

**LINCOLN COLLEGE  
TEF PROVIDER SUBMISSION**

**JANUARY 2023**

**UKPRN: 10003928**

## INTRODUCTION

### Lincoln College

Higher Education (HE) is delivered predominantly from the Lincoln campus with 505 students in 2021/22 split across full (63%) and part time (37%).<sup>1</sup> The HE curriculum offer comprises of Honours Degrees, Foundation Degrees and Higher National Certificates and Diplomas with validations from five partner institutions: The University of Hull, the Open University, Bishop Grosseteste University, the University of Derby and Pearson. The range of subject areas is strategically broad so as to provide progression for our FE learners and to meet local labour market demands with courses across a number of sector areas including Engineering and Computing, Sport, Social Sciences, Teacher Training, Complementary Medicine, Musical Instrument Craft, Business and Animal Management. Musical Instrument Craft is the only programme currently delivered from the Newark College campus.

Contextual data for 2021/22 illustrates that the typical Lincoln College HE student is male, of white-British ethnicity, with an average age of 29.52% of the HE student population at the College is male, with 91.3% of white -British ethnicity and 67.4% ages 25 or over. 37.7% of students are from Index of Multiple Deprivation quintiles 1 or 2. The majority of students (56.7%) are local to the college and 41.1% have either low or non-tariff entry qualifications. The proportion of students from low socio-economic groups remains stable with 34.7% of students identified in IMD quintiles 1 or 2. In addition to this 28.1% reported having a disability or support need, a figure which has increased by 5.7% since the previous academic year<sup>2</sup>.

Lincoln College is a consortia partner of the Lincolnshire Institute of Technology offering programmes at level 4 and above in Engineering, Computing, Construction and Teacher Training to 136 students in 2021/22. Lincoln College is also a consortia partner of the LinHigher National Collaborate Outreach Programme which supports collaborate work across the county to promote and support access in to Higher Education in schools and communities.

Our purpose:

**To be an extraordinary employer-led organisation; producing a highly skilled and productive local workforce<sup>3</sup>**

Higher Education ambition:

**Valued by the local and regional communities for providing accessible and flexible study options across a range of established and emerging industry sectors, the Lincoln College Higher Education Centre will be the institution of choice for those seeking employer-led higher vocational and technical qualifications<sup>4</sup>.**

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<sup>1</sup> LC enrolment data

<sup>2</sup> LC enrolment data

<sup>3</sup> Lincoln College Group Strategy 22-25

<sup>4</sup> Lincoln College HE Strategy 22-25

## 1. PROVIDER CONTEXT

According to the Greater Lincolnshire LEP Skills Report (2022)<sup>5</sup> there is a requirement to increase the number of residents with qualifications at levels 4 and above in order to meet sector growth demand. Current evidence suggests that over 16% fewer residents are qualified to level 4+ between the ages of 25 and 39 years old compared to national averages. The GLEP Skills Report also highlights the need for providers to build higher-level qualification and vocational skills training for people upskilling, retraining, and who have had training interrupted by Covid-19. The Greater Lincolnshire economy is forecast to face a jobs demand of 175,000 between 2017 and 2027 due to an anticipated 166,000 people retiring from the Greater Lincolnshire workforce. Greater Lincolnshire has a higher proportion of SMEs than the national average, with 45% of businesses employing fewer than 50 employees, compared with 32% nationally. There are clusters of industrial specialisms in different parts of Greater Lincolnshire, which are responsible for significant levels of jobs growth. One of the key drivers for the future success of the industrial specialism clusters is skills development. For decarbonisation and offshore wind, advanced manufacturing, defence, and where robotics automation is introduced in the food production supply chain, this means more people with higher level and specialist technical and digital skills and qualifications for sectors to grow locally. Our Career Degrees are designed and developed in close consultation with local and regional employers in response to labour market intelligence and growth trends. The CEO and Principal of the Lincoln College Group is a member of the GLEP Employment and Skills Advisory Board which provides the local 'knowledge link' and employer voice, to influence nationally designed schemes and funding<sup>6</sup>.

Graduate mobility data suggests that the majority of those domiciled in the East Midlands region are 'stayers' who work within a different Local Authority area (21.4%). 17.5% have moved for study and moved again for work, 15.5% moved for study but have stayed for work and 14.5% are 'stayers' who have also stayed within the region for work<sup>7</sup>.

### Student profile at Lincoln College

2,790 students studied on a full or part time undergraduate HE programme between 2017 and 2021<sup>8</sup>. The majority of these students studied full time (64%) on a programme delivered over 3 years or more (47%). 420 students studied on an undergraduate Apprenticeship during this period. The most popular subject areas for undergraduate enrolments were Allied Health, Engineering, Technology and Computing, Business and Management. The majority of undergraduate Apprenticeships were delivered within the areas of Health and Social Care, Business and Management and Engineering.

68.2% of undergraduate full-time students, 68.8% of undergraduate part-time students and 74.9% of undergraduate Apprentices were aged 21 or over with at least 30% of each sub-group consisting of students aged 31 or above on entry.

22.5% of the full-time undergraduates, 13.7% of the part-time undergraduates and 8.2% of undergraduate Apprentices declared a disability or learning difficulty and the representation of BAME students was 9.7%. The majority of students studying on undergraduate full-time programmes and undergraduate Apprenticeships were female (54.9% and 58.3% respectively) whilst the majority of part-time undergraduates were male (68.5%).

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<sup>5</sup> Greater Lincolnshire LEP Skills Report 2022

<sup>6</sup> GLEP website – Board and committees [LEP Board and Committees | Greater Lincolnshire LEP](#)

<sup>7</sup> HESA Graduate Mobility data November 2022

<sup>8</sup> TEF size of provision workbook

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) profile of the students is shown below:

IMD Quintiles	Full-time undergraduate	Part-time undergraduate	Undergraduate Apprentice
1 & 2	36.6%	29.9%	28.3%
3, 4 & 5	56.9%	69.3%	71.0%

24.2% of full-time undergraduates and 18.8% of part-time undergraduates hold qualifications on entry at HE-level. These students typically enrol on the BSc (Hons) Clinical Herbalism in pursuit of professional development to complement an existing career in medicine or complementary therapies. 43% of full-time and 45.5% of part-time students hold an Access to HE qualification, foundation courses or BTEC's lower than a DDM profile. 17.3% of all undergraduate students have no formal qualifications on entry. This figure is higher for undergraduate Apprentices with 38.1% of students having no formal qualifications on entry. 24.4% of these students enrol with Access to HE, foundation courses or other level 3 qualifications at 65 UCAS points and above.

This is a consistent profile for HE student entry qualifications at Lincoln College. Like many Further Education Colleges, the demographic of HE students strongly supports the national widening access agenda with a high proportion of adult students seeking to upskill or re-train around their existing commitments.

