the County. The strategy underpins recent expert independent research of Durham's economic geography and business sectors to encourage inward investment and employment with a forecast of 6000 jobs predicted in the city in areas such as ICT, FinTech and business, professional and financial services sectors. Part of a Durham County Council strategic priority is to raise living standards, employment income and job opportunities across the County.

New College Durham has launched a new innovation management module as a direct response to employers' needs in the North East.

The idea came from Business Durham, the economic development company for County Durham, working on behalf of Durham County Council. Business Durham's engagement with thousands of companies convinced it that innovation management was a skill that needed to be taught in addition to entrepreneurship and enterprise, which are already part of the curriculum.

Catherine Johns, Innovation and Business Growth Director for Business Durham, explained further:

"The skill of actually launching a product or service into the market and doing it successfully is a core life skill, one that helps all of us, no matter if we are working for someone else or setting up in business for ourselves. And it can be learned, so we asked New College Durham if they would be willing to at least try it."

And the College certainly was willing, working with Business Durham to develop an exciting innovation module, which will be integrated into all of the College's higher education programmes, including foundation degrees and degrees.

Local Press Release – February 2017

All students completing the innovation module of their Higher Education programmes are awarded an Institute of Enterprise and Entrepreneurs (IOEE) Diploma in Innovation, Creativity and Enterprise. This is unique selling point for Higher Education graduates at New College Durham.

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New College Durham was one of the first Further Education institutions to be granted Foundation Degree Awarding Powers by the Privy Council in 2011 (still only six colleges nationally have this recognition today). In 2017 these awarding powers were successfully renewed and are now effective through to July 2023. This acknowledges the role that the College plays in delivering a strong Higher Education provision and of the trust and confidence which New College Durham has demonstrated within the Higher Education sector.

The College currently has 25 validated Foundation Degrees and offers a range of provision for honours degrees through a validation partnership with the Open University. Open University validated provision includes full first honours degrees in BA (Hons) Social Work and BSc (Hons) Podiatry, and nine level 6 top-up degrees. Five of the nine level 6 top degrees are new provision for this academic year (2017/2018) which has been in response to support employment demands in the region. To continue to meet growing regional employer demands, the College also offers five Higher National qualifications including Engineering, Construction and the Built Environment and Civil Engineering.

Our professional programmes in Social Work are approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) with the Podiatry programme also approved by the Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists (SOCAP). The continual mapping of practice to Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB) policy by course teams for both BA (Hons) Social Work and BSc (Hons) Podiatry, are part of internal College quality assurance processes. Teams meet once every six weeks through Course Committees which enables regular engagement and discussion on PSRB policy and practice. As well the undergraduate and first degree programmes, the College also has extensive experience in the successful delivery of non- prescribed Higher Education and professional programmes and currently offers programmes approved by the Association of Accounting Technicians, Chartered Institute of Marketing and the Chartered Management Institute.

New College Durham successfully deliver a growing number of Higher and Degree Apprenticeships as well as higher level professional programmes across four of our six schools with over two hundred and sixty apprenticeships on programme across nine curriculum areas. As new Apprenticeship Standards are developed at levels 4 and 5 the college will explore mapping existing and new Foundation Degrees to the standards. This provides employers with a degree of flexibility where specific units can be incorporated to meet the needs of individuals and employers.

The effectiveness of this model is evident in the work undertaken with Nissan for their Higher Apprenticeships in Business and IT. Currently the College is leading nationally on the development of a new Degree Apprenticeship Standard in Podiatry, working with employers to tailor a degree programme to meet the needs of their businesses. The College in the previous academic year was part of a national working group led by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) to develop an innovative Degree Apprenticeship in Management.

The College draws the vast majority of Higher Education students from County Durham (95%), with 59% of its HE students from classified widening participation neighbourhoods. As part of the provider submission it is important to consider significant regional differences within the employment and labour market to understand challenges and opportunities for Higher Education provision at New College Durham.

Regional Context

Office for National Statistics labour supply data (ONS: 2017) shows that there are 240,600 people in employment within County Durham which is 2.8% less than the national employment rate. The unemployment rate in the County is 1.1% higher than Great Britain as a whole. This difference results in a downward pressure on wages as the demand for employees is less and there is a greater supply of labour. If this is further broken down into a gender split, males employed in County Durham equate to 3.8% less than the national average.

