Name of Provider: **Truro and Penwith College**
UKPRN: **10007063**

TEF 2023 Provider Submission

University Centre Truro & Penwith

Contents:

Throughout this document reference is made to the features of excellence identified within Annex A of the TEF 2023 Guidance. Superscripts indicate performance judgements: O for outstanding; V for very high and H for high. For example: **[SE1^H]** indicates evidence of high performance in SE1 and **[SO1^O]** indicates evidence of outstanding performance in SO1. TEF 2023 judgment areas are outlined below:

Student experience
[SE1] teaching feedback and assessment
[SE2] course content and delivery
[SE3] innovation, scholarship & employer engagement
[SE4] staff professional development and academic practice
[SE5] supportive learning environment and academic support
[SE6] physical and virtual learning resources
[SE7] student engagement and improvement of student experience

Student outcomes
[SO1] ensuring students succeed and progress beyond their studies
[SO2] continuation and completion rates
[SO3] successful progression
[SO4] educational gains students are expected to achieve
[SO5] approaches to supporting students' educational gain
[SO6] evaluation of gain and demonstration of student success in educational gain

1   Provider Context

"… a comprehensive and embedded approach to student engagement in course development and enhancement…. initiatives and processes that ensure students achieve their full potential by providing outstanding personalised support throughout their studies ...effective identification of at-risk students…..student engagement in professional practice, including one-to-one employability advice tailored to student needs…..an embedded culture that facilitates, rewards and recognises excellent teaching, with structured support for staff development …. high quality physical and digital resources used by students to enhance learning." - TEF Panel (2017)

Truro College opened in 1993 and in 2008 merged with Penwith College to become Truro and Penwith College (T&PC). Since 1993, the College has grown in size and reputation and is now a popular choice for people in Cornwall who wish to study Higher Education (HE) or Further Education (FE). In over 20 years of HE delivery, student numbers increased from around 100 students to a peak of over 900 during 2013/14 and 2014/15 before declining following the removal of the HE numbers cap and changes to student loans that led to a national decrease in part-time students. Currently (2022/23) enrolled numbers are over 550. The quality of HE provision over time is evident in the feedback from external reviews, including the Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review (IQER), Higher Education Review, and 5 yearly Institutional Review with the University of Plymouth. The college was successful in its response to Annual Provider Review in 2016/17: "*fully meeting requirements for quality and standards*" and T&PC Higher Education was awarded Gold Standard in the first Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) review. T&PC continues to score above average on all areas of University of Plymouth partnership institution student questionnaires[1,2,3,4,] and has been the highest scoring HE provider in Devon and Cornwall for the National Student Survey (NSS) student satisfaction for three of the last five years[5,6]. T&PC was granted University Centre status in 2020[7] enhancing widening participation within the county using University Centre Truro & Penwith to highlight opportunities on offer to upskill adults wishing to return to education.

1.1 Educational mission & strategic aims

"*The lecturers on the course were incredibly supportive and always there to offer advice and guidance whenever needed, even after I'd gone on to Plymouth University. I would recommend the course to anyone interested in Law   . I wouldn't be where I am today if I hadn't studied it*" -   , FdSc Law

The new HE Strategy[8] identifies targets linked to T&PC intent, the implementation of the strategy, its impact and how we aim to evaluate activity. As a partner in the South West Institute of Technology (SWIoT), opportunities for skills-based courses in the digital technology and engineering sectors are a priority. Further expansion of Pearson Higher National Certificates and Diplomas will create opportunities that align with expanding sectors within the region such as the HNC/D Space Technology designed in partnership with Pearson and employers in the space sector[9] **[SE3^O]**. A second priority is to have a significant impact on health and care in Cornwall by expanding the delivery of nursing and allied health qualifications and modifying sport, health and wellbeing programmes. The opportunities that have come following developments in online teaching, initially as a response to the Covid-19 outbreak in 2020, have led to a new way of thinking about 'blended' delivery. The college is now creating a different type of programme in partnership with employers in the digital sector **[SE2^O, SE3^O]**; mapped to Apprenticeship Standards to badge as a Higher Technical

Qualification, with modules designed for full-time and part-time learners and for graduates who want to 'upskill' (preparing for Lifelong Learning Entitlement) **[SE2^o]**.   These new developments fit well with the recent 'variations' to the Colleges Access and Participation Plan[10] and projects linked to access, success and progression. The college was recently awarded £3.6million by OfS[11] towards expansion and development of its HE, focusing on: nursing, the SWIoT development in engineering and digital, alongside resource developments for the Archaeology programmes and planned archaeology short courses.

Planned changes to the T&PC curriculum offer linked to student admissions and desired outcomes stem from an ongoing review of HE impact and intent for learners. T&PC is moving away from historic position, where courses were linked to curriculum areas at our partner HEI with the opportunity for progression, to a more targeted curriculum relevant for the next 10 years and developing employment opportunities within the county[12] **[SE3^v]**. Curriculum developments have been informed by employer curriculum groups, South West Institute for Technology priorities and sector skills reports, with a focus on emerging highly skilled industries within Cornwall. The implementation of changes to curriculum is managed through the College Board of Studies for Higher Education (CBSHE) which has a representative from the Student Body (Lead Student representative) and from the Governing Body (Higher Education Governor). Higher Education quality and activity continues to be considered in detail by the governing body on a regular basis with an Annual HE Self Assessment[13,14,15,16,] which requires 'sign off' by the Governors HE Quality Assurance Group, continuing practice established by HE Annual Provider Review in 2016/17.

1.2   Size and shape of provision

"*It was refreshing to find that I could study locally. My degree is going to say University of Plymouth, but I have been able to do it in Truro so I didn't have to travel. If the course wasn't so well structured and condensed into   I don't think I would have done so well, especially as   , it's been perfect.*"-

Over the last five years student recruitment has moved from a mix of local students and students from outside of the county to a significant majority being local, from a wide range of backgrounds, creating diverse local cohorts on all courses. T&PC has a broad curriculum of approximately 30 Higher Education programmes in a range of curriculum areas[11]. These consist of Higher Nationals, Foundation Degrees and Bachelor's Degrees (mainly one-year honours progression 'top-ups'). Curriculum includes Higher Apprenticeships, 'non-recognised' courses and a range of stand-alone Continuing Professional Development (CPD) modules and CPD short courses at level 4 and above which are now part of our new Future Skills Institute[17]. Each curriculum area includes level 3 programmes from which students may progress to our Higher Education offer. The Further Education offer continues to expand with A levels, T levels, International Baccalaureate, BTEC vocational qualifications, apprenticeships, and Access to HE programmes[18,19]. Applicants are diverse and include young adults who have left school, gained experience in work, and decided to return to study, school leavers and mature students returning to education after employment activity, creating an exciting and vibrant mix in classes. The entry tariff is set at 48 UCAS points (PPP at Level 3 Vocational Diploma) to provide opportunity for a range of FE students to apply and complete their studies. The policy for widening participation has also been very successful, attracting 48%, 51% and 42% of mature learners over the last three years[20]. In the last four years the bulk of students are from Cornwall (86%), are a mix of mature (21+) (52%) and school or

college leavers (48%) who are from our own level 3 programmes (79%) or from other schools and colleges in the county (21%). The ethnic mix of our higher education community reflects the racial diversity in the county and region; in 2021, 3.8% of the further education students who we recruit from identified as black, Asian, mixed or other ethnicicty[21] and in 2022, our HE recruitment of black, Asian, mixed or other ethnicity students increased to 3.1% (from 1.7% in 2021). County representation in 2021 was 3.3%[22] and college staff 4.1%. Many students (35% from 2018/19 to 2021/22) identify as disabled, often with a learning disability or mental health condition, and access student support, learning support services, academic study skills workshops and academic and pastoral tutorials **[SE5^V]**. Some students travel long distances through Cornwall to attend, crossing 3 or 4 Travel to Work (TTW) areas[23]. The HE timetable is normally compressed into two days and operates between 9.15 and 16.15 to accommodate learners who otherwise might not be able to afford to attend. Group size remains small with some courses exceptionally running on a group size of 5. Most programmes operate with higher numbers, between 10 and 16, enabling ready access to resources, staff and the ability for high levels of support both in class and tutorials **[SE5^O]**.

Student engagement is widely supported with every course year cohort having a student representative who attend regular meetings to discuss course and college issues. The student reps have a lead and deputy (normally one on each college site) and the Lead Student Rep attends the College Board of Studies for Higher Education (CBSHE) and has a seat on the Board of Governors alongside the FE Student Rep. Students are encouraged to raise issues with their individual tutors, the HE Student Support team and HE Deputy Team Lead (responsible for student experience) so that issues can be resolved quickly **[SE7^O]**.

