

Office for
Students



Degree awarding powers assessment report for London School of Innovation

**New degree awarding powers
assessment**

Provider legal name: London School of Innovation Ltd

Provider trading name: London School of Innovation

UKPRN: 10091282

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Contents

Executive summary	2
Introduction and background	6
Context	6
Assessment process	9
Information gathering	9
Assessment of DAPs criterion A: Academic governance	10
Criterion A1: Academic governance	10
Assessment of DAPs criterion B: Academic standards and quality assurance	30
Criterion B1: Regulatory frameworks	30
Criterion B2: Academic standards	43
Criterion B3: Quality of the academic experience	56
Assessment of DAPs criterion C: Scholarship and the pedagogical effectiveness of staff	81
Criterion C1: The role of academic and professional staff	81
Assessment of DAPs criterion D: Environment for supporting students	102
Criterion D1: Enabling student development and achievement	102
Assessment of DAPs criterion E: Evaluation of performance	116
Criterion E1: Evaluation of performance	116
Degree awarding powers overarching criterion	128
New DAPs test conclusions	129
Annex A: Abbreviations	131

Executive summary

The Office for Students (OfS) may grant a New degree awarding powers (New DAPs) authorisation to a provider that has been delivering higher education for less than three years. The authorisation will be on a probationary basis and normally time-limited for three years.

A provider may apply for a New DAPs authorisation for the following awards:

- foundation degrees only
- awards up to, and including, bachelors' degrees
- all taught awards.

It may apply for these authorisations on a subject-specific basis, or covering all subjects.

A provider that is granted New DAPs will be required to implement its agreed New DAPs plan and to engage in monitoring and scrutiny activities during the probationary period.

This report represents the conclusions of a DAPs assessment of a provider that is seeking New DAPs, referred to as the 'New DAPs test'.

The purpose of a New DAPs test is to gather evidence to inform a judgement about whether a provider is able to meet the DAPs criteria, by the end of the probationary period, and whether it has arrangements that can take effect from the date of the New DAPs authorisation, to make awards at the level for which it has applied.

Before making a decision about whether to award a New DAPs authorisation, the OfS will undertake a New DAPs test. The purpose of the New DAPs test is to:

- assess the credibility of the provider's New DAPs plan
- assess the provider's understanding of the DAPs criteria
- confirm that the standards set or that will be set for the provider's proposed courses are at an appropriate level.

New DAPs tests are conducted by assessment teams with membership that includes OfS-appointed academic experts. The outcome of the New DAPs test is a report compiled by the assessment team setting out its findings.

This report does not represent any decision of the OfS in respect of whether the DAPs award the provider is seeking should be authorised.

1. This report represents the conclusions of an assessment for new degree awarding powers (New DAPs) at the London School of Innovation ('the school').
2. The school is seeking authorisation for New DAPs for taught awards up to and including Level 7 in the following Common Aggregation Hierarchy (CAH) coded subjects:
 - CAH11 computing
 - CAH10 engineering
 - CAH17 business and management
 - CAH23 combined and general studies
3. To carry out the assessment, the Office for Students (OfS) appointed an assessment team, which included three academic experts and one member of OfS staff. The assessment included a visit to the school's site on 9 July 2025, and a virtual visit on 11 July 2025. This report contains the advice and judgement of the team following its assessment.
4. The team concluded that the school is ready to operate with New DAPs (see Table 1). The team also concluded that specified changes are required to the school's New DAPs plan, to ensure this will provide a suitable basis for monitoring and further assessment (see Table 2). This report does not, however, represent any decision of the OfS to authorise these powers.

Table 1: Summary of advice against the DAPs criteria

Criteria	The provider has a credible New DAPs plan	The provider has demonstrated a full understanding of the DAPs criteria
Criterion A1: Academic governance	Met	Met
Criterion B1: Regulatory frameworks	Met	Met
Criterion B2: Academic standards	Met	Met
Criterion B3: Quality of the academic experience	Met	Met
Criterion C1: Scholarship and the pedagogical effectiveness of staff	Met	Met
Criterion D1: Environment for supporting students	Met	Met
Criterion E1: Evaluation of performance	Met	Met

The standards set for the proposed courses are at an appropriate level
The provider is ready.
Overarching New DAPs criterion
The provider is an emerging self-critical, cohesive academic community with a clear commitment to the assurance of standards supported by effective (in prospect) quality systems.

Table 2: Summary of specified changes to its New DAPs plan identified to ensure this will provide a suitable basis for monitoring and further assessment

Criteria	Specified changes
Criterion A1: Academic governance	The assessment team was assured that the school has detailed and credible plans. However, it recommends that the school consolidates key milestones and deliverables which are currently set out in other plans (Academic Recruitment Plan, Three-Year Workforce Plan, Strategic Framework for Academic Appointments, Resource Allocation Plan and Governance Statement) into the New DAPs plan, to ensure the New DAPs plan document provides an effective basis for monitoring for criterion A1.
Criterion B1: Regulatory frameworks	The assessment team was assured that the school has detailed and credible plans. However, it recommends that the school consolidates key milestones and deliverables which are currently set out in other plans (Internal Auditing Charter, Three Year Workforce Plan, Strategic Framework for Academic Appointments, Resource Allocation Plan, Transcript, Certificate, and Reference Requests Policy) into the New DAPs plan, to ensure the New DAPs plan document provides an effective basis for monitoring for criterion B1.
Criterion B2: Academic standards	The assessment team was assured that the school has detailed and credible plans. However, it recommends that the school consolidates key milestones and deliverables (which are currently set out in out in the school’s Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations) into the New DAPs plan, to ensure the New DAPs plan document provides an effective basis for monitoring for criterion B2.
Criterion B3: Quality of the academic experience	The assessment team was assured that the school has detailed and credible plans. However, it recommends that the school consolidates key milestones and deliverables (which are currently set out in out in the school’s Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations) into the New DAPs plan, to ensure the New DAPs plan document provides an effective basis for monitoring for criterion B3.

Criteria	Specified changes
Criterion C1: Scholarship and the pedagogical effectiveness of staff	The team was assured that the school has detailed and credible plans. However, it recommends that the school consolidates key milestones and deliverables which are currently set out in other plans (Academic Recruitment Plan, Three-Year Workforce Plan, Three-Year development plans for academic and non-academic staff, Teaching and Learning Policy,) into the New DAPs plan, to ensure the New DAPs plan document provides an effective basis for monitoring for criterion C1.
Criterion D1: Environment for supporting students	The team was assured that the school has detailed and credible plans. However, it recommends that the school consolidates key milestones and deliverables which are currently set out in other plans (Annual Employability and Career Development Strategy 2025-26, Resource Allocation Plan, Student Engagement Policy and the Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations) into the New DAPs plan, to ensure the New DAPs plan document provides an effective basis for monitoring for criterion D1.
Criterion E1: Evaluation of performance	No specified changes identified.

5. This report does not represent any decision of the OfS or findings in respect of compliance with conditions of registration.

Introduction and background

6. This report represents the conclusions of an assessment for new degree awarding powers (New DAPs) at the London School of Innovation ('the school').
7. The school is seeking authorisation for New DAPs for taught awards up to and including Level 7 in the following CAH-coded subjects:
 - CAH11 computing
 - CAH10 engineering and technology
 - CAH17 business and management
 - CAH23 combined and general studies.
8. The OfS's Quality Assessment Committee will consider the report and formulate its advice to the OfS regarding the quality and standards at London School of Innovation.
9. The OfS will consider this assessment report, and the Quality Assessment Committee's advice, in deciding whether to grant the London School of Innovation's New DAPs authorisation on the basis requested. The OfS will also consider its own risk assessment of the London School of Innovation and will have regard to advice received from others where this has been sought. It will also take into account other relevant considerations, such as the OfS's general duties under section 2 of Higher Education and Research Act 2017.

Context

10. The London School of Innovation is an independent higher education provider based in Sutton, London, and was founded in 2013, originally as 'Geeks Academy', to address the need for more skilled digital workers. The London School of Innovation operates from its campus in Sutton in south-west London.
11. The school is not currently delivering higher education provision and currently has no students enrolled.
12. The school intends to deliver the following programmes during a New DAPs probationary period:
 - MSc Data Science and Analytics
 - MSc Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship
 - MSc AI and Machine Learning
 - MSc Software Technical Leadership
 - MSc Digital Project Management
 - MSc AI for Business Transformation.

13. The school plans to initially deliver these programmes online, introducing a hybrid delivery model towards the end of the monitoring period.
14. The school has expressed an interest in developing and delivering further programmes in the future, should it gain New DAPs and subsequently gain Full DAPs. If successful at gaining New DAPs, the school intends to use the probationary period to undertake market research on new programmes.
15. The programmes which the school intend to develop during the monitoring period, in readiness for gaining Full DAPs, are:
 - MSc Digital Product Management
 - MSc Data Science and Engineering
 - MSc Digital Innovation in Public Service
 - MSc Digital Innovation in Education
 - MSc Smart Cities and Urban Innovation
 - MSc Business Innovation Management
 - MSc Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship
 - MSc Quantum Computing
 - MBA Digital Innovation
 - MBA Digital Entrepreneurship
 - MBA Sustainable Innovation and Circular Economy
 - MBA AI-Led Transformation.
16. As these programmes are not due to be delivered within the New DAPs probationary period, the assessment team has not included them in its assessment of the school's New DAPs plan, though it took these future plans into consideration.
17. The school currently has in place a senior leadership team and Board of Governors and has recently recruited five members of teaching staff, who were undergoing the process of onboarding at the point of assessment. At the time of the assessment, further recruitment for roles such as Director of Student Services and the student success team was due to start.
18. In accordance with the OfS's regulatory framework and operational guidance on how to apply for DAPs, the OfS undertook an initial eligibility and suitability assessment of the London School of Innovation. It decided that a New DAPs test, including a visit to the school, should be undertaken. The purpose of the New DAPs test is to gather evidence to inform a judgement on the extent to which the school:

- Has a credible New DAPs plan which demonstrates how it will be able to meet the DAPs criteria, including the overarching criterion for New DAPs, by the end of the probationary period.
 - Demonstrates a full understanding of the DAPs criteria.
 - Has or will set academic standards for the proposed programmes at an appropriate level, or has arrangements that can take effect from the date of the New DAPs authorisation, to make awards at the level for which it has applied.
19. The OfS appointed an assessment team on 14 February 2025 which consisted of three academic expert assessors and a member of OfS staff in the following roles:
- Professor Marc Griffith – committee chair and lead assessor
 - Professor Shushma Patel – deputy committee chair and assessor
 - Dr Michael Scott – deputy committee chair and assessor
 - Charlotte Chamberlain-Hare – committee member and assessment manager.
20. The OfS asked the team to give its advice about the quality and standards applied to higher education courses at the school and whether the school has a credible New DAPs plan and has demonstrated a full understanding of the DAPs criteria.
21. The assessment team considered a range of information submitted by the London School of Innovation in support of its application for New DAPs.

Assessment process

Information gathering

22. In accordance with the operational guidance on assessment for degree awarding powers, the school submitted a detailed New DAPs plan and self-assessment document on 21 March 2025, setting out how it will meet the DAPs criteria in full, before the end of the probationary period. The self-assessment also set out its arrangements to make awards at the level for which it has applied (up to and including Level 7) from the intended start date of the probationary period.
23. To support the statements made in the New DAPs plan and self-assessment document, the school submitted a range of documentary evidence. This included programme documentation and information relating to academic policies, processes and governance structures. The assessment team was also shown the school's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), through its Automated Governance System (AGS).
24. Following the initial analysis of the school's New DAPs plan and evidence submission, the assessment team requested further information from the school. The school submitted a response to this request on 30 May 2025.
25. Following a review of the additional information submitted by the school, the assessment team undertook a desk-based assessment of all the available evidence. The team requested additional information following the submission of the additional evidence. The school submitted a response to this on 16 June 2025.
26. The team undertook two visits to the school, an on-site visit on 9 July 2025 and an online visit on 11 July 2025. During the visit the team met with the school's current staff and members of the Board of Governors and members of the Academic Board, and received a demonstration of the school's online systems (AGS) and VLE.
27. Following the visit the team requested additional information and evidence from the school. The school submitted a response to this request with further evidence provided on 21 July 2025.

Assessment of DAPs criterion A: Academic governance

Criterion A1: Academic governance

28. The assessment team's view is that the school has demonstrated a full understanding of criterion A1: Academic governance, and that its New DAPs plan is credible in relation to this criterion.
29. The assessment team's view is based on its review of evidence showing in summary that the school is developing an effective academic governance model, with clear and appropriate lines of accountability to support its academic responsibilities and ensure alignment with the school's strategic objectives.
30. While the evidence shows that the school has a credible plan to demonstrate an effective academic governance model, the team recommends that the implementation of its recruitment plans to broaden academic leadership and membership of committees is monitored during Year One of the probationary period.
31. The assessment team's view is based on its review of the school's New DAPs plan and evidence that shows that it can be reasonably expected to meet the evidence requirements for criterion A1 in full by the end of the probationary period.

Subcriterion A1.1

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

Advice to the OfS

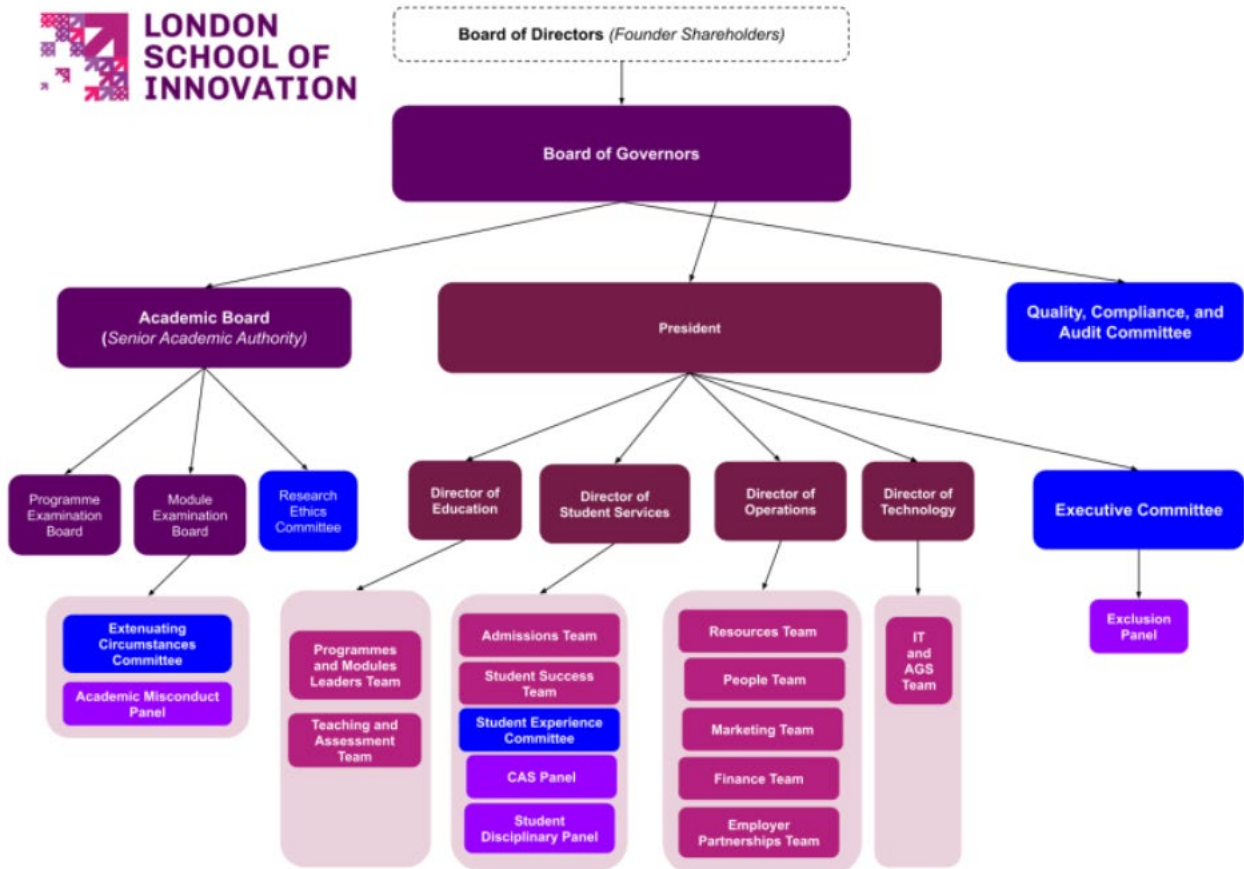
32. The assessment team's view is that the New DAPs plan is credible in relation to criterion A1.1 because it has designed an effective academic governance process, with clear lines of accountability for its academic oversight.
33. The assessment team's view is that the school has demonstrated a full understanding of criterion A1.1, as it has created a governance structure with clearly defined roles and responsibilities at every level in the organisation, including the roles of committees, groups and individuals. While not yet in place, the plans include a clear intention for engaging students in the academic governance. This structure demonstrates how academic governance will be systematically managed and monitored, with clear reporting lines and accountability that aligns with the school's strategic aims.
34. The assessment team's view is based on its review of the school's New DAPs plan and evidence, showing that school can be reasonably expected to meet the evidence requirements for A1.1 in full by the end of the probationary period. It notes that there is currently some overlap of staff responsibilities at various levels of academic governance. The

assessment team is assured, given the plans in place, that this will be reduced as the school becomes fully operational and recruits to fill roles. This is discussed in paragraph 56.

Background

35. To inform the assessment team's consideration of its academic governance arrangements, the London School of Innovation provided contextual information regarding its management and governance structures, including:
- Governance calendar
 - Organisational Chart
 - Minutes of Board of Governors Meetings
 - Role of Geeks Ltd
 - Introductory Presentations OfS
 - Governance Statement
 - Vision and Values Statement
 - the school's New DAPs plan
 - the school's self-assessment
36. The school has created a governance structure (shown in Figure 1) to fit with the planned scale of its delivery. At the time of the assessment, the Board of Directors, Board of Governors, the Academic Board and the Executive Committee exist, as they are required for the current level of operation at the school. The school has a plan in place for the constitution of the remaining committees and groups within the structure once staff are appointed and delivery of programmes is due to begin. For example, Quality, Compliance, and Audit Committee has a stated constitution date of the first quarter of Year One.

Figure 1: Governance structure



37. Governance at the school happens through the Automated Governance System (AGS). This is an integrated online system that encompasses the administration of the committee functions and associated actions. It is also the school's learning management system, for example, encompassing the school's VLE, teaching portal, admissions portal and records portal, covering every aspect of the student journey. Regulations, programme approvals, student feedback, monitoring and evaluation data all flow through the AGS. The AGS is governed by the school's AGS Policy, which covers how the AGS is used and maintained, including data integrity, training on the use of the system, how to ensure that it is used and maintained to be inclusive, and how to ensure accountability, compliance and continuous improvement. The AGS has differing access for different groups, for example a 'staff' and a 'student' view, and supports regular reporting and data gathering for reporting to relevant committees.
38. The school's founders are the owners of a number of other ventures, including Geeks Ltd. Geeks Ltd had run training courses in artificial intelligence (AI) for internal staff, the success of which prompted the creation of the school as a separate entity. Other than a set of specific contractual arrangements regarding the use of resources (listed in paragraph 106), there is no legal relationship between the two entities, other than the founders sitting on the Board of Directors. As will be discussed in paragraph 110, the school intends to use the link with Geeks Ltd as one of a number of industry partners from which it can draw sector knowledge and provide careers opportunities (such as talks from experts in aspects of AI).

39. The AGS has been built in-house within the school, with elements of technical work contracted to Geeks Ltd. Ongoing technical maintenance and updating is due to sit within the school, with any further development work being contracted to Geeks Ltd.

Reasoning

40. The assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents to assess whether the school has a credible plan to ensure its higher education mission and strategic direction and associated policies are coherent, published, understood and applied consistently. These included:
- Governance calendar
 - Organisational Chart
 - Minutes of Board of Governors Meetings
 - Role of Geeks Ltd
 - Introductory Presentations OfS
 - Governance Statement
 - Vision and Values Statement
 - Staff Handbook.
41. The assessment team found a credible plan and understanding in place because it found coherence between the mission and goals outlined in the school's Introductory Presentations OfS (provided in the evidence pack and outlined during the visit), the Vision and Values Statement and the Learning and Teaching Strategy. The documents emphasised the school's commitment to providing quality, student-centred, personalised instruction underpinned by the innovative use of AI to meet industry needs. The documents articulate with consistency that the school's mission is to focus on immersing learners in an expansive and practical technology-mediated study experience that uses the latest technology to transform learners into technology leaders.
42. The Vision and Values Statement states the school's mission as follows:
- 'Given the pace at which technology is shaping society, the shortage of people with the knowledge and skills to lead the charge, and the lack of diversity among those leading digital transformation, the school will immerse learners in an expansive and practical tech-powered study experience, using the latest technology, and transform them into tech leaders that unite and inspire all stakeholders involved in digital projects at all levels of change (team, organisation, and society).'
43. The 'Learning and Teaching Strategy' highlights the school's vision to use dynamic modern technologies to provide the means to reconceptualise the ways of delivering learning and teaching, and to provide pedagogical excellence, a state-of-the-art curriculum and high quality student experience, which transforms students into technology leaders. This aligns with the mission outlined in the Vision and Values Statement.

44. The assessment team observed during the visit that the school's strategic documents and associated policies and procedures are accessible via the school's AGS system. The AGS will be accessible to all staff and students, and provides easy access to the relevant documentation.
45. While unable to state definitively that the documented policies and practices are consistently applied, as the school is not yet delivering higher education, the team reviewed the terms of reference for the school's Governance Statement, which clearly sets the roles and responsibilities for each deliberative structure for the school. The Governance Statement outlines the expectations for the oversight of governance and the integral role that each element of the deliberative structure has in the review and approval of academic policies. These documents define a consistent understanding and application across the school.
46. The minutes of the Board of Governors' meetings also demonstrate that the school understands the requirement for the consistent application of policies. The Regulations and Policies Policy defines the school's plans for the consistent application and maintenance of the regulations. Additionally, the AGS sits at heart of the operationalisation of the school's implementation, oversight and monitoring of the implementation of the strategies and policies. It is designed to facilitate the maintenance and ongoing monitoring of the policies ensuring that actions are recorded, tracked and closed and thus ensures that the implementation of these strategies will be systematic and aligned with established academic standards.
47. Based on the evidence reviewed, the assessment team concluded that the school has a credible plan to ensure its higher education mission, strategic direction and associated policies are coherent, published, understood and applied consistently. The key regulations and policies are also directly linked from the Staff Handbook, and staff are required as part of their induction to participate in AGS onboarding module, which covers key areas such as teaching responsibilities and institutional policies, among other induction information.
48. To assess the whether the school has a credible plan to ensure its academic policies support its higher education mission, aims and objectives, the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:
 - Teaching and Learning Policy
 - Teaching and learning strategy
 - Student Charter
 - Research Ethics and Governance code
 - Vision and Values Statement
 - Consolidated Course Approval Documents.
49. The primary purpose of the school's educational provision is to develop leaders equipped for an AI-driven future, achieved through a state-of-the-art curriculum, innovative pedagogy, and an exceptional student experience. There is a clear focus on innovation across all strands of learning, teaching and assessment, which is evidenced in the policy documents and the Programme and Module Design Strategy. The assessment team found this to be a credible

plan and that there was understanding in place of academic policies that would support the school's higher education mission, aims and objectives.

50. The Learning and Teaching Strategy articulates a vision to leverage dynamic, modern technologies to reconceptualise approaches to learning and teaching. It commits to delivering pedagogical excellence, a state-of-the-art curriculum, and a high quality student experience that transforms learners into technology leaders. This vision aligns with the policy statements set out in the Programme and Module Design Strategy, the Vision and Values Statement, and the Learning and Teaching Strategy, collectively demonstrating the school's commitment to providing innovative programmes and modules designed to develop leaders for an AI-augmented future. The range of programmes being developed for the New DAPs monitoring phase of operation provides a credible plan linking the school's academic policies to its higher education mission, aims and objectives. The programmes are clearly linked to the mission of the school and aim to produce leaders capable of prospering in AI-enriched environments.
51. The New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations establish a structured and systematic framework for approving and modifying programmes and modules, clearly defining the stages of the approval process. A review of the consolidated programme approval documents, which demonstrate the outputs of this process, led the assessment team to conclude that the approach is credible for producing programmes that meet regulatory requirements for academic quality and standards. Similarly, the Programme and Module Modification Policy sets out a transparent and systematic process for modifying existing programmes and modules, ensuring that changes are appropriately approved and that programmes remain adaptable and current. While the assessment team found the approach outlined in the policy to be credible, its implementation will need to be evaluated as part of the ongoing monitoring of the New DAPs plan, once programme or module changes are introduced.
52. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the school has a credible plan to ensure its academic policies support its higher education mission, aims and objectives.
53. To assess whether the school has a credible plan to ensure there is clarity and differentiation of function and responsibility at all levels in the organisation in relation to its academic governance structures and arrangements for managing its higher education provision, the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:
 - Governance calendar
 - Organisational Chart
 - Minutes of Board of Governors Meetings
 - Role of Geeks Ltd
 - Introductory Presentations OfS
 - Governance Statement
 - Board of Directors' Delegation Instrument to the Board of Governors

- Board of Governors' Approval Instrument of Academic Board
 - Board of Governors' Approval Instrument of Quality, Compliance and Audit Committee.
54. The assessment team reviewed the school's evidence identified within the New DAPs plan and found that a credible plan exists to ensure that clarity and differentiation of function and responsibility will be defined at all levels in the organisation in relation to its academic governance structures and arrangements for managing its higher education provision. A clear governance structure with defined roles and responsibilities, is outlined in the Governance Statement. The assessment team also discussed issues relating to academic governance during the visit to the school, specifically relating to potential conflicts of interests as key individuals such as the President occupying multiple roles within the governance structure. For example, the President is on the Board of Directors and chairs the Executive Committee, and they also hold the role of the Director of Technology. In summary, the evidence shows that the school's governance structure consists of the Board of Directors, which has assigned strategic decision-making authority to the Board of Governors.
55. The Board of Governors has established and delegated powers to other school bodies, such as the Academic Board and executive committee. It has constituted the Academic Board, as the senior academic authority, and a Quality, Compliance, and Audit Committee. The President, who is appointed by and reports to the Board of Governors, has established an Executive Committee, which is responsible for service delivery, business plans and budgets. These deliberative structures are supported by a range of committees, groups and teams, with the Quality, Compliance, and Audit Committee reporting directly to the Board of Governors. The Governance Calendar sets out an appropriate sequence of meetings and reporting, demonstrating a strong understanding of the academic cycle. On the basis of the evidence presented, the assessment team therefore found the plans relating to governance structures to be credible, as the academic cycle of meetings appears wholly appropriate for managing the higher education provision. However, the team recommends that the New DAPs plan should be updated to set out the schedule of meetings within the Governance Calendar, to enable effective monitoring during the probationary period and to include the specific milestone for the inclusion of students on the committees.
56. The assessment team interrogated the roles and responsibilities for academic governance and how it would be implemented during the assessment visit. The school's team demonstrated a good understanding of academic governance and the roles and responsibilities of the boards and committees. However, in the documentation evidenced in the visit, there is overlap between responsibilities resulting from individuals holding multiple roles across the organisational structure. For example, both directors hold multiple roles sitting on the Board of Governors, the Executive Committee, and in the role of President and other operational roles. The assessment team noted that this reflected the size of the school and that it is in its infancy. It considered that over time the school should ensure there is less overlap of roles and responsibilities, to ensure effective independence of decision-making and effective accountability.
57. The assessment team explored the plan for recruiting additional staff, which is currently held in the Three-Year Workforce Plan and the Strategic Framework for Academic Appointments, with senior staff during the assessment visit. Senior staff highlighted that key roles within these plans, due to be recruited during Year One, would alleviate the team's concerns: for

example, the recruitment of programme leaders, who will take on roles in the governance structure currently covered by the Director of Education. The assessment team was satisfied that a plan existed to include a wider range of members across the deliberative structure, to improve independence of decision-making as the school recruits staff once it is operational. This will reduce the overlap of roles currently necessitated by the current operational restrictions, which will enable the removal of potential conflicts of interests currently identified within the organisational structure. The Strategic Framework for Academic Appointments outlined the plans for recruiting and strengthening academic leadership across the organisation, as discussed in detail under criterion C1. The assessment team notes that the school's staff recruitment plans are credible, but currently held in documentation outside the New DAPs plan.

58. The Academic Board is the institution's senior academic authority, operating under delegated authority from the Board of Governors. Chaired by the Director of Education, its membership includes programme and module leaders, at least one external member, and student representatives. At present the Academic Board's membership is not fully constituted, but will be expanded once academic delivery begins. The Academic Board is responsible for safeguarding academic quality and standards through oversight of regulations and policies, examination boards, research ethics, and programme approvals. It connects to the wider governance structure via reports from programme and module leaders, external examiners and other teams. In addition to advising the Board of Governors and proposing policy changes, the Academic Board ensures the school's academic integrity and effectiveness. Regular reporting is designed to provide transparency and accountability.
59. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the school has a credible plan to ensure there is clarity and differentiation of function and responsibility at all levels in the organisation, in relation to its academic governance structures and arrangements for managing its higher education provision. While the assessment team finds the school's plan credible, to support effective monitoring during the probationary period the team recommends that the New DAPs plan reflects the schedule of meetings and milestones for inclusion of students on committees, and for extending committee memberships.
60. To assess the whether the school has a credible plan to ensure the function and responsibility of the senior academic authority is clearly articulated and consistently applied, the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:
- Board of Directors – Delegation of Powers to the Board of Governors
 - Board of Governors – Approval Instrument of Academic Board
 - Academic Board's Approval Instrument of Academic Regulations
 - LSI Organisational chart
 - Minutes of the Board of Governors.
61. The Academic Board, constituted in September 2024, acts as the school's senior academic authority. The assessment team found that the Academic Board's Terms of Reference outlined in the Board of Governors Approval Instrument of Academic Board, clearly establish the function of the Academic Board as the senior academic authority. For example, they

specify that the Academic Board has the authority 'to oversee and ensure the academic quality and standards of the school in accordance with this Instrument and the school's Governance Statement'. The Organisational Chart demonstrates that the school has a defined a structured and transparent approach to managing its academic responsibilities, with plans for appropriate oversight by relevant stakeholders to include staff and student representatives. The committee structure, as shown in Figure 1, clearly articulates that all academic decisions flow up through the Academic Board. On reviewing academic processes, such as the New Programme and Module Approval Regulations, the assessment team found that the decision-flow is very clearly laid out, with all decisions sitting under the purview of the Academic Board.

62. The assessment team found that the role of the Academic Board, outlined in the Board of Governors Approval Instrument of Academic Board matched the role that was identified in other documents, and aligned with how it has operated in practice. For example, under its remit of 'Engaging with external academic experts and addressing their reports', the Board approves external examiner appointments, which can be seen in the minutes of the February 2025 Academic Board.
63. During the assessment visit, the team examined the role and operation of the Academic Board, with particular focus on the need to expand its membership to strengthen independence and accountability. The assessment team found that the school demonstrated a clear understanding of both the necessity for this expansion and the functions and responsibilities of the Academic Board. Based on discussions and a review of supporting evidence, the assessment team concluded that a credible plan exists for the Academic Board's operation and that it had a clearly defined remit outlined in the Governance Statement. The assessment team saw evidence of the Academic Board's consideration of the consolidated course approval documents. During the visit, the assessment team discussed with senior leadership the workload associated with the scrutiny of documentation, to understand the arrangement in place for their effective review. The assessment team found that the school has accounted for this in its plans to recruit further staff, as discussed in paragraph 56.
64. To ensure that the academic authority of the Academic Board is consistently applied, the Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations state that it will need to provide regular reporting to the Board of Governors (through an Academic Board Chair's report) against its own performance metrics, such as in recruitment, progression, retention and any changes in regulations and policies. This is to ensure that the Board of Governors provides 'comprehensive oversight, continuous improvement, and strategic planning aligned with the School's mission', while ensuring that the Academic Board is acting in line with its delegated powers.
65. Based on its review of the evidence the assessment team concluded that school has a credible plan for the effective operation of the Academic Board. Further, the organisational chart shows that the school has established a clear, structured, and transparent framework for managing its academic responsibilities, with appropriate oversight by relevant stakeholders, including staff and student representatives.

66. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the school has a credible plan to ensure the function and responsibility of the senior academic authority is clearly articulated and, to the extent possible at the time of the visit, consistently applied.
67. The assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents to assess whether the school has a credible plan to ensure an appropriate depth and strength of academic leadership. These included:
- Academic staff CV
 - Staff Development Plan Academic Staff 2025-2028
 - Three-Year Staff Development Plan (Non-Academic Staff) 2025-2028
 - Staff Recruitment Policy
 - Staffing Planning Framework
 - Strategic Framework for Academic Appointments
 - Organisational Chart.
68. The assessment team found, based on an assessment of the submitted CVs and during discussion at the site visit, that the school currently possesses some, but limited, depth and strength of academic leadership. The Director of Education and certain members of the Board of Governors demonstrate relevant academic leadership experience, for example as Education Consultants, Global Director of Education for a membership body and Faculty Directors. This is less evident in other key roles such as the Chair of the Board of Governors and the President, both of whom have limited leadership experience in the higher education sector, not having held governance roles in UK higher education institutions, although both have extensive expertise in linked industries. During the assessment visit the two governors in attendance shared their vision, experience and backgrounds in higher education both nationally and internationally, as illustrated in the Introducing LSI Presentation.
69. The assessment team found this locus of academic leadership experience within the Director of Education role, for which the job description confirms a requirement of seven to ten years' experience in an equivalent role, to be commensurate with the stage in the development of the school and its programmes. As can be seen in the Three-Year Workforce Plan and the Strategic Framework for Academic Appointments, the school plans to expand its academic leadership via recruitment in key roles (in particular, programme leaders), who will have responsibilities relating to strategic planning and interdepartmental collaboration.
70. The Recruitment Policy, Staff Development Plan Academic Staff 2025-2028, and Staff Development Plan Academic Staff 2025-2028 outline credible plans for recruiting, developing, and retaining staff with the necessary academic leadership to these roles, with clear targets and role-specific recruitment. This is further discussed under criterion C1. The school has created, as a part of its plan, job descriptions for full-time academic staff and programme leaders for specific programmes, which specify the academic leadership sought through the recruitment process. The Staff Induction and Development Policy reinforces the requirement for continuous professional development, while the Programme Leaders' Onboarding

Presentation addresses the academic leadership responsibilities expected of programme leaders.

71. The assessment team's view is that the plans may be overly ambitious given the specific expertise required for the programmes and the expectation for staff recruited to be comfortable and competent to engage productively with AI. However, the assessment team found the school's plan to recruit to ensure there is an appropriate depth and strength of academic leadership to be credible. This is because, taken holistically, it demonstrates how the school intends to attract, retain, manage and develop its academic staff base, reflecting a clear understanding that building and sustaining an academic community requires ongoing, structured, and planned development activity. The school's recruitment and development plans demonstrate how academic leadership will be strengthened and sustained once the school begins delivering its programmes.
72. The assessment team noted that elements of the proposed approach are reflected in the New DAPs plan, such as the inclusion of programme leader reports. However, the plan does not include specific milestones relating to the recruitment of staff to strengthen the depth and breadth of academic leadership. The team recommends that key activities relating to the recruitment of staff in academic leadership roles, as set out in the school's key staffing documents, are added as milestones to the New DAPs plan to enable effective monitoring during the probationary period.
73. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the school has a credible plan to ensure appropriate depth and strength of academic leadership for the school, alongside a clear commitment to recruitment, ongoing professional development and scholarly activities for academic staff. The plans are expected to contribute to the strengthening of the school's academic leadership. However, these plans need to be formalised in the New DAPs plan. The assessment team's view is that, if successfully implemented, this planned approach will effectively support and strengthen the school's academic leadership. While the team notes reservations regarding the availability of the specific expertise required for the programmes, there is no evidence to suggest that these plans are not deliverable.
74. To assess whether the school has a credible plan to develop, implement and communicate its policies and procedures in collaboration with its staff and students and external stakeholders the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team, viewed a demonstration of the AGS system and reviewed documents including:
 - Governance calendar
 - Organisational Chart
 - Minutes of Board of Governors Meetings
 - Governance Statement.
75. The assessment team noted that the Governance Statement clearly outlines the terms of reference of the key governance boards and committees and their membership. These terms of reference express current membership, but also highlight plans for expansion as the school starts operations, to ensure that staff and students are appropriately represented in the governance structure. For example, the school plans, once operational, to include student

members on the Board of Governors, the Academic Board and the Quality, Compliance and Audit Committee. The Regulations and Policies Policy sets out that regulations, policies and strategies are reviewed annually to ensure they remain effective and adapt to changes in the external environment or internal priorities. These representatives are expected to participate in the development of academic policies and play an active role in discussions regarding the school's higher education provision. For example, the school has committed to expanding the Board of Governors to include up to three student members and to having a student representative on the Academic Board once the first cohort of students is recruited. The governance structure provides a framework for incorporating the perspectives of both staff and students into policy decisions, supporting transparency and inclusion in governance processes.

76. The use of the AGS for the management of policies and procedures will provide a mechanism for communication and ease access to the policies and procedures for staff and students. The policies and procedures are readily accessible via the school's website and the AGS, ensuring ease of access. Feedback on regulations, policies, and procedures is facilitated through the AGS, which was demonstrated during the assessment visit. While the assessment team finds that the school has credible plans for policies and procedures, and considers it credible that they can deliver these against the criterion within the monitoring period, the team notes that these plans are held outside of the formal New DAPs plan. For example, the plans to expand memberships and include students and staff on committees are held in the Governance Statement and relevant terms of reference. The assessment team recommends the inclusion of these plans in the New DAPs plan, including clear delivery milestones for example, recruitment milestones and timelines for the addition of students to relevant committees. Further discussion on student engagement in governance can be found under criterion A1.2.
77. The school has plans in place to develop policy in collaboration with, and communicate its policies to, external stakeholders, including external examiners. The school's framework for engaging external examiners is set out in the External Examiner Regulations, which describe how they will contribute to the review of academic standards and assessment processes. This includes different categories of external examiners for modules and programmes, and the role and responsibilities of external examiners in maintaining academic standards, including their required attendance at examination boards and reporting. It outlines the scrutiny of the external examiner reports by the Director of Education and a feedback loop to module leaders, programme leaders and the external examiner. This provides a comprehensive approach for external examiner input and oversight of academic standards. The External Examiner (Academic Board) Report Template demonstrates the requirements of the external examiner report to the Academic Board. This engagement supports alignment with industry standards and contributes to maintaining the quality and relevance. This demonstrates how the school develops and reviews its policies and procedures through a collaborative process involving external stakeholders. Drafts and revisions are shared for consultation via the AGS to ensure broad engagement.
78. The AGS is a proprietary academic governance system that facilitates support for teaching, learning, and administrative processes. The AGS holds all current versions of the academic regulations, codes of conduct, and policies, and is designed to make these easily accessible to all stakeholders. Departmental directors are responsible for ensuring that staff are aware of and trained on the relevant school regulations, codes of conduct, and policies. Similarly, the

Director of Education is responsible for communication with external examiners. As outlined in the External Examiners' Regulations, an annual workshop will be provided covering academic regulations, examiner roles, modules, examination boards, reporting, and administrative tasks, and external examiners must have access to the AGS. The use of the AGS for the management of policies and procedures provides a mechanism for communication and ease of access to the policies and procedures for staff, students and other stakeholders.

79. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the school has developed through the AGS an effective mechanism and framework for the development, implementation and communication of its policies and procedures to stakeholders. This is done in collaboration with its staff and students and external stakeholders.
80. To assess the whether the school has a credible plan to manage successfully the responsibilities that would be vested in it, were it to be granted degree awarding powers, the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:
- Organisational Chart
 - Governance Statement
 - Academic Standards Regulations
 - Assessment Regulations
 - Examination Boards and Academic Appeal Regulations
 - External Examiner Regulations.
81. The school has demonstrated its preparedness to effectively manage its higher education provision through evidence provided during the assessment. The school's plan articulates its commitment to quality and equity, inclusive support systems, and a rigorous quality assurance framework. This includes continuous feedback via student surveys, leadership reports, and strategic oversight designed to ensure academic excellence and fairness.
82. The assessment team reviewed a range of regulatory and governance documents, which demonstrated an internal coherence of processes, were clearly linked to the school's strategic mission, and reflected sector expectations. For example, the Governance Statement, committee terms of reference and organisational chart reflect the responsibilities assigned to steps of the programme approval process (as described in Criterion B2), showing that consideration has been given to how processes and policies will work within the governance structure. Where activity has already taken place, for example in approving the appointment of the school's current external examiners, this activity has occurred in line with all policies (in this example, the External Examiner Regulations), as well as in accordance with the delegated responsibilities as set out in the Governance Statement (in this case, with approval occurring at the Academic Board).
83. The team found that the terms of reference and memberships set out in the Governance Statement for the school establish clear roles and responsibilities, which, if implemented by the school, assist in ensuring that the school successfully manages the responsibilities that

would be vested in it if granted degree awarding powers. The Governance Statement confirms that both the Board of Governors and the Academic Board will play an integral role in reviewing and approving academic policies, and that academic policies will be reviewed regularly and are overseen by the Academic Board, promoting consistent understanding and application across the school. This was evident during discussion at the site visit, where senior staff spoke about the practicalities of how reviews and updates would be managed, and this was also demonstrated to the assessment team as part of the functionality of the AGS.

84. The school outlined a robust framework for overseeing academic standards and maintaining effective governance, allowing the assessment team to form the view that the school has in place appropriate mechanisms to ensure that regulations are consistently applied. These mechanisms include the Assessment Regulations and the Examination Boards and Academic Appeal Regulations. The presence of key committees, including the Academic Board and its subcommittees, with representation from both staff and students, demonstrates that the school has defined a well-structured and transparent approach to managing its academic responsibilities.
85. The assessment team found that the school has a credible plan to manage successfully the responsibilities that would be vested in it, were it to be granted degree awarding powers, as it has in place plans to action and oversee all elements of academic provision, from enrolment and induction (as evidenced by the school's Welcome and Induction Schedule), through marking and external examining (primarily discussed under criterion B3) to awarding, using the central AGS system to track and monitor student data and progress, as well as delivering an integrated governance structure. The assessment team found that the integration between policy, governance and data, as well as the integration of the VLE and assessment platforms, provided assurance that the school fully understands the requirements that would be placed upon it were it to be granted degree awarding powers.
86. The assessment team found that the school's plans are credible to manage successfully the responsibilities that would be vested in it were it to be granted degree awarding powers as they are appropriate to its size and scale, and that the proposed governance structure has clear lines of reporting and responsibility without overcomplication. The assessment team found that the school has considered all aspects of delivering higher education in its plans, and that the coherence of policies and processes with the delegations listed in the Governance Statement (alongside the integration and data provided through the AGS) provided assurance that the school's plans are credible. The assessment team notes, however, that this will need to be monitored in practice, through the first year of the school's delivery.
87. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that, through the school's plans for effective academic governance, strategic oversight, academic quality assurance mechanisms and engagement with external stakeholders, credible assurance is provided that the school has effective academic governance, with clear and appropriate lines of accountability for its academic responsibilities.

Subcriterion A1.2

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

Advice to the OfS

88. The assessment team's view is that the New DAPs plan is credible in relation to criterion A1.2, because it demonstrates that the school's academic governance will include student involvement in programme design and the development of policies and procedures. According to the plan, students will be included in key committees such as the Academic Board and provide feedback at a programme level via various surveys presented through the AGS.
89. The assessment team's view is that the school has demonstrated a full understanding of criterion A1.2, because there are clearly identified and planned roles and responsibilities for students in governance and plans for engaging students individually and collectively in the governance and management of the organisation.
90. Based on its review of the school's New DAPs plan, the assessment visit, and the supporting evidence, the assessment team concludes that the school can be reasonably expected to meet the evidence requirements for A1.2 in full by the end of the probationary period.

Reasoning

91. The assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team, members of the Board of Governors, viewed a demonstration of the AGS and reviewed documents. These included:
 - Organisational Chart
 - Governance Statement
 - Mid-Module Survey Template
 - End of Module Survey Template
 - Programme Survey Template
 - Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations
 - New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations (including revalidation process)
 - Student Engagement Policy
 - Student Charter
 - Monitoring of Student Engagement.
92. The school has plans for both staff and student representation in key governance boards and decision-making processes, which can be found in the Governance Statement [088]. Staff

and students would be expected to contribute to the development of academic policies and actively participate in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's higher education programmes. For example, the Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations state that 'students and staff collaborate to ensure student input shapes the academic experience', and identify mechanisms such as the Student Experience Committee to facilitate this. Similarly, the New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations emphasise the value of student contributions and outline several avenues for student engagement, such as regular surveys, student members on revalidation panels and consultation with students for new programme proposals.

93. In addition, the Student Engagement Policy clearly articulates the commitment of the school to create an environment where students are partners in their education. The policy promotes the empowerment of students to engage fully in the governance of the school, their learning and the broader campus life. This policy also identifies the various mechanisms for gathering feedback from students. This includes surveys like the module, programme and school survey.
94. The New DAPs plan sets out that students will play an active role in quality and governance through regular surveys, committee representation, and an accessible feedback system, but specific milestones are required for the monitoring period. Student engagement is embedded in governance structures and induction activities, with the aim of making student voices central to decision-making, ensuring their input influences their academic experience. Discussions during the assessment visit confirmed how student representatives will be advertised and recruited to and how the VLE platform and AGS will be used to support student participation and feedback.
95. The team reviewed evidence, including that listed in paragraph 91, to assess the whether the students individually and collectively are engaged in the governance and management of the organisation and its higher education provision, and are supported to be able to engage effectively.
96. The assessment team found that the Governance Statement includes both staff and student representatives in key governance boards and decisions. Staff and students are expected to participate in the development of academic policies and play an active role in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's higher education programmes. For example, the Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations set out that 'Students and staff collaborate to ensure student input shapes the academic experience', identifying various mechanisms through which this is achieved, such as the Student Experience Committee.
97. The team reviewed the school's New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations, and found that they highlight that student contributions to monitoring and evaluation are valued and provide several ways for students to engage. Various mechanisms for gathering feedback from students have been developed, which feed directly into the cyclical monitoring of modules and programmes. This includes surveys like the mid-module and end of module surveys, programme survey and school surveys. As will be further discussed under criterion E1, students will form a key element of the programme approval and revalidation processes, with a student member on the panel. The Student Engagement Policy further elaborates that students will be consulted when any changes to programmes, modules, regulations, or policies are proposed. The relevant governance committee, which

for academic standards is the Academic Board, will verify that student input has been sought and students will be invited to assure this happens.

98. Students will be supported to engage via the VLE (hosted on the AGS) which hosts programme and module learning content. The VLE prompts and supports students to provide ad hoc feedback. For example, the learning activity, as demonstrated during the assessment visit, includes 'comment' links, allowing feedback on individual activities. The AGS provides access for students to feed back via module surveys and includes a 'Support and Services' link where students can submit 'General Feedback'. These feedback mechanisms enable a wide range of student feedback that can be used by the school to enhance the students' overall academic experience. The AGS also houses the school's policies and handbooks, providing direct access to the support structures in place to assist students in engaging in governance. The school has identified a target of 60 per cent of students providing feedback annually. The school notes in its Student Experience Policy that, as long as it remains under 500 students, it will not constitute a formal students' union, but will facilitate student access to the National Union of Students. The policy further states that, to ensure that students are supported to engage, the student success team will, in collaboration with the marketing team, promote engagement opportunities and provide training for student representatives.
99. The assessment team found that the school has established formal structures for student engagement in academic governance. The Student Experience Committee defined in the Governance Statement ensures representation of all programmes and provides clear processes for meeting organisation, decision-making and follow-up. Reporting to the Academic Board and Executive Committee ensures continuous improvement and accountability. These mechanisms indicate that the school has plans in place for students to have a formal role in governance, contributing to the development of academic policies, programme improvements, and other matters related to their academic experience.
100. The New DAPs plan sets out that the Student Experience Committee is due to be constituted within the fourth quarter of Year One, subsequently meeting three times a year, and notes that student module and programme surveys (and the school's responses to them) will be available towards the end of the first year of delivery. The New DAPs plan also sets out the module and programme review cycle, which is required to take into account student views. The assessment team found the New DAPs plan, alongside other milestones related to establishing student members of committees currently held within the Governance Statement and Student Engagement Policy, will enable the school to meet the criterion in full by the end of the monitoring period.
101. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that credible plans are in place to ensure that students are individually and collectively engaged in the governance and management of the organisation and its higher education provision, with students supported to be able to engage effectively at the school.

Subcriterion A1.3

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.

Advice to the OfS

102. The assessment team's view is that the school's New DAPs plan is credible in relation to criterion A1.3.
103. The assessment team's view is that the school has demonstrated a full understanding of criterion A1.3, because the decisions to work with other organisations are the result of a strategic approach through the Resource Allocation Plan rather than opportunism, ensuring that governance surrounding these partnerships is robust.
104. The school currently plans to only work with other organisations in contractual arrangements for resource provision and access to systems and software. These partnerships and agreements are already in place, and governed by the Resource Allocation Plan, which provides a clear roadmap, including timelines for these being made available to students and staff, and any outstanding actions related to the provision.
105. The assessment team's view is based on its review of the school's New DAPs plan and of evidence showing that the school can be reasonably expected to meet the evidence requirements for A1.3 in full by the end of the probationary period.

Reasoning

106. To assess if, where the school works with, or proposes to work with, other organisations to deliver learning opportunities, the arrangements are based on a strategic approach, informed by the effective assessment of risk including the carrying out of due diligence and are defined in a written legal agreement and are subject to the same robust oversight and governance as the rest of the organisation's provision, the assessment team spoke to the school's leadership team, received a tour of the AGS and reviewed:
 - Resource Allocation Plan
 - New DAPs plan
 - Document outlining the relationship with Geeks Ltd.
107. The school's leadership team confirmed that the school does not currently intend to work with other organisations to deliver teaching and learning.
108. The school does work with and plans to work with external partners to provide resources to both students and staff. The school has a comprehensive Resource Allocation Plan, which provides a strategic overview of the resources required across the following key areas: Digital Infrastructure; Digital Resource; Support Resources; Estates and Facilities; and Academic Success Guides.

109. A number of the resources identified are external to the school, requiring subscription or licensing. For example, the school is a subscriber institution to two digital library and research resource providers, and plans to use an online assessments platform. These have standard contractual agreements and are in common use across the sector. The assessment team found that they were appropriate for use by the school as they complement the school's AGS and VLE systems, and found it credible that they could be implemented within the timeframes suggested, as they are primarily obtained by the purchase of a subscription, or entering a standard user-licence agreement. The Resource Allocation Plan provides clear plan and timeline for the implementation of these resources. However, these 'milestones' appear only within the Resource Allocation Plan, and not in the New DAPs plan. The assessment team recommends that these are added to the New DAPs plan.
110. The school also uses specific resources from Geeks Ltd (the school's link with which is set out in paragraph 40), including a licence for the use of proprietary systems and knowledge regarding the AGS, and the secondment of some staff. These are governed by specific legal agreements, specified by the school as 'ensuring operational support is delivered without compromising LSI's independent academic governance'.
111. The school's leadership team also noted that the school plans to work with industry experts to provide networking opportunities for students, as well as to ensure that the school keeps pace with changes in the AI landscape to best prepare students for employment. The assessment team was told that the plan was for a gradual building of relationships within the sector once teaching had commenced, initially using the link with Geeks Ltd, the current sector and business experience on the Board of Governors, and later alumni, to grow this network. The school does not currently have all these links in place, but the assessment team was satisfied that with the knowledge of the sector represented on the Board of Governors, and the strategic approach taken in other resource and planning, the school will build these relationships in a strategic manner.
112. In conclusion, the school currently plans to only work in partnership for resource provision and access to systems and software. These partnerships and agreements are already in place, and governed by the Resource Allocation Plan, which provides a clear roadmap, including timelines for these being made available to students and staff, and any outstanding actions related to the provision.

Conclusions

113. Based on its findings, the assessment team concluded that the school demonstrated a full understanding of criterion A1, and has a credible New DAPs plan, which shows that it can be reasonably expected to meet the evidence requirements for A1 in full by the end of the probationary period.
114. The school has developed, and is further developing, structures to support effective academic governance with clear and appropriate lines of accountability for its academic responsibilities. The New DAPs plan sets out how the effectiveness of these arrangements will be monitored and reviewed during the probationary period.
115. The assessment team concluded that the school has established a clear framework for working in partnership with its students across all aspects of academic governance and

management of the organisation, and that it will be able to further demonstrate the effectiveness of these arrangements during the probationary period, once students have been recruited.

116. The assessment team concluded that the school has plans to formalise arrangements that will enable effective governance of its approach to working with other organisations to deliver learning opportunities, and that will ensure that decisions to work with other organisations are the result of a strategic approach.

Specified changes to the New DAPs plan

117. The assessment team was assured that the school has detailed and credible plans. However, it recommends that the school consolidates key milestones and deliverables that are currently set out in other plans (Academic Recruitment Plan, Three-Year Workforce Plan, Strategic Framework for Academic Appointments, Resource Allocation Plan and Governance Statement) into the New DAPs plan, to ensure the New DAPs plan document provides an effective basis for monitoring for criterion A1.
118. The assessment team recommends that these changes are made to the New DAPs plan before the probationary period begins.

Assessment of DAPs criterion B: Academic standards and quality assurance

Criterion B1: Regulatory frameworks

Advice to the OfS

119. The assessment team's view is that the school has demonstrated a full understanding of criterion B1: regulatory frameworks, and that its New DAPs plan is credible in relation to the criterion. This is because in summary, the assessment team's review of evidence shows that the school has developed, in readiness for New DAPs, transparent and comprehensive academic frameworks and regulations to govern how it will award academic credit and qualifications.
120. The assessment team's view is based on its review of the school's New DAPs plan and evidence which shows that it can be reasonably expected to meet the evidence requirements for B1 in full by the end of the probationary period.

Subcriterion B1.1

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.

Advice to the OfS

121. The assessment team's view is that the school has demonstrated a full understanding of criterion B1.1 because it is developing transparent and comprehensive academic frameworks and regulations to govern how it will award academic credit and qualifications, and that its New DAPs plan is credible in relation to the criterion.
122. The assessment team's view is based on its review of the New DAPs plan and evidence showing that the school can be reasonably expected to meet the evidence requirements for B1.1 in full by the end of the probationary period.

Reasoning

123. To assess the extent to which the school has (or has credible plans in place to develop) academic frameworks and regulations to govern its higher education provision, that these are appropriate to its current status and will be implemented fully and consistently, the assessment team reviewed documents including:
- New DAPs plan
 - Governance Calendar and Governance Statement
 - Regulations, including for:
 - admissions

- assessment
- progression and award
- complaints and appeals
- Academic Board's Approval Instrument of Academic Regulations
- Quality Assurance Framework.

124. The assessment team considered that the school has established a clear, credible and comprehensive set of academic regulations and policies, which underpin its Quality Assurance Framework. The framework and its regulations cover:

- modes of delivery
- student admissions
- recognition of prior learning and experience
- extenuating circumstances and extensions
- assessment
- academic standards
- assessment processes, including external examination arrangements
- external examiners
- academic misconduct
- examination board processes and academic appeals
- exclusion
- credit accumulation
- progression and awards
- complaints
- monitoring and evaluation.

Each regulation or policy identifies the guiding principles, regulatory and best practice reference points, and who is primarily responsible for implementation.

125. The school has also created a wider range of procedures to facilitate operations across the institution, many of which are described in other sections of this report, for example, the Learning and Teaching Policy (discussed further under criterion B3) and the Learning Support and Reasonable Adjustments Policy (discussed under criterion D1).

126. As the school is new and has not yet enrolled any students, the team was unable to confirm that the academic frameworks and regulations that the school has developed are implemented fully and consistently. However, in general the New DAPs plan outlines appropriate and credible milestones and sources of evidence (such as minutes of assessment boards and external examiner reports) to test this during the probationary period. Notably, in Year One (second quarter of 2025 to first quarter of 2026) the school plans to commence delivery of its MSc programmes, and therefore implement its academic frameworks and regulations. Subsequently, the team suggests that the implementation of the academic frameworks and regulations is monitored during the first year of the school's probationary period.
127. The team formed the view that the regulations are appropriate for a small specialist institution that will offer programmes to a relatively small number of students. The team also found that the coverage of these regulations and underpinning policies is consistent with those in operation at other UK higher education institutions. For example, the school's Student Complaints and Academic Appeals Policy makes a distinction between complaints and academic appeals. According to the policy:
- Appeals constitute challenges to decisions made by examination boards
 - Complaints constitute claims of inadequate service, concerns about resources, issues with misleading or incorrect information, problems with third parties engaged by the school, and decisions by the executive regarding exclusions.

Based on the assessment team's experience, such distinctions are common in the sector.

128. The team further considered that for each process, the policy details the stages of an appeal or complaint, roles and responsibilities, timelines and methods for initiating the process with sufficient clarity to facilitate the policy's implementation. Therefore, the assessment team formed the view that such distinction and detail indicate a satisfactory understanding of the academic frameworks and regulations governing the school's higher education provision. The school's complaints and appeals policies are further discussed under criterion B3.
129. The team noted a variance between the Student Complaints and Academic Appeals Policy and the appeal procedure described in relation to the Academic Misconduct Regulations. The difference relates to cases where an appeal is made against an outcome from an Academic Misconduct Panel. Rather than an email to the student success team and an investigation by the chair or other appointed member of the Academic Board, a student must submit a written appeal to the Director of Education. If the appeal is valid, an Academic Misconduct Appeals Panel is convened. As the school has yet to commence delivery of its higher education programmes, the team was unable to determine whether the difference is sufficiently transparent and whether students would understand the respective appeal processes. The assessment team formed the view that, while the Academic Misconduct Regulations are clearly written, their separation from the Student Complaints and Academic Appeals Policy has the potential to confuse some students. The team therefore recommends that the implementation of the Student Complaints and Academic Appeals Policy and the appeal procedure described in relation to the Academic Misconduct Regulations are monitored once students are enrolled.

130. The Admissions and Registration Regulations set out information on:

- programme marketing information
- eligibility criteria for admission
- admission procedures and protocols
- the grievance resolution process
- registration and enrolment procedures
- processes for intermission and withdrawal
- how to manage immigration requirements
- maximum registration periods.

The regulations also note requirements to comply with relevant statute, including the Equality Act 2010, the Consumer Rights Act 2015, and the Data Protection Act 2018.

131. A corresponding Admissions Policy details the principles and responsibilities of staff involved in admissions, offering clarification on eligibility criteria such as qualifications, experience, English language proficiency, and additional requirements like IT skills where appropriate. The assessment team considered the policy and regulations comprehensive, based on their experience of other higher education institutions. For example, the circumstances under which offers can be made conditionally or unconditionally are clear because they have been explicitly defined in the policy. The assessment team found the school required disclosure of unspent convictions and plans to use Disclosure and Barring Service checks on some of the courses, with the Executive Committee (or their delegates) assessing any disclosed information when considering making an offer of admission.

132. The assessment team also found the eligibility criteria for admission to be fair and well designed to widen access and participation. This is because the policy clearly articulates inclusive admissions practices such as contextual admissions and reasonable adjustments. The team therefore concluded that the school's academic frameworks and regulations governing student admissions were appropriate. However, the school's New DAPs plan does not identify sources of evidence that will become available during the probationary period, so it is unclear how the full and consistent implementation of the admissions regulations and policy can be monitored. As a result, the team recommends that the school amends its New DAPs plan to clarify key evidence which will demonstrate this.

133. The team noted that the minutes of the Academic Board meeting in February 2025 indicate that the school's academic frameworks and regulations were drafted in consultation with two external academic members of the Academic Board in readiness for seeking New DAPs. The external input was drawn from those with senior-level experience in higher education at a number of well established English higher education institutions, in addition to expertise in governance matters and leadership experience at other higher education institutions with similar remits to the school's specialist focus on technology and innovation. The minutes of the Academic Board also showed that the school responded to feedback in refining its

frameworks and regulations. For example, the minutes of the Academic Board meeting in February 2025 refer to a consolidated table of comments on the draft academic regulations, which had been received from external reviewers in January 2025. The minutes also show that the Academic Board reviewed the table and agreed the amendments, discussing and making decisions on five matters, and addressing two further matters by email. The chair confirmed agreed changes to the draft regulations on 17 March 2025.

134. During the visit, members of the Board of Governors reassured the team that it had also scrutinised and provided feedback on the regulations. The exchange between members of the school and the assessment team illustrated that feedback had been considered carefully and responded to constructively, with an external member of the Academic Board commenting on how valued they believed their independent input had been.
135. The New DAPs plan indicates that such consultation will continue from the first quarter of 2026 onwards and will be evident through board minutes and case reviews. The team considered that this will support the school to implement its academic frameworks and regulations fully and consistently before the end of the probationary period.
136. Furthermore, the school's Governance Statement sets out that the academic frameworks and regulations will be monitored to ensure coherence and consistent application across the school. To this end, a Quality, Compliance and Audit Committee will meet three times a year, in accordance with the Governance Calendar, to manage the audit and monitoring process. The Quality, Compliance and Audit Committee reports to the Board of Governors as its principal authority and informs the Executive Committee and the Academic Board of its reports. An Internal Audit Charter sets out the objectives and scope of such auditing, which includes evaluating compliance with regulations and policies. The team considered that the school's plans and approach to the regular monitoring of its academic frameworks and regulations would help to ensure their full and consistent implementation. However, the team considered the role and planned routine of such auditing and reporting, as set out in the Internal Auditing Charter, could be set out more explicitly in the New DAPs plan.
137. In conclusion, the team formed the view that the academic frameworks and regulations that the school has developed to govern its higher education provision are appropriate to its current status. Additionally, the team formed the view that there is a credible plan to ensure that the academic frameworks and regulations governing the school's higher education provision will be implemented fully and consistently. However, as the school has not yet enrolled any students, the implementation of the academic frameworks and regulations governing its higher education provision will need to be monitored during the probationary period, once the school has enrolled students.
138. To assess whether the school has created, in readiness, one or more academic frameworks and regulations which will be appropriate for the granting of its own higher education qualifications, the team reviewed evidence including:
 - New DAPs plan
 - Regulations for:
 - assessment

- marking, grading, and external scrutiny
- credit accumulation
- module, progression and award
- examination boards and academic appeals
- Assessment Flowchart.

139. The school has developed a set of regulations that will govern the processes for granting its own higher education qualifications. The Academic Standards Regulations establish the qualifications that the school can award if granted DAPs, the number of credits required for the award of each qualification, and processes for programme and module approval. The regulations also establish that the school will award higher education qualifications based on demonstrated achievement of outcomes, using the Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (CATS).

