

**Luminate Education Group**  
**UKPRN 10024962**

**1. Provider Context**

University Centre Leeds (UCLeeds) is part of Luminate Education Group (LEG), a collection of passionate education providers based in the Leeds City Region. We see ourselves as ‘always stronger together’. Luminate Education Group comprises:

- Leeds City College
- Leeds Sixth Form College
- Harrogate College
- Keighley College
- University Centre Leeds
- Leeds Conservatoire

There are 30,000 learners across the LEG, with over 2000 staff (approximately 90 at UCLeeds) who constantly pursue positive outcomes for students. Each member has a board of governors or directors responsible for overseeing the successful implementation of strategic priorities and operations. LEG also has a board that oversees the overall group strategy and provides governance guidance across the group.

LEG’s purpose is to collectively transform lives through inspirational education, training and support. Our values shape and reflect the beliefs and behaviours of all our staff and students. This is one of the largest education groups in the country with Leeds City College (LCC) being one of the largest general further education colleges in the country, and the largest in the region. Our programmes cover 14 of the 15 subject areas and include full- and part-time academic and vocational qualifications from basic skills to apprenticeships and A-levels to higher education degrees. LCC is one of the biggest providers of apprenticeships regionally and adults represent 84 per cent of the College’s learners.

**1.1 Leeds City College**

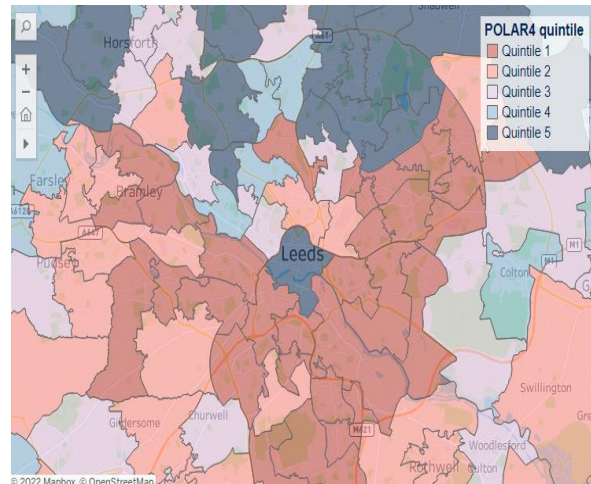
LCC’s mission is supported by the following values<sup>(1)</sup>:

We will achieve this by having a highly inspirational and fully inclusive staff and student culture, coupled with excellent resources, supported by strong leadership and governance. Our brand values allow us to deliver education that meets the needs of each and every student, regardless of background. By letting our brand values guide us, we can continue to put students at the heart of everything we do. As an education group we focus on transforming lives by providing outstanding education, training and support for all of our students. We work closely with the Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership, West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Leeds City Council, Bradford Metropolitan District Council, Keighley Town Council, Harrogate Borough



Council, York and the North Yorkshire LEP, and local and regional MPs to identify curriculum and to ensure that we are meeting the skills needs of the region.

Leeds City Region is the largest city region in the country, with over 2.3 million residents (projected to grow by 8% to more than 2.5 million by 2043) and has an employed workforce of 1.1 million and around 95,000 businesses (West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA<sup>(2)</sup>), 2021). WYCA<sup>(3)</sup> also note that West Yorkshire has a deficit of high skilled employment, with total employment of higher skilled jobs in Leeds City Region is 3% lower than the national average of 50%. However, although employment in higher skilled occupations is under-represented locally, it is still the main driver of net employment growth, contributing around two-thirds of the net increase during this period. The report also refers to a shortage of employability skills, with just under a quarter of vacancies in West Yorkshire are skill shortages, vacancies that are hard-to-fill due a lack of candidates with the required skills and most common in skilled trade occupations, associate professional / technical and professional occupations. West Yorkshire is seven points below the national average with regard to the proportion of its working age population qualified to a higher level – Level 4 and above. Instead, its qualification profile is skewed towards people with no qualifications or who are qualified at the lowest level (below Level 2). In absolute terms these percentage differences are equivalent to 100,000 fewer people locally with qualifications at Level 4 and above and 74,000 more people qualified below Level 2 or with no qualifications. West Yorkshire is relatively strong in terms of the proportion of people who hold their highest qualification at an intermediate level i.e. at level 3 and level 2. Many areas within the City of Leeds have low rates of participation in Higher Education (POLAR quintile 1), and many of its surrounding towns and cities are areas of lower participation (quintiles 1-3). 52% of our HE students come from the Leeds City Region and % from Yorkshire, many of whom are the first in their families to undertake study at this level.



Map of Polar Quintiles for the Leeds Area

The York and North Yorkshire region, within which Harrogate is situated, presents a different landscape from that of the West Yorkshire region, with acute deprivation being less widespread (only 10% falling within the most deprived areas nationally), despite covering a geographical area which includes some isolated coastal and rural communities. Unemployment in the area is low and is less than half the national rate, with 46% of people working in high-skilled occupations.<sup>(4)</sup>

## 1.2 University Centre Leeds

Aligning with Luminate Education Group, University Centre Leeds's mission is to:

- Be the leading choice for students and staff;

- Make a positive, life changing impact on our students with clear progression routes into further study and work;
- Help to make our communities more prosperous and cohesive;
- Fully connect to businesses with constantly emerging opportunities.

Higher Education (HE) is a significant aspect of the mission of Leeds City College. The College is a national provider of education, skills, training and employability opportunities and has developed extensive provision which is not provided elsewhere through more traditional HEIs. Our Higher Education strategy is based on a sound vision for HE, fully aligned to the vision and mission of the College, and a self-critical review and assessment of current performance which has led to the creation of achievable, realistic business/operational plans for HE.

UCLeeds' current higher education strategic priorities include:

- Continue to improve progression into and through HE and increase and widen participation in HE by under-represented groups of learners.
- Design, develop and deliver a relevant curriculum that put the students' needs first, offers flexible, responsive programmes appropriate to the social and economic needs of the locality and region that reflect the diversity of the student body.
- Improve recruitment of part time students, particularly through higher and degree apprenticeships.
- Develop and strengthen partnerships with employers, sector groups, HEIs, FECs, schools and other providers to address the regional economic strategies and priorities.
- Develop a research profile through scholarly and pedagogical activities that will underpin the growth, development and strategic management of HE.

There is an active and effective reporting and committee structure ranging from Programme Managers and course committees up to Academic Board and the Group Board of Governors (including Leeds Conservatoire and Leeds City College), confirmed in the Higher Education Review (2016) and successful FDAP application. All committees and boards have terms of reference and, together with their effectiveness, are reviewed on an annual basis. September 2022 saw the establishment of a UCLeeds Board of Governors, to oversee decision-making on regulatory, statutory, financial, quality and curriculum matters. This enables the LEG to more closely scrutinise the quality of the HE that we offer to our students, to ensure that we develop and implement a strategy for continuous improvement, with the ultimate aim of ensuring we continue to offer high quality educational experiences for students.

A key feature of our overarching strategy is our commitment to widening access to, and participation in, HE with a range of mechanisms and approaches adopted to support this. The success of these is evident in our student characteristics profile with under-represented groups forming a significant proportion of our overall population, with 38% identifying as BAME, 24% declaring a learning difficulty or disability, 63% being mature students, 62% from IMD Q1-2 and 53% from POLAR Q 1-2 in 2021-22. Following our promotion of the Care Leavers Covenant, we developed and implemented a Care Leavers and Estranged Student Support Package in 2020-21 leading to a designated webpage (<https://ucleeds.ac.uk/student-life/care-leavers/>), greater promotion of support for care leavers, and proactive reaching out to applicants identifying as care leaver in the enquiry and admissions process. As a result, we have seen increased numbers of care leavers applying to University Centre Leeds, receiving

support, and progressing in their HE studies. Starting with a very small number in 2019-20, we have seen an increase to in 2020-21, in 2021-22, and in 2022-23.