### Career degrees

*'While degree-level qualifications are important for individuals, business and the economy, the research found that the growth in the number of graduates has outstripped the creation of highly skilled jobs. This means that more and more graduates have found themselves working in jobs that, in previous generations, would have been filled by non-graduates. The proportion of graduates in low/medium skill roles double over the course of the last three decades, increasing from 10% in 1992 to 20% by 2022.'*<sup>9</sup>

With the number of graduates increasing each year, competition for positions has become increasingly competitive and employers are looking beyond academic qualifications when recruiting to posts with high application rates. The intent of Lincoln College Career Degree programmes is to add value, or educational gains, to our graduates with relevant vocational skills and industry experience to complement their academic achievements.

The core purpose of a 'Career Degree' is to enable students to develop a set of holistic qualifications and skills that make them highly attractive to employers. The model was developed following extensive engagement with a consortium of local and regional employers in order to establish a set of commonly agreed graduate attributes. Alongside their main academic qualification (such as an honours degree, a HNC/D or a Foundation Degree) all students can access up to £1000 of additional funding per person to spend on 'bolt on' qualifications, activities or resources aligned with their career development. These may take the form of vocational or industry recognised qualifications (e.g. L2 Gym Instructor, First Aid, Safeguarding), events / activities (e.g. work placements, workshops, conferences, visits) or professional membership / accreditation. In addition, all students are entitled to a single 'Independent study bursary' payment to support the purchase of equipment or physical resources such as IT equipment, software licencing, home office supplies and industry-specific clothing or uniform.

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<sup>9</sup> CIPD Voice: Issue 38 (Dec 2022)

Programmes of study are designed to include regular curriculum-based opportunities to support the development of employability skills. These include:

- Modules or units of study such as 'Graduate Employability Skills', 'Business Skills for Sports Therapists', 'Social Science in the Professions' and 'Graduate Entrepreneurship'
- Work based projects and industry-based assessments that are written and designed in collaboration with employers
- Industry visits and guest speaker sessions

Students are also encouraged and supported through their academic programmes to complete work placements in order to gain valuable industry experience. Collectively this approach ensures that graduates are suitably qualified, skilled and prepared for employment by the end of their 'Career Degree' at Lincoln College.

The 'career degree' model has been widely praised by a number of our validating partners as being a significant enhancement to the student experience. This has also been echoed by External Examiners and employer feedback. High levels of employer engagement have, without doubt, contributed to the high levels of student satisfaction with 'My course has provided me with opportunities to apply what I have learnt' reported by students in NSS<sup>10</sup> (6.6% above sector average) and should be considered as evidence of educational gain.

*'The practical and business nature of the programme allows students to develop a range of skills, including, communication, organisation and time management which are important for graduate employment. There are additional qualifications built into the programme, which further helps students promote themselves upon graduation. Students who have moved onto this programme from the FdSc at Lincoln College show how they have improved over the time with confidence and knowledge in practical exams, which will help with personal and graduate skills.'* (External Examiner - BSc Sports Therapy 2022)<sup>11</sup>

*'The College is committed to meeting the local industry's needs, this via networking, and their enhanced career degree bursary'.* (Mechanical Engineering employer 2022)

## **2. TEACHING QUALITY**

### **Contact Time**

Full-time HE programmes are delivered over a weekly average of 11 contact hours with class sizes ranging from 1 to 96 students (mean class size of 16 students, median and modal average of 12 students)<sup>12</sup>. Weekly contact hours include academic lectures, seminars, online sessions, specialist clinic and workshop time, group and individual tutorial activities. Programme delivery is, in most cases, comprised of both theoretical and practical sessions in addition to individual tutorials to support dissertations, project work and pastoral care.

The generally small class sizes permit closer support of the learning needs of students who typically attend College Based Higher Education (CBHE) and who flag as Widening Participation (WP) students, and in 2021/2022, 37.7% of students were from Index of Multiple Deprivation quintiles 1 or 2. As a consequence of the supportive environment including small class sizes, in

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<sup>10</sup> NSS 2022

<sup>11</sup> External Examiner report – BSc Sports Therapy 2022/3

<sup>12</sup> LC Prosolution

2021/2022 90% of students from IMD quintile 1 continued their studies<sup>13</sup> (1.9% above the sector average) and the continuation rates for full-time mature first degree students was 2.7% above the sector average at 89%. The latest available data for part-time mature student's continuation rates (2018/19) also illustrated 85% continuation compared to a sector average of 67.4%. The support afforded to students via small supportive group sizes also resulted in positive student feedback such as:

*'The support from staff is outstanding, cannot fault the tutors at the college at all'*

*'Staff are very supportive of students, giving us space to express our characteristics in our academic work and professional work'*

*'Lecturers, library and canteen staff are extremely helpful and the environment feels safe and friendly'<sup>14</sup>*

### **LAT Strategy for Lincoln College and Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) activity**

The Lincoln College Learning, Assessment and Teaching (LAT) strategy was introduced in September 2016 and has undergone two updates to facilitate institutional currency and appropriateness. The strategy recognises that learning, assessment and teaching are not mutually exclusive and the effectiveness of each is dependent on the others. It is centred around four key principles for inspiring delivery and exceptional learning:

1. Learning is inspiring, challenging and relevant to the needs and aspirations of each learner with a clear line of sight to employment and/or future learning.
2. Learning is planned effectively, including stakeholders contribution, to monitor and assess progress and develop core and employability skills however teachers, trainers and assessors have the confidence to adapt and react in the learning environment to maximise learning opportunities.
3. Effective pedagogical strategies (including the use of appropriate technologies) are used within the learning environment, and extend beyond it, to ensure all students' skill development and understanding is exceptional and students develop independence.
4. A wide range of challenging assessment methods are used that have a broad focus (academic, personal, employability skills etc.) Specific and timely feedback /forward that is valued and acted upon by students will follow assessment helping them to further develop their knowledge, skills and values.

These principles have been mapped to the Advance HE UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) and academic staff are supported continually to evaluate their individual practice as part of an ongoing process of Continuous Professional Learning (CPL).

The strategy outlines a range of methods for learning to be observed in practice (Observation of Learning Practices (OLP's)) including:

- Learning walks (short drop-ins to various sessions)
- Virtual learning walks (asynchronous evaluation of online material)
- Developmental Observations of Learning (practitioner defined 45-minute observation of teaching)

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<sup>13</sup> LC Prosolution

<sup>14</sup> HE 1<sup>st</sup> Impressions Survey 2022

- Unseen Developmental Observation of Learning (reflective practitioner observation via filming of session)
- Learning visits (deep dive for course information and session observations)

LAT forms a central component of the College performance management and annual review processes, with each practitioner discussing and agreeing a Personal LAT action (PLAT) aligned to their area Curriculum LAT action (CLAT), which is congruent with at least one of the Organisational LAT actions (OLATs). This action plan is evaluated as part of a formal mid-year review and monthly as part of each departmental LAT meeting. Academic staff share best practice related to LAT through monthly HE Practitioner Forums and regular HE Forum meetings, as well as having the opportunity to work with one of the cross-college Professional Standards Learning Coaches (PSLC's) for more targeted support and development.