Employment by occupation also suggests that there are key differences within the measures of standard occupational classification (SOC 2010). In Major Group 2 for example, Professional Occupations, 18% of employees fall into this classification within County Durham, as opposed to 20.3% nationally. A difference of 2.3%. A similar difference in Major Groups 1, 2 and 3. These differences align to the employee median earnings including those with a higher education qualification. Earnings by place of residence for employees in County Durham expressed as gross weekly pay is £510.70 per week. This compares to the national average of £552.70 per week. A difference of £42.00 or 7.6%. This level of disparity applies to both female and male employees. It should be noted that the vast majority of Higher Education graduates from New College Durham remain with the region therefore links to this employment market.

The disparity in the shape of the labour and earnings data between County Durham and Great Britain as a whole, has an influence on the earning potential and occupational attainments that New College Durham graduates will achieve. This has a negative impact on the 'above median earnings threshold or further study' metric which the college has little control over. However, the College continues to develop new and innovative strategies to contribute in addressing these disparities with the region.

The College strives to engage students from across the County and the North East region as a whole to support regional employment targets. In the Strategic Economic Plan for the North East, 'More and Better Jobs', the NELEP forecasts that 120,000 new employees with higher skills at level 4 and above, will be required by employers in the North East by 2020 (NELEP, 2014). Labour force Higher Education qualification profiles for the North East of England are lower than that of Great Britain. From the population as a whole those holding qualifications of NVQ Level 4 and above (ONS: 2016) in the North East of England were 31.4% of the population, compared to 38.2% for Great Britain as a whole. A difference of 6.8%. For County Durham the difference widens further to an 8% disparity with 30.2% of the population holding a qualification of NVQ 4 and above. The College's Higher Education offer focuses on the provision of professional and technical programmes to address employer needs in the County, and works hard to engage Higher Education students in developing the higher knowledge and skill required to meet current and future employer needs.

To support the NELEP priorities students have the opportunity to complete a Higher Level qualification at Level 5 to enable then to gain sustainable employment in their chosen Technical or Professional fields.

Teaching Quality

The overall aim of the College, is to provide first class learning and training for individuals, business and community. This enables the College to be recognised as a leading provider of Further and Higher Education, contributing to the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the region. The College supports individuals of all abilities and aspirations to fulfil their potential through learning, achievement and progression.

New College Durham is committed to:

- Enhancing the quality of the student learning experience by creating a supportive and inspiring learning environment.
- Developing excellence in teaching, learning and assessment that encourages high aspirations and achievement for all.
- Maximising vocational and academic success.
- Developing employability, personal and social skills that lead to employment, progression in employment or further study.

Our teaching is highly rated by our students, the 2017 NSS shows our performance being 1.0% above the sector benchmark for 'Teaching on my course' and for 'assessment and feedback', the

TEF data shows our performance of 84.8% is significantly higher than the sector benchmark as indicated by the z-score of +3.5 and the identifying 'very high' absolute value.

We recognise however, our first degree students in previous years have been less then satisfied with some elements of their provision, as demonstrated in the split metric for first degree. A drop in NSS outcomes for Q1-3 in 2016 within our BA (Hons) Social Work provision due to low response rates and some staff changes within the first semester of that year led academic staff to review how communication was being delivered to its students. Close monitoring of the student voice, coupled with academic teams, management support and timely intervention strategies have increased rates of satisfaction in the latest NSS (2017) by 9.3% from previous year.

Excellent teaching is supported and enhanced by ensuring academic staff are appropriately qualified and trained. All New College Durham staff have a formal teaching qualification and are expected to undertake a minimum annual commitment of 30 hours formal and informal professional development. The College holds three (college-wide) staff development days, of which Higher Education development and training are provided for the full Higher Education staff community. In addition a series of staff development opportunities are made available throughout the year, with additional bespoke HE45 workshops which focus on specific Higher Education areas of interest and relevance within the HE sector. Twenty three HE45 sessions ran during the 2016/17 academic year. Key topics were delivered including Research Ethics Approval, Supporting Students through Mitigation, Student engagement and VLE enhancement and A Guide to Programme Validation. The development sessions were successful, attracting a range of staff across the college's Higher Education community and further HE45 development sessions are planned for the academic year 2017/18.

