

City College Plymouth Student TEF Submission 2023

Every HE course at City College Plymouth has a student rep for each stage of the course. We can then give feedback to the HE Team during the rep and Program Committee Meetings (PCMs) who take this on board and action what we have said and feed this forward to the relevant staff. In total, there are 53 HE reps that meet regularly to discuss how we can improve any issues the HE students are experiencing for the College to address, but to also talk about what's going well. As well as having our regular meetings, usually termly, we do have the ability to give feedback to our lecturers and HE staff at any other time.

In terms of evidence gathering for the TEF, there has been significant involvement from students across all of our HE courses who have taken the time to feedforward their thoughts and contributed to the evidence presented in this submission. Many of the HE reps have gathered this information to pass on to me by talking to their peers about their experience of HE at CCP. I have then concluded the recurring themes throughout to build a report. Some evidence has been collected from pre-existing sources, for example the evidence gathered Post-Covid learning. Additionally, with the use of student rep feedback, the National Student Survey (NSS) and data from the College's Student Perception Questionnaire (SPQ) dating back to 2018, I have compiled together the student element of the TEF submission.

In terms of maintaining independence for this submission, drafts of the College's submission were shared with me as well as sharing of data and access to previous rep feedback. Support was kindly offered from the HE team where needed with the breakdown of how to approach this piece of writing when I asked for assistance.

Teaching and Learning

In respect of teaching and learning, many of our lecturers have previously worked in the relevant industries for the courses that they teach on and therefore have real-world experience to teach us. For example, the Level 4 Health and Social Care students have commented on how one of their lecturers used to be a nurse; one of the Community and Public Service lecturers is now a retired Police Officer and can provide us with alternative viewpoints during our lectures; and the Programme Leader for our HNC Manufacturing Maintenance Engineering course spent 34 years as a Principal Design Engineer before teaching. The lecturer's enthusiasm for the subject matter makes the content and course engaging and interesting. Students get the opportunity to learn about the experiences, lecturers' journey and application of theory in real life. According to the NSS, in 2019, 83.94% of City College Plymouth students agreed that the teaching on their course was excellent. This increased in 2020 to 85.97% and then again to 86.58% in 2021.

Many of the HE students have the opportunity to network and engage with guest speakers in our masterclasses. This provides students with the chance to learn about prospective future careers

Provider name: City College Plymouth

and ask questions about their job type. For certain courses, there is a weekly engagement with guest speakers and opportunity to mix with different courses. The participation with employers can guide students in choosing future careers and helps us build our professional network.

The City College Masterclasses are always interesting as they can give insight into a wide range of known organisations and how they work, how we can get there and where most of the speakers came from. The masterclasses consist of HE students on a variety of courses including: Community and Public Services, Health and Social Care, Childhood Studies and Business Management. Having these speakers give us the opportunity to connect with new people and learn what they do still gives us the chance to think about future careers we would not have otherwise known about.

Alongside the masterclass we complete our 'red book' which ties everything together through the use of theory and practice. Therefore even when a speaker is not within one of the course's interests, it is good practice for us to find the relation back to our own studies. The master classes have seen guest speakers including Luke Pollard; Plymouth MP, Sue Dann; Lord Mayor, Alison Hernandez; Police and Crime Commissioner and many more fantastic people. The Level 5 FDA Creative Acting students have had the opportunity to work closely with people from the West End, and were able to push themselves outside of their comfort zones to "push the boundaries of acting." Similarly this has been a recurring theme in many of the courses; students on the Public services and Health and Social Care courses have had the opportunity to host tables for visitors at our health seminar back in 2022, as well as a chance to attend a social enterprise conference.

Each course at City College provides students the opportunity to develop a variety of skills such as: presentation skills, communication skills, confidence and professionalism and the emphasis on skills development and professional work environment provides a solid foundation for when we enter the workplace.

Academic Support

Through looking at course rep feedback that dates back to 2018, the majority of students have expressed how valuable they find 1:1 sessions with their lecturers and tutors. Many use the 1:1 tutorials as an opportunity to talk about the areas they might be struggling with and tutors can advise the best they can. We treat this as a safe space to express any issues personally or academically because studying at the college in small groups means we build relationships with our lecturers and feel more than just another number. They always find the time to talk to us after class hours or before. Teachers are always accessible to us through email, or text message, even during the holidays and study leaves. Knowing that we can always drop-in/ email gives us peace of mind and freedom if we ever have something that needs to be acted on quickly. In fact, in 2019, a small focus group was conducted with 20 HE students regarding why they chose to study HE at the College. students said the main reason was the smaller group sizes, additional staff and support.

