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| Q:\Governors\2018-19\14 December 2018\Brad Sampson edit and crop.jpg | **ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18**  Overview  The School Annual Report sets out summaries relating to key documents and provides assurance information in relation to the 2017-18 School year. |

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

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# **Introduction & Overview**

## Principal’s Introduction

This is the second year that the (newly re-named) School has prepared an Annual Report. This Annual Report is an internal document prepared in order to provide the Corporation Board with an assurance overview in relation to the activities of the whole School. It aims, as much as possible, to review the previous year, 2017-18, rather than to provide a preview of the current year. However, for some relatively new areas there is an obvious temptation to look forward rather than backward.

Whilst it is a comprehensive document, it does not encompass all assurance areas in full detail. For instance, members wishing to be fully informed about FE or HE academic issues should refer to the School’s Self-Assessment Report (SAR) or the Academic Board’s Annual Report.

This year, there has been a focus on enhancing the School’s governance arrangements. The School has complied with the AoC’s Code of Good Governance for English Colleges since the Code’s inception. However, as a further education corporation (FEC) prior to 2017 the School had not considered compliance with the CUC Code. In 2017 the School assessed its compliance with the CUC Code and determined that it was close to compliance, and that it would work towards full compliance. Publication of the Office for Students’ (OfS) registration requirements in February 2018 hastened the School’s decision to seek to comply fully with the CUC Code by the end of 2018.

The Corporation Board, acting through the Governance and Search Committee, has sought to achieve CUC Code compliance. To this end it has implemented a number of new assurance measures in 2017-18, as follows:

* The Academic Board has provided a detailed report to the Governing Body covering academic standards and related issues in order to provide appropriate assurance;
* The Remuneration Committee has provided a detailed report to the Governing Body covering the remuneration of senior postholders in order to provide appropriate assurance;
* The Audit Committee has sought an additional opinion from the School’s external auditors in relation to compliance with the publicity requirements which fall on all charities;
* Assurance statements have been sought and obtained from the Clerk & Governance Advisor and senior managers in relation to regulatory compliance, including that during the year the School’s business has complied with the Instruments & Articles of Government and Standing Orders, that publicity materials comply with the requirements of the Competition & Markets Authority, that finance and data returns to ESFA and other bodies have been complete and accurate, and that the School’s policies have been correctly applied throughout the year;
* The Governance & Search Committee has reviewed a detailed assessment of the School’s compliance with the CUC Code; and
* The Governance & Search Committee has produced an Annual Report to the Governing Body in order to provide assurance in relation to governance issues.

This comprehensive range of measures was implemented in order to move the School towards full compliance with the CUC Code. The Annual Governance Report includes the following formal opinion:

*The Governing Body seeks to adhere to the provisions of the Higher Education Code of Governance issued by the Committee of University Chairs. There are two issues arising during 2017/18 which, whilst not considered to be fundamental, do in the opinion of the Governance & Search Committee prevent the School from asserting that in terms of Corporate Governance that it is fully compliant with the CUC Code.*

In its Summary & Conclusions the Report states the following:

*The School continues to be compliant with the provisions of the AoC Code, and in its first year of adoption also complies with the CUC Senior Staff Remuneration Code. The School operates in accordance with the Nolan principles. However, in several – albeit relatively minor – respects the School does not yet comply with the CUC Higher Education Code of Governance. These areas of non-compliance are remediable, and the School commits to move to full compliance in the first half of 2019.*

The School undertook to comply with the CUC Code as part of the OfS registration process. However, this went beyond what was strictly required – compliance with the AoC Code should be sufficient. Compliance with the CUC Code was not an OfS condition of registration, and so no regulatory implications are expected. The School should be fully compliant in 2018-19, and this is of greater significance given that the new OfS regulatory regime commences on 1 September 2019.

## **Strategic Plan**

1. **Overview**

During the lifetime of the current Strategic Plan the further and higher education sectors have both been subject to considerable change in areas such as funding, patterns of participation and academic delivery. The level of political debate and therefore uncertainty about higher education policy has risen considerably during 2017-18. Two key factors have driven the debate; the announcement of the Augar Review of post-18 funding by the Prime Minister in February 2018 and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) announcement in April 2018 that it would review the treatment of student loans in the UK government’s accounts. The latter review is to ensure that the way these loans are treated reflects how the system works in practice as well as being in line with international best practice. This review followed recommendations from both the Treasury Select Committee and the House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee and will report in December 2018, potentially influencing the Augar Review, which is due to report early in 2019.

Whilst the creation of the Office for Students (OfS) and the School’s registration as a provider – with minimal registration conditions – should be noted, events after the year end, such as the publication in October 2018 of new regulations in respect of the granting of Degree Awarding Powers (DAPs) have the potential for much greater influence over the School’s strategic direction. Despite increased environmental uncertainty, hitherto the School has seen no reason to fundamentally alter its key strategic objectives. However, in 2018-19 the School has a majority of HE provision for the first time and the possibility of a New DAPs application and the probationary granting of DAPs in 2019 have prompted a revised strategic outlook. Whilst the political situation highlights the continuing importance of making progress in growing the School’s higher education provision in the event that policy or regulatory changes are introduced which would inhibit the School’s growth in HE student numbers, the School anticipates the need for a new Strategic Plan (2019-24) to be in place by the end of the academic year.

The current Strategic Plan is supported by the underpinning strategies of the School. These are short and contain a limited number of objectives, and in turn are reflected in team operating plans and individual staff performance objectives. In concentrating on change, a key factor is the implementation of the School’s vision. Following a review of the deliberative structure, the decision was taken to create a new Academic Board sub-committee to oversee the implementation of the suite of strategies that support the Academic Strategy. The remainder of this section includes highlights from the full Strategic Plan.

1. **Key Themes and Objectives**

**Employability & Creative Industry Links:** In an increasingly competitive market, with employment in the creative industries predicated on a degree, the School must improve the quality and coordination of its links with employers as part of improving the currency of its offer and its ability to assist graduates in finding employment.

Key Objective

* To maintain the level of graduate employment/further study and professional/managerial level employment.

**Current relevant curricula offer:** The School must review developments in the creative industries andcreative education, primarily via staff scholarly activity, whilst assessing potential student demand in order to ensure that its offer isrelevant and contemporary.

Key Objectives

* Staff are aware of creative and academic sector developments as a result of their scholarly activity and use this knowledge to propose and evaluate curricula changes.
* A distinctive series of HE programme offers demonstrating currency in academic terms and high quality links with creative industry organisations of national standing.

**Excellent Student Experience:** The School has a reputation for the quality of its provision. Though well-deserved this may be fragile and the quality of provision must therefore be improved. As well as teaching, learning and assessment the whole student experience is crucial; the School must ensure that staff understand the imperative for high quality customer service.

Key Objectives

* To meet or if possible exceed internal and external benchmarks for success rates, progression, higher degree classifications and student satisfaction.
* Led by the Student Experience Team, develop further the rigour and monitoring of TLA.
* To support a culture of staff scholarly activity and development.
* An improved wider HE student experience.

**Increasing HE Orientation and Growth:** The School’s strategic direction is based upon increasing HE orientation and expansion of HE activity, predicated on increasing the HE orientation of staff by focusing on scholarly activity and a student experience which meets the standards expected. The School believes that opportunities for growth exist in the present difficult market, dependent upon demonstrating good graduate outcomes and creative industry-relevance.

Key Objectives

The School’s two main strategic objectives are:

1. To transfer to the HE sector; and
2. To achieve Taught Degree Awarding Powers (TDAP).

Whilst these cannot realistically be expected within the timescale of the current Strategic Plan, but it is imperative that progress is made towards achieving both in the plan period.

Key objectives during the life of this plan are:

* A majority of HE provision by 2018-19 with increasing L4 student intake.
* Continued development of scholarly activity that leads to curriculum development.
* Ensure that staff scholarly activity will support a TDAP.

**Sustainability**: The School has always been financially sound and is determined to remain so. Sustainability must underpin the School’s other ambitions. Managing the inter-relationship between these priorities will be the key task for the School over the life of the plan.

Key Objectives

To pursue, refine and maintain a financial strategy as the basis of the sustainable financial health of the School in order to ensure:

* The long term reputation and viability of the School for the benefit of students, staff and the creative industries by maintaining operating surpluses and positive cash generation;
* Meeting the obligations of financial covenants set by the School’s loan providers;
* The availability of sufficient resources to match its stated strategic objectives; and
* The financing of developments, capital investments and long-term maintenance.

# Assurance Issues

## **Finance**

Financial Headlines

*Income*

*Expenditure*

*Summary Accounts 2017-18*

We recognise that the School’s accounts are complex and that not all readers will have the time to study the level of detail that we are required to publish. Therefore, we have prepared an ‘easy-to-follow’ summary of the key numbers from our 2017-18 accounts. This should give a good understanding of our financial activity in the year.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  | **2017-18** | **2016-17** |
|  |  |  |  |  | **£000** | **£000** |
| **Income** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Education and Skills Funding Agency | | | |  | £2,782 | £3,001 |
| Higher Education Funding Council for England | | | | | £375 | £424 |
| Further Education Student Fees | | |  |  | £81 | £113 |
| Higher Education Student Fees | | |  |  | £4,327 | £4,087 |
| Other Government Grants | | |  |  | £288 | £173 |
| Other income | |  |  |  | £670 | £651 |
|  |  |  |  |  | £8,523 | £8,449 |
| **Expenditure** | |  |  |  |  |  |
| Teaching costs | |  |  |  | £5,679 | £4,469 |
| Non-teaching costs | |  |  |  | £1,767 | £2,897 |
| Premises costs | |  |  |  | £628 | £607 |
| Depreciation | |  |  |  | £645 | £407 |
| Finance costs | |  |  |  | £174 | £149 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| One off depreciation charge for building demolition | | | | | £0 | £490 |
|  |  |  |  |  | **£8,893** | **£9,019** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Surplus / (deficit) for the year** | | |  |  | **-£370** | **-£570** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Cash balances** | |  |  |  | **£463** | **£1,957** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **ESFA - Health Assessment** | | |  |  | **Satisfactory** | **Good** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Banking Covenants** | |  |  |  | **Met** | **Met** |

The financial health assessment for the School has deteriorated as a result of the investment made in various buildings at the Hartlepool HE campus and investing in new programmes in advance of recruitment. This is not unusual for colleges making large investments and this is planned to improve in 2019-20.

## **Risk & Internal Controls**

*Risk Appetite and Risk Management Policy*

The College monitors key risks on a regular basis in line with the Risk Management Policy. The College as a matter of good practice approves the Risk Management Policy on an annual basis. One of the main reasons behind this is to enable the board to discuss it’s appetite to taking risks. Currently the Corporation Board attitude to risk is ‘Open’.