140. The Credit Accumulation Regulations provide further detail on the school's credit awarding procedures, including the use of CATs and each credit representing ten notional learning hours. The regulations also set out programme credit requirements, which are aligned with the OfS's sector-recognised standards, and the school's approach to credit distribution and requirements for the delivery and assessment of modules.

141. These are further supported by the Module, Progression and Award Regulations and New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations. Respectively, these set out information on the school's award classification algorithms and classification bands, and the rules and processes for module and programme approval in accordance with internal and external requirements.

142. Furthermore, the Assessment Regulations outline how the school will set, mark, moderate assessments and determine student classifications, in line with generic assessment criteria at Levels 4 to 7. The regulations also define several types and formats of assessment that the school will employ, and for some types of assessments, such as open-book examinations, set out further procedures to ensure the integrity and validity of the process. The team found that these are brought together in module specifications in alignment with relevant programme specifications. For example, the Applied Machine Learning module defines five learning outcomes, which are aligned to the generic marking criteria. One of the learning outcomes is to 'Develop machine learning models using industry-standard tools'. This is marked as a 'technical/practical skill', and has been mapped to a 'technical analysis and solution assessment', which challenges students to develop a complex problem followed by analysis and reflection. The team considered the articulation of the learning outcomes, the means to assess whether they have been achieved, and their corresponding mappings, to be appropriate for the school's own planned higher education qualifications, in terms of both the subject content and the proposed level of study.

143. The regulations also articulate the school's assessment framework. This will be implemented according to the Marking, Grading, and External Scrutiny Regulations. Together, these outline how the school will grant credit towards higher education qualifications. For example, the module leader uses the school's generic assessment criteria to measure 'knowledge and

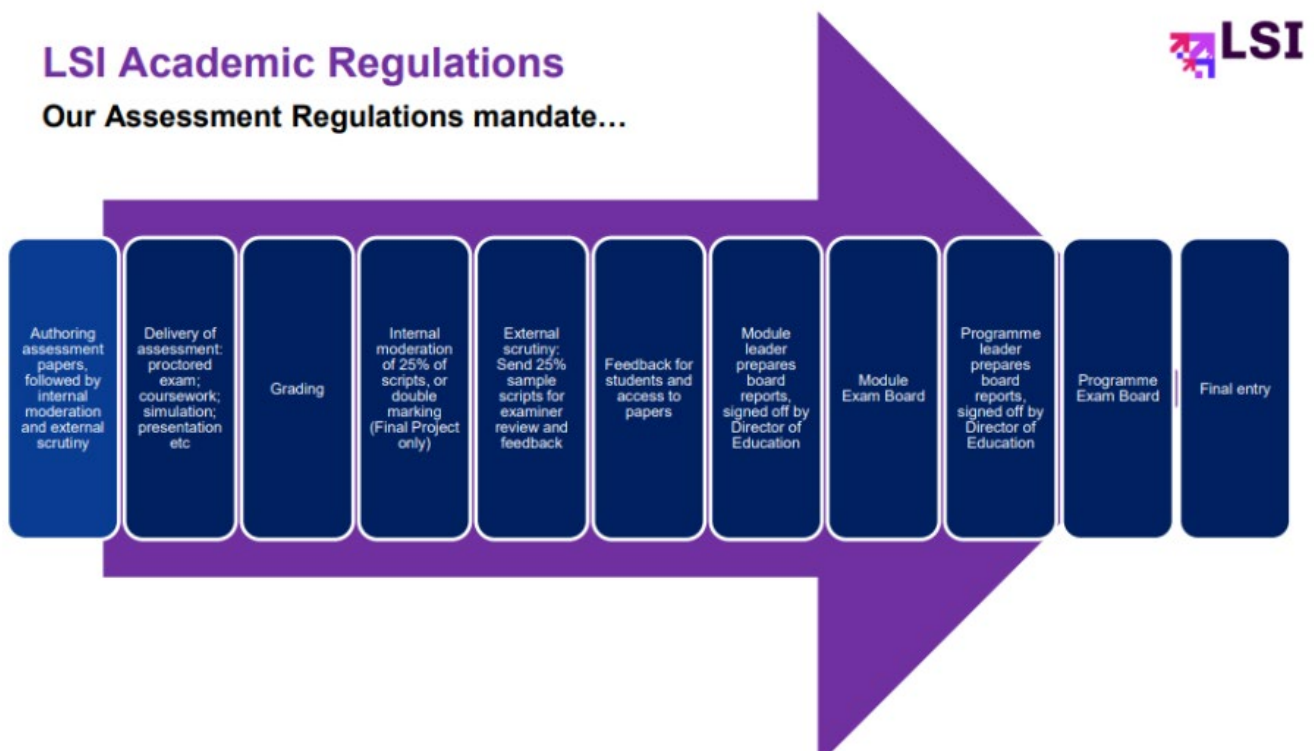
understanding', 'intellectual skills', 'technical/practical skills' and 'professional/transferrable skills' as part of a standardised and fair assessment process that 'accurately reflects student outcomes and maintains sector-wide academic standards'. In doing so, assessors are instructed to:

- follow academic regulations
- use academic judgement
- use only materials provided by the module leader
- use the full range of marks
- ensure equal and fair treatment of all students
- mark consistently to the same standard
- report any issues to the module leader immediately.

144. The marks are then considered and confirmed by a Module Examination Board. The team considered the regulations to be clear and coherent because they explicitly define the responsibilities of each role involved in planned assessment design, marking, internal and external scrutiny, examination boards, and the retention of assessments, alongside the corresponding process.

145. The administration of the assessment process is illustrated by the school in a supplementary Assessment Flowchart, shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Academic Regulations



146. The team considered that the flowchart outlines how the Assessment Regulations will be implemented and conveys the sequence of steps using language that is straightforward and accessible. This being the case, the team formed the view that such communications demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of how academic frameworks and regulations can be applied to assess students and grant higher education qualifications.
147. The Examination Boards and Academic Appeal Regulations detail the duties and responsibilities of the Module Examination Boards and the Programme Examination Boards. These boards will operate under delegated authority of the Academic Board. The Module Examination Board will be responsible for confirming assessment marks and outcomes for students in line with the school's academic regulations and standards, in consultation with external examiners. The Programme Examination Board will be responsible for determining programme awards and classifications for each student. In doing so, it must ensure awards and credits are valid, reliable and in accordance with the school's academic regulations and sector standards. Both will be chaired by the Director of Education and have programme staff and approved external examiners included in their membership. The team considered the remit of the examination boards and the reporting structure to be appropriate for a small, specialist institution and consistent with norms in the sector.
148. The New DAPs plan illustrates that the school will use board minutes, external examiner reports and post-programme examination board reports to demonstrate how its frameworks and regulations are appropriate for granting its own awards in practice. It will also use these examples to critically assess its approach to academic decision-making, and refine its frameworks and regulations where necessary. The New DAPs plan sets out that the timings of these reflections will coincide with the Academic Board Chair's Report to the Board of Governors. The team considered the plan is credible in this respect.
149. As the academic frameworks and regulations have not yet been implemented in full, the team also considered whether the school had included any plans to develop its regulations, policies and procedures within its New DAPs plan. The team found that the plan does not indicate the creation of additional regulations, policies or procedures that will be critical to course delivery or awarding qualifications. The team considered this to be reasonable, given that the range of regulations and frameworks that the school has already created is comprehensive and comparable with those of other higher education institutions in the UK. The New DAPs plan, instead, draws attention to areas of monitoring and development, for example, as addressed in paragraph 96, incorporating the student voice through the inclusion of student representation on governance committees such as the Board of Governors. Other examples of development include graduation ceremony planning, which may intersect with developments in the way in which transcripts will be made available to graduates. The team considered the credibility of such plans to monitor and develop its policies and procedures, and it was satisfied these were achievable and appropriate.
150. In conclusion, the team formed the view that the school has created, in readiness, an academic framework and regulations that will be appropriate for the granting of its own higher education qualifications.

Subcriterion B1.2

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.

Advice to the OfS

151. The assessment team's view is that the New DAPs plan is credible in relation to criterion B1.2 because the school has in place appropriate plans for maintaining a definitive record of each programme and qualification that it approves, alongside subsequent changes to it. These plans will constitute a 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.
152. The team's view is that the school has demonstrated a full understanding of criterion B1.2 because it has adequately established processes for maintaining a definitive record of each programme and qualification that it approves, alongside any subsequent changes to those programmes and qualifications.
153. The team's view is based on its review of the school's New DAPs plan and evidence showing that the school can be reasonably expected to meet the evidence requirements for B1.2 in full by the end of the probationary period.

Reasoning

154. To assess whether the school has established mechanisms to maintain definitive and up-to-date records of each qualification to be awarded and each programme being offered, that these records are used as the basis for the delivery and assessment of each programme and that there is evidence that students and alumni are provided with records of study, the assessment team reviewed evidence including:
- New DAPs plan
 - Automated Governance System
 - New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations
 - Accuracy of Information Policy
 - Transcript, Certificate, and Reference Requests Policy
 - Programme Specifications
 - Module Specifications
 - Director of Education (Programme Examination Board) Report Template
 - Director of Education (Module Examination Board) Report Template

- Report on the Establishment and Activities of the Academic Board
- Consolidated Programme Approval Documents.

155. The school has prepared and approved specifications for six MSc programmes, which it plans to deliver within the New DAPs probationary monitoring period. These are:

- MSc Data Science and Analytics
- MSc Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- MSc AI and Machine Learning
- MSc Software Technical Leadership
- MSc Digital Project Management
- MSc AI for Business Transformation.

156. These programmes were developed using the school's New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations. The approval paperwork showed each programme's journey through three approval decision stages, strategic, operational and academic, where decisions were made respectively by the Board of Governors, the Executive Board, and the Academic Board. The paperwork also shows external input and industry consultation (as discussed under criterion E1). The team found that the gathering of student input was the only element of the process that had not been followed for these initial programmes, as the school has not yet recruited students.

157. These programmes, and the associated approval decisions, are recorded in the AGS, which is the system the school uses to host programme specifications. The team found that the AGS provides an up-to-date record of each qualification along with its constituent programme and module specifications. The team observed a demonstration of the system during its visit, and found that the system is able to provide the full programme specification, alongside a record of approvals and changes. As a result, the team formed the view that the use of the AGS constitutes a credible mechanism for providing a definitive and up-to-date record of each qualification to be awarded by the school. The team noted that the final stages of the AGS building and implementation were still in progress at the time of the assessment. The team was informed that the building and implementation of AGS would be completed by the end of 2025, and before the school begins delivery. The team therefore recommends that the school provides an update on the status of AGS early on in its Year One probationary period.

158. The Accuracy of Information Policy provides an explicit definition of academic information and a protocol for working with such information, including details about learning, teaching, and standards in programme and module specifications. It also includes information about awards, entry criteria, levels, credits, assessments, and fees. The team considered that the policy is well placed to support the processes for updating and verifying publicised programme and module information. This is because the policy also sets a protocol to ensure that any programme or module updates will be disseminated across different teams at the school, including to students and to prospective applicants via the marketing team.

159. The underlying process for making changes to programmes and modules is outlined in the New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations, which explicitly clarifies that 'programme documentation, along with the Academic Board's approval must be recorded in the Automated Governance System'. The team found that automation supports the process of approval of new and modified documentation, which facilitates the control and storage of previous versions. The school stated that the AGS is capable of populating agendas for relevant board and committee meetings and tracking all changes and comments throughout the process (such as modification and approval of programmes) to enable stakeholders to refer to previous versions.
160. Both minor and major programme changes are reviewed by the Academic Board, which it may then delegate to the Director of Education to implement. The team considered that such an approach would help to ensure a self-contained and seamless single point of truth. Therefore, the team formed the view that the school has a credible plan to maintain a definitive and up-to-date record of each qualification to be awarded and each programme being offered. The team noted that the functionality of AGS in this respect should be monitored throughout the probationary period, once the school has commenced delivery of programmes.
161. The team found that the programme and associated module specifications were well specified, with clear articulation of the learning outcomes and associated elements of assessment. For example, the Applied Machine Learning module defines a learning outcome to 'Develop machine learning models using industry-standard tools', which has been labelled a 'technical skill' and mapped to a 'technical analysis and solution assessment'. This learning outcome is just one of a broader set of learning outcomes listed on the module specification. It is appropriate because it is specific, observable, and clearly aligned with an appropriate competence with a corresponding assessment strategy. In the team's experience, the information and level of detail reflect sector practice. The team found that there is an explicit mapping between modules within a programme and their corresponding level in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and sector-recognised standards. For example, the approval documentation for MSc Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning has a mapping document, which explicitly sets out how the module learning outcomes address threshold academic standard statements at Level 7 of the FHEQ and accreditation criteria set by the British Computer Society.
162. Based on the evidence reviewed, the team formed the view that the programme and module documentation demonstrated that the school has a full understanding of how to record and maintain a definitive record of each programme and qualification that it approves.
163. The school's planned approach to programme oversight consists of a reporting structure overseen by the Director of Education and the Academic Board, including reports prepared at each Module and Programme Examination Board by relevant staff and external examiners. These reports specifically address questions such as 'Do current assessment methods align with intended learning outcomes?' and 'What organisational challenges have been identified in the management of programmes?' at the module level. The Staff Induction and Development Policy also indicates that the staff induction process will include training on programme approval processes and academic regulations. The team therefore considered that the school's approach will be sufficient to ensure that programme leaders and module leaders use the definitive record as the basis for the delivery and assessment of each

programme. However, as the school does not yet have academic staff in post to deliver its proposed programmes, the effectiveness of the induction process could not be confirmed. With this being the case, the team suggest that academic staff understanding of where to find the records of each qualification and how they use these records as the basis for the delivery be monitored in the first year of delivery.

164. At present, oversight for ensuring that the school has established mechanisms for maintaining definitive and up-to-date records of each qualification to be awarded and each programme being offered, and that these records will be used as the basis for the delivery, sits with the Director of Education. The Director of Education will receive and act upon reports by module leaders, programme leaders and external examiners, following the Module and Programme Examination Boards, and report to the Academic Board. While the team's view is that this approach is appropriate to the current size of the school given the relatively small number of programmes it plans to offer, the school's future plans to expand the number of programmes may prompt further development of the approach during the monitoring period, as the school recruits staff. The current approach potentially increases the risk of a single point of failure. As the number of modules increases, so too will the number of reports to consider. The team notes that the recruitment of programme leaders, with academic leadership responsibility, is listed in the Three-Year Workforce Plan. The team therefore recommends that staff capacity and growth of programmes or student numbers be assessed during the monitoring period for evidence of how the resilience of the process will be maintained as the size of the institution increases - for example, showing the delegation of responsibility to a wider range of staff, such as other committee members, to maintain programme oversight.
165. The school has not yet enrolled any students, but the Transcript, Certificate, and Reference Requests Policy explains that students and alumni will be able to request records of study by email. During the visit, the school demonstrated how student records will be retrieved from the student records and information system. The team also reviewed screenshots from the AGS (including of the student-facing element of the AGS, 'MyLSI'), and was assured that students will be able to access records of their own study throughout their enrolment on the programme, through the MyLSI view of the underlying student data held on the AGS. The New DAPs plan sets out that formal transcripts will be made available upon programme completion. It also makes reference to the post-programme examination board reports in the fourth quarter of 2026, with transcripts being made available once the first cohort of students complete from the third quarter 2026. The team therefore concluded that students and alumni will be provided with records of study.
166. Based on the evidence reviewed, the team concluded that the school has a definitive and up-to-date record of each qualification to be awarded. The team is confident that each programme being offered by the school will be maintained and that these records will be used as the basis for the delivery and assessment of each programme. The team is satisfied that there is a credible plan in place to provide students and alumni with records of study.

Conclusions

167. Based on its findings, the team concluded that the school has demonstrated a full understanding of criterion B1 and has a credible New DAPs plan, which can be reasonably expected to enable the school to meet the criterion in full by the end of the probationary period.

168. The team concluded that the school has developed, in readiness for seeking New DAPs, transparent and comprehensive academic frameworks and regulations to govern how it will award academic credit and qualifications.
169. The team also concluded that the school has mechanisms to enable it to maintain definitive and up-to-date records of each qualification to be awarded and each programme being offered. These records will be used as the basis for the delivery and assessment of each programme, and there is evidence that students and alumni will be provided with records of study.
170. At the time of the assessment, no programme delivery had taken place. As a result, the full and consistent implementation of the school's regulations could not yet be confirmed and should be monitored throughout the probationary period.
171. At the time of the assessment, no academic staff were in post to support the delivery of programmes offered at the school. Consequently, the use of definitive and up-to-date records as the basis for delivery and assessment of the school's programmes could not yet be confirmed. This should be monitored during Year One of the probationary period, including an update once the Director of Education has considered the report from the first Module and Programme Examination Boards.
172. At the time of the assessment, the team was informed that the building and implementation of AGS would be completed by the end of 2025, so the integrity of the school's process for maintaining records could not yet be confirmed. The team therefore identified this as an area of development which should be monitored during Year One of the probationary period, including an update on the transition from email requests to an end-stage system for providing transcripts to students and alumni.
173. The team also recommends that the implementation of the Student Complaints and Academic Appeals Policy and the appeal procedure described in relation to the Academic Misconduct Regulations are monitored once students are enrolled.

Specified changes to the New DAPs plan

174. The assessment team was assured that the school has detailed and credible plans. However, it recommends that the school consolidates key milestones and deliverables which are currently set out in other plans (Internal Auditing Charter, Three-Year Workforce Plan, Strategic Framework for Academic Appointments, Resource Allocation Plan, Transcript, Certificate, and Reference Requests Policy) into the New DAPs plan to ensure the New DAPs plan document provides an effective basis for monitoring for criterion B1.
175. These changes should be made to the New DAPs plan before the probationary period commences.

Criterion B2: Academic standards

Advice to the OfS

176. The assessment team's view is that the New DAPs plan for criterion B2 is credible in relation to criterion B2: Academic standards.
177. The assessment team's view is that the school has demonstrated a full understanding of criterion B2 because, in summary, the school is developing its own mechanisms for setting and maintaining the academic standards of its higher education qualifications that are clear, credible, and will be consistently applied.
178. The assessment team's view is that the school will be able to design and deliver programmes and qualifications that meet the threshold academic standards described in the FHEQ and sector-recognised standards. The standards they set and maintain above the threshold will be reliable over time and reasonably comparable with those set and achieved by other UK degree awarding bodies.
179. The assessment team's view is that the New DAPs plan is credible in relation to sub-criterion B2.1 and B2.2 because it sets out plans for clear and consistent mechanisms for setting and maintaining the academic standards of its higher education qualifications. It has also outlined clear policies and processes for programme design, approval, and review that will ensure its qualifications align with the threshold academic standards of the FHEQ should it gain its own DAPs.
180. Additionally, the school has a credible plan to monitor and ensure that the standards they set and maintain above the threshold are reliable over time and reasonably comparable with those set and achieved by other UK degree awarding bodies.
181. The assessment team's view is that the New DAPs plan is credible in relation to criterion B2.2 because the school has approved and can be reasonably expected to be able to deliver programmes and qualifications that will meet the threshold academic standards described in the FHEQ.
182. The assessment team's view is that the school has developed policies and procedures which will enable it to establish clear and consistently applied mechanisms for setting and maintaining the academic standards of its higher education qualifications.
183. The assessment team's view is based on its review of the school's New DAPs plan and evidence showing that it can be reasonably expected to meet the evidence requirements for criterion B2 in full by the end of the probationary period.

Subcriteria B2.1 and B2.2

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 Frameworks 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.

Reasoning

184. To assess whether the school'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 their own academic frameworks and regulations, the assessment team reviewed evidence including:

- New DAPs plan
- Organisational Chart with Names
- Assessment Regulations
- Academic Standards Regulations
- New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations
- Programme Approval Rules
- Programme and Module Design Strategy
- Academic Board Minutes
- Programme Approval Documents
- Three-Year Workforce Recruitment Plan
- External Academic Report.

185. The assessment team considered the planned arrangements for programme delivery described in the New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations. To constitute a systematic and thorough approach, the team reviewed the full set of programme development and approval documentation for:

- MSc AI for Business Transformation
- MSc Digital Project Management

- MSc Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- MSc Data Science and Analytics.

186. The arrangements follow a process of strategic approval, operational approval, external review, and then academic approval. The external review stage will involve the production of External Academic Reports, which will be analysed to yield a Programme Recommendation Document. Those involved in developing the programmes will respond to the report, refining the programmes. The final academic approval by the Academic Board will evaluate the proposed programme against criteria outlined in the Programme Approval Rules, taking into consideration a presentation on programme development, the external assessor reports, and the responses. Therefore, the assessment team formed the view that the arrangements for approving new programmes are robust.

187. The assessment team recognised the nascent nature of the programme approval arrangements described in the minutes of the Academic Board for four of the initial MSc programmes. The assessment team also recognised the ongoing development and refinement of the academic approval arrangements moving forward in accordance with the New DAPs plan. The school is not yet delivering programmes to students and consequently has fewer academic staff currently. The roles and responsibilities in the Organisational Chart are shared by the same people, creating the potential for those involved in planning and delivery to also be involved in approval. However, in the case of the initial four MSc programmes, the assessment team was assured that the programme approval event decisions had been made by two external academic members of the Academic Board on a unanimous basis. This mitigates any risk of a conflict of interest and assured the assessment team of effective practice in programme approval.

188. As the Workforce Recruitment Plan is implemented over the monitoring period, in accordance with the New DAPs plan, the roles and responsibilities will be assumed by new staff, reducing sharing and overlap, and resultingly removing such risks of conflict. The New DAPs plan illustrates how the school will follow the three-stage process described in paragraph 185, which in future will include the involvement of the internal members of the Academic Board in decision-making. This being the case, the assessment team formed the view that the process, if followed, will be applied consistently and will be evidenced through the minutes from committee deliberation and programme development records during the three-year monitoring period.

189. The Programme Approval Rules, which are used to evaluate proposed programmes during the approval process, require alignment with sector-recognised standards, academic regulations, FHEQ requirements and credit-level descriptors, and subject benchmarks. The Programme Approval Rules also directly ask reviewers to consider learning outcomes and curriculum design with respect to the school's own expectations as defined in the Assessment Regulations and Academic Standards Regulations. For example, the reviewers, and the Academic Board as the decision-making body, are explicitly asked, in relation to sector-recognised standards to answer questions including:

- Does the programme align with the latest FHEQ requirements, qualification descriptors, CATs credits, SEEC Credit Level Descriptors, and Subject Benchmarks?

- Is the programme designed to meet the accreditation standards of relevant professional or academic bodies?
- Have subject matter experts been involved in the design or validation of the programme's curriculum?

190. The assessment team formed the view that the school has credible plans to set academic standards at a level that meets the UK threshold standard for the qualification and accords with the school's academic frameworks and regulations.

191. The New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations set out clear plans for programme approval. These are echoed in the Programme and Module Design Strategy that sets out the principles, regulatory context, standards, assessment strategy, and documentation for the approval process. The Programme Approval Rules are embedded into the AGS through a structured form which further coheres the criteria for approval with the process of development and ratification. The New DAPs plan outlines the development of a new MSc programme with a milestone of the first quarter of 2026, which will provide further evidence and opportunity for the school to implement its New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations. The assessment team formed the view that, collectively, the clarity and coherence of the regulations, strategies, and approval rules indicate a complete understanding of the need for robust and consistently applied programme approval arrangements. This, if implemented as planned, will help to ensure that academic standards are set at a level that meets the UK threshold standard for the qualification and accords with the school's own academic frameworks and regulations.

192. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the school's programme approval arrangements are robust and when implemented and applied will ensure that academic standards are set at a level that meets the UK threshold standard for the qualification and are in accordance with the school's own academic frameworks and regulations and are likely to be applied consistently.

193. To assess whether the setting and maintaining of academic standards takes appropriate account of relevant external points of reference and external and independent points of expertise, including students, the assessment team reviewed evidence including:

- New DAPs plan
- External Examiner Regulations
- New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations
- Automated Governance System
- Programme Approval Rules
- Student Engagement Policy
- Note on Student Involvement in Academic Standards
- Programme Approval Documents

- Industry Consultation and Feedback
- External Academic Reports.

194. The set of questions asked during the academic approval of programmes, outlined in the Programme Approval Rules and programme approval documents, demonstrates the school's plan to bring in multiple external points of reference. These include appropriate examples such as sector-recognised standards, subject benchmarking statements, and accreditation standards. For example, Chartered IT Professional standards set by the British Computer Society, and standards set by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI), will be incorporated into the qualification descriptors, which are held on the AGS. The assessment team also observed references to such external standards in the Programme Approval Documents for the four MSc programmes listed in paragraph 192, where they were used to articulate alignment with standards in the subject area and for the level of study. For example, in the course approval documents for MSc AI for Business Transformation, the external assessor notes that a student achieving a mark of 50 per cent or higher in the programme would be meeting CMI Masters' Benchmark Statement for Level 7.
195. The assessment team considered this to demonstrate how the school will take appropriate account of relevant external points of reference, though it is unclear to the team why similar accreditation standards posed by other professional bodies such as the Association for Computing Machinery, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Computer Society, or the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence are not similarly referenced. These referenced materials are mentioned in the Quality Assurance Agency's 2022 Subject Benchmark Statement for Computing as a reference for detailed curriculum standards and content. The assessment team notes that these are further appropriate relevant external points of reference that the school ought to consider in the development of its new programmes outlined in the New DAPs plan. The assessment team considers that such points of reference would support the school in assuring that course content maintains appropriate coverage of the specific focuses within a subject area, such as the AI knowledge area. Consequently, the assessment team formed the view that the school will use appropriate and relevant external points of reference in the setting and maintaining of academic standards. However, the assessment team recommends that the New DAPs plan should incorporate a specific milestone to indicate monitoring and review of the approval process, to enable the school to consider whether a wider range of appropriate and relevant external points of reference for computing should be included.
196. The External Academic Reports shows that academic externals from four different higher education institutions were credited for their involvement in the development and approval of the four MSc programmes. The assessment team notes that the way their reports have been used to uphold standards is evident from the approval documents, where feedback has been explicitly addressed and changes made in response.
197. In alignment with the Programme Approval Rules, which state that 'documentation must detail engagement with internal and external stakeholders, including students, employers, and professional bodies', the documentation on Industry Consultation and Feedback on MSc Modules provided insight into several roundtable discussions with participants in industry during the development of the programmes. Therefore, the assessment team formed the view

that academic standards for the school's first four programmes were set through relevant points of external and independent points of expertise.

198. During the visit, the assessment team raised with the school that it had noted that all the industry externals credited for their involvement in the development and approval of the four MSc programmes were affiliated with the same organisation, and that the organisation had close ties to the school. The school assured the assessment team that industry externals were selected based on their subject matter expertise; however, the assessment team considered that drawing industry external consultants from a single organisation had the potential to create the perception of a conflict of interest and may also narrow the insights. The assessment team was verbally reassured by the school that future programme approvals and revalidations would involve a wider and more diverse range of external industry expertise. As the school is in its infancy and the process was followed for the development of its first four programmes, the team was assured of the school's understanding and need to seek independent points of expertise. However, the assessment team recommends that, for future programme developments, the school seeks a wider variety of relevant external and independent points of expertise.
199. The New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulation shows that there are plans to consult students in the design and validation of programmes, and that revalidation panels will include a student representative. The Student Engagement Policy further elaborates that students will be consulted when any changes to programmes, modules, regulations, or policies are proposed. The relevant governance committee, which for academic standards is the Academic Board, will verify that student input has been sought, and students will be invited to assure this happens. The Note on Student Involvement in Academic Standards further outlines ways in which students will be involved in maintaining academic standards including peer review, feedback on assessment, participation in monitoring and evaluation cycles, meetings with external examiners, the Student Experience Committee, and other forms of continuous engagement such as those that will be facilitated through the Automated Governance System. The assessment team formed the view that the school has credible plans to ensure that students will be included as a relevant point of reference.
200. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the setting and maintaining of academic standards takes appropriate account of relevant external points of reference and external and independent points of expertise, and there is a credible plan to include students.
201. To assess whether credit and qualifications will be awarded only where the achievement of relevant learning outcomes (module learning outcomes in the case of credit and programme outcomes in the case of qualifications) has been demonstrated through assessment, and both the UK threshold standards and the academic standards of the relevant degree awarding body have been satisfied, the assessment team reviewed evidence including:
- New DAPs plan
 - Assessment Regulations
 - Module, Progression, and Award Regulations
 - Teaching and Learning Policy

- Assessment and Feedback Policy
- SEEC/FHEQ Level 7 Generic Marking Criteria
- Marking, Grading and External Scrutiny Regulations
- Credit Accumulation Regulations.

202. The Module, Progression, and Award Regulations make a clear and explicit commitment to the principle that credits are based on achievement as opposed to time. Other policies, such as the Assessment and Feedback Policy, consistently reiterate the commitment to outcome-based qualification standards. The Marking, Grading and External Scrutiny Regulations and the Credit Accumulation Regulations govern the awarding of credit for the school's programmes. The Credit Accumulation Regulations govern how credit is attached to each programme. As is common in the sector, the school assigns ten notional hours of learning to each credit, and the number of credits per qualification is aligned with the sector-recognised standards, with each of the school's proposed masters' programmes requiring 180 credits.

203. To ensure that credit will only be awarded where the achievement of learning outcomes is demonstrated, the Marking, Grading and External Scrutiny Regulations lay out a clear process, with assigned responsibilities at each stage. Individual markers will be overseen by the module leader, who will convene a pre-meeting to ensure that all markers are prepared for marking, to ensure consistency. During the marking process, markers can flag any queries or concerns, or seek guidance from the module leader or Director of Education. As outlined in the Assessment Regulations, all marking is anonymous, and markers will be required to follow the following set of principles:

- follow academic regulations
- use academic judgement
- use only materials provided by the module leader
- use the full range of marks
- ensure equal and fair treatment of all students
- mark consistently to the same standard
- report any issues to the module leader immediately.

204. For certain assessments, the school is planning to use double marking. Double marking will be undertaken by two independent markers, and will apply to all assessments within a Final Project Module, or where a module has a professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB) requirement. For all modules that are not double marked, a sample of assessments will be moderated. Moderation involves another marker reviewing a sample of marking and feedback for appropriateness, consistency, and fairness. The sample will consist of 25 per cent of scripts, including all fails and borderlines within two marks of grade boundaries. If there is a disagreement between the first and second marker, the regulations state that a third marker will be brought in, and the three sets of marking reviewed by the module leader.