T&PC HE provision has declined since 2013 when the college was providing HE to over 900 students. Expansion of HE in Cornwall with a move to university status for competitors in Arts and Music, the development of a new University campus at Penryn and opening of a new HE Education provider has led to closure of whole curriculum areas: art, design and music and reduction in other areas: community and education. The development of new curriculum outlined in section 1.1 reflects the changes needed to support employment opportunities for our graduates **[SE3^O]** and encourage our learners to rise to the challenge of HE studies **[SE2^V]**. The areas in which we are developing curriculum are informed by the Cornwall LEP's: Five Smart specialisation areas[24], 10 opportunity areas[25], the 2020 Cornwall Industrial Strategy[26] and CIoS LEP Vision 2030[27]: Agri-Tec/Agri Food, Digital Economy, E-health/wellbeing, Marine Technology, Space & Aerospace, Creative, Clean Energy, Tourism / Visitor economy, Mining/ Geo-resources.

A significant factor within the expansion of curriculum in these areas is the South West Institute of technology (SWIoT). SWIoT draws on expertise from twelve partner organisations[28], investing in the development of state-of-the-art facilities for training skilled digital technicians and engineers and working with employers to ensure the curriculum is industry-led and responds to workforce and skill needs **[SE3^O]**. As part of the SWIoT initiative the College has developed new national programs (HNC/D Space technology) and with another college partner in SWIoT is co-approving FdEng Software Engineering. Further expansion of curriculum will result from new developments in Bodmin with a new £8.8million STEM and Health Skills Centre on land adjacent to the site of Callywith College, a level 3 free school sponsored by T&PC. Bodmin is an area for development within Cornwall, with plans to create the "Cornwall Gateway" an agri-food, fish and drink centre being proposed for funding by the Bodmin Chamber of Commerce and Industry[29]. Bodmin was the first recipient of funding from the Shared Prosperity Fund in Cornwall with the new "IntoBodmin" development that will create a new cultural and community hub for the town[30]. Data from the 2011 Census details

that the proportion of adults that had a higher education qualification in the two Govt defined 7500 resident or 4000 household Middle Layer Super Output areas (MSOA) in Bodmin stood at 15% and 21% of adults, whilst the figures for nearby Rock and Treverbyn were 14.5% and 16.8% respectively, indicating a band across mid and north Cornwall where levels were considerably below the Cornish average of 25%, which is itself markedly lower than the national average. At both the Truro and Bodmin campuses, higher level apprenticeships will be an increasingly critical part of the College's flexible and industry-relevant higher education offering and the significant expansion of apprentices studying with the College at intermediate and advanced levels, which now exceeds 700 in learning, will afford a pipeline of skilled talent to progress onto these higher-level courses. In the 2021/2022 academic year, Truro and Penwith College also provided Career and Professional Development short courses to over 1,600 adults from across Cornwall and 55% of its apprentice cohort were aged 19 or over upon enrolment; demonstrating the demand for part-time or occupationally based training and evidencing the need to expand the offer that is currently available from the Truro and Penwith Campuses to the Bodmin site to provide learners and employers in north and east Cornwall with appropriate and accessible HE opportunities through the T&PC Future Skills Institute.

The College's developing portfolio for technical provision at Level 4 and above has been endorsed during 2022 by visits to the Truro Campus and Ottery Building construction site by representatives from Cornwall Council, CIoS Local Enterprise Partnership, Department for Education, Department for Work and Pensions and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and is continually reviewed and informed through dialogue with local employers about their current and emergent skills needs, providing resources for mechanical and manufacturing engineering, digital technology and nursing, opening up opportunity for HE to the north and east of Cornwall.

1.3   Context: partnerships, geographical and economic location

"*The modules in the BA that focussed on mental health and special educational needs were perfect for what I want to do in the future. The Penwith campus matched this with it being by the sea and full of green space both of which are good for your mental health. You can study outside on the Manor Lawn which I love*" -   BA (Hons) Human Behavioural Studies   )

T&PC has two campuses, Penwith in Penzance and Truro campus with a third development for Higher education planned in Bodmin. Cornwall College, our main competitor, has campuses in Camborne, Newquay, St Austell, Falmouth, Stoke Climsland (Callington) although most competing programmes are based at Camborne. Further competition in the education curriculum comes from the Learning Institute (approved by the University of Worcester) and based in Roche but who deliver countywide. Cornwall also hosts the University of Exeter campus at Penryn which is shared by the University of Falmouth, a competitor for art and design programmes, and is subject to recruitment activity by the University for Plymouth and University of St Mark and St John (Marjon). This provides learners in Cornwall with a wide range of opportunities to study locally, to travel within the county or to study within an easy commute to Plymouth.

In 2021 T&PC was granted permission to use the term University Centre Truro & Penwith to identify the higher education provision delivered at the college in partnership with its university partners and Pearson[7]. The college values the link with University of Plymouth and University of Greenwich and Pearson EDEXCEL. Students are aware of the value of working with established institutions that have University status and degree awarding powers.

T&PC make a point of publicising the links at our University Centre buildings and throughout the application process. The College's focus is to expand technical provision that directly maps to live and anticipated skills needs, and investment has recently been secured from the Department for Education's Strategic Development Fund (SDF) to develop marketing, careers education, information advice and guidance (CEIAG) and labour market intelligence resources that will raise awareness and aspirations amongst young people and adults about the local offer and attendant career opportunities.

Truro and Penwith College is a longstanding partner with University of Plymouth. The partnership is managed through Academic Partnerships (AP), which continues to support the development of new programmes and the quality assurance process. The Plymouth partnership has been crucial in enabling the College to develop a quality assured range of vocational and applied higher education programmes geared to meet the needs of local employers and local students and T&PC continues to achieve a high standard in internal reviews by the University [31]. In 2020 T&PC began a new partnership with the University of Greenwich delivering a FdSc Nursing Apprenticeship programme with Royal Cornwall Hospital Trust which has led to the development of three new Nursing / Allied Health degrees and degree apprenticeships. T&PC's relationship with Pearson has expanded over the last four years, with new Higher National programmes in engineering, space technology, construction, hospitality and computing; all focused on providing level 5 training leading to local employment for our graduates **[SE2^O, SE3^O]**.

T&PC is an active member of the south west Uni Connect consortium: Next Steps South West. T&PC continues to work alongside the other 13 partners within the collaborative partnership to ensure HE information is made available to progressing students throughout the region, focusing particularly on students in Cornwall. Most recently T&PC supported an initiative to run an HE progression fair in Cornwall for approximately 1300 students, with over 40 HEIs attending and providing information for level 3 students [32]. The College is a member of the Mixed Economy Group (MEG), sharing ideas and good practice with colleges in this national network, and is an active member of the Association of Colleges, HE Policy Group and SW Region HE group. T&PC remains a member of Combined Universities Cornwall and is part of wider initiatives to share good practice between all members of that group [33]. T&PC works closely with CIOS LEP and embraces the new Vision 2030 and 10 '21st Century' Opportunities within the county. Our Strategy[8] focuses on the range of developments in HE that link to the targets and aspirations of young and mature learners in Cornwall and supports initiatives linked to the local industrial strategy. Cornwall Council's Cornwall Education Strategy is embraced by T&PC. Our HE strategy aligns with targets set by the Local Authority and will continue to support their initiatives through providing an Outstanding educational experience for our learners, training the County's teachers and educators, and providing opportunities for mature students. In the past five years the college has been able to access European funding linked to projects that support activity for its HE students, including support for small business launches [34], the development of stand-alone modules [35] linked to lifelong learning; additional support for mental health [36] raising industry skills for employed people [37] and the development of higher education professional courses for the space sector [38]. The Education department engages with Cornwall SCITT (Initial teacher training) and the Secondary SCITT unit shares the same building as the Education Curriculum at Truro College. The college also supports Truro & Penwith Academy Trust (TPAT), who work with a diverse group of 33 schools in Cornwall. T&PC has strong links with Cornwall Teaching School and the Maths Hub and Computing Hub for Cornwall.

