



# **Integrated quality and enhancement review**

**Summative review**

**Kirklees College**

**May 2012**

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## Preface

The mission of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is to safeguard the public interest in sound standards of higher education qualifications and to inform and encourage continual improvement in the management of the quality of higher education. As part of this mission, QAA undertakes reviews of higher education provision delivered in further education colleges. This process is known as Integrated quality and enhancement review (IQER).

## Purpose of IQER

Higher education programmes delivered by further education colleges (colleges) lead to awards made by higher education institutions or Edexcel. The awarding bodies retain ultimate responsibility for maintaining the academic standards of their awards and assuring the quality of the students' learning opportunities. The purpose of IQER is, therefore, to safeguard the public interest in the academic standards and quality of higher education delivered in colleges. It achieves this by providing objective and independent information about the way in which colleges discharge their responsibilities within the context of their partnership agreements with awarding bodies. IQER focuses on three core themes: academic standards, quality of learning opportunities and public information.

## The IQER process

IQER is a peer review process. It is divided into two complementary stages: Developmental engagement and Summative review. In accordance with the published method, colleges with less than 100 full-time equivalent students funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), may elect not to take part in Developmental engagements, but all HEFCE-funded colleges will take part in Summative review.

## Developmental engagement

Developmental engagements explore in an open and collegial way the challenges colleges face in specific areas of higher education provision. Each college's first, and often their only, Developmental engagement focuses on student assessment.

The main elements of a Developmental engagement are:

- a self-evaluation by the college
- an optional written submission by the student body
- a preparatory meeting between the college and the IQER coordinator several weeks before the Developmental engagement visit
- the Developmental engagement visit, which normally lasts two days
- the evaluation of the extent to which the college manages effectively its responsibilities for the delivery of academic standards and the quality of its higher education provision, plus the arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of public information it is responsible for publishing about its higher education
- the production of a written report of the team's findings.

To promote a collegial approach, Developmental engagement teams include up to two members of staff from the further education college under review. They are known as nominees for this process.

## Summative review

Summative review addresses all aspects of a college's HEFCE-funded higher education provision and provides judgements on the management and delivery of this provision against core themes one and two, and a conclusion against core theme three.

Summative review shares the main elements of Developmental engagement described above. Summative review teams however, are composed of the IQER coordinator and QAA reviewers. They do not include nominees.

## Evidence

In order to obtain evidence for the review, IQER teams carry out a number of activities, including:

- reviewing the college's self-evaluation and its internal procedures and documents
- reviewing the optional written submission from students
- asking questions of relevant staff
- talking to students about their experiences.

IQER teams' expectations of colleges are guided by a nationally agreed set of reference points, known as the Academic Infrastructure. These are published by QAA and consist of:

- *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)*, which includes descriptions of different higher education qualifications
- the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education (Code of practice)*
- subject benchmark statements, which describe the characteristics of degrees in different subjects
- guidelines for preparing programme specifications, which are descriptions of what is on offer to students in individual programmes of study
- award benchmark statements which describe the generic characteristics of an award, for example Foundation Degrees.

In addition, Developmental engagement teams gather evidence by focusing on particular aspects of the theme under review. These are known as 'lines of enquiry'.

## Outcomes of IQER

Each Developmental engagement and Summative review results in a written report:

- Developmental engagement reports set out good practice and recommendations and implications for the college and its awarding bodies, but do not contain judgements. Recommendations will be at one of three levels - **essential**, **advisable** and **desirable**. To promote an open and collegial approach to Developmental engagements, the reports are not published.
- Summative review reports identify good practice and contain judgements about whether the college is discharging its responsibilities effectively against core themes one and two above. The judgements are **confidence**, **limited confidence** or **no confidence**. There is no judgement for the third core theme, instead the report will provide evaluation and a conclusion. Summative review reports are published. Differentiated judgements can be made where a team judges a college's

management of the standards and/or quality of the awards made by one awarding body to be different from those made by another.

Colleges are required to develop an action plan to address any recommendations arising from IQER. Progress against these action plans is monitored by QAA in conjunction with HEFCE and/or the college's awarding body/ies as appropriate. The college's action plan in response to the conclusions of the Summative review will be published as part of the report.

## Executive summary

### The Summative review of Kirklees College carried out in May 2012

As a result of its investigations, the Summative review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreements, for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreement, for the quality of learning opportunities it offers. The team considers that reliance **can** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

### Good practice

The team has identified the following **good practice** for dissemination:

- the highly effective mapping of the terms of reference of the Higher Education Quality and Standards Committee against the Academic Infrastructure
- the internal validation of Edexcel Higher Nationals aligns delivery and assessment against College policies and protocols
- the effective and enthusiastic use of employers to engage with students
- the excellent opportunities for students to exhibit and compete in national competitions and shows
- the professional expertise of tutors who are current practitioners, including high-profile guest speakers
- the effective higher education forum which engages with staff across all academic disciplines and allows sharing of experiences.

### Recommendations

The team has also identified a number of recommendations for the enhancement of the higher education provision.

The team considers that it would be **desirable** for the College to:

- give greater prominence to programme specifications in course handbooks, the website and the virtual learning environment
- continue to develop a standardised approach to College documentation
- clearly align research and scholarly activity against the HEFCE definition of scholarly activity
- continue to develop student representation activities
- develop a minimum standard for student tutorial entitlement tailored to programme needs
- ensure all courses have similar minimum levels of information available to potential applicants via the College website
- implement planned improvements to the virtual learning environment to ensure consistent levels of information are available to students.