Provider name: City College Plymouth

Many students have found the online resource, Develop Me, a useful tool, due to the number of modules that we can apply directly to our assignment. It includes subject areas such as research skills, writing skills (writing critically), and how to reference etc. It can feel daunting looking at the various areas to complete, however it is a useful tool to go back to if we are ever struggling as it provides the use of a journal we can reflect on in future. As an academic source it can be useful as the information is accessible to all students, which is particularly handy during assessment periods.

We also use Personal Development Plans which are specific to each individual student and used by a few courses but may take slightly different approaches. This allows us to have the opportunity to be as honest and as personal as we like about our current state. The document includes questions such as where I am academically, professionally and personally- and then where we wish to be in these areas. We are then able to write our short to long term goals and how we plan to achieve these.

Resources

At City College Plymouth, we are fortunate to be studying courses awarded by partner institutions. Having a shared library with the University of Plymouth makes it very convenient for us; we can access the facility at any hour. With our university cards we have access to the university's facilities as well as at CCP, including the library. Students who are studying a course awarded by body Plymouth Marjons, have access to their facilities as well. With our logins we are able to access a wider variety of resources online when researching for assignments. The online University resources such as Primo help us find books, publications and academic journals, and we are able to get past the paywalls, which has been beneficial for many of the coursework based students as we can access this from home and dive into deeper, more effective academic research.

Prior to every module, usually at the beginning of the first semester, students are provided with module guides. These are beneficial because they come as a hard copy and on our Google Classrooms, making it convenient to look at whenever we need. They offer a much needed depth into the marking criteria and how each assignment will be scored, while keeping the instructions simple, well-structured and easy to follow for people who have difficulties with long written work.

As a College we primarily use Google Applications as we are the first college to gain a Google reference in the South West. It is simple to use and makes communication much easier with lecturers and staff in comparison to having to write an email. It also gives those who have a valid reason for not attending a session the opportunity to drop in online through the Google Meets feature and keep up with the lesson, preventing us from falling behind. In addition, it gives those who missed the session the chance to catch up on any lesson content in the forms of Google Slides or Google Docs. These are then posted after the session directly onto the Google Classroom board, as well as any other people who need to review the content for future use and revision. Using Google means we can access our work wherever we are and whenever we need it.

The College does also offer Google Chromebooks that we can use whenever needed and take home with us if certain circumstances occur. For example, for students who are on a low income, the College can provide them with one on a long term basis.

Environment/Facilities

At the College we are privileged to have many spaces open to us for use. As well as having access to all of the facilities that FE students have, we also have HE Students only facilities. This includes our HE Common Room, which is usually subject to HE students on their breaks, where we can chill, play a game of table tennis, or break out a board game. Alongside we have our study spaces which are split evenly so numerous people doing different things can still work effectively without being disturbed. The individual rooms and computers create a good and quiet environment for those who require it, especially with the opportunity to book them out, this can be really beneficial when we have group projects to work on and need a private space to work collaboratively. These spaces have continuously improved through the use of student feedback, we have been able to express freely how we would like and make use of the space.

We are also lucky enough at the College to have support services available to us that are easily accessible. This includes our new wellbeing centre called The Lighthouse- it houses pastoral support, mental health and counselling teams, and provides a secure space for those struggling with their emotions or anxieties - this opened in May 2022. Students have the option to have 1:1 meetings with a professional either on a one off occasion or on a block booking basis.

The Student Union is also a great place to go for our HE students because it houses all facilities from mental health support and emergency sanitary products, to food banks and household items for those struggling financially.

Course Specific Facilities

Our classrooms reflect a very professional environment for those of us studying, this is purposefully done to prepare us for the working world. In our classrooms we can find additional resources such as books and laptops to assist us with our learning. Business Management classrooms have been adapted so it now reflects a business environment following student feedback about how they would like to study in a work-like environment to prepare them for future roles. Many students have a dress code, for example some of our HNC Mechanical Engineering students who are sponsored by their employers, but for the majority it is simply smart casual. In some cases, students may have to dress more professionally when given the chance to host course related events such as breakfasts and conferences.

Provider name: City College Plymouth

Oceansgate:

Another fantastic facility available is Oceansgate for the HE Engineering and Construction students. This was opened in 2021. The new teaching facility supports the Maritime, Engineering, Manufacturing, Construction and Digital Technology industries. The site enables the delivery of new courses that are designed to provide students the opportunity to present themselves to employers with the highly technical, specialist skills and knowledge gained from these facilities.

There are many other course specific facilities that our students have; our FdSc Sports Therapy students have a sports clinic space where they are observed during practicals. They also offer injury clinics to staff, students and the wider public. Dance students have their own dance studio where they are taught and can openly perform to students and staff in passing. The Creative Acting students also have use of the college's theatre. There is also a gym space for the FdSc Strength Conditioning and Coaching students.