2   Student Experience

2.1   Teaching

"*A highly engaging course that covers a broad range of social science disciplines. The tutors have formidable expertise in and knowledge of their particular subjects and lectures are lively and discussion led. The course has been meticulously organised and help and advice are freely given. I highly recommend this course not only for those to whom it is a natural procession route but also to those who have a passion for some for all of the subjects covered*" -   BSc (Hons) Applied Social Science (2017)

The NSS questions relating to teaching led to four years where the full-time responses were above but not materially above the benchmark values for TEF **[SE1^H]**. The 4 year aggregate measure is also above but not materially above the benchmark. Teaching on the technology and computing programmes was materially above the benchmark as was also the case for psychology programmes demonstrating that generally the teaching on programmes is in line with or above benchmark **[SE1^O]**. In the most recent two years, 2021/22 and 2020/21, 7 of 8 teaching related questions on the NSS have been above the NSS benchmark; with three significantly above in the latest dataset. The overall response for teaching and learning was in the top 10% of NSS responses **[SE1^O]**.

T&PC undertakes its own Student Perception Questionnaire which mirrors the questions in the NSS and gathers data from students on the first year of their programmes, effectively our level 4 and level 6 students. The teaching questions are answered positively by the students and last year [1] responses at level 6 were high (at 88% satisfaction) **[SE1^O]** while level 4 students responses dropped to 80%, reflecting a general decline in response by level 4 students, possibly linked to having two years of covid interruptions to their education.

External examiners[39,40,41,42] are complimentary about the delivery and content of programmes and the approach the college took to the pandemic and the speed we were able to move to online delivery, with most courses following online lessons as timetabled during the lockdown periods. Students were prepared and as we moved into a new teaching pattern, effort was made to provide resources for all our learners **[SE6^O]** with lap-tops available on loan and opportunities to work in isolation in college if needed. At induction, staff highlight online delivery so were there to be a situation where students or staff couldn't access college due to epidemic or adverse weather conditions, delivery could continue.

All our staff are qualified as teachers alongside their academic qualifications, with new staff required to complete a Certificate of Education or PGCE in their employment at the college **[SE1^O]**. Staff who to maintain currency in their sector through part-time employment (such as nursing staff) are not required to compete a teacher training qualification but are supported in their employment and in completing a post-graduate teaching training qualification **[SE4^O]**. The HE Board of Studies has approved staff development that will encourage staff to apply for fellowship of the Higher Education Academy[43] **[SE4^O]** and the opportunity to apply for small research funds to encourage staff development. Staff engaging in research activity are able to publish in the college's journal SEEKER ref **[SE4^O]**. New teachers on the PGCE delivered at the college are encouraged to take up placements at level 3 within the college and are supported to develop into new staff for the college on graduation, ensuring that the quality and experience of our teaching staff is maintained, and new staff are supported as trainees and as newly qualified teachers **[SE1^O, SE4^O]**. New teachers are assigned a mentor and observed a number of times during a 9 month probationary period. Pedagogy based CPD is available for all staff focusing on continuous improvement of

teaching, learning and assessment practices. Staff are supported in attending conference activity and the college normally makes a contribution to the cost of Masters programmes undertaken by HE staff **[SE4^O]**. All teachers are observed once a year and are provided with feedback about their teaching techniques as would be the case in an FE environment **[SE1^O]**. Teaching observation feedback for HE observations is under review to reflect the changes and developments taking place in higher education pedagogy and the more long-term impact of delivery.

Our courses tend to operate on a seminar style delivery with a few delivering through large formal lectures on some modules. As group size tends to be small, our courses operate as a learning community with staff aware of all the students' needs and able to make time to support them individually through1:1 tutorials and advice **[SE5^O]**. Small group sizes means access to practical workspace and equipment for art and media, nursing, sport and health and STEM students is not an issue in a normal academic year **[SE6^O]**.   Our teaching strategy applies equally to our higher education short courses; with qualified teachers delivering content over HE level workshops, weekend events and evening classes based on HE modules. As part of our new strategy, students on HE short courses now have an introduction from a member of the HE team that highlights the academic and other support available to them as higher education students, including information about part-time and full-time HE opportunities **[SO1^H, SE5^O]**. Many of these courses are business related or accountancy courses but there are also some professional short courses that could be considered micro-credentials, particularly in the activity undertaken by the Cornwall Space and Aerospace Technology Training (CSATT) unit **[SE2^H]**.

The college induction process has undergone a number of changes to support the teaching of our learners. Student activity at induction involves a number of activities that aimed to help develop skills that would link to learning such as note-taking, planning, research activity and referencing. During the pandemic many of these activities moved online with students being given the opportunity to engage remotely. Feedback from Access and Participation Plan activity suggested that a post-pandemic move back to teaching activity during the enrolment and induction process would be welcomed and this was put in place for 2022 start **[SE7^O]**.

2.2 Assessment and Feedback

"*I'm   , but I was able to get extra time in exams, which was well facilitated for. It was so much better that just being off in my own room completely; I had the opportunity to sit with everyone else in the exam hall and just have additional time when everyone left. The University Centre was really supportive*"

NSS responses relating to assessment and feedback indicate two years where the full-time responses were above but not materially above the benchmark values for TEF and two years with responses at the benchmark value **[SE1^H, SE2^H]**. The 4 year aggregate measure is broadly in line with the benchmark **[SE1^H]**. Assessment and feedback responses in the 'arts and performing arts' sector were materially below the benchmark, as a result of negative feedback from Silversmithing and Jewellery students during the pandemic when they were unable to use resources in college until the end of the academic year. Allied health and Psychology responses were materially above benchmark **[SE1^O]**. In the most recent two years all eight 8 assessment related questions have been above the NSS benchmark; with four significantly above in the latest dataset and the 'scale value' was in the top 10% of NSS responses nationally **[SE1^O]**.   Our nursing apprenticeship responses were very positive,

materially above the benchmark by some 14 percentage points **[SE1^O]**.   T&PC internal questionnaire responses were high at level 4 and level 6 (76% and 91% satisfaction respectively) more than 10% above a benchmark of similar colleges [1] **[SE1^V]** and following an improving trend over the last two years.

External examiners are positive about our assessment and feedback with many indicating that feedback is very constructive and supportive for students [39, 40, 41, 42.] There are occasional issues with new module leads that cause concerns linked to language use, and the way that rubrics and grading criteria are applied within the assessment process, but these are resolved quickly and effectively in year. When necessary, we modify assessments quickly and efficiently for individual learners through reasonable adjustment **[SE5^H]**. During the pandemic programme leaders were able to check all learning outcomes on assessments and adapt as necessary with advice from external examiners enabling students to complete assessments and cover learning outcomes. External examiners were very supportive of the process we applied quickly and effectively to enable our learners to know what changes to expect **[SE1^O, SE2^H]** [41].

Assessments follow an Assessment Task Approval process, which requires all assessments to be submitted to a panel consisting of a member of the Higher Education team, the Programme Leader and curriculum lead. Assessments are all reviewed and discussed to ensure that the internal verification process is appropriate and that the tasks are achievable and diverse, providing learners with a range of opportunities to gain different skills through assessment; creating an environment where assessment writing skills continue to develop and where internal verification improves **[SE1^O, SE3^H, SE4^H]**. The assessment diversity and timetable/planner are also reviewed to ensure there is no overassessment and no 'pinch points' that could impact students or staff during the academic year and that the course provides a range of opportunities for skills development through diverse assessment types **[SE2^O]**. Once approved all the assessment information is included with the course Learning Teaching and Assessment (LTA) handbook which is developed from a standard annual template to create a bespoke outline of the course for each programme **[SE6^H]**.

2.3   Academic support

"*I love the fact that you can graduate for an HND, that's always been my dream and   I am actually doing it. My course is structured so well and there's constant support from an amazing team*" -

The NSS questions relating to academic support led to four years where the full-time responses were above but not materially above the benchmark values for TEF **[SE5^V]**. The 4 year aggregate measure is above but not materially above the benchmark. Academic support responses in the "arts and performing arts" curriculum were materially below the benchmark, as a result of negative feedback during the pandemic; academic support for education students, where there were no practical issues and students were introduced early to the online opportunities, resulted in responses that were materially above benchmark. Allied health and Psychology responses where students either attended through the pandemic (nursing) or were able to access strong online materials (psychology) were also materially above benchmark **[SE5^O]**. This indicates there is a need to be aware of how we support practical based studies if another epidemic were to arise, and this is one of the targets for Arts and media and engineering courses. Our nursing apprenticeship responses were very positive, materially above the benchmark by some 19 percentage points **[SE5^O]**. In the most

recent two years, all of the 6 academic support related questions have been above the NSS benchmark with three significantly above in the latest dataset. The 'scale' value for academic support was in the top of NSS responses 10% nationally **[SE5^O]**.