Within the Learning, Assessment and Teaching (LAT) strategy, the vision outlines that exceptional learning will be achieved by all, realised by learners enjoying challenging, well-paced and dynamic lessons, based from staff checking progress and setting meaningful and challenging activities in and away from the classroom. To support this, managers, governors and staff members undertake learning walks as a monitoring mechanism, to notice the learning being experienced, before capturing this alongside any questions for consideration. Equally, learning talks are undertaken with students, to provide meaningful discussions about their experiences and future plans. From these mechanisms, themes are created and disseminated to course teams to reflect on within course meetings, to prompt discussion. Recently within Policing classes visited, it was noticed that students were participating in case study, scenario-based activities, having mature and in-depth conversations on sensitive topic areas. It was wondered what preparatory work had been undertaken to develop such skills to enable students to have mature and articulate conversations on such matters. Through the accompanying learning talks, it was apparent that a multitude of extracurricular activities were provided to support with their knowledge development and transition into employment, in addition to two of the three students already engaging with either the specials or cadets to enhance their experiences and employment opportunities.

There is a minimum requirement for each member of staff to log 30 hours of CPL throughout the year – these hours are split evenly between pedagogy, industry and core skills (such as Prevent awareness). Staff tailor their own CPL by attending workshops and training sessions on the set professional development and training days and are also supported and encouraged to spend time in vocational settings to update their industry knowledge and practical skills. For HE staff, the College strategically support the completion of higher-level qualifications, which in turn facilitates knowledge generation within the institution. Several existing staff hold HEA fellowship and in 2021/2022, three members of staff successfully gained FHEA as a result of financial and mentoring support from the college, with three further being supported in the same way during 2022/2023.

HE LAT also falls within the scope of the college's Step in Support (SiS) approach, which routinely engages staff teams in reflective discussions about current learning experiences provided to students. Discussions triangulate a range of data sources such as learning walk findings, attendance, forecast data, 'at risk' students and survey feedback and set in year actions to maximise student learning and achievement. For example, during 2021/2022 the Musical Instrument Craft (MIC) provision experienced some student dissatisfaction due to staff retirement. The Step in Support process worked with the MIC management team to action plan a range of measures and address the issues raised, resulting in a return to student satisfaction during 2022/2023.

Lincoln College takes pride in ensuring that all staff hold recognised teaching qualifications and can apply pedagogic principles appropriately to facilitate learning. At present 97% of the contracted academic staff who teach across the HE programmes hold recognised teaching qualifications, complementing the high levels of post-graduate qualifications held by Lincoln College HE staff (58% at level 7 and 8)<sup>16</sup>. Teaching excellence is recognised and rewarded in a number of ways at Lincoln College, including via 'spotlight' awards which are presented monthly to individuals who have been nominated for outstanding performance. Staff achievements are also formally celebrated at the Lincoln College Annual Awards Ceremony, including both individual and team recognition of extraordinary performance, and all staff obtaining FHEA are recognised and given awards at the HE Graduation Ceremony at Lincoln Cathedral.

Academic staff are encouraged and supported to share LAT practices, including their research informed methods or ideas co-created with students, as part of the following events:

- HE Practitioner Forum (monthly)
- HE Forum (monthly)
- Workplace HE scholarly activity group
- Professional development ('Determined to Educate' days)
- The annual LAT Conference
- Events and activities that form part of the annual LAT-fest week

### **Scholarly activity**

Research and scholarly activity are highly valued across Lincoln College as fundamental to facilitating a high-quality teaching and learning experience for students and, as such, the college has maintained its commitment to supporting academic staff in this regard. This commitment is demonstrated by the college support for staff who wish to complete higher level qualifications, undertake research and, congruent with the college's employer led ethos, maintain vocational relevance and expertise in their subject areas.

The college's commitment to scholarly activity was further evidenced by the introduction of the Research and Scholarly Activity Policy<sup>17</sup> in March 2022 which complements the more general Staff Development Policy by providing more specific reference to relevant activity and reference points. The two policies clarify and further embed the productive and purposeful scholarly activity that has been undertaken by Lincoln College staff for many years, and continually facilitates these activities in a number of ways.

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<sup>16</sup> LC HR records

<sup>17</sup> LC Research and Scholarly Activity Policy



Internal to Lincoln College, staff members who teach on HE programmes effectively share knowledge and practice via HE Practitioner Forum, HE Forum and running workshops on staff development days (DtE days). The HE Practitioner Forum contributes to the development of the HE culture at Lincoln College and permits practitioners to maintain a clear HE community for sharing pedagogic ideas specifically related to HE.

Professional development days allow academic staff to meet in order to share their experiences, to encourage those who might be interested in undertaking additional study in the future and to offer peer support to each other whilst actively studying. These group sessions also provide an opportunity to explore and implement ways in which this research activity can be used to enhance the experience of the HE students across the college, via direct contact in lectures and seminars or through cross-college events and activities.

External to the college, HE staff are also active partners in the sharing of knowledge and practice with their validating HE Institutions (HEIs) and have presented at various collaborative partner events with, for example, Bishop Grosseteste University and the University of Hull.

Academic staff are encouraged and supported to publish their work and, at present many staff have had publications via books, journal articles (for example, the International Journal of Information and Education Technology), professional association publications (for example, the Education and Training Foundation's Intuition magazine) and conference papers (for example, Researching, Advancing and Inspiring Student Engagement (RAISE)). At present there are members of the Complementary Medicine team with multiple book publications and journal editorial roles, with other staff members being supported to submit papers to research networks (such as the Teacher Education in Lifelong Learning (TELL) Research Network) and post-graduate conferences when studying for higher qualifications (for example, Post-Graduate Showcase at the

Conference attendance, industrial updating and professional recognition for HE staff are also facilitated by Lincoln College. For example, in the last five years, 25 members of staff have attended various conferences and industry body events, including industrial updating at Industrial Marine Power Services (IMPS) UK, participation in an AoC College HE Research and Scholarship Conference, and, amongst other similar examples, board membership for the National Institute of Medical Herbalists. These activities afford HE members of staff the opportunity to remain current in their subjects and, in many cases, continue to practice in their chosen fields of expertise, for example as an acupuncturist or photographer.

At present HE academic staff members active within or associated to the following organisations<sup>21</sup>:

- Advanced HE
- British Computer Society (The Chartered Institute for IT)
- British Education Research Association
- The Association of Photographers in Higher Education
- The British Acupuncture Accreditation Board
- The British Acupuncture Council
- The British Psychological Society
- The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
- The Chartered College of Teaching
- The Engineering Council
- The Education and Training Foundation
- The Institution of Engineering Technology
- The National Institute of Medical Herbalists
- The National Association of Musical Instrument Repairers
- The National Association of Violin Makers
- The Piano Tuners Association
- The Royal Photographic Association
- The Society of Education and Training
- Trustee Board Member of St Barnabas Hospice, Lincolnshire

To encourage and reward HE staff to undertake higher qualifications and professional recognition, a discretionary pay increment is made available to staff on completion of study or award of professional recognition.