*OPEN – willing to consider all delivery options and choose the one most likely to result in successful delivery whilst also providing maximum reward, this represents a measured approach to risk making informed and considered choices*

*Corporation Risk Register*

The Audit Committee reviews the risk register on a regular basis in detail and the Board discuss risk at every Board meeting to determine if the risks the College faces have altered since previous meetings.

Key risks to the College over the course of the coming months include:

* Government policy including BREXIT and HE Fees
* Construction project(s)
* Cash flow and banking covenants
* HE recruitment
* FE recruitment
* College name change
* Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

Key areas of risk become standing items on the Corporation Board agenda for discussion or are covered by the Principal’s Report at each meeting.

*Audit Committee Annual Report – November 2018*

Under the Joint Audit Code of Practice (JACOP), there is a requirement for the audit committee to produce an annual report, which is submitted to the corporation prior to the Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control being signed. The Audit Committee is responsible for providing insight to the “Corporation on the adequacy and effectiveness of the School Corporation’s assurance framework”.

The Audit Committee Annual Report:

* Summarises the Committee’s activities relating to the financial year under review, not only those activities undertaken in-year;
* Includes the committee’s opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the School’s assurance framework of governance, risk and control and how the School has secured value for money; and
* Underpins the board’s own opinions in the Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control in the annual financial statements

In line with the requirements of the Accounts Direction 2017 to 2018, English FECs are required to submit the audit committee annual report to the responsible funding body. In the case of the Northern School of Art this will be a submission to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

Some of the key causes for concern are illustrated below and how as an institution we look to provide the Audit Committee and ultimately the Corporation Board with adequate assurance:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Area of concern | Sources of assurance |
| School Strategy | Corporation Board strategy days  Corporation Board performance reporting |
| Key Performance Indicators | Management accounts and financial statements  Data book reporting  Recruitment statistics  Academic standards committee reports  Principal’s report |
| Internal Controls | Internal audit reports and opinion  External audit reports and opinion |
| Financial controls and reporting | Internal audit reports  External audit reports and opinion |
| Value for money | Procurement processes  Annual budget process and use of curriculum resource model to identify anomalies |
| External and internal risks | Risk register in place which is regularly reviewed and reported upon  Principal’s report updating on the School’s operating environment and sector developments |
| Academic delivery | Ofsted reports  Higher Education Review (HER)  Self-Evaluation Document (SED)  Self-Evaluation Report (SAR)  Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)  ESFA monitoring  Oversight by the Academic Board |
| Training of Governors | Clerk to the Corporation plans:   * Induction of new Governors * Governor development programme |

*The Audit Committee’s Formal Opinion 2017-18*

With increased autonomy and accountability, coupled with pressing financial viability concerns in the education sector, providing an opinion on the ‘adequacy and effectiveness’ of the School’s assurance arrangements, governance, risk and control processes is a real challenge for any Audit Committee.

In forming its opinion, the Audit Committee must have a clear understanding of the School’s overall financial position. It must also have a clear understanding of the School’s risk profile and also where improvements in internal controls may be required.

The assurance process that has been documented above has illustrated the processes that the School has employed to try and assure Members as to the financial and operational risks to the School and where it has sought external reviews and opinions. With this in mind and considering the review and challenge that has conducted during the year by this Committee it is the opinion of the Members of the Audit Committee that the School’s assurance arrangements, governance, risk and control mechanisms are adequate and effective for the purpose of conducting the continuing delivery of The Northern School of Art.

This report will review what areas have been reviewed as part of the remit and operation of the Audit Committee and make a recommendation on the success or otherwise the Corporation Board.

## **Human Resources**

*Staff Turnover Rate*

The data below shows a slight decrease in turnover rate from 2016-2017.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Turnover | 2017-2018 | 2016-2017 |
| Turnover Rate | 4.8% | 5% |
| National Turnover Rate | Education Staff (Academic) = 11.5%  Education Staff (Non-Academic) = 10.2%  All employment = 15% | 15% |

The data below shows the monthly turnover rate.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Month** | **No. of Staff** | **Leavers** | **Rate (%)** |
| Sep-17 | 205 | 3 | 1.5 |
| Oct-17 | 205 | 1 | 0.5 |
| Nov-17 | 209 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Dec-17 | 210 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Jan-18 | 210 | 1 | 0.5 |
| Feb-18 | 209 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Mar-18 | 209 | 1 | 0.5 |
| Apr-18 | 208 | 2 | 1.0 |
| May-18 | 207 | 2 | 1.0 |
| Jun-18 | 207 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Jul-18 | 207 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Aug-18 | 210 | 0 | 0.0 |
| **Total** | **208** | **10** | **4.8** |

To contextualise this data, the School’s staff turnover rate has been very steady over the last two years, and very low in comparison to both the national average in Education and the ‘All Employment’ national average of 15%. Having a high turnover rate can, of course, be detrimental to an organisation as it may suggest that staff are not engaged, motivated by higher pay or that they are poorly managed. From analysing the School’s turnover rate this is not the case. Conversely, having a low turnover may also have detrimental implications as it could indicate that staff are ‘set in their ways’.

Turnover rates are relative, so it’s hard to say what is “too high” or “too low.” Comparing turnover rates between industries is problematic. Retail turnover can reach 200%, while turnover among tenured university professors is virtually zero. To assess the School’s turnover rate going forward the HR department will compare the School’s turnover with similar institutions through communication with the AoC and Guild HE HR networks. This will enable more of a realistic analysis to be undertaken.

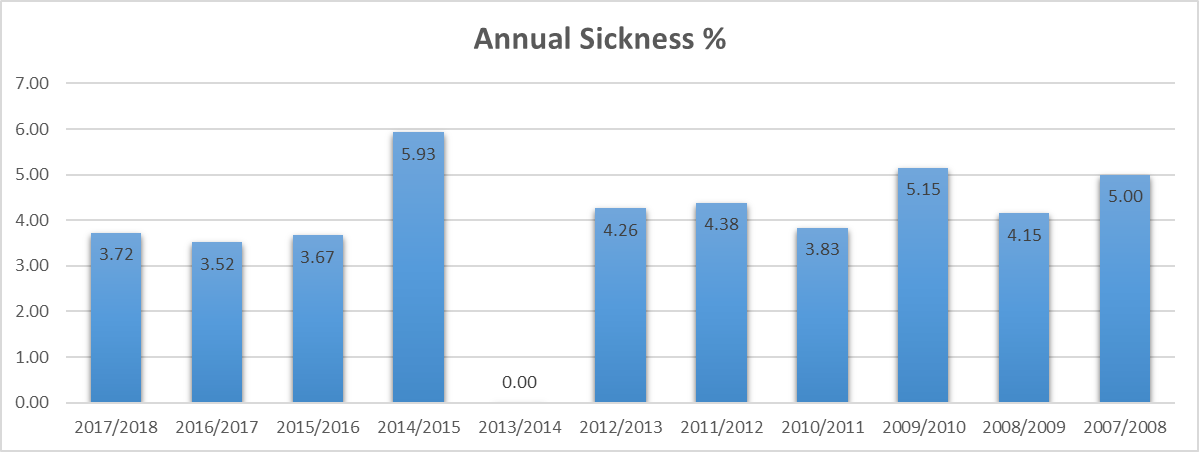
*Sickness*

The national average sickness percentage in the UK is at 2.6%. According to the Office for National Statistics [sickness absence has fallen to the lowest rate on record](https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/sicknessabsencefallstothelowestratein24years/2018-07-30). The latest figures for 2017 show that the average number of sickness absence days that UK workers took was 4.1, which has almost halved since 1993 (7.2 days). The below data shows the Schools sickness percentage for 2017-18 as 3.72%. This is an increase of 0.20% from 2016-17. Monthly sickness rates are communicated in the Staff Newsletter with a comparison from the previous year. All sickness is monitored and appropriate triggers meetings are organised between HR and staff.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sickness Rates | 2017/2018 | 2016/2017 |
| Annual Rate | 3.72% | 3.52% |
| Long Term | 42% | 46% |
| Short Term | 58% | 54% |

It should be noted that out of the 638 days’ long-term sickness some 333 days were in the Cleaners, Catering and Caretakers category.

The graph below shows the annual sickness percentage for the last 10 years; please note there was no data for 2013/2014.



52% of long-term sickness was attributed to mental health-related illnesses. The School has mental health very firmly on the agenda with the introduction of mental health first aiders and the objective of signing the employer pledge. Additionally, Teresa Latcham (Student Services Manager) and Amy Crossland (Head of HR & Organisational Development) have become Wellbeing Champions. The aim of this role is to help implement and support wellbeing within the School by raising awareness and promoting healthy lifestyles and positive mental health. This, in turn, will hopefully reduce the amount of sickness attributed to mental health. It will be interesting to note whether this has a positive impact on next year’s annual sickness percentage.

*Staff Development*

The staff development approved in 2017-2018 is shown below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Qualification | Number of applications approved |
| MBA | 2 |
| MFA/MSc/MA/MEd | 4 |
| PGCE/ PG Cert (HE) | 3 |
| PhD | 1 |
| HEA | 8 |
| CMI Diploma in Strategic Management & Leadership | 1 |
| Misc., including conferences, et cetera | 52 |
| Online Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity, Prevent, Channel and Health and Safety | School-wide |
| Mental Health Training | School-wide |
| Total | 71 |

*Mental Health Training*

The School appointed a trained psychologist to deliver regular training to staff and students. Topics delivered to staff were stress management and mental health awareness training. We received very positive feedback from staff on this training and it has helped to put mental health firmly on the School’s agenda, thus starting conversations between staff on mental health topics.

*Mental Health First Aiders*

We currently have 13 mental health first aiders whose role is to identify, understand and help a person who may be developing a mental health issue. In the same way, as physical first aid is learnt, mental health first aid teaches volunteers how to recognise crucial warning signs of mental ill health.

*Equality and Diversity*

Included in the annual Equality and Diversity report.

*FE Safeguarding*

In 2017/2018 all FE staff were expected to undertake the online training below:

* Safeguarding – 100% completion rate. 2-year expiry renewal.
* Prevent – 100% completion rate. 2-year expiry renewal.
* Channel – 99% completion rate. 2-year expiry renewal.

In 2017/2018 all FE staff were also expected to attend a Safeguarding and Prevent update training session. An update will continue to take place annually. Selected FE academic staff will also be required to complete the following training throughout the year.