Academic support begins with induction activity, with taught sessions relating to planning, research and referencing, and resilience, alongside information about their individual programmes. Mature applicants are invited to attend "Get into Uni" events in the summer term, over the summer and in the first week of September where they learn about what will be expected from them on their University level studies and have the opportunity to network and feel part of a learning community, so that they start as part of a large cohort of students returning to education **[SE5^O, SE1^O]**. Initial evidence suggests that students who attend the 'Get into Uni' events are more likely to continue on their studies at the end of the autumn term than students who don't attend the event **[SE7^O]**. As part of induction, Library staff take students through the research process and review online search processes; an exercise repeated for groups or individuals at later points through the academic year as needed. Library staff are available in the learning Centre throughout the day and are able to support higher education students as required or set up support activity through tutors **[SE5^O, SE6^O]**. All students are offered the opportunity to attend additional lunchtime research talks delivered by research active staff, to improve their understanding of qualitative and quantitative research and engagement in a wider research community **[SE4^H, SE3^V]**.

Early in the tutorial process, students have digital literacy sessions and are supported on how to use the online delivery platform, Microsoft teams, and the college SharePoint system that has replaced a Moodle VLE. Digital literacy continues throughout the three years of their study with opportunities to gain skills using Microsoft Office and subject specific software and hardware **[SE6^H]**. Every cohort of students has a 1 hr tutorial every week of which 40 minutes is set aside to discuss higher education skills or course related activity. A generic structure for tutorial activities is set by the HE team, and programme leaders or tutors adapt this framework to fit their own programme and activity so that key tasks are completed each term [44]. T&PC is developing a set of resources that link to each tutorial activity and which can be contextualised so that all students will have a similar experience and be aware of the same generic skills as they move through their studies **[SE2^V, SE4^H]**.

Every student has the opportunity of one 20 minute 1:1 individual tutorial during each term of the academic year where tutors discuss academic progress and any individual issues that students may wish to raise. There are also 1:1 tutorial slots throughout the year that can be booked by individual students as needed and all staff have an open door policy regarding access, with students able to email or visit staff in their offices at any time **[SE7^O]**. Students who are challenged by particular issues may be referred by their tutor or may self refer to academic study support workshops. Workshops are designed to be twenty minute tutorials where there is an initial 'triage' to identify the needs of the student and who is best placed to support them. Online and digital material is provided for the students for reference and then a series of 20 minute meetings are set up to discuss how best to improve and develop the skills identified as being an area for improvement. The aim of the sessions is to assist the learner to develop techniques that overcome their perceived weakness and that by the end of an agreed timescale the learner will no longer need support **[SE2^H, SE5^O]**. Over the last three years 49 students have taken up the opportunity to engage with the workshop sessions.

All students registered with a disability have the option of support from our student support team. This means that if students agree we meet with them to review their support, including Disabled Students allowance outcome to check that they are getting access to the resource they have been awarded **[SE5^V, SE6^V]**. Any student who has an individual support

plan is also met with regularly and, when possible, support tutors are put in place to assist students with planning, organisation, research activity, assessment preparation or with daily support during their time at college **[SE5[O], SE6[O]]**. If students flag a concern about their studies a Student Support meeting[45] is convened with the student, their tutor and a member of the HE team to review the personal and academic support in place for the learner and agree action that will help the student complete **[SE5[O]]**. These meetings are often referrals but are also triggered automatically by any student who requests three assignment deadline deferrals due to extenuating circumstances. Students who wish to refer or who are referred as possibly dyslexic are referred for review, often leading to the allocation of learning support tutors, or reasonable adjustment. Over 36% of our students have some form of learning difficulty that is supported by staff at the college to challenge, stretch and ensure learners complete their academic studies to the best of their ability **[SE2[V], SE5[O]]**.

2.4   Learning resources

"*The Valency building is impressive, with fantastic industry-standard equipment. Its brilliant to see the investment in engineering. It gives you confidence*" -   HNC Mechanical Engineering (2022)

The NSS questions relating to learning resources indicate one year where the full-time response was materially above benchmark and three years where values were below but not materially below the benchmark values **[SE6[H]]**. This trend reflects the impact of covid on our student response where despite work to provide online resources and IT resources students felt that resources were not available to them because of lockdowns. Throughout lockdown learning resources were monitored and made available to students but, for some courses practical work had to be postponed until the end of the academic year when students were able to return to college. Responses in the arts and performing arts curriculum were materially below the benchmark, as a result of this negative feedback during the pandemic Allied health and Psychology responses were materially above benchmark **[SE6[O]]** suggesting that lower satisfaction was linked with 'resource heavy' courses where students were unable to attend college. Learning resources values recorded for disabled students were materially above the benchmark suggesting that support for our disabled learners was enhanced through the pandemic through the use of online material **[SE6[O]]**, a pattern we are continuing. The 2021/22 NSS results show the learning resources scale is recovering with a value recorded of 81%, 2% points above the college's NSS benchmark and the 4 year aggregate TEF measure is broadly in line with the benchmark **[SE6[H]]**. In 2020/21 the three learning resource related questions dropped below NSS benchmark but all three improved in 2021/22. Our nursing apprenticeship responses were very positive, materially above the benchmark by some 16 percentage points **[SE6[O]]**.

T&PC is moving towards new curriculum opportunities at level 5 and, in some subject areas, level 6, linked directly to employment opportunities within the county **[SE3[H]]**. The focus on new and developing curriculum requires resource expenditure in nursing, digital, engineering and construction as well as continued investment in sports & health and art & media, and a commitment to create new and exciting resource spaces for our HE students **[SE6[O]]**. Expenditure on nursing has exceeded £180K with a new suite of rooms in the Fal building at Truro, dedicated to the Nursing and Allied health unit. The creation of two simulations suites for delivery and new digital teaching resources provide the best opportunity for our higher and degree apprenticeship students **[SE6[O]]**.

The investment from the SWIoT and match funding from the college of £3.5 million have enabled the development of the new Valency building with rooms resourced specifically for IT delivery with systems that enhance the delivery of Cyber Security courses. The engineering suite provides the opportunity for higher national students to use £1.4 million of current high-tech engineering equipment, including systems, developed with advice from the sector, such as digital welding to enhance the learning opportunities of full-time and part-time students **[SE6ᴼ, SE3ᴼ]**. The College has also committed £500K for equipment to support courses delivered in the Ottery building in Bodmin, creating an opportunity for students from and east Cornwall who otherwise might not be able to engage in Higher education studies. The Ottery building will focus on engineering, digital and nursing replicating many of the resources in Valency and the Fal building but also providing alternative and current resources that can be shared virtually between the two buildings through lecture capture and shared delivery in the new Business Centre Suite in Valency **[SE6ᴼ]**.

Alongside development of resources for Nursing and STEM programmes, Art & Design programmes continue to access new resources and ensure that workshop space is available for studies. Film, Photography and Media staff are continually upgrading their equipment and software and students learn and study in the Media Suite or on Apple Mac computers. Silversmithing students have a dedicated workshop which they can access outside of normal lessons when technical support is available. Art & Design students at Penwith have access to the Penzance Art School building and their studies take place in an historic atmosphere and environment linked to the development of art in west Cornwall **[SE6ⱽ]**.

The Fal building, which houses the University Centre at Truro is in the process of undergoing a refit with new social spaces and communal discussion spaces for our learners to work together or to relax between their lessons. The first phase has been completed and two more phases linked to: redecoration to create a positive learning environment and a refit of classrooms to create learning spaces that are fit for purpose. Our recent successful bid for OfS capital funds will enable the creation of a new permanent lecture space for our expanding IoT and nursing programmes **[SE6ᴼ]**. At Penwith, the University Centre courses have been moved to the Penberth building creating a small friendly HE focused learning environment. Plans are underway to ensure that resource is of a similar standard to the Truro University Centre building **[SE6ᴼ]**.