### **Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation**

At present, two HE programmes hold full PSRB accreditation. The BSc (Hons) Clinical Herbalism has maintained successful accreditation with the European Herbal & Traditional Medicine Practitioners Association (EHTPA) since 2002 and, similarly, the BSc (Hons) Acupuncture achieved accreditation in 2008 with the British Acupuncture Accreditation Board (BAAB). Professional accreditation on these programmes enables students to graduate from these programmes and transition directly into clinical practice, in line with our *Career Degree* approach. As a result, professional accreditation is a contributing factor to the strong Graduate Outcomes results experienced for a number of years and ensures that academic staff maintain up to date industry knowledge and skills in order to deliver and assess to the required professional standards. Due to PSRBs requiring students to achieve minimum thresholds above and beyond those set by

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<sup>21</sup> LC HE staff CPD survey 2022

validating partner academic regulations, students on PSRB accredited courses achieve well and in 2021/2022, 67% of graduates from the BSc (Hons) Acupuncture and 53% of BSc (Hons) Clinical Herbalism achieving a 1<sup>st</sup> class honours degrees, with a further 42% achieving a 2:1 classification<sup>22</sup>. Graduate Outcome data from 2021/2022 illustrated that 85% of graduates from the BSc (Hons) Acupuncture programme were in highly skilled employment and/or further study after 15 months of completing their degree and, similarly, 85% of BSc (Hons) Clinical Herbalism graduates were in highly skilled employment 15 months after course completion.<sup>23</sup>

## Summary and impact

As a result of the clear commitment Lincoln College and its staff have towards providing a high-quality learning as described above, students rate the teaching and learning experience consistently well over a number of years.

Internal module evaluation questionnaires, administered throughout 2021/22, highlight student satisfaction with their experience and demonstrate high average scores in all areas, particularly *'staff are good at explaining things'* (91% mean average satisfaction; 98% median average satisfaction), *'module marking and assessment have been fair'* (91% mean average satisfaction; 95% median average satisfaction) and *'overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the module'* (90% mean average satisfaction; 93% median average satisfaction)<sup>24</sup>. Initial in-year student feedback indicates similar satisfaction in 2022/23, with 94.4% of students highlighting that they would Lincoln College to others as a place of study based on their experience so far<sup>25</sup>.

External evidence similarly suggests student satisfaction with their experience at Lincoln College. National Student Survey (NSS) data relating to satisfaction with teaching is presented below and illustrates ongoing satisfaction.

NSS Measure	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
<i>The teaching on my course</i>	90.6%	89.6%	89.9%	87.0%	78.0%*

\* The skew in teaching satisfaction scores for 2021/22 was due to relatively high numbers (10 within a small overall sample of 55 students) of the aforementioned MIC students negatively rating their experience.

Student commentary from the 2021/22 also provided positive testimony such as:

*'Staff are helpful and knowledgeable about their subjects.'*

*'The tutors have been amazing, supporting and helping not only with the uni course but also with personal things that go on. The practical experience is incredible and a great opportunity.'*

<sup>22</sup> LC Exam Board data 2022

<sup>23</sup> Graduate Outcomes data 2022

<sup>24</sup> LC Module Evaluation Questionnaire summary 21/22

<sup>25</sup> LC HE 1<sup>st</sup> Impressions Survey 2022

*'Great quality of teaching from teaching staff. Lots of contact in practical classes between students and teachers.'*<sup>26</sup>

Graduate Outcomes data<sup>27</sup> also reflects the positive impact the learning experience has on students' ability to proceed and continue in employment, and the table below highlights the improving outcomes which students are progressing to and the recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Difference (20/21 to 21/22)
Average salary	£21,000	£22,550	£25,606	+£3,056
% in paid work / employment	82.5%	70.5%	75.6%	+5.1%
% in further study	7.9%	5.9%	8.4%	+2.5%
% Unpaid or other roles e.g. Caring / volunteering	8%	17.6%	5%	-12.6%
% Unemployed and looking for work	1.6% (1 student)	5.9% (3 students)	4.2% (5 students)	-1.7%
% strongly agree or agree with the statement 'my current work fits with my future plans'	87%	69.6%	86.6%	+17%

The average salary which students' progress to has increased over a three year period and the percentage of students going into unpaid or voluntary roles has decreased to below pre COVID-19 levels, and 86.6% of students agreeing or strongly agreeing that their 'current work fits with their future plans' emphasises the appropriateness of the HE courses delivered at Lincoln College with graduates being in meaningful career-related roles following completion of their studies.

### 3. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The Lincoln and Newark Campuses provide HE students with a range of study environments; including specialist laboratory, workshop and practical spaces, well equipped classrooms and multiple group and private study areas.

In 2021, refurbishment of the Gibney building occurred at Lincoln College, supported by the Institute of Technology (IoT). The redesign focused on specialising in delivering higher technical qualifications, with a focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subject areas. The facility houses £690,000 worth of capital items, ranging from high specification computers and 3D printers, through to virtual reality systems and robots. Rooms have dedicated hardware and software to provide students with industry standard equipment, to comprehensively prepare them for employment.



<sup>26</sup> NSS 2022

<sup>27</sup> Graduate Outcomes data 2019/20 to 2021/22

The building is also home to the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP) funded Professional Skills Centre, offering state-of-the-art training facilities for areas including health and social care and digital sectors. For healthcare students, this provides access to mechanical dolls (adults, children and a baby) that mimic a multitude of conditions to expose and prepare them for what will be experienced in industry. This is supported by access to specialist beds, hoist systems and equipment that replicate a real-life automated external defibrillator (AED), to accommodate transition into employment.

The following link (<https://bit.ly/Gibney1>) provides insight into the facilities and resources available within the Gibney building.

Scheduled to open in Newark for September 2024 is a state-of-the-art training facility designated to the Air and Space Institute, with funding of £1.3 million acquired from the OfS for Aeronautical Engineering programmes.



At present, further education students have access to specialist rooms, including aviation and engineering classrooms, workshops and an emulation zone that keep teaching and learning apace with cutting-edge innovation and discovery through the use of virtual reality technologies and a flight simulator. From September 2023, higher technical qualifications are scheduled to be offered, to further enhance the technical knowledge and skills of students, whilst retaining a strong focus on employability. This will be possible through continued networking with training partners and professional connections, with guest speakers provided previously from Jet2, British Airways, EasyJet and East Midlands Airport, to enable students to immerse themselves in the industry. To compliment, the buildings location will be in close proximity to East Midlands Airport, along with other regional aviation partners, giving students the opportunity for networking and acquiring seasonal jobs and/or work placements.

