Name of Provider: Nelson College London
UKPRN: 10030129

TEF Year Three Provider Submission

Provider Context

Vision
Nelson College London aims to become:

> A leading provider of high-quality career focused higher education in the Greater London area; and an exemplar of alternative university-level provision - well governed, accountable and sustainable.

Mission
Nelson College London offers access to higher education to people from the widest possible range of backgrounds, enabling them to transform their lives through the acquisition of the knowledge and skills that they need to succeed in their chosen careers.

The Nelson College London motto is "**Learning Brought to Life"**

Values
Nelson College London values:

- The quality of the learning experience it provides, offering education that caters for the individual needs of its students.
- Support for students both professionally and personally as they progress with their studies at the College.
- Creativity: engaging students and teachers in reflective thinking, innovation, originality and self-expression.
- The development of independent learning skills, making learning enjoyable as well as meaningful, stimulating and challenging.
- The celebration of its achievements through the success of its students.
- Diversity, achieved through inclusiveness.
- The continual professional development of all members of staff.
- The partnership between staff, students, non-executives, directors and shareholders.

Introduction

Nelson College London was founded in 2009 as an independent college of higher education. Nelson College London has two campuses situated in Ilford and Gants Hill, both located in East London.

Previously, the College used to offer its programmes to only non-EU students. However, from September 2012, it has started offering its HND programmes to both UK and EU students. In 2015, the College entered into a partnership with London Metropolitan University to deliver two Foundation Degree courses and two Bachelor Degree top-up courses in Hospitality Management and Business; and from September 2016, the college started delivering these validated courses.

The Mission Statement of the College states that it "offers access to higher education to people from the widest possible range of backgrounds, enabling them to transform their lives and prosper through the acquisition of the knowledge and skills that they need to succeed in their chosen careers".

To fulfil its Mission, Nelson College London has adopted the following strategic aims:

- To provide a varied selection of academic curricula;
- To provide the students with skills which contribute to success in their careers and in their private lives;
- To enable students to become independent and to lead them to self-discovery;
- To strive for and maintain excellence by systematically reviewing classroom facilities, equipment, curricula, and staff;
- To make available to our students activities and experiences which foster personal growth and leadership qualities.

The student body at Nelson College London is diverse and includes mature students from deprived backgrounds who may not have previously had access to higher education at Level 4 and above.

The Academic Board is the principal academic body of the College and is ultimately responsible for its local regulatory frameworks, policies and procedures, as well as for the management of academic standards and quality. The Academic Board has eight sets of committees reporting to it: the Academic Planning Committee, the Programme Committees, the Course Committees, the Student Representatives Committee, the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee, the Academic Assessment Panel, the Subject Standards Board and the Progression Board.

The Principal's Executives Group advises the Principal on strategic decisions relating to the academic conduct and well-being of the College. Of itself it has no executive authority.

Teaching Quality

Metrics
The data available within core matrices belongs to HND Programmes only. Year 2016/17 was the very first time when students were required to complete the NSS and DLHE survey. The courses validated by London Metropolitan University were not eligible for NSS and DLHE as those were newly launched programmes at the time.

The Indicator for “Teaching on my course” is 7.7% above benchmark of 87.7%. There are double positive flags and reflects the fact that the College is in the top 10% of absolute performance amongst all providers who participated in NSS 2017. Our performance is underpinned by working closely with our students as partners. Students have multiple platforms from to provide their feedback and raise any issues every term which enables the College to take immediate steps to address any concerns raised. All Committee/ Board meetings have student membership (Excluding Academic Assessment Panel), and Committees/ Boards have action plans which are scrutinised on a termly basis.

Academic Staff Development and Teaching and Learning Strategy
The College ensures that all teaching staff and personal tutors are appropriately qualified, supported and developed through training. Most of our teaching staff are qualified to a minimum of a Master Degree level and we have many lecturers who have either a PHD level qualification or are pursuing their PHD qualification. Some have published in their fields of specialism. The College have a good mix of teaching staff who are experienced academically as well as having industry experience which helps our students to learn from their experience and knowledge. The College is a member of the Higher Education Academy, and currently five staff members are Fellows or Associate Fellows of the HEA. This is an evidence of the College’s commitment to the enhancement of teaching and learning.