2.5 Student voice

"*As soon as I walked into the Fal building I felt welcomed. The idea of university seemed quite daunting at first, but I felt like I was still comfortable at College without any scary changes*" -   BA (Hons) Applied Media (2018)

The NSS questions relating to student voice resulted in one year where the full-time response was materially above benchmark and three years where values were below but not materially below the benchmark values for TEF **[SE7ᴴ]**. This decline reflects students on some courses feeling that the college was unable to respond to their concerns regarding online delivery at the start of Covid and similarly regarding concerns about the return to college at the end of the pandemic. Responses in the arts and performing arts curriculum were materially below the benchmark, as a result of this negative feedback. The most recent NSS data for the Student Voice 'scale' is 82% agreement, some 15 percentage points above the NSS benchmark and 15 points above the national level. The 4 year aggregate measure is broadly in line with the benchmark **[SE7ᴴ]**. Student voice recorded by business and management

students was materially below the benchmark (9 percentage points) reflecting negative feedback from a small group of students regarding their return to college and support post-covid. Law students' responses were also materially below the benchmark because the department failed to communicate effectively about the approval of a top-up programme for students locally in Cornwall. The following year the LLB top-up was approved and immediately recruited students who have been very positive about the programme. In contrast, Allied Health and Psychology responses were materially above benchmark and nursing apprenticeship responses were very positive, materially above the benchmark by some 24 percentage points **[SE7^O]**. In 2021/22 and 2020/21, 5 of the 6 student voice related questions were above the NSS benchmark; with two significantly above in 2021/22 **[SE7^H]**.

Students have a wide range of opportunities to engage with the college's learning community and raise issues they feel necessary. Every student has a 1 hr tutorial timetabled every week to raise issues that might be relevant to modules, programme or to the wider learning environment at the University Centre or college. Every course and cohort have a student representative elected at the start of term and these students raise issues with the HE team directly, at Reps meetings or through the Lead Student Rep. At Reps meetings general issues relating to the college are discussed at length and action agreed. Reps are given the opportunity for course specific issues to be raised which are then discussed outside of the meeting **[SE5^O, SE7^O]**. Student reps are also invited to bi-annual quality meetings (autumn and spring) with the Programme Leader, HE team member and module leaders where issues can be raised and where student reps are able to discuss issues relating to the programme with reps from other cohorts. The Lead Student Rep is normally in place at the start of the academic year and this year we have a Lead and two Deputy Lead reps to establish ongoing development of the role. The Lead rep or their Deputy attend Board of Governors, Board of Studies, Joint Board of Studies with the University and, when appropriate, other quality meetings linked to internal and external reviews **[SE7^O]**.

In addition to the student reps the college also engages 'student ambassadors' to support our HE recruitment process and to advise and guide students from level 3 programmes. These students, who often engage with the Uni Connect programme, are a valuable sounding board for new developments and are quick to provide ideas and initiatives that support the wider student voice as well as developing their confidence and communication skills **[SE7^H, SE2^O]**. All students also have open access to the Student Support staff and to the HE Programme Team Lead and their Deputy who aim to respond quickly to any issues raised or questions from students. The concept of a learning community is vital to the success of our University Centre and students are listened to carefully and solutions discussed with them. Students are also able to contact the Principal of the college directly by email, to which he will respond. He frequently discusses issues raised by students; recently meeting a group of student reps to discuss the impact of industrial action by some staff **[SE7^O]**. The Access and Participation Officer also engages with students through informal fora, student voice'' lunchtime meetings, tea, coffee and cake events and questionnaires. This Student Voice activity led to modification of activity so that bursary payments are now spilt over three periods rather than two; and the development of a new 'Care experience bursary' and travel bursaries, initially to support learners from POLAR4 Quintile1 postcodes **[SE7^O]**.

2.6   Impact of activity and direction of travel

"*The course offered everything I required and pushed me to improve not only my knowledge but my self-belief and confidence. I was full of apprehension in my first week at Plymouth University, but I can honestly say I have not once felt out of my depth in either lecture content or lab practicals. Thank you*

to all the teaching staff at Truro College for not only giving me skills and knowledge but the confidence to progress onto the third year"   FdSc Biomedical Studies (   )

All learners have access to a wide variety of relevant course specific material to support teaching on the programme. The development of wider skills linked to academic research and employment, including the option of publishing work alongside other staff **[SE4^H]** and students in the college journal "SEEKER" [46, 47, 48]**,** enhances the opportunities for them at graduation **[SE2^H, SE3^H, SE5^O]**. Feedback from students on some programmes indicates that there are gaps in the resources available for our learners with not all programmes reaching the level expected and action is in place to review material prior to the spring Programme Committee Meeting. The continual improvement of academic support through our support team and tutorial system will develop a suite of online material for staff and students to adapt for their programme over the next academic year. This tutorial material will continue to be clearly signposted to all part-time and short course HE students ensuring all our level 4+ students have a similar opportunity and experience whatever the nature of their studies **[SE6^H, SE5^H]**.

The college will continue to develop research support with the Learning centre teams providing opportunity for students from any programme to access refresher workshops at key points through the year. Our pre-enrolment induction activity "Get into Uni" will expand with sessions for mature students supplemented by sessions for Access students and for internal level 3 progressing students and school leavers [**SE7^H**]. We have established a new role in our Student Support team which will expand our capacity to work with students with a diverse range of need and we are piloting a support project for students with mental health issues that will enhance the guidance and support for a range of students who require more regular and targeted support. This will align within future plans for our Access and Participation activity linked to informal support activity such as 'Brew Monday'; 'lunchtime linkup' and links with Student Minds. Student support will continue to operate an Extenuating Circumstances referral system and will include other trigger points linked to attendance and educational gain from year to year (section 3.4).

The redesign and review of curriculum will develop new programmes with 10 credit modules that are created in partnership with the sector as 'lifelong learning' programmes. Core delivery will be linked to the apprenticeship standard, enabling a level 5 programme to operate as an HTQ and optional modules created with employers that focus on the current needs and demands of the sector, ensuring students graduate with required skills and also that employers can retrain their workforce through online or blended delivery **[SE2^O, SE3^O]**. Ensuring programmes and the student experience are fit for purpose and that students understand the reasons behind different delivery styles and opportunities will create an engaging and fulfilling experience for our learners. Easily identified targets linking learning to future studies, wider skills and employment opportunities will enhance the student experience and lead to improved experience and outcomes **[SE2^O]**.

3   Student Outcomes
"*The course has given me a totally new purpose. It wasn't something I ever thought that I would be capable of completing, not to mention coming out with first class honours*" -

The last five years have seen a greater focus on student outcomes following the development of the Governors Higher Education Quality Assurance Group. This sub-group of the Board of

Governors Teaching and Learning committee undertake a review of Higher education at the college through a written Higher Education Self-Appraisal Review [13,14,15,16] that began as a response to the 2016/17 HE Annual Review process [49.] The Governors group holds a meeting at which the HE SAR is discussed and the HE programme team leader and Senior Manager responsible for Higher Education are challenged to explain planned activity and responses to current data and trends **[SO1^O]**. Over time the development of OfS Conditions of Registration has led to the inclusion of B3 information as part of the review and the data set has expanded to include short-courses and higher apprenticeships.

3.1 Continuation

" *was the thing I wanted to do from the start and the fact I don't have to travel too far or move away to study was brilliant. I have enjoyed every aspect. I was even excited to take an exam as it gave me the full experience of being in education. The lecturers are so friendly, and they've helped me to pass my first year. I'm so excited to continue and can't wait to graduate*" -

The continuation data for full-time students is broadly in line with the TEF benchmark **[SO2^H],** while part-time students are materially above the benchmark **[SO2^O]** and apprenticeships above benchmark but not materially so. Full-time continuation data shows that over the four years our student continuation has improved from 81.6% to 87% **[SO2^H]**. This reflects targeted activity to improve in areas such as computing and psychology where continuation has not been strong; ensuring our recruitment process is focused, that students are aware of the level of mathematics and computing required on programme and making some staff changes on programmes in these areas **[SO1^H]**. Our part-time programmes show a lower level of continuation at level 4 indicating a need to focus on supporting students overcome the challenges at the start of their studies, countered by early engagement and study skills advice for part-time and short courses. Continuation data is 6% to 10% above the B3 numerical threshold for all full-time undergraduate programmes and 25% above for part-time students **[SO2^H]**.

Work with students with particular health or mental health issues that result in challenges early in their studies has been identified as a means to improve continuation. Internal data recording level 4 student 'in-year retention' [20] shows erratic changes in levels (between 87% and 92%) over the last three years while level 5 and 6 students showed an improving trend of in year retention, to 99% and 97% respectively. The continuation of students is difficult to evaluate because of employment opportunities that arise within Cornwall and the variation linked with those opportunities during and post-covid. Our students tend to study for a foundation degree and then top up to a full degree with some choosing employment after completing level 5 before returning to level 6 in the future. Similarly, at level 4 it is possible to interrupt, if employment becomes available, and then return to level 5 at some point in the future. The impact of covid was initially negative, but last year created an improved salary opportunity for part-time and full-time low skilled work in the county as employees left the hospitality sector, and this may impact future continuation measures. Action is underway to improve communication with students over the summer period identifying the benefit of employment post-graduation compared to short-term low skilled employment **[SO1^H]**.