The Lincoln College campus provides access to a wide variety of facilities, including a designated HE study room and common room. Both provide students with a space to relax, research and work; either independently and/or collaboratively. Moreover, course specific facilities and resources are available within each curriculum area, to enable students to develop and refine their knowledge and skills. As an example, sports therapy, acupuncture and clinical herbalism students have access to clinic areas, to enable skills to be developed when working with clients, to support with the transition into industry.



NSS (2021) responses support this, outlining that *'we have great resources available to us within the building'*<sup>28</sup>, furthered by feedback from NSS (2022) addressing that they *'like working in a clinic, it is a good professional environment'*<sup>29</sup>. Additionally, 83.6% agree that their course provides opportunities to apply what they have learnt, compared to a sector average of 77%. These findings support feedback acquired from the HE First Impressions Survey (2022/23), with a student outlining that *'Lincoln College through its current educational infrastructure, has given me a new lease of life through my chosen course and I look forward to informing others about the benefits and rewards of attending'*<sup>30</sup>.

### **ILT, Library Infrastructure and Digital Connectivity**

The college has continued to invest in the Information and Learning Technology (ILT) infrastructure following the implementation of the ILT strategy in 2013. There has been substantial development of new ILT resources across the college, including development of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) – Canvas and continued investment in specific software for HE courses, such as Autodesk Inventor and Ansys Simulation Software for mechanical engineering students. Feedback received in the HE First Impressions Survey (2022/23) compliments this, with a student stating that *'Canvas is a brilliant resource. Staff and lecturers have been very helpful and accommodating. Lincoln College is a very friendly and lovely environment. Class sizes are good, as are the places to work'*<sup>31</sup>.

Development has been supported by the introduction of the Digital Learning Strategy in 2021<sup>32</sup>, which aspires to build and improve the capacity and quality of its digital learning over a three-year period by investing in the digital infrastructure. To date, this has seen a £250,000 upgrade of the College Wi-Fi, £200,000 replacing and/or upgrading the Mac suites and a £165,000 investment in laptop/classroom equipment. Developing the ILT infrastructure has proved valuable, with both staff and students appreciating the ease and flexibility provided by the investments. This has seen TV screens being easily manoeuvred into practical spaces such as sports halls, to allow students to use video clips to supplement their discussions with clients on technical points to enhance their practical performances. Equally, students' value the ease of being able to connect to their accounts from home; *'Having an Office 365 account has been valuable to me and I like how I can have access to my OneDrive from home, it's simple enough to get connected'*.<sup>33</sup>

Students have remote access at all times to Canvas. There is a set of minimum standards for all HE programmes to ensure that the information provided to students is accurate, current and contributes positively to their learning experience. Canvas is audited by the Higher Education Quality Manager during the academic year to ensure that the minimum standards are being met, and HE student representatives are asked to comment on their Canvas pages as part of the cross-college meetings. As well as providing information at course-level, Canvas is also home to the 'HE

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<sup>28</sup> NSS 2021

<sup>29</sup> NSS 2022

<sup>30</sup> LC HE 1<sup>st</sup> Impressions Survey 2022

<sup>31</sup> LC HE 1<sup>st</sup> Impressions Survey 2022

<sup>32</sup> LC Digital Learning Strategy

<sup>33</sup> LC HE 1<sup>st</sup> Impressions Survey 2022



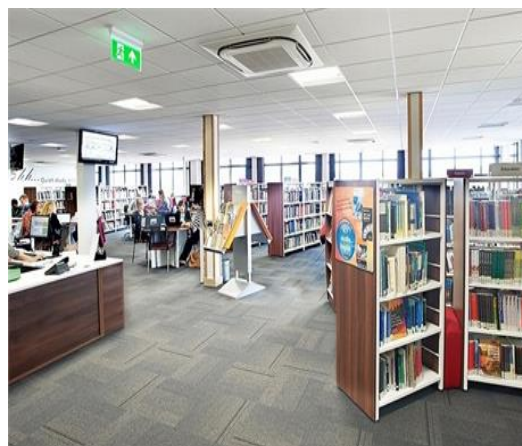
Hub' – an area where students can access all of the cross college HE information and documentation in one place. This includes key contacts, policies and procedures, regulations, HE Annual Monitoring Reports and HE Student Council meeting minutes.

Course teams are encouraged to communicate with students through a variety of mechanisms, including social media channels. A number of course teams have Canvas notifications, Microsoft Teams and/or Facebook groups set up for students and staff to access. These perform a 'message board' function as well as providing a mechanism for the quick dissemination of reading materials and discussion topics.

The Library has continued to invest in academic resources to support HE students, subscribing to academic journal collections from the main academic publishers including Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press, Springer, Taylor and Francis and Wiley. Specialist resources such as those from Medicines Complete and ACM Digital Library are also available to students. Following feedback from students across a number of programme areas in 2019/20 regarding the availability of articles for Clinical Herbalism, Acupuncture and Sport the investment funds for library resources was enhanced to enable subscription to the Elsevier (ScienceDirect) package to be offered.

The implementation of the [LibGuides platform](#) has improved the information and support available to students as well as increasing the accessibility of the resources, both on and off campus, with bespoke subject guides for all higher education courses. Federated searching is available through the EBSCO Discovery service; available via Libguides. The majority of online resources are authenticated through Shibboleth single sign on to ensure off campus access to resources.

Specialist library support is provided to the students through a team of four Library Information Advisers, whose details are available on Libguides; with the opportunity for students to contact the team through email, live chat or phone. One to one appointment's with Library Information Advisers can be provided in person or virtually, with students able to book via Libguides. The Library Information Advisers support learners to effectively use the library resources and develop their academic research skills through study skills sessions; these cover a range of areas including referencing, searching the literature and evaluating resources. The Library team have worked closely with academic staff this year to ensure all HE students were offered group study skills sessions. In the Autumn Term 2022/23, the team delivered 28 group study skills sessions to HE students; this equals the total number of sessions delivered to HE students for the whole of 2021/22<sup>34</sup>.



Despite an increase in satisfaction for Library services in the NSS (2022), student satisfaction with the Library services is significantly below TEF benchmark. There is an action plan in place to address this, with the Library team working closely with the Director of HE and academic staff. A recent HE Library survey (Dec 2022) had 72 responses and will be utilised to identify where further development work needs to be carried out. The table below provides the headlines from the survey, with satisfaction on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being most satisfied.

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<sup>34</sup> LC Library Service booking records



HE Library Survey (Dec 2022) Questions	Satisfaction
I am satisfied with the resources provided by the library (e.g. books, journals, support)	4.21
I am satisfied with the facilities available to me in the Library (e.g. general library area including study spaces, chairs, rooms)	4.11
I am satisfied with the IT facilities in the library (e.g printer, laptops, PCs, WiFi)	3.76
I am satisfied with the online resources available to me from the Library (e.g. eBooks, Journals, help guides etc)	4.17
I am satisfied with accessing eResources from home	4.14
I am satisfied with the support available from the Library Information Advisers	4.38
Overall, I am satisfied with the library services and facilities	4.32

The Library team listen and respond to feedback provided at the HE Student Council and at course committee meetings. Recent examples include purchasing additional copies of books, and providing additional group library sessions to Social Science students to improve their confidence using the online library resources.