UCLeeds has significant experience of delivering HE spanning approximately 25 years. Our early experience was in relation to HNC and HND programmes, however the establishment of a validating partnership with Leeds Beckett University in 2004 facilitated the expansion of provision and introduction of Foundation Degree programmes (FDs). As a result of changes in university leadership and strategic direction we have worked with a number of validating partners over the years. In 2018 we were awarded Foundation Degree Awarding Powers, only the seventh college nationally and the second in Yorkshire. This award confirmed the College's commitment to the guardianship of academic standards and the quality of teaching through its established governance and quality systems. The continuous improvement made by the College was also confirmed by the 2022 Ofsted inspection in which the College was awarded the grade of 'Good' with 'Outstanding' features with our Adult provision identified as 'Outstanding'. This is a clear indication of the commitment of the College to drive for excellence and evidence of how much the College has improved over the years.

The curriculum offered at UCLeeds is vocationally focused and diverse in nature, including 37 foundation degrees (with a number of these recognised as HTQs), 22 top up courses, 1 three-year Honours programme, 2 Initial Teacher Training (ITT) programmes, 2 HNCs in Engineering and 2 HNDs in Engineering. Following the gaining of FDAP we have carefully managed the transition of validating arrangements for our FDs, as a result of which our external validating arrangements now primarily cover our 3-year undergraduate award, ITT and Masters provision. Our validating partner is the Open University, who we have been partnering with for 6 years. This has proven to be a successful partnership which has facilitated support for the development of our academic infrastructure, which was commented positively on during the FDAP process and confirmed as being effective <sup>(5)(6)</sup>.

UCLeeds has developed its delivery models to suit student and employer needs, and these continue to feature in student feedback as a significant and positive factor in the choices they make and the support they need to engage with their studies. For our full-time programmes we offer taught and academic support components over a 2-day period, which has several positive impacts on the student experience, including accommodating work and family commitments, reducing cost, particularly in relation to travel and consolidating independent study time. For our part-time students we schedule taught sessions to align with sector working patterns, for example afternoon and evening for childcare students, day release for engineering students. Further to this we have also developed bespoke packages to align with employer requirements, for example Health Play Specialism delivery schedule designed with a blended approach to facilitate learner engagement from a range of geographical locations.

Apprenticeships, although optional for inclusion, are included and represent 14.4% of the HE population, with 96.6% of those studying on recognised HE qualifications so as such, the majority are represented within the NSS data. Apprentices are represented throughout this submission as they are included in the following programmes/subject areas: Engineering, Health Play Specialism, Science, Business and Leadership and Education and Training.

Throughout the TEF preparation exercise there have been ongoing collaboration and discussions with the primary author of the student submission. This served the purpose of ensuring appropriate levels of support were provided, including access to data, while also discussing the threads being explored and detailed across the two submissions.

## 2. Student Experience

UCLeeds has maintained very strong performance in the NSS for a number of years, with overall student satisfaction consistently exceeding the benchmarks for both England and the Sector. The impact of the Covid19 pandemic on the student experience was evident in the dip in 2021 data for overall student satisfaction and this was reflected in our internal student survey data for 2021, however the impact was not sustained and 2022 saw our overall satisfaction increase by 4.4% marks against benchmarks. Of note here is that our internal surveys are structured to reflect the NSS in order to facilitate effective comparisons. Our overall data includes a small number of students undertaking non-recognised HE programmes. Student feedback mechanisms fall in line with overall student voice mechanisms, with some awarding bodies also utilising their own e.g. AAT.

### 2.1 Teaching

Our performance in relation to Teaching in the NSS has improved significantly over recent years performing above benchmarks in each of the 4 years with the difference also increasing each year to a high of 4.5% marks above the benchmark in 2022 (N.B. No NSS data for apprentices).

Teaching	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Overall Indicator (I)	Overall Benchmark (B)	Diff
Full Time	86.9%	88.1%	86.2%	90.5%	87.8%	86.0%	+1.8%
Full Time B	86.4%	86.9%	84.6%	86%			
Part Time	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	89.0%	84.2%	+4.8%

This data tracks closely with our internal student survey results which indicates overall student satisfaction in teaching of 84% in 2019<sup>(7)</sup>, 83% in 2020<sup>(8)</sup>, 87% in 2021<sup>(9)</sup>, 89% in 2022<sup>(10)</sup>, a steady and sustained increase.

There are a number of factors attributable to this sustained increase in performance. As a CBHE provider we retain a key focus on the review and development of teaching and learning. All teaching colleagues are required to hold a recognised teaching qualification, typically a PGCE or equivalent, with currency of practice reviewed on an annual basis through a range of quality mechanisms, including observations of teaching, review of student module results and student surveys. As an institution we provide a range of developmental opportunities for staff including support to undertake further qualifications, opportunities for shadowing, staff development activities, sharing of good practice events, and the opportunity to gain AdvanceHE recognition.

As mentioned above, we support colleagues to undertake further qualifications in order to enhance and develop their practice. This has included PhDs, EdDs, Masters and technical qualifications. As a result, 50% of academic staff now have, or are working towards, Masters, and a further 20% have, or are working towards PHDs<sup>(11)</sup>. Out of these 50% undertook this study alongside their roles and have been supported to undertake this study by UCLeeds. The impact of this has been significant in relation to the development and delivery of the curriculum, with individuals drawing on both the experiences and content of their study to ensure curriculum content is contemporary and aligns with employer needs.

Examples of impact includes the inclusion of a new Law module on a Business programme, a new module on equality and diversity within the Media Make-up programme, a new Artificial Intelligence module on a Computer Games programme, further development of blended learning environments and successful mapping of programmes to HTQ requirements (4 submissions in cycle 1, 2 in cycle 2, all successful, with a further 2 awaiting outcomes in cycle 3).

Improvements to teaching and learning also include extensive investment in a range of learning/teaching resources in addition to the creation of specialist teaching spaces to enhance the learner experience and replicate employment environments. These provide teams with the ability to include content that is additional to the published curriculum, therefore further enhancing students' knowledge, experience and skills. Some of these improvements include:

- The creation of a sensory room - a learning space which provides an immersive sensory experience for health students which, as well as being a teaching facility, also enables tutors to lead therapeutic play and intervention, guided meditation and relaxation sessions, which is not only beneficial to student wellbeing but also facilitates effective modelling of practices.
- The creation of a sports Performance Lab - aimed at promoting and inspiring innovative research-practice through which testing and training strategies can be developed and implemented, promoting focus on undergraduate research and providing a hub for elite athletes and teams.
- Investment in a range of Chemistry analytical machines and powerful digital microscopes - provides Science students the opportunity to analyse a range of chemical compounds that they were unable to before.
- Investment in robotics equipment in Engineering - provides the opportunity for students to assemble and control robotic equipment using controlled and programmed movements, simulating industry practice. Investment in 3D printers allows students to print and have a tangible render of their designs that enables them to analyse and adjust their scale, measurements and proportions.
- Investment in new computing hardware (including mobile devices, tablets and virtual reality hardware) - provides the additional computing power to increase the complexity of the work delivered by staff and the project work undertaken by students.

Further examples of improvements to teaching and learning include:

- Skills audits introduced in practical tutorials on the Computer Games programmes resulted in an increase in module average grades, between 2020-21 and 2021-22 of 4% marks in Game Creation, 5% marks in Professional Development and 5% marks in Project 1. More widely the impact of this developmental work can be seen in the increase in classifications with Second Upper Class increasing from 31% to 36%, Second Lower class from 26% to 32% and Thirds reducing from 14% to 10%.
- The use of online tutorial resources such as EdPuzzle in Business and Law which has helped to improve engagement with tutorials, and hence the monitoring of student engagement with learning. There was a significant impact on module averages e.g. LLB level 4 where each module average had increased from 2020-21 to 2021-22 and BE&M5 where there was an increase in 4 out of 5 module averages.
- The development of blended learning methodologies and the strengthening of resources to ensure that the 80% of time spent online in the virtual world is as engaging as the 20% of time spent on campus in face-to-face learning has been a focus for University Centre Leeds. This development has provided a more accessible programme for Health Play Specialism learners, to meet geographical needs, while also achieving high continuation rates (100%).