Further development of the Colleges Schoology (VLE) site has been that the college has appointed two project leads that work closely with schools to enhance the use of their Schoology sites to ensure they continue to meet the needs of students. The first project for this has been to progress from sites, which are solely about being a repository for lecturers and reading material to more interactive sites where students are more involved in their learning. The second project has been the development of a Rubric based assessment method to enable student to access their progress online and reflect on area of enhancement.

Project leads are facilitating this transition to more advanced sites and a new grading system for course sites which rates them as Bronze, Silver or Gold depending on their range of features. This is having a positive impact on the use of Schoology which has become a popular choice for students to as part of their independent learning.

Various teaching, learning and assessment methods used are reported on during developmental and quality assurance line manager observations, examples of good practice and areas for enhancement within schools are discussed at course and school meetings and are monitored within quality enhancement plans. Academic staff actively engage in peer observation that supports their professional development and enables teams to share innovation and best practice within their discipline's and throughout the college.

In addition, as part of our drive to enhance and maintain the College's already excellent teaching standards, we have established a scheme to support staff members in their applications for Fellowship with the Higher Education Academy (HEA). This relatively new initiative is steadily growing with 25% successful applications in 2016/17). To date, this academic year the College has 36% of its HE staff working towards their HEA Fellowship.

All Head of Schools have a staff development plan in place to ensure all students are taught by staff who have the appropriate academic qualifications and have contemporary technical skills and knowledge. This plan is monitored by Heads of School and Vice Principals throughout the academic year to ensure actions are completed and the impact on the student experience is reviewed regularly.

A strong student voice is promoted within New College Durham which drives the HE provision and ensures students are at the heart of everything we do. Schools collect individual student module evaluations throughout the academic year, at the end of course/level an additional evaluation is undertaken by programme teams in partnership with students. These are then used to inform curriculum design, help curriculum teams reshape and refresh module content. Recent examples include;

a. the creation of higher level Degree Apprenticeships in Management and in Podiatry. Teams worked in conjunction with the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) and Open University in the development of the Management Degree Apprenticeship. The College is currently working in partnership with the Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists in designing a new Degree Apprenticeship for the profession which will meet both student and employer needs;
b. the creation of bespoke and unique top-up awards for BSc (Hons) Sport and Exercise Development; BA (Hons) Popular Music with the Open University which will enable students currently studying on Foundation Degrees in these specialisms to progress, succeed and graduate at level 6;
c. the redesign of the Foundation Degree Computing provision to create 4 separate pathways which enable students to focus on particular fields within computing to achieve their career aspirations.

The student voice is key to the College's resource strategic decision making. In the academic year 2016 and 2017 an investment of over £800,000 by the College created a brand new dedicated Higher Education student social space for Higher Education students to meet and work in. This major investment by the College, was in direct response to students asking for a combined space where they could meet together to both relax and work. Feedback on this new facility has been very positive across the Higher Education student community.

> *'The new HE social area is really useful if you need to work on assignments and presentations together and its fab to have somewhere nice to talk with friends on your course.' – BA (Hons) Counselling student.*

Student Representatives are nominated and receive training and on-going support from the Students' Union to equip them to fulfil their roles in college communication, student enhancement and quality assurance effectively. Each programme level has its own student representative who are invited to attend course and school team meetings and attend termly college HE Student Forums chaired by the Student Union President.

In addition, a full time Students' Union President (paid role) is appointed each academic year who works closely with the students' reps but also attends the College strategic meetings such as HE Academic Standards and Quality Board, Higher Information Group, HE Academic Board and the College Corporation Board. The student experience is a standing item at both College and School level meetings and any actions are recorded and acted on. Minutes and actions from these meetings are available to all students via the College's VLE and demonstrate specific examples of where the student voice has led to enhancements at College level.

Internal Questionnaire Data Processing Services (QDP) surveys are used twice a year for all our Higher Education students, results from these are benchmarked against other participating colleges. QDP responses reflect and often exceed the positive feedback received within the National Student Survey (NSS) outcomes. This is due mainly to only a small number of our undergraduate and top up degree courses being eligible for participation within the NSS. Only 41% of our HE programmes are included within the 2017 NSS, due to the delivery of some of our programmes being 1 year or less.