The College supports all of its academic and administrative staff with their CPDs and time off is given to individuals to keep their CPDs updated. The College organises training for its teaching staff to equip them with latest curriculum-related developments. This in turn helps student to learn latest industry trends and to advance their knowledge and critical understanding

Academic Resources
The College ensures that learning and teaching are fit for purpose and associated resources are in place to enable students to achieve their intended learning outcomes. Lecture slides are produced using a standardised template which is cross-referenced with the learning outcomes of each module. To provide every student with an equal and effective opportunity to achieve the intended learning outcomes, the College has produced bespoke Study Manuals for each module it delivers. Copies of these study manuals are given to students free of charge and are also made available within the college library. All manuals produced by lecturers are reviewed to ensure quality and relevance to module specifications. The quality of the content and impact of these manuals are discussed in different forums, including the Student Representatives Committee and the Programme Committees.

Quality Assurance
The College has a Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee which is responsible for ensuring that the College's quality assurance systems meet the expectations of the UK Quality Code, awarding bodies, students and other internal and external stakeholders.

The College's programme monitoring and evaluations structures are designed in a way that allows module leaders, programme leaders and Academic Managers to reflect on learning and teaching practices at module level, programme level as well as at College level.

Assessment and Feedback
The Indicator for "Assessment and feedback" is 10.2% above the benchmark of 82.7%. This shows how satisfied our students are with the standard of assessments and the level of feedback provided to them. The students have opportunities to receive formative feedback from their tutors as well as support lecturers who work together to provide guidance to the students. Summative feedback is provided to the students within four to six weeks as per the Assessment Policy. Students can view their feedback on the VLE which is integrated on Moodle. The College has clear process in place for academic appeals.

The December 2016 QAA HER (AP) Partial Review recognised (1.97) that the College operates an Assessment Decision Review Request Procedure. Documents make clear to students that this request should be made within 14 days of the decision being confirmed by an academic assessment panel. The Head of Academic Services reviews each request and a decision is communicated to the student within 20 working days. The review team found clear information on this process provided to students through Student Handbooks and the VLE. Within the policy, students have the right to request consideration by the external verifier if they are not satisfied with the College's decision. Students confirmed that they were all aware of this process although none had used it. The College confirmed that no complaints or assessment decision review requests had been submitted by students. The team noted this and formed the view that this may be due in part to good staff/student relations and the provision of effective feedback concerning assessment decisions.

Assignment Briefs are prepared by the relevant Module team and are internally verified before distribution to students. Where required external verification from the external examiner is also sought.

The College uses Turnitin for student coursework submission and all lecturers are trained on how to mark online on Turnitin. Student feedback is given on each learning criteria and learning outcome, in addition students are given constructive feedback on their work and are also given developmental feedback to improve their knowledge and skills for their future work.

The assessment material is reviewed and approved by the external examiner(s). External examiners are appointed by London Metropolitan University for its validated programmes while Pearson appoints it own independent external examiners.

External Examiners reports confirm that the College has robust internal moderation / internal verification processes in place to ensure the academic integrity of student assessment. The College also organises standardisation meetings every term to ensure consistent fair marking across all of its programmes.

The College produces responses to all external examiners reports received and an action plan is developed to ensure continuous improvement of the assessment process and practices and also ensure the continuity of the good practices highlighted.

Student Voice

The College recognises the student body as equal partners in the assurance and enhancement of quality in their educational experience, and encourages both individual and collective participation in a mutually beneficial relationship. Arrangements for the effective representation of the student voice exists in the College's formal committees in which student participation is defined in the committee composition, and actively encouraged throughout the College by fellow staff and students.

The College receives feedback on the effectiveness of learning opportunities and teaching practices from a variety of sources. This includes collecting data from students on a termly basis using the student feedback form, structured committee meetings (i.e.: Student Representatives Committee), reports from external examiners (who also meet students during their visits), focus groups on assignment briefs and exit survey forms. Data from these are analysed and included in the College Review & Enhancement Report which is discussed at strategic level.

Student feedback is collected on a termly basis; the student feedback reflects their satisfaction with the College's HE provision as well as administrative facilities. The feedback also depicts lecturers' teaching capabilities from the students' perspective. A student feedback report is prepared for each programme per term and necessary actions are taken based on any matters arising from the feedback forms. According to past and recent reports, student satisfaction with the academic quality has been over 80%.