The Library now manages and delivers a [Digital Skills Helpdesk](#) to support all students, including higher education, with accessing and using the College digital platforms both on and off campus. Students can contact the Digital Skills Helpdesk by phone, email, live chat or in person in the libraries. This service has been well used during the Autumn Term 2022/23 by HE and FE students with over 1800 queries resolved, with 81% taking less than 5 minutes<sup>35</sup>.

### Learner Voice

There is a well-established stakeholder voice strategy that values the views of others and Lincoln College is committed to facilitating stakeholder involvement within the organisation. Formal HE Student Council meetings are in place to enable this, in addition to course level mechanisms (such as Course Committee Meetings, Module Evaluation Questionnaires, First Impressions Survey and opportunities to meet with external examiners and link tutors).

Within the 2021/22 academic year, 655 Module Evaluation Questionnaires were completed, summarised below<sup>36</sup>.

	Average	Median
Staff are good at explaining things	91%	98%
Staff have made the subject interesting	85%	87%
The module is intellectually stimulating	87%	89%
Module marking and assessment have been fair	91%	95%
Feedback on my submitted work has been timely	86%	88%
The module is well organised and is running smoothly	85%	86%
Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the module	90%	93%

<sup>35</sup> LC Digital Skills Helpdesk user data 2022

<sup>36</sup> LC Module Evaluation Questionnaire summary 2021/22

This information is used and discussed within end of year exam boards and course committee meetings, to highlight areas of good practice and areas for improvement. Within the 2022/23 academic year, Mid-Module Reviews are also being introduced, to enable in-year module feedback to be acquired and acted upon to further enhance the student experience.

First Impressions Survey (2022/23) data similarly provides positive findings, albeit from a low response rate (28.4%). Of the sample, 94.4% stated that Lincoln College was their first choice of establishment, with 68.5% having discussed the course with a staff member prior to enrolling. Reasons for selecting their chosen course related to the course being the only one in the country, the locality and convenience of the provision, enjoyment of previous learning experiences at the college or the requirement to upskill for their current employment role. The sample concluded that 94.4% would recommend Lincoln College as a place of study based on their experiences so far<sup>37</sup>. Data acquired from the survey was distributed to course teams to discuss and action within team meetings. As an example, the Learning and Skills Lead for Complimentary Medicine, Business and Social Science acted on the feedback received, undertaking a 'You Said We Did' approach by using communal areas to display the actions taken. This addressed additional purchasing of equipment and library resources, changes to library opening times to support the teaching weekend timings and the availability and location of HE laptops.

The cross-college HE student representatives meet every six weeks throughout the academic year within HE student council meetings and they are responsible for ensuring that information is discussed and cascaded to students across all HE courses. These meetings are also attended by representatives from the college support teams – such as ICT, library and facilities – in order to capture and address any issues as quickly as possible. Course Committee meetings are organised by the academic teams and take place once per semester. Students speak positively about these opportunities to contribute to course-level and cross college enhancements.

*'Student views were collected via student committees throughout the course and students felt valued and that their views were taken seriously by all parts of the College'.<sup>38</sup>* (External Examiner – HN Construction and Civil Engineering)

HE student representation is part of every deliberative board including monthly HE Forum meetings, Academic Affairs Committee meetings, Learning Standards Quality Committee and the College Board of Governors. Representation through these committees ensures that students are able to influence decisions and contribute to the development of policies, processes and systems in order to ensure that the student experience is prioritised at all levels. This includes curriculum development and approval, marketing activities and events, facility development and survey analysis.

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<sup>37</sup> LC HE 1<sup>st</sup> Impressions Survey 2022

<sup>38</sup> EE Report HN Construction and Civil Engineering 2021/22

## 4. STUDENT OUTCOMES

### Careers Strategy

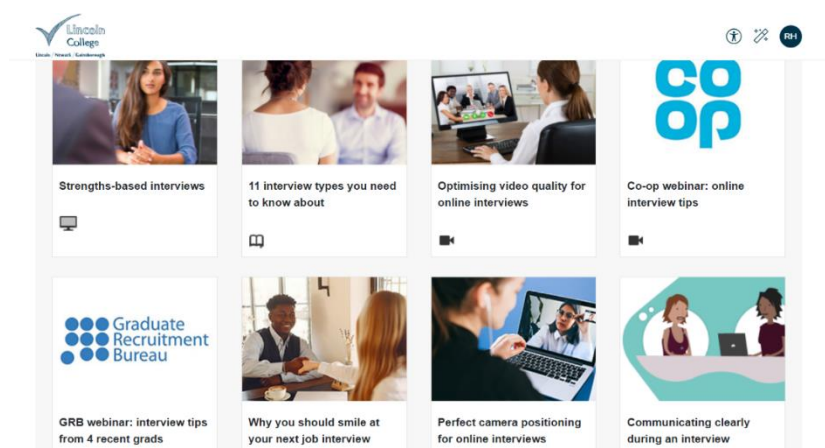
The Lincoln College careers programme is designed to support students across all areas of our provision – including Higher Education students and Apprentices. The intent of Career Degrees specifically is to provide a platform for educational gains by preparing graduates for employment or career progression in their chosen sector or industry. This is achieved by supporting the simultaneous development of academic knowledge, vocational skills and professional behaviours.

In addition to the bursary scheme, Career degree programmes include the following elements which may be delivered in person or virtually:

- Work experience or industry placements
- Industry engagement opportunities (both on campus and off site)
- Embedded opportunities within the curriculum to undertake work-based assessments
- 1:1 tutorials with a pastoral academic tutor
- Activities and events to support career progression (e.g. Preparation for self-employment workshops)
- Activities and events to support progression to postgraduate study

In addition, students have access to impartial personal careers guidance from a professional careers advisor at any time (including pre-application). This includes the development of a personal careers action plan with ongoing or follow up support if required.

HE students at Lincoln College have access to a bespoke MyCareer platform that offers a wide range of interactive tools, resources and information regarding all aspects of employment preparation at graduate level. The platform enables students to self-assess against a range of transferrable skills valued by employers via a 'skills pulse.' The results of which automatically generate an individual profile with tailored resources and support to target the lowest scoring areas. Students have open access to the platform via the main Gateway and the resources are also used by tutors as part of curriculum-based activities within taught modules such as 'Graduate Employability Skills' and 'Social Science in the Professions.'