- The development of collaborative research and data display activity in science to deepen students' understanding of periodicity (the repetition of trends in properties of chemical elements). There was a marked increase in student understanding and engagement with learning.

## 2.2 Assessment

Our performance in relation to Assessment in the NSS has remained consistent over recent years performing above benchmarks in each of the 4 years with the difference being 1.9% marks above the benchmark in 2022.

Assessment	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Overall Indicator (I)	Overall Benchmark (B)	Diff
Full Time	83.9%	83.4%	80.6%	83.7%	82.9%	81.4%	+1.5%
Full Time B	80.7%	82.1%	80.8%	81.8%			
Part Time	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	77.2%	79.8%	-2.6%

This also tracks closely with our internal student survey data which indicates overall student satisfaction in assessment of 82% in 2019<sup>(5)</sup>, 82% in 2020<sup>(6)</sup>, 84% in 2021<sup>(7)</sup>, 87% in 2022<sup>(8)</sup>, demonstrating clear and steady improvement, and clear impact resulting from an institution-wide intervention.

This intervention relates to the Peer Review (PR) undertaken each year which is a full and detailed quality review, led by the senior leadership team, with participants across the directorate and student body. The focus of the PR changes each year, and can be in response to a need identified through annual quality processes, an aspect of practice impacting on the sector (e.g. increasing prevalence of academic cheating) or an aspect of the student experience which we would like to consider for enhancement.

In 2019-20 the focus was on assessment and feedback practices as we had noticed a slight dip in satisfaction in the NSS (0.5%). The PR identified some excellent practice and resulted in the development and delivery of further training to facilitate consistency and improve feedforward skills. As a result of this intervention we saw a marked increase in the number of positive comments on feedback practices provided by External Examiners (21 out of 22 reports highlighting this as either good or excellent in 2020-21<sup>(12)</sup>, with further feedback gained in 2021-22 acknowledging the significant improvements made in a range of programmes), with feedback to students being commended with clear impact on student outcomes. Analysis of module results supported this assertion and was clearly evident in a number of areas, for example in photography where there were increases in module average grades ranging from 3% to 12% between 2020-21 and 2021-22. The outcomes of this enhanced focus were also evident in the NSS results, with positive responses to the Assessment and Feedback question increasing by 3.1% points over the same period of time, resulting in us being 2.1% points above the benchmark in 2022.

## 2.3 Academic Support

Our performance in relation to Academic Support in the NSS has remained consistent over recent years, performing above benchmarks in each of the 4 years with the difference being 4% marks above the benchmark in 2022. The impact of Covid19 was evident in 2021 where we saw a dip in satisfaction with academic support (although still 0.5% marks above benchmark), this was despite the establishment of an on-line academic support hub and the open-door culture.

Academic Support	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Overall Indicator (I)	Overall Benchmark (B)	Diff

<b>Full Time</b>	88.2%	89.7%	83.1%	86.9%	87.1%	84.4%	+2.7%
<b>Full Time B</b>	85.7%	85.9%	82.6%	82.9%			
<b>Part Time</b>	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	82.7%	79.1%	+3.6%

This compares favourably with our internal student survey data which indicates overall student satisfaction with academic support of 83% in 2019<sup>(5)</sup>, 84% in 2020<sup>(6)</sup>, 85% in 2021<sup>(7)</sup>, 88% in 2022<sup>(8)</sup>, demonstrating a clear and steady increase in satisfaction, which tracks closely to the investment in, and enhancement of, support mechanisms over recent years. Our central support services team has developed in scope and nature over recent years. In 2017/18 we increased our Learning Support team, and in 2019-20 expanded this further to include Counselling and Mental Health. Further investment and expansion include the introduction of a HE Student Support Manager and a HE Welfare and Progression Officer, in response to an increase in students reporting financial difficulties impacting on learning and continuation. These appointments have ensured that students have timely access to appropriate support and continuation figures would suggest this has had a positive impact. Support posts were also introduced within each of the curriculum areas to provide contextualised, subject related support

. The impact of this is evidenced in the high levels of student satisfaction evident in the NSS. Further to this, the introduction of subject-specialist support mechanisms facilitates early identification of support needs, early intervention, further support in transitioning into higher education, impacting on assessment results, the bridging of the gap between professional practice and academic study, identification of target classifications and support to achieve these, targeted support (e.g. increase in study support to address issues in relation to academic misconduct in one particular department resulted in an 89% decrease of instances from 2019-20 to 2021-22<sup>(14)</sup>).

A student survey was undertaken during lockdown, which returned a 20% response rate<sup>(13)</sup>, which invited students to identify the challenges to home learning in addition to further ways in which they felt we could support them. Analysis of the results demonstrated that 71.5% related to factors outside of our control, including lack of childcare, study space, social interaction, motivation (or the issue of distractions) and challenges associated with IT. Of note was that only 7.2% related to lack of resources, 11.1% noted slow response times in response to tutor contact and 10.1% difficulties with understanding (this was related to an inability to ask impromptu questions when taught sessions were asynchronous). In response to this feedback the support hub mentioned above was established which included learning resources, links to support services including information about financial support and teams increased the availability of on-line support and resources, via Google classrooms, and clarified staff working hours (there was some evidence of student expectations including 24/7 tutor contact).

We also saw an increase in students suffering from a range of mental health issues and responded to this in a range of ways, including offering 'Looking after your mental health during Covid19' talks, webinars to support the return to campus and 'Time to Talk' sessions. We also saw an increase in students requesting reasonable adjustments associated with mental health, of which 91% were able to continue with their studies and 96% of those achieved their intended outcomes.

The 2021 NSS included a set of Covid19 specific questions<sup>(15)</sup>, the results of which aligned with our internal survey findings and indicated that we were performing above the national results in all aspects apart from learning resources (in particular course materials), where we performed slightly below. Factors to be taken into consideration here include the high



proportion of practical programmes where access to facilities was a key aspect of the overall learning experience. Although we took actions to minimise this wherever possible e.g. providing make-up packs for media make-up students to facilitate on-line specialist skills sessions, providing computer games students with access to further specialist software to facilitate game development activity, a small number of students (14.28%) reported dissatisfaction.

## 2.4 Learning Resources

Our performance in relation to Learning Resources reduced in 2021 as a result of the impact of Covid19 and students' inability to access campus-based resources. 2022 saw an improvement of 9.4% marks, however lies 2.5% marks below the benchmark, despite the provision of e-resources, physical resources, and the establishment of numerous on-line facilities to support students' learning, and is an overall reflection of their dissatisfaction at being unable to study on-campus for some significant periods of time.

Learning Resources	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Overall Indicator (I)	Overall Benchmark (B)	Diff
Full Time	84.1%	85.1%	63.6%	73.0%	77.0%	78.1%	-1.1%
Full Time B	81.2%	81.8%	71.9%	76.5%			
Part Time	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	56.1%	77.0%	-20.9%

Student satisfaction with learning resources is a concern, and focus, for us with our internal results demonstrating a slightly different picture of 79% in 2019<sup>(7)</sup>, 69% in 2020<sup>(8)</sup>, 68% in 2021<sup>(9)</sup>, 80% in 2022<sup>(10)</sup> (1.9% above the benchmark). Again, the impact of Covid19 is evident in this data. Subject areas reporting below benchmarks included Business, Creative arts, Education and Training, Law, and Health, whereas Computing, Biosciences and Sport and Exercise Sciences (areas which have seen significant investment in resource) reported above benchmarks. Of note here is the nature of resources associated with each of these subject areas and the associated interpretation of the term 'learning resources' by students. Analysis of internal data and discussion with students confirmed that the dip in satisfaction reported by creative arts students (2.8% marks below benchmarks) reflected the inability to access facilities such as art and photography studios. The remaining areas are those that are more academic in nature, with analysis of student feedback indicating that this was due to the inability to attend campus and access resources available from the library (despite the rapid inclusion of a range of e-texts).