The College has subscribed to Emerald Insight where there are many journals available for students on Business and Hospitality Management topics. Previously, students were restricted to only accessing Emerald Insight from within the College premises due to technical limitations. Students requested the College for access to Emerald Insight from outside of the campuses too. The College has now made arrangements where students can access Emerald Insight from anywhere via VLE with their log-in details.

Another example of the College acting on student issues is that, many students studying at the College have childcare issues and they requested to have morning-only classes to enable them to carry on studying. The College timetabled its teaching in such a way that students can opt to attend morning-only sessions.

Peer Reviews and Teacher Observations

To review and enhance teaching quality, the College conducts peer reviews and teacher observations. The purpose of peer reviews is to encourage the developmental process of the reviewer and reviewee and to share good practice among colleagues. Peer reviews are conducted by lecturers every term in a standard template form, from which a report is subsequently generated.

The purpose of teacher observations is to appraise the performance of lecturers. They are carried out by the managers/programme leaders using a template form. The reviewer organises a pre-observation meeting with each lecturer, at which the reviewer is briefed on the process of teaching observations and any concerns are addressed and participation is agreed upon. The reviewer also organises a post-observation meeting where feedback is provided to the lecturer and where required an action plan is agreed.

The outcomes of the peer review and teacher observations are analysed and included in various reports including the College Review and Enhancement Report.

Student Support

Student support is one of our strengths which we submit differentiates us from many larger institutions. Many of our students are not conventional regular students coming out of sixth-form and FE Colleges but are mature students who have been out of the education cycle for many years or have no formal educational qualification and hence require higher levels of academic guidance and support, which is understood and recognised here at Nelson College. Previously, the College had low achievement rate in its HND Programmes and to address this issue, student support lecturers were introduced to provide academic guidance and study skills to each student. This support received very positive feedback by the students and staff and, accordingly, the College has expanded the student support team.

The College's Personal Tutoring and Student Support Policy and Procedures aim to set out the basis of structuring how personal tutors at the College support students in setting and achieving students' personal targets. Each student is allocated a personal tutor who supports the student throughout their course of study. Personal tutors help monitor the progress of every student and enhance their academic development through the provision of regular opportunities to meet with them and provide feedback on their academic progress. The Student Support team also assists students in understanding learning goals and in formulating Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) to enable them to complete their courses successfully

Student Feedback

As per the feedback received from students, the majority of students were satisfied with the College's teaching provisions for HND programmes; 80% of lecturers scored between a range of 80% to 100%, and 20 % of the lecturers scored between 70% - 80% for students' satisfaction.

The Programme Leader discusses teaching-related matters and students' feedback during the Lectures Induction Meeting. A discussion is carried out on how to improve the student learning experience. The lecturers share best practices with each other during the induction meeting. The lecturers will now be holding monthly meetings to share their experience with students and to discuss desirable teaching practices.

As far the individual teaching practices are concerned, the scores are above 80% on student satisfaction-related criteria, indicating a high level of student satisfaction and confidence in lecturers' ability to teach effectively.

The December 2016 QAA HER (AP) Partial Review report recognised (2.8) that the College has successfully identified areas for enhancement and has examples of improvements to the student experience that were often in response to student feedback. The new approach to programme monitoring and review will provide the College with a greater range of key performance data, which will enable the College to more readily identify areas for enhancement in addition to responding to student feedback.

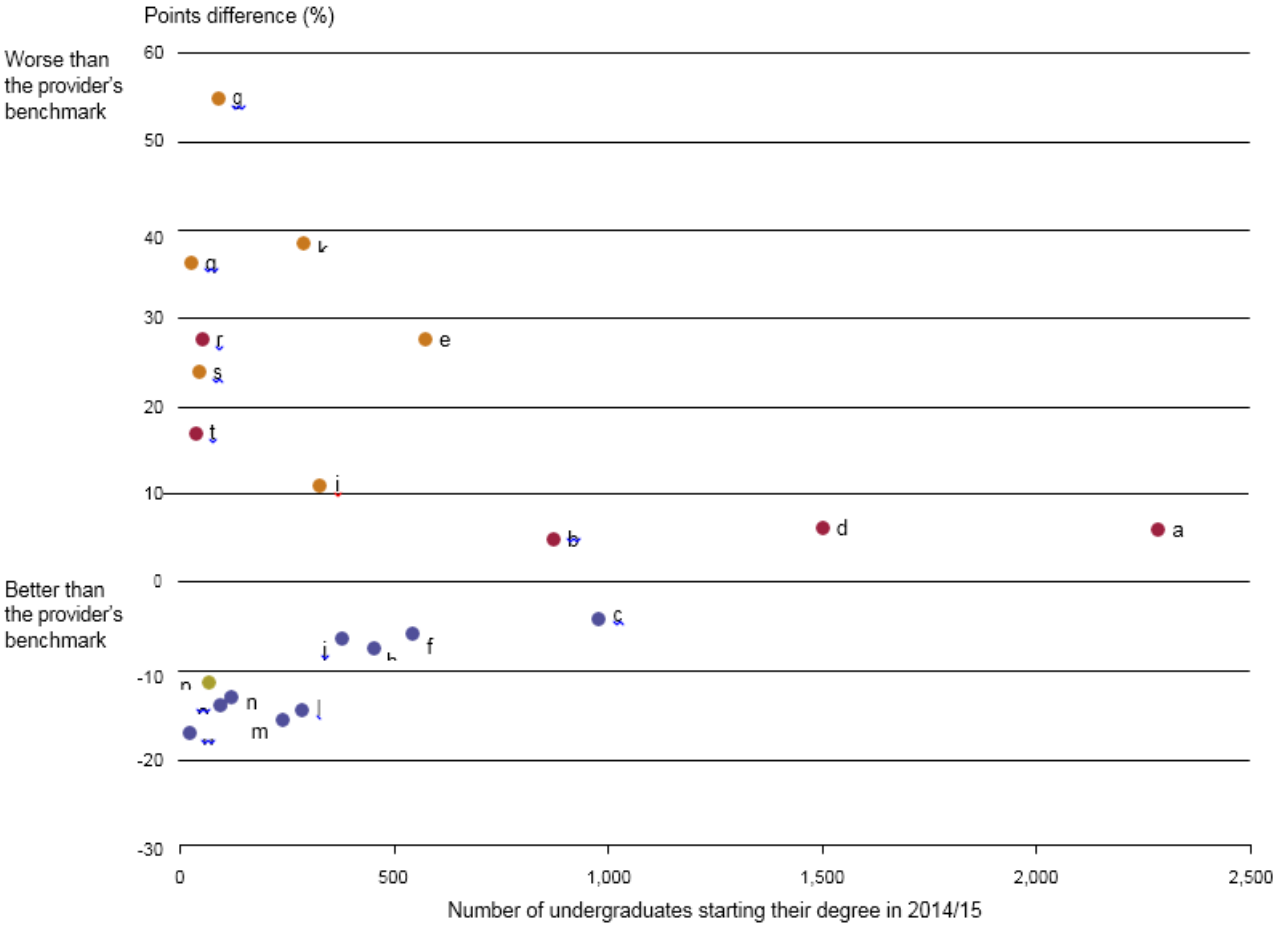
Learning Environment

The core metric for Academic Support is 8.4% above benchmark with ++ flag indicating strong student satisfaction. This metric positions the College in the top 10% of the NSS 2017 results. The non-continuation rate for the College are satisfactory and in line with its expectation considering entry profile of the students. The College non-continuation rate were featured in the National Audit Office's recent report titled "Follow-up on Alternative Higher Education Providers as "better than the provider's benchmark". This was achieved by introducing early intervention to enable students to continue their studies and providing opportunities such as flexible timetables.

Figure 5

Difference in non-continuation rates from benchmark, by alternative provider, 2014/15

Eleven providers have non-continuation rates worse than their benchmarks



- Non-continuation rate worse than the provider's benchmark (first degree)
- Non-continuation rate better than the provider's benchmark (first degree)
- Non-continuation rate worse than the provider's benchmark (other undergraduate provision)
- Non-continuation rate better than the provider's benchmark (other undergraduate provision)

Figure 5 *continued*

Difference in non-continuation rates from benchmark, by alternative provider, 2014/15

a GSM London Limited
b BPP University Limited
c BPP University Limited (2)
d BIMM Limited
e London School of Business and Finance (UK) Limited
f ICON College of Technology and Management
g SAE Education Limited
h Nelson College London Limited
i UCK Limited
j Mont Rose College of Management and Sciences
k City of London College
l Grafton College
m Brit College
n Regent College
o London School of Management Education
p St Mellitus College
q London College of Creative Media Limited
r The College of Integrated Chinese Medicine
s ABI College Limited
t Access to Music Limited
u Chicken Shed Theatre Company

Notes

1 The provider's benchmark is the non-continuation rate after taking into account differences in student characteristics (including age and subjects studied).

2 The chart only reports providers for which differences to their benchmarks are statistically significant.

3 HESA publishes non-continuation rates separately for first degree and other undergraduate provision. A first degree is an undergraduate degree, commonly a Bachelor's degree. Other undergraduate provision includes foundation degrees and Higher Nationals.

4 BPP had non-continuation rates worse than its benchmark in 'first degree' qualifications, and better than its benchmark in the 'other undergraduate provision'. BPP had around 1,000 undergraduates starting courses in 2014/15 for each of the two types of qualifications.

5 Thirty-six providers had non-continuation rates that were not significantly different from their benchmarks. Differences may be statistically insignificant either because the difference between the non-continuation rate and the benchmark is small or because the number of students attending the provider is low.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of published Higher Education Statistics Agency data

The College has a state-of-the-art Library and Learning Resources Centre. The College uses an Integrated Library System called Librarika to manage its library online. The College has a full-time Librarian and a Library and Learning Resources Officer whose task is to ensure that all relevant books and resources are available and up-to-date. The library contains over 1,000 books including core as well as optional books for HND Business and HND Hospitality Management programmes. Both campuses have student common rooms which are used for socialising and extracurricular activities. The Library and Learning Centre remains open with extended opening hours during peak submission times, as requested by the students.

The College has its own YouTube channel which contains videos on various topics and modules of the Hospitality Management and Business programmes. Students are encouraged to subscribe to these videos in order to benefit from the information contained in the latest uploads. The College aims to add new videos to its YouTube Channel every term.

The College has a Moodle-based Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) platform. Lecturers must upload all lectures slides, assignment briefs, unit handbooks, Study Manuals, case studies , and any other material pertinent to students on the VLE prior to the start of a term. Students have 24/7 access to the VLE and can download and read the lecture slides and other learning material while

away from the College. In addition the College also has an E-Library with many valuable learning resources.

The College has an open door policy whereby students can meet any member of staff, including senior management in an open and informal communication platform. This is verbally communicated to students during induction and at many stages thereafter.

The December 2016 QAA HER Partial Review recognised (2.1) that the College articulates a commitment to the continuous enhancement of learning opportunities for its students. A number of College committees are involved in processes that improve the student learning experience, including the Board of Governance, the Principal's Executive Group, the Academic Board and programme committees. The College also uses action plans associated with minutes of these committees as a mechanism for improving the student experience. The Principal's Executive Group identifies areas in which the College can improve its provision. The College's annual action plan captures areas of enhancement-related activity

Student Outcomes and Learning Gain

The core metric for employment and further study is 7.6% below at benchmark. Although the benchmark is sector wide it does not take into account the demographic location of the student which in our view results in a benchmark being set at an unrealistically high level given the demographics of students enrolled at the College.

Therefore, the College believes that highly skilled employment which is 7.3% below benchmark should not be viewed negatively as there are a number of underlying issues which should be considered, such as level of qualification achieved. A significant proportion of student are pursuing their further studies at level 6 and upon completion of their first degree they are more likely to employed in one of the highly skilled employment categories.

Traditionally, the students undertaking an educational qualification are mostly in part-time employments which are generally lower supervisory level jobs and do not fall into highly skilled employment categories.

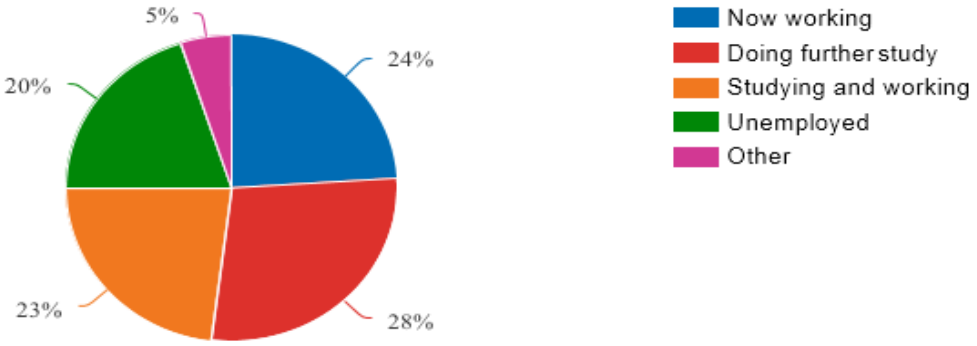
The College supports the introduction of graduate outcome survey to be conducted after 15 months of completion of studies as not all students find their required job within six months of completion of the course.

HND BUSINESS

75%

Go on to work and/or study

This is what students are doing six months after finishing the course.

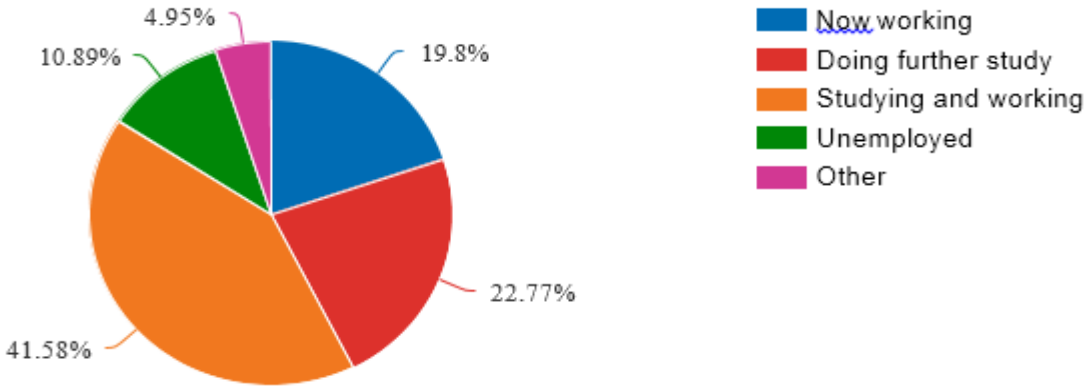


HND HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT

85%

Go on to work and/or study

This is what students are doing six months after finishing the course.



The College has taken many deliberate steps to develop the employability skills of its students. The College has introduced a Knowledge Exchange Centre in collaboration with its sister concern NCL Tours. The objective of NCL Knowledge Exchange Centre (KEC) is to create a space where students and small to medium sized enterprises could benefit from Nelson College London and its expertise. Students and growing businesses alike benefit from the Knowledge Exchange Centre in a wide range of ways. NCLKEC organises weekly workshops for students, businesses and their employees to acquire new skills and improve their learning, along with giving them the opportunity

to brush up and improve existing skills. Students may utilise this opportunity to engage with employers to increase their knowledge and prepare themselves for the world of work. Additionally, attendees of workshops have access to a wide range of services including use of College meeting room facilities, staff training, assessments and advertising for vacancies.

In order to prepare students for practical work in the hospitality industry, the College has subscribed to Oracle Opera PMS Hotel Software. The college schedules dedicated training sessions that are made available to all hospitality students enabling them to acquire practical skills and experience on the software that is widely used across large and medium hotel chains. Although the software is mainly for Hospitality students, Business students are also encouraged to attend these workshops and equip themselves with new skills.

The College provides guidance and advice to all students on the progression opportunities for further study or employment. The College has an in-house marketing department which has collaborative arrangements to place students with other higher-education providers where this is judged more suitable to their requirements.

Students are also asked to complete an Exit Survey Form at the end of their programme. This survey incorporates a self-assessment of their employability and professional skills. A report is produced annually in order to assess student experience and level of student personal and professional development as a result of their studies at Nelson College. The outcomes of the survey help College to make improvements and focus on areas where students can make further progress.

The first cohort of BA (Hons) in Business and Hospitality Management programmes validated by London Metropolitan University has now graduated from Nelson College. Overall 60% of the enrolled students achieved their Bachelor's degree. Although the figure needs improvement we submit that considering the profile and demographics of the local area this pass-rate is an achievement that merits genuine celebration, more especially as this was the first year of the validated programmes – at Level 6 - being delivered at the College London. Building upon this experience, the College is in the process of further strengthening our student-support mechanisms to achieve higher levels of achievement in the future.