Learning/Teaching during Covid

During Covid both teachers and students had to adjust to the new way of learning.

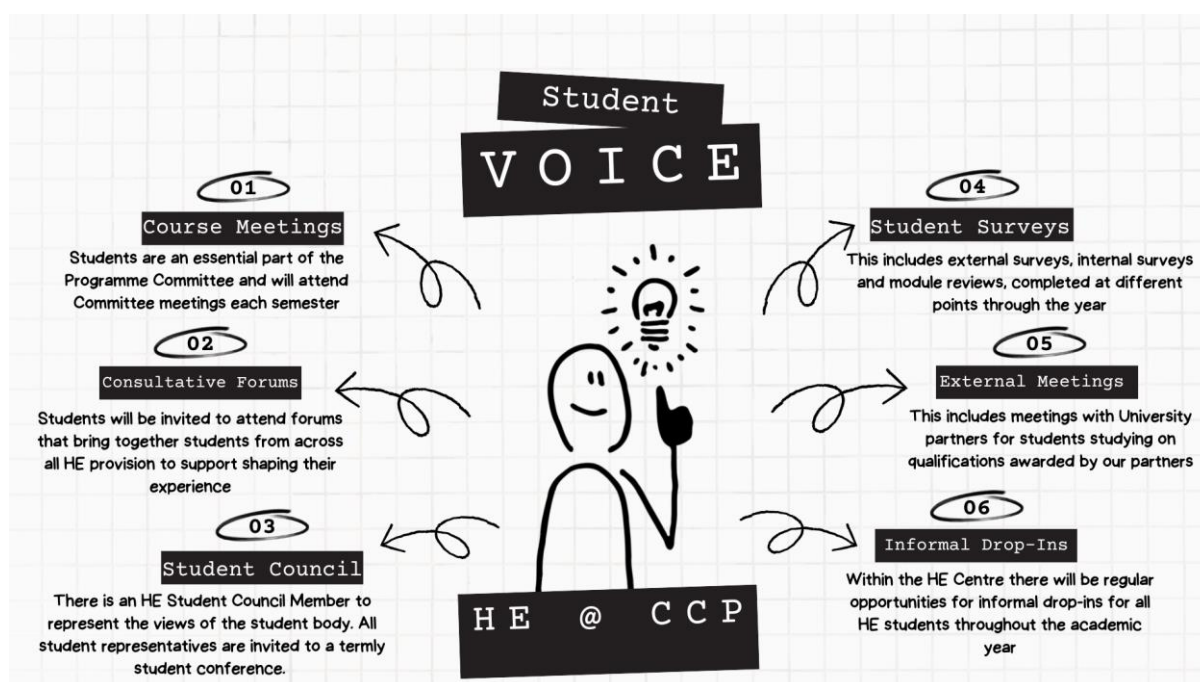
These findings were not published externally but as you can see in the table below, students were very satisfied with the level of learning and support received during the pandemic- surpassing the UK average.

Question Topic	NSS Satisfaction %	SPQ Satisfaction %	UK Average %

Provider name: City College Plymouth

Receiving useful information about changes to course during the pandemic	90.91%	93%	73.09%
Receiving timely information about course during pandemic	89.61%	92%	63.79%
Steps taken to support mental wellbeing during the pandemic	71.62%	79%	41.85%
Steps taken to support physical safety during the pandemic	95.83%	94%	79.75%
Contentedness with delivery of learning and teaching during the pandemic	75.32%	84%	47.57%
Ability to access learning materials during the pandemic	92.21%	95%	78.14%

Student Voice



By using our student voice, myself and other HE students have the opportunity to give feedback to the staff that teach on our course about anything that is working and any constructive feedback. Additionally, one of our students who is on the FdA Business Management course is our HE Student Council Member. This means that they represent HE students at the Student Council meetings where all of the student reps across the FE and HE provision meet on a termly basis.

Throughout the year, the College sends surveys to its students to gather further feedback on how the courses are running and what improvements could be made to make our learning experience even better, this is known as the Student Perception Questionnaire (SPQ). Some students even have the option to attend the annual meeting with the Partnership Manager at University of Plymouth and other UoP staff. The meeting is a chance for us to provide student feedback that we have gathered throughout our time as reps, about the courses and what is working and what changes we'd like to see.

Throughout 2018-2022, the College has consistently been above the benchmark for Student Voice according to the NSS Scale, meaning that students have been overall satisfied with the Student Voice at CCP. In fact, a mature student from 2018 commented during a rep meeting that they were welcomed with open arms to the college and found the whole experience extremely rewarding. Any concerns that students have are addressed by the staff at the College and we feel that our voices are heard.