* Genital mutilation
* E-Safety
* Child Sexual Exploitation

All Safeguarding Officers are required to carry out Core Level 3 Safeguarding Children training every 2 years.

*Pulse Survey*

Pulse surveys were introduced within the School in September 2017. The reasoning was that annual surveys are not enough on their own and are too infrequent. A business needs feedback from customers, and an organisation needs feedback from employees in order to improve. Pulse surveys are issued on a regular basis to all staff via the VLE (paper copies are available if necessary) and are anonymous.

*Employee Reward and Recognition Scheme*

The employee recognition scheme was introduced in January 2016. This scheme consists of any employee being able to nominate an employee who has gone above and beyond their normal duties. The reward is a £15 Amazon gift voucher and a personalised thank you letter from the nominating employee. This scheme is still very well utilised with 71 members of staff receiving an award in 2017/2018.

*Future Developments for 2018/2019 – HR strategy*

The 5-year HR Strategy (People First) was written in 2017/2018. The HR strategy is focused around 8 themes. These include:

* Rewarding and Recognising Excellence
* Engagement
* Performance Management and Growth
* Talent Attraction
* Leadership and Management
* Equality and Diversity
* Safeguarding
* Health and Wellbeing

The HR department will continue to work through this strategy to motivate, grow and engage our employees.

## **Health & Safety**

The following table provides an overview of the health & safety position in the School.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Comment** |
| 1. **Date H&S policy implemented:**   **Date of next review:** | April 2018  March 2019 |
| 1. **Accident Report File (e.g. trends/remedial actions etc.)** | * Statistical analysis of accidents and near misses (compare to previous year(s) to show any trends); details of actions taken to reduce number and repetition of most common / most serious accidents. * There has been a total of 30 accident book entries, one was reportable under the Riddor 2013 regulations. A member of the Estates team tripped on Folio stairs causing a broken bone in his foot. * This is a 16.7% drop in accident book entries compared to last year’s figures. |
| 1. **Details/outcomes from fire drills completed and extinguisher annual service check:** | * Fire drills have been carried out at both sites. All drills satisfactory with the buildings being evacuated within five minutes. * Fire detection and firefighting equipment has been serviced in accordance with regulations. |
| 1. **Details of First aid provision/arrangements:** | * The College currently has eighteen qualified first aiders ten at Hartlepool and eight at Middlesbrough. All receive refresher training before their current certificates expirer. |
| 1. **Outcomes from H&S inspections:** | * No matters arising from monthly Health & safety inspections other than general housekeeping needs to improve |
| 1. **Status of Risk Assessment process:** | * Regular monitoring to ensure existing controls are relevant, fully observed and risk assessments adapted as found necessary. * Room risk register produced for both sites. |
| 1. **Training completed:** | * 26 members of staff have completed online fire warden training. Target is 30 staff * All staff completed online General Health & Safety Training * All Managers completed online risk assessment training * Estates staff completed Asbestos awareness & Ladder refresher training |

The following table provides a high level overview of accident statistics within the School, showing a relatively consistent level across the last three years, with a return to lower levels of accidents in 2017-18, consistent with 2015-16.

The following table breaks down the headline figures and shows a more detailed analysis of accident types.

It can be seen that, following an intensive campaign, craft knife cuts have reduced slightly in 2017-18 as part of the overall reduction in accidents, but that minor bumps have increased.

The following chart shows that there were two Riddor reportable incidents, as for the prior year.

*Kind of Accident – shown in the following chart*

## **Equality & Diversity**

The following are the key Equality and Diversity updates and data for 2017-18.

1. **Equality & Diversity Statement:**

The Northern School of Art is committed to the principles of equality and diversity and aims to ensure that all employees and college users are treated fairly and equally regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

1. **Equality and Diversity Committee**

The Committee met termly last year to raise and address issues and drive the Equality and Diversity agenda forward within the School.

1. **Student Feedback**

Results from the FE Student Survey (QDP Survey Services) for 2017-18 were positive in relation to equality and diversity issues. 93% of students responded that the School makes sure that all students are treated equally, and also that the tutors treat them fairly and with respect and 96% feel that the School deals with bullying, harassment and discrimination well.

At HE the Student Perception Survey highlighted that 95% of students agreed with the statement “I am treated with respect”.

1. **Matrix Assessment Feedback**

The Matrix Assessment feedback received in March 2018 stated: “The end-to-end CCAD IAG experience is championing values of: equality and diversity; putting the student first; empowerment; and dignity and respect. Innovative approaches to embedding British Values are in keeping with the curriculum team's approaches to ensuring applicability to their specialism within Arts and Design.”

1. **Estates / Facilities**

Estates are always conscious of health & safety in the workplace and ensure that safety and security are put at the front of all projects and site inspections. A proactive approach is taken to assist where possible on any issues that may require special attention.

The School provides medical rooms, disabled toilets with hoists and facilities for those in need of additional toilet changing facilities. Lifts and ramps and disabled parking spaces are also made available. Induction loops and hearing alert fire alarm systems are in place for those who may have difficulty in hearing; glow strips are present on stair nosings and where floor levels differ for those who may have impaired vision.

1. **Curriculum**

Equality and Diversity issues are embedded very effectively in the curriculum with the majority of learners taking part in discussion, debate, research, and projects associated with a broad range of themes from culture and society. External moderation reports highlight the breadth project proposals which engaged learners in a range of social/ethical issues including transgender, social class, conspiracy theory/propaganda and multicultural Britain.

At HE all of the External Examiners provided positive responses to the criteria within the summary feedback section of their reports, therefore confirming their satisfaction with academic standards and the quality of student work; and that each of the College’s undergraduate programmes conforms to the QAA Subject Benchmark and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications [FHEQ].

1. **Student Support**

All students at both FE and HE who declare a disability and/or a support need at interview or at enrolment are offered early support. They are made aware of Student Services and the support that can be provided at the earliest opportunity, from Open Days, at enrolment and at Induction.

Students with protected characteristics are appropriately supported within their programme of study, ensuring progression and excellent achievement is attained. A local support group provides a regular drop-in support facility within the School for students who identify as transgender and/or require support with transition.

1. **The Governing Body**

The Governing Body seeks to remove any barriers that might deter people from expressing an interest in joining the Board and welcomes applications from people from all backgrounds for consideration for appointment during its search to fill vacancies, with the aim of achieving a balance of membership that reflects the diversity of the School, its activities and the region. During 2017/18 the gender balance of the membership was 53% male and 47% female which makes the School relatively well-placed amongst UK Higher Education Institutions that are gender-balanced, and above the average of 36% of women filling places on UK HEI governing bodies in England, 38% in Scotland and 34% in Northern Ireland and in Wales (Jarboe, 2016 and The Guardian, 2018). The Higher Education Funding Council for England previously set a target of 40 per cent female representation on higher education institution (HEI) boards by 2020.

The AoC report ‘A Practical Guide to Improving the Diversity of College Boards’ (2015), identified that in the UK 88% of governors are white British, 4% have Black Caribbean, Black African or Other Black background and 3% of governors are Indian, Pakistani or British Asian backgrounds. In addition, 3% assess themselves as having a disability. During 2017/18 the School had no Black or Minority Ethnic members. Further work is also required to identify members who assess themselves as disabled. This will be addressed as a future agenda item for the Equality & Diversity Committee.

1. **Staffing Information**

*Gender - including part-time working*

The overall male/female split is 33% male/67% female (2017: 32% male/68% female). The split for Managers is 50% male and 50% female. There are also more females in the non-managers group with 70% female and 30% male. This is in part due to many of the catering and cleaning roles being undertaken by females.

85% of managers are full time (by headcount) but only 47% of non-managers work full time. These figures show a slight increase in managers working part-time compared to 2016-17 (12.5% in 2016-17compared to 15% in 2017-18). There is still a clear tendency for more females than males to work part-time. 53% of non-managers work part-time which includes roles within catering and cleaning. This is due to members of the management team working part-time due to child care arrangements.

*Disability*

7% of managers have declared a disability or long-term health problem compared with 5% of non-managers, suggesting that the School does not see disability or long-term health issues as barriers to appointment/progression. The percentage of non-managers with a disability has remained at 5% since 2017. As there is usually considerable movement in hourly paid staff and exit interviews are not completed it is difficult to determine if there are any barriers to employment but monitoring will continue.

*Ethnicity*

The percentage remains the same as at May 2017 with 4% of managers declaring their ethnicity to be non-white. The non-manager category had decreased to 1% as opposed to 2% in May 2017. The hourly paid category has, however, increased from 2.5% in May 2017 to 3% in May 2018.

*Age*

Due to the removal of the retirement age, there continue to be 5 staff (and 8 the previous year) who work beyond age 65. The majority of staff at the School are within the age band 45-54. As expected, fewer managers than non-managers are in the age band 16-34 as managers need to have a knowledge of the fields they manage, and this knowledge is, in most cases, gained with experience in that area.

*Pay Equality issues*

The School operates specific published pay scales so all staff doing a particular role are paid within the same band, with the same opportunity for progression via annual increments (where appropriate) within the band. Some senior managers are paid on a spot point salary and progression is awarded via consideration of performance reviews by their line managers. All business support staff are able to apply for a higher grade should they feel that this is warranted, via the application for re-grading procedure. This procedure takes into account issues of internal parity of pay when assessing the appropriateness of any individual grade.

*Gender Pay Gap*

The gender pay gap is the percentage difference between average hourly earnings for men and women. The School was required by the Government to submit a gender pay gap report by March 2018. The results showed that the School had a gender pay gap of 8% as opposed to the national average of 14.4% for Education. Even though the School felt that the gender pay gap was positive as it was relatively low there were still steps the School could take to further lower the gap. Actions include:

* *Flexible working*

Staff have previously had to work for the School for 26 weeks' continuously before applying for flexible working. This clause will be removed meaning an employee can apply for flexible working regardless of how long they have worked for the School.

*Applications for flexible working*

There have been 11 formal applications for flexible working in the year 2017/18 which were granted. There are ongoing flexible working arrangements which are working well adapting the working patterns to meet the needs and other commitments of employees without having a detrimental impact on delivery. Every employee has a statutory right to request that an application for flexible working be considered.

*Applications for training and development*

All staff are encouraged to undertake staff development activities by individual application for external events.

*Grievance and Disciplinary cases*

There were no disciplinary or grievance hearings in this period.

*Developments and Priorities for 2018-19*

* Annual Equality and Diversity Activities to be reviewed by the Equality and Diversity Committee to ensure continued relevance
* Review evidence gathering re Equality and Diversity issues and activity
* Develop more inclusive practice across
* Enhance staff and student awareness of Equality and Diversity issues.