In addition to the investment in resources outlined in section 2.1, teams have reviewed the range and types of learning resources provided for students in order to ensure availability and suitability and have included activities within teaching plans to encourage students to make better use of those available. Further to this we have also invested in a new Virtual Learning Environment (Learning Management System), specifically designed to meet HE students' needs, which will be operational for September 2023.

We are currently investing in accommodation and are building a new campus which is on target for occupation by the summer of 2024. This will provide state of the art specialist facilities as required for the components of our curriculum offer, in addition to a range of student social, study and support areas.

## 2.5 Student Voice

Our performance in relation to Student Voice, although consistently above benchmark, reduced in 2021 as a result of the impact of Covid19.

Student Voice	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Overall Indicator (I)	Overall Benchmark (B)	Diff
Full Time	85.7%	87.0%	79.8%	81.1%	83.7%	79.7%	4.0%
Full Time B	80.6%	81.5%	77.1%	79.0%			
Part Time	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	72.8%	70.0%	2.9%

This tracks relatively closely with our internal data which returned results of 71% in 2019<sup>(5)</sup>, 78% in 2020<sup>(6)</sup>, 76% in 2021<sup>(7)</sup>, 81% in 2022<sup>(8)</sup>.

Student voice mechanisms across UCLeeds are strong (consistently above benchmarks in the NSS), with students able to provide feedback on their experience via both formal and informal channels. We adopt an open-door culture on which students place high value. The appointment of a Student Engagement officer in 2019-20, with a remit to utilise a range of mechanisms and approaches to engage students in wider discussions about their experience and the range of ways in which this can be enhanced and supported, has also helped to further expand communication channels. This ensures that we engage in regular, open dialogue with students which facilitates ongoing improvements to the learner journey while also implementing timely interventions where the need arises. As a result, we have very few complaints from students as can be seen in the table below.

	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
Number of students	1286	1311	1479	1297
Complaints	13		18	
% of overall student population	1.0		1.2%	

Student views are regularly sought and acted upon. Specific examples of where student feedback has been acted upon to improve the student experience include:

- Changes to module order to enhance and support knowledge development and application e.g. in the LLB a change to the delivery pattern for Research Methods resulted in an increase of 3% overall module average going from 53% in 2020/2021 to 57% in 2021-2022 in the Dissertation module.
- Requests for the development of HE specific student societies, including Student Parent Society, Law Society, Business Society, Science Society.
- Requests for increased trips/visits and guest speakers implemented in business and tourism programmes.
- Inclusion of CAD training on Engineering programmes.
- Alterations to timetables to support digital students' work patterns resulted in an increase in attendance of 5% since 2018-19
- The creation of new computer suites for computer games students.
- The development of new teaching spaces/studios for Acting and Art students and equipment for photography students.
- The inclusion of new specialist pathways of study in the Media Make-up programmes.
- Changes to assessments in the Health Play Specialism and Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes to reduce the assessment burden.

### 3. Student Outcomes - Education Gain

#### 3.1 Transitioning into Higher Education

UCLeeds provides additional and specific interventions for students who face barriers, such as learning support for students declaring specific learning needs or disabilities. Referral to the HE Learning Support Officers takes place at application, enrolment, and/or during their course. Specific transition programmes, with designated contacts, are also in place for students who are care experienced or estranged from their families, students with English as

a second/additional language, mature learners returning to education, and those from Gypsy, traveller, Roma, Showman and Boater communities. This includes early identification of mental health and wellbeing needs and promotion of positive wellbeing and social connectedness.

Admissions are proactive in referring applicants who have identified any additional needs at the first point of the application process, including disabilities and learning difficulties and if the student is care experienced or estranged from their family, for example, which is followed by contact from the Student Support team. Data shows a steady increase in applicants accessing additional learning support prior to enrolment, with a 27% increase so far from applicants enrolling 2021-22 compared to 2020-21. These early interventions have, in turn, increased the number of students applying for, and receiving DSA. In 2017-18 only 8 students received DSA compared to 32 in 2018-19 (2%), 39 in 2019-20 (3%), 55<sup>(13)</sup> in 2020-21 (4%)<sup>(29)(30)</sup>, and 57 in 2021-22 (4%).

Cross-department keeping warm communications and activities are facilitated for all students and new to UCLeeds applicants are encouraged to join the UCLeeds Student Room for early engagement in preparation activities, to connect with other students, and to be exposed to the support services available to them. This supports the development of efficacy and academic integration. This is in addition to support provided by curriculum teams. Curriculum induction days introduce a number of themes, including mental health, mental resilience, and management of expectations.

The Student Support Team offer all students (whether new to UCLeeds or transitioning between levels of study) talks, workshops, “coming to University Centre” preparation meetings across the summer period, prior to enrolment. During induction, the Student Support Team hosts pop-up stalls and speaks in each group induction session about the support on offer and wellbeing services, complementing information sessions regarding academic regulations and study/academic support. Since initiating the Induction Talks, and through proactive promotion of support services earlier in the admissions and enrolment process, there has been an observable increase in early referrals for mental health support. These have increased from 20 (1.5%) in 2020-21<sup>(25)</sup>, to 60 (4.7%) in 2021-22<sup>(26)</sup>, and 92 (7.9%) in 2022-23. Students with specific mental health difficulties such as anxiety are offered support throughout the transition process, such as contact through the summer, regular meetings, tours of the building if needed.

As earlier intervention has increased, and early referrals to the support team have increased, the number of applications for mitigation have decreased. In 2018-19 there were 378 applications for mitigation with 362 (96%)<sup>(16)</sup> being approved, extensions given, or reasonable adjustments actioned. In 2019-20, this reduced significantly to 242 applications of which 232 (96%)<sup>(17)</sup> were approved, in 2020-21 there were 243 applications and 239 (98%)<sup>(18)</sup> approved, and in 2021-22 there were 156 applications and 144 (92%)<sup>(19)</sup> were approved.

Specific examples of strategies and interventions undertaken by curriculum teams to support transition into HE includes:

- Subject taster days, applicant keeping in touch sessions throughout the summer, and a comprehensive induction programme with a focus on individual student support.

Keep-in-touch sessions have supported Business Level 6 students to think early about their research topics for their Research Methods and Dissertation modules, with earlier background reading and preparation for the transition into Level 6 study, resulting in an increase of 4% marks in the Research Methods module average grade and a 3% marks increase in the Dissertation module in 2021-22

- Taster days, keeping warm projects, social media groups that promote connectiveness, pre-study skills provision, including use of G-Suite for Education are offered to students.
- Piloting of mentor schemes, where a potential applicant is provided a subject mentor from the year above before they start.
- Provision of study skills support for post-graduate students, who may be returning to learning, including supporting students from non-essay-based backgrounds (arts, sciences, performance etc), to develop academic writing skills. A particular example related to ITE where writing frames were introduced, resulting in only 3% of students failing in 2021-22 due to not meeting the assessment criteria.

Ongoing tutorials throughout the programme include wellbeing topics that can impact mental health such as mindfulness, healthy eating, drugs and alcohol, etc. Ongoing support and social connectedness are further developed within the curriculum, including 1-to-1 pastoral tutorials, as well as through the UC Hub (online VLE), Student Engagement opportunities and activities, and celebrations of religious and cultural festivals.