## A Introduction and context

1 This report presents the findings of the Summative review of higher education funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) conducted at Kirklees College (the College). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the College discharges its responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes which the College delivers on behalf of Edexcel, Leeds Metropolitan University and the University of Huddersfield. The review was carried out by Mr Graham Brotherton, Dr Paul Monroe, Ms Trudy Stiles (reviewers) and Dr Mark Mabey (coordinator).

2 The team conducted the review in agreement with the College and in accordance with *The handbook for Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review* (the handbook), published by QAA. Evidence in support of the Summative review included documentation supplied by the College and its awarding bodies, meetings with staff, students, employers and partner institutions, and reports of reviews by QAA and from inspections by Ofsted. In particular, the team drew on the findings and recommendations of the Developmental engagements in assessment and employer engagement. A summary of findings from the Developmental engagements is provided in Section C of this report. The review also considered the College's use of the Academic Infrastructure, developed by QAA on behalf of higher education providers, with reference to the *Code of practice*, subject and award benchmark statements, the FHEQ, and programme specifications.

3 In order to help HEFCE to gain information to assist with the assessment of the impact of Foundation Degree awards, Section D of this report summarises details of the Foundation Degree programmes delivered at the College.

4 Kirklees College is a large further education college formed by the merger of Huddersfield Technical College and Dewsbury College on 1 August 2008. It has two main campus buildings in Huddersfield and Dewsbury, and a further nine buildings which include two specialist Creative Industries Centres, two specialist Construction Centres and a dedicated Animal Care facility. In autumn 2012 the College will open a new main campus in Huddersfield and a new dedicated engineering block; this is a major investment in state of the art learning facilities.

5 A relatively low proportion of Kirklees residents (22.7 per cent) are qualified at degree level compared to the national average (26 per cent). There are areas of low educational achievement in Kirklees, including some of the deprived wards surrounding Huddersfield and Dewsbury, which are characterised by significant Skills for Life needs, a high proportion of residents without level 2 qualifications, and a low proportion of residents with degree-level qualifications. The College recruited 16,393 students in 2011-12 based across the campuses. The HEFCE-funded higher education provision currently delivered by the College comprises the following programmes, listed by awarding bodies and indicating full-time equivalent numbers in brackets.

### Leeds Metropolitan University

- FdA Applied Arts (0.5)
- FdA Ceramics (11.5)
- FdA Children Learning and Development (17)
- FdSc Computing Systems & Networking (17)
- FdA Fashion Design and Manufacture (22)
- FdA Fashion Styling and Promotion (19)

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- FdA Graphic Communication (3)
- FdA Sports Coaching (4.5)
- BA (Hons) Applied Arts (3)
- BA Fashion Design and Manufacture (1)
- BA (Hons) Fine Art for Design (42)
- BA (Hons) Graphic Communications (3)
- BA Photography (10)

## Edexcel

- HNC Construction (7)
- HNC Electrical and Electronic Engineering (5)
- HNC Mechanical Engineering (8.5)
- HND Animal Management (12.4)

## University of Huddersfield

- In-service Certificate in Education (33 FTE)
- In-service Post Graduate Certificate in Education (22 FTE)

## Partnership agreements with the awarding bodies

6 The College has detailed Memoranda of Agreement with both its higher education institution partners. The College also holds a Standard Note for its provision with Edexcel.

## Recent developments in higher education at the College

7 The College has had a clear focus on improving its retention and success rates and rationalising provision to ensure the quality of learning opportunities. It has a strategic objective of 10 per cent year-on-year growth in higher education provision. The College was successful in the recent Government initiative to bid for additional student numbers. The development of higher level courses is being explored in all appropriate curriculum areas. One new award, FdSc Computer Forensics and Security, has been validated in March 2012; one further validation takes place in May 2012 for Business Management.

8 There are plans to develop level 4 and level 5 management qualifications for the health and social care sector. Potential developments in engineering will also be reviewed. The College will continue to provide low cost, high quality learning opportunities for students. The College is planning for increased levels of internal progression of existing level 3 further education students.

## Students' contribution to the review, including the written submission

9 The student written submission reflects the views of a wide range of students, varying in age, gender, course, mode of attendance and level of study on the College's HEFCE-funded higher education provision. Students were invited to produce their own submission but unanimously elected to have an external facilitator conduct the session and write the initial report, while retaining editorial and submission rights. A student questionnaire and focus groups acted as the information source for the written submission. The report was distributed for comment to all students who had taken part in the meetings and posted on the intranet so that students had access to it for further comment. This document represents the agreed views of the student body at the College. During the review the team met with



students in both face-to-face meetings and in telephone interviews which were invaluable contributions and were welcomed by the team.

## **B Evaluation of the management of HEFCE-funded higher education**

### **Core theme 1: Academic standards**

#### **How are responsibilities for managing and delivering higher education standards delegated within the management structure and what reporting arrangements are in place?**

10 The College has made recent changes to the leadership and management structure and the higher education reporting structure. These changes add clarity to the higher education structure and are effective in maintaining and enhancing academic standards.

11 There is a separate structure for managing and delivering higher education within the College. The Head of Higher and Teacher Education reports to the Director of Curriculum Development, Innovation and Higher Education, who is responsible for the maintenance and enhancement of academic standards. The structure is effective in meeting the responsibilities set out in the Memorandum of Understanding with Leeds Metropolitan University, the contract of collaboration with the University of Huddersfield and the Edexcel Standard Note.