## **Safeguarding and Wellbeing**

A significant amount of work is being undertaken by the student services team regarding wellbeing. Teresa Latcham is working closely with HR around preventative activities for students and staff. In addition she is working with Dan Tierney and the Student Union Executive to encourage students to participate in wellbeing activities. HE student introductory Wellbeing workshops have been completed. And delivered/offered to all Level 4 students. The feedback so far has been positive with students actively engaging in the sessions and wanting more! Follow on sessions are being planned and will be open to all students. Sessions will include workshops on sleep, anxiety, managing stress, thoughts and behaviours, perfectionism and procrastination.

Before half term all FE staff were invited to the annual Safeguarding and Prevent training. Whilst attendance was mandatory the turn out and enthusiasm was excellent identifying the positive safeguarding culture evident across the School. There will also be follow up sessions for those that could not attend. The sessions provided information on a range of key updates to the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 guidance and the Prevent Duty. This included information on:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * County lines * Peer on peer abuse * Contextual safeguarding * Information sharing * Online safety * Sexual violence and harassment | * Operation Encompass * The Contest Strategy * E-Safe * Whistleblowing * Dynamic Lockdown |

At HE staff will receive their annual update at the staff development session that will take place on the 18th December.

## **Governance Issues**

The Northern School of Art is committed to demonstrating best practice in all aspects of corporate governance.

## Statement of Primary Responsibilities

The Governing Body has adopted a statement of primary responsibilities, which is published on the School’s website. This statement sets out the Governing Body’s responsibilities in respect of the proper conduct of public business, strategic planning, monitoring effectiveness and performance, finance, audit, estate management, human resource management, equality and diversity, student welfare, health and safety and the appointment of the School senior post-holders.

## Conduct of Business

The School has a duty to conduct affairs in a responsible and transparent way, and to take into account the requirements of funding bodies, the Association of Colleges’ *Code of Good Governance for English Colleges* (2015) and the Committee of University Chairs’ (CUC) *Higher Education Code of Governance* (2014, as amended 2018) – “The CUC Code”. Both of the Codes are underpinned by the standards in public life enunciated by the Nolan Committee. Consequently, the Corporation Board seeks to discharge its functions with due regard to the 'seven principles of public life' defined by the Nolan Committee:

1. ***Selflessness***: Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.
2. ***Integrity***: Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
3. ***Objectivity***: In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
4. ***Accountability***: Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
5. ***Openness***: Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
6. ***Honesty***: Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
7. ***Leadership***: Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

The School has complied with the AoC’s *Code of Good Governance for English Colleges* since the Code’s inception. However, as a further education corporation (FEC) prior to 2017 the School had not considered compliance with the CUC Code. In 2017 the School assessed its compliance with the CUC Code and determined that it was close to compliance, and that it would work towards full compliance. Publication of the Office for Students’ (OfS) registration requirements in February 2018 hastened the School’s decision to seek to comply fully with the CUC Code by the end of 2018.

The CUC Code identifies the following seven primary elements of governance that underpin the values and beliefs outlined in the Code:

1. The governing body is unambiguously and collectively accountable for institutional activities, taking all final decisions on matters of fundamental concern within its remit.
2. The governing body protects institutional reputation by being assured that clear regulations, policies and procedures that adhere to legislative and regulatory requirements are in place, ethical in nature, and followed.
3. The governing body ensures institutional sustainability by working with the Executive to set the institutional mission and strategy. In addition, it needs to be assured that appropriate steps are being taken to deliver them and that there are effective systems of control and risk management.
4. The governing body receives assurance that academic governance is effective by working with the Senate/Academic Board or equivalent as specified in its governing instruments.
5. The governing body works with the Executive to be assured that effective control and due diligence take place in relation to institutionally significant external activities.
6. The governing body must promote equality and diversity throughout the institution, including in relation to its own operation.

The CUC Code states that the governing body must ensure that governance structures and processes are fit for purpose by referencing them against recognised standards of good practice.

## Additional Assurance and CUC Code Compliance

The Corporation Board, acting through the Governance and Search Committee, has sought to achieve CUC Code compliance. To this end it has implemented a number of new assurance measures in 2017-18, as follows:

* The Academic Board has provided a detailed report to the Governing Body covering academic standards and related issues in order to provide appropriate assurance and to comply with the CUC Code;
* The Remuneration Committee has provided a detailed report to the Governing Body covering the remuneration of senior postholders in order to provide appropriate assurance and to comply with the CUC Code;
* The Audit Committee has sought an additional opinion from the School’s external auditors in relation to compliance with the publicity requirements which fall on all charities;
* Assurance statements have been sought and obtained from the Clerk & Governance Advisor and senior managers in relation to regulatory compliance, including that during the year the School’s business has complied with the Instruments & Articles of Government and Standing Orders, that publicity materials comply with the requirements of the Competition & Markets Authority, that finance and data returns to ESFA and other bodies have been complete and accurate, and that the School’s policies have been correctly applied throughout the year;
* The Governance & Search Committee has reviewed a detailed assessment of the School’s compliance with the CUC Code; and
* The Governance & Search Committee has produced an Annual Report to the Governing Body in order to provide assurance in relation to governance issues.

This comprehensive range of measures was implemented in order to move the School towards full compliance with the CUC Code.

## Overall Opinion and Conclusions

The Annual Governance Report includes the following formal opinion:

*The Governing Body seeks to adhere to the provisions of the Higher Education Code of Governance issued by the Committee of University Chairs. There are two issues arising during 2017/18 which, whilst not considered to be fundamental, do in the opinion of the Governance & Search Committee prevent the School from asserting that in terms of Corporate Governance that it is fully compliant with the CUC Code.*

In its Summary & Conclusions the Report states the following:

*The School continues to be compliant with the provisions of the AoC Code, and in its first year of adoption also complies with the CUC Senior Staff Remuneration Code. The School operates in accordance with the Nolan principles. However, in several – albeit relatively minor – respects the School does not yet comply with the CUC Higher Education Code of Governance. These areas of non-compliance are remediable, and the School commits to move to full compliance in the first half of 2019.*

The School undertook to comply with the CUC Code as part of the OfS registration process. However, this went beyond what was strictly required – compliance with the AoC Code should be sufficient. Compliance with the CUC Code was not an OfS condition of registration, and so no regulatory implications are expected. The School should be fully compliant in 2018-19, and this is of greater importance given that the new OfS regulatory regime commences on 1 September 2019.

# Excellent Student Experience & Curricula Offer

## Student Experience Team

The Student Experience Team (SET) reached its first year anniversary during October and this report focuses on their work. After a year the team is demonstrating tangible progress, having concentrated on development of the strategies that underpin the School’s Academic Strategy. These are the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, the Student Support Strategy, the Student Engagement Strategy, and the Learning Resource Development Strategy. In addition, the team has regard to the Scholarly Activity and Research Strategy which is led by colleagues.

Following a review at the end of 2017-18, an addition to the School deliberative structure for 2018-19 is the introduction of the Academic Strategy Implementation Group (ASIG). This is a sub-committee of the Academic Board and will oversee the implementation of key strategies. It has identified the priorities for the academic year and begun to monitor and evidence the impact of the School’s strategic approach. The following sections highlight key work related to these priorities.

*Student Engagement*

The Student Engagement Strategy aims to have student representation at every level. Dan Tierney (Student Liaison Officer) has been supporting the process to ensure we have student representation at both Corporation Board meetings and the Academic Board.

In addition, the Student Union has held elections to their Executive Committee. The SU Executive will be well represented this year and the number of roles has increased. SU elections were held in October-November. Some 16 students from 8 programmes were nominated for roles, and over 200 students voted. There are 9 Students’ Union Executive Officers in post for the next year (see below). All Students’ Union Officers have received training and guidance from the Student Liaison Officer during November.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SU Role | Student Name | Programme | Level |
| SU President | Georgia Bell | BA (Hons) Production Design for Stage & Screen | 5 |
| SU Vice President | Alastair McKie | BA (Hons) Acting for Stage & Screen | 4 |
| SU Vice President | Heather Wilson | BA (Hons) Costume Interpretation with Design | 5 |
| LGBTQ+ Officer | John Perangie | BA (Hons) Fine Art | 5 |
| Activities Officer | Danni Clarke | BA (Hons) Acting for Stage & Screen | 4 |
| Student Life Officer | Aliya Jefferson | BA (Hons) Textiles & Surface Design | 5 |
| Communications Officer | Elizabeth Lovejoy | BA (Hons) Illustration for Commercial Application | 6 |
| Accommodation Officer | Tyler McKeown | BA (Hons) Production Design for Stage & Screen | 5 |
| Sustainability Officer | Eve Murray | BA (Hons) Costume Interpretation with Design | 5 |

The newly-appointed SU Executive is expected to develop both the social aspects of student life and support the academic interests of the student body.

At FE, Dan Tierney has started developing further opportunities for student engagement. Working with Amanda Smith (FE Quality Manager) and Rob Kane (Head of FE) he has planned a series of sessions with Student Representatives on the Schools approach to key issues such as our Code of Conduct, Prevent and Equality and Diversity. These sessions are in addition to Student Assemblies and Course Boards that take place in each semester and are focussed on developing our Creative Community approach.

The process for student assemblies and Programme Boards at HE has been reviewed and minor revisions put in place to ensure we more effectively listen to the student voice and address their concerns. This will be a focus for the remainder of 2018-19.

*Learning Resource Development*

During the summer the School VLE was redesigned. The main objectives were to ensure that the Moodle site reflected our name change and new brand identity, and also to improve accessibility and usability. The new Moodle site provides all users with more personalised experience allowing them to find and locate information and resources more effectively. Rosie Hare (Learning Resources Development Manager) and Michael Egan (Learning Technologist) led on the delivery of the update which went very smoothly. In addition, Michael has been delivering Moodle training sessions to staff and has also created and uploaded a series of online training videos. The Learning Resources Team has also supported academic colleagues to develop the Perspectives in Art and Design (PAD) Online journal, a place for the publication of staff and student academic investigation ([www.northernperspectives.co.uk](http://www.northernperspectives.co.uk)).

Training and promotion around our learning resources for both staff and students are priorities for Rosie Hare and her team. Recognising that high quality learning resources can actively promote independent and inclusive learning they are keen to increase meaningful engagement with both online and physical resources. Feedback from students regarding how the library supports their academic studies is very positive. However, the team will further promote the library services to increase usage, access and the sharing of good practice. The library was active on Instagram for ‘Libraries Week’ [ 8th – 13th October] posting at least daily using the #librariesweek hashtag.