### **3.2 Distance Travelled**

As an important part of educational gains relating to distance travelled from starting point, the transition into HE is a fundamental aspect of the student journey, with UCLeeds' approach outlined in section 3.1 above. There is a whole-institution approach to continued support across the student lifecycle including transition between levels of study and into graduate employment or further study. Example activities include 1-to-1 application and enrolment support including campus tours, DSA application support, HE Study Skills Programme, Progression / Insights into University module, Freshers' activities, and robust induction programmes. Of those students who evaluated the HE Study Skills programme (2021-22), 100%<sup>(20)</sup> valued the programme and considered the sessions relevant. 50% of students reported a positive distance travelled to very much considering HE, with the other 50% having already been considering HE but with more confidence now than before about starting HE. 85.2% of the participants said the module helped them consider their options for progressing to HE.

As part of this, an Online Summer School and HE Study Skills programme have been developed, to support learners and returners to better prepare for HE study, whilst developing resilience, academic preparedness, and facilitating the management of expectations. Some of this work was embedded into 'Things to Think About' webinars delivered during lockdown and also into taster days and UniConnect work. During Covid, a peer-assisted study support scheme was piloted, Aspire High, utilising Trainee Teachers in the delivery of peer-to-peer support for potential and current HE students, whereby Trainee Teachers offered study skills support to FE students and current HE students, 85% of those supported found it useful. In 2021-22 the Aspire High programme<sup>(20)</sup> included ESOL-specialist Trainee Teachers supporting our Step Ahead programme. 16 Leeds City College ESOL students participated in the Step Ahead project, focussed on employability and routes to graduate employment. Students reported having particularly valued the opportunity for a sustained programme of activity focused on employability and were able to articulate high levels of distance travelled in their learning and preparation for work, and a positive impact

on their ability to enquiring to, apply for, and secure places on FE and HE courses, and employment within the region.

More localised, curriculum examples would include:

- Following the identification of challenges in 2021-22 associated with new entrants and the impact of Covid on their level 3 study programmes, the Creative Arts department introduced practical projects with industry input in the first 6 weeks of study which has improved engagement, raised aspirations and improved retention (currently at 100%).
- 2% increase in proportion of 1<sup>st</sup> class and upper 2nds in Creative Arts following the implementation of enhanced monitoring of students and use of grade calculators to predict outcomes
- The Business and Law department introduced a grade calculator to help students monitor progress and calculate grades needed for different outcomes, resulting in students achieving higher than their predicted grades. End of year reviews, and employment progress reviews to identify targets and looking beyond graduation were re-focused to ensure they are not too generic and take a more person-centred approach to student needs for example at Level 4 these focus on community, belonging, resilience, etc, at Level 5 on academic and employability, with Level 6 being focussed on research and progression beyond graduation.
- The demographic of the students in the Sport and Health department indicated a high proportion coming from lower SES backgrounds, BAME groups and EAL. 2021-22 saw a collaboration with the Teacher Training Learning and Development department to look at strategies to use in the classroom for those using English for Academic Purposes (EAP), with training implemented.

In line with our mission to widen participation in, and access to, higher education our entry requirements are lower than those typically evident in HEIs with entry at level 4 being based on a typical offer of 2 x D grades, with a minimum being 1 x E grade. In 2021-22 37% of Foundation Degree students achieved Merits or Distinctions (equating to 1<sup>st</sup> class or 2:1), 56% of BA/BSc (Hons) students achieved a good degree (1st class or 2i) and 39% of Masters students achieved Distinction with a further 44% achieving Merit.<sup>(21)</sup> This data set provides a clear picture of the impact of the transition and support strategies implemented across the UCLeeds which support students to realise excellent outcomes, despite their low level of entry qualifications.

### **3.3 Academic Skills Development**

Work towards educational gains in relation to academic skills begins with our WP and Outreach Programme and continues throughout the HE student lifecycle to post-graduate study and graduate employment. In 2021-22, 267 Level 3 learners at LCC and Keighley College completed the pilot HE Study Skills module<sup>(20)</sup>. These learners were largely from underrepresented backgrounds studying either A Levels, Access to HE, or BTEC diploma. 85.2% of those who completed evaluations felt sessions were relevant, and supported their decision making (55.6% noted this). As well as support for early academic skills development, the programme also observed positive movement towards consideration of studying HE pre- (35%) and post-programme (61%).

Whilst on a HE programme at UCLeeds, the HE Student Support team offer a range of support services and interventions. These include study skills sessions, one-to-one support,

a wealth of resources (available via the online UC Hub and Student Support Google Classroom), advice on reasonable adjustments to teaching, assessments, and exams and referral to other support services. Also offered are sessions to support the development of critical thinking, analytic reasoning, problem solving, academic writing, research and referencing skills. Effective interventions include preparation for the session and a follow-through, along with independent work after the session. Resources such as Cottrell Study Skills Handbook, British Dyslexia Association, Google Classroom and various online pages have been used to ensure students are supported effectively. In addition, the Academic Librarian provides support sessions on a range of topics, including academic skills, referencing, academic reading and note-making, academic writing, and research skills. Some successes, and evidence demonstrating effectiveness of study skills sessions, include students who have received support and successfully secured places on post-graduate study. For example, student A who had been required to resubmit on several tasks in semester one. In semester two, following intervention, the student was achieving grades between 54%, and 66%. Student B, who was achieving 2i grades in assignments aspired to achieve 70% and above for a 1<sup>st</sup> and received study skills support. The student said *'having sessions with you I had managed to up my grades from 2i to first. You helped by providing me with different ideas on how to achieve these grades which reflected in my work when writing which I really appreciated'*.

Academic Skills development is effectively embedded throughout all programmes, both through specific modules of study and approaches to teaching/delivery. This also includes the enhancement of students' digital capabilities in response identified needs and use of the extensions on the Chromebook to support them to develop their academic writing skills. As students progress in their research skills, particularly in Level 5 and beyond, they are supported to understand the process of ethical approval/authorisation through modules such as Research Methods. This introduces them to the subject of research ethics in general, and more specifically, compliance with the UCLeeds Research Ethics Policy. Students subsequently make their own applications to the Research Ethics Committee for permission to complete their research projects. This process is highly beneficial to students in developing an understanding of both explicit and implicit codes of conduct, and working within the boundaries of these, which supports future employability.

Feedback from External Examiners highlights the development of students' skills and abilities between levels and note the impact of feedback provided to students on their ability to make progress. Examples can be found across the range of reports and include:

- Film and Screen Media report from 2021-2022<sup>(22)</sup> where the EE noted that students demonstrated growing levels of research skills, creativity, understanding of professional practice, including legal and ethical issues and professional communication, as well as technical fluency and knowledge of the complexity of filmmaking. Especially level 6 modules, such as Professional Portfolio, Major Project and Research Project, as well as Level 5 Documentary project engage with the whole range of skills and demonstrate that the students can access complex problems, ideas and contemporary media issues with professionalism and integrity.
- LLB<sup>(23)</sup> where the EE noted strength with critical analysis, particularly at level 6. There was clear progress between the level 4 students moving up to level 5 and the level 5 students moving to level 6. This shows that students are progressing in their learning.