12 Course committee meetings are held once a term to analyse the results of student surveys, external examiner reports, enrolment data and completion data. Outcomes are reported to the higher education award leaders' meeting and from there to the higher education Quality and Standards Committee. The Quality, Performance and Standards Committee receives the outcomes of the Quality and Standards Committee and reports to the Academic Board. The outcomes are used to inform the College Higher Education Annual Review validation process. The system ensures that actions taken to improve the student experience are effectively identified and monitored through to completion.

13 The higher education strategy 2011-13 sits within the overall College strategic plan (December 2011-December 2013). The higher education strategy identifies eight objectives which relate directly to the eight strategic objectives of the plan, and contains a range of aspirational targets for enrolment and success.

#### **What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?**

14 The Academic Infrastructure is used effectively during curriculum development, validation and periodic review and to inform policies and procedures. The terms of reference of the Higher Education Quality and Standards Committee have been mapped against key aspects of the Academic Infrastructure. It was clear from all documentation that this was now fully embedded within all curriculum areas, and staff are implementing this both in the quality maintenance of programmes and within learning and teaching. The team consider this mapping to be an area of good practice.

15 The College produces handbooks for each programme, and a generic higher education induction handbook. It is, however, not always clear where programme specifications are located. A cross-higher education handbook, designed to encourage a more standardised approach, is currently under development. The team recommends that

the College continues to develop the standardised approach to College documentation, and give greater prominence to programme specifications in course handbooks and in the website and virtual learning environment.

16 The College offers a range of Foundation Degrees accredited by Leeds Metropolitan University. There is clear evidence of engagement with the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark*, both at validation and periodic review and during delivery and assessment.

17 The Head of Higher and Teacher Education has led training and development sessions designed to embed the Academic Infrastructure in the higher education provision, but the College acknowledges that more needs to be done in this area. The Higher Education Quality and Standards committee is working to enhance and maximise understanding and enhance adherence to the guidance found in the Academic Infrastructure.

**How does the College assure itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to ensure that the standards of higher education provision meet the requirements of validating partners and awarding bodies?**

18 The College has partnerships with Leeds Metropolitan University, the University of Huddersfield and Edexcel. The College has effective systems to ensure that academic standards meet the requirements of their awarding body partners. The various partnership agreements align the responsibilities clearly and effectively. Leeds Metropolitan University allows the College a certain amount of autonomy within fixed guidelines. The University of Huddersfield retains the responsibility for their programmes because the College is part of a larger teacher training consortium.

19 The College has addressed the recommendations made in the two Developmental engagements with regard to the maintenance of academic standards, and has monitored the progress made. Where action has been taken this is noted and where action is pending there is a narrative explaining the current position. The College monitors the two Developmental engagement action plans in a highly effective manner.

20 Curriculum development procedures follow guidelines laid down by the awarding bodies and provide opportunities for employer involvement. There are comprehensive and effective periodic internal reviews of Leeds Metropolitan University programmes every five years and annual higher education reviews. Teacher training programmes are revalidated by the University of Huddersfield every five years. The College has introduced internal validation of all Edexcel Higher National programmes in order to align delivery and assessment against College policies and protocols. The team consider that the robust internal mechanisms effectively safeguard standards, and this is good practice.

21 The student voice is collected through module and course reviews and student focus groups. Higher education students are encouraged to complete the annual National Student Survey online questionnaire. The outcomes of the above procedures are fed into the Higher Education Student Consultative Committee, and thereafter to the College Student Parliament. Students all commented that their opinions are treated seriously and that actions are taken to address their concerns.

22 There is effective employer engagement with the higher education provision at the College. A local employer from the information technology security sector contributed ideas to the curriculum development process and attended the validation event as a member of the team. Good use is made of live projects and assessment opportunities involving

employers. Examples include the commercial aspects of designing and producing clothes, and the annual installation of student work in a formal show at local galleries and museums. Childcare students are all in employment and enhance the quality and standards in local settings. The College has long-standing relationships with a range of private and public sector organisations and uses them to great effect both for contributing to course development and for assisting with student employability, which was particularly emphasised during the student meeting. The team consider the effective and enthusiastic employer engagement to be good practice.

### **What are the College's arrangements for staff development to support the achievement of appropriate academic standards?**

23 Staff training and development is highly effective and includes a reduced teaching load for staff engaged in research and scholarly activity. The College has an effective appraisal system which identifies staff development needs and these are addressed on an annual and ongoing basis. An Advanced Teaching and Learning Coach for Higher Education has been appointed and this has led to a better understanding of how academic standards can be enhanced. The higher education forum is effective in sharing good practice across all academic disciplines.

24 Research and scholarly activity is well documented. This was previously identified as good practice by the Developmental engagement team on the grounds that the approach is effective and includes a reduced teaching load for staff engaged in research and scholarly activity. However, the nature of the activities undertaken does not map clearly against the HEFCE definition of scholarly activity. The team recommends that the College audit their training and development activities and clearly align research and scholarly activities against the HEFCE definition of scholarly activity.

**The team concludes that it has confidence in the College's management of its responsibilities as set out in its partnership agreements for the management and delivery of the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies.**

## **Core theme 2: Quality of learning opportunities**

### **How are responsibilities for managing the quality of learning opportunities for higher education programmes delegated within the management structure and what reporting arrangements are in place?**

25 The College has a clear structure for the management of learning opportunities as set out in paragraphs 10 to 13 with clearly defined organisational structures, roles and responsibilities.