Targeting newly enrolled level 4 intake and students who have had support at level 4 and level 5 with early support advice has been a focus over the last three years and this year our individual intervention activity started at induction, improving the opportunity for students

with academic issues or learning challenges. More students are engaged with personal and academic support than ever before, requiring an increase in our Higher Education student support team **[SO1ᴴ, SE5ᴴ]**. In the three years from 2019-20 to 2021-22 the number of support meetings increased from 55 to 192, with students split equally across all three years of study **[SO1ᴴ; SE5ᴴ]**. The majority of students fall within an informal or early stage of support activity, involving a meeting with the student, tutor and a member of the higher education team. Students welcome the involvement of a member of staff who is not part of the course team and who will listen to the issues raised and identify intervention that can be agreed. Agreed interventions are reviewed and only occasionally a formal action plan is needed. In three years only one student has been involved the final level of intervention following lack of engagement with agreed action **[SO1ⱽ]**.

The support process includes working with students who have challenges with their learning or an identified learning disability. The support team draw up a student support plan and engage with the teaching team to help them understand the best way to adjust activity to support leaners. The support team are involved early in the enrolment and induction process and attend student tutorials to remind students that the opportunity for support is available, resulting in an uptake by approximately 30% of the student body. This early engagement with level 4 students and rapid engagement with previously supported students will help improve overall continuation **[SO2ᴴ]**.

Providing students with improved information about employment opportunities and sector salaries during their programme through more frequent meetings with employers will improve continuation, encouraging students to return to their studies despite the short-term attraction of part-time employment opportunities and temporarily enhanced salaries for low skilled roles. To this end every programme area has developed a careers information resource for students and the Careers and Employability Lead for Higher Education has been attending tutorials to remind students of the opportunities that arise from their programmes **[SO1ᴴ, SE5ᴴ]**. In the summer term, the level of careers information will increase reminding students of the benefit of returning to their studies following a summer of part-time employment **[SO2ᴴ]**.

3.2   Completion

"*I loved seeing myself grow as a student, I didn't think I was capable of what I've achieved. Being able to see myself grow over the three years has been amazing and has given me so much confidence*" -
    BSc (Hons) Human Behavioural Studies (2022)

Full-time Completion data is broadly in line with the TEF benchmark **[SO2ᴴ]** and part-time is materially above the benchmark **[SO2ᴼ],** with levels 8% to 14% above the B3 numerical threshold on full time and 25 to 30% above the B3 benchmark for part-time programmes. Apprenticeship completion rates are above TEF benchmark but not materially so **[SO2ᴴ]**. The rate on our full time first degree is materially lower than the TEF benchmark (2.9% below) although the level is 8.6% above the B3 threshold. Completion data shows a low level in year 1 of the data series with a gradual improvement of 6% over the next three years **[SO2ᴴ]**. Completion at level 4 and level 6 is below the TEF benchmark and foundation degree and level 6 honours progression (top-up) programmes in education, computing, applied social science and human behaviour have been modified with changes to modules, module leads and in some cases programme leads to improve completion rates **[SO1ᴴ]**. On our part-time programmes completion is strong although in the last year the completion level dropped below the benchmark and was low compared to previous years. Investigation of our records

suggests that this change may be an accidental outcome of a change to a new MIS system that resulted in some part-time outcomes not being recorded appearing as an increase in non-completion.

As was the case in the discussion above (section 3.1) about continuation, one of the challenges we have identified is the support needs of many of our students both early in their studies and as they step up to a different type of higher education study at level 6. The ongoing changes to the level of support we have in place for our students identified in the academic support section (2.3) and above (section 3.1) apply to completion as well as to continuation **[SO2ᵛ]**.

Short courses continue to create a challenge regarding completion, particularly modules or part-time courses with assessment. Many industry-based students who enrol on these programmes are not interested in the assessment, only wanting to gain the higher level knowledge from the tutors. This generates a lower level of completion on stand-alone modules than might be expected. Discussion around the future of short courses and the development of potential 'lifelong learning entitlement' programmes and modules is considering whether higher education short courses with linked assessment could be offered at a discounted rate for 'professional students' who complete all the assessment work. Higher apprenticeship completion is approximately 70% and although in line with the benchmark **[SO2ᴴ]** is below the level that the college would expect. As our new nursing programme has embedded and become established, the rate has improved so that all students on recent cohorts are completing. A more focused support package for all higher apprenticeship students is under development to ensure all higher education students have the same opportunity **[SO2ᴴ]**.

3.3 Progression

"*Having the careers advice available has been great.   goes out of her way to help look for jobs and helps with things like editing your CV, which   can seem really daunting to rewrite. …The careers advice here has given me the confidence and skills to go further with my education. I look at jobs now and think I can do that.*" -   BSc (Hons) Applied Sport & Health Science (   )

Cornwall provides an exciting opportunity for employment in a diverse range of sectors. In 2017 over 75%[50] of college students moved into employment or further studies within six months of graduating and the link between high level employability skills, subject specific knowledge and personal development is important for the success of our graduates, local employers and the Cornish community. The progression data for the last three years generated by the Graduate Outcomes survey is measured 15 months after graduation.

T&PC HE aggregate progression into higher skills employment or further study after 15 months post-graduation is materially below benchmark; with full-time undergraduate students 5.4% below the threshold of 60%; other undergraduate 6.9% below threshold and first degree graduates 3.8% below the threshold. The responses show a decline over the three years of data with year 1 meeting the 60% threshold and then a decline to 56% and then 45.6%. These declines are linked to curriculum areas such as creative arts, education, health and social care, sociology and psychology whereas computing, archaeology, and sport and public services all exceeded their benchmark levels, suggesting that curriculum that is more focused on direct pathways to employment resulted in improved progression **[SO3ᴴ]**. The biggest drop in progression was in the < 21 year old group with the 31+ group also showing lower than threshold progression. It seems likely that the drop over the last two years of the sequence coincides with the challenges in the employment sector linked to covid, with graduates looking

for employment in the periods leading up to October 2020 and October 2021 finding particular challenges. In July 2020, the wearing of face masks was made mandatory and covid cases increased until tiered restrictions were introduced in October with a second four-week lockdown in November 2020. At the end of lockdown in July 2021, 'Omicron' variant cases were increasing as infection rates in the UK increased to a high level by early October. In both cases the ongoing concern regarding opportunities for employment was whether it was safe to be working and whether high-skilled roles were available in Cornwall. A higher percentage of people are employed in low skill sectors such as hospitality, health and care in Cornwall than the rest of the southwest and the wider UK[51] and this partly explains the reduced level of economic activity through and after the pandemic (2% lower than the rest of the south west)[52]. Cornwall showed a May 2020 peak in Universal credit claims as a percentage of the population (over 2 ½ times higher than the previous year) which remained high and by November 2021 was still 1.6 times higher than the Nov 2019 level[52]. In 2020 and 2021, the last two years of our Graduate Outcomes data, low skills employment, such as shelf stacking in supermarkets and delivery drivers were considered an option and students who needed to take on employment, and the perceived risk linked with that, chose to take on any level of employment rather than waiting for high level opportunities, or chose to claim Universal credit.

Review of our last three years of Graduate Outcome data indicates that the proportion of students who identified as unemployed rather than employed on an Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) status role in each of years of the data were 19%, 11% and 13% respectively; although the number of high skilled SOC roles declined in year 3 of the series (33%, 48% and 29% respectively). This suggests that students were employed but not in high-skilled roles. The percentage of students employed on a low level SOC role was 17%, 16% and 26% in each of the three years, indicating that graduates were more inclined to take any role in 2020/21[53] **[SO3^V]**. The proportion of students who chose different reasons for taking a job also changed over the series, with 2%, 21% and 22% of respondents taking a job to "earn a living" a large increase in the two years where high skills performance declined [53] **[SO3^V]**. This contrasts with a change from 18% to 1% and 1% of students taking a job to "pay off debts. The data returned also indicated that 6%, 12% and 13% students believed their chosen employment would 'broaden their experience', taking roles to move on from after the pandemic. On a positive note, over the three years, 23%, 26% and 22% of respondents were taking roles that "fitted with their career plan" **[SO3^V]**. The median salary increased from £14500 to £16000 to £16580 respectively over the three years, still low reflecting generally lower wages within Cornwall. Often Cornish graduates will take any role including a low skilled one while they wait for a better opportunity to arise within their chosen sector. To give an indication of the extent to which our graduates are able or prepared to leave the county, of those   students who returned a job location in the most recent survey, only   (6%) of those responding took up a role outside of Cornwall.