The screenshot displays the Lincoln College Career Centre website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the college logo and a menu icon. Below this, a featured article titled "What is networking and can it really help my job hunt?" is visible. To the right, a contact box for career guidance is provided. The main content area is a grid of eight tiles: SELF-AWARENESS, WORKPLACE SKILLS, CAREER POSSIBILITIES, HUNTING FOR JOBS, CVs & APPLICATIONS, INTERVIEWS & OFFERS, PREPARING FOR WORK, and CAREER WELL-BEING. Below this grid, a section titled "INTERVIEW360 / MOCK INTERVIEWS" prompts users to select a mock interview. Three options are presented: "AI CV Interview", "Auto-generated Interview", and "Custom Interview", each with a "Take Interview" or "Create Interview" button. A "Filter by tag" dropdown is also present, followed by four image-based tags.

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NSS results show that student satisfaction with advice and guidance is in line with the sector average, with students being particularly positive about their ability to contact staff when they needed to (3.4% above sector average). Graduate outcomes data from 2022 shows that 90.8% of graduates were in employment or further study when surveyed 15 months post-completion. 75% said that their current activity was meaningful and 87% said that their current work was aligned with their future plans.<sup>40</sup>

## Student support

In 2020/21 27% of students declared a disability, learning difficulty or health problem, which indicates a 10% increase since 2017/18. Cognitive and learning difficulties and mental health conditions account for the majority of declarations. 53% of those with a declared disability were female and the average student age was 29. Of those that declared an additional support need 61% actively engaged with the services offered by the College, which is unchanged from the previous year<sup>41</sup>.

Alongside their academic programme all HE students have access to a pastoral support model that includes both compulsory (4 times per year) and optional sessions that are designed to support student progress or to develop generic skills and attributes. Students are allocated a personal tutor as part of their induction programme and this tutor stays with them for the duration of their studies. These meetings are recorded on Promonitor and include a review of both academic progress and pastoral support requirements. At the start of their programme students work with their personal tutor to set targets for completion over the academic year – these might be specifically related to

<sup>39</sup> MyCareer platform

<sup>40</sup> Graduate Outcomes data 2022

<sup>41</sup> TEF Size and shape of provision workbook

the achievement of aspirational grades, or broader developmental goals regarding generation of knowledge or demonstration of skills. These targets are reviewed formally as part of the scheduled individual tutorials. The TEF data dashboard shows that student satisfaction with academic support is 2% above benchmark with performance consistently above sector average over the past three years<sup>42</sup>. Student feedback is consistently positive about the holistic approach to academic and pastoral support and the impact this has had on their ability to achieve.

*'I've been able to challenge myself, completing tasks and areas of my study which I would not have completed without the aid of the course. The course has allowed me to step out of my comfort zone, since I struggle with anxiety, I've been able to step out of my shell, and this course has really improved my confidence.'*

*'Feedback and adaptability of tutors to push my performance and learning in the right direction in order to progress my work to higher grades with guided discovery and excellent feedback.'*<sup>43</sup>

Designated support for HE students is available in both pastoral and academic contexts. The HE Wellbeing and Support Coordinator is responsible for delivering a programme of workshops and activities throughout the academic year for students to access. Workshops cover a range of topic areas including; Resilience, stress management, procrastination and time management. Students can also book 1:1 appointments with the HE Wellbeing and Support Coordinator throughout the year to access coaching sessions. The HE Study Skills Advisor offers academic writing development support to HE students in a similar way. Workshops and group sessions are offered throughout the year which focus on topics such as; Ethics and academic integrity, Dissertation support and Critical thinking. Students can also access 1:1 support by booking individual sessions. Workshops and 1:1 support are offered in both virtual and on-campus settings throughout the year. Since the introduction of these services at the start of the 2020/21 academic year these specialist tutors have engaged with 641 students, the majority of whom fall into a widening participation group (71%)<sup>44</sup>. Completion rates for both full and part time students have been consistently above TEF benchmark for the past 4 years (by 1.6% and 6% respectively)<sup>45</sup> and student feedback regarding these services has been overwhelmingly positive. In order to support the development of students preparing to transition onto our HE programmes we have extended the reach of these sessions for the 2022/23 academic year to include support for Access to HE students.

*'The HE Wellbeing and Support Coordinator was amazing when I was at my lowest she helped me get through. Not only did she help when I most needed it but she changed my whole mindset which has helped me throughout my every day life.'*<sup>46</sup> (HE student 2021/22)

Students also have access to the full range of services offered by our Student Services department. This includes:

- Mental health support and counselling services
- Financial support and advice (such as access to hardship funds and support with making financial applications externally)
- Independent careers advice and guidance services
- Peer support groups e.g. LGBTQ+ community

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<sup>42</sup> TEF provider workbook

<sup>43</sup> NSS 2021

<sup>44</sup> APP student engagement tracking document

<sup>45</sup> TEF provider workbook

<sup>46</sup> HE student testimony 2021/22

- Assessment and Support services (including support for DSA applications and specialist assessments with external providers)

Internal 'Progress Boards' are held in January to consider each HE student. Programme teams are required to meet in advance to formally review the progress of each student and submit a RAG-rated document for consideration by the Progress Board based on student attendance, conduct and academic progress. Once submitted by the programme team, the RAG forms are reviewed centrally by the HE admin team and the HE Widening Participation Team to add information and data regarding attendance and current support arrangements for each student. The purpose of the Progress Board meetings themselves is to consider the effectiveness of the support arrangements in place for each student – particularly those who are identified as being at high or medium risk of withdrawal. The board also recognises students who are making strong progress by formally writing to students identified by the course teams as being worthy of commendation. 47% of students identified as being at high risk and 89% of those identified as being at medium risk of withdrawal or failure were supported to continue, complete or interrupt as a result of the enhanced monitoring and interventions applied in 2021/22<sup>47</sup>. Whilst it is not possible to draw direct links between specific interventions and their impact, this process ensures that all students are offered the highest level of support possible whilst studying with us. These Progress Boards have been identified as good practice by a number of our university validating partners.

*'Progress boards have been identified as a valuable initiative to improve the student experience and outcomes for students. You have introduced this board within the calendar year to monitor student's early progress. This allows you to risk assess students at an earlier stage and enables support to be allocated as and where necessary'.<sup>48</sup>* (UoH Joint Development Board Report 21/22).

By offering a holistic pastoral support model HE students at Lincoln College are monitored closely throughout their time with us, ensuring that they have access to the specific support that they need at any given time in order to maximise their potential for achievement and progression. Analysis of progress board data from the past 3 years indicates that students who engage with pastoral support are more likely to pass or progress onto the next stage of their programme<sup>49</sup>.

Consequently, students are expected to attend a minimum number of individual tutorials throughout the academic year and these are included in the course timetable at every level.