### **How does the College assure itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to its awarding bodies to ensure that students receive appropriate learning opportunities?**

26 The College has an emerging strategic overview, through the recently formed Higher Education Quality and Standards committee, to ensure that learning outcomes and greater standardisation of systems, processes and key documentation are achieved.

27 The Student Consultative Committee facilitates student representatives discussing aspects of their higher education experience. The information is disseminated through

various channels to ensure maximum response and impact. Guidelines have been developed by the Head of Higher and Teacher Education to help students understand their role within the Student Consultative Committee. Student representatives agreed they received helpful training and they confirmed that the College responded to issues raised. Students agreed that they would welcome the opportunity to be involved in other areas of relevant committee work, where they are not currently represented. The College introduced higher education student focus groups in 2009-10 to provide a forum for feedback. Examples of action taken as a result of these meetings include rescheduling assessments and provision of industry-standard computing facilities, in an exclusive higher education environment. There is a process in place for gathering the views of students at course level at the end of units and modules to inform future planning. The team recommend that the College continues to develop student representation activities.

### **What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?**

28 The recently formed Higher Education Quality and Standards committee has oversight of changes to legislation and external regulatory frameworks. While the College acknowledges the need to ensure that the Academic Infrastructure and the *Code of practice* are referred to explicitly across College policies, they are now well embedded in the higher education policy and procedures.

### **How does the College assure itself that the quality of teaching and learning is being maintained and enhanced?**

29 The quality of learning opportunities is significantly enhanced by the range of activities undertaken with employers and external agencies. This includes students undertaking live briefs, and employer input in curriculum development, validation, and periodic review. Aspects of work-based learning and employer links have been effectively developed in many programmes. Creative Arts students have many opportunities to engage with art galleries, to put on exhibitions, and to compete in national competitions. In graphic design and fashion there is strong evidence of employer engagement, which is demonstrated in studio work that is tailored towards industry/employer needs. Employers also cite examples of work with students on graphic design and fashion programmes that include live projects, working with the Textile Centre of Excellence, Yorkshire Fashion Week, and national competitions. A number of employers reported to the team that students are highly skilled and knowledgeable, with a level of student research that exceeded their expectations. The effective use of industrial links for highly innovative live briefs is an area of good practice. On the FdA/BA (Hons) Top-up awards in Digital Photography, Fashion and Graphic Communications, formative feedback is given to students by employers through live briefs and projects, and employers are also present on occasion at the presentation of final assessment pieces to give informal but industry-relevant feedback. The well-established link with a range of employers which has been developed over a number of years by the College is now reflected in the true partnership working and recognition by employers of the College effort.

30 The College operates a comprehensive annual observation scheme for all full-time and substantive part-time teachers. This focuses on teaching, learning and assessment. Observations are conducted by the tutor's line manager and are subject to moderation using a joint lesson observation process. The observation team receives annual training using external consultants. Observation judgements are used to inform individual development through the College's staff appraisal scheme. In addition, the curriculum area identifies strengths and areas for improvement from the observations using a standard observation form which is then used to develop quality improvement plans. The observation profile for higher education shows the impact of this rigorous approach to the development of teaching, learning and assessment with a 6 per cent increase of good or outstanding grades. To

further enhance the quality of the learning experience, the advanced teaching and learning coach for higher education provides dedicated support sessions for teaching staff in the Teacher Development Centre.

31 An online communication scheme called Peer.Net now effectively operates to reflect the desire to create a professional dialogue between tutors teaching higher level students. It is designed to be supportive of personal and professional development. The Peer.Net Quality Circle comprises the lead tutor from within each Peer.Net group, the Head of Higher and Teacher Education, and the Quality Performance and Standards Manager. It is chaired by the Advanced Teaching and Learning Coach for Higher Education. This group discusses identified areas of good practice, areas for development and action plans from each Peer.Net group, which are then disseminated through the higher education forum which is now operating effectively.

32 All staff have a degree or equivalent with a relevant teaching qualification, and one quarter have, or are working towards, a master's degree. Many have professional qualifications and membership of professional institutes. A high proportion of the creative arts tutors have considerable relevant commercial experience, some with 25 years or more. The team considers the professional expertise of tutors who are current practitioners, including high-profile guest speakers, to be a feature of good practice.

### **How does the College assure itself that students are supported effectively?**

33 All students go through a process of College, course and module induction, and are provided with course and module handbooks which advise students on aspects of the College and their chosen programme of study. This is supported by a range of resources which students can access through the virtual learning environment. The use of this facility, however, currently varies across programme areas. The students confirmed that their induction was thorough and the information was in the College induction handbook. The presentation covered awarding body regulations, such as mitigating circumstances, plagiarism, referencing, deadlines, penalties for late submission of assignments, and details of student voice opportunities. The College has developed a comprehensive College student handbook that has yet to be fully implemented. A new interactive library induction was developed for 2011, providing students with the opportunity to revisit guidance as necessary. Study skills are introduced during induction and further guidance is available from tutors or library staff. A standardised study skills booklet is being developed by the library staff for all students. There is still not consistency of documentation production across subject areas and the team recommend the College develop a standardised approach to all documentation.

34 There is no standard tutorial practice but arrangements vary within individual programmes to suit delivery and working methods. On childcare programmes, where all students are employed and classroom time is short, tutorials are held within the workplace. Photography programmes use the personal development planning module for tutorials. Some tutorials naturally fit within workshop time, and others are scheduled at predetermined times. The students commented that the tutorial entitlement varied across programmes and that they would welcome a more standardised approach recognising the needs of different academic disciplines. The team recommends that the College develop a minimum standard for student tutorial entitlement tailored to programme needs.