205. The assessment team found that the school's approach and processes are comparable with those of other UK higher education providers. For example, the Teaching and Learning Policy refers to the guiding principle to ensure that assessments are fair, transparent, and aligned with learning outcomes. Accordingly, the planned Assessment Regulations require that all summative assessments must include bespoke assessment marking criteria detailing the outcomes that students must demonstrate to be awarded credit. These must also be aligned with general level-specific assessment criteria, such as the SEEC/FHEQ Level 7 Generic Marking Criteria in the case of the MSc courses.
206. The Teaching and Learning Policy also outlines academic responsibilities, including the module leader team ensuring assessment 'alignment with module objectives' as part of the 'marking scrutiny process' to ensure alignment with the learning outcomes. This being the case, the assessment team formed the view that there is a plan in place that, if followed, will ensure assessment criteria will correspond with the UK threshold standards and academic standards. The assessment team considered that, based on its experience across the sector, there is a risk that the alignment between the generic marking criteria, the school's bespoke marking criteria and the learning outcomes could conceptually drift apart if not applied consistently or appropriately. The use of generic marking criteria could also improve consistency in the design of assessment with UK threshold standards at the relevant FHEQ level. At the time of the assessment, there were no assessments available to test the suitability of the school's approach in practice, but these will be delivered in the first quarter of 2026 according to the New DAPs plan. The assessment team was reassured that care would be taken to ensure that course teams leveraged these generic marking criteria as a starting point.
207. The assessment team therefore formed the view 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 relevant degree awarding body have been satisfied. However, the team notes that evidence of this in practice should be monitored throughout the probationary period.
208. The assessment team noted that, according to the Module, Progression, and Award Regulations, up to 40 credits at Level 4 may be compensated if the student received a qualifying mark between 30 and 39. While the school has not expressed an intention to deliver undergraduate engineering programmes per paragraph 12, it intends to seek New DAPs for subjects including CAH10 engineering, per paragraph 2. Therefore, the assessment team observed that, should the school wish to pursue accreditation of future undergraduate engineering programmes, such as robotics or software engineering, its compensation regulation might conflict with the Engineering Council's recent requirements for Accredited Higher Education Programmes (AHEP4) which state that no more than 30 credits in a bachelors' or integrated masters' programme can be compensated [<https://www.engc.org.uk/media/ddrnfyqa/guidance-note-on-compensation-and-condonement-2019.pdf>]. The assessment team notes that the policy itself is unproblematic however, and the school's approach to compensation reflects similar regulations and practice across the sector.
209. To assess whether the school's higher education qualifications are offered at levels that correspond to the relevant levels of the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies, the assessment team reviewed evidence including:

- New DAPs plan
- Assessment Regulations
- Academic Standards Regulations
- Credit Accumulation Regulations
- Qualification Descriptors
- Programme Specifications
- Module Specifications
- FHEQ Level 7 Generic Marking Criteria.

210. The assessment team observed clear correspondence between the school's regulations and the FHEQ and sector-recognised standards. The Assessment Regulations map awards to their corresponding level. They also set out that the use of Generic Marking Criteria will form the basis to ensure consistency with academic standards for the level of study. The Academic Standards Regulations make a robust commitment to align standards with the FHEQs, while the Credit Accumulation Regulations set out that modules must adhere to approval rules including being at the correct FHEQ level. Furthermore, the assessment team considered the mapping of learning outcomes in the Programme Specifications and Module Specifications for the four approved MSc programmes corresponded to Level 7. Consequently, the assessment team formed the view that the school's higher education qualifications will be offered at relevant FHEQ levels.

211. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the school's higher education qualifications will be offered at levels that correspond to the relevant levels of the FHEQ.

212. To assess whether the school's programme approval, monitoring and review arrangements are designed to be 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 assessment team reviewed evidence including:

- New DAPs plan
- Marking, Grading, and External Scrutiny Regulations
- New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations
- Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations
- Key Performance Indicator and Reports Policy
- Programme Approval Rules
- Peer Observation Framework and Form.

213. The assessment team considered the evidence and criteria documented for the approval process in the New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations to be thorough, as discussed in paragraph 159. Additionally, the Marking, Grading, and External Scrutiny Regulations describe processes to ensure standards are adhered to through internal and external scrutiny ahead of each examination board. For example, this will occur through moderation of marks by the module leader and external scrutiny by the external examiner.
214. According to the New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations, the responsibility for programme approval spans three approval decision stages, strategic, operational, and academic, made respectively by the Board of Governors, the Executive Board, and the Academic Board. In the assessment team's view, the proposed evaluation of modules and programmes at the 'academic' stage of this process addresses standards explicitly. The set of questions outlined in the Programme Approval Rules ask evaluators to verify whether there is alignment with the latest FHEQ requirements, level descriptors and subject benchmarks, for each programme or module proposed. Consequently, the assessment team formed the view that plans for programme approval, monitoring and review arrangements will explicitly address whether the UK threshold academic standards are achieved.
215. The Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations set out regular review and reporting schedules, with an appropriate framework to interrogate standards. The assessment team notes that these schedules should be added as milestones to the New DAPs plan. Collectively, the assessment team considered these arrangements to be well formed. Therefore, the assessment team formed the view that plans for programme approval, monitoring and review arrangements are robust and if implemented will enable the school to ensure that academic standards required are being maintained.
216. The assessment team noted that the New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations outline a six-year period for the revalidation cycle. While this is not unusual in some subject areas, computing is a fast-moving subject and would likely benefit from an increased frequency for revalidation. For example, professional bodies such as the British Computer Society, which the school intends to seek accreditation with, tend to operate periodic review every five years. Given the institutional focus on AI technologies, the team recommends the school could consider whether a shorter period for revalidation than six years is appropriate to reflect the subject specialism of the school, or whether the annual processes of module and programme review alongside the six-year revalidation are sufficient to keep pace with the academic discipline.
217. The school does not have any students and is not yet delivering any programmes. Therefore, it is not yet possible for the assessment team to determine whether the programme approval, monitoring and review arrangements are applied consistently. The Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations set out clear responsibilities for module leaders and programme leaders to review their respective modules and programmes after each examination board. The AGS captures monitoring information and compiles the documents required to support discussion at the relevant committee meetings, such as the Academic Board, facilitating consistency. In summary, the assessment team's view is that the school has credible plans in place which, if followed, will ensure that programme approval, monitoring and review arrangements will be applied consistently.

218. In the assessment team's view, the proposed evaluation of modules and programmes addresses standards explicitly. The set of questions outlined in the Programme Approval Rules (as discussed in paragraph 189) ask evaluators to verify whether there is alignment with the latest FHEQ requirements, level descriptors and subject benchmarks. Consequently, the assessment team formed the view that plans for programme approval, monitoring and review arrangements will explicitly address whether the UK threshold academic standards are achieved.
219. The assessment team considered that the school's planned approach to internal and external scrutiny in the assessment process would maintain standards set by the awarding body. The Marking, Grading, and External Scrutiny Regulations enforce a standardisation process to align grading scales and criteria while also setting out the responsibilities of module leaders and external examiners to check and ensure standards are followed. There is similar internal and external scrutiny in reports prepared during the approval and annual review processes. An example of a programme leader's report is listed in the New DAPs plan, which will evidence the process in the fourth quarter of 2027. Therefore, the assessment team formed the view that the school's programme approval, monitoring and review arrangements explicitly address the academic standards required by the individual degree awarding body. In the assessment team's view, the school's plans will ensure academic standards are being maintained.
220. The assessment team recognised the value of the Peer Observation Framework and Form for maintaining the academic standards with respect to programme delivery by members of the academic team. One objective of the framework is to 'support alignment of module content with programme outcomes.' The assessment team noted that the participation of staff in the framework is voluntary and considers that, over time, the school may wish to review this voluntary approach to encourage all staff to undertake peer observation. Further discussion of opportunities for staff development is set out under criterion C1.
221. The assessment team considered that the planned approach to monitoring and tracking activity for programme monitoring, review and amendment through the AGS was well developed. During the visit, the assessment team was shown the reporting tools and questioned senior management about the frequency and thoroughness of their programme approval, monitoring and review arrangements. The responses provided by senior management were detailed, and the assessment team was shown how module leaders, programme leaders, and external examiners would submit reports ahead of relevant committees (e.g., External Examiner (Academic Board)). The assessment team formed the view that the school therefore demonstrated a clear understanding that programme approval, monitoring and review arrangements need to be robust, applied consistently and explicitly address whether threshold academic standards are achieved and whether the academic standards are maintained.
222. The assessment team concluded that the school's 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.

223. To assess whether in establishing, and then maintaining, threshold academic standards and comparability of standards with other providers of equivalent level qualifications, it makes use of appropriate external and independent expertise:

- New DAPs plan
- External Examiner Regulations
- Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations
- Marking, Grading, and External Scrutiny Regulations
- External Examiner Report Template (Academic Board)
- External Examiner Report Template (Programme)
- External Examiner Report Template (Module).

224. As discussed above, the school used academic externals from four different higher education institutions in the development and approval of its four MSc programmes. The External Academic Report shows how academic externals with relevant subject matter expertise, drawn from other independent higher education institutions, were recruited. The assessment team considered that the selection of external academics to serve as external assessors was appropriate, because they had experience that would enable them to verify the comparability of standards with other providers of equivalent level qualifications in the subject.

225. The assessment team considered that the regular incorporation of external scrutiny by an external examiner in the assessment process ahead of each examination board , and consideration of such input as part of the annual review process , would serve to maintain standards by highlighting opportunities and concerns to module teams in a timely manner, while also reviewing and tracking subsequent responses and actions in the annual review of all modules in a programme. The assessment team also found the role, responsibilities, and powers outlined in the External Examiner Regulations to be in accordance with sector norms. This is discussed further under criterion B3. This being the case, the assessment team formed the view that the school has credible plans to make use of appropriate external and independent expertise in maintaining threshold academic standards and comparability of standards with other providers of equivalent level qualifications. The team noted that this will be monitored throughout the probationary period as the school begins delivery of its programmes.

226. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that in establishing, and then maintaining, threshold academic standards and comparability of standards with other providers of equivalent level qualifications, the school has made use of, and intends to make further use of, appropriate external and independent expertise.

Conclusions

227. The assessment team concluded that the school has a credible plan to enact clear and consistently applied mechanisms for setting and maintaining the academic standards of its higher education qualifications.

228. At the time of the assessment, only one instance of programme approval by the Academic Board had taken place; therefore, the consistent application of the school's approval arrangements could not yet be confirmed. These processes should be further reviewed during the probationary period.
229. At the time of the assessment, no programme delivery had taken place; therefore, there were no assessments available to review. Therefore, the alignment between the assessment marking criteria and the corresponding UK threshold standards, as well as the academic standards, should be verified during any subsequent monitoring assessment. However, the assessment team concluded that the school has a credible plan to design and deliver programmes and qualifications that meet the threshold academic standards described in the FHEQ and sector-recognised standards.
230. Additionally, the plan indicates that the standards the school sets and maintains above the threshold will be reliable over time and reasonably comparable with those set and achieved by other UK degree awarding bodies.
231. Based on its findings, the assessment team concluded that the school has a credible New DAPs plan and demonstrated a full understanding of criterion B2, which can reasonably be expected to enable the school to meet this criterion in full by the end of the probationary period.
232. The assessment team identified activity which should be further assessed during the Year One monitoring assessment and on which the school should provide an update for in its first quarterly self-assessment submission. This is verifying the creation of assignment briefs and their alignment with the standards set in the programme documentation and UK threshold standards and academic standards.

Specified changes to the New DAPs plan

233. The assessment team was assured that the school has detailed and credible plans. However, it recommends that the school consolidates key milestones and deliverables (which are currently set out in out in the school's Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations) into the New DAPs plan to ensure the New DAPs plan document provides an effective basis for monitoring for criterion B2.
234. These changes should be made to the New DAPs plan before the probationary period begins.

Criterion B3: Quality of the academic experience

Advice to the OfS

235. The assessment team's view is that the New DAPs plan is credible in relation to criterion B3: Quality of the academic experience.
236. The assessment team's view is that the school has demonstrated a full understanding of criterion B3 because it is able to design and deliver programmes 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.
237. Additionally, the school is able to demonstrate that learning opportunities will be consistently and rigorously quality assured.
238. However, the team recommends that the students' experience of studying through both hybrid and online modes of study, as well as their use of learning spaces, are monitored throughout the probationary period. The team also recommends monitoring of the implementation of the Student Complaints and Academic Appeals Policy and the appeal procedure described in relation to the Academic Misconduct Regulations once students are enrolled.
239. The assessment team's view is based on its review of the school's New DAPs plan and supporting evidence, alongside other relevant information showing that the school can reasonably be expected to meet the evidence requirements for B3 in full by the end of the probationary period.

Subcriterion B3.1

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.

Reasoning

Design and approval of programmes

240. To assess whether the school has credible plans to operate effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes, the assessment team reviewed evidence including:
- New DAPs plan
 - Academic Standards Regulations
 - Teaching and Learning Policy

- New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations
- Programme Approval Rules
- Programme and Module Design Strategy
- Academic Board Minutes
- CVs of Academic Board members
- Programme Approval Documents
- External Academic Reports.

241. Although the school has not yet enrolled any students, it has designed, developed, and approved several Level 7 programmes. The currently approved programmes illustrate good alignment with the FHEQs and were developed in accordance with the school's Teaching and Learning Policy and their Programme and Module Design Strategy.

242. As set out under criterion B2, the process for programme approval is described in the New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations, detailing a multi-stage process for strategic, operational, and academic approval by the Board of Governors, Executive Committee, and Academic Board respectively. The assessment team found the supporting External Academic Report and programme approval documents of the programmes approved to date to illustrate an effective process. Comments and suggestions were used to make improvements to the proposed programmes in an insightful and reflective manner. However, the assessment team noted that currently the small scale and size of the school means that there are limited senior staff, for example on the Academic Board, to consider and approve programme development documentation. However, the assessment team recognises the nascent and evolving nature of the school and therefore for the approval of programmes. The assessment team is assured that the school has a clear and credible plan in place to use of a wider staff pool in the processes once recruitment is concluded, as set out in its New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations and Three-Year Workforce Plan. Consequently, if the plan is followed, the assessment team believes the process for the approval of programmes will be effective.

243. During the visit, the assessment team questioned whether, where, and how generative AI would be integrated into the design or development of the school's programmes. At the visit, the school presented a bespoke solution which embedded quality requirements into the process in the AGS. The assessment team viewed a demonstration of the process which follows a template to support some automation. The assessment team was reassured by the 'human-in-the-loop' process with multiple stages of approval, including by the module leader, programme leader, external from industry, academic external examiner, and the Academic Board. The assessment team found these checks and safeguards were well placed to uphold academic standards.

244. The assessment team requested further insight into the process of programme approval. During the visit, the school provided considerable insight into its multi-stage approval process (strategic), demonstrating a full end-to-end process with explicitly enumerated approval criteria within its governance system, explaining how the Academic Board and other bodies

made decisions. Additionally, the members of the Academic Board were well-positioned to make decisions on academic approval, having considerable experience of academic leadership. Consequently, the assessment team formed the view that the school understands how to operate an effective process for the design, development and approval of programmes.

245. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the school has credible plans to operate effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes.

246. To assess whether relevant staff will be informed of, and provided with guidance and support on, programme development procedures and their roles and responsibilities in relation to them, the assessment team reviewed evidence including:

- New DAPs plan
- Staff Induction and Development Policy
- Staff Handbook
- New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations
- Learning and Teaching Strategy
- Academic Staff Onboarding Short Course
- Academic Staff Onboarding Presentation
- Programme Leaders Onboarding Presentation
- Programme Leaders Team, Module Leaders Team, and Teaching and Assessment Team Responsibilities
- Note on Staff and Curriculum Development.

247. A range of guidance and support documentation is available to relevant staff, including a Staff Handbook, which directs attention to Programme Leaders Team, Module Leaders Team, and Teaching and Assessment Team Responsibilities, as well as to appropriate policies such as the Learning and Teaching Strategy and the New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations. The OfS assessment team confirmed that these documents and policies set out clear expectations of roles and responsibilities in relation to the design, development, and approval of programmes. For example, defining the responsibilities of those involved in programme revalidation, setting out who is responsible for development and approval at each stage, and detailing who sits on revalidation panels.

248. The school has a Staff Induction and Development Policy setting out the process for supporting academic staff, which is evident through the onboarding presentations for programme leaders and other academic staff. Ongoing curriculum development and continuing professional development are further detailed in the Note on Staff and Curriculum Development.

249. The assessment team did not have the opportunity to engage with all relevant staff during the visit because some had only recently been appointed and were still undertaking training. However, the school's leadership team provided considerable detail and clarity regarding the operationalisation of staff development to ensure staff understand their roles and responsibilities. A short course had been developed and was available at the time of the visit to support staff onboarding, and appeared to offer comprehensive guidance on the philosophy, strategy and delivery approach at the school. The New DAPs plan refers to onboarding presentations, such as that devised for programme leaders, which outline the procedures and responsibilities associated with particular roles, with the New DAPs plan acknowledging a need for 'continuous adaptation' over several years.
250. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that relevant staff are informed of and provided with guidance and support on, these procedures and their roles and responsibilities in relation to them.
251. To assess whether the responsibility for approving new programme proposals is clearly assigned, including the involvement of external expertise, where appropriate, and subsequent action is carefully monitored, the assessment team reviewed evidence including:
- New DAPs plan
 - New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations
 - Academic Board Minutes
 - Consolidated Programme Approval Documents
 - External Academic Reports
 - External Examiner Contract.
252. In accordance with the New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations, the responsibility for programme approval spans three approval decision stages, strategic, operational, and academic, made respectively by the Board of Governors, the Executive Board, and the Academic Board. The articulation of the approval rules and where the responsibility lies for approval is explicit in the regulations. All of the approval rules have corresponding relevant templates. There is a credible plan in place to further formalise the process by integrating tracking and sign off into the AGS in the future. Therefore, the assessment team concluded that responsibility for approving new programme proposals will be clearly assigned.
253. The External Academic Reports and associated programme approval documents show an example of the involvement of external expertise in the evaluation of several recently approved Level 7 programmes. Therefore, the assessment team found involvement of external expertise in the approval process.
254. The Consolidated Programme Approval Documentation describes how four new MSc programmes were approved, including MSc Digital Project Management. The documents show that recommendations and actions were tabulated and recommendations given by reviewers were responded to, indicating changes to the proposed programme. For example,

considering 'globally recognised certifications like Project Management Professional (PMP) or PRINCE2' leading to 'Digital Delivery Management (DM71) extensively [covering] Agile, Lean, and Scrum methodologies, all of which are core to PMP and PRINCE2'. The assessment team reviewed and cross-referenced the documentation, observing that subsequent decisions and actions had been carefully monitored.

255. During the visit the assessment team found the school's explanation of the operationalisation of the programme approval process and its underlying principles and mechanisms to be clear and insightful. For example, when asked how decisions were made during the Academic Board about whether or not to approve a programme, the leadership team were quickly able to explain who was involved, how they considered the approval rules, and how they leveraged the information provided to them by external experts, in a clear and coherent manner. Staff were also able to outline how subsequent action would be delegated and communicated to relevant stakeholders, such as the team responsible for advertising new programmes, and monitored through a task board reviewed during Executive Committee meetings.
256. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the responsibility for approving new programme proposals is clearly assigned, including the involvement of external expertise where appropriate, and subsequent action is carefully monitored.
257. To assess whether coherence of programmes with multiple elements or alternative pathways is secured and maintained, the assessment team reviewed evidence including:
- New DAPs plan
 - Programme Approval Documents
 - Programme Outcomes and Learning Outcome Mapping Document
 - Academic Experience Across All Modes of Study.
258. Several optional modules are evident in programmes advertised by the school, such as a choice between Deep Learning or Advanced Computer Vision on the MSc AI and Machine Learning. Similarly, some core modules are shared across programmes, such as the AI in Business module, which is shared with MSc Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship. The assessment team found their alignment with learning outcomes were described in a Programme Outcomes and Learning Outcome Mapping Document. Additionally, the appropriateness of each module to the programme has been scrutinised within the programme approval documents. As the assessment team found evidence that coherence at the specification level had been assured, they formed the view that the coherence of programmes with multiple elements or alternative pathways would also likely be secured and maintained at the point of delivery.
259. The assessment team notes that the Director of Education holds responsibility to oversee and conduct detailed checks regarding the coherence of programmes with multiple elements or alternative pathways. This appears to be the case where modules are shared across programmes with different programme leaders.

260. The school makes a clear commitment to providing all students, regardless of their chosen mode of study, a high quality academic experience that is rigorous, engaging, and consistent across different formats. The strategy is to use a flipped learning model (described in paragraph 361) supported by innovative educational technologies embedded in its VLE. This strategy is supported by other teaching systems suitable for the mode of study relevant to the professional or technical requirements of the content. Other learning resources, including the use of in-person and remote tutors, were clearly mapped against the programme specifications. Therefore, the assessment team considered this further evidence that coherence would be assured, forming the view that the coherence of programmes with multiple elements or alternative pathways would be secured and maintained.

261. During the visit, the assessment team sought clarification as to how the programmes would be delivered. The school plans to launch its programmes initially as distance learning only, then to move to also offering a hybrid delivery option with in-person attendance in Year Three. The school also elaborated on further increasing optionality of modules as programmes become embedded, including adding opportunities to engage with external speakers as a component of modules, rather than as enhancement or career-building events. The explanation of how this would facilitate a measured approach to enable programme teams to deliver an equitable student experience reassured the assessment team. The assessment team therefore found that the school understood how to secure and maintain the coherence of programmes with multiple elements or alternative pathways.

262. To assess whether close links are maintained between learning support services and the organisation's programme planning and approval arrangements, the assessment team reviewed evidence including:

- New DAPs plan
- Organisational Chart
- New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations
- Governance Statement
- Personal Academic Tutoring Policy
- Personal Academic Tutors Support
- Fitness to Study Policy
- School Handbook
- Staff and Curriculum Development.

263. The process described in the New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations describes an operational approval process, which would normally involve the Director of Student Services. According to the Governance Statement, the Director of Student Services would sit on the Academic Board, where the 'Academic Approval' stage of programme approval decision-making occurs. The assessment team noted that the school had not yet employed a Director of Student Services to lead its student success team. This

being the case, the programme approval documents did not immediately evidence how learning support services were involved in the approval process, but the assessment team recognises that evidence of the New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations in practice will be available during the probationary period, should the school gain New DAPs. The assessment team was assured that links between programme development and learning support services would likely become closer through the operational approval process once the relevant staff were in post.

264. The close working arrangements between personal academic tutors and learning support teams, as described in the Personal Academic Tutoring Policy, indicates that there will be clear lines of communication that will inform ongoing curriculum development and enhancement, in accordance with the Note on Staff and Curriculum Development. The assessment team notes that directing staff how to surface and formally record such considerations would be welcome, to ensure they are included in Module and Programme Reviews described in the Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations.
265. During the visit, the assessment team requested further insight into links between the teams under the Director of Education and their counterparts under the Director of Student Services. The school clarified how the student success team would work with personal academic tutors and course teams to support student welfare and to support professional experience, particularly in relation to supporting career pathways. Further to this, the Director of Student Services will regularly review analytics from the ticketing system and dashboards to report back to the Executive Committee, the Academic Board, or the Board of Governors, as appropriate. This reassured the assessment team that the school understood that close links would need to be maintained between learning services and the organisation's programme planning and approval arrangements.
266. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that close links will be maintained between learning support services and the organisation's programme planning and approval arrangements. Further evidence of this through the future programme developments should be monitored through the probationary period.

Learning and teaching

267. To assess whether the school has credible plans to articulate and implement a strategic approach to learning and teaching which is consistent with its stated academic objectives, the assessment team reviewed:
- New DAPs plan
 - Introductory Presentation
 - Vision and Values Statement
 - Learning and Teaching Strategy
 - Programme and Module Design Strategy
 - Student Outcomes Statement and Graduate Attributes
 - Student Engagement Policy.

268. The school has set out an express focus on technological innovation. Accordingly, it is seeking to deliver programmes which correspond to subjects coded as:
- CAH11 computing
 - CAH10 engineering
 - CAH17 business and management
 - CAH23 combined and general studies.
269. This academic objective is clearly outlined in the school's Vision and Values Statement as well as its Learning and Teaching Strategy. The assessment team found these objectives to be consistent with the definition of desired graduate characteristics outlined in the documentation on Student Outcomes Statement and Graduate Attributes. Additionally, these are cross-referenced well between the Learning and Teaching Strategy and the Programme and Module Design Strategy, which provide structure in the form of teaching systems to help students cultivate those attributes.
270. The assessment team found the teaching systems described to be innovative and to accord with good pedagogic practice. For example, the teaching systems promote active learning over passive learning, and they also provide a framework to facilitate interactive learning activities on the VLE which can provide timely and constructive formative feedback. It is the opinion of the assessors that the use of such teaching systems will support a high quality academic experience for students.
271. One of the school's aims in its Learning and Teaching Strategy is to have innovative research 'as part of the school's DNA'. Through its review of programme specifications, the assessment team observed evidence of strategic alignment with this in the design and proposed delivery for the Masters' Final Project module. This project is supported through a research portal (further discussed at paragraph 391) delivered through the VLE, which illustrated opportunities appropriate to the level and subject of the associated programmes.
272. During the visit, the school provided an introductory presentation which outlined its mission and vision alongside its strategic approach. The assessment team observed that these were clear and had been referenced consistently throughout the visit in relation to learning and teaching. For example, in positioning active learning around case studies in one of the teaching systems from the Learning and Teaching Strategy, and in describing the interrelationship between staff and their students in the Student Engagement Policy. Therefore, the assessment team formed the view that the school had fully understood how to articulate and implement a strategic approach to learning and teaching that was consistent with its stated academic objectives.
273. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the school articulates a strategic approach to learning and teaching that is consistent with its stated academic objectives.
274. To assess whether the school has credible plans to maintain physical, virtual and social learning environments that are safe, accessible and reliable for every student, promoting dignity, courtesy and respect in their use, the assessment team reviewed evidence that included:

- New DAPs plan
- Registration and Enrolment Policy
- Office Renovation Plans and Explanatory Notes
- School Plan and Floor Layout
- Information Technology Regulations
- Information Technology Infrastructure Management Policy
- Virtual Learning Environment
- Learning Resources and Facilities Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy
- Learning Resources and Facilities Policy
- Automated Governance System Policy
- Dignity at Work, Bullying, Harassment, and Victimisation Policy
- Staff and Student Relationship Policy
- Student Disciplinary Policy
- Safeguarding and Prevent Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Drugs and Alcohol Misuse Code of Conduct
- Student Charter.

275. As discussed in paragraph 261, the school intends to deliver programmes online initially, followed by a hybrid online and in-person mode. The assessment team was guided around the physical facilities as part of the visit. The school articulated plans to configure and, where appropriate, renovate the teaching and learning spaces, in accordance with its School Plan and Floor Layout. The assessment team had no concerns about the safety, accessibility, or reliability of the physical spaces in which students would be learning or the planned changes. The New DAPs plan suggests that ongoing monitoring through school experience surveys and the minutes from meetings of the Executive Committee from the fourth quarter of 2026 onward will ensure that physical spaces remain safe, accessible, and reliable.

276. The assessment team scrutinised the School Plan and Floor Layout as well as the Office Renovation Plans and Explanatory Notes. These documents outline the way the school will use its physical space to support learning for hybrid and in-person students. The plans illustrate various features for access as well as emergency evacuation and align with the Health and Safety Policy. The assessment team confirmed these plans are appropriate for the intended learning content, showing appropriate IT infrastructure for the subjects that will

be taught in those spaces. These were supported with appropriate Information Technology Regulations and an Information Technology Infrastructure Management Policy, which would help to ensure equipment would remain current. Therefore, the assessment team formed the view that the physical learning environment will be safe, accessible, and reliable for every student.

277. The school's digital learning environment is through its AGS and VLE, which are available through desktops and mobile apps. All technology, software and programmes are therefore planned to be available to all students equitably, regardless of method of study. The assessment team observed a demonstration of the AGS during the visit, and also reviewed screenshots of AGS and the VLE, and scrutinised how learning would be delivered. Students are able to access the 'My Assessments' page, as well as their calendars, module registrations, payments and surveys alongside learning resources, student support and teaching content. Each module is set up as a discrete unit, to which the student is added, and contains the required reading or video content for each week, alongside some prerecorded lectures and other activities, such as quizzes. Each module gives a breakdown of the estimated hours for each activity, and sets out the format of the module assessment, for example 50 percent invigilated exam, 50 per cent coursework essay. The assessment team observed, for example, the use of a flipped classroom approach that encouraged active learning according to a notional structure of 'context, scenario, challenge, answer'. These could be navigated through different views, including a knowledge graph. The system also featured questions and answer activities with a virtual avatar, framed as a discussion about the subject matter with a virtual peer.
278. The school has in place a wide range of policies to promote dignity, courtesy, and respect in all of its physical, virtual and social spaces. These include a Student Disciplinary Policy, a Drugs and Alcohol Misuse Code of Conduct, and a Dignity at Work, Bullying, Harassment, and Victimisation Policy. These were underpinned by an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy that offered coherent approach to upholding shared values, outlined in the Student Charter. For example, the Student Charter outlines eight responsibilities for students; Prepare, Attend, Engage, Opportunity, Support, Respect, Ambassadors, Community. The underpinning explanation for 'opportunity' reads 'Utilise the School's teaching, resources, and facilities effectively and appropriately'. The school's Student Welcome and Induction Schedule lists 'utilising the school's digital resources' as a key element of the pre-arrival communication, alongside familiarising students with the school's policies, including the Student Charter and the EDI Policy. This is followed up by a session on the final day of the induction period, covering ongoing support, and to 'Reinforce the availability of continuous digital resources and support channels for students'. Consequently, the assessment team formed the view that the school promoted dignity, courtesy, and respect in all of its spaces.
279. During the visit, the assessment team was given a demonstration of the virtual and social learning environment, which aligned with the assessment team's expectations from the evidence made available prior to the visit via screenshots. The assessment team observed that web content accessibility guidelines had been adhered to. The assessment team also noted the potential uses and misuses of elements like discussion forums, especially those augmented through synthetic discussion with AI agents. Following questioning, the team was assured that the planned student induction, academic skills training and Academic Misconduct Policy provide mitigation, and the assessment team had no concerns about the safety, accessibility, or reliability of the virtual or social spaces in which students would be

learning. Consequently, the assessment team formed the view that the school understood how to maintain virtual and social learning environments that are safe, accessible and reliable for every student. As no students are yet enrolled at the school, the team recommends that dignity, courtesy, and respect in the use of learning environments are regularly monitored through the probationary period.

280. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the school maintains physical, virtual and social learning environments that are safe, accessible and reliable for every student, promoting dignity, courtesy and respect in their use.

281. To assess whether robust arrangements exist for ensuring that the learning opportunities provided to those of its students that may be studying at a distance from the organisation are effective, the assessment team reviewed:

- New DAPs plan
- Engagement with Studies and Retention
- Monitoring Student Engagement
- Registration and Enrolment Policy
- Modes of Study Regulations
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Tech Support for Users
- Academic Experience Across All Modes of Study Document
- Notes on IT Support for Programmes
- Note on AI Used in Teaching and Assessment.

282. The assessment team noted that the Teaching and Learning Policy makes an explicit commitment to support flexible study modes. This is evident through various policies and practices to support learning opportunities for those students studying at a distance. These included considering the different needs of students, such as the Engagement with Studies and Retention, and means to support blended study, such as the Academic Experience Across All Modes of Study Document. These describe a model of core content delivery oriented around a flipped learning model, suitable for all modes of delivery. These are supplemented by tailored support systems and differentiated delivery, including AI avatars in lieu of live interactions to simulate a classroom environment. These are underpinned by quality and monitoring mechanisms described in the Modes of Study Regulations. Reflecting on these documents, the assessment team formed the view that the school had a credible plan to ensure that arrangements to provide learning opportunities to those of its students studying at a distance would become robust and effective.

283. The assessment team considered that distance learning students may choose to study outside of usual office hours. As the Notes on Tech Support for Users and IT Support for Programmes did not seem to distinguish between modes of study, the time at which support

teams would be available may not accord with typical study hours of these students. The in house-IT team will be respond to all tickets between 9am and 5pm, in the order in which they are submitted. This may lead to students in other time zones having a short wait for their ticket to be answered. This being the case, the assessment team questioned what measures were in place to ensure such students could access learning opportunities if they encountered IT problems. The provider reassured the assessment team that 'For any critical systems issue the team has a 24/7 response time'.