Curriculum review and the new developments at Truro and planned at Bodmin demonstrate our move to an HE offer where the curriculum provides increased high value employment opportunities in the county. Course development in health and care is linked to nursing higher apprenticeships, degree apprenticeships and degrees in partnership with Royal Cornwall Hospital Trust and the University of Greenwich and provide an opportunity to support the local need for skilled nurses and operating department practitioners with all nursing associate graduates to date moving directly into nursing related employment **[SO3^O]**. Longer term, our Applied Sport and Health programme and Health and Nutrition programme will focus on employment linked to wellbeing. Alongside this, the SWIoT focus on digital and engineering

and new developments in construction, hospitality and law, involve liaison with relevant sectors and align with developing employment opportunities **[SE3ᴼ, SO1ᴼ]**.

Digital programmes are being reapproved with a high level of employer involvement; the FdSc Cyber Security has been approved as a higher technical qualification and FdEng Software Engineer will have a core linked to a two year Higher technical Qualification and flexible 10 credit modules that enable students to choose their pathway into employment locally. This structure will be replicated by the reapproval of FdSc Computer Technology (network and systems) **[SE3ᴼ, SO1ᴴ]**. Alongside this our new curriculum led to the approval of an HNC/D Mechanical Engineering part-time and full-time option that runs in tandem with HNC/D manufacturing engineering and a new HNC/D Space Technologies, written in partnership with Pearson and employers in the expanding space sector in Cornwall **[SE3ᴼ, SO1ᴴ]**. As part of the SWIoT, the college has an option to deliver a BSc Integrated Engineering Technologies as a part-time pathway for local HND engineering students.

Feedback from the hospitality sector indicated that there was an opportunity for employed students to develop their skills providing the delivery style could meet the needs of the sector and so we have developed an HNC/D embedded within an Higher Apprenticeship that is being delivered in a blended fashion over a full calendar year rather than an academic year, with breaks that coincide with busy periods in the hospitality sector **[SE3ᴼ, SO1ᴴ]**. Local law firms identified a gap in training opportunities for students to progress into local solicitors and law firms and through discussion and advice from the University of Plymouth and local firms, a new Cornwall based LLB has been approved and is being delivered in Truro **[SE3ᴼ, SO1ᴴ]**. Similarly, employers approached our Construction Department and indicated they had students who were ready to enrol on a part-time HN programme to develop a workforce to support the development opportunities in Cornwall; the programme has its first part-time cohort this year **[SO1ᴼ]**. The demand for field archaeologists for an extensive road building programme in Cornwall has led to a review of archaeology programmes and the development of short courses linked to this opportunity **[SO1ᴴ]**. The new University centre has allowed us to take a position where we focus on level 5 opportunities for employment with some students choosing to progress to level 6 in particular subject areas. These level 6 students are being given the opportunity to progress to higher skills programmes at level 7 and new 'pathways to learning' are being developed focusing on Masters programmes with our partner HEIs[54] **[SO1ᴴ]**.

Our Access and Participation plan supports a Careers and Employability Lead role that enables us to offer students a full-time career advisor who is developing an employability resource for students. The college has purchased 'Target Connect' software which is being developed for students to assess and develop graduate level transferable skills as well as the skill and confidence needed to successfully apply for and gain graduate level roles. The Employability Statement[55] will be updated by a 2023-27 Careers and Employability Initiative demonstrating our commitments to action that supports our learners **[SO1ᴴ]**. The Careers and Employability Lead's role is to engage with students at every level, on a 1:1 basis through careers interviews, but also more widely by attending group tutorials to discuss careers opportunities and resources. Support for undergraduates and graduates includes careers advice, cv development, letters of application, application forms, interview advice and guidance. Individual Careers Advice support is available for all our learners and graduates for a period of 3 years after graduating. This extended support is advertised on our website and in our graduation information and is a direct way to support graduates during the critical period when they move from initial low level employment to high skilled employment **[SO1ᴼ]**. Employability activity includes development work with ''disability confident employers'';

businesses who have signed up to a government scheme encouraging employers to recruit and retain disabled people and those with health conditions. Students with disabilities are also encouraged to look at online opportunities through job sites aimed at recruitment opportunities for disabled people and guidance that helps disabled students find employment that is best suited to their condition **[SO1ᴼ]**.

3.4 Educational gain

"*When I left the University centre, I found that I had the confidence I needed to go into business and to be in the room with other professionals. It gave me confidence to know I was dealing with clients in the right way*" -   BSc (Hons) Applied Sport & Health (2021)

Recognising that learning gain may be affective, behavioural or cognitive[56] but aiming to avoid any additional testing or questionnaires [57,58,59], our approach to educational gain evaluation is that the results should improve the opportunity for students. We are looking at five targets linked to simple and easily generated metrics, using data from the NSS, internal questionnaires, Graduate Outcomes, and data based on aggregate grades at each level of study. Our educational gain metrics will be used to improve outcomes for students and can be outlined as the following targets **[SO4ᵛ]**:

- ability to self appraise and develop wider skills – *tutorial process*
- use of wider skills to progress from low skilled roles into high skilled roles after graduation - *alumni feedback*
- ability to apply knowledge in novel areas through learning opportunities on programmes – *NSS and internal questionnaire review*
- use of prior learning in main activity post-graduation – *graduate outcomes data*
- continual improvement in performance from level to level during their studies – *assessed by measures of magnitude and frequency of gain within a cohort*

Early in the academic year students are introduced to the 15 employability skills identified within our Employability Statement. These skills will be self-appraised by students and, working with their tutor, students will look at activities linked to their studies that are designed to support the development of these new skills and confidence. This is a process that some level 6 programmes have been using for a number of years and is being expanded to apply across all academic years from start of 2023/24 **[SO5ᴴ, SO4ᵛ]**.

The engagement with alumni will be on an annual basis and information gathering about new employment will provide data on SOC roles and the time it takes for our graduates to progress from unemployed (15% of Graduate Outcomes respondents) and low level roles (20% of respondents) to high skilled roles (34% of respondents) **[SO4ᴴ, SO5ᴴ]**.

The examination of the "learning opportunities" data from the NSS and from our own internal questionnaires is used to determine how well students feel they can apply their knowledge **[SO4ᴴ]**. The three questions in the learning opportunities 'scale': "opportunities to explore ideas or concepts in depth"; "opportunities to bring information and ideas together from different topics" and "opportunities to apply what I have learnt" are an indication of how wider skills linked to educational gain might be applied by students on graduation. In 2021, the value for the overall scale was not significantly different from the NSS benchmark but in 2022, responses demonstrated an improvement in their ability to apply their studies through learning opportunities; responses to the questions were over 9% above benchmark values

and in the latter two cases and the overall value, significantly above benchmark; the overall value in the top 10% of responses nationally **[SO6^O]**. The T&PC internal questionnaire for level 4 and level 6 students, which mirrors the NSS questions, indicated that level 6 students were satisfied with the opportunities available to them, with a positive score of 86%. However, level 4 students were not satisfied with opportunities available, with their score dropping by over 25%. Investigation of this drop indicates that 5 programmes responded particularly negatively to one or two of the 'learning opportunity' questions and in so doing caused the overall score to drop. The five programmes have been challenged to improve learning opportunities for students with activity will be reviewed early in 2023 **[SO5^H]**.

A further measure used to evaluate educational gain is the Graduate Outcomes response from our alumni that indicates whether they felt that their course prepared them for their current activity, be that employment or further study[52] **[SO4^H]**. The question "Does your current activity use prior learning?" is an indicator of the value of taught programmes and the development of wider skills in preparing students for employment. In the three data series years from our Graduate Outcomes data, the mean score returned by students was 3.6, 4.1 and 3.6 (year 1, 2 and 3 respectively) where 5 is the maximum positive score and 1 the minimum score. This suggests that in the second year of the series our learners were more positive about being prepared for their roles, but this positivity declined in 2019/20 perhaps because of a lack of confidence after covid. More detailed review will enable us to investigate programmes where mean values are high compared to those where the value is low and put interventions in place to improve performance **[SO6^V]**.