35 The higher education forum is now well established and is highly effective. It has developed significantly over the three years since its introduction and is now held at different centres and on different days of the week to facilitate attendance. Minutes of the meetings are posted on the virtual learning environment. The sharing of good practice has had a significant impact upon both enhancing learning and teaching and the overall quality

management of programmes across the higher education area. The effective higher education forum, which engages staff from across all academic disciplines and allows the sharing of experiences, is an area of good practice.

36 Since the second Developmental engagement, the College has developed a comprehensive employer's handbook to clarify responsibilities and expectations. The College recognises the need to further develop a formal structure to support students in their work-related and placement-based activities and to ensure clear recording. The team recognises the wide range of employer involvement in providing varied and professional work-related learning experiences that increase the employability of students. There is a clear commitment to providing timely feedback to students, as expressed in the higher education assessment framework, and the College acknowledges the differing turnaround times across the awarding body frameworks. The students confirmed they receive constructive and timely formative and summative feedback. The College recognises that while there is a need to develop a consistent approach to peer assessment, it is integral to all Leeds Metropolitan University awards through the personal and professional development module. The BA Fine Art for Design embeds both formative peer assessment, through critique and tutorials, and summative peer assessment, through an assessment panel. Peer assessment also occurs in teacher education and on the HND in Animal Management.

### **What are the College's arrangements for staff development to maintain and enhance the quality of learning opportunities?**

37 The College has worked closely with its university partners and all staff have undergone training to become totally familiar with academic regulations. Staff have the opportunity to join research groups within the university partners and also reciprocal academic exchanges of ideas and concepts for new learning and teaching methods. The College's approach to research and scholarly activity, including the commitment to a reduced teaching load, has led to an enhanced learning experience linked to employer engagement.

38 Computing staff have global vendor qualifications and developed knowledge of specialist industry-specific software. Fine Art for Design staff attend exhibitions, conferences and the Graphic Art fair at Somerset House, which enables them to engage with industry specialists.

### **How does the College ensure the sufficiency and accessibility of the learning resources the students need to achieve the intended learning outcomes for their programmes?**

39 The library holds relevant books, journals and e-books, and students have full access to Leeds Metropolitan University and University of Huddersfield library resources. Learning resource centre staff provide valuable support and instruction during induction and later as required. They are standardising study support materials for all higher education students.

40 The College has an annual process of capital resource allocation and departments submit bids for new and updated equipment. Information and communication technology students have a well-equipped, purpose-built higher education computer lab with industry standard software and networking facilities, and a study area. Creative arts students have abundant professional standard equipment, including state of the art computing and software facilities. Fashion students have three fully equipped workrooms; two for classes and a third for independent use. Photography students have state-of-the art studio facilities, including a drive-in studio, and well-equipped digital and film laboratories. Ceramics students have a

range of kilns and facilities for ceramic production methods. The FdA Ceramics and FdA/BA (Hons) Top-up Applied Arts awards specifically find work-related and placement learning challenging, because the nature of the industry means that the employers are often self-employed. The award team has developed innovative and enterprise-based opportunities to alleviate this issue and support learners to achieve the aims of their programme. For example, these students have developed a link with a local company to secure exhibition space to promote their products at various points throughout the year. Second-year BA (Hons) Fine Art for Design students develop, curate and publicise their own exhibition, this year in Dewsbury Museum. This range of realistic work-related activity was thought by the team to be likely to enhance students' employability and is therefore good practice. Higher education art and design students attend exhibitions and end-of-year shows to provide them with the opportunity to meet employers, representatives from professional bodies and other industry professionals. This allows students access to external resources to display their final productions that are not available within the College setting.

41 There is a broad range of review activities conducted by the College in respect of employer engagement and work-related learning to ensure a relevant contribution to the quality of learning opportunities and the overall review of resources within the College. These include: course committee meetings; professional discussions with employers; the higher education student consultative committee; module reviews; higher education award leader meetings; the higher education forum; annual planning days; annual review process; the Higher Education Quality and Standards committee; the College self-assessment report; and the annual review of higher education.

**The team concludes that it has confidence in the College's management of its responsibilities for the quality of the learning opportunities as required by the awarding bodies to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.**

### **Core theme 3: Public information**

#### **What information is the College responsible for publishing about its HEFCE-funded higher education?**

42 The College is responsible for the information on its website and virtual learning environment. The College has a signing-off process to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the higher education prospectus, which includes gaining full approval from awarding bodies before this document is published. The prospectus is finally approved by the Director of Curriculum Development, Innovation and Higher Education and the Vice Principal: Curriculum Quality and Standards. There are some differences on the level of detail on courses and the team recommends that the College ensures all courses have similar levels of information available to potential applicants.

43 Programme-level information is the responsibility of course teams and these are signed off by the Head of Higher and Teacher Education. The College's higher education strategy clearly sets out the approval process with roles for various individuals and committees.

44 The College has a higher education section on its website which contains information for applicants. While the majority of courses have direct links to clear and well organised programme handbooks, others have no information. The prospectus is easily available through the front page of the higher education section of the website and is also clear and well organised.

45 The College seeks to promote its higher education activities in a range of media forms. These include stories in professional publications such as the Photographer magazine and the local press, audio visual resources such as an annual video of the fashion show, and promotional videos by students. These are used to highlight aspects of the programme to potential applicants or other visitors.