'The Professional Lead has an organised and excellent approach to providing a cohesive team that is well supported by the Programme Leader, and as such they are to be commended.'

External Examiner. BSc (Hons) Podiatry. June 2017.

'I have found NCD staff to be most courteous, professional and totally dedicated to improving the student experience through the creative use of live project employer briefs.'

External Examiner. FdA Visual Arts. June 2017

'(There are examples of) students really engaging with the material to ensure that not only do they pass but they are all demonstrating understanding of complex ideas at level 4 as well as beginning to analyse.'

External Examiner. BA (Hons) Social Work. June 2017

'Students are provided with thorough and detailed feedback which supports students in indentifying strengths and points for development.'

External Examiner. FdA Counselling. June 2017

Response rates are particularly good for internal surveys. In 2016 -17 there was a response rate of 79.9% of the Higher Education student population. Our students ranked the College in the upper quartiles for eight of the nine areas of the survey. When compared to other colleges with HE provision the ninth area being "Satisfied with Student Union at institution' were 91% of our HE students agreed.

Teaching intensity,
New College Durham's annual Higher Education teaching year is planned over 32 weeks with part time courses typically being 205 hrs and full time courses 405 hrs, depending on level and subject specialism. However, professional regulatory requirements, which include BSc (Hons) Podiatry students who receive further 1000 additional hours for clinical practice and BA (Hons) Social Work who have 170 days placement throughout their programme.

All Foundation Degrees, Higher Nationals and BA (Hons) Top-Ups participate typically in 80 blended learning hours per academic year for each programme. Placement hours for all Foundation Degree programmes is 35 hours (annually).

All students have access to on-line support from tutors throughout their studies via the VLE and College email. Students are able to arrange tutor appointments on a 1:1 for additional support and advise when required. The average class size for the majority of the Higher Education classes is 12-15. This ensures a personalised learning experience for our Higher Education students.

External Examining
New College Durham regards the external examiner system as critical to assuring the quality and standards of its academic awards and this is reflected in the formal process the College holds for the approval and appointment of its external examiners. This is conducted via the Higher Education Approval Panel (a Sub-Committee of the HE Academic Standards and Quality Board), which reports directly to HE Academic Board.

Our annual reports are an integral part of the College's quality assurance processes and form part of the overall requirements for annual review. In all cases course teams must demonstrate how they have responded to the views and comments made by their External Examiner.

Information relating to the qualification, experience and contractual basis of staff
New College Durham currently employs academic staff on a range of contracts from full time, part time and on an agency basis. The College ensures that all staff involved in delivering or supporting the Higher Education learning experience are appropriately qualified, supported and developed. Staff use their specialist knowledge and skills to enhance the learning experience, supporting students to gain the knowledge and skills for employment, either new or a further development of their chosen career plans.

Academic staff who deliver on the Higher Education provision at the College are required to hold appropriate qualifications for their subject specialism as well as hold a qualification at least one level higher than the level they deliver.

With a continued commitment to continuous development of its staff the College offers financial support and reduced teaching contact for staff participating in higher level qualifications or scholarship activities.

As a new initiative for the academic year 2016/2017, individual schools were asked to develop a project or activity which will enhance the quality of the student learning experience within their subject fields. These projects were included on the Higher Education Enhancement Plan and progress was monitored throughout the year. At the final HE Quality and Curriculum Forum in June 2017, each school presented their enhancements they had developed during the academic year, along with project outcomes.

Successful enhancement projects shared between schools included FdA Events Management and FdA Travel and Tourism students organising, managing and evaluating Higher Education recruitment events and the Business and Management course teams establishing an employer innovation and enterprise unit which will support local small business in Durham in scaling up their business activity.

Learning Environment

Impact and effectiveness support into and through a higher education course
Key support is provided through the Advice, Support and Careers (ASC) service, offering financial support, counselling services and careers advice. Additional Learning Support provides key services to Higher Education students who require any physical or assistive learning help to study on higher education programmes. HE students also have access to the services of a Personal Learning Coach (PLC) should they require any additional support. The PLC Team help students with key study skills including, personal time management and organisation skills. Feedback from students for these initiatives has been positive with students stating:

'The new HE social area is really useful if you need to work on assignments and presentations together and its fab to have somewhere nice to talk with friends on your course.' – BA (Hons) Counselling student.