284. The Note on AI Used in Teaching and Assessment seems to suggest a dependency on artificial intelligence technologies to support distance learning students, alongside set periods of staff consultation hours. Whilst this innovative and potentially effective, the assessment team formed the view that such as approach is non-standard and that over reliance on the approach may confer additional risk. The New DAPs plan ought to be amended to consider such risk, monitoring and carefully managing the use of AI tools in teaching and assessment.
285. The assessment team noted that all students studying in the different modes of delivery will have the same induction, and the evidence reviewed shows that the school understands the need to ensure that distance learning students are also appropriately inducted in their programmes. For example, all students will undertake the Social Integration module, which is organised by the student success team, and will enable students learning at a distance to engage as a cohort with peers and staff. The module will be recorded and shared to all students to facilitate social engagement and access to the social integration features on the app. During the visit, the assessment team was shown the Social Integration Module for distance learning students and observed good practice with respect to stimulating social interaction and building a community to support the learners.
286. When the school begins delivering both hybrid and online models of study, the assessment team found that the student experience of group work for students on the online mode of study may not be the same as for those studying under a hybrid model, although there will be opportunities for all students to engage on the discussion forum, with AI avatars. The assessment team recognised that, given the different modes of study, it will not be possible to duplicate entirely the same approach to group work. The team recommends that this is monitored once the students are enrolled on both modes of study, to ensure that students receive an equitable experience.
287. The support provided to students studying at a distance and the support for accessing virtual and social learning environments are discussed in detail under criterion D1. This sets out that the assessment team found the school has effective and credible plans that demonstrate it will implement robust arrangements for ensuring that the learning opportunities provided to those of its students studying at a distance from the organisation are effective. However, the team recommends that the students' experience of studying through both hybrid and online modes of study is monitored throughout the probationary period.
288. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that robust arrangements exist for ensuring that the learning opportunities provided to those of its students that may be studying at a distance from the organisation are effective.
289. To assess whether every student is enabled to monitor their progress and further their academic development, the assessment team reviewed:

- New DAPs plan
- Engagement with Studies and Retention Policy
- Personal Academic Tutoring Policy
- Learning Management System and Learner Journey
- Learning Management System Module Trackers and Learning Analytics.

290. The assessment team observed that the planned approach to monitoring and assessing student progress is transparent. As discussed in paragraph 454 the school has demonstrated a clear commitment to capturing and analysing data related to student development and achievement. This is predominantly enabled through the use of the school's AGS, which tracks and manages a variety of data related to student records and curriculum information, and is also linked to the assessment system. The Engagement with Studies and Retention Policy outlines metrics for engagement monitoring, with mechanisms in place to alert the student success team and personal academic tutors and to provide them with guidance on when to intervene. The Personal Academic Tutoring Policy outlines that tutors will escalate matters to appropriate teams for specialist support or to handle serious concerns or crisis situations. To this effect, there are dashboards available on AGS and the VLE which will enable students to see their progress on formative and summative assessment. To ensure that students are able to evaluate their own development and achievement, all students will undertake formative assessments in the form of quizzes or self-reflection, with real-time AI-generated feedback that can be personalised. This will enable both staff and students to track progress regularly.

291. During the visit, the assessment team confirmed how the school would be making use of analytics and assessment processes to enable students to monitor their progress and further their academic development. Dashboards and reporting tools embedded in the VLE were demonstrated. The assessment team had no concerns about how these tools would be used, and formed the view that the school fully understood how to monitor the progress of and further the academic development of every student.

292. In conclusion, the assessment team therefore concluded that every student will be enabled to monitor their progress and further their academic development.

Assessment

293. To assess whether the school has credible plans to ensure it operates valid and reliable processes of assessment, including for the recognition of prior learning, 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 assessment team reviewed:

- New DAPs plan
- Assessment Scheduling Policy
- Assessment Flowchart
- Marking, Grading, and External Scrutiny Regulations

- Programme Examination Board Report Template
- Module Examination Board Report Template
- Assessment and Feedback Policy
- Assessment Regulations
- External Examiner Regulations
- Recognition of Prior Learning and Experience Regulations
- Research Supervision Code of Conduct
- FHEQ Level 7 Generic Marking Criteria
- Programme and Module Design Strategy
- Assessment Briefs and Sample Papers.

294. The Assessment Regulations explicitly articulate a commitment to valid and reliable assessment. Modules that have been approved at the school typically follow a similar strategy for assessment which balances an element of examination with an element of coursework, varying depending on whether the 'research', 'professional', 'technical', 'foundational' or 'seminar' teaching system is applied to a particular module. The assessment team found the strategy appropriate to student assessment and appropriate to the subjects being taught, because the subject matter incorporates both conceptual and procedural knowledge.

295. The assessment team examined example assessment briefs and sample papers, confirming that the design of assessment is appropriate to the proposed subject matter, learning outcomes, and level of study. All elements of assessment are managed by the AGS, although an external platform is used for managing and proctoring the examinations. Assessment criteria are made clear to markers, with a FHEQ Level 7 Generic Marking Criteria providing a framework and basis for bespoke criteria and rubrics for each element, ensuring consistency and alignment. This being the case, the assessment team formed the view that the school will operate valid and reliable processes for assessment that enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification being sought.

296. The assessment team confirmed that the school has a policy for recognising prior learning. The Recognition of Prior Learning and Experience Regulations outline, in the assessment team's view, a reasonable process and requires evidence such as references, interviews, portfolio, and comparison of qualification standards and contexts to award credit on a module-by-module basis, for core modules only, excluding the final major project. Credit will only be awarded in full, or not at all, with the determination of whether credit for a module should be awarded being made by the relevant module leader. The assessment team considered the approach appropriate to the scale of the institution and to the current focus on Level 7 programmes, but noted that it may become laborious for advanced entry into Level 6 programmes. Therefore, the assessment team formed the view that the school will operate

valid and reliable processes for recognising prior learning for the courses that it proposes to deliver.

297. During the visit, the assessment team requested insight into programme teams' experience of assessment and how the rigour of assessment would be assured. The senior leadership team illustrated its considerable experience in designing and managing assessment. In consideration of their experience, the Director of Education will work alongside external examiners to review the outline of each assessment to check validity and reliability, particularly with respect to alignment with the learning outcome, level, and relevant benchmarks. They will also oversee the Module and Programme Examination Boards. Additionally, the school has established a hiring process and appointment requirements, which ensure academic module leaders and programme leaders have experience of assessment. To ensure good practice is adopted by programme teams, staff are expected to engage with mentoring opportunities and a learning and teaching day. Therefore, the assessment team formed the view that the school fully understood how to operate valid and reliable processes for assessment, including recognising prior learning, that enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification being sought.
298. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the school will operate valid and reliable processes of assessment, including for the recognition of prior learning, which enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification being sought.
299. To assess whether staff and students engage in dialogue to promote a shared understanding of the basis on which academic judgements are made, the assessment team reviewed:
- New DAPs plan
 - Student Engagement Policy
 - Personal Academic Tutoring Policy
 - Student Feedback, Questions, and Staff Responses on Virtual Learning Environment
 - FHEQ Level 7 Generic Marking Criteria
 - Assessment Briefs and Sample Papers
 - Student Involvement in Academic Standards
 - Advanced Digital Acumen Module.
300. Assessments are defined through briefs which outline the requirements of the task that students must undertake, articulate the relevant learning outcomes and provide an explicit set of assessment criteria. There is a requirement that all assessment criteria are clear and have been aligned with a set of FHEQ Level 7 Generic Marking Criteria. Additionally, there are many routes through which students can receive further clarifications to assessment. Firstly, according to the syllabuses in the module specifications, the first session provides an induction, including an overview of assessment. Secondly, the VLE supports question and

answer features, which students can use to engage their tutors to develop their interpretation of assessment requirements and assessment criteria. Therefore, the assessment team formed the view that the school would support staff and students to engage in a dialogue that would promote a shared understanding of the basis on which academic judgements are made.

301. During the visit, several modules were demonstrated to the assessment team, providing insight into formative assessment and feedback. Module syllabuses embed a variety of forms of formative assessment, such as case study reviews, forum-based activities and quizzes, with students discussing their progress with staff and peers in class, during office hours, and online via the VLE.
302. The School Handbook, which will be provided digitally to all students via the VLE, comprises ten sections, with 'Section Six: Understanding Assessments, Regulations & Policies' covering topics including the following:
 - Assessment Regulations and Procedures
 - Generic Assessment Criteria
 - Grading Methods and Degree Classifications.
303. This section of the handbook explains in detail how academic judgements are made against the criteria. For example, the handbook explains how the 'Intellectual Skills criteria' are broken down, covering critical analysis of theory, the ability to engage with complex ideas and synthesise information. Each section and sub-section of the handbook provides a linked list of associated policies, which students can click through to access. The assessment team also saw signposting within 'MyLSI' (the student view of the AGS), to a 'School Policies and Regulations' page. On this page, all policies are listed by type, and provide a short sentence description of the policy alongside a link.
304. The assessment team considered this approach would be effective in ensuring students develop insight into the assessment criteria, because it provides ample opportunity for students to evaluate their understanding and receive formative feedback on their work. Therefore, the assessment team formed the view that the school fully understood how to enable staff and students to engage in a dialogue to promote a shared understanding of the basis on which academic judgements are made.
305. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that staff and students will engage in dialogue to promote a shared understanding of the basis on which academic judgements are made
306. To assess whether the school has a credible plan in place to ensure that students are provided with opportunities to develop an understanding of, and the necessary skills to demonstrate, good academic practice, the assessment team reviewed:
 - New DAPs plan
 - Advanced Digital Acumen Module

- Personal Academic Tutoring Policy
- Academic Misconduct Regulations
- Research Ethics and Governance Code of Practice
- Research Ethics Committee Chair's Report Template
- Artificial Intelligence Policy
- School Handbook
- Student Welcome and Induction Schedule.

307. The School Handbook, which is made available to all enrolling students, contains an entire section dedicated to understanding academic integrity and avoiding misconduct. It defines misconduct in language students are likely to understand. It also directs their attention to the Academic Misconduct Regulations. These are reinforced through a bespoke session during the welcome week, which combines synchronous and asynchronous session delivery as part of an academic and technical orientation. The school has credible plans for implementing systems of support using personal academic tutors and a student success team, with particular attention to remedying poor academic conduct through guidance meetings.

308. During the visit, the assessment team was presented with excerpts from the Digital Acumen module. This module illustrated several ways in which students could adhere to good academic practice and avoid misconduct, including exploring acceptable and unacceptable uses of generative AI technologies, with reference to the appropriate policies. The school, in its Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy, has committed to providing training to all staff and students on the principles and practical application of the guidelines in the policy. There were also other means to promote good academic conduct, including a banner integrated into the VLE. In discussion with the assessment team, senior staff were aware of and could provide detailed explanations of policies relating to good academic practice and academic misconduct.

309. The assessment team also considered that the learning opportunities had been well integrated into the module because they were appropriate to the assessed task and pertinent to the subject matter. The assessment team considered the multifaceted approach layered into the learning environment sufficient reinforcement to prevent cases of misconduct. Therefore, the assessment team formed the view that the school fully understood how to provide students with opportunities to develop an understanding of, and the necessary skills to demonstrate, good academic practice.

310. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that students will be provided with opportunities to develop an understanding of, and the necessary skills to demonstrate, good academic practice.

311. To assess whether the school operates processes for preventing, identifying, investigating and responding to unacceptable academic practice, the assessment team reviewed:

- New DAPs plan

- Governance Calendar
- Marking, Grading, and External Scrutiny Regulations
- Academic Misconduct Regulations
- Academic Misconduct Panel Chair's Report Template.

312. The school has a credible plan in place to operate a process for identifying, investigating, and responding to unacceptable academic practice, which has been described in the Academic Misconduct Regulations. Such unacceptable academic practice is well defined and includes plagiarism, collusion, fabrication, duplication, cheating, impersonation, ghost writing, unethical behaviour and poor academic practice amounting to negligence. The team found that these reflect definitions in use at other higher education institutions.
313. Where academic misconduct is potentially identified, this will be raised to the attention of module leaders, typically by markers or those involved in either internal or external scrutiny, who initiate an investigation. If appropriate, a student can be referred to an Academic Practice Review, which may lead to constructive outcomes such as a warning and guidance. Alternatively, if evidence is found, this may be referred to an Academic Misconduct Panel. It is clear from the Governance Calendar that there is an appropriate cadence for such panels to convene, corresponding with the assessment process and examination boards. Based on the template, the corresponding reports provided by panels will be detailed and give clear outcomes.
314. The assessment team considered the process to be well articulated and rigorous. The New DAPs plan sets out evidence, in the form of minutes from Academic Misconduct Panel meetings from the first quarter of 2026 onwards, to review during the monitoring period.
315. The school recognises the risks associated with academic misconduct and has made a clear commitment to ensuring that they will be addressed through the school's culture. It explained that good academic practice would be reinforced through contact with students, from the onboarding process in welcome week, to appropriate workshops on skills such as referencing, and the use of formative assessments to address issues of integrity as early as possible.
316. Senior staff emphasised they will take a strategic approach to embedding reinforcement throughout the student experience, to socialise and reinforce appropriate academic conduct. The assessment team queried how this would be monitored and, during the visit, the school demonstrated its reporting and governance process, showing how the templates for reports produced by the misconduct panels will be embedded in its governance system ahead of relevant committees such as the Academic Board. Academic Misconduct Reports are to be considered at the Academic Board to oversee the process, and while the Academic Board would not overturn decisions, they would therefore have oversight of the number and types of cases and be able to give recommendations for any changes in procedures or policies. Any lessons learned will be cascaded down via staff meetings.
317. Further discussion illustrated a hypothetical case example relating to student use of AI during examinations. The proctoring tools that have been sourced can detect students accessing and using generative AI tools, thereby minimising the risk that students would use such tools

during an examination. The assessment team considered these methods would likely be effective.

318. The assessment team concluded that the school has credible plans in place to operate suitable processes for preventing, identifying, investigating and responding to unacceptable academic practice.

319. The team assessed the school's planned processes for marking assessments and for moderating marks. The assessment team reviewed:

- New DAPs plan
- Governance Calendar
- Marking, Grading, and External Scrutiny Regulations
- Examination Board and Appeals Regulations
- External Examiner Regulations
- Assessment Regulations
- Assessment Flowchart
- Examinations Portal
- Student Management Portal
- Staff Onboarding Handbook.

320. The Marking, Grading, and External Scrutiny Regulations clearly articulate a multi-stage process for marking assessments and moderating marks. The process has been illustrated effectively as a flowchart, showing that it will involve internal and external scrutiny ahead of ratification at the Module Examination Board. The assessment team found that this approach accords with norms in the UK higher education sector. This being the case, the assessment team formed the view that the school has a credible plan for implementing appropriate processes for marking assessments and for moderating marks.

321. To ensure consistency, the approach to marking assessments and for moderating marks is overseen by programme leaders and by the Director of Education, with reporting via the examination boards and in external examiner reports to the Academic Board. It has also been described clearly in the Staff Handbook, which is provided to staff during their onboarding process. This being the case, the assessment team formed the view that the school would clearly and consistently articulate assessment processes to all those involved.

322. When the assessment team discussed the process for marking assessment and for moderating marks with senior staff, the school's responses were clear and consistent. It is clear to the assessment team that staff are familiar with the process. The assessment team saw demonstrations of both the staff facing examinations portal and the student-facing management portal, which highlighted the integration of the process into the AGS to ensure the process would be implemented in a consistent manner. These were appropriate because

there were no unnecessary bureaucratic steps, the integration would facilitate referential integrity, and it was clear how the consolidation would aid progress tracking as well as sign-off.

323. The assessment team concluded that the school has credible plans in place for processes for marking assessments and for moderating marks, and those plans are clearly articulated and consistently operated by those involved in the assessment process.

External examining

324. To assess whether the school will make scrupulous use of external examiners including in the moderation of assessment tasks and student assessed work, the assessment team reviewed:

- New DAPs plan
- Assessment Regulations
- Assessment Flowchart
- External Examiner Contract
- Marking, Grading, and External Scrutiny Regulations
- External Examiner Regulations
- External Examiner Register
- External Examiner Recruitment
- External Examiner (Academic Board) Report Template
- External Examiner Handbook
- Minutes of the Board of Governors.

325. While the school has not yet enrolled any students, it has established clear processes and systems for assessment, including the appointment of academic external examiners. The assessment team considered these processes and systems to be well formulated and described in the Assessment Regulations and the Marking, Grading, and External Scrutiny Regulations. The role of external examiners is also illustrated in an Assessment Flowchart, which shows a stage of external scrutiny where a sample of 25 per cent of assessments are sent to external examiners for review and feedback. The assessment team notes that this is a not a typical approach based on its experience of other UK higher education institutions, which typically draw samples that are nuanced with respect to minimum sample size and with respect to representing the full range of grades. However, the assessment team notes that this is appropriate for the planned student numbers at the school, to ensure a statistically viable moderation process. The team notes that this may require review as the school grows.

326. External examiner comments are considered at the corresponding examination board, and a report is prepared for consideration at the Academic Board. The specific roles and responsibilities of the external examiners and the Chief External Examiner are outlined in the External Examiner Regulations and a comprehensive External Examiner Handbook. Through

this, the assessment team confirmed that the school intended to make scrupulous use of external examiners including in the moderation of assessment tasks and student assessed work.

327. The school has recruited external examiners in readiness for delivery of its initial programmes, whose appointments were reviewed and approved by the Academic Board in February 2025. The school maintains an External Examiner Register, which the assessment team found to list people with backgrounds and expertise appropriate to the role of external examiner at a higher education institution in the UK. The assessment team also confirmed that the recruitment process concurs with the UK Quality Code and reflects practice across the sector.
328. The assessment team was reassured that industry externals who were otherwise involved in the programme development and approval process would not be scrutinising marks, and that academic external examiners were appointed for this purpose.
329. The assessment team concluded that the school has credible plans to make scrupulous use of external examiners including in the moderation of assessment tasks and student assessed work.
330. To assess whether the school 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 assessment team reviewed:
- New DAPs plan
 - Marking, Grading, and External Scrutiny Regulations
 - External Examiner Regulations
 - External Examiner (Academic Board) Report Template
 - External Examiner Handbook
 - Approval Documents
 - Whistleblowing Policy.
331. As the school has not yet enrolled any students, no student assessment had been undertaken at the time of the assessment. However, the assessment team was able to verify that the school has a credible plan via the processes that had been followed to approve and establish the standards of the award, which include an external assessors report. The assessment team established that external examiners had already been recruited, with their appointments approved by the Academic Board in February 2025. The programme approval documentation illustrated an example of how the school had considered comments provided by external assessors and responded accordingly. The assessment team was also able to scrutinise the appropriateness and comparability of the approach to governance.
332. The Marking, Grading, and External Scrutiny Regulations confirm that external examiners will be invited to Module and Programme Examination Boards, following review of the summative

assessment marks prepared by module leaders. External examiners will be able to provide impartial and independent advice on assessment and comment on academic standards and student achievement in relation to those standards. External examiners will prepare a report to the Academic Board, where their comments and recommendations will be considered. Per the New DAPs plan, the minutes of such meetings alongside samples of external examiner reports will be provided from the first and last quarters of 2026 onwards, respectively. Although there are several avenues for external examiners to provide feedback, including in their module report and their report to the Academic Board, the assessment team was reassured to see a Whistleblowing Policy, which will provide an additional avenue for external examiners to raise concerns directly with a member of the Board of Governors.

333. During the visit, the assessment team made enquiries about the process of student assessment, including external examiner involvement in the assessment process. The assessment team was reassured that comments from external examiners would be considered and acted upon in a timely manner. The assessment team found many avenues for external examiners to provide feedback. For example, there is a three-stage process for designing assessment, the final stage of which is a review by an external examiner. This was shown to be integrated into the governance system, with full end-to-end tracking of commentary and revisions. The process was also transparent to the Director of Education, who could ensure adequate completion.
334. The assessment team concluded that the school has credible plans to ensure 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.

Academic appeals and student complaints

335. To assess whether the school has effective procedures for handling academic appeals and student complaints about the quality of the academic experience; these procedures are fair, accessible and timely, and enable enhancement, the assessment team reviewed:
- New DAPs plan
 - Governance Calendar
 - Examination Board and Academic Appeals Regulations
 - Academic Misconduct Regulations
 - Student Complaints and Academic Appeals Policy
 - Risk Register and Dashboard
 - School Experience Survey.
336. The Student Complaints and Academic Appeals Policy alongside the relevant regulations for Examination Board and Academic Appeals and Academic Misconduct Regulations, describe the processes for complaints and appeals. These are further discussed in paragraph 129. These are both managed electronically through the AGS, passing relevant information to an appropriate panel or committee. The assessment team found this process was likely to be

effective, with clear eligibility criteria, an explicit outline of the processes and their various stages, and definitions of various rights, as well as an articulation of who makes the decision and the potential outcomes.

337. The assessment team found that a clear plan was laid out for the effective running of complaints and appeals procedures. The Governance Calendar sets out a clear timeline for the panels, examination boards, and committee meetings, described in the regulations and policies that relate to complaints and appeals. The team found the plan for this to be credible, as the schedule of committees accords with norms in the higher education sector. Furthermore, the regulations and policies have been designed to adhere with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education's good practice framework – notably, the guidance suggesting 90 calendar days to complete consideration of a formal complaint or academic appeal.¹
338. During the visit, the assessment team explored how decisions would be made and how the effectiveness of decision-making would be monitored. The assessment team was satisfied with the depth of the responses and observed, that the mechanisms in the governance system were well developed. For example, when questioned about how enhancement could be enabled, the leadership team showed the school's risk register and dashboard to the assessment team, outlining how it would discuss and solve problems. The leadership team also drew attention to committees, such as the Student Experience Committee, being able to capture and discuss information on the effectiveness of the process to drive continuous improvement.
339. Accordingly, the assessment team formed the view that the school understood how to establish effective procedures for handling academic appeals and student complaints about the quality of the student experience. Furthermore, the assessment team found the school understood that the procedures must be fair, accessible, timely, and able to facilitate enhancement.
340. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the school has a credible plan to implement 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, and enable enhancement. The New DAPs plan gives annual milestones from the first quarter of 2025, with key evidence including minutes from the Executive Committee, minutes from the Student Experience Committee, and the Annual School Report.
341. To assess whether appropriate action is taken following an appeal or complaint, the assessment team reviewed:
- New DAPs plan
 - Examination Board and Academic Appeals Regulations
 - Academic Misconduct Regulations
 - Student Complaints and Academic Appeals Policy.

¹ See <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/media/otzp4do5/gpf-handling-complaints-and-academic-appeals.pdf>.

342. As the school has not yet enrolled any students, there have not yet been any appeals or complaints to consider. However, the school's policies outline a credible plan for actions that could be taken following an appeal or complaint. These have been explicitly defined in the relevant regulations and policies: namely, the Examination Board and Academic Appeals Regulations and the Student Complaints and Academic Appeals Policy. The assessment team considered these to be appropriate, and they accord with the assessment team's experience of the sector.
343. The assessment team queried the circumstances under which the President may overturn an academic appeal, currently in the policy as 'The President may overturn the Chair's decision to reject a change if deemed manifestly unreasonable, at their discretion'. The assessment team also queried the circumstances under which the Academic Board may overturn the outcome of an Academic Misconduct Panel. The assessment team recognised the challenge in foreseeing such circumstances, particularly in relation to the adoption of new technological innovations. The school proposed reviewing their regulations and policies with a view to provide greater clarity. The assessment team believes any such amendments should be monitored in the Year One monitoring assessment. Nevertheless, the assessment team formed the view that the school has a firm understanding of why it is important to take appropriate action following an appeal or complaint.
344. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the school has a credible plan to take appropriate action following an appeal or complaint.

Conclusions

345. Based on its findings, the assessment team concluded that the school has demonstrated a full understanding of criterion B3 and has a credible New DAPs plan which can be reasonably expected to enable the school to meet the criterion in full by the end of the probationary period.
346. The school has a credible plan to design and deliver programmes 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, and that learning opportunities are consistently and rigorously quality assured.
347. At the time of the assessment, no students had yet enrolled; therefore, there were no complaints, appeals, or examples of misconduct. Consequently, these processes should be further reviewed during any subsequent monitoring assessment. In addition, at the time of the assessment, no programme delivery or assessment had taken place; therefore, the assessment process should be verified during any subsequent monitoring assessment.
348. The assessment team also recommends that the implementation of the Student Complaints and Academic Appeals Policy and the appeal procedure described in relation to the Academic Misconduct Regulations are monitored once students are enrolled.
349. At the time of the assessment, no students had yet enrolled; therefore, student experience of studying through both hybrid and online modes of study should be monitored throughout the

probationary period, as should the students' experience of dignity, courtesy, and respect in the use of learning environments.

350. At the time of the assessment, key staff in support services had yet to be recruited. Therefore, the assessment team recommends that the links between learning support services and programme approval arrangements are monitored once staff are in place.

Specified changes to the New DAPs plan

351. The assessment team was assured that the school has detailed and credible plans. However, it recommends that the school consolidates key milestones and deliverables (which are currently set out in out in the school's Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations) into the New DAPs plan, to ensure the New DAPs plan document provides an effective basis for monitoring for criterion B3.

352. The team recommends that these changes are made to the New DAPs plan before the probationary period begins.

Assessment of DAPs criterion C: Scholarship and the pedagogical effectiveness of staff

Criterion C1: The role of academic and professional staff

Advice to the OfS

353. The assessment team's view is that the school's New DAPs plan is credible in relation to criterion C1: The role of academic and professional staff.
354. The assessment team's view is that the school has demonstrated a full understanding of criterion C1 because it has a credible plan for ensuring scholarship and pedagogical effectiveness of staff.
355. The school has credible plans to assure itself that it has appropriate numbers of staff to teach its students, and that everyone involved in teaching or supporting student learning, and in the assessment of student work, is appropriately qualified, supported and developed to the level and subject of the qualification awarded.
356. While the evidence shows that the school has a credible plan to recruit appropriately qualified and experienced staff, and to assess and monitor staff skills and expertise, the team recommends that implementation of these plans is monitored during Year One of the probationary period.
357. The assessment team's view is based on its review of the school's New DAPs plan and supporting evidence, alongside any other relevant information, which shows that the school can reasonably be expected to meet the evidence requirements for C1 in full by the end of the probationary period.

Subcriterion C1.1

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.

Reasoning

358. The school has recruited five academic staff and the Director of Education, in addition to the directors who may also contribute to teaching. To assess whether the school has credible plans for relevant learning, teaching and assessment practices that are informed by reflection, evaluation of professional practice, and subject-specific and educational scholarship, the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:

- New DAPs Self-Assessment
- Quality Assurance Framework

- Learning and Teaching Strategy
- Learning and Teaching Policy
- Pdf of Screenshot from AGS Teaching System Portal
- Assessment Regulations
- Assessment Scheduling Policy
- Assessment and Feedback Policy
- AI used in Teaching and Assessment
- External Examiner (Academic Board) Report Template
- Marking, Grading and External Scrutiny Regulations
- External Examiner (Module) Report Template
- External Examiner Handbook
- Graduate Outcomes Monitoring Plan
- Peer Observation Framework and Feedback Form
- Staff CVs
- Academic Staff Recruitment Questions and Test.

359. The team reviewed the school's Quality Assurance Framework, which includes external reference points, including the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) Quality Code, OfS Regulatory Framework for Higher Education in England, QAA Subject Benchmarks and the sector-recognised standards. The school has clearly outlined the programme design, approval and review processes, responsibilities for teaching and learning practices, assessment and feedback processes, student support, external scrutiny, monitoring and review, in line with key performance indicators and continuous improvement. The team concluded that the school's development and monitoring of programmes is based on appropriate learning, teaching and assessment practices.

360. The school's Learning and Teaching Strategy is underpinned by three pillars: innovative programmes, innovative pedagogy and innovative research. Part of the innovative teaching and learning framework is outlined in the Learning and Teaching Policy. This policy provides the school's ambition to include AI as an educational technology to develop innovative programmes, learning and teaching tools, research on the science of adult education and innovative research projects, through continuous improvement. The policy has been developed with reference to external frameworks and regulations and outlines the credit structure, summative assessment tools, and the structure for the modules and quality assurance. The module structure on the AGS is comprehensive and includes the activities, time allocations for self-study and for tutor-led study, AI-led and group learning, with workload information, and assessment type and weighting. The allocation of time to the learning

activities is appropriate for Level 7. For example, at Level 7, the onus is on more independent learning and self-guided study, and the overall time allocated on the 15 credit module example is 81 hours. This includes time for the summative assessment, comprising a coursework (individual essay) assignment and an invigilated exam, both weighting at 50 per cent.

361. The school has identified 'flipped learning', where learners independently engage with learning materials followed by active participation in discussions in class, as a core part of its content delivery for blended, flexible and online learning modes. The team reviewed CVs of the five adjunct academic staff currently recruited by the school. These show that the staff currently recruited have some, but limited, experience of this approach to learning, teaching and assessment. However, the school's Staff Recruitment Policy, Three-Year Workforce Recruitment Plan 2025-2028, and Academic Staff Recruitment Questions and Test demonstrate how the school has credible plans to effectively address this throughout the probationary period. For example, the Academic Staff Recruitment Questions and Test contain, alongside a formal set of interview questions, a 60-minute exercise for prospective staff members. The exercise lays out a teaching scenario, and asks the applicant to demonstrate how they would embed the knowledge gained from the supplied materials into a flipped learning environment, and how they would approach assessment, provide feedback and collect student input. The task is detailed and requires the applicant to describe their task, focus on the learning outcomes and explain how they would embed collaborative elements of work. The applicant's task is then assessed against the following criteria:
- a. 'Clarity and Relevance of Proposed Activities'
 - b. 'Creativity and Effectiveness of In-Class Activities'
 - c. 'Thoughtfulness in Assessment and Feedback Mechanisms'
 - d. 'Depth of Reflection on Effectiveness'
362. The assessment team found that this has demonstrated effective recruitment practice and would be suitable for ensuring recruitment of academic staff with subject-specific and educational scholarship. This is because the approach requires the practical application of knowledge and scholarship to the school's learning, teaching and assessment practices. The team was therefore assured that the school had credible plans in place to ensure staff recruitment demonstrates relevant learning, teaching and assessment practices that are informed by subject-specific and educational scholarship.
363. To consider whether the school has credible plans that demonstrate this, the team reviewed the Assessment Scheduling Policy, which outlines roles and responsibilities to ensure that assessments are scheduled appropriately, at the correct time, and that dissemination of dates and times, appropriate equipment requirements and reasonable adjustments are considered.
364. Furthermore, the team found that the External Examiners Report Template will enable external input into teaching and learning, assessment and feedback, skills development, overall structure of the programmes and module coherence and student engagement. The external examiner report feedback and data will systematically integrate with the Graduate Outcomes Monitoring Plan and Quality Assurance Framework within the AGS, which will feed into the school's wider data review landscape. The feedback given through the external

examiners will be systematically considered by the Academic Board, to ensure high-level reflection on learning, teaching and assessment practices. The school plans, in its Programme and Module Modification Policy, to review all modules annually, reflecting on the subject-specific and sector knowledge gleaned from external examiners. The assessment team notes that the scheduled annual review of modules is set out in its Programme and Module Modification Policy but considers that it should be added to the New DAPs plan as an annual milestone to demonstrate as a basis for monitoring and further assessment.