**What arrangements does the College have in place to assure the accuracy and completeness of information the College has responsibility for publishing? How does the College know that these arrangements are effective?**

46 Course teams have made significant improvements in the way the virtual learning environment is used at programme level to disseminate information and engage students. This has been supported by staff development sessions, the higher education forum and dissemination of research and scholarly activity. It is now used extensively for teaching and learning and the accuracy is checked both at programme and College level to ensure accuracy and completeness. There remain, however, considerable differences in the amount of information available to students on different programmes. As a way of addressing this, the College has introduced 'Bronze, Silver and Gold Standards' for the virtual learning environment to support the development of effective learning environments, and is working towards a universal minimum specification by September 2012. The team recommend that the College implements planned improvements to the virtual learning environment to ensure a consistent level of information is available to students.

47 The College is in the process of standardising module and course handbooks for all higher education programmes, with full implementation by September 2012. However there are at present considerable variations. This activity has been developed through two members of staff undertaking a comprehensive audit, and working collaboratively with curriculum areas and awarding bodies to identify the best practice among existing course and module handbooks, with a view to devising a common format available both electronically and in hard copy.

48 The College has a highly effective mechanism in place for the checking of the accuracy and completeness of information it is responsible for publishing. At a local level programme-specific information is all checked by programme leaders before being checked at a departmental level for accuracy. All corporate materials such as the prospectus and the website are managed by the central marketing team who liaise with subject teams to collate information and ensure completeness. These are then checked by the Head of Higher and Teacher Education before being signed off by the Director of Curriculum Development, Innovation and Higher Education. An annual meeting takes place between the College and University marketing teams to ensure a corporate image is maintained and that processes of checking are in place to ensure accuracy of information.

**The team considers that reliance can be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.**



## **C Summary of findings from the Developmental engagements**

### **Developmental engagement in assessment**

49 The Development engagement in assessment took place in May 2010. There were three lines of enquiry, which were as follows.

**Line of enquiry 1:** How does the College ensure that assessment is rigorous, fair and consistent across all awards?

**Line of enquiry 2:** How does the College promote assessment practices to ensure effective learning?

**Line of enquiry 3:** How effective is the communication regarding information on assessment to students.

50 The Developmental engagement team identified a number of areas of good practice. The College had adopted a proactive and strategic approach to the management and development of its higher education provision, which had enhanced the overall assessment process. The approaches to staff development had been effective and included a reduced teaching load for staff engaged in research and scholarly activity, as well as the introduction of advanced teaching and learning coaches in each curriculum and a specialist higher education teaching and learning coach. The higher education forum proactively engages staff from across all academic disciplines and allows the sharing of good practice. The use of strong industrial links has led to highly innovative live briefs and work-based assignments, especially in fashion and design. The high level of individual and group support and guidance provided by staff enhances the learning opportunities linked to assessment.

51 The team made a number of recommendations. It considered that the College should ensure that subject teams engage more fully in the process of assessment standardisation and further enhance and develop the peer assessment scheme across all higher education provision. There was a need to establish an employer forum in order to allow the dissemination of good practice across the range of Foundation Degrees and to act as an advisory panel for new developments. The development of the virtual learning environment across all academic disciplines was judged to be desirable. The College was asked to ensure that adequate and appropriate library and information technology resources for higher education students were available, including where appropriate industry-standard software. The team are satisfied that all the points raised in the Developmental engagement action plan have been fully addressed. All of the issues have been implemented and embedded within the institution to enhance the management of higher education.

### **Developmental engagement in employer engagement**

52 The Developmental engagement in employer engagement took place in April 2011. There were three lines of enquiry, which were as follows.

**Line of enquiry 1:** To what extent are learning outcomes and standards achieved through work-related and placement-based activity?

**Line of enquiry 2:** To what extent is work-related and placement learning contributing to the students' quality of learning opportunities?

**Line of enquiry 3:** How well does the College communicate work-related and placement-based information to students, employers and their representative agencies?

53 The Developmental engagement team identified a number of areas of good practice. All assignment briefs were vocationally relevant and clearly enhanced student employability with employers who were effectively involved in assessment design and in providing feedback to students, particularly in art and design. There were well-developed and highly effective mentoring systems for students in all teacher education programmes. There were very well-developed high quality links with employers in a range of vocational areas, for example across art and design awards, children's learning and development, and teacher education. Students have the opportunity to be involved in a wide range of local community-based art and design exhibitions and national shows, which has a direct impact on developing their employability skills. Work-related and placement learning were making a very positive contribution to the enhancement of student confidence, skills and employability. The College's approach to research and scholarly activity, including the commitment to a reduced teaching load, had led to an enhanced learning experience linked to employer engagement, and tutorial support and guidance information enhances the student experience while on work-related activities.

54 The team made a number of recommendations. It considered that the College should provide more information for employers regarding work-related learning to ensure that students are supported more effectively. It should further enhance the existing review processes to include recorded feedback from employers and students on work-related and placement learning, and embed processes to improve the clarity and consistency of information, including the virtual learning environment provided both to students and employers. There was a need to establish a standard approach to the production of course and module handbooks across all awards as well as to extend the mentoring scheme that operates in teacher education across all other award schemes. The team were satisfied that all the points raised in the Developmental engagement action plan have been fully addressed. All of the issues have been implemented and embedded within the institution to enhance the management of higher education.

