

TEF Student Submission for Derby College Group (DCG)

Background

Student Contact

Derby College Students' Union's _____ was nominated as this years' Student Contact. The Students' Union is a separate entity to the College which employs its own staff members and Sabbatical Officers.

_____ they were deemed the most appropriate individual to be able to independently produce a Student Submission.

Evidence Gathering

When thinking about how to best gather evidence, it was decided that speaking directly to students would be the best method, trying to cover as many different course areas as possible. The _____ met with HE management to get student timetables and to discuss the different courses. The HE Management Team ensured that the teaching staff allowed the time _____ to speak to their learners.

Who did we speak to?

The _____ attempted to speak to students from as many different HE courses as possible. The following groups were identified:

- Animal Management – Level 4, full-time
- Equine Science, Management and Training – Level 6, full-time
- Professional Construction – Level 4, part-time & employed
- Criminology – Level 4, full-time
- Criminology – Level 5, full-time
- Criminology – Level 6, full-time
- Sports – Level 5, full-time

In total just over 80 students were involved from the above courses. Sports – Level 5 were predominantly male students and Equine – Level 6 was all female students, the other groups were roughly 50/50 male to female. All groups had students from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities.

Speaking to Students

The meetings began by providing an overview of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), National Student Survey (NSS), and the student submission process. To ensure the integrity of the feedback, _____ proactively asked the students if they had been instructed or influenced to provide any specific responses. The majority of the students were not aware

of the attendance or the purpose of the meeting, and all students, affirmed that they had not been given any guidance on their responses.

Questions asked

- **Why did you decide to undertake a HE course at DCG?**
- **What is Teaching and Learning like on your course?**

The following statements, from the NSS, were read out and students were asked to make comments

- Staff are good at explaining things
 - Staff have made the subject interesting
 - The course is intellectually stimulating
 - The course has challenged me to achieve my best work
- **Learning Resources**

The following statements, from the NSS, were read out and students were asked to make comments

- The IT resources and facilities provided have supported my learning well
 - The library resources (e.g. books, online services and learning spaces) have supported my learning well
 - I have been able to access course-specific resources (e.g. equipment, facilities, software, collections etc..) when I needed to
- **Academic Support**

The following statements, from the NSS, were read out and students were asked to make comments

- I have been able to contact staff when I needed to
 - I have received sufficient advice and guidance in relation to my course
 - Good advice was available when I needed to make study choices on my course
- **What would you like to do after DCG?**

External Influence

I can confirm that the college had no influence on whether to produce a submission and did not try to influence, in any way, the content that follows.

Student Experience

Why choose Derby College?

As expected, the reasons for studying at Derby College is slightly different than studying at a typical HEI (for example Derby University or Nottingham University). Students tend to choose Derby College as it is familiar, they know the staff and the College from previously studying a Level 3 course. However, some had no choice in location as it was a work requirement to undertake the course at Derby College (for example, those on Professional Construction). From the cohort spoken to, the following reasons were given:

- Close to home / location is more accessible
- Cheaper course than nearest University
- Familiarity with staff, previously studied Level 3 course – 51
- Smaller groups
- Work requirement – 14
- Transferred from another provider due to not being treated like HE students
- Transferred from another provider due to not providing the Top-Up course

What is the Teaching and Learning like at DCG?

Course Content

When asked about the staff at DCG, all students agreed that the staff are very knowledgeable and ensure that the delivery is as engaging as possible. The Professional Construction students said that staff go as far as relating content back to individual students' line of work.

All the students spoken to agree that staff ensure that students understand the content. With the groups being smaller, than a typical HEI, the staff are able to engage with individual students, when needed, to ensure comprehension.

Animal Management students explained that lecturers often refer to case studies to enhance the content and this often gives the students a different perspective and understanding.

Equine Science, Management and Training students went as far as stating that, 'staff make it as fun as possible' and, although the course is very much content and research heavy, they are able to fit in an adequate amount of practical time, in the yard, with the horses.

Many of the students believe that the smaller class size is very important to them, this allows for them to feel comfortable asking questions and staff are able to ensure that each individual is happy with the content. This was particularly mentioned in the discussions with Sports, Equine and one of the Criminology groups.

Criminology – Level 5 – particularly enjoy the opportunities they are given to explore the content further through group discussions as they are able to reinforce the information they have just received, and this helps them to discuss other related areas.

Assessment and Feedback

When talking about assessment frequency and feedback, all groups mentioned that they have a course handbook with the dates of when assignments will be given out and the deadlines for these.

Many students agreed they receive above adequate comments on how to improve their assignments, such as, 'You could do this to improve' from Equine learners.