### **3.4 Development of Resilience, Motivation, Confidence, and Transferable Skills**

UCLeeds wide pre-application/enrolment programmes and inter-level/year activities support the development of a sense of belonging, student identity and resilience, whilst managing

expectations and developing academic preparedness. There are a number of ways in which these aspects are also addressed through curriculum delivery, including:

- Curriculum induction days introduce several themes, including mental health, mental resilience, and management of expectations.
- Internal and external networking events each semester where students can meet with peers from beyond their own cohort/specialism (e.g. Creative Arts)
- Curriculum content that supports the development of resilience, motivation, confidence, communication, presentation, time management, networking and interpersonal skills. Being in employment whilst studying provides an opportunity for students to practice these skills in high frequency.
- The Health Play Specialism programme offers blended modes of study, with learners attending from across the country. These apprentices are all employed by an NHS Trust and attend 80% of the programme online and 20% face to face on campus learning. an on-campus session once a month. The face-to-face session provides opportunities to share practice, network and build relationships. Mentors have cited that they can see development in confidence, skills and motivation from attending the course.
- The incorporation a range of formative and summative assessment methods throughout the curriculum, contributes to educational gains in relation to the development of resilience, motivation, confidence, communication, presentation, time management, networking and interpersonal skills. For example, in the early weeks of the Certificate in Education and Professional Graduate Certificate in Education courses, trainees prepare and teach a 20-minute session to their peers and are provided with developmental feedback from their tutor and peers about this. This provides them with a sound basis on which to enter their placement with confidence and is evident in the module average differences between the 2 teaching practice modules with 2021-22 seeing a 4% mark increase between modules 1 and 2.
- In 2022, three students successfully took part in the UCLeeds Annual Research Festival (for staff and students), including one student who delivered a collaborative project completed with a member of staff within the department. Students noted that taking part gave them a fantastic opportunity to develop confidence presenting to large groups of professionals, addressing previously held concerns, such as imposter syndrome, and stated that their employers had noted an increase in their confidence and poise. Further to this a student presented at the Luminate Education Group Unlocking Potential Conference in 2022.

Student Representative roles allow learners to gain additional skills such as confidence, leadership, mentoring, teamwork, communication, and networking. Training is offered to Student Representatives which includes a programme of leadership training. Student Ambassador roles allow students to gain additional personal and transferable skills such as communication, confidence, time management and interpersonal skills, through a supported environment which benefits their CVs considerably. This can include supporting the team in community activity (for example, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller outreach work), in delivering subject specific workshops (such as media make-up demonstrations) and more formal delivery (for instance, Step Ahead (employability) planning and delivery to ESOL students). Most outreach activity involving Student Ambassadors is facilitated within community settings, with full support from the WP and Outreach Team, providing students opportunities to devise and lead practical activities linked to their subject specialisms. Comprehensive training and support is key to help build the confidence of Student Ambassadors. This stretches students beyond their comfort zone, building transferable skills such as communication, interpersonal, leadership and teamwork skills. Academic staff have praised

the scheme for increasing student confidence and self-esteem and have noticed the impact on the student's confidence within tutorials, lectures and amongst their peers.

### **3.5 Development of Employability Skills**

UCLeeds has established, and operates, a robust mechanism for the development of new provision which puts employers at the heart of the process. Initial Strategic Planning Approval is gained via our deliberative committee structure with teams required to undertake a full review of the LEP data to outline the need and rationale for the development. Such information includes the employability skills employers consider as in demand, lacking in the current workforce, and that they seek in graduates. These are reported in, for example, Labour Market Analysis Reports from West Yorkshire Combined Authority (Leeds City Region LEP). The skills sought after, reflecting gains in relation to the development of employability skills, for example, team working, commercial awareness, leadership and influencing, inform curriculum design and are embedded throughout programmes and wider institutional activities.

In conjunction with an analysis of the subject benchmarks, local and national employers are consulted regarding the form, structure and content of the programmes. Comprehensive programme of consultation, review and evaluation to ensure that employer needs are taken into consideration and used to shape the proposed programme in line with their needs and the requirements detailed in the subject benchmarks. This is reviewed through the validation process which employers also engage and play a key role in. Examples of direct employer impact on curriculum development can be found in section 4.3.

Further to this a range of extra curricula activities, designed to bring about gains in employability and personal skills, are provided. These include:

- Collaboration with the National Film and Television School, British Film Institute, ScreenSkills, Prime Studios, ITV, Screen Yorkshire, and various freelancers from the film and television industry; consistently connecting students with industry professionals. They provide workshops, guest lectures, work experience opportunities, live briefs, and mentoring; approaches that have been identified as good practice in the sector
- A weeklong programme of specialist speakers from a range of industry specialists and employers to include Channel 4 and the Prince's Trust (who also deliver business planning workshops) at the end of semester one, developing their awareness of the wider creative industries and gain valuable insights from local creative talent.
- The Film and Screen Media department are part of Screen Yorkshire's Connected Campus initiative which works to forge closer links between TV and Film professionals, production companies, broadcasters and students. Through this initiative students have access to a range of boot camps, masterclasses and special events, including visits to live sets and studios, industry workshops, visiting speakers and the opportunity to gain feedback on their work from industry professionals. The scheme is encouraged and supported by the broadcasters based in the region, including Channel 4, the BBC and ITV.
- Free registration with Film Buddy UK throughout Creative Arts studies, giving access to live Q&As with some of the world's leading specialists, mentoring support, access to work experience opportunities and FB-1, an online catalogue of interviews and podcasts with specialists from the screen industries.
- A recent BA (Hons) Film and Screen Media graduate (first class honours degree) applied the employability skills gained on the course to secure his first full professional film job shortly after course completion on a £10 million-pound budget US film called 'Recipe for Love', starring Gloria Estefan. The student was able to



secure this by applying through his Film Buddy network, going up against an Oxford University graduate.

- A 4-6 week Women in Leadership programme held during the first half of semester two in 2022 which consisted of several female guest speakers, leaders in their sector, hosting workshops around confidence, imposter syndrome and personal branding. As a result, a student accessed and completed a GenIE (Generation of Innovators and Entrepreneurs) bootcamp which provided her with an excellent networking opportunity, helping her to launch her<sup>(24)(25)</sup> new business.
- A Bangladeshi-themed fundraising event planned and hosted by our FD Events Management students, raised more than £1,200 for Henshaws.
- Law students received a visit from His Honour Judge Mushtaq Khokar, a circuit judge sitting in the crown court who has dealt with some of the most high-profile criminal cases in the UK, including some of the largest UK money laundering cases worth hundreds of millions of pounds. Notable impacts of such interventions include a raise in aspirations, particularly amongst Level 6 students. Some students have gone on to achieve internships with LEP companies and one student gained a place on the prestigious workshop held at the University of Leeds Innovation Centre for Entrepreneurs.
- Positive relationships with West Yorkshire Combined Authority have also led to several opportunities for development being offered to our students, as internships and permanent employment. One such opportunity relates to an FD Business, Enterprise and Management student, being successfully appointed as a Marketing Intern with Frame, Slaithwaite Huddersfield.
- A particular case study from our Health provision relates to skills such as leadership and influencing. Following the death of a 9-year-old child with a brain tumour who asked for a 7-day-a-week play service within her wish list, the charity Sophie's Legacy was launched. Sophie's Legacy are working in strategic partnership with Starlight, NAHPS, NHS England, RCN, and CQC to strive for this change and one of our is a member of the working group.
- Trainee Teachers are introduced to the process of entering teaching careers, including the expectations of the industry and the real-life workload for teachers in employment. This has led to a high level of students gaining employment in the teaching profession. As mentioned previously Trainee Teachers also engage in the Aspire High project and have gained skills and opportunities through this.
- Regular sector specialist guest speakers on the Media Makeup programme also act as mentors and provide students with opportunities to go on-set to observe and engage in real-life industry practice.

Additional opportunities to develop employability skills such as team working, leadership and influencing are provided through Student Ambassador, Student Representative, and peer-to-peer support (Aspire High) schemes, as outlined in section 3.4.

Support for student progression to further study and/or employability is both whilst on programme and beyond graduation. This includes sector-specific advice and guidance, networking opportunities, and insights into life in industry. During 2021-22, several workshops were facilitated, including group sessions on writing the perfect job application, interview preparation, using LinkedIn effectively and CV workshops. Over 100 students requested progress or careers support during the academic year. This led to the launch of Employability Week in April 2022, which was supported by the LEP, and over 30 local SMEs, who delivered live and on-demand sessions. This was accessed by a third of our overall student population. We are also involved in the steering group for the WYCA Graduate Skills Programme<sup>(26)</sup> which gives all West Yorkshire-based graduates access to skills development workshops throughout the year.