## **D Foundation Degrees**

55 The College has a long history of providing high-quality vocationally related higher education in North and South Kirklees. It seeks to address the need for higher level courses and qualifications for the local community and employers by offering 19 Foundation Degrees. The College aims to support local employers through the development of appropriate Foundation Degrees, and providing the workforce with higher skills and knowledge to underpin the economic regeneration of Kirklees. The development of the FdA in Children's Learning and Development was undertaken as a direct response to employer demand. It reflected statutory requirements for higher level qualifications for the management tier of the childcare workforce and is sector-endorsed. There is clear evidence of strong employer engagement in all Foundation Degrees. A proactive dialogue with employers and the establishment of a centrally coordinated business development unit will enhance this further by offering a one-stop shop for all employer enquiries and demands. One new award, the FdSc Computer Forensics and Security course, has been validated in March 2012. One further validation takes place in May 2012 for the FdA Business Management course. Both are demand-led for the local market.

56 The team were extremely impressed by the high degree of employer engagement which is truly embedded within all Foundation Degrees offered by the College from planning, design and implementation through to involvement in assessment. The College had built upon all the recommendations and good practice from the Developmental engagement and

the courses currently running and those newly validated demonstrate excellent employer engagement. This was apparent at the meeting with employers during the review who were enthusiastic and highly complimentary about the College and especially the students they were working with. The College has worked effectively with employers for many years to ensure that they are now an integral part of both programme design and delivery. The team recognised the effective and enthusiastic use of employers to engage with students as an area of good practice.

## E Conclusions and summary of judgements

57 The team has identified a number of features of good practice in the College's management of its responsibilities for academic standards and for the quality of learning opportunities of the awards the College offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. This was based upon discussion with staff and students and scrutiny of evidence provided by the College and its awarding bodies, Leeds Metropolitan University, the University of Huddersfield and Edexcel.

58 In the course of the review, the team identified the following areas of **good practice**:

- the highly effective mapping of the terms of reference of the Higher Education Quality and Committee against the Academic Infrastructure (paragraph 14)
- the internal validation of Edexcel Higher Nationals aligns delivery and assessment against College policies and protocols (paragraph 20)
- the effective and enthusiastic use of employers to engage with students (paragraphs 22, 29 and 37)
- the excellent opportunities for students to exhibit and compete in national competitions and shows (paragraphs 29 and 40)
- the professional expertise of tutors who are current practitioners, including high-profile guest speakers (paragraphs 32 and 38)
- the effective higher education forum which engages with staff across all academic disciplines and allows sharing of experiences (paragraph 35).

59 The team also makes some recommendations for consideration by the College and its awarding bodies.

60 The team considers that it is **desirable** for the College to:

- give greater prominence to programme specifications in course handbooks, the website and the virtual learning environment (paragraph 15)
- continue to develop a standardised approach to College documentation (paragraphs 15 and 33)
- clearly align research and scholarly activity against the HEFCE definition of scholarly activity (paragraph 24)
- continue to develop student representation activities (paragraph 27)
- develop a minimum standard for student tutorial entitlement tailored to programme needs (paragraph 34)
- ensure all courses have similar minimum levels of information available to potential applicants via the College website (paragraph 43)
- implement planned improvements to the virtual learning environment to ensure consistent levels of information are available to students (paragraph 47).

61 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that it has

**confidence** that, in the context of this Summative review, the College discharges its responsibilities effectively, as set out in the relevant partnership agreement for the management of the standards of the awards of its awarding bodies.

62 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that it has **confidence** that, in the context of this Summative review, the College discharges its responsibilities effectively, as set out in the relevant partnership agreement for the management of the quality of learning opportunities to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

63 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that, in the context of this Summative review, reliance **can** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

**Kirklees College action plan relating to the Summative review: May 2012**

Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
<p>In the course of the Summative review the team identified the following areas of <b>good practice</b> that are worthy of wider dissemination within the College:</p>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the highly effective mapping of the terms of reference of the Higher Education Quality, and Standards Committee against the Academic Infrastructure (paragraph 14)</li> </ul>	<p>Ensure effective implementation of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, monitored through the Higher Education Quality and Standards Committee</p>	<p>September 2013</p>	<p>Director of Curriculum Development, Innovation and Higher Education and Head of Higher and Teacher Education</p>	<p>Awarding body confirmation of compliance; new institutional validation with new validating partner</p>	<p>Vice Principal curriculum, quality and standards and Academic Board</p>	<p>Awarding body annual review, periodic review, and validation processes</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the internal validation of Edexcel Higher Nationals aligns delivery and assessment against College policies and protocols (paragraph 20)</li> </ul>	<p>Validations carried out for all new Higher Nationals</p>	<p>Annual programme of validation events</p>	<p>Director of Curriculum Development, Innovation and Higher Education and Head of Higher and Teacher Education</p>	<p>Successful validations</p>	<p>Vice Principal curriculum, quality and standards and Academic Board</p>	<p>Module reviews; annual course reviews</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the effective and enthusiastic use of employers to engage with students (paragraphs 22, 29)</li> </ul>	<p>Disseminate good practice across all higher education through the Higher Education Forum</p>	<p>January 2014</p>	<p>Head of Higher and Teacher Education and award leaders</p>	<p>Each award to demonstrate the use of at least one live brief per level of study. All</p>	<p>Quality Performance and Standards committee of the Corporation</p>	<p>Student feedback; external examiner reports; periodic review</p>