365. To support staff development and understanding of the school's teaching approach, the Science of Adult Education Module will form part of the onboarding for all staff (covering both academic and professional services), thereby ensuring that all staff will have a clear and coherent understanding of the school's learning and teaching philosophy and the pedagogic approach. The module will form part of the onboarding of all staff, ensuring that everyone involved in teaching or student support has received the appropriate level of support and development.
366. To support reflective practice, continuing professional development (CPD) and sharing of good practice, the New DAPs plan outlines a voluntary developmental approach through Peer Observation Frameworks and the associated Feedback Form to support reflection on learning, teaching and assessment practices. The feedback form will enable constructive feedback for staff to use in evaluating their practices, which will be overseen by the Director of Education. Staff will be encouraged to participate in peer observations, and it is intended to form part of appraisals. The team notes that the peer observation process is set out clearly in the New DAPs plan, and that a sample of this will be available to view from the fourth quarter of 2026.
367. The Assessment Regulations outline the standards for setting, marking and moderation of assessments, and the roles of module leaders and the student success team in setting, marking, moderation and support for students. The regulations cover both formative and summative assessments, as well as academic integrity and internal and external scrutiny responsibilities. AI will be used for formative assessments in the form of quizzes and AI-generated Socratic self-reflections. The assessment team is assured that the school's internal and external scrutiny practices as outlined in the evidence are to be informed by reflection and evaluation of professional practice and subject expertise.
368. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that school has plans in place to ensure that it provides relevant learning, teaching and assessment practices that are informed by reflection, evaluation of professional practice, and subject-specific and educational scholarship.
369. To assess whether the school has academic and (where applicable) professional expertise, the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:
- Staff Recruitment Policy
 - Three-year Workforce Recruitment Plan 2025-2028
 - Staff CVs

- Director of Education job description and person specification
- Job Descriptions – Full Time Academic Staff
- Programme Leaders Team, Module Leaders Team and Teaching and Assessment Team: Responsibilities
- Academic Staff Contract
- Academic Staff Recruitment Questions and Test
- Student Success Team Executive Job Description.

370. To understand how the school will ensure there is appropriate academic and professional expertise, the assessment team considered the Staff Recruitment Policy, Three-Year Workforce Recruitment Plan 2025-2028 and the Academic Staff Recruitment Questions and Test, to ascertain the school's approach to recruiting staff. The Staff Recruitment Policy outlines the responsibility for staffing undertaken by the Executive Committee to meet staffing needs and ensure staff with the required qualifications are recruited. All roles and responsibilities within the recruiting process are specified, including: identifying staffing needs, job specifications, advertising vacancies, applications process, assessments, candidate evaluation, interviewing and onboarding. To support staff to actively engage in their pedagogic development of their discipline knowledge, the policy also includes pathways and career progression and promotion criteria for academic staff. There are two pathways for promotion: teaching, and teaching and research (see paragraph 409).

371. The school's Three-Year Workforce Plan outlines the plan for recruitment across all areas of the school. Within the plan, the school is broken down into four categories in which recruitment is planned: education, student services, operations and technology. Each area is then further broken down by team and role. The workforce plan provides a clear outline of when the school intends to recruit to each role; for example, noting that roles such as the Director of Education and programme leaders have already been recruited, whereas the school expects to recruit full-time (rather than adjunct) module leaders by June 2027. The chart provided in the Three-Year Workforce Plan provides a snapshot of expected staffing numbers for each of the three years of the monitoring period. This plan shows the school moving from 15 staff in its first year of programme delivery, increasing to 32 in the second year, to 43 in the third year.

372. The assessment team found the increase in staffing numbers to be a credible plan, as it correlates with the school's student recruitment plan, whereby it moves from having no students to having cohorts across all programmes, totalling 350 students. The assessment team found the proposed breakdown of staffing increases, such as a move from primarily adjunct staff to primarily full-time staff, decreasing directors' work on day-to-day tasks and gradually increasing the student services team, to be a considered and appropriate scaling. The school has modelled this on a student-staff ratio of 18:1, using sector benchmarking to ensure that this is set at an appropriate level.

373. The assessment team therefore found that the school has credible plans in place, set out in detail through its Three-Year Workforce Plan. Alongside this, the New DAPs plan references the Three-Year Staff Development Plan for academic staff, which will ensure that staff are

equipped to deliver high quality education. This will be further supported by future recruitment to enable further development of programme materials with relevant expertise. The team notes that the New DAPs plan itself does not detail the corresponding monitoring milestones, and therefore recommends that key activities related to recruitment activity and staff development activity, as set out in the school's key staffing documents, are added as milestones to the New DAPs plan to enable effective monitoring of milestones during the probationary period.

374. To further inform the team's view on the academic and (where applicable) professional expertise of staff involved in teaching, learning and assessment, the team reviewed the CVs of the five adjunct staff currently recruited by the school. [redacted]. The CVs indicate that staff have a mix of appropriate and relevant industry and academic experience. The job description for full-time academic staff states a requirement for four out of ten areas of subject expertise, ranging from technical skills in AI or data science to management skills such as project management and organisational leadership. [redacted] The CVs of programme and module leaders indicate experience in assessment and feedback because they are currently or were holding academic positions at higher education providers, that involve learning, teaching and assessment. In addition, some members of the Academic Board and Board of Governors also held or hold academic positions at other higher education institutions and are appropriately qualified to understand the requirements for feedback and assessment that is timely, constructive and developmental.
375. The team concluded that currently, as acknowledged by the school in its plans, there is some, but limited, evidence of subject knowledge and expertise in the staff recruited by the school to deliver the programmes it sets out to deliver during the probationary period. However, the team is assured by the school's credible plans to increase its subject expertise via recruitment, as discussed in paragraph 370. This will include the recruitment of full-time teaching staff, and programme and module leader roles, with specified skills and subject-specific knowledge. For example, the school's recruitment plan and practices require all staff to have some teaching experience, require subject expertise and encourages applicants to have, or to seek AdvanceHE Fellowship. The team considered that the AdvanceHE Fellowship and the school's support of staff in undertaking it, represents good practice of pedagogic development in the higher education sector, based on the team's experience.
376. In addition, the school's recruitment plan and practices will require that Professor and Associate Professor positions require a PhD in relevant subjects, and Assistant Professor positions require a masters' degree in relevant subjects, which is commensurate with the qualifications the school wishes to provide.
377. Furthermore, to ensure that staff obtain or retain academic and (where applicable) professional expertise, the staff development plan seeks to identify any gaps in expertise, for example, through one-to-one meetings, and to run specific workshops focusing on developing staff in these areas, such as a module on educational leadership. The plan also includes the roll-out of mentorship programmes within the school. The school's plans reflect practice from across the sector, and the team notes that the school's plans to encourage staff to gain Advance HE fellowship will further support staff to gain professional academic accreditation and support reflection on their professional practice.

378. The assessment team also reviewed job descriptions for a variety of roles across academic staff and student services. The assessment team found that the job descriptions provided were clear, setting out the required areas of experience and responsibilities associated with each role. For example, the Director of Education job description and person specification requires the postholder to have a masters' or doctoral qualification and to evidence skills in curriculum development and teaching. The responsibilities of the role are clearly defined, including the implementation of the school's strategy, responsibility for reporting to the board, oversight for all academic operations including admissions, teaching, assessment, external examining and awards and chairing the Academic Board. The school have recruited to this role, and the director's CV indicates that they are appropriately qualified and have the skills to undertake the role. The job description for the Student Success Team Executive includes the key responsibilities required for supporting learners through their student journey, including academic tutor, learning support, wellbeing and safeguarding. The school has recruited to the post through a rigorous process and assessment, ensuring the applicants had the required skills and aptitude in AI to fulfil the role and meet requirements.
379. The job descriptions for programme and module leaders and the teaching and assessment team outline roles and responsibilities and line management structure. The job description requires specific skill sets and relevant academic and professional expertise, including: mentoring and pastoral support, active listening and communication, curriculum development and teaching, assessment and feedback, research and supervision.
380. To ensure that staff recruited to these roles can articulate and apply their experience in the school's context, the interview questions listed in the academic staff recruitment and test pack cover the candidate's academic background subject knowledge, and professional experience and contributions to subject-specific research. The questions then cover elements of learning and teaching practice, probing how a candidate would ensure engagement with the learning outcomes, how they would ensure a module remains up to date with advances in the subject field and how they would ensure that the school's teaching or training is responsive to the diverse needs of learners. All the questions ask the candidate to comment on how they would approach each topic through the lens of blended learning programmes and online delivery. Other questions cover the candidate's understanding of equity and inclusion, leadership, experience of staff development and mentoring, and their currency with advancements in their field.
381. The assessment team found that the alignment between the job description and the interview questions and task, as well as the direct relevance of the questioning and task to the delivery of teaching within the school's context, is likely to result in the school recruiting relevant academic and (where applicable) professional expertise.
382. The team concluded that the school has a credible plan to ensure that all staff involved in teaching or supporting student learning, and in the assessment of student work, have academic and (where applicable) professional expertise. This is based on the evidence that shows that staff are recruited against clear role descriptions and undergo recruitment processes requiring the application of relevant academic and professional expertise, and that this expertise is maintained and enhanced by CPD. The team found that the school's plans reflect effective practice from across the sector, but recommends that the school's progress in implementing its recruitment plans should be monitored early on in the first year of its probationary period to ensure that the credible plans are being enacted. To enable suitable

monitoring of these plans, the team recommends that the key activities and milestones set out in the school's Three-Year staff recruitment plan and staff development plan are added as milestones to the New DAPs plan.

383. To assess whether the school has a credible plan for staff to have active engagement with the pedagogic development of their discipline knowledge the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:

- Staff Induction and Development Policy
- Three-year Staff Development Plan (Academic Staff) 2025-2028
- Three-year Staff Development Plan (Non-Academic Staff) 2025-2028
- Academic Staff AGS Onboarding Module
- Job descriptions for full-time academic staff
- Staff CVs
- Staff Handbook
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Subject Specific and Educational Scholarship
- Staff and Curriculum Development
- Vision and Values Statement
- Peer Observation Framework and Form
- Academic Staff Recruitment Questions and Test.

384. The team's view is that the school has a credible plan to support the active engagement and pedagogic development of the discipline knowledge of staff. The plan is outlined in the Staff Induction and Development Policy, which outlines the school's commitment for development opportunities for new and existing staff so they have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to undertake their roles and responsibilities. The Three-Year Staff Development Plan (Academic Staff) outlines the school's plan for staff development. The plans include dedicated time to do research and scholarship. Staff will have 40 hours allocated per year on their workload to support CPD, through internal training, external courses and mentoring, as well as funding and time for further study and professional development. For example, the Peer Observation Framework and Form will enable the school to determine the relevance and currency of the module content and areas for development.

385. Although current staff CVs show some but limited evidence of pedagogical scholarship and discipline research, the school has a credible plan for building up staff expertise by enabling staff to actively engage in pedagogic development of their discipline knowledge. The plan includes establishing an Academic Innovation Cluster (AIC) in Year One, with an emphasis on high academic standards, a structured orientation and training, with feedback. In Year

Two, as more academic staff are recruited, the school plans to introduce mentorship and through the AIC, AI-led teaching and collaborative teaching projects, to support scholarship. In Year Three, advanced educational leadership CPD with a fully established staff is planned. CPD is included in the Teaching and Learning Policy, with the Annual Learning and Teaching Day, which will focus on pedagogical innovations and discipline knowledge, and structured appraisals enabling staff to reflect on their scholarship (C1a). This aligns with the school's three-year staff development plans for academic and professional services staff and the team found that the New DAPs plan includes the Director of Education's report for personal and continuous development for all staff.

386. When recruiting staff, the school will ensure that they can engage with its teaching and pedagogy approach, as evidenced in the staff recruitment plan (see paragraph 370). The Staff Handbook supports the onboarding of staff, outlines the mission of the school and references relevant policies, including regulations, teaching and learning, learning and teaching strategy, research supervision and research ethics and governance code of practice and conduct. It also includes links to Assessment Regulations, marking, grading and external scrutiny regulations and the AI Policy, including staff declaring use of AI for teaching. The Science of Adult Education Module, which all staff will be expected to complete, will form part of the onboarding. This will enable staff to engage in the school's pedagogic approach. There are plans in place to support staff to undertake peer observations, which are voluntary, and the intention is to link them to appraisals.
387. The evidence reviewed demonstrates that the school recognises the importance of subject-specific and educational scholarship, and has plans in place both to recruit staff with active engagement with the pedagogic development of their discipline knowledge, and to provide CPD and research time to all staff. The assessment team therefore concluded the school has credible plans in place to ensure that staff will have active engagement with the pedagogic development of discipline knowledge. The Assessment team notes that planned CPD activity, currently listed in the three-year staff recruitment plan and staff development plan, should be added as milestones to the New DAPs plan to enable effective monitoring of the school's plans during the probationary period.
388. The assessment team assessed whether the school has credible plans to demonstrate that staff will have an understanding of current research and advanced scholarship in their discipline, and that such knowledge and understanding directly inform and enhance their teaching. The assessment team also assessed whether the school's plans will ensure that staff can demonstrate active engagement with research and advanced scholarship to a level commensurate with the level and subject of the qualifications being offered. To do so, the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:
- Subject Specific and Educational Scholarship
 - Plan for Staff to Engage with Scholarship
 - PDF of Screenshots from AGS Research Portal
 - Research Supervision Code of Conduct
 - Research Ethics and Governance Code of Practice

- Research Ethics Committee (Chair) Report Template
- Staff Engagement with other Higher Education Providers
- Academic Staff SAGS onboarding Module
- e-Learning and Teaching Policy
- Job descriptions for full-time academic staff
- Staff CVs
- Learning Theories Scoping Paper.

389. The assessment team found that the school demonstrated that it understands how current research and advanced educational scholarship will directly inform and enhance its teaching. For example, the school's approach to subject-specific and educational scholarship is aligned to its three-year Workforce Recruitment Plan (2025-2028) enabling it to scale up in structured phases. In Year One the school will establish the AIC to enable staff to advance their scholarship, and in Year Two by initiating informal internal collaborations between staff. In Year Three, when the school has an established staff base, the plan is to provide advanced educational scholarship through CPD. Staff will be encouraged to engage in the Annual Learning and Teaching Day to engage in pedagogical innovations and discipline-specific scholarship.

390. As previously discussed in paragraphs 361 and 362, the school's plan for recruiting focuses on staff with doctoral qualifications, and recent publications in both pedagogy and discipline specific . Both full-time and adjunct staff will be encouraged to contribute to a research seminar series and the AIC to advance their scholarship and directly inform and enhance their teaching. To enable staff to develop their research and advanced scholarship, the school will fund conference attendance and encourage to contribute to research outputs, from Year One. The staff onboarding module provides staff with access to relevant policies, resources and development opportunities. The school also has plans to enable staff to access ebook and journal repositories. The assessment team found this plan of encouraging, rather than mandating, conference attendance and publication to be credible and appropriate for a small and specialist school currently onboarding the first tranche of its teaching staff.

391. The assessment team reviewed the school's Research Supervision Code of Conduct , Research Ethics and Governance Code of Practice and Research Ethics Committee (Chair) Report Template , and concluded that the school has plans in place to ensure that research and scholarship is embedded within its programmes, which also enables staff and students to engage in research, and is supported by having the appropriate processes and policies. For example, Research Ethics Committee (Chair) Report Template includes a set of questions focusing on the effectiveness of the ethics processes, monitoring of recurrent issues and recommendations for improving the ethics review process. The assessment team concluded that the school is aware ethics processes have a significant impact on staff and student research, and has a credible plan for monitoring how the process works and ensuring both policies and processes are reviewed, to enable the school to gain the necessary skills and expertise.

392. The school also plans to have innovative research 'as part of the school's DNA'. To enable this, the research portal, which will be available to all staff and students, will provide a platform to showcase research projects, resources, and participation opportunities, fostering community engagement and collaborative learning. Staff will be able to identify projects in their areas of interest, which will also be available as projects for students to participate in. To enable staff and students to have more exposure to current research and advanced scholarship to inform and enhance teaching, the school will host research events, inviting external researchers and industry experts, to develop an environment for research and scholarship. Furthermore, the team noted that the Science of Adult Education Module (which staff must complete during onboarding) will support all staff to understand different learning and teaching paradigms and theories, and how AI and technology can be used to overcome challenges and support advanced scholarship
393. In summary, the team concluded that school has credible plans to ensure all involved in teaching and in the assessment of student work will have an understanding of current research and advanced scholarship in their discipline and that such knowledge and understanding will directly inform and enhance their teaching. Further, the plans show how staff will demonstrate active engagement with research and advanced scholarship to a level commensurate with the level and subject of the qualifications being offered.
394. To assess whether the school's staff have opportunities to engage in reflection and evaluation of their learning, teaching and assessment practice, the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:
- Teaching and Learning Policy
 - LSI Learning & Teaching Strategy
 - Learning Theories Scoping Paper
 - Peer Observation Framework and Form
 - Staff Induction and Development Policy.
395. The assessment team found the school has credible plans and feedback loops to provide opportunities for staff to engage in reflection and evaluation of their learning, teaching and assessment practice. The plans will enable the school to monitor, evaluate and support staff operationally and enable reporting to the Academic Board. For example, one of the school's guiding principles is to encourage reflective practice for staff (and students) for improvements. Staff will participate in annual reflection and appraisal sessions to review performance and consider professional development opportunities. Staff will also undertake quarterly reflection and monthly progress sessions and submit reflection statements to assist them to review their progress, and evaluate their learning, teaching and assessment practice.
396. Aligning with the Learning and Teaching Strategy, the team found that the school has plans to offer opportunities for good practice knowledge sharing in learning, teaching and scholarship by reflection and critical evaluation. For example, there is a credible plan for the Director of Education to monitor, evaluate and share good practice in team meetings. As technology, and in particular AI, underpins the learning, teaching and assessment practices at the school, the

frequency of progress reviews and reflections will enable the school to ensure timely review of the practices, and enable staff to reflect and evaluate them.

397. The Annual Monitoring, Student Engagement, and Feedback Loop will require module and programme leaders, and the Director of Education, to reflect on learning and teaching provision every year and produce reports for the governance bodies. Although peer observations are optional (see paragraph 366), reflecting on and evaluating learning, teaching and assessment are explicit and are to be evidenced on the Peer Observation Framework and Form.
398. The school's plans include competency assessment as part of annual appraisals to enable individuals to track their progress and enable them to enhance their practice and scholarship. Staff will be incentivised to advance their scholarship and practice against specific competencies through tiered ratings of silver, gold and platinum, with annual appraisals graded from A (exceptional) to D (working towards). The assessment team found this to be a credible plan because it will enable staff to reflect and evaluate their practice for enhancement and track their progress, which will include reference to 360-degree feedback and consideration of performance against metrics.
399. The team concluded that that the school has credible plans in place to demonstrate how staff will have opportunities to engage in reflection and evaluation of their learning, teaching and assessment practice. The team recommends that this planned activity is also set out in the school's New DAPs plan document to enable effective monitoring during the probationary period.
400. To assess whether the school's staff have development opportunities aimed at enabling them to enhance their practice and scholarship, the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:
- Staff Induction and Development Policy
 - Subject Specific and Educational Scholarship
 - Plan for Staff to Engage with Scholarship
 - LSI Learning & Teaching Strategy
 - Three-Year Staff Development Plan (Academic Staff) 2025-2028
 - Three-Year Staff Development Plan (Non-Academic Staff) 2025-2028
 - External Engagements and Appointments Statement
 - Peer Observation and Feedback Form.
401. The assessment team's view is that the school has credible plans for staff development opportunities to enhance their practice and scholarship. These plans are set out within the three year staff development plans, the Learning and Teaching Strategy (which outlines the school's commitment for all staff to be supported to enhance their practice and scholarship), and the Staff Induction and Development Policy, which provides the school's plans for development.

402. The evidence shows that the school understands the different aspects of staff development, learning and teaching, scholarship and research, recognises the difference between research and scholarship and is committed to provide scholarship opportunities for all staff [M3]. For example, to support reflective practice, and to enhance practice and share good practice, the Peer Observation and Feedback Form outlines a voluntary developmental approach that enables constructive feedback, overseen by the Director of Education. Staff will be encouraged to participate in peer observations, and these are intended to form part of appraisals. Furthermore, the External Engagement and Appointments Statement outlines the value for undertaking external work as development opportunities for enhancing practice and scholarship. The statement outlines what types of activity can be undertaken for the various positions at the school, recording of the activity and adherence to the school's Intellectual Property Policy.
403. The school recognises the value of scholarship, especially how the rapid changes in AI will impact the curriculum, and understands the distinction between scholarship and research. For example, staff will be allocated 40 hours for CPD per year. In addition to the AIC which will facilitate sharing ideas and curriculum enhancements, dedicated CPD activities and scholarly events, the school intends to introduce the Scholarly Impact Evaluation Model (SIEM) in Year Two. The SIEM will provide a structured framework to monitor and evaluate scholarly engagement of academic staff through individual appraisals and evaluation of module content updates. These will be recorded by module leaders and monitored for their impact on student understanding, and feedback on peer observations. The data collected from student feedback, appraisals, CPD activities and the enhancements logs will be compiled to enable the school to make informed decisions on the effectiveness of the scholarship activities.
404. The Staff Induction and Development Policy details the school's plans for the frequency of appraisals, which includes monthly catch ups and 360 degree feedback. The policy also covers the process for annual appraisals, where staff will be assessed against specific competencies relevant to their roles, which are aligned to the organisation's strategic aims. The Staff Induction and Development Policy also requires staff to create a personal development plan, and identify any areas where they wish to undertake further training. The Three-Year Staff Development Plans for Academic and Non-Academic Staff are comprehensive and demonstrate how the school intends to ensure that both academic and non-academic staff are supported in their development, in cross-functional teams, to enhance practice and scholarship. For example, the effectiveness of student support will be monitored through biannual surveys to determine service efficiency. All staff will have mentorship opportunities, and the school will provide opportunities for cross-functional teams to share good practice to enable better customer service. The assessment team's view is that the school's integrated approach to scholarship for both academic and support staff will provide opportunities for staff to enhance practice and scholarship. The assessment team considers the development opportunities to be in line with what the team has experienced in the sector.
405. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the school's staff have development opportunities aimed at enabling them to enhance their practice and scholarship. To enable effective monitoring of the school's plans, the assessment team recommends that milestones relating to the school's staff development plans are also added to its New DAPs plan document.

406. The team assessed whether staff will have the 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.
407. The team found that the school has a credible plan for staff to gain experience in curriculum development and assessment design. For example, the External Engagement and Appointments Statement confirms the school's recognition of the importance of staff gaining experience in curriculum development and assessment design, and engaging in activities of other higher education providers, including external examining, validation and external reviewing. Furthermore, the Staff Handbook references the school's support for staff to engage with the activities of other higher education providers. This sets out how the school will work with staff to ensure there will be no conflicts of interest with research, academic or business activities and compliance with intellectual property.
408. The Staff Handbook clearly states the responsibilities for academic and non-academic staff roles. Academic responsibilities include delivering engaging, research informed teaching, assessment and marking, mentoring students and research. Non-academic staff will have responsibility for ensuring the school operations are effective and efficient, including education, student services, operations, and technology areas. To monitor the impact and value of external engagement, review of the activities will be undertaken at annual appraisals and biannually at institutional level. This is outlined in the Three-Year Staff Development Plans for Academic and Non-Academic Staff, and will determine the impact on quality assurance, curriculum development and assessment design. The team recommends that the school's planned review of the annual appraisals and institutional biannual reviews should be included in the New DAPs plan to enable effective monitoring during the probationary period.
409. During its meeting with the school's senior team, the team found that it expressed a clear understanding of the importance of academic staff engaging in external examining and external validation panels. The school recognises the importance of staff gaining experience of curriculum development and assessment design, and has formally integrated external engagement into its two academic career progression pathways, teaching, and teaching and research. Engagement with other higher education providers is recognised in both pathways. This includes engagement through external examining, external validation panel membership, invited seminars and lectures, participation in QAA and OfS reviews and, cross-institutional collaborative curriculum development projects.
410. The assessment team concluded that the school has credible plans for providing staff opportunities to gain experience in curriculum development and assessment design and to engage with the activities of other higher education providers through external examining, validation panel members and reviewers.
411. To assess whether the school's staff will have expertise in providing feedback on assessment, which is timely, constructive and developmental, the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:
- Organisational Chart CVs
 - Academic Staff CVs

- Director of Education CV
- Assessment and Feedback Policy
- Programme Leaders Team, Module Leaders Team and Teaching and Assessment Team Responsibilities
- Assessment Regulations
- Screenshot of AI Formative Feedback for weekly assignments
- PDF Screenshots from AGS Assessment Feedback
- AI used in Teaching and Assessment
- School Generic Marking Criteria FHEQ Level 7
- Assessment Briefs and Sample Papers
- The Assessment Flowchart (arrow diagram)
- Three-Year Workforce Recruitment Plan 2025-2028
- Staff Induction and development Policy.

412. The assessment team concluded that the school has credible plans for ensuring there is appropriate expertise in providing feedback on assessment, that is timely, constructive and developmental. For example, the assessment team reviewed the academic staff CVs, which included members of the senior executive team (directors) and concluded there was a mixture of industry and academic expertise in the staff. Of the ten CVs, more than half have academic expertise in assessment and feedback. The CVs of programme and module leaders indicate experience in assessment and feedback because they are currently, or were, holding academic positions at higher education providers that involve learning, teaching and assessment. In addition, some of the Academic Board and Board of Governors also held or hold academic positions at other higher education institutions and are appropriately qualified to understand the requirements for feedback and assessment that is timely, constructive and developmental.
413. The school's Three-Year Workforce Recruitment Plan sets out its phased approach to ensure that staff are recruited with appropriate expertise to support growth and expansion in student numbers. In addition, the team found that all staff must complete an induction programme that introduces the school's approach to teaching, learning and assessment, and introduces key policies to support CPD. Once onboarded, staff will be expected to develop individual personal development plans to enable monitoring of actions and will have quarterly check-ins to reflect on their progress and overall effectiveness.
414. The team found that the school's Assessment and Feedback Policy aligns with the responsibilities of programme and module leaders and the teaching and assessment team. The roles clearly specify that module leaders have responsibility for managing assessment deadlines, and for student feedback, and oversight for marking and scrutiny of summative assessments. The teaching and assessment team has responsibility for marking and

providing constructive feedback supported by module leaders. To ensure timely feedback on assessments, the Assessment Regulations state students should be informed of when and how they will receive feedback, which should be within 20 working days of the assessment deadline, which was confirmed in the meeting with senior staff and overview of VLE and AGS. Assessments will be marked in the online assessment system and marking criterion rubrics will be used, with feedback annotated in text or audio feedback. For consistency the feedback will also include selection or circling of the relevant area in the marking rubric, which will also provide developmental feedback on what went well and areas of improvement. Furthermore, to support constructive and developmental feedback, past assessments and model answers will be shared with students. The team found that this reflected effective practice from across the sector.

415. The school's pedagogic approach to using AI in assessments includes weekly formative assessments with AI-generated feedback to enable students and staff to monitor areas of further support and students' understanding of taught concepts. Students will receive real-time, almost instant AI-generated feedback on the weekly formative assessments, which will consist of interactive quizzes and AI-generated Socratic self-reflections. The assessment team concluded that the weekly formative assessment model will provide clear developmental opportunities and timely feedback for students.
416. The assessment team concluded that the school's current staff have expertise in providing feedback on assessment. The school has credible plans in place to ensure that current and new staff involved in assessment will have expertise in providing feedback on assessment, which is timely, constructive and developmental.
417. The assessment team assessed whether the school has credible plans to ensure that staff with key programme management responsibilities will have experience of curriculum development and assessment design. The team also assessed whether such staff will demonstrate engagement with the activities of providers of higher education in other organisations (through, for example, involvement as external examiners, validation panel members, or external reviewers).
418. Currently the school has recruited staff who have expertise in curriculum development and assessment design as demonstrated by their CVs. For example, the Director of Education's CV clearly demonstrates curriculum development and assessment design experience. Once future staff are recruited, programme and module leaders will be responsible for curriculum development and assessment design, overseen by the Director of Education. The team found that job descriptions for academic staff, programme leaders and the Director of Education require applicants to have experience of curriculum development and assessment design, indicating the school is ensuring that staff are recruited with this necessary experience. For example, to ensure such staff have the relevant experience, applicants are asked to draft learning and assessments plans. The team considered this to demonstrate effective recruitment practice.
419. As the school scales up and recruits more staff, the team found that it has credible plans for a comprehensive training and development programme for curriculum development and assessment design, aligned to the Learning and Teaching Strategy and Programme and Module Design Strategy. The Teaching and Learning Policy refers to staff development and

induction and the Annual Learning and Teaching Day where staff will be able to develop expertise in programme and assessment design and development.

420. The staff CVs reviewed by the team showed that some of the current staff appointed by the school demonstrate that they engage with activities, for example, through acting as external examining and advising on programme development, in other higher education providers. As the school scales up and recruits more staff, there are credible plans to support engagement in activities of providers of higher education in other organisations, for external examining and external validation and review panel membership. For example, the school recognises the importance of external roles, as stated in the staff handbook and the school's External Engagements and Appointments Statement. External academic roles will formally be recorded on the School's Register of External Engagements.
421. The strategy is to increase the numbers of staff engaging in external examining; to host cross-institutional events, for example the Annual Learning and Teaching Day and research and innovation seminars; to produce Memoranda of Understanding for secondments, to encourage collaborative programme development, and to encourage PSRB membership. The External Engagements and Appointments Statement and Staff Engagement with other Providers will enable the school to monitor external activity and engagement to ensure that there is sharing of good practice with all staff.
422. Therefore, the assessment team concluded that the school has credible plans to ensure that staff with key programme management responsibilities will have experience of curriculum development and assessment design, and will demonstrate engagement with the activities of providers of higher education in other organisations.
423. To assess whether the school has made a rigorous assessment of the skills/expertise required to teach all students and the appropriate staff/student ratios, the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:
- Academic Staff CVs
 - Director of Education CV
 - Staff Recruitment Policy
 - Academic Staff Recruitment questions and Test
 - Three Year Workforce Recruitment Plan 2025-2028
 - Programme Leader job descriptions
 - Job Descriptions – Full-time Academic Staff
 - Director of Education Job Description
 - Three-year Staff Development Plan (Academic Staff) 2025-2028
 - Staff Student Ratios (SSR)
 - Staff Student Ratio Calculation

- Staff Planning Framework
- Student Outcomes Statement and Graduate Attributes
- Academic Staff Contract.

424. The assessment team found the school has credible plans for recruiting staff with the skills and expertise required to teach students. For example, the job descriptions for full-time academic staff clearly outline the required expertise required to teach the students on the four masters' programmes (MSc Data Science and Analytics, MSc Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship, MSc Digital Project management and MSc AI for Business Transformation). This corresponds to the associated programme leader job descriptions, where the broad expertise requirements are more specific to the relevant programmes. As discussed in paragraph 374, the Academic Staff CVs indicate the staff already demonstrate subject expertise in the areas of the programmes the school intends to deliver. Within the CVs the assessment team found expertise in applied curriculum in professional practice and settings, experience in designing training, on large transformation projects, improving processes and participating in projects and certification or consultancy programmes. Although these are not directly relevant to the academic positions, the team is of the view that such staff will enable the institution in their aim to support the delivery of the graduate attributes by leveraging educational technologies to support learning.

425. The academic staff contract sets out that adjunct staff will initially be hired on a contractor basis to support the review of AI-generated content and to provide early support to flexible online students as the school expands its provision over the year. The school will map the staff expertise required for module and programme delivery using the Staff Planning framework. This approach will give the school time to develop the staff expertise required for module and programme delivery using the Staff Planning Framework, enabling effective capacity planning that can be reviewed and adjusted throughout the year. This is consistent with the three-year workforce recruitment plan. There will be data led planning cycles to meet programme and module needs, workload planning, recruitment, curriculum design. Student feedback and module performance will enable identification of staffing adjustments, and staff development needs. The staff recruitment policy will enable role mapping and matching staff profiles to module requirements to enable assessment of the skills/expertise required to teach students. While the school has a credible plan to assess staff skills and expertise, the team recommends that its plans for this are monitored during year one of the probationary period as it begins to implement these plans.