Other student related activities in the library include:

* Caroline Mason [HE Library Development Manager] and Rosie Hare ran library inductions for all Level 4 and Direct Entry students.
* Caroline ran 9 ‘Information Skills’ sessions for Level 4 students in Week 6, going into more depth about how to use online search techniques to get the best results from the online catalogue and online database resources.
* Rosie and a member of staff from the World Global Style Network (WGSN) facilitated an online webinar for Claire Baker and Level 6 Textiles students. Rosie is waiting for confirmation of dates to run a similar session for FE Fashion and Textiles
* Ann Kenyon ran 13 induction sessions for FE students and gave out a Library Guide with key information about how to use the library to all new students at FE.
* There are plans to send out termly digital newsletters for each library to staff and students.

A significant focus for Rosie and her team over the coming weeks will be development of library services in preparation for the visit by Emma Hunt, Deputy VC at AUB, to review facilities and resources for the newly proposed MA provision, and to support Research and Scholarly activity.

*Safeguarding and Wellbeing*

A significant amount of work is being undertaken by the student services team regarding wellbeing. Teresa Latcham is working closely with HR around preventative activities for students and staff. In addition she is working with Dan Tierney and the Student Union Executive to encourage students to participate in wellbeing activities. HE student introductory Wellbeing workshops have been completed. And delivered/offered to all Level 4 students. The feedback so far has been positive with students actively engaging in the sessions and wanting more. Follow-on sessions are being planned and will be open to all students. Sessions will include workshops on sleep, anxiety, managing stress, thoughts and behaviours, perfectionism and procrastination.

*Learning, Teaching and Assessment*

The FE cycle of teaching observations is underway. The School approach to observation of FE staff has been developed further this year to include more development opportunities for teaching staff. As well as the formal teaching observations we now have Advanced Notice observations which have been introduced to share best practice across the School and encourage further reflection upon teaching strategies. The purpose of all FE teaching observations in the School are developmental and whilst the quality of teaching, learning and assessment was graded ‘good’ in our Self-Assessment report 2017/18 there is scope for improvement and in a minority of cases requiring greater emphasis on compliance.

At HE, a lot of the work for the SET team will be recognising and sharing the outstanding contribution our staff make to art and design education. Our TEF results identify that our approach to learning and teaching is excellent, however, there is recognition that we need to better evidence how our scholarly activity and research impacts on the student experience. This not only will provide the School opportunity to develop its academic community but can also provide opportunities to build on our external reputation. One of the key criteria for sector change and achieving DAPs is evidencing the pedagogical effectiveness of our staff. Eyv Hardwick and I will be working closely with all members of academic staff in future weeks with this goal in mind. This will include:

* Implementation of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy across all areas of curriculum development and review
* Development of the Standardisation process
* Development of the Student Assembly and Programme Board process to have a greater emphasis on learning and teaching
* Collaboration with the scholarly activity and research co-ordinators to identify research opportunities related to pedagogical development
* Developing a platform for sharing best practice in learning and teaching to establish our reputation in the Art and Design sector
* Provide mentoring support opportunities to all academic staff, primarily newly qualified or appointed staff

## Further Education Curriculum Development

*University of Arts London Qualifications*

Through 2017-18 the School transitioned all previous BTEC Edexcel vocational programmes to the University Arts London Awarding Body. This decision was carefully planned in order to provide our learners with the most appropriate skills necessary for the creative industry through utilising a specialist provider for arts education.

Although challenging, continuous evaluation has led to the agreement of a thorough and common approach to structuring and delivering the programmes which has been supported by the UAL Awarding Body external moderator through monitoring visits.

Feedback from the UAL Awarding Body Level 3 Extended Diploma External Moderator stated *“A high level of practical skill was evidenced across the sample with students exploring a wide range of media and techniques to effectively realise their ideas. Sampling and testing demonstrated good technical understanding of a range of 2D and 3D processes across a wide range of specialist disciplines. The majority of final outcomes were skilfully produced with the work at the higher grades being particularly impressive and demonstrating both ambition and a high standard of finish”.*

Such feedback provides assurance that the decision to move to UAL provision was the correct one, however the future of Applied General Qualifications (AGQs) remains uncertain. Information at a recent DfE consultation event at the AoC Conference, attended by John Waddington, highlights the need for the Creative Education sector to work together to ensure that arts based AGQs are retained as part of qualification reforms to technical education.

*Future Provision*

Further FE curriculum developments include the introduction of a level 3 qualification in Film and TV Production. The film and TV industry in the UK is booming – official statistics show that it has grown by more than 72% in value since 2014. The UK is benefiting from the growth in demand for digital content and digital TV platforms like Netflix and YouTube. This demand is reflected in our recent developments in HE Programmes in the TV, Film and Theatre sector and supports our decision to introduce a level 3 further education course. Delivery is due to commence in September 2019 and the course will allow students to work on a variety of different creative projects, such as; short films, documentaries, single and multi-camera productions, live studio television, film trailers, creative photography and motion graphics. In addition they will learn to script, plan and story board, use camera equipment, edit film and work with audio to ensure they have a good understanding of the variety of skills used within the film and TV industries. Most importantly, it will provide progression opportunities to the Film and TV industry and higher education including Programmes at The Northern School of Art. For similar reasons the School is also offering a Media Studies A-level as part of the overall A-level pathway, again for delivery in September 2019.

## **FE Provision**

*Self-Assessment Report (SAR)*

The School’s FE Quality Committee considered the 2017-18 Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and recommended its approval to the Corporation Board. The Corporation Board has received and approved the full SAR and Quality Improvement Plan (QuIP). As an *aide memoire*, brief extracts from the SAR are presented in this annual report.

*Summary of Grades*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Self-Assessment Grades:**  1= Outstanding, 2 = Good, 3 = Requires improvement, 4 = Inadequate | | | | | |
| **Academic Year** | **Overall Effectiveness** | **Outcome for Learners** | **Quality of Teaching, Learning & Assessment** | **Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare of Learners** | **Effectiveness of Leadership and Management** |
| **2017/18** | **1** | **1** | **2** | **1** | **1** |
|  | | | | | |
| *2016/17* | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| *2015/16* | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| *2014/15* | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| *2013/14* | 2 | 2 | 1 |  | 2 |

Course Performance Self-Assessment

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Course | Overall Effectiveness | Outcomes for Learners | The quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Personal development, behaviour and welfare of learners | Effectiveness of leadership and management |
| A Level | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Art & Design | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Textiles | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Fine Art | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Graphics | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Photography | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 3D | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Interactive Design | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Fashion | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Foundation | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Level 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Level 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Access to HE | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Total 1’s | 7 | 7 | 3 | 9 | 7 |
| Total 2’s | 6 | 6 | 9 | 4 | 6 |
| Total 3’s | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Total 4’s | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

*Overall Effectiveness: Outstanding*

Outcomes for learners are outstanding. The overall key performance indicators for 2017/18 are 90.1% Achievement, 96.5% Pass rate and 93.4% retention. Whilst performance is marginally down compared to that of 2016/17 The School has maintained a three-year history of being above 90% for each of these indicators. During 2017/18 a significant proportion of the curriculum underwent major changes in a rapid timeframe demonstrating The Schools ability to adapt and change without impacting upon learner outcomes.

Through 2017/18 The School transitioned all previous BTEC Edexcel vocational programmes over to the University Arts London Awarding Body. This decision was carefully planned in order to provide our learners with the most appropriate skills necessary for the creative industry through utilising a specialist provider for arts education. The move was bold with all learners including those enrolled on a two-year Extended Diploma being accredited for prior learning so they could progress through the second year. This implementation was/is a large learning curve for all staff though achievement results, exceptional high grade profiles as noted by the eternal moderator, external audit (Matrix) and destination data conclude the move has been extremely successful.

The School remains above the national averages of both General Further and Specialist education providers. This has been achieved through maintaining a structure of setting clearly defined and ambitious targets with staff and learners. Progress is reviewed on a cyclical timeline and actions are executed timely. The overall impact ensures the vast majority of learners are studying a suitable programme of study and make excellent progress leading to high quality outcomes with positive destinations. Through analysing each learner level, qualification type, age group and learners with high needs and/or disability there are no significant variations with the exception of performance on a small cluster of AS subjects where pass rates are a concern.

Maths and English is a priority of curriculum planning. Study programmes have set entry criteria and ensure learners are enrolled onto a suitable level of study with the abilities to develop these skills in a manageable manner. The School replaced the functional skills level 2 qualifications with the option to only study a GCSE at level 2. This shift aims to provide learners with the best chances of working towards qualifications which will support progression into higher education in line with The School’s historic destination data and industry demands. It was anticipated the removal of the functional skills level 2 and significant changes to the GCSE English curriculum would impact upon the overall achievement of maths and English, which it has by 4.5% in comparison to 2016/17. However, the School remains 5.9% above the current national average. Whilst the GCSE English performance has dipped, it still remains 6.9% above the national average and high grades are almost 13% above.

The overall achievement rates for maths are healthily above the national averages in both the functional skills and GCSE provision. The GCSE maths achievement rate has dropped 4.3% from 2016/17. A total of 11 learners were not retained and 4 learners failed to achieve the GCSE maths. High grades have also declined to 1.7% under the national average indicating there is work necessary to improve the provision. Functional skills maths identifies a concern with the pass rate, as retention has marginally improved.

Improving the learning experience is at the heart of The Northern School of Art. Staff across the campus are supported with professional development opportunities such as a dedicated staff development week, encouragement to attend conferences, and supported through additional qualifications. The organisational structure sets clear job roles and responsibilities, and encourages a culture of working in a transparent and collaborative manor to support areas of underperformance and promote good practice.

High expectations resonate throughout the School. Staff are extremely motivated to support learners to produce high quality outcomes and achieve their qualifications. Teaching staff have a wealth of subject knowledge and experience within the creative industries which they are keen to share with learners. Through learning walks and teaching observations it is evident that the vast majority of learners have an excellent rapport with the staff and a high level of respect for the learning environments and their peers. Retention, attendance, learner feedback, and the exceptional quality of work produced suggests almost all learners are happy to commit towards their studies and achieve.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is very good. Teaching staff are enthusiastic, very well qualified and hold high expectations of learners. From initial diagnostic testing, learners are set individual targets, whilst regularly challenged and encouraged to surpass them. The standard of learner work is reflected throughout the grade trackers, final exhibitions and live client work demonstrating examples of near professional standards. The curriculum staff have worked hard to maintain high standards across all courses and throughout the transition to the UAL Awarding Body specifications. Thorough planning of teaching and learning sessions incorporate a range of methodologies aimed to meet the individual needs of learners and groups which has resulted in outstanding achievement rates. There are a diverse range of skills across the teaching staff. Feedback from the QDP survey indicates 94% of learners agree the teaching on their course is good*.* Close links with industry practitioners such as *‘Better Brand’* and *‘The house of Blah Blah’,* enriches the learning experience and provides learners with a greater insight into the wider variety of occupations throughout the creative industries. In a small minority of lessons, the teaching can sometimes become tutor led, which prevents learners from taking risks, and demonstrate their abilities which may impact upon them developing independence.