"This has had a significant positive impact by allowing me to manage my stress levels appropriately. A massive thank you for what is an invaluable service to me." - FdA Business Management Student

"I now feel more capable in myself towards the course. PLC made me feel more comfortable with myself after some unexpected issues earlier on in the academic year" - FdA Tourism Management Student

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For several years, New College Durham has provided academic support service to its HE students but in 2014 this was reviewed and revised, resulting in the appointment of a new HE Academic Tutor. This full-time member of staff delivered the newly established provision for three years, and this laid the foundations for our current HEFCE Catalyst Fund sponsored project. In February 2017, New College Durham, as the Lead Partner working with Sunderland College and Darlington College, was awarded £300,000 as part of a successful bid to the HEFCE Catalyst Fund – Addressing Barriers to Student Success. The project aims to improve outcomes for HE students within Further Education Colleges by making improvements to their learning, boosting engagement with course content, enhancing the learning experience, and raising confidence and resilience. Specifically focusing on students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, and those with learning difficulties or mental health issues, the project provides specific academic support to students via a dedicated HE Academic Support Tutor. This support includes one-to-one support sessions, group tutorials and access to a wide range of IT based learning resources.

The successful academic support project designed to enhance the student experience demonstrate the College's commitment to ensuring all of our students are fully engaged, committed to their studies and reach their full potential. A small scale study at the end of 2016/17 of graduates' grade averages evidenced an average increase of 8% for HE students attending academic study support tutorials throughout their studies. This project will provide an opportunity for the College partners to work together to scale up the current Academic Study Skill Support Service to improve retention, achievement, attainment and progression rates for HE students. For the College this has meant appointing a project lead and expanding the HE Academic Support Team which will increase the support available for students and tutors in the next two years.

The addition of dedicated HE Academic Support Tutors as a resource for students studying a Higher Education programme has been highly valued by students and teaching staff. Improved retention and continuing positive feedback has been documented during HE Student Forums and through individual student comments as identified below:

"Just to let you know I have just picked up my last assignment results and I got 79% I can't thank you enough for your support, that means I've had no re-subs this year I'm over the moon all the hard work is paying off" – FdA Public and Community Services

"Came away from the meeting feeling reassured, confident and with a clearer head so I can get on now and complete my assignments.
I just wanted to let you know your support and advice is very much appreciated".
– FdA Housing and Communities

The HE Academic Support Lead produces summary reports at the end of each semester and a final evaluative document at the end of the academic year related to the use of the resource by students.

A total of 618 one to one tutorials were delivered in 2016/17 which involved 170 individual students studying on 25 different HE courses. Summary reports provide an analysis of the topics students have requested tutorials for and the types of students seeking support with some aspects identified that require consideration at either course level, school level or College level. The document is shared with Programme Leaders, Curriculum Managers, Heads of School and Vice Principals for use in the completion of course, school and College annual reports and where actions are required, inclusion in quality enhancement plans.

All students are allocated a Personal Tutor at the start of their studies and receive regular 1 to 1 tutorials throughout the academic year. Each school has its own Lead Tutor co-ordinating and

supporting the work of personal tutors; the Lead Tutors come together in a Lead Tutors' Network that is coordinated by the Head of School with Tutorial responsibility. This community ensures our personal tutoring programmes are constantly being reviewed in line with best practice and our personal tutors are supported and trained in their role.

Investment in teaching and learning infrastructure
New College Durham has a robust induction which includes a standard introduction to the College processes and the support systems it offers. This is developed at College level and delivered through a number of different methods which benefits all students. As well as the College level induction a further academic induction is delivered by academic teams which will include academic regulations, quality and standards relevant to the programmes awarding body. In many schools second year students take part as buddies, leaders of campus tours and will run small group discussions to give some reassurances to new students.

The Learning Resource Centre is a central campus facility that incorporates the College Library. The Library provides support services to students to assist them in their learning, and to course teams to identify appropriate subject specific learning resources both for themselves and for their students.

The Library provides access to a range of e-books and this provision is being increased. Regular reports are produced from the Library Management System (Heritage) to identify heavily used items and items that are frequently reserved and where relevant, additional copies are ordered to meet demand.