and 37)				programmes to undertake work based/related learning at a minimum of 40 hours per level		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the excellent opportunities for students to exhibit and compete in national competitions and shows (paragraphs 29 and 40)</li> </ul>	Disseminate good practice across higher education where appropriate and through the Higher Education Forum	March 2013	Head of Higher and Teacher Education and award leaders	A 10% increase in related marketing activity (press releases) relating to student engagement in competitions and shows	Vice Principal Curriculum, Quality and Standards	Evaluation of feedback from competitions and annual reviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the professional expertise of tutors who are current practitioners, including high-profile guest speakers (paragraphs 32 and 38)</li> </ul>	Maintain high quality recruitment and involvement of fractional teaching staff who work in relevant sectors, and ongoing, industry placement or updating; programme of guest speakers	Guest speaker programme confirmed December 2012	Director of Curriculum Development, Innovation and Higher Education and Director of Human resources  Heads of Department and Award Leaders	All higher education academic staff will demonstrate a minimum of a recognised teacher training qualification; professional body membership (where applicable); current vocational experience within or working with the industry (within the last 18-24 months) and an annual CPD record (a minimum of 30	Quality Performance and Standards Committee	Analysis of staff CVs; Alumni Tracking for successful employment outcomes; Validation Review; Periodic review

				hours recorded in line with Institute for Learning requirements); Student success will increase per level by 2% in 2012-13 and 5% in 2013-14 75% of students will progress into relevant employment		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the effective higher education forum which engages with staff across all academic disciplines and allows sharing of experiences (paragraph 35).</li> </ul>	Continue Higher Education Forum activity and increase Higher Education Staff Development Activity	Forum meets October 2012, February 2013, and April 2013 Higher Education Staff Development Activity takes place throughout each semester - up to 15 sessions throughout the year	Director of Curriculum Development, Innovation and Higher Education and Head of Higher and Teacher Education	There will be a 5% increase in staff satisfaction in relation to meeting objectives of Higher Education Staff Development and Higher Education Forum sessions	Higher Education Quality and Standards Committee	Award annual reviews, which will include feedback from students; module reviews; committee meetings; Higher Education Annual Review; Higher Education Forum Blog

Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team considers that it is <b>desirable</b> for the College to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>give greater prominence to programme specifications in course handbooks, the website and the virtual learning environment (paragraph 15)</li> </ul>	Pilot review and implementation of standard course handbooks with programme specification details; all programme specifications on the website and virtual learning environment	May 2013	Director of Curriculum Development, Innovation and Higher Education and Head of Higher and Teacher Education	Handbooks, Website and virtual learning environment contain programme specification details (100% compliance)	Higher Education Quality and Standards Committee	Annual audit of Programme specifications in handbooks, website and the virtual learning environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>continue to develop a standardised approach to College documentation (paragraphs 15 and 33)</li> </ul>	Review all documentation during new institutional validation and align to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education	December 2012	Director of Curriculum Development, Innovation and Higher Education and Head of Higher and Teacher Education	Revised documentation implemented for all higher education provision; standardised documentation used by all programmes, 100% compliance in audit	Higher Education Quality and Standards Committee	Higher Education Annual Review process; Higher Education Performance Monitoring meetings; Higher Education Quality and Standards group; External Examiner reports; student feedback



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clearly align research and scholarly activity against HEFCE definition of scholarly activity (paragraph 24)</li> </ul>	Review research and scholarly criteria	May 2013	Staff development manager and Head of Higher and Teacher Education	Research and scholarly activity criteria revised to align to HEFCE definitions	Director of Curriculum Development, Innovation and Higher Education	Research and Scholarly Activity Panel evaluate applications against HEFCE definitions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>continue to develop student representation activities (paragraph 27)</li> </ul>	Continue student representative training, Student Consultative Committee, and Higher Education Operations Group	May 2013	Head of Higher and Teacher Education	Continued high levels of participation 75% of courses represented at the student consultative committee; student representation identified from all provision	Higher Education Quality and Standards Committee	Student consultative committee; attendance and action log
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop a minimum standard for student tutorial entitlement tailored to programme needs (paragraph 34)</li> </ul>	Implement and annually review the tutorial entitlement framework	September 2012	Director of Curriculum Development, Innovation and Higher Education and Head of Higher and Teacher Education	Each student will be able to report that they have received: a named personal tutor; a minimum of one individual tutorial per semester; a clear structure to tutorial provision throughout each level of study	Higher Education Quality and Standards Committee	Review of student feedback on the effectiveness of tutorial provision and action plan

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure all courses have similar minimum levels of information available to potential applicants via the College website (paragraph 43)</li> </ul>	<p>Review of College website materials</p>	<p>May 2013</p>	<p>Head of Higher and Teacher Education, Web development team and Marketing manager</p>	<p>Minimum standard implemented 100% website compliance</p>	<p>Director of Higher Education and Director of Marketing</p>	<p>Student feedback; Audit of website compliance with report to the Higher Education Quality and standards group</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>implement planned improvements to the virtual learning environment to ensure consistent levels of information are available to students (paragraph 47).</li> </ul>	<p>Implement all planned improvements and training</p>	<p>May 2013</p>	<p>Head of Higher and Teacher Education, virtual learning environment development team and Marketing manager</p>	<p>Minimum standard implemented, Bronze, Silver and Gold ILT standards as identified on the college intranet</p>	<p>Higher Education Quality and Standards Committee</p>	<p>Evaluation of course achievement of Bronze, Silver and Gold ILT standards</p>

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