The senior leadership team acknowledge the need to plan and deliver a provision which is relevant, current, and developmental to the skills necessary within the Creative Industries for the local and regional areas. The governing body contains a variety of personnel from differing sectors including employers within the Creative Industries. The awarding bodies are reviewed and contrasted with alternative providers to ensure the provision is best suited to the needs of industry and education to encourage progression. Despite a history of outstanding results with Pearson’s, the UAL Awarding Body qualifications offer more holistic approaches to arts education, which will enable learners to grow more organically. The introductory year has been a major success which has contributed to the high levels of overall achievement.

There is a clearly defined and robust performance cycle which includes a variety of methods to assess and monitor the quality of classroom / studio practices. Self-assessment and improvement planning is thorough. The School actively analyses the performance and progress of its provision through collecting evidence from a variety of sources and stakeholders including: learners, employers/professional practitioners within the creative industries, and external examiners. Feedback in collaboration with performance data provides a positive overview of an outstanding place to learn, which aligns with the mission of providing an ‘*Exceptional education for creative careers’.*

The learner journey is tracked and monitored on programme through to completion and intended destinations. The Northern School of Art has a successful history of supporting learners to progress into their preferred routes of study. A high proportion of learner’s progress onto positive destinations. 100% of level 1 and 97.2% of level 2 progressed onto further education courses whilst 79.3% of level 3 completers progressed onto Higher Education. 28.2% of these learners progressed in Higher Education with The Northern School of Art, whilst 4.5% progressed to Teesside University and the remaining 47% progressed into HEI’s outside the Tees Valley.

The School is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment in which everyone is comfortable to learn and enabled to achieve their full potential. The School seeks to promote an environment which fosters and embraces peoples’ individuality and differences to recognise the positives that those differences bring to make a creative and positive learning environment.

Equality and Diversity issues are embedded very effectively in the curriculum with the majority of learners taking part in discussion, debate, research, and projects associated with a broad range of themes from culture and society. Learners are actively encouraged to feedback upon their experiences within The School through a variety of channels including discussions with course teams / tutorials, student assemblies, surveys and in confidence where necessary with support staff such as the Student Services department. Examples of feedback include quotes such as *“The staff have been really helpful and supportive. I am not going on to uni but I have applied for an apprenticeship. The staff have been supported me through this decision. I haven't been the best attender but they still are there to help me with my work”* (QDP response). This is further supported with the vast majority of learners across The School (93%) agreeing they are treated fairly and with respect whilst studying at The School.

The Equality and Diversity Committee has this year included representatives from Recruitment and Marketing to reflect a whole School approach to equality and diversity issues. The School has a dedicated Faith Room at Green Lane, with guidelines for its proper use. The Faith Room usage is monitored on a regular basis. Both academic staff and Student Services promote an open door policy so that students feel comfortable raising any issues related to equality and diversity. The School takes a rigorous stance on any bullying and discrimination. Academic staff work closely with Student Services to tackle issues promptly and effectively.

The School maintains a conscious awareness of developing a welcoming and harmonious learning experience for all learners, staff and visitors. Learners are encouraged to participate and work collaboratively and respect each other in line with British Values. As practicing artists and designers staff and students have very strong views on British values and these are shared and delivered in group discussions and meetings. At The Northern School of Art, students will encounter these principles throughout everyday School life. These values are mapped throughout the learning experience.

The School successfully manages the development and achievement of learners with a declared learning need and/or disability, or health problem exceptionally well. Over a three-year period, the number of learners with such needs has increased. There is a small achievement gap (4%) between learners with identified needs and learners without demonstrating the robust measures in place to support an increasing student population with learning needs, achieve their qualifications.

## **FE Quality Strategy**

The School graded itself outstanding in the FE Self-Assessment Report 2017-18. There remain areas for development and challenge in maintaining high standards. The quality assurance procedure identifies approaches to achieve this in 2018-19 and involves a cycle of activities; self-assessment and action planning are major parts. Key elements are:

* Continuously developing the range and effectiveness of School quality assurance systems and tools with the involvement of staff and learners.
* Establishing performance indicators/targets against which provision is judged, bearing in mind those used externally, by Ofsted and other stakeholders. This includes:
* The FE Course Forecast (Course Level Target Book)
* Attendance targets (Overall, maths and English)
* Individual Target Setting (Performance Management)
* Collecting and monitoring data in order to measure performance:
* The FE Course Forecast
* Attendance Reporting
* Termly FE Course Quality Monitoring Review meetings.
* Centralised drive for storage and audit of documents (planning for learning etc)
* Identifying areas of strength and for improvement at curriculum team level, linked to the Common Inspection Framework and Matrix criteria. This includes monthly course performance meetings with Course Leaders and the Head of FE and in-year action plans for immediate intervention in areas for improvement and tracking of ‘at risk’ learners.
* Individual Performance Management:
* Initial Target Setting
* Regular update meetings
* Mid-Year review against targets
* End of Year Review
* The student voice - key to quality improvement and includes:
* Student Assemblies (course level)
* Student Forums (School level)
* Student Perception Surveys
* Student Rep meetings to allow discussion of key School strategies and approaches
* Implementing the teaching Observation Process including formal teaching observations (with action planning), Advanced Notice Observations, and Learning Walks. The new observation process allows for a more targeted approach to observations, whilst maintaining each member of staff will be observed at least once a year. Also cluster leaders required to manage learning walks in their subject areas, to gain a bigger picture of teaching and learning in their areas.
* Encouraging continuous updating and skills development of all staff, including quality improvement strategies to drive up standards and promote outstanding teaching and learning. Opportunities include:
* Annual Staff Development Week
* Annual HE/FE Conference
* External Staff Development (funded via Human Resources)
* Online staff development opportunities
* In-house sharing of best practice
* FE+ regional membership
* Internal and external verification processes.
* The Course Review process builds on the action planning and interventions from the academic year, reviewing performance and developing an action plan for next year.
* The maths and English regular quality explore at all aspects of delivery in maths and English.
* The School Self-Assessment Report makes judgements on the quality of the School’s FE provision; the Quality Improvement Plan highlights interventions required.

## Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

During 2017/18 the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy (LTAS) was reviewed, revised and approved by Academic Board. The LTAS is part of the institution’s wider academic strategy and has been developed to support our overarching character vision statements. The strategy has been developed through discussion with our academic community. The strategy is presented as 5 themes and 7 approaches. For our experienced staff it is as an ‘aide memoire’ of our ideals, for newly appointed staff an introduction to our ethos or a developmental tool.

## The Themes of the Strategy

**Theme 1 – Recruitment, Support and Recognition.** People are critical to the delivery of excellence in learning and teaching. To achieve our academic vision we will continue to develop our approach to staff recruitment, support and recognition.

**Theme 2 – A Creative Curriculum**. We will continuously review and develop our curriculum to encourage critical thinking, curiosity and creative learning opportunities and approaches.

**Theme 3 – Digital Futures.** We will incorporatedigital approaches across all our provision including learning and teaching experiences, to ensure we appropriately support students in their digital futures.

**Theme 4 – Inclusive Teaching and Learning.** We will ensure we promote inclusion and diversity within all learning, teaching and assessment activity.

**Theme 5 – Employability and Professional Practice.** On course curriculum design will develop and enhance employability skills and opportunities for further study.

## The 7 Approaches of the Strategy

The 7 approaches of good teaching stated in the strategy have been adapted from the “Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education” (Chickering and Gamson, 1987). Their research identifies that when all these principles are practiced other forces emerge including: activity, expectations, cooperation, interaction, diversity and responsibility.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Approach 1 - Encourage student engagement with their course / programme and the wider Institution  Approach 2 – Develop a course / programme community and collaboration among students  Approach 3 – Encourage active learning | Approach 4 – Give prompt feedback  Approach 5 – Emphasise time on task  Approach 6 – Communicate high expectations  Approach 7 – Respect diverse talents and ways of working |

## Delivering the Strategy

The strategy is an ‘active’ document and should be used by all as a reference point for evaluating the quality of all future learning and teaching activity including curriculum design, validation, delivery and review.

The newly formed Academic Strategies Implementation Group (ASIG), a sub-committee of Academic Board, are responsible for ensuring the School is effectively working towards the aims of the strategy. Work has already began in this respect primarily led by Eyv Hardwick, the Learning and Teaching Development Manager.

The strategy was launched at the School HE / FE Conference in June 2018. As part of the launch academic staff were asked to review their practice against the 7 approaches of good teaching. The strategy is also used to form the basis of academic staff mentoring sessions. These sessions are used as an opportunity to provide support to newly appointed staff, newly qualified lecturers and also to share best practice where areas of developmental need are identified. Peer observation methodologies have also been developed and approved by Academic Board. This includes a greater focus on the approaches and themes of the strategy, particularly in reflection paperwork. The strategy has also been used as an evaluative tool in the review of module guides and assignment briefs. This will also be a consideration for future curriculum developments as part of programme validations.

## **Quality of HE Student Academic Experience**

The School has undertaken to comply with the provisions of the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) document *The Higher Education Code of Governance* *(2014)*. In this context, the School is mindful not only of the Code’s provisions (specifically Element 4 relating to academic governance) but also the CUC Illustrative Practice Note 3: Academic Governance (January 2017). The latter document suggests that the governing body should receive formal opinions in respect of the quality of academic outcomes (para 30) and the management of academic quality and standards from the Academic Board.

To this end the Academic Board provided the Corporation Board with a detailed and comprehensive report covering the continuous improvement of the student academic experience and student outcomes. The Report included, *inter alia*, details in respect of:

* The constitution and operation of the Academic Board;
* The Academic Strategy;
* The standard of taught awards, including a detailed review of retention, achievement, high grades, referral rates, module average marks, restudy opportunities offered, academic dishonesty and external examiner comments;
* The student academic experience and student outcomes, including academic governance and the systems and processes relating to the management of quality, as well as NSS data and much detail on the student voice, graduate destinations, complaints and academic appeals;
* An update on the prior year action plan;
* Learning and teaching enhancement;
* Staff development;
* Resources;
* The operation of key partnerships; and
* The quality assurance action plan.