426. As discussed under paragraph 361, the school has an intensive high-contact approach to the delivery of the programmes, with 'flipped', scenario based learning and formative AI support. The use of AI will enable the school to free up staff time to provide more support to students. To demonstrate how the school makes a rigorous assessment of an appropriate staff/student ratio, the school reviewed and benchmarked staff student ratios (SSRs) in London based higher education providers with data to determine its SSRs, which it established will be set at 18:1. The institutions the school benchmarked against were selected because they offer similar programmes. The Director of Education will monitor the SSRs annually based on student recruitment and feedback from staff and students on the impact on academic quality and support. The team found that the school's SSR aligns with the school's broader strategies associated with student numbers, programme structures and three year workforce

plan. Furthermore, the team found that the school's Workload Allocation Model is built into the AGS, with module leader and personal academic tutor information, which will allow appropriate allocation of staff expertise and manage workload.

427. The Director of Education and People Team are responsible for appointing new staff, with appropriate qualifications. The school's structured academic planning and staffing lifecycle considers annual enrolment forecast for student numbers planning for subsequent years, including curriculum review and resource mapping. SSR is used as part of academic planning to allocate staff to programmes and workload calculator and SSR will be monitored alongside recruitment, with sessional/adjunct staff recruited accordingly. This will allow the school to ensure there is appropriate SSR, aligned with the staff planning framework so there are appropriate skills and expertise to teach all students.
428. The assessment team concluded that the school has demonstrated how it has, and continues to, make a rigorous assessment of appropriate staff to student ratios. Furthermore, the assessment team concluded that while the school has a credible plan to assess staff skills and expertise, the team recommends that its plans for this are monitored during the probationary period as it begins to implement these plans.
429. To assess whether the school has appropriate staff recruitment practices, the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:
- Staff Recruitment Policy
 - Academic Staff Recruitment Questions and Test
 - Job Descriptions – full-time academic staff
 - Student Success Team Executive Job Description
 - Staff Handbook
 - Academic Staff AGS onboarding module
 - Academic Staff Onboarding Presentation
 - Programme Leaders Onboarding Presentation.
430. The Staff Recruitment Policy outlines all recruitment activities, which will form part of the Annual Strategic Staff Plan. For example, department directors will hold responsibility for recruiting staff in their areas, ensuring that consideration is given to recruiting to fill any skills or expertise gaps within each directorate. The policy clearly outlines the responsibilities for recruitment across all departments/teams. For example, the People Team has the responsibility for preparing job specifications, examples of which were reviewed by the assessment team and advertising the posts. The policy also outlines the procedure for job offers, formalising employment and allocation of academic titles, pathways and remuneration.
431. The Academic Staff Recruitment Questions and Test illustrates the approach to interviews, with all candidates asked the same questions. The school understands the importance of asking each applicant the same questions. The pro-forma includes what is expected of staff, commensurate with experience for the three levels (professor, associate professor and

assistant professor), to allow for consistent judgments to be made. The test, which is applicable to associate and assistant professors, evaluates each candidate on their understanding of innovation, problem solving ability, and learning, teaching and assessment in a flipped learning environment, to ensure academic staff are recruited with the necessary skills and expertise required.

432. The team found that the recruitment and onboarding of professional services staff reflect a similar approach for academic staff. The team reviewed evidence of the recruitment process for a member of the Student Success Team and found it demonstrated a rigorous process. The initial shortlisting included testing on the use of AI which effectively and appropriately informed the subsequent appointments of qualified staff.
433. As discussed in paragraph 386, the school has in place a robust onboarding process to ensure the smooth transition of all staff. Successful academic candidates will complete the Academic Staff AGS Onboarding Module which ensures staff can understand teaching responsibilities, and can access institutional regulations and policies, and other resources, for example, the LSI's pedagogical approach, research and scholarly activity, technology and digital learning resources. In addition, the Staff Handbook, which aligns with the onboarding module, provides relevant information for all staff including the school's values and vision, education mission, resources and policies. The team consider this an effective and appropriate onboarding process that enables academic staff to transition into the specialist nature of the school.
434. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the school has appropriate staff recruitment practices.

Conclusions

435. Based on its findings, the assessment team concluded that the school has demonstrated a full understanding of criterion C1 and has a credible New DAPs plan which can be reasonably expected to enable the school to meet the criterion in full by the end of the probationary period.
436. The assessment team concluded that relevant learning, teaching and assessment practices are informed by reflection, evaluation of professional practice, and subject-specific and educational scholarship. The school has credible plans to recruit staff with the appropriate academic and professional expertise and demonstrates how it will ensure that staff will have active engagement with the pedagogic development of discipline knowledge.
437. The evidence showed that the school's staff will demonstrate an understanding of current research and advanced scholarship in their discipline and that such knowledge and understanding will directly inform and enhance their teaching, as well as active engagement with research and/or advanced scholarship to a level commensurate with the level and subject of the qualifications being offered.
438. Furthermore, the school's plans for development opportunities aimed at enhancing practice and scholarship are credible, offering staff the opportunity 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.

439. The assessment team concluded that the school has appropriate staff recruitment practices and the school understands and plans to have appropriate staff/student ratios.

440. While the evidence shows that the school has a credible plan to recruit appropriately qualified and experienced staff, and to assess and monitor staff skills and expertise, the team recommends that implementation of these plans is monitored during year one of the probationary period.

Specified changes to the New DAPs plan

441. The team was assured that the school has detailed and credible plans. However, it recommends that the school consolidates key milestones and deliverables which are currently set out in other plans (Academic Recruitment Plan, Three-Year Workforce Plan, Three-Year development plans for academic and non-academic staff, Teaching and Learning Policy) into the New DAPs plan to ensure the New DAPs plan document provides an effective basis for monitoring for criterion C1.

442. The team recommends that these changes are made to the New DAPs plan before the probationary period begins.

Assessment of DAPs criterion D: Environment for supporting students

Criterion D1: Enabling student development and achievement

Advice to the OfS

443. The assessment team's view is that the New DAPs plan is credible in relation to criterion D1: Enabling student development and achievement.
444. The assessment team's view is that the school has demonstrated a full understanding of criterion D1 because the evidence shows that the school has in place policies and procedures that can reasonably be expected to enable students in developing and achieving academically, professionally and personally.
445. However, the team recommends that students' experience of studying through both hybrid and online modes of study, as well as their use of both digital and physical learning spaces, are monitored throughout the probationary period. The assessment team also recommends a revision to, and the monitoring of, the implementation of the school's reasonable adjustment policy, as will be discussed in paragraph 493.
446. The assessment team's view is based on its review of the school's New DAPs plan and supporting evidence, alongside any other relevant information which shows that the school can reasonably be expected to meet the evidence requirements for D1 in full by the end of the probationary period.

Subcriterion D1.1

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.

Reasoning

447. To assess whether the school has credible plans in place to take a comprehensive, strategic and operational approach to determine and evaluate how it enables student development and achievement for its diverse body of students, the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:
- Student Charter
 - Student Engagement Policy
 - Student Outcomes Statement and Graduate Attributes
 - Student Resources, Support and Wellbeing Policy
 - Student Mental Health Policy

- Mid-Module Survey Template
- End of Module Survey Template
- Screenshots of module trackers and learning analytics
- Scholarships Policy.

448. The Student Charter clearly states that one of the school's responsibilities is to provide students with access to academic and professional support. This aligns with the Student Resources, Support and Wellbeing Policy, which provides a comprehensive overview of the support and resources available at the school, with clear responsibilities and accountability. The school has plans in place provide access to external specialist resources for mental health, housing and finance, in addition to internal resources, where necessary.
449. The school's Learning and Teaching Strategy sets out the skills that will enable students' academic progression and career progression, and this is supplemented by the school's Annual Employability and Career Development Strategy 2025-26.
450. The school's New DAPs plan outlines a number of mechanisms for evaluating student development and achievement, including planned student surveys (e.g. a template for a module satisfaction survey) and Academic Board reports and student outcome data. The school's plan to enact a strategic approach to evaluation is outlined in the Student Engagement Policy. This policy sets out the mechanisms for gathering feedback through internal and external surveys. Internally, the school will implement module, programme and student experience surveys. Externally, the school will make use of data from the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey and Graduate Outcomes where relevant. The team noted a minor anomaly in that the Student Engagement Policy includes reference to the external Postgraduate Research Experience Survey, rather than the Postgraduate Taught Student Experience Survey, which would reflect the level of programmes the school intends to deliver (Level 7). The team considers that the New DAPs plan should be expanded to set the milestones for each year for delivering, monitoring and analysing data for external and internal surveys over a three-year period, as set out in its Student Engagement Policy.
451. As discussed under subcriteria A1.1 and A1.2, the school has plans for several opportunities to engage students in the academic governance and management activities of the school. For example, students will be able to join strategic governance committees and the school will provide training to support their development. This will enable students to not only have opportunities to develop skills and gain experience of the school outside of their academic programmes, but will also allow them to understand the school's approach to supporting student development and achievement.
452. The Student Resources, Support and Wellbeing Policy further outlines the details of the school's strategic approach to ensuring there is planned support and resources for student development and achievement for its diverse student body. For example, the approach taken to provide a range of different study modes will enable students to select the most appropriate mode, based on their learning preferences and circumstances. The flexible online mode of study will also allow students to start their studies at any time across the year, accommodating individual circumstances.

453. The school understands the support needed for its diverse body of students to support their development and achievement. The student success team will provide support for students, including monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the personal academic tutoring, wellbeing, mental health and fitness to study. For example, the Student Mental Health Policy outlines how flexible support will be provided, including through working with specialist organisations, to enable student development and achievement. It also includes understanding of how mental health can manifest in a range of different conditions, and how they can be identified and tailored support provided. The assessment team concluded that these plans appear credible, as over time the school will build up the available expertise to support the range of specialist needs for students across the monitoring period.
454. The school has a plan to provide scholarships as set out in the Scholarships Policy which lists a set of scholarship guiding principles for the school, including meritocracy, recognition, equality, diversity and needs based. For example, the recognition principle considers scholarships awarded on the basis of different talents and strengths, and the diversity principle will be tailored to different backgrounds and abilities, demonstrating the school's understanding for the need to provide financial support and enable student development and achievement in a targeted way. Information about scholarships is currently available on the school's web pages, and the school has also included information about external scholarships, such as the British Council Women in STEM and the Commonwealth masters' scholarship.
455. Further evidence of the school's strategic and operational approach to how it will enable student development and achievement for its diverse body of students is through its use of learner analytics, as set out in the Learning and Teaching Strategy. For example, it will do this through the use of the school's AGS, which is a bespoke, comprehensive integrated end-to-end system, developed in-house, that tracks processes and archives data and information, including the VLE. The AGS manages student records, curriculums, and human resources. It is a system central to the functioning of the school, as is the assessment system, an external system linked to the AGS, with all activity logged on the AGS. The AGS collects data across all aspects of the student journey, from application through to award, using its automated functions to turn this data into regular sets of reports. At a granular, module level, these reports will be reviewed by module leaders and Personal Academic Tutors (PATs), with programme leaders and the Director of Education receiving reports of learners' analytics at programme or school level. The student-facing AGS is managed as an integrated part of the campus, rather than a system, as it is core to the student experience.
456. The team observed a walk-through and demo of AGS during its visit and noted that final stages of the AGS building and implementation were still in progress. The team was informed that the building and implementation of AGS would be completed by end of 2025, before the school begins delivery. The assessment team therefore recommend that the school should provide an update on the status of AGS early on in its Year One probationary period.
457. The assessment team found that several output documents reflecting the school's approach to evaluating student development and achievement, such as the annual Director of Student Services report, are listed as milestones in the New DAPs plan. However, the assessment team recommends that further actions and milestones set out in key documents such as the Student Engagement Policy are added to the New DAPs plan as milestones, to enable effective monitoring during the probationary period.

458. The assessment team concluded that the school has credible plans in place to demonstrate that it will take a comprehensive strategic and operational approach to determine and evaluate how it enables student development and achievement for its diverse body of students.
459. The assessment team reviewed the school's plans to assess whether students will be advised about, and inducted into, their study programmes in an effective way. This included assessing whether such plans take account of different students' choices and needs. The team reviewed evidence including programme specifications, the Student Charter, Student Welcome and Induction (Autumn 2025) and the School Handbook.
460. The evidence reviewed demonstrated that the school has a credible plan to advise students about their study programmes. For example, the programme specifications are consistent in format and inform students about the award, including exit awards, with associated credit values, and entry requirements, including equivalent work experience in appropriate subjects in relation to the masters' programme. The programme specifications demonstrate the school's understanding of what student information is required including skills development and real-world applications, with the impact on career prospects and personal development. Furthermore, the programme specifications provide detailed information about the modules, learning outcomes mapped to programme outcomes, modes of study, assessments and breakdown of the workload for the modules, and aligns with the information provided on the school's web pages.
461. The Student Resources, Support and Wellbeing Policy includes details regarding the admissions team's responsibility to collaborate with the marketing team to ensure a positive student experience, tracking and processing all queries and applications and managing pre-offer, registration and enrolment information. The policy sets out that the admissions team will work with all relevant teams in the school and is responsible for collecting information, evaluating and reporting for continuous improvement, with clear responsibilities and accountability. In the assessment team's view, this will enable the school to track performance around induction, and to make changes to ensure it remains effective.
462. The Student Charter provides a commitment from the school to its responsibilities for the students' experience. These are clearly articulated through goals and aspirations, with key responsibilities identified and what the school will do to provide a high quality education to prepare students to meet their career aspirations. The expectations placed on students are also clearly identified, for example, in terms of preparedness and engagement, which are important for the school's flipped learning approach. The assessment team found the clarity of expectation and early discussion of responsibilities within the school's plan, to be a credible approach, and considered that it will be effective at inducting students into their programmes of study, ensuring that the school and students have a shared understanding.
463. The assessment team considered that students will be advised about, and inducted into, their study programmes in an effective way.
464. The assessment team reviewed evidence demonstrating the school's approach to the induction of students, and found that the school has a robust and effective induction plan. For example, a one week student welcome and induction plan has been developed, which is comprehensive and includes a pre-induction communications plan, to advise students what to

expect during the week. The pre-induction information provides material about programme and module information, and the virtual ID card. It also provides contact information for academic staff and personal academic tutors, enabling students with different needs to contact relevant staff. The welcome week begins with participation in the asynchronous welcome module, which provides virtual campus tours, a live session (which will be recorded) introducing the student success team and personal academic tutors, information on career development and student engagement opportunities.

465. Personal academic tutors are allocated to students before induction, and students are provided with contact details and have the opportunity to meet them in welcome week. The main responsibilities of personal academic tutors include general academic support and personal and professional support. The personal academic tutors work with the Student Success and Programme Teams to support students, including signposting to academic skill support and other services, enabling different students' needs and choices to be identified and addressed.
466. The assessment team noted that all students studying in the different modes of delivery will have the same induction and the evidence reviewed shows that the school understands the need to ensure that distance learning students are also appropriately inducted in their programmes. For example, all students will undertake the Social Integration module, which will enable students learning at a distance to engage as a cohort with peers and staff. The module will be recorded and shared to all students to facilitate social engagement and access to the social integration features on the app, as discussed under criterion B3.
467. The team found that the Student Welcome and Induction Schedule and the School Handbook are aligned and provide effective resources to ensure that students are appropriately inducted into their programmes. The Student Handbook contains more detailed key information, including the school's pedagogical approach and how it impacts student learning, academic and non-academic support and guidance, digital learning resources, regulations and policies. The handbook and induction include information about accessing student support services, particularly for students with additional needs. The team found the Student Welcome and Induction Schedule, together with the School Handbook, demonstrated evidence of effective resources for advising students about their programmes, and took account of different student choices and needs. For example, the asynchronous welcome week with the live session recording will allow students to review the recorded welcome information on AGS, and can be accessed when it is needed.
468. In conclusion, the assessment team found that the school has credible plans to ensure that students will be advised about, and inducted into, their study programmes in an effective way, and account is taken of different students' choices and needs.
469. To assess whether the effectiveness of student and staff advisory, support and counselling services is monitored, and any resource needs arising are considered, the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:
- Student Resources, Support and Wellbeing Policy
 - Personal Academic Tutoring (PAT) Policy
 - Annual Support, Wellbeing and Personal Tutoring Plan

- Student Charter
- LSI Staff Workload Calculator
- Student Mental Health Policy
- School Resource Allocation Plan.

470. The school's New DAPs plan outlines the school's student support framework with specific milestones for the review of student survey responses, the Personal Tutoring plan and relevant annual reporting. The school's plans and evidence reflect its understanding of the importance of appropriate resource needs for student and staff advisory, support and counselling services and the team found that the school has a credible plan to ensure there are sufficient resources. For example, the Staff Workload Calculator demonstrates that personal academic tutors (PATs) are provided with specific workload allocation to ensure the effectiveness of student support.

471. The team found that the school has a credible plan in place to ensure that the effectiveness of student and staff advisory, support and counselling services is monitored, and that any resource needs arising are considered. For example, the Student Resources, Support and Wellbeing Policy sets out a focus on collecting and analysing data on the performance of the services. A comprehensive set of data will be collected, for example via engagement activities with careers support services, referral to external services, response times and student engagement with wellbeing support, and overall satisfaction with support services. This data will be collated into an annual Director of Student Services report and shared with the Director of Education and the Director of Operations, to ensure evaluation against the strategy, performance and alignment. The data will then be used to inform annual plans, including resource needs, and strategic reports, which will be reviewed by the Director of Education and the Academic Board.

472. The team concluded the school's plans are credible and the cross-functional approach shows an understanding of the need to undertake a holistic oversight of the effectiveness of student and staff advisory, support and counselling services, with resource needs identified and planned annually. Therefore, the team found that the school will monitor the effectiveness of student and staff advisory, support and counselling services, and any resource needs arising will be considered.

473. To assess whether the school's administrative support systems will 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 assessment team reviewed documents including:

- Monitoring Student Engagement
- Monitoring and Evaluation Policy
- Personal Academic Tutoring (PAT) Policy
- Access to the VLE

- Data Retention Schedule and Policy
- Programme and Module Modification Policy
- Walk through of AGS System.

474. As discussed in paragraph 455, the school has demonstrated a clear commitment to capturing and analysing data related to student development and achievement. This is predominantly enabled through the use of the school's AGS which tracks and manages a variety of data related to student records, curriculum information and is also linked to the assessment system. The AGS includes a virtual tutor, which enables personalisation of the content using AI. It provides a seamless integration between support services, academic modules and programme content. The AGS is used to maintain records of all student engagement activities. For example, module and programme leaders, personal academic tutors and the student success team will have access to the analytics and progress for each student through AGS. Furthermore, the school plans that personal academic tutors meet with tutees a minimum of three times a year and are responsible for maintaining brief, factual records of meetings that are uploaded onto the AGS.
475. As part of the school's operational approach to assessment and evaluation of student development and achievement, all students will undertake formative assessments in the form of quizzes or self-reflection, with real-time AI-generated feedback that can be personalised. This enables staff and students to track progress regularly. The AGS will also provide relevant management information to support the student journey, including onboarding materials, handbooks, policies and regulations.
476. The Monitoring and Evaluation Policy outlines the roles of all staff for academic and pastoral monitoring for student engagement at module and programme levels. In addition, the Director of Student Services is responsible for ensuring feedback and actions for personal academic tutors are managed. The range of academic and pastoral activities for monitoring student engagement include, for example, accessing the AGS, attendance, engagement with e-content and absence authorisation requests. Staff can access the VLE learning analytics which include interactive knowledge graphs for both staff and students to identify completed activities and monitor engagement, and the Module Tracker and Learning Analytics System provides a Red-Amber-Green (RAG) dashboard, which will enable both staff and students to track progress.
477. In summary, the AGS records all student academic activities and administrative and other engagements, including enrolment and option selections, complaints and appeals, satisfying academic and non-academic management information needs.
478. The school's plan for managing information can be found in the Data Retention Schedule and Policy, which clearly sets out the regulatory context and legislation governing data retention and data protection, security and access. The data retention period will be for up to six years. To satisfy academic management information needs, the school intends to keep final programme information indefinitely. All programme and module updates will be aligned with the Programme and Module Modification Policy, which will result in programme data being kept and final versions created and kept separately. Each document will be maintained, so student records are aligned with programmes and modules studied. Programme

specifications will be archived and stored on the AGS and changes and updates logged. This provides assurance to the assessment team that the school has credible plans and understands the significance of tracking student cohorts aligned with programme specifications, to satisfy academic management information.

479. The team notes that AGS will be central to exam board operations. All board decisions will be maintained on the AGS, including module marks and results, progression, programme and short course conferment lists and board outcomes, for example deferrals, withdrawals and expulsions. Students will be able to access board outcomes, transcripts and certificates via the AGS, ensuring that secure, timely, accurate and up to date information is provided to students enabling academic integrity of board outcomes.

480. The team therefore concluded that the planned administrative systems will enable the school 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 noted that the New DAPs plan provides milestones for when evidence of management information will be available, such as minutes of the Student Experience Committee in the fourth quarter of 2025, and Post Programme Examination Board Reports in the fourth quarter of 2026. The assessment team recommends that further milestones could be included to enable effective monitoring of the criterion during the probationary period: for example, the enrolment and awarding points for each cohort of students and subsequent reporting on attendance or enrolment data.

481. To assess whether the school has credible plans to provide 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 assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:

- LSI Learning and Teaching Strategy
- The Annual Employability and Career Development Strategy 2025-26
- Subject Specific and Educational Scholarship
- Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations
- MSc AI and Machine Learning Programme Specification
- MSc Data Science and Analytics Programme Specification
- MSc Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship Programme Specification
- MSc Digital Project Management Programme Specification
- MSc AI for Business Transformation Programme Specification.

482. As discussed under paragraph 455, the school has demonstrated a commitment to enabling student development and achievement through providing resources that enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential. The Student Resources, Support and Wellbeing Policy sets out the comprehensive overview of the support and resources available at the school, with clear responsibilities and accountability.

483. As previously discussed under criterion B3, the school's Learning and Teaching Strategy sets out the skills that will enable students' academic progression and career progression. The team found that the strategy aligns with sector-recognised standards and the FHEQ, and contains requirements and mapping for appropriate knowledge and current issues in the school's subject of study. The school's focus of aligning learning with real-world expectations will ensure students graduate with relevant and appropriate practical skills and competencies.
484. This demonstrated to the team the school's understanding of the skills required for professional progression and employment and future career management. In addition, the Annual Employability and Career Development Strategy 2025-26 details the opportunities the school will provide to enhance CV development, interview techniques, digital leadership skills, networking and strategic career development. For example, the school plans to host three employability events per semester scheduled as part of the academic calendar and to enable participation from all students.
485. To support students to develop skills that enable their personal and professional progression, the school has embedded soft skills in its programmes. For example, the MSc Programme Specifications include the development of academic literacy, presentation and critical thinking skills and embedded softer skills development in activities on the VLE. The programmes will employ a range of assessment tools, including presentations, critical self-reflections, timed assessments and discussions, enabling students to develop skills for their personal and professional progression. Students will have the opportunity to engage in extra-curricular workshops, careers events, and CV workshops, and will have access to career development tools.
486. As set out under criterion C1, the school will establish an Academic Innovation Cluster (AIC) for staff development. The team notes that the school's plan is to include research projects for student capstone projects, providing opportunities for all students to develop skills that will enable academic and potential future academic career skills. The school will also invite students to research seminars which will have internal and external participants and collaborators, and to networking events with industry experts, to develop skills that enable their academic, personal and professional progression.
487. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the school will provide 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 noted that the New DAPs plan document sets out milestones to demonstrate this, such as the Director of Education's Annual Plan from the third quarter of 2025, and recommends that to enable effective monitoring of the criterion, the school should also include key activities from the Annual Employability and Career Development Strategy 2025-26 into its New DAPs plan.
488. The assessment team's view is that the school has a credible plan to provide opportunities for all students to develop skills to make effective use of the learning resources provided, including the safe use of specialist facilities, and the digital and virtual environments. To inform this view the assessment team reviewed documents including:
- Student Welcome and Induction Schedule (Autumn 2025)

- Student Charter
- Screenshot of AI Virtual Tutor for concepts
- IT support for programmes
- Automated Governance System (AGS) Policy
- Director of Technology Report Template
- Artificial Intelligence Policy
- Information Technology (IT) Infrastructure Management Policy
- School Resource Allocation Plan.

489. The school plans to deliver all its programmes online initially, as discussed under criterion B3, introducing a hybrid delivery model towards the end of the monitoring period.

490. The assessment team considered the school's Student Welcome and Induction Schedule (Autumn 2025) and established that the school has a credible plan for giving students opportunities to develop skills to make effective use of the resources provided. For example, during the induction and welcome week, students will be given a virtual tour of the AGS and VLE, focusing on key areas. Access to digital literacy guides, for example, 'Cybersecurity Basics', 'Harnessing AI for Learning', and 'Staying Current with Emerging Technologies', will also be covered during induction, and the guides will be accessible via the AGS. Key information will be provided on modules and programmes through digital presentations, which will support students to make use of the digital and virtual environments.

491. To support asynchronous and online studying, the Student Welcome and Induction Schedule will provide students with tutorials to effectively study online. The school is aware that social interaction is important for students studying online. Therefore, the Social Integration module, which forms part of the welcome and induction programme, will enable students to interact with each other in break out rooms online, providing seminar-style participation. The module and programme information will also introduce students to the schools teaching approach, including how to access the content, formative and summative assessments, supporting students to develop skills to make effective use of the learning resources.

492. The planned induction and welcome week activities will include opportunities to engage in asynchronous workshops and activities to familiarise students with using the AGS and VLE. This aligns with the Student Charter, which states students will be provided with opportunities to use resources and facilities effectively, and the Automated Governance System (AGS) Policy providing adequate access for all users of the AGS, which provides the training framework. During induction, the Director of Technology will be responsible for training all staff and students in the use of the school's technology, as well as evaluating the effectiveness of the technology to support hybrid and remote modes of study and the development of students' digital and technical skills, assuring the effective use of the learning resources and the digital and virtual environments.

493. The school has demonstrated a clear understanding of the need for students to engage as a cohort with peers and staff, especially online. To enable this, the Social Integration module organised by the student success team introduces students to the use of breakout rooms in the AGS and VLE. It will allow students to develop the skills to engage with their peers and staff using the digital and virtual environments and to effectively use the learning resources.
494. The assessment team is assured the school has credible plans to develop students' skills on the safe and effective use of specialist facilities, including digital and virtual environments. For example, during the induction and welcome information and guidance on how to access relevant policies regarding the safe and effective use of specialist facilities will be provided. In particular, as the use of AI is ubiquitous for the school's pedagogic approach, the Artificial Intelligence Policy sets out the guideline for the safe, effective and ethical use of AI for staff and students. Digital literacy guides, including Cybersecurity Basics, Harnessing AI for Learning, and Staying Current with Emerging Technologies, are covered during welcome week and induction to ensure the safe and effective use of specialist facilities.
495. The school intends to integrate all specialist resources, such as coding tools and data science platforms on the VLE and AGS and the IT and AGS Team will provide helpdesk functionality and real-time assistance, ensuring that any technical queries are resolved quickly.
496. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that the school will provide opportunities for all students to develop skills to make effective use of the learning resources provided, including the safe and effective use of digital and virtual environments. The assessment team notes that once students are recruited, the usage of, access to and engagement with the school's physical and digital learning environments system should be monitored, and evidence of this provided during the probationary period.
497. To assess whether the school's approach is guided by a commitment to equity, the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:
- Equality, Diversity Inclusion (EDI) Strategy
 - Access and Participation Statement
 - Scholarships Policy
 - IT Accessibility
 - IT support for programmes
 - Online Delivery Plan
 - Learning Support and Reasonable Adjustments Policy
 - PDF Screenshots from AGS Learning Support System
 - Student Resources, Support and Wellbeing Policy
 - School Resource Allocation Plan
 - Academic Experience Across All Modes of Study

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment and Feedback Policy.

498. The assessment team reviewed the school's Equality, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) Strategy which includes the guiding principles of inclusivity (creating an environment where everyone feels welcome, supported, and included) and equity (ensuring fairness and justice in the way they teach, learn, and interact). The roles and responsibilities outlined in the strategy focus on upholding EDI with student-related metrics on the admission diversity index, recruitment of new students from diverse backgrounds, and student satisfaction. The latter considers satisfaction with EDI-related services, to measure their effectiveness and identify areas of improvement. The assessment team noted that although equity is one of the guiding principles, the strategic focus, aligned with Access and Participation Statement, is predominantly on equality of support for students with protected characteristics, in particular ethnicity, and on addressing gaps for better outcomes.

499. Technology plays a significant role in learning, teaching and assessment at the school, and is central to the delivery of the programmes. The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) Strategy outlines its approach on how technology enhances EDI. For example, for IT Accessibility Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) will be applied to support the diverse needs of all users in the design and implementation of systems, making them usable and accessible. The school aims to improve skills and access for underrepresented groups, and will offer scholarships in three main areas, widening access by providing financial support, by encouraging more women into tech, and for applicants whose first language is not English and who have used the school's language app. This is outlined in the Scholarships Policy and reflects the school's strategy for 'leveraging technology for EDI'.

500. To further understand how the school's approach is guided by a commitment to equity, the assessment team reviewed the Online Delivery Plan and IT Support for Programmes, to explore how students, in particular online distance learners, will be able to access the specialist tools and digital infrastructure. The school intends to offer programmes in blended and fully flexible online modes and is committed to equitable access to specialist tools and digital infrastructure to all students. The school plans to integrate the latest AI technologies onto its AGS platform, facilitating equity of access for all students to the latest and most powerful AI technologies. The IT Support for programmes document states that module documentation will outline the technical specifications and software platforms used for teaching or student activity within the module, which then forms a part of the IT and digital learning infrastructure section of the Resource Allocation Plan (140a). The commitment to ensuring student access to the latest versions of relevant technology demonstrates the school's understanding of equity of access to paid, as opposed to free, versions of AI technologies for students.

501. The school has clear plans in its Resource Allocation Plan to integrate tools and specialist resources on the AGS and make them accessible via the VLE, as well as through the AGS Mobile App, which is scheduled for completion in the autumn of 2025. All technology, software and programmes are therefore planned to be available to all students equitably, regardless of method of study. The team notes that to access the AGS mobile app and associated programmes, students will only need to have access to a smartphone less than nine years old. The school also plans to provide a laptop bank on campus for student use, for

those studying via a hybrid delivery. Therefore, the team found the school's approach to access to technology, software and programmes to be guided by a commitment to equity, as all access is via the VLE and AGS, which has been made accessible via both laptop and mobile app.