Criminology learners explained that their staff provide previous assignments and explain the differences between and 'good' and an 'excellent' submission. They feel this pushes and inspires them to do more than the minimum requirements and feel pushed to do their best.

Sports learners said that the '...content is hard, but this is a good thing as we feel pushed to learn more'.

Learning Resources

All students agreed that the College IT resources are excellent and, when needed, students have been supplied with a College laptop to use throughout the year. There was an issue with the College's Guest 'WiFi' network, at the start of the year, but the students agreed this has been sorted and is working well.

Professional Construction students agreed that they have been able to come onsite, at any time and use the College's computers for research and to use the CAD software, Autodesk Revit. However, they wished they were able to take the laptops home as the software cannot be supplied on personal computers due to licensing.

With regards to books, journals and case studies all the groups confirmed that they do not use the physical libraries. Some like Equine students, are quite a distance from the libraries. However:

- Equine students use the online moodle portal to access the required books and journals, of which, there are a lot of.
- Professional Construction learners use the online e-library and feel that 'everything we need is on Moodle'.
- Criminology stated, 'all the books we need are available on Moodle' and that 'the number of journals is extensive'
- One Criminology group explained that their lecturer has made a padlet available to them which has links to external resources and journals relevant to specific topics.

Academic Support

At Derby College our students feel they are able to gain the support and advice they need in a timely manner. They often engage their lecturers directly when support is needed with many saying they contact staff on Teams and often receive a response the very same day.

Students in Professional Construction also agreed that staff are quick to respond on Teams.

Many of the staff have offices very close to the lecture rooms and students are happy enough, and welcomed to, to go directly to their lecturer.

One student went as far as saying their lecturers are 'stellar' and they could email them and 'receive a response within 5 minutes, unless it's a weekend, of course'.

Equine students confirmed they have regular 1-2-1 meetings with their staff which helps them to ascertain if they are on track.

Academic Study Coaches are available throughout the day and all students agreed they are able to speak to their study coach, usually, the same day and get the support they need.

Information, Advice and Guidance

All the students that have progressed from a Level 3 course at Derby College, have confirmed that they received many opportunities to discuss their options after Further Education.

Equine students said that received careers talks, HE visits and HE course information during their time as Level 3 students and throughout Levels 4 & 5 have received similar opportunities to discuss their future progression.

Professional Construction students have had similar opportunities where they have been told what they could progress onto after this year.

Criminology learners confirmed that they have been able to discuss future career pathways and further studies.

Sports students all agreed that during enrolment and induction they were given a lot of advice and guidance on how the course is structured, the content and future pathways.

Student Outcomes

When talking about progression most students would like to continue their educational studies. All students have confirmed that at the start of the year they have been told what opportunities are available after finishing their current course, whether this be working in their chosen industry or progressing onto further studies.

Animal Management – Level 4

One student had a full time position lined up at their family farm once they have completed level 4. Another wishes to go into another area of study – this is to broaden their knowledge for their chosen career path. Everyone else in the group wanted to progress onto level 6.

Equine Science, Management and Training – Level 6

Three of our students are looking to progress onto a Masters Degree, they have spoken to the College Careers Team and have decided to do this at Nottingham University as, currently, DCG do not offer this. One student has decided to move onto a PGCE in order to teach. The rest of the students are going into work in the Equine industry.

Professional Construction – Level 4

As our Professional Construction learner are here as part of their work requirements, it is not mandatory to progress onto Level 5. All of the students agreed that they would really be keen to progress onto the Level 5 and then 6. However, two students said, 'as long as it was financially viable'.

Criminology – Level 4, 5 & 6

Level 4 – all students agreed that they would be looking to progress onto the Level 5 and then 6 degrees with the ultimate goal of working for the Police.

Level 5 – student is arranging to study the Level 6 award abroad. The rest of the group are looking to progress onto level 6 and then ultimately apply to the Prison Service, CID and the Police.

Level 6 – All the current level 6 students are wishing to join the Police service.

Sports – Level 5

All the level 5 Sports students are wanted to complete the Top-Up after this year. Afterwards, would like to go into Teaching Sports, into Sports Analysis and the rest of the group all are looking to progress onto a career in Sports Coaching.

Analysis

It is our belief that the sample set included, in this Student Submission, is a fair representation of our full-time & part-time students and the courses on offer, at DCG, in Higher Education.

Our students, in the main, come from our level 3 Further Education provision with Professional Construction being an exception as they study here as part of their work Professional Development requirements.

Not including the students studying at DCG as part of a mandatory work requirement, 76% of the students spoken to chose DCG due to previous knowledge of the teaching members, facilities and support available to them. This is a real testament to the Teaching & Learning and Support available to learners in Higher Education at DCG.