The Library provides access to a range of print and online materials, which are regularly reviewed for currency and relevance. All students can create an Athens Account which allows off-site access to the large number of online texts, journals, and articles that are provided by the College. Additionally, the Library operates a loan system with the British Library whereby students can order copies of texts and journal articles not readily available through other means. 100% of current level 5 HE students, (via NSS), indicated that 'The Library resources and service are good enough for my needs'.

Multimedia Resources
Media spaces that are equipped with industry standard Apple Mac Computers with software appropriate to the needs of teaching and learning, across the higher education provision.

Specialist Resources
The College provides number of specialised resources available to support the teaching and learning of HE programmes. Key specialist resources include;

a. a fully equipped podiatry clinic at Bishop Auckland which provides a wide range of equipment for analysing, assessing and treating patient's podiatry needs. The clinic is seen as an important community service within the area attracting high levels of patience satisfaction;
b. a new student design and media centre to support student learning in film and media production, visual and graphic design and IT software analysis and development;
c. an advanced design and manufacturing centre developed in association with a number of regional engineering and advanced manufacturing companies;
d. a fully equipped health ward to support student learning in health and social care;
e. specialist computer servers which enable students to develop cyber security strategies and solutions as part their FdSc programme in Cyber Security which was validated by the College in May 2017.

In addition to the above resources the College has made significant investment in teaching and learning by investing over £5 million in 2016/17 on a new advanced manufacturing facilitates with industry driven equipment, a newly designed multimedia studio and a new Social & IT facility for

our Higher Education students. This key investment in accommodation resource by the college is focused on providing a high quality learning experience that enhances pedagogical practice for both staff and students. The new HE spaces have gathered much praise from students, partner validating bodies and local employers. This investment has been directly linked to the Higher Education skills needs of the region and the North East LEP priorities as highlighted on page 1.

A further £6 million of capital investment has recently been approved by College Governors to develop facilities and infrastructure in line with LEP priorities which has focused on STEM growth within the region. This investment is underpinning our Institute of Technology application which reaffirmirms the college's commitment to supporting future skills development within the region.

Student analytics in tracking and monitoring progress
The College employs a range of mechanisms to monitor learner analytics including, target setting, tutorials and student engagement, this is done through a programme called Student Course Integrated Performance System (SCIPs) environment. All programmes have a robust course tracker which are monitored throughout the academic year by programme teams but also formally during quality reviews to highlight students who may become at risk of not reaching their full potential and also to monitor current student progress against target. SCIPs our online recording system allows all those involved with the student (both academic and pastoral support) have access to the necessary information to support the students' performance and level of engagement consistently.

Employer engagement in course design and/or delivery
New College Durham has built several new HE employer links in 2016/17, these have been formed as part of new programme validation activity during the academic year. New HE provision has been validated in Visual Arts, Business Computing, Computing and Networking, Sport and Exercise, Popular Music, Media and Film Studies, Cyber Security and Heritage and Cultural Tourism. As part of the validation process for each programme, course teams are working with both current and new employers to design programme format and content. These new employer links have enabled course teams to develop working relationship with employers, who will not only support the higher education provision, but will also see the new programme as a potential development opportunity for their employee advancement.

Links with Business Durham continue to be strengthened and enhanced in the delivery of the new Foundation Degree Innovation module. Students on the Foundation Degree Applied Business Computing programme and the Foundation Degree Computing and Networking programme are working with Business Durham on live innovation projects as part on their programme at the College. This has involved the students visiting the NETPark at Sedgefield and industry based innovators working with the students studying on the programme. Simon Henig, Leader of Durham County Council, visited the College to talk to students about the innovation projects they are working on, which created much press and social media coverage.

> The Leader of Business Durham commented …
>
> "The Foundation Degree students have really enjoyed their studies of innovation this academic year, gathering skills and knowledge to develop them to be innovative thinkers and practitioners. Working in collaboration with Business Durham, it opened up opportunities to work on projects with global innovation companies across the county"

The Association of Colleges Higher Earning Higher Learning Project came to a close in November 2016 with some notable employer successes for the College. Employer link projects were run in developing the new innovation study module for Foundation Degree students, developing a new Degree Apprenticeship programme in Leadership and Management in conjunction with the Chartered Management Institute (CMI), and a project to promote higher apprenticeships in

manufacturing technology with employers in the North East region. The work and the results of all three projects, is available on the Higher Learning Higher Earning project website.