502. The assessment team also considered the Teaching and Learning Policy. The policy outlines the school's commitment to reasonable adjustments, which aligns with the Learning Support and Reasonable Adjustments Policy. The Learning Support and Reasonable Adjustments Policy outlines the school's commitment to providing an inclusive learning environment, supporting students through learning support plans and reasonable adjustments, including additional time, alternative assessment formats, and specialised tutoring. The guiding principles focus mainly on providing equal support and an inclusive learning environment. For example, PDF screenshots from the AGS Learning Support System, which align with the Learning Support and Reasonable Adjustments Policy, mention a range of reasonable adjustments to support student learning and teaching, including recording lectures, alternative exam formats and coursework deadline extensions.
503. The team noted that all modules have a mandatory summative exam and that, according to the policy, the reasonable adjustment for all learners will be 20 per cent additional time for examinations. The team considers that the school's approach to this element of the policy does not reflect equitable consideration of the range of individual learning support needs and may not be covered by a standard 20 per cent additional time as a reasonable adjustment for every student. While the school has demonstrated a clear understanding of the requirement for reasonable adjustments for different learner needs, this element of the policy reflects an approach focused on equality, rather than equity. The team therefore recommends that the school monitors and reviews its reasonable adjustment policy throughout the probationary period, to ensure that it demonstrates a commitment to equity.
504. The team reviewed the Academic Experience Across All Modes of Study document, which outlines how the school will enable a consistent access to academic content for students on all study modes, through the flipped learning approach. The modules will be organised into ten chapters, enabling all students to access the same content, will be accessible in two formats, video or text-based, and will follow WCAG guidelines to support different learning needs and equitable access. There will be AI tutor support with real-time responses. Human tutor support will be available during UK office hours and scheduled office hours or via email communication.
505. As noted under criterion B3, the team noted that the student experience of group work on the online mode of study will not be the same as for those studying under a hybrid model. For example, the comparison of study modes indicates that individual or group assignments for students studying under the hybrid mode will take place after interactive seminars and workshops, whereas, for students studying under the online mode, there will be individual assignments with AI avatars for simulated peer interaction. There will, however, be opportunities for all students to engage on the discussion forum, with AI avatars. The assessment team recognised that, given the different modes of study, it is not possible to duplicate entirely the same approach to group work. However, the team recommends that this is monitored once the students are enrolled on both modes of study, to ensure that students receive an equitable experience and to demonstrate a commitment to equity.

506. The assessment team concluded that the school's approach is guided by equity, but there is a potential weakness in the reasonable adjustments policy regarding examinations.

Conclusions

507. Based on its findings, the assessment team concluded that the school has demonstrated a full understanding of criterion D1 and has a credible New DAPs plan which can be reasonably expected to enable the school to meet the criterion in full by the end of the probationary period.

508. The assessment team concluded that the school has in place arrangements and resources that should enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential, supported by appropriate mechanisms through which to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these arrangements and the provision of these resources.

509. The assessment team found that the school's commitment to capturing and analysing student data demonstrates an effective approach and will enable the school to regularly evaluate student progress. This is predominantly through the AGS, which is due to be fully built and implemented by the end of the 2025, according to the Resource Allocation Plan.

510. The team also recommends that the following developments are monitored during Year One of the probationary period:

- usage, (including accessing of and engagement with) the school's physical and digital learning environments system
- updates on the school's consideration of its reasonable adjustment policy
- the experience of students studying in both online and hybrid modes of delivery.

Specified changes to the New DAPs plan

511. The team was assured that the school has detailed and credible plans. However, it recommends that the school consolidates key milestones and deliverables that are currently set out in other plans (Annual Employability and Career Development Strategy 2025-26, Resource Allocation Plan, Student Engagement Policy and the Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations) into the New DAPs plan to ensure the New DAPs plan document provides an effective basis for monitoring for criterion D1.

512. The team recommends that these changes are made to the New DAPs plan before the probationary period begins.

Assessment of DAPs criterion E: Evaluation of performance

Criterion E1: Evaluation of performance

Advice to the OfS

513. The assessment team's view is that the school's New DAPs plan is credible in relation to criterion E1: Evaluation of performance.
514. The assessment team's view is that the school has demonstrated a full understanding of criterion E1, because the school has developed an overarching approach which enables the school to engage in effective self-evaluation of its own performance, respond to identified weaknesses and develop further its strengths.
515. The school has included in its plans scheduled reviews, external examining, and student feedback and engagement. The governance structure allows committees to scrutinise monitoring and review reports, such as external feedback on programmes and external examiner reports, to drive decisions that enhance its performance.
516. Within the New DAPs plan the school has identified the need to reflect on and review its approach throughout the probationary period, while setting out a commitment to independent external review to ensure that the academic provision evolves appropriately.
517. The assessment team's view is based on its review of the school's New DAPs plan and supporting evidence, alongside any other relevant information, which shows that the school can reasonably expected to meet the evidence requirements for E1 in full by the end of the probationary period.

Subcriterion E1.1

E1.1: An organisation granted degree awarding powers takes effective action to assess its own performance, respond to identified weaknesses and develop further its strengths.

Reasoning

518. To assess whether critical self-assessment is integral to the operation of the school's higher education provision and that action is taken in response to matters raised through internal or external monitoring and review, the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:
- External Examiner Regulations
 - Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations
 - Governance Calendar 2025-2026
 - New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations

- MSc AI for Business Transformation, Consolidated Approval Documents.

519. The school's New DAPs plan specifies that self-reflection will be embedded in its operations through a number of mechanisms, including:

- a clear system of accountability for decision-making through the governance structure
- cycles of internal review at module and programme level
- reviewing and responding to feedback given by externals
- reviewing and responding to student feedback.

520. The Governance Statement sets out the school's goal to uphold the highest standards through critical self-assessment, comprising transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement through a clear governance structure that allocates responsibility and delegation. The Governance Statement defines the principal bodies for governance, and clearly articulates their role in critical self-assessment including the role of the Board of Governors, the Academic Board and the Quality, Compliance, and Audit Committee, principally responsible for internal controls and risk management.

521. The scheme of delegation within the Governance Statement specifies the framework within which the Board of Governors and its principal bodies operate. It defines the roles, responsibilities, and authority delegated to committees within the governance structure to ensure effective governance, decision-making, and accountability in line with the school's strategic objectives, regulatory compliance, and academic standards. The terms of reference for each of the school's committees clearly set out the delegated responsibilities assigned to each, which match those specified in the scheme of delegation. The terms of reference for the Board of Governors note that it has overall responsibility for management of the scheme of delegation. Minutes of the Board of Governors meeting in 2024 confirm that the board is already acting in this capacity, for example in overseeing and approving the Quality and Audit Committee Instrument of Delegation. To ensure that the scheme of delegation remains 'effective and relevant', the Governance Statement notes that it will be reviewed annually. In the assessment team's view, this constitutes a credible plan for oversight of decision-making within the organisation, aligning with the committee structure.

522. To assess how external monitoring and review are integral to the operation of the school's higher education provision, the assessment team reviewed the school's process and policies around external examiners. The school's recruitment report of December 2024 shows that, in readiness to begin delivery of programmes, the school had run a successful recruitment process for external examiners. A register of external examiners, showing allocations against modules was approved by the Academic Board in February 2025. The External Examining Regulations outline the role of external examiners in reviewing academic standards, assessment processes, and student outcomes. For example, the regulations list that they are engaged to 'provide impartial advice and commentary on academic standards and student achievement' and to 'assist with improvement'.

523. The assessment team reviewed the template for the External Examiner Report to the Academic Board, and found that it requires external examiners to provide feedback on Teaching and Learning, Assessment and Feedback, Organisation and Management, Skills

Development and Student Engagement. The board must then 'respond and discuss these reports'. As the school has not yet commenced delivery, the assessment team could not assess this in practice. The assessment team recognised that the engagement of external examiners, who will provide independent feedback on academic quality and areas for improvement, will play a key role in supporting the school's internal self-assessment by introducing external perspectives into its evaluation processes. The assessment team notes that Module and Academic Boards (and associated minutes), where discussion of external examiner feedback is planned to occur, are listed as milestones in the New DAPs plan. The assessment team found this to be a credible plan for external examiner monitoring and review, as, in readiness for delivery, recruitment of external examiners had taken place, and templates for reports been created, with the scheme of delegation placing responsibility for 'Engaging with external experts and examiners and responding to their reports' with the Academic Board.

524. The school has in place a process of internal review for its higher education provision. The Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations specify the expectations for the review of programme content, teaching methods, and assessments, and incorporate the use of feedback from student surveys, sessions and committees. The regulations will require module leaders to complete an 'Assessment of Module Performance', recorded on the Module Review Form. This assessment will include a statistical analysis of student performance, analysis of the external examiner feedback and responses, and analysis of student feedback, which is planned to be gathered through mid-module and end of module student surveys. The assessment will then conclude with suggested actions for any updates identified before the next delivery of the module. This report is then sent through to relevant programme leaders and the Director of Education.
525. The school also has developed, in readiness to begin delivery, a process for critical self-assessment of its higher education at programme level, as well as module level, through the Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations. This process will require programme leaders to complete a programme review form annually. This form requires information to be provided in areas including:
- programme performance, including satisfaction surveys, feedback from student representatives, meetings with module leaders, and comparison with previous cycles
 - quantitative and qualitative analysis of marks, including passes, fails, and awards
 - retention and progression
 - external examiner reports, responses, and discussions
 - needed changes to the programme specification
 - other improvements for quality and standards.
526. The programme review will also take into account the Module Review Forms submitted for the programme's constituent modules, with programme leaders also required to attend the Student Experience Committee once a semester. This programme level review will then be submitted to the Director of Education. The Director of Education will then report to the Academic Board on the basis of these programme level reports. The assessment team notes

that the New DAPs plan has in place the meetings of the Academic Board, where these reports are to be discussed, as milestones. The assessment team found this to be a credible plan for self-critical review of higher education provision, with explicit comment requested on actions and changes required based on a range of data and evidence, and a clear flow of information through module reports, to programme reports, to the Director of Education to the Academic Board.

527. The school has also developed a process of revalidation, whereby periodic review will occur for each programme every six years, to ensure critical self-assessment of the school's higher education provision. This is further discussed in paragraph 216. The periodic review expectations are set in the New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations, which state that a panel will be convened, consisting of:

- the chair of the Academic Board (Chair)
- one nominated student representative from the programme
- a programme external examiner
- one independent subject matter expert.

528. The revalidation process follows a very similar path to an initial programme approval, albeit it with documentary evidence and metrics included as evidence of the programme's track record of delivery. The panel will review the evidence, which must include:

- A reflection on the programme's performance, including admissions, teaching, progression, assessment, student satisfaction, awards and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Evidence from module and programme leaders, satisfaction surveys, assessment results, external examiner reports, and other performance data
- Reports from directors on the Executive Committee
- Programme specification and module specifications adhering to Academic Standards Regulations
- CVs of the programme leader and all staff
- Outcomes of stakeholder engagement regarding the programme; External market analysis and ongoing business case
- External expert's report on the programme.

529. The panel will then assess the evidence against 'Strategic Approval' rules, then the 'Operational Approval', rules before moving to the 'Academic Approval' rules, echoing the programme approval process. More on the programme approval process is discussed in paragraph 252. Should the review highlight areas for amendment at any of these stages, the documentation will be sent back to the programme development team for review and resubmission. Final outcomes can vary from full revalidation to time-limited revalidation or no revalidation.

530. The final report resulting from the revalidation will be submitted to the Academic Board, and then to the Board of Governors. The revalidation process is planned to identify areas for improvement and guide future programme development, and to calibrate programmes across the school. The New DAPs plan does not cover revalidation, as the six-year cycle sits beyond the New DAPs monitoring period. However, the assessment team found that the proposed process formed a credible plan for critical review, as it requires input from students and externals (including an independent external), and has specific and comprehensive evidence requirements. The assessment team also noted that the similarity of this process to the programme approval process lends credibility to the plan, as the team has assessed that the school has already acted in accordance with the very similar approval process for the programmes which it intends to deliver, as discussed under criterion B.
531. The assessment team found that the school has in place processes to ensure that actions are taken in response to matters raised. For example, the templates for the module and programme review form ask the module and programme leaders to assess the evidence and feedback given, and list actions in response. The New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations state that the school must 'explain which stakeholders were involved, the methods of engagement, the outcomes, and how feedback influenced programme development'. The programme approval documents for the MSc Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship show this in practice, showing an external review, school response and resulting actions. The external assessor identified a number of areas for improvement in the initial programme approval proposal, such as providing feedback that the current entry criteria were overly restrictive, with the potential to exclude students who may have applicable skills. The school provided a response to each element of the feedback, providing the rationale for their original proposal, and any changes made as a result of the feedback. Both the feedback and the responses form part of the approval process papers pack, which will be reviewed by the Academic Board at the point of decision. In the example of the entry criteria, the school note in its response that it has updated its entry criteria for the programme to cover humanities graduates and clarify the role of prior work experience.
532. The school has developed a process for gathering student feedback as a mechanism for ensuring self-assessment is integral to the operation of the school's higher education provision. The Student Engagement Policy requires the school to consult students on any minor or major changes to programmes, modules, regulations or policies. Alongside ad hoc consultations, the school has developed a structure for gathering student feedback to form a part of internal review. The Student Experience Committee, planned to be constituted once students have been recruited, will meet once a semester, and will be chaired by the Director of Student Services. Module and programme leaders and the Directors of Education and Operations will also attend. The student feedback gathered will feed into the cycle of module and programme review. To ensure that actions are taken in response to feedback, the Student Engagement Policy requires the chair to distribute actions to assigned parties, and to report outcomes to the Academic Board. The policy sets out a 90 per cent target for student feedback submitted through surveys to receive a formal response or action within one month. The Student Engagement Policy states that this metric will be 'measured and regularly reviewed as performance indicators for the School'. The assessment team notes that the New DAPs plan lists the Student Experience Committee meetings as milestones, and commits to constituting the committee in Year One.

533. In conclusion, the assessment team formed the view that that the school is establishing mechanisms to integrate critical self-assessment into its higher education provision, through continuous internal and external review processes and that action will be taken in response to matters raised through internal or external monitoring and review.

534. In order to assess whether clear mechanisms exist for assigning and discharging action in relation to the scrutiny and monitoring of its academic provision, the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team, viewed the AGS system and reviewed documents including:

- External Examiner Regulations
- KPI and Reports Policy
- Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations
- New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations
- Student Engagement Policy
- Consolidated Approval Documents
- Module Leader's Report Template
- Programme Leader's Report Template
- External Examiner (Academic Board) Report Template
- Progression of Discharging Actions
- Demonstration of the AGS.

535. The school plans to use the AGS as the core mechanism for the assigning, tracking and discharging of actions. The AGS has been built with the functionality to enable:

- Structured scheduling of governance meetings, distribution of agendas, and sharing of materials and trackers for discussion
- Secure recording and transcription of meeting proceedings and actions
- Standardised templates for capturing actions
- Central dashboards for action monitoring, deadline tracking, and alerts
- Version-controlled archiving of closed actions and associated evidence.

536. Within the AGS system, each action will be 'tagged' with a unique identifier, enabling its progress to be tracked. Once the identifier has been added, it will be assigned a 'responsible owner' and a proposed timeline for completion. 'Responsible owners' are required to provide an update against their actions ahead of the committee or meeting to which the action is attached, which it is the chair's duty to check and enforce. For example, in a screenshot of the Governance Reports and Student Surveys pages reviewed by the assessment team, each item had a designated 'response evaluator' assigned.

537. The Progression of Discharging Actions document, provided to the assessment team alongside a practical demonstration of the AGS, gives additional practical details about how actions are recorded and tracked by the AGS. This includes the process for closing institutional actions, which is integrated into the terms of reference of all governance bodies. For example, the Academic Board has oversight of the implementation of academic actions, including curriculum amendments, learning and teaching strategies, quality assurance enhancements, and programme approval outcomes. The Progression of Discharging Action document also provides a more granular breakdown of the process within the AGS, noting that it works from specific templates, which capture for each action:

- description and rationale
- owner (e.g. individual or department)
- implementation deadline
- link to originating document or policy
- status at time of reporting (e.g. 'in progress', 'overdue', 'completed')
- next review or validation point.
- evidence supporting closure (e.g. revised policy, new procedure, completion report)

538. The assessment team found the use of the AGS to be a credible plan for assigning, tracking and discharging actions, as the system allows auditability, and for actions to be opened, assigned, closed, monitored or transferred easily.

539. The AGS will also be used to track the school's KPIs and associated actions, which are outlined in the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) and Reports Policy. These KPIs are operational measures, used to evaluate the implementation of the school's strategy. For example, the school has a KPI relating to 'curriculum review and update rate', another that focuses on 'on-time graduation rate', and others that relate to financial sustainability, partnerships with industry and graduate employment. Progress against these KPIs will be tracked through regular reporting, recorded on the AGS. The Executive Committee, Academic Board, and Quality, Compliance, and Audit Committee will produce reports for scrutiny against the KPIs and any assigned actions three times a year to the Board of Governors.

540. There are specific data-driven metrics that sit under each KPI: for example, the metric 'Achieve a graduation rate of 80% or higher within the expected timeframe' underpins the 'On-Time Graduation Rate' KPI. The data relating to each of the metrics is held in, tracked through and reported on through the AGS. Where an area of underperformance is identified by a report to the Board of Governors, the policy states that an action plan will be created, and the school confirmed to the assessment team that associated actions will be held, assigned and tracked through the AGS. Subsequent reports will use the AGS data to provide updates to the Board of Governors. Action holders will be able to discharge actions as complete through the AGS, which will form a part of the progress update to the Board of Governors.

541. The usage of the AGS is governed by the Automated Governance System Policy. This sets out a set of principles and responsibilities for the AGS, for example placing 'Enhancing Governance Efficiency with the AGS' (which is noted as providing support to the school's boards, departments, and committees by providing a reliable and efficient online system) under the purview of the Director of Technology. The guiding principles of the AGS Policy include transparency, inclusivity, reliability, continuous improvement and providing training to all users of the AGS. Alongside the AGS policy sits the Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations, which sets out requirements for the review of programme content, teaching methods, and assessments, including the use of student feedback from surveys, sessions, and committees, as discussed in paragraph 499. The Monitoring and Evaluation Regulations also set out the expectations of the delivery of evaluation and completion of actions, for example, a metric to 'communicate review outcomes and resulting actions to 100% of stakeholders within one month of completion' and 'implement 85% of actionable recommendations from Student Experience Committee within one academic year'. The assessment team found that the direction provided in the Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, combined with the operational mapping and responsibilities outlined in the AGS Policy provide a credible plan to govern and support the use of the AGS as the primary vehicle and mechanism for assigning and discharging action in relation to the scrutiny and monitoring of its academic provision.
542. While actions themselves are directly tracked, collated, assigned and discharged through the AGS, the assessment team found that the school has developed templates to assist with identifying actions as a result of scrutiny. For example, the module and programme review templates specifically ask for required updates to programmes, and recommendations as a result of the scrutiny process. The associated external examiner report templates ask for actions to be identified, which will then be added to the AGS, and an 'owner' identified when the report is seen by the relevant module or programme board. The assessment team considered this to be a credible plan, as the templates which will identify actions form a central element of the planned review process.
543. The assessment team concluded that the school is developing clear mechanisms for assigning and discharging actions in relation to the scrutiny and monitoring of the school's academic provision. However, these plans are yet to be operationalised, and will therefore need further assessment during the monitoring period.
544. In order to assess whether the school is developing mechanisms to ensure 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, the assessment team spoke to the senior leadership team and reviewed documents including:
- New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations
 - External Examiner (Academic Board) Report Template
 - External Examiner Regulations
 - Programme and Module Design Strategy
 - Industry Consultation and Feedback on MSc Modules

- Student Engagement Policy
- Student surveys including:
 - Mid and end of module survey templates
 - Programme survey
 - School Experience Survey.

545. These documents and discussions were reviewed to assess how the school intends to integrate external perspectives, industry standards and internal expertise to inform the continuous development and improvement of its programmes.

546. The school plans to systematically gather external perspectives through its external examiners. As discussed in detail in paragraph 490, the school has developed structures whereby the external examiners will produce a report to the Academic Board and will also feed into cyclical module and programme review. Report templates show that the external examiners will be asked to identify areas for improvement, areas of good practice and provide calibration with the sector, specifically asking for comment on 'Teaching and Learning, Assessment and Feedback, Organisation and Management, Skills Development and Student Engagement'.

547. The External Examiner Regulations lists the functions and responsibilities of the role as to:

- provide commentary on academic standards
- offer impartial and independent advice on assessments and programmes
- comment on student achievement relative to standards
- contribute expertise on trends affecting standards
- attend relevant examination boards
- assist with continuous improvement.

548. The scheme of delegation places responsibility for 'Engaging with external experts and examiners and responding to their reports' with the Academic Board. The New DAPs plan lists the meetings of the Academic Board as milestones.

549. The External Examiner Regulations also contain the criteria for recruiting external examiners, either as a module external examiner or a programme external examiner, for the review of academic standard assessment processes and student outcomes. As discussed in paragraph 490, the school has, in readiness for delivery, already recruited external examiners for the courses it intends to initially deliver, and these appointments were approved by the Academic Board in February 2025.

550. The assessment team found that the External Examiner Regulations, report templates, recruitment of current external examiners and responsibility vested in Academic Board to review and respond to external examiner reports, to be a credible plan for the systematic

incorporation of external perspectives to uphold high academic standards in teaching, learning and assessment. The assessment team found that the planned use of external examiners matched its experience in the sector, and that the granularity and specificity within the templates will ensure that external feedback is useful, and prompts action.

551. The school also plans to gather external expertise through the use of independent external experts. The school requires independent external experts to be included on the panels for both the creation of new programmes and for periodic revalidation of the school's provision, which use almost identical processes, as discussed in detail in paragraph 495. The role of the external members in these processes is set out in the New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations, which state that external expertise, consisting of the external assessor and one independent subject matter expert, comprises 50 per cent of the approval or revalidation panel. The external members of the panel provide feedback on the programme or module design at the panel meeting during the 'strategic approval' stage, following a review of the draft specifications and other relevant materials. The external assessment form (commenting on the standards of the programme and areas for enhancement) will be submitted ahead of the 'Academic Approval' stage. These are captured in the consolidated programme approval documents. The Director of Education will review the external assessors' reports, collate items for action and prepare an action sheet, which is used by the programme design team.
552. The assessment team reviewed the programme approval documentation for the MSc AI for Business Transformation, MSc Digital Project Management, MSc Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and the MSc Data Science and Analytics. In the consolidated programme approval documentation, the assessment team found the external reports, alongside an analysis of the external report, and a recommendations document compiled by the Director of Education. The analysis and recommendations are presented in table format, noting the comments made by the external reviewer, and proposing actions to be reviewed and responded to by the programme design team. For example, the analysis and recommendations documents for the MSc Data Science Analytics programme cover suggestions such as 'should the curriculum be enriched with topics like generative AI, DataOps, and big data frameworks like Spark?' Each suggestion has been assessed and responded to, in this case to note that these topics, whilst not explicitly listed by name, are covered in proposed modules 'Advanced Business Intelligence and Analytics' and 'AI in Business: Strategies and Implementation'. The assessment team was therefore assured that the school has developed mechanisms to ensure that ideas and expertise from outside the organisation are drawn into its arrangements for programme design, approval and delivery. The assessment team notes that the New DAPs plan lists milestones of the approval of further modules, such as the Visual and Data Storytelling module.
553. The New Programme and Module Approval and Modification Regulations state that the external assessor is expected to have appropriate academic experience from another higher education institution and to be able to assess whether programmes meet the sector-recognised standards. The regulations also provide a clear policy for conflicts of interest: for example, the school cannot appoint someone as an external assessor or examiner where they may be able to significantly influence the future of students on the programme, or where there is already an appointed external examiner from the same teaching team at the same institution. The regulations also state that external assessors and examiners must not serve

as consultants on programme design or participate in review panels for the programmes they are examining.

554. The school plans to consult with industry experts, and has already done so the initial tranche of programmes. In January 2025 the school held a module development roundtable with individual industry experts, asking a range of questions, such as ‘Do the module’s outcomes align with the key skills needed in your industry?’, ‘Does the module balance technical and non-technical skills well?’ and ‘Are there emerging trends or developments in your industry that should be addressed in these module for future relevance?’ The responses given by industry experts in this roundtable are primarily positive, and make some enhancement suggestions. Included with the notes of the roundtable is the school’s analysis of the responses, in which the school makes a commitment to consider how to action elements of the feedback; for example, in adding an element of budget management training to the Modern Requirements Engineering module.
555. The assessment team therefore concluded that the school has developed credible plans to use ideas and expertise from outside the organisation in relation to programme design and development, as both the initial approval process, and subsequent periodic revalidation of each programme, require external and independent panel members to scrutinise the programmes. The assessment team was further assured of the credibility of these plans through the review of the programme approval documentation for the programmes that the school intends to deliver, which show that external expertise has been integrated into the approval process. The assessment team found that these processes provide a formal role of external expertise in curriculum development and programme reviews, to ensure continued industry alignment to maintain the relevance of the programmes to the needs of employers.
556. The assessment team found that the school is developing mechanisms to ensure that ideas and expertise from within the organisation are drawn into its arrangements for programme design, approval, delivery and review. Students will form a key element of the programme approval and revalidation processes, with a student member on the panel. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation processes, such as module and programme review, will require the reviewer to take into account student learner analytics alongside the mid and end of module surveys, and the programme survey. As discussed in paragraph 493, programme and module leaders will also be required to attend the Student Experience Committee, in order to collect and respond to student’s views. As set out in the Student Engagement Policy, the school will be required to consult with students when proposing major or minor changes to programmes, modules, regulations or policies. This consultation must occur prior to submitting any proposals, and the student responses to the proposals must form a part of the evidence submitted with the proposal for approval, to ensure that the student’s views are taken into account at the point of decision-making.
557. The Student Engagement Policy outlines a structured feedback mechanism designed to gather insights from current students about their academic experience and how it is used to enhance programme design and delivery, with associated metrics for delivery. For example, the school identifies the metric of ‘student feedback response rate’, with a target of 90 per cent of feedback to be addressed within one month. The assessment team concluded that the planned approach through a structured student feedback mechanism, alongside consultation for specific changes, will provide the school with valuable feedback from students to facilitate continuous evaluation and improvement of its programmes. The New DAPs plan specifies

that the student engagement, through committees and structures, will be in place by the end of Year One, with the Student Experience Committee and surveys embedded by the end of Year Two.

558. The assessment team concluded that the school is establishing mechanisms to ensure that ideas and expertise from within and outside the organisation are drawn into its arrangements for programme design, approval, delivery and review. The assessment team was assured of the credibility of these plans, as they relate to specific milestones set out in the New DAPs plans, or can already be evidenced in practice, such as the inclusion of external expertise in the programme approvals for the initial tranche of programmes.

Conclusions

559. Based on its findings, the assessment team concluded that the school has demonstrated a full understanding of criterion E1 and has a credible New DAPs plan which can be reasonably expected to enable the school to meet the criterion in full by the end of the probationary period.

560. The school has credible clear plans to take effective action to assess its own performance, respond to identified weaknesses and develop further its strengths. The New DAPs plan outlines structured processes for critical self-assessment, performance monitoring, and the integration of internal and external expertise, which are consistent with the expectations outlined in criterion E1. The team concluded that these processes will support continuous improvement when fully implemented.

Specified changes to the New DAPs plan

561. The team did not identify any required changes to the school's New DAPs plan in relation to criterion E1.

Degree awarding powers overarching criterion

New DAPs: An emerging self-critical, cohesive academic community with a clear commitment to the assurance of standards supported by effective (in prospect) quality systems.

Advice to the OfS

562. The assessment team's view is that the school meets the overarching criterion for New DAPs because it can be reasonably expected to meet the underpinning criteria in full by the end of the probationary period.
563. The assessment team's view is based on its review of the evidence, which shows in summary that the school has credible plans to develop a self-critical and cohesive academic community. It further has a clear commitment to the assurance of standards, supported by clear quality systems that can be reasonably expected to be effective.
564. This view is based on consideration of the evidence requirements for the DAPs criteria alongside any other relevant information.

Reasoning

565. The assessment team found that the school has credible plans to demonstrate self-criticality through the governance structures it has established, which are underpinned by its comprehensive policies for review and evaluation.
566. The assessment team found the school to have an emerging cohesive academic community as evidenced by its current staffing structures and staff engagement, in addition to the plans for recruiting and developing the academic and support staff base.
567. The school has demonstrated a clear commitment to the assurance of standards through explicit benchmarking against relevant external points of reference, including the FHEQ and subject benchmark statements, in addition to external and independent expertise to confirm those academic standards.
568. The assessment team considers the school to have clear and appropriate quality systems which are expected to be effective. Its quality systems are underpinned by clear governance structures and reporting lines, with policies for monitoring and review and engagement with external reference points.

Conclusions

569. The assessment team therefore concluded that the school meets the overarching criterion as its New DAPs plan and supporting evidence demonstrate that the school has an emerging self-critical, cohesive academic community with a clear commitment to the assurance of standards as supported by effective (in prospect) quality systems.

New DAPs test conclusions

Advice to the OfS: credibility of the New DAPs plan

570. The assessment team's view is that the school has a credible New DAPs plan.
571. The team's view is based on its review of the evidence which shows in summary that the school's New DAPs plan demonstrates how it will meet the DAPs criteria in full by the end of the probationary period.
572. The team considers that the school's New DAPs plan is credible in relation to all criteria such that the school should be able to demonstrate that it will fully meet these criteria by the end of the probationary period.
573. However, the team identified that specified changes are required to the school's New DAPs plan in relation to criteria A1, B1, B2, B3, C1 and D1 to consolidate key activity from existing documentation into the New DAPs plan document. This will ensure that the New DAPs plan forms an effective, single-source tool for monitoring during the probationary period.

Advice to the OfS: understanding of the DAPs criteria

574. The assessment team's view is that the school has demonstrated a full understanding of the DAPs criteria.
575. The team's view is based on its review of the evidence which shows in summary that the school has established an academic governance framework to oversee a coherent higher education mission. This framework is underpinned by academic policies and a self-critical approach to evaluating its own performance. The school has transparent academic frameworks and regulations to govern the award of academic credit and qualifications, with clear mechanisms for setting and maintaining the standards of its qualifications. These meet the expectations of the FHEQ and are comparable with those of other higher education providers.
576. The school has outlined clear policies and processes for programme design, approval and review that will ensure its qualifications align with the threshold academic standards of the FHEQ. The assessment team found that the school has used its programme approval processes, taking into account internal and external expertise, to design programmes that will provide its students with a high quality academic experience.
577. The student learning experience will be underpinned by the plans to recruit staff who are appropriately qualified and supported, sufficient in number and developed to the levels and subjects of the qualifications to be awarded, and by the establishment of policies and procedures that should enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.
578. The school will critically review its own performance through both external and internal monitoring and review, and has in place a clear system for the assigning and discharging of actions arising from self-evaluation and scrutiny.

Advice to the OfS: academic standards

579. The assessment team's view is that the standards set by the school for the proposed programmes are at an appropriate level.
580. The team's view is based on its review of the evidence which shows in summary that the school has developed regulations, policies and procedures that are robust and support the setting and maintenance of academic standards and the security of the award of credit and qualifications.
581. The evidence reviewed shows that the setting and maintenance of academic standards will take account of the appropriate reference points and external and independent points of expertise.

Conclusions

582. The assessment team therefore concluded that the school's New DAPs plan is credible, and once key activity in other documentation is consolidated into the plan, should enable the school to demonstrate that it will meet the DAPs criteria in full by the end of the probationary period.

Annex A: Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
AFHEA	Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy
AGS	Automated Governance System
AI	artificial intelligence
AIC	Academic Innovation Cluster
BOG	Board of Governors
CAH	Common Aggregation Hierarchy
CATS	Credit Accumulation and Transfer System
CMI	Chartered Management Institute
CPD	continuing professional development
DAPs	degree awarding powers
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
FHEQ	Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications
LSI	London School of Innovation
OfS	Office for Students
PAT	Personal Academic Tutor
PMP	Project Management Professional
PSRB	professional, statutory or regulatory body
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
RAG	red-amber-green
SIEM	Scholarly Impact Evaluation Model
SSR	Student Staff Ratio
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics
VLE	virtual learning environment
WCAG	Web Content Accessibility Guidelines



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