## Annual Report by Academic Board to the Corporation Board

The Report was considered by the Academic Board at its meeting on 7th November 2018. The assurance and opinion statements to the Corporation Board set out below were approved by the Academic Board.

## Assurance

In the opinion of Academic Board, the Governing Body has received a report and accompanying action plan relating to the continuous improvement of the student academic experience and student outcomes, and that report is fit for purpose. The report includes evidence from the School’s own periodic review processes, which fully involve students and include embedded external peer review.

## Quality of Academic Outcomes

The standards of the awards delivered by the School remain, ultimately, the responsibility of the Arts University Bournemouth as the degree awarding body. Nevertheless, the School inevitably views itself a jointly responsible for the standards of these awards, and therefore also states that, in the opinion of the Academic Board, standards of the undergraduate awards of the Arts University Bournemouth which we deliver have been appropriately set and maintained.

## Management of Academic Quality & Standards

The methodologies used as a basis to improve the student academic experience and student outcomes are, to the best of Academic Board’s knowledge, robust and appropriate.

# **HE Orientation, Growth**

## Scholarly Activity and Research

The School moved forward significantly in 2017-18 through putting in place a range of procedures and processes that enable us to capture and measure the impact of Scholarly Activity and Research (SAR). SAR is now embedded within the Annual Programme Review (APR) as both a reflective tool and as an aid to future planning and programme development.

## Curriculum Changes

Changes were made to Technical Demonstrators (TDs) contracts in 2016-17 that enabled them to work with students independently from academic staff while delivering technical skills. During the start of 2017-18 Programme Leaders were then required to demonstrate when these skills would be delivered across the academic year. This change to contracts enabled the School to request timetabling of Technical Demonstrators against specific sessions. This made transparent the allocation for teaching time and could mean that Programme Leaders (PLs) chose to enhance the delivery or embed TD time into the curriculum offer. This was done with the requirement that PLs had then the capacity to allocate TDs to free up time for SAR or key strategic requirements such as interviews and attendance at UCAS fairs and internal/external outreach events. This removed the need to allocate hours for SAR as PLs would be managing the SAR process as academic leaders. This strategy was also designed to support our application for TDAP.

## Managerial Changes

The Annual Programme Review (APR) is the key evaluative document used by the programme teams. Each APR is considered by the line manager who assures that targets and action being entered onto staff targets for the year. Each Programme leader is obligated to assign team members or themselves to elements of the SAR and again these individual teams members have their targets checked to ensure there is consistency in the actions listed against the original APR requirements.

## **FE/HE Progression**

The 2017-18 recruitment cycle saw a continued emphasis on the management and quality control of FE/HE progression activity – developing the practice of holding two dedicated off-timetable days where FE students visit the Hartlepool campus and take part in workshops and receive other talks on HE life.

Despite this, as the table below shows, there was a dip in internal progression with 26% of Level 3 completers enrolling on one of our HE programme. Consequently, as reported to Governors in October 2018, we have introduced additional measures, including training and further enhancement and refinement of the progression event in order to reverse this position. It should be said that the overall statistics here mask a more nuanced position when like for like comparisons are made (new programmes discounted) which means the rate of conversion is slightly better.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Academic Year of Completers | L3 Completers | HE Apps | Application rate | HE Firm | Firm rate | HE Enrol | Conv of L3 to HE Firm Apps | Conv of L3 to Enrols |
| 13/14 | 305 | 158 | 52% | 90 | 57% | 93 | 30% | 30% |
| 14/15 | 294 | 148 | 50% | 63 | 43% | 62 | 21% | 21% |
| 15/16 | 258 | 119 | 46% | 56 | 47% | 59 | 22% | 23% |
| 16/17 | 258 | 154 | 60% | 78 | 51% | 80 | 30% | 31% |
| 17/18 | 239 | 127 | 53% | 62 | 49% | 63 | 26% | 26% |

During the 2017/18 cycle we also sought to address the perception amongst FE students that they were not eligible for dedicated student accommodation in Hartlepool. Whilst our policy is to guarantee a place for Level 4 students living outside a 15-mile radius we have made it clear in communications and sessions with FE students that we will strive to find them places in dedicated accommodation where possible.

During 2017/18 we participated in the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (OFS funded) alongside other FE Colleges in the north east – this activity attracts a small amount of funding to support progression activity targeted at widening participation in higher education.

## **Recruitment**

The 2017/18 recruitment year was challenging in both FE and HE.

In HE we continued our overall growth reaching 240 enrolments but fell short of a challenging recruitment target. Applications were up this year to a high of 691, an increase of 24%. However, the conversion rate to Firm dropped slightly to 35%. Significantly, market activity has changed yet again and we failed to attract the anticipated levels of applicants post July and through Clearing. This reflected a difficult market in which saw applications in our subject area fall by 7.8% since the 2016 cycle.

Our applicant feedback paints a largely positive experience by applicants (74% had a good interview experience, 80% rated their interaction with us as good or very good, 92% had viewed our website before applying and 84% think our publicity is good or very good) however this does leave room for improvement. For the coming year we have undertaken a full end to end review of the recruitment process and are introducing enhancements and refinements to support improved conversion and reduced withdrawal (pre or post interview).

In FE we experienced a disappointing fall in applications and fell well short of our recruitment target. Applications were down 11% whilst our level of Firm offers grew by 60%. However, the conversion from Firm to enrolment fell resulting in only 481 enrolments.

Our market share of 3.7% in the Tees Valley has been relatively stable over time ranging between 3.6% and 4.1%. This underlines the external causes of this drop in numbers which are outside our direct influence:

* + Demography
  + EBACC in schools

We will continue to offer our Saturday Clubs, outreach, Workshops, and support for teachers and careers advisers to try and mitigate the impact of EBACC. The demographic position is gradually improving – however we are offering new courses in Film and TV for 2019 and an expended network of bus routes allowing us to penetrate new market areas, particularly in County Durham.

These results are despite an ongoing intensification of recruitment activity across both phases and the deployment of more targeted marketing in each.

For FE we maintained the increased level of outreach activity with 207 events in the 2017/18 cycle (30% growth over 2016). We kept our focus on school based parent/options events and careers events and further developed and extended our support offer to teachers and careers advisers through our NESCAN network CPD meetings.

For HE activity has been maintained at our expanded level of activity. Last year we reported a doubling in the level of national recruitment events attended – we increased this marginally from 22 to 25 – further expansion is not thought necessary following detailed examination of markets in the few areas we do not visit and the list of those we did attend changed following evaluation of impact. We have maintained a high level of engagement with specialist careers events by 58% to 31, and the number of FE-HE Workshops has also been maintained – reflecting our efforts to boost internal applications. Our broadened our geographic reach – we now attend recruitment events right across the UK - recognises that the local market is finite and that growth must come from outside the Tees Valley. This activity is reflected in the growth in applications from outside the locale – since the 2016 recruitment cycle we have seen the proportion of these applications grow from 54% to more than 70% - of the 2018 Level 4 group 61% of enrolled students come from outside the Tees Valley – up from 42% in 2015.

In both phases our activity has been informed by intelligence from students and external influencers about what works – we deploy attendee and non-attendee surveys and meet with our own students in focus groups as well as consulting head teachers, art teachers and careers advisers. We also monitor conversion rates for each type of event to allow us to identify the right events.

## **Marketing**

During the year we continued to embed The Marketing Strategy with its focus on a more content based approach to marketing. We have significantly developed our deployment of SEO and paid for traffic and remarketing – for HE this is targeted on key dates in the recruitment cycle whereas FE spend is focussed on the sub-region and spread across the year.

A greater focus on organic and driven reach for our content has continued to deliver results, as highlighted in the table below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2017-18 performance** | |
|  | **Target** | **Actual** |
| Users who visit website | 160k | 136.6k |
| PR Value | £1.4m | £1.61m |
| Social Media Followers | - | 15.4k |

Whilst we missed the challenging web user target we still saw growth of c30,000 – meaning 3 consecutive years of growth. We also saw significant growth in PR value and social media following.

In the final quarter of the year, with the approval of our change of name, considerable marketing effort was dedicated to the delivery of re-branding – a new web-site, the development of the brand identity and brand and communications guidelines. This work was focussed on an external launch of the brand in September 2018. The impact of the new name in terms of our performance will be closely monitored and every effort will be taken to mitigate an anticipated fall in our online visibility – indeed much of the work over the final quarter was dedicated to this mitigation.

## **Enterprise Plan 2016-2019: update**

The Enterprise Plan sets the context for taking action to support students and graduates in entrepreneurial activity – notably the high levels of self-employment amongst our graduates and the lack of dedicated enterprise support for the creative sector in the locality. It sets out a series of current and developing actions under the following headings:

* The Enterprise Work of Folio
* Supported Workplaces
* Strategic Collaboration
* Enterprise Support within the Curriculum

Folio has continued to deliver a mix of one to one and small group support to students and alumni. In 2017/18 this included:

* A series of seminar programmes on marketing, fundraising, and participatory arts attended by 43 (mainly Level 6) students.
* Mock interviews and pitches for 40 Level 6 students.
* Business planning advice for 11 level 6 students
* 13 students supported in to post graduate learning.

Work has now started on the conversion of the former GPO building on Whitby Street into ‘The BIS’ – providing supported workspace for 100 early career creatives. This project remains behind schedule and will now open in March 2019. Through 2017/18 we have worked with more than 40 students and alumni to brief them about the studios and help them develop applications. Sadly the delays to the building programme means that some have found spaces elsewhere, but we continue to work with students and alumni to help them make the most of this opportunity. We have also worked with a range of partners who have agreed to support our package of business support – notably Tees Valley Business Compass, the Department for International Trade and Empty Shop CIC.

In tandem with the development of the business case for the ISQ2 capital project (notably The Northern Studios) we have developed very wide and strong links with other studio providers (Pinewood and Ward Park) production companies and strategic agencies (the BFI and Creative England). These will benefit The School as a whole and underpin our reputation.

# Employability, External Relations, Creative Industry Links

## Employability & Creative Industry Links

This section of the report summarises performance in the Destinations of Leavers of Higher Education (DLHE) survey.

The headline result this year is another success for the whole college – at 96.3% in employment or further study The School is placed in the top performing group of all UK HE providers across all subject areas, and ahead of all regional universities. Unemployment amongst our leavers is less than half of the average UK rate.

The rate of employment in professional or managerial roles at 66.6% is well ahead of the national rate for relevant art and design graduates which is 63%. It should be noted that this is a drop from the exceptional 83% for 2016 leavers, which was driven by an unusually high level of self-employment (54%) which has fallen back this year to the more normal level of 37%.