#### **4. Student Outcomes – Positive Outcomes**

#### 4.1 Continuation

Our overall retention rate for full time students in 2021-22 was 91%, for part time students 95% and for work-based learners (apprentices) 96%. Our part time and apprenticeship learners are very often mature students, with a good proportion of full-time students also being over the age of 21. Retention on our non-recognised HE programmes has increased from 67.2% in 2019-20 to 93.6% in 2021-22 as a result of a move to on-line learning and the provision of additional support.

As has been explored in previous sections, a range of mechanisms have been introduced to support students while on programme which has resulted in increases in continuation rates, with full time (FT) continuation being 1.7% marks and part time (PT) being 2.7% marks above benchmarks in 2022. 2021 results were 3.8% marks for FT and 6.7% marks for PT above benchmarks which indicates the increased support provided during the Covid19 pandemic and success of the additional mechanisms developed and implemented. The exception to this is apprentices, for which the data is below benchmarks, and indicative of withdrawals due to changes in employment status. Apprenticeship data was impacted by timeliness of EPA processes which were outside of the team's control and therefore not a true indicator of overall performance.

Continuation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Overall Indicator (I)	Overall Benchmark (B)	Diff
Full Time	82.2%	82.4%	85.0%	84.6%	83.7%	81.5%	+2.2%
Full Time B	82.1%	79.7%	81.2%	82.9%			
Part Time	77.5%	85.2%	81.0%	79.7%	73.4%	+6.5%	2.9%
Part Time B	70.6%	75.3%	74.3%	77.0%			
Apprentices	[low]	79.3%	79.3%	83.7%	81.3%	84.9%	-3.6%
Apprentices B		85%	83%	88.4%			

As has been explored in section 3.1 a range of mechanisms are in place to support students' transition into Higher Education and throughout their programmes of study. Support for students to engage with learning and continue with studies remained high during the Covid19 pandemic as many resources were already online and contained within the Virtual Learning Environment, Google Classroom. During this period, we were in a good position as students were already utilising Google Classroom so the transition to using Google Meet for lesson delivery was relatively seamless. Rapid development of tutor skills to facilitate this included exploration of further functions within Google Meet, including the ability to allocate students into breakout rooms, holding polls and use of the presentation function. HE Students reported that they preferred face-to-face delivery, however they were appreciative of the fact that they could access the learning content 24 hours etc. Further to this teams developed skills in using resources that allowed the embedding of technology into classes such as Discord, Ed puzzle, Pear Deck, jam boards, Plickers, Loom, Nearpod, Wizer.me, Socrative, Quizzzzes and Adobe Express.

This development work has enabled us to continue to offer a blended approach in response to sector needs an example of this relates to the Health Play Specialism programme which is a niche area of specialism, offered in few localities. Through stakeholder engagement we

have developed and adopted blended delivery models which has resulted in bespoke delivery models (Great Ormond Street Hospital) and models which facilitate engagement with students from a wide range of geographic locations, ensuring that this provision is accessible to all.

We have seen a significant improvement in continuation for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) (including mental health) since 2017-18 with our performance improving to within 0.4% of the sector at that time. In 2017-18<sup>(27)</sup> there was an average of 6% continuation gap compared with non-disabled students, with disabled students who withdrew during their first year stating their reasons as due to external factors rather than the quality of the course and support. In 2016-17 our continuation rate for LDD students was 89% and the sector average was 89.4%. In 2019-20, 95.1% of LDD students continued in their studies with us, 0.27% lower than non-LDD students. In 2020-21 this was 91.4%, 0.5% lower than non-LDD students. However, in 2021-22 this was 86.41%, 4.06% lower than non-LDD students, with narrative drawing on the impact of the pandemic.

Students have been also more engaged in accessing mental health support with initial assessments also increasing each year (2019-20: 67 (5%) , 2020-21: 85 (6%) , 2021-22: 87 (7%) ). In the current academic year, students have engaged in initial assessments before December 2022, suggesting the numbers will remain high in 2022-23. Counsellors and Mental Health Officers have observed increases in mental health referrals after induction sessions promoting positive mental health and wellbeing and the support services available. Several students have stated that they would not have acted on accessing the support if it was not for hearing about it in induction.

## 4.2 Completion

Pass rates for full time learners was 85%, 97% for part-time and 93% for work-based learners. In terms of achievement rates, for full time was 77%, part time 92% and apprentices 90%. There is a significant difference between the TEF published data and our internal data. As mentioned above the timeliness of EPA processes have had a negative impact on this data, with the cut-off data point being out of sync with these processes. The internal data of 90% provides a more accurate picture of completion and therefore would place us above benchmarks. Completion and achievement on non-recognised HE programmes has increased significantly from 20% in 19-20 to 61.5% in 2021-22 as a result of a move to on-line learning and the provision of additional support.

Completion	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Overall Indicator (I)	Overall Benchmark (B)	Diff
Full Time	69.7%	72.7%	73.3%	77.9%	73.1%	76.9%	-3.8%
Full Time B	78.1%	76.2%	76.7%	77.1%			
Part Time	78.0%	77.2%	74.5%	82.9%	78.0%	73.9%	+4.1%
Part Time B	71.0%	75.4%	76.8%	73.2%			
Apprentices	[none]	16.0%	[low]	[none]	29.9%	68.4%	-38.5%
Apprentices B		57.5%					

The range of strategies and interventions explored throughout the previous sections have contributed to a steady increase in completion rates with the difference for FT students

between the benchmarks and our performance being -8.4% marks in year 1, -3.5% marks year 2, -3% marks year 3 and + 0.8% marks in year 4, demonstrating significant improvements year on year, with the most significant increase for PT students also being evident in year 4 at 9.7% marks above benchmark. Completion for apprentices tracks lower than other student groups and represents the timeliness of achievement data, linked to completion of the overall apprenticeship programme and timeliness of students going through gateway and completing the End Point Assessments (EPAs) with significant delays being experienced. For future cohorts profiling of the programme of study will more accurately reflect the time needed for these activities to ensure that the data is reflective of the actual picture of performance.

Examples of ways in which we have worked to improve the achievement of learners from across our curriculum are vast, demonstrating a common mission to ensure positive outcomes for our students and in identifying the range of challenges at entry, support needs for transition into and through HE, and the excellence in strategies to overcome and support students to overcome these challenges. Some specific examples include:

- Within our Business, Law and Leadership department, an intervention was implemented as identified in section 3.2. Significant improvement in achievement was observed between 2021 and 2022, specifically on BA (Hons) Business, Enterprise and Management (increase from 35% to 55% of students gaining a 1<sup>st</sup> class or upper second), BA (Hons) Travel and Tourism Management (increase from 33% to 60% of students gaining a 1<sup>st</sup> class or upper second) and FD Business, Enterprise and Management Level 5 (increase from 14% to 38% of students gaining a merit or distinction).
- Support mechanisms for ITE students on teaching placement has been significantly enhanced through the inclusion of a Placement Co-ordinator role in 2019. The impact of this includes the support provided for a student with mental health issues in relation to placement working (impact was an instance of successful completion and securement of employment within placement and an instance of successful completion leading to further study), support through bereavement (successful completion of course) and supporting refugees (successful completion of programme and securement of teaching posts)
- In the Creative Arts department where there is an embedded 1-to-1 programme, complemented by peer feedback sessions and studio workshops. These activities, along with the Grade Calculator, provide an opportunity to stretch students to the achieve higher award by supporting students to identify and develop their skills in relation to critical thinking, analytic reasoning, problem solving, academic writing, research and referencing skills. Through an extensive engagement programme with industry professionals and representatives, students are introduced to aspirational practitioners who instil professional working practices, including key employability skills for a competitive industry, often as freelance practitioners, including critical thinking, analytical reasoning and problem-solving.<sup>(32)</sup>
- Within our Engineering provision, activities to develop problem solving skills and critical thinking are embedded throughout the programme, promoting an appreciation of the importance of these skills within the industry. This is reflected in improvements in pass rates among our engineering students, from 87% in 2019-20<sup>(35)</sup> to 100% in 2020-21 and 2021-22<sup>(34)</sup>. It is further reflected in the proportion of students achieving Merit and Distinction grades, improving from 27% achieving Merit and 13% Distinction in 2019-20 to 16% achieving Merit and 76% Distinction in 2021-22.<sup>(33)</sup>