Industry based guest speakers, educational visits and work placement opportunities give students a valuable insight into their chosen industry sector. In addition, extensive opportunities are available to get involved in volunteering and leadership projects to improve students' personal development and employability skills.

Scholarship and Professional practice
New College Durham has been actively engaged with the Association of Colleges Scholarship Project since February 2016 alongside two partner Colleges; Hartlepool College of FE and Darlington College. The project aims to support the development and embedding of a distinct College Higher Education scholarly ethos across the sector with a key outcome being to establish a 'scholarship framework' that can be adopted by all Colleges.

In line with the notion that scholarship and research should be at the heart of Higher Education, New College Durham recognises the importance of these two fields. Whilst it is a challenge to facilitate large engagement due to the contextual nature of College based Higher Education, we have taken steps in recent years to significantly increase its status and impact.

Earlier this academic year, New College Durham adopted its first Scholarship Policy which defines scholarship specific to our context and the requirements for staff to engage, what students can expect and how management will support the policy development. Our definition of Scholarship is:

Research and scholarship should be at the heart of all Higher Education provision and New College Durham seeks to support both staff and students within the development of these activities in order to aid in the provision of outstanding learning and training.

Research involves the generation of new knowledge whilst scholarship exists to underpin teaching (Creasey 2013) involving activities with the potential to:

a. create or affirm knowledge and/or expertise of a subject or discipline;
b. develop or enhance understanding of a subject or discipline;
c. develop or enhance methodologies for the delivery of a subject or discipline.

This activity must be shared with peers, disseminated across the institution and beyond (King and Widdowson 2009)."

As is evident, this working definition takes much influence from Boyers Four Scholarship and due to the teaching intensive nature of College based Higher Education we see much of our engagement being firmly within the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Examples of successful projects can be found below:

Research Area	Impact on teaching and learning
Maintenance of mandatory duel professional practice	· Enhance student learning- more enthusiastic current lecturers · Enhance student employability skills · Potential to improve student recruitment · Improve employer engagement /working relationships · Develop a community of learning within NCD and between partner HEI's · Develop personal ownership for CPD · Improve appraisal process
Comparative analysis of motivation for application / study between internal and external applicants	· Greater understanding of student motivation · Improvement of initial advice and guidance · Improve recruitment of external students to HE courses · Possibility of tailoring teaching styles / methods to motivation of learners
Use of collaborative digital technology	· Greater understanding of current digital literacy levels amongst staff · Sharing and disseminating best practice across the College · Establishing impact of digital collaboration upon learning
Student Journal Club in School of Health, Care and Public Services	· Student engagement in journal research and reading.

A clear focus of HE Scholarship activity has been in the support and management of student scholarship. Good current examples are:

a. National conference presentations by BSc (Hons) Podiatry students supported by tutors.
b. A high level of contribution to the New College Durham book of research abstracts (available from December 2017).
c. Participation of New College Durham Higher Education students in the Posters for Parliament event, during 2018.
d. Student engagement in joint scholarship with regional employers. For example, Durham Fire and Rescue and the development of Apprenticeship Standards.

Effective Retention / Continuation

Retention / Continuation is strong within the Higher Education provision as the table below shows performance for all levels above the College's key performance indicators (KPIs).

Level	2015/16 Performance	2016/17 KPI	2016/17 Actual	Variance
4	91	93	98	**5%**
5	94	95	99	**4%**
6	95	95	100	**5%**

The TEF core metric shows the College scores 2.7 above the sector benchmark, with a Z-Score of 2.9, and with positive flag in the majority of the splits for Year 2 and 3. Retention is an area that the College feels it is particularly strong and is continually working to make further enhancements to support students learning experience. Made more relevant due to the College location in the North

East of England with a high proportion of students entering higher education from low participation neighbourhoods.

Student Outcomes and Learning Gain

New College Durham is very proud of its positive outcomes for students and continually excel in terms of learning gain, the majority of our students are recruited from low participation areas with many of our full time students starting with “non-traditional’ qualifications. In 2016/17 for students completing top up degrees 60% of students achieved either a first class honours degree or a 2:1, on Foundation Degrees 64% of our students were awarded either a distinction or commendation. 50% of our Higher National students (mainly Engineering and Construction) received higher classifications.