Overall satisfaction with preparation for ‘the next step’ is 82% (85% for employment destinations) – a strong improvement on past years – the result is supported by another increase in the rate of satisfaction with preparation for further study (up to 75%). This was identified as an area for further action in previous years – addressed through Folio and Programme teams our remediation appears to be successful.

Our results continue to show that Folio Employability Service has a positive impact on students. However, as our overall results continue to improve (on small absolute numbers) this effect is becoming less marked. It is also the case that in the past three years, as the service has become embedded, the proportion of students engaging with Folio has increased such that the majority now engage with one-to-one or group support.

In the past academic year Programmes have engaged with more than 60 visiting lecturers from industry in delivering talks, workshops and crit sessions. Alongside this, students took part in more than 20 live projects. The level of engagement is now formally monitored and considered through the Annual Programme Reviews and ongoing performance management.

The range of industrial engagement has been very wide, encompassing:

* MiniModerns – leading interiors and homeware designers
* The BBC, ITV and Rough Cut Productions (bafta winners) for whom we built sets and who provided work experience on a range of productions.
* The Bowes Museum for both Costume and Textiles
* Collaboration with Anthropics (a leading software and image manipulation company) assisting them with the development of an illustrated image bank for use in personalised Apps – the company took 4 illustration students for work experience and subsequent employment.
* Collaborated with a number of galleries on exhibitions where students have curated the displays of their work.
* The leading acting agency in the region – in preparation for the introduction of the Acting programme.

## Stakeholder Engagement

At the start of the year we were still waiting for a decision on our application to change name and so formal stakeholder engagement was put on hold until this was resolved. With the formal approval of our name change coming at Easter we then devoted efforts to the introduction of the new identity.

There have been a number of key events throughout the year.

As outlined in the preceding section we have continued to develop and deepen our industrial liaison within the curriculum. We held a number of very well attended evening networking events with talks by internationally known creatives such as Anthony Burrill (typographer and printmaker) and Simon Costin (art director for Hermes, Apple, Alexander McQueen and Swarovski amongst others).

Notably our new building – 1 Church Street – was opened by Professor Madeleine Atkins (head of the former Higher Education Funding Council for England), with the Tees Valley Mayor and Chief Executive of Hartlepool Council also present. The opening event showcased our growth and development to local MPs and the wider community.

Our national status was underpinned by John Kampfner (Chief Executive of the Creative Industries Federation) who supported our name change and gave the valedictory address at the 2018 Graduation Ceremony.

There has been progress against areas identified in the earlier Stakeholder Action Plan:

* The Customer Relationship management (CRM) system is now in use by support staff, Marketing, and Recruitment teams. We have also developed the system so that it is functional on mobile devices – an essential precursor to wider roll out. The roll-out of the system to academic teams has been delayed due to software issues and the lack of capacity to deliver training. These issues have now been resolved and academic staff will be introduced to the system in 2019.
* Through the year we started to engage with Alumni in a more structured way – and developed an Alumni Action Plan ready for approval in autumn 2018.

We have been active in other areas:

* In developing the Bus Sheds, we have deepened and expanded links across the screen production sector – Pinewood Studios, Creative England and BFI etc.
* We closely supported Hartlepool Council in their successful bid for Heritage Lottery funding to improve the look and use of buildings on Church Street. In the coming years this will provide opportunities for students and alumni
* Worked with the council and combined authority to successfully secure Greater Places funding for cultural activities across the Tees Valley – many of which will provide opportunities for our students
* The Vice Principal (Employability & External Relations) was selected to sit as a member of The North Area Council of Arts Council England for the next four years.

From this firm foundation we will develop our stakeholder relations in the coming year – informed by the needs of the Strategic Plan, our objectives of growth and sector transfer.

## **Public Value Statement**

The Northern School of Art is a statutory corporation by virtue of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. It is also an exempt charity under the terms of Schedule 3 of the Charities Act 2011. Consequently, the School has a commitment to deliver a significant public benefit to the wider community that it serves by developing the skills and knowledge of its students and thus providing benefit to society and individuals.

In considering its vision, mission and values and in setting its objectives The Northern School of Art Corporation has had due regard to the Charity Commission’s guidance on the advancement of education.

**School Wider Community**

As a specialist provider the School is committed to making a major contribution to the communities and stakeholders that it serves locally, regionally and nationally. The School’s wider community includes:

* + - Learners;
    - Parents / guardians / carers and families of learners;
    - Alumni;
    - Staff;
    - Educational partners including schools, colleges and higher education institutions;
    - Creative sector employers regionally and nationally;
    - Local residents and community groups;
    - Local authorities;
    - The Tees Valley Combined Authority; and
    - Funding bodies and relevant Government departments and agencies.

The primary means by which the Schools adds value to the wider community that it serves is by attracting students and educating them successfully in accordance with its core values. By providing exceptional education the School adds significant value in terms of its students’ educational attainment so that they may progress to higher education or employment, and by virtue of that progression, benefit both themselves and the School’s wider community.

**School Vision**

As one of the few specialist art and design institutions in the country the School has a strong reputation, but one that is known to a narrow group of educators and practitioners in the creative sector. The School’s vision is therefore:

“To gain wider recognition as a leading provider of creative education”

**School Mission**

The School’s essential mission concerns the quality of students’ learning experience and outcomes. Its mission statement reflects this:

“Exceptional education for creative careers.”

**School Values**

*Creativity and Excellence*

We aim to place creative practice by students and staff at the centre of what we do, with excellent outcomes as our goal.

*Professional Practice, Employability and Enterprise*

We aim to develop students’ skills for employment and enterprise through curricula informed by staff and student engagement with creative industries. We value the encouragement of professional practice in students and the continuing professional development of staff, improving their performance and contribution to the education sector and creative industries.

*Student Engagement, Collaboration and Community*

We aim to promote student engagement within their learning environment as a partnership with staff, to aid delivery of a high quality student experience and to promote understanding and appreciation of art and design. We aim to develop complementary areas of study that support interdisciplinary collaboration and learning and engagement with external partners.

**Measuring our Contribution**

The School is confident that through the implementation of its Strategic Plan it will continue to operate as a dynamic and creative specialist School within the region. Members of the public may assess the value added to the School’s wider community through:

* + Performance Tables published nationally (showing value added and student performance);
  + Published financial statements (available on request);
  + The public records of School Corporation meetings;
  + Equality and Diversity reports;
  + School Self-Assessment Report;
  + Ofsted reports;
  + QAA reports; and
  + Student surveys (including the National Student Survey (NSS) and the Destination of Leavers in Higher Education (DLHE) surveys).

The School Corporation reviews and updates its public value statement periodically as part of its regular review of the School’s performance.

**Key Capital Projects**

In November 2014 the Board approved an Accommodation Strategy for the period 2014-2017. This was a refresh of ideas and plans for the estate in light of a Local Growth Fund Bid (LGF) that was successful in attracting funding for a new building on the Hartlepool Campus. The funding was still going through due diligence at that time. In October 2016 the Vice Principal (Resources) brought an update to the strategy to the Board for approval, and a further refresh was considered and approved in October 2017.

**Current Positon**

**LGF Phase 1/2 Hartlepool**

* Purchase of 5.3 acres of land at Lynn Street completed July 2015.
* c.4,000 m2 new build at Lynn Street completed May 2017.
* 750 m2 of refurbished space (ex HBC buildings) at Lynn Street completed May 2017.
* Partial demolition of existing Church Square main building and refurbishment/remodelling of existing space.

Most of the remaining Phase 1 work at Church Square was completed by January 2018 with the demolition works to the rear of Church Square and the completion of refurbishment works to create the new theatre/lecture theatre space. Further work was undertaken in summer 2018 to create two sprung floor rehearsal spaces for undergraduates on the acting degree, and to create student union social space in the former photography darkrooms.

**Church Square, Church Street and Whitby Street Developments (Hartlepool Borough Council projects)**

* Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC) has been successful in applying for various funds to regenerate the Church Square and Church Street areas of Hartlepool.
* Work is ongoing (at December 2018) but during 2018 HBC has provided wider pedestrian access along Church Street, and undertaken a major redevelopment of Church Square, as well as altering access into the School’s Municipal Building car park, which is now accessed from Church Street rather than Church Square.
* The creation of Whitby Street Studios (a venture which is running in partnership with the School) as future workspace for our graduates and others from the creative industries is ongoing, and due for completion in March/April 2019. HBC have purchased the old post office building and are renovating it and converting in studios for the creative industries. This project has been in collaboration with the School and the architects are going to clad the new elevations in similar cladding as the Lynn Street buildings.

**Innovation and Skills Quarter 2 (ISQ2)**

HBC and the School are working in partnership to deliver the second phase of the ISQ, capitalising on the success of recent investment in the Church Street area including the expansion of CCAD’s campus, the development of managed workspace/studio space on Whitby Street and the transformation of Church Street and Church Square, through LGF and HLF funded projects.

The Tees Valley Combined Authority has given approval to take this project to the detailed business case and planning stage (RIBA Stage 4) and funds are being allocated to support this process.

**The second phase of the ISQ involves:**

* **The conversion of the former HBC transport depot on Lynn Street to create the only dedicated film and television studios and production base in the North East region;** providing 3,000m2 of sound stage, green screen workshops and production offices.“The Northern Studios” will be aimed at TV production, smaller budget film, advertising, corporate video, green screen and digital. Soundings within the industry show a demand for studio space of this nature which will help to attract and retain talent in the region. There is a gap in the market for such facilities within the North of England as the nearest available facilities are in Selby, Manchester and Central Scotland. The creation of film and TV studios will build on the School’s track record in Film and TV Production, Production Design, and Costume design and will enable the School to enhance their curriculum offer. The development of a full service commercial facility will attract supply and value chain businesses to cluster around it and will address the growing demand within the UK for TV and film production space. The costs for this element of the project are £1.5m which includes cladding, soundproofing, structural work, internal fittings, technical equipment and the creation of green screen facilities.
* **Growing the School as the anchor for creative businesses offering them support and training, and access to high value equipment and emerging technology in the “*Tech Shed”****.* The *Tech Shed* willincludean open 3D large scale maker workshop, a VR studio and a range of large scale equipment (3D CNC router, industrial 3D printer etc.) for combined commercial use aimed at Stage & Screen production, advertising, corporate video, event and exhibition design and production. The proposed large scale equipment is outside the scope of SMEs to acquire, so a supported environment will allow them access to otherwise unattainable kit. The facility will also enable the School (working with industry) to be a centre for innovation in these business areas. The project cost is £1.12m.
* Redeveloping the School’s former Edgar Philips building – now re-named The Scott Building – into teaching delivery space including a large workshop/assembly space in order to