The main development to review educational gain is an approach that considers the aggregate score of each individual student as they progress from level 4 to level 5 and from level 5 to level 6 **[SO4^V]**. Following on from discussion in the literature of the use of grade point averages [60] and distance travelled [61], we are exploring 'educational gain' linked to the QAA Qualification descriptors and the learning journey undertaken as a student progresses from one level to the next[62]. The hypothesis is that if a student achieves a grade of x% at level 4 and then achieves the same grade of x% at level 5 it can be assumed that there has been a degree of educational gain. A value at level 5 below that of level 4 cannot be proof that no gain has taken place because of the nature of the change in level and the difficulty of measuring the effect of that change. However, an improvement in grade does demonstrate gain. To gather information about our performance and the performance of each programme, the aggregate at level 4 has been deducted from the aggregate at level 5 for every student, generating a value 'g' which equates to the difference between each individual student's grade at each level. An initial review of this data indicates two simple measures that will allow comparison of performance between courses and years and between level 4 to 5 and level 5 to 6.

- The median value of these differences for any academic year will demonstrate the median level of educational gain as a positive or negative value at level 5 or at level 6, indicating a measure of the magnitude of any gain 'M_g'.
- The percentage of each cohort of students that show a non-negative difference indicates the frequency of academic improvement over their year of studies 'P_g'.

These two metrics are being used to investigate the performance of different courses in generating educational gain and also the gain recorded annually.

Table 1) Annual learning gain over the last 4 years				
	Level 4 to level 5		Level 5 to level 6	
	Median gain M_g	Percentage Gain P_g	Median gain M_g	Percentage Gain P_g
2018/19	0.24	54%	0.62	55%
2019/20	6.89	88%	4.15	79%
2020/21	-2.27	29%	-3.93	31%
2021/22	2.18	69%	1.64	58%

Our initial comparison[63], shows (table 1) that in the last four years our level 4 to 5 and level 5 to 6 performance has been variable with 2019/20 demonstrating the highest Median and Percentage values and 2020/21 the lowest. 2019/20 was the first year of covid when UoP students were able to use the best 60 credits to generate their aggregate grades using the changes to regulations made by the University as a 'safety net'. This practice was ended in 2020/21 but the negative value for the median and low percentage of students demonstrating a positive change suggests continued impact of covid on the students learning **[SO6^O]**.

Table 2) examples of cohort learning gain over the last 4 years (2018/19 to 2020/21)					
Level 4 to level 5 gain	Median gain M_g	Percentage Gain P_g	Level 5 to level 6 gain	Median gain M_g	Percentage Gain P_g
FdSc Sports Coaching	5.73	91%	BSc (Hons) Archaeology	3.85	79%
FdSc Computer Technology	5.32	80%	BA (Hons) Human Behavioural Studies	3.14	69%
FdA Film, Media and Photography	4.18	65%	BA (Hons) Business, Enterprise and Leadership	2.63	67%
FdA Children and Young Peoples Workforce	1.32	60%	BSc (Hons) Applied Social Science	0.30	56%
HND Applied Psychology	-0.24	45%	BSc (Hons) Applied Computing Technologies	-4.09	37%

Table 2 shows the data aggregate for the last four years for example programmes at level 5 and level 6 indicating how we will use this educational gain information. It clear that there is a wide range of performance and that in some cases the impact of the change from level 5 to level 6 becomes apparent, notably Computer Technology where the median and percentage gain decline and psychology and Human behaviour, where the median and percentage gain increase. This may reflect the nature of the students but signposts that more work is needed to support level 6 computing students as they progress and that the preparation for the step from level 5 to 6 is good on Psychology programmes though students struggle from level 4 to 5 **[SO5^H]**. Further investigation will consider level 3 entry programmes, entry grades and will consider the gain on a level 6 programme from different entry Foundation degrees. Some initial questionnaires with our students and graduates will help establish whether this is a useful measure, reflecting the additional skills gained during higher education studies. The college will continue to review this information and share these metrics with Programme Leaders and managers across the University Centre with an aim to work collectively to improve educational gain for all our students **[SO6^O]**.

3.5 Impact of activity & direction of travel

"*No matter what course you are doing, the critical thinking that you develop and the learning to learn is invaluable*" -   BSc (Hons) Applied Social Sciences (2020)

Student outcomes data indicates that while continuation and completion are broadly in line with the TEF benchmark, work to improve these metrics by providing a better experience for our students shows an improving trend over the four years of the data series and as an institution we are aware of the curriculum areas where our performance needs to improve and are taking appropriate action through annual HE Curriculum Review **[SO1^O]**. Progression has declined in the last two years, but this reflects the nature of our leaners, the opportunities for SOC high level employment within Cornwall and the impact of covid during the periods when our students were seeking employment. The majority of learners choose not to leave Cornwall to take up employment and so there is significant competition between graduates from T&PC, Cornwall College, Falmouth and Exeter Universities and those returning home from studies away from Cornwall, for high skilled roles in the county. Many of our graduates choose to take low or moderate SOC level roles while they wait for an opportunity for a high skilled role to appear. It could be argued that some courses generate a 'bank' of graduates who will not have the opportunity to be employed in their sector as there will be insufficient job roles available for them. However, many graduates progress within their employment from low skill roles or move to other sectors because of the graduate skills they have gained while studying for their degree and we provide support for them as |Alumni while they make that transition **[SO1^O]**.

New curriculum developments are focusing on opportunity within the county with an aim of attracting students to level 5 and 6 programmes that are designed with employers to enable progression into roles that are available locally, avoiding the need to recruit graduates from outside of Cornwall to fill high skilled roles **[SE3^O, SO1^O]**. The development of nursing and health, engineering and digital are targeted to provide an 'employee pipeline' for new and developing local sectors. Alongside these new developments the HE curriculum also supports students who return to study for a degree because of their wish to improve their opportunities long-term in whatever sector they choose.

4. 0 Concluding remarks from Director of Curriculum Development and Head of HE

"*Following a thorough discussion, Governors concluded that the HE SAR provided a rigorous and comprehensive evaluation of provision. The meeting was satisfied that areas requiring attention had been identified and proposed actions were appropriate.*" - Minutes of Annual Meeting of T&PC Governors HE Quality Assurance Group (2022)

This submission for TEF 2023 demonstrates that the University Centre Truro & Penwith has some outstanding provision. However, we recognise that some provision is below the consistently high level expected for our students and could be improved further; for which we have already implemented significant change and investment, with the support of our students, local employers and academic delivery teams.

Student experience measures are positive with NSS scores returning to the high levels we saw in the two years prior to the covid pandemic **[SE2^O]**. The high levels relative to the national average are not reflected in the TEF benchmarks as generally HE in FE returns higher student experience outcomes than more traditional universities. The scale values for 'teaching', assessment and feedback' academic support', 'learning opportunities' and 'organisation and management' are in the top 10% nationally, yet none of the first three are materially above the T&PC TEF benchmark.

Student outcomes demonstrate that our completion and continuation data are in line with the benchmark [SO2^V] and improving over the four years of data despite the impact of covid on our learners. Our progression data is not as strong as it should be with declines in the last two years; a result of covid impact on our graduates progressing into employment or further studies. T&PC is strongly committed to improving this and has taken a range of actions since the 2017 TEF to improve our employability support and engage with employers as we develop new HTQs and programmes directly linked to high skilled local employment **[SE3º, SO1º]**. This employment focus is linked to the SWIoT developments and Nursing and Allied Health and is expanding to improve employer focus throughout the University Centre **[SO1^O]**.

The evidence in this document explains that improvement in progression was impacted by the pandemic and that T&PC has acted to significantly increase employability resource and is demonstrating activity to improve employment opportunities for learners. Taking this into account, our student outcomes are in the bronze category. Student experience responses are in the silver category as, while they do not all provide outstanding outcomes relative to the TEF benchmark, they are in the top 10% nationally when considering the 2022 NSS data. Based on this position we expect the college's University Centre performance to drop from its previous TEF Gold standard [64, 65] to one of Silver. Over the last four years the University Centre has supported our students through the Covid pandemic, significantly expanded our student support and our careers and employability support, grown closer employer partnerships and updated the curriculum offer to align with existing and emerging high skilled roles within Cornwall; demonstrating our intent and improved impact on student experience and progression. Working with our students we continue to aspire to do the best for our learners, improving their experience so they continue to study and improve their individual outcomes; we will continue to improve, working towards a Gold standard for TEF 2027.

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