### **4.3 Progression**

Progression	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Indicator (I)	Benchmark (B)	Diff
Full Time	47.9%	44.8%	44.6%	45.6%	54.8%	-9.3%
Full Time BM	57.9%	54.7%	52.9%			
Part Time	69.2%	86.9%	[low]	77.6%	71.8%	+5.8%
Part Time BM	73.2%	70.7%				
Apprentices	[none]	[none]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]

Response rates for the Graduate Outcomes survey have been low across all modes of study for the last three years. Due to the nature of our provision, mainly FD of two years followed by one year top-up, the timing of the Graduation Outcomes survey poses us with challenges, in that our students are surveyed twice, once following completion of their FD programme and then again following completion to their top-up programme. The results are significantly negatively impacted, with FD graduates being surveyed a full 12 months earlier than comparable full 3 year undergraduate programmes, when it is less likely that they will have gained professional and managerial roles as might be reasonably expected 15 months after graduation. Further challenges in the data link to subject specialisms, such as chosen professions not being classed as 'graduate level' such as some health-related occupations. Similarly, with a large number of Creative Arts students gaining employment as freelance practitioners, the responses they provide do not always reflect the professional roles they are undertaken and instead they often report on part-time work, such as waitressing, that they may be undertaking alongside their professional role as, for example, a photographer. This has resulted in low indicator values across the indicator types, particularly for cohorts completing full time modes of study.

As part of an internal insights project, we undertook a destinations data collection activity in November 2021 to support the Graduate Outcomes data, in order to explore engagement levels, attain insights regarding destinations, and gain a better understanding of the prospects for our students. Participants were chosen from academic year 2018-19<sup>(34)</sup>, corresponding to the planned HESA collection in the same year, receiving around 50 responses. The project questions were framed on the Graduate Outcomes data fields, designed to enhance our insights into the destinations of our graduates, build an alumni network and inform progression strategies. The data revealed that 72% were working (either paid or voluntary and in-line with their future plans) and a further 12 % engaged in further study.

All our HE programmes are designed, monitored and reviewed with stakeholder engagement, including employer consultation and a robust evaluation of local market intelligence. Their input informs curriculum design and delivery, including indicative content, practical skills development, and teaching, learning and assessment strategies. Employers are panel members at validation events, providing invaluable insights regarding the validity, currency, and relevance of our provision for industry and the production of employable graduates. Examples of direct impact on programme development/content include:

- The inclusion of the Black Letter Law to ensure graduates have developed skills in critical analysis in order to give advice to clients in practice.<sup>(36)</sup>
- The inclusion of reflective practice in the LLB which is increasing in value throughout the law sector.<sup>(37)</sup>
- The inclusion of video within photography in line with sector demands.<sup>(38)</sup>
- The inclusion of specific skills shortages within the media make-up programmes, including script breakdown, barbering, continuity and hair cutting and styling.<sup>(39)(40)</sup>

- The inclusion of cultural appreciation and unconscious bias, use of language to include age ranges from baby to adolescence, including those who may be older chronologically but not cognitively in the Health Play Specialism programme (employers included Leeds Teaching Hospitals, The Christie, Manchester University, Alder Hey and Great Ormond Street Hospital)<sup>(41)</sup>
- The inclusion of Introduction to Marketing and Data Analytics, and Understanding Organisations and Consumer Behaviour in our FD Business, Enterprise and Management programme.
- The Introduction to Marketing & Data Analytics introduces the essential requirement to market goods and services and the powerful analytics which inform successful businesses. This is as a result of feedback received during consultation from several employers who identified the need for graduates to have basic knowledge and skills in data analytics - used for business decision making.<sup>(42)(43)</sup>
- The inclusion of the following aspects in the Health and Wellbeing FD: 'Digital' included in the Academic and Digital module due to feedback that working practices have changed post pandemic, a focus on health promotion in Fundamentals of Health and Interventions for Wellbeing modules and inclusion of a Creative Interventions for Mental Health and Wellbeing module as this is a problem recruitment area for the sector.<sup>(44)(45)(46)(47)</sup>

Employers also regularly feedback on the skills development of our graduates:

- The breadth of student work that Creative Arts students produce, their professionalism, and how prepared they are to discuss and defend their work.
- Confirmation of appropriate skills development during HTQ approval processes <sup>(48)</sup>
- UCLeeds won an invitation to tender for the L5 Health Play Specialist apprentice standard and are Health Education England's preferred provider, meaning we are a first choice for NHS Trusts to provide their training.

In addition to programme content and delivery, a range of opportunities are provided for students in relation to the development of graduate skills and to promote entry into graduate employment, which include graduate schemes, master lectures/practicals, guest speaker programmes, Women in Leadership programme, wider graduate skills development sessions (e.g. 'Dealing with colleagues/staff remotely', responding to the increase of home working and impact of zoom/team meetings on dynamics and effective communication) and a range of employer engagement activities including working on employer designed briefs, employer-led projects and employer led activities such as pitches, interviews etc. We also operate a number of graduate schemes across the provision, including:

- A Media Hair and Make-up graduate scheme running in conjunction with Screen Yorkshire, designed to bridge the gap between education and employment. This scheme includes two 'boot camps' designed to prepare graduates for specific requirements of Hair and Make-Up crew in film and TV, such as their role within a department, the way departments interact with other departments during production, set etiquette and preparation for freelance life (including tax, invoicing, and networking) and work placements on local productions. The scheme has been extremely successful in students gaining employment on productions after the course. 63% of course completers have gone on to work in film, TV, theatre, and/or commercial work, including some high profile TV and film productions. <sup>(49)</sup>
- A Bridge to Employment scheme includes an 8-week boot camp for digital graduates developed in collaboration with, and endorsed by local employers, to provide the necessary professional skills to increase the potential of subject related employment after they finish their course at the University Centre.
- A Business Incubation hub which provides graduates with access to resources and staff expertise for a year after graduation in order to support the development of

computer games. This scheme also includes input into aspects such as bid-writing to support them to develop these skills required for self-employment.

- Alumni engagement through Discord with computer games graduates, which facilitates ongoing support with professionals, connections with employment opportunities etc.

Employment opportunities gained by our students following graduation are numerous. Some specific examples include:

- Each year a number of graduates progress onto the PGCE and many have subsequently been employed as teaching staff. Their feedback has confirmed that the HE programme that they achieved enhanced their knowledge and skills and their career prospects as they are now employed as HE Lecturers.
- In addition to teaching roles graduates have been employed in a number of different roles within the LEG, including Study Support Coaches, Lab Technician, Apprentice Assessor, MIS team members.
- A previous Student Ambassador from the Games programmes is now employed as Programme Manager having successfully graduated and completing PGCE.
- An LLB student, offered a training contract as a solicitor, fed back that the Law degree gave him the knowledge and confidence to pursue a career in the law. The student who progressed to study the BPTC stated that he would not have had the confidence to enrol on the BPTC and a barrister's career without the knowledge and skills he developed on the LLB and the confidence he gained whilst studying with us.
- Work placement required on the Health Play Specialist programme provides students opportunities to be part of NHS Play Services nationally, with close relationships built with Leeds and Manchester. Approximately 20% gained employment as a direct result of their placements.
- Graduate destinations on our Media Makeup programme includes 66.7% gaining employment as makeup related professionals within the industry, including freelance artists; 8.3% on PGCE courses; and 4.2% on Masters. Students have secured roles on several productions including blockbuster films,
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