Continuation rates for both full and part time students have been consistently above TEF benchmark for the past 4 years (by 1.4% and 3.4% respectively), which demonstrates the impact of our institutional commitment to student support.<sup>50</sup>

## Employment and Further Study

Lincoln College engages well with external partners to ensure an exposure to a wider academic community. Two of our degree programmes hold accreditations with their associated regulatory body (EHTPA and BAAB) and many other courses engage with professional bodies to ensure currency of course content and alignment with professional standards, for example the Sports Therapy Association (STA) in sport provision. These engagements have had a positive role in the development of curricula that is industry led, relevant and contemporary, thereby aligning with the Lincoln College mission and the 'career degrees' concept in preparing students well for their chosen industry. The vocational knowledge and experience of staff also enables the curriculum to

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<sup>47</sup> HE Progress Board data 2021/22

<sup>48</sup> University of Hull Joint Development Board Report 2021/22

<sup>49</sup> LC HE Progress board data 2019 - 2022

<sup>50</sup> TEF provider workbook

be industry-informed, which adds significant value to both student outcomes and the student experience.

*'The teaching is, on the whole, stellar and coming from real professionals who either have worked or still do work in the trade. This uniquely enables them to provide advice on both the technical aspects of Making and Repair, and on trickier topics such as selling instruments, finding work afterwards and making a living as a crafts-person.... The college welcomes a number of external speakers every year to cover topics that the college doesn't run to, more in depth versions of those that they do, and current research. It is always exciting to feel part of a vibrant, growing community of makers and repairers beyond the reaches of the college and the guest lecturers are a wonderful way of providing that.'* (NSS 2020)<sup>51</sup>

*'I have achieved a high standard of education. I have enjoyed the learning experience. I have been able to further my interest by attending the course. I feel well prepared for future endeavours.'* (NSS 2020)<sup>52</sup>

Similarly, Lincoln College effectively engages with regional bodies and organisations to ensure that the curriculum meets local skills demands. For example, Lincoln College is a key partner in the Lincolnshire Institute of Technology, which has provided an opportunity to work with the University of Lincoln, other regional colleges and a range of local employers to provide modern resources and new curriculum in Automotive Engineering, Digital Technologies and Electrical Engineering. A further example is the strong positive relationships recently forged with the Lincolnshire Police and the University of Derby which has permitted the successful delivery of the BA (Hons) Professional Policing.

Higher Education course teams at Lincoln College have fostered a range of positive relationships with external academics, which assists in maintaining course currency and re-validation activity but also often provides guest lectures and visiting speakers to supplement curriculum delivery. For example, Acupuncture provision is supported and enhanced by a visiting scholar arrangement, whereby, an academic colleague from China (Anhui University of Chinese Medicine) will teach on the programme for a year.

Our commitment to employer engagement and its impact on the development of the curriculum is recognised by our validating partner universities. A recent commendation from the Open University following Institutional Re-approval highlights *'the employer input and engagement into the curriculum and responsiveness of the College to professional body requirements'* as a key strength<sup>53</sup>. Progression to highly-skilled employment is above the TEF benchmark by 2.6% for full-time students<sup>54</sup> and the proportion graduates in employment or further study has increased by 5.1% and 2.5% respectively since 2019/20<sup>55</sup>.

*'The College has established strong links with local employers, and shares good practices.'* (HN Mechanical Engineering employer 2022)

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<sup>51</sup> NSS 2020

<sup>52</sup> NSS 2020

<sup>53</sup> Open University Institutional Re-approval Report 2022

<sup>54</sup> TEF provider workbook

<sup>55</sup> Graduate Outcomes data 2019/20 to 2021/22

80% of part-time HE students at Lincoln College study on sub-degree programmes with 69% of students age 21 or older<sup>56</sup>. The vast majority of these students are enrolled on Higher National (HN) programmes in mechanical, electrical, construction or civil engineering and over 70% of these cohorts consist of students that are being supported by their employers to complete technical level 4 (HNC) qualifications in response to their business needs and skills requirements<sup>57</sup>. We have continued to maintain strong and positive relationships with a number of large employers from across the region including Siemens, RTS, Lincolnshire County Council, City of Lincoln Council, Lindum Construction and Gelders Group. As a result of these relationships and, in response to employer demand and requirements, the number of students that continue on to HND (level 5) qualifications following completion of the HNC is small (typically 10% or less) and students are most likely to continue working with their existing employer. Whilst these students may be technically qualified to progress within their organisation it is likely that they will continue within their existing job role for an extended period in order to gain the broader industry skills and experience required specifically by the organisation. Although the proportion of part-time students that progress on to highly-skilled employment or further study within a 15-month period (70.2%) is lower than the TEF benchmark by 3.4% in the aggregated data set<sup>58</sup>, there is evidence to suggest that this gap is closing after reducing from 13.8% in 2017/18 to 0.7% in 2019/20 as a result of the targeted work undertaken by the HE Widening Participation team. It is clear that students develop the knowledge and skills required to be successful within their existing higher-technical roles and it is a testament to the strong and established relationships that we have maintained with local and regional employers that students often return to undertake further training and development as they progress to more senior roles within the organisation in the future.

The impact and effectiveness of our commitment to preparation for employment is evidenced by the proportion of full-time students, both undergraduate and first degree, in highly skilled employment or further study within 15-months of graduation (2.6% above the TEF benchmark<sup>59</sup>). The proportion of students from IMD Quintile 1 in highly skilled employment or further study is 7.8% above the TEF benchmark, which demonstrates the broader impact of the activities and support offered by the Widening Participation team to encourage and facilitate progression.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The current Higher Education Strategy and its associated sponsorship at Board level has driven significant financial, human and pedagogical investment in student outcomes and student experience. The impact can be seen through consistently strong student satisfaction with teaching and academic support and high levels of progression to employment or further study facilitated by considerable educational gains in graduate employability. Moreover, the embedded practices and enhancements allow for sustainability of performance, creating space to evolve our career degree methodology to better encompass self-employment and entrepreneurship.

Students on HE programmes at Lincoln College achieve positive academic outcomes and transition successfully into employment or further study with a wide range of industry-recognised skills. We are employer responsive and work hard to ensure that we meet the requirements of our trusted and long-standing business partners whilst supporting the students to develop the

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<sup>56</sup> 2021/22 Enrolment data

<sup>57</sup> 2021/22 HE Fees Report

<sup>58</sup> TEF provider workbook

<sup>59</sup> TEF provider workbook



knowledge, skills, confidence and resilience required by industry. Our teaching staff are highly qualified and committed to supporting and inspiring students to achieve, developing a curriculum that fosters enquiry, action research and innovation.

*'When I think back, being a single parent, running four football teams in my spare time and being a student was a handful, and yet I still applied for a short contract at the College in my final year, the big one when so many of us felt the hurdle of dissertation was going to be too large to jump.*

*Fortunately, through those tears, there have been incredible Tutors holding me together and a cohort of the most amazing people that I have had the pleasure of sharing this journey with. But I am so pleased I demanded more of myself. Having been well prepared by my first- and second-year education, I became the FE Engagement and Sport Coordinator here at the College and remain in post today. This is a testament to the quality of the degree on offer at Lincoln College.'*

( graduate; Graduation address 2022)