On three year honours degree courses the figure is 47% for higher classifications however the professional nature of both the BSc (Hons) Podiatry and BA (Hons) Social Work courses in which there is a large practice based component, places a greater requirement for students to balance the demands of academic work with their professional practise. As in previous years the majority of students on the Social Work and Podiatry courses receive job offers prior to completion of their course. In 2017 100% of BSc (Hons) Podiatry students and 96% of BA (Hons) Social Work gained sustainable employment.

We consistently review and set challenging targets across our HE provision which have contributed to a period of sustained high performance and overall achievement rates have remained high for the past few years. In 2016/17 this trend continued with an overall achievement rate by level shown in the table below:

Achievement (KPI 03)	**Level 4**	**Level 5**	**Level 6**	**Level 7 (Prof Quals)**
Actual %	99	95	99	90

The above achievement rates and the contextual TEF data highlight outstanding distance travelled from our students with only 22% of our full time HE student cohort having medium or high tariff entry points (of which only 6% are high), the majority of our students (54%) starting point is either low tariff entry or have non-traditional qualifications (28% being non-tariff).

The North East area traditionally has low entry numbers progressing into Higher Education, compared to other regions. Only 30.2% of adults in County Durham are qualified to level 4 or above, with 10.1% aged 16-64 with no qualifications. The geographical market from which the College draws the majority of its Higher Education students, County Durham, has one of the lowest participation rates into higher education in the country as identified in the TEF metric (60%). There are 43 disadvantaged wards documented by POLAR3 data in the county which are particularly targeted by the college.

Most of our HE students are drawn from widening participation categories and have applied solely to the College rather than having made multiple applications. Majority of full time Foundation Degree students are internally progressing students drawn from cognate programmes delivered by the College at Level 3.

Please refer to the College’s one page submission for further contextual information regarding our part time provision.

Students destinations are an important measure of performance at New College Durham, we look at two measures the College‘s own internal collection of destination data collected, by course teams and recorded via our Unit E system. The College has reported 92.5% positive outcomes on this internal measure, the process for destination capture is robust with destinations targeted

around the proportion of students achieving a sustained positive destination i.e. their destination between October and March of the year after completion.

Destination data is also gathered independently via iGraduate on behalf of the College, and reported to the Destination of HE leavers (DLHE) survey.

It's important to note that while the TEF Metric averages are based on a standard 3yrs of data, for the College this has been calculated on only 2015/16 data. Data for 2013/4 and 2014/5 has been excluded due to the low response rates.

The TEF metric highlights that overall the full time students who progress to Highly Skilled Employment or Further Study achieve 1.2% better than the sector average of 71%, and the split metric demonstrates positive flags for both Male (77.2%) and other UG(76.5%) cohorts.

As a College, we continue to strive for positive employment outcomes for our students from all backgrounds, in particular those from disadvantaged backgrounds or those who are at greater risk of not achieving positive outcomes. Our most recent Access Agreement demonstrates the work and initiatives being developed to increase young white males' recruitment as well as the financial contribution the College is making to ensure successful outcomes for this targeted group.

Through a newly established Higher Education Quality and Data Team the college has begun to proactively use data available to understand levels of engagement across our different student characteristics, findings from this analysis have identified potential under-representation and focussed our interventions to support those student groups and backgrounds particularly for young white males.

There is a 0.8% difference in the achievement of male and female students' performance (achievement rates for Male 93.5% / Female 94.3%) however; retention is slightly lower for females then males at 87% compared to 90% male although still within our +/-3% differential gap.

In previous years non-white students performed significantly better than white British students, this differential gap is reducing and both non-white and white British performance remained between +/-3% in 2016/17. The College plays a key role in the regional North East Collaborative Outreach programme (NECOP). The objectives for the College has been to engage young people who reside in areas of low engagement in Higher Education to consider higher levels of study as a future life choice.

This submission has intended to demonstrate the level of excellence being attained by the College with respect to each of the three main TEF assessment criteria. We strongly believe that our provision is of the highest quality in meeting the needs for all students and the TEF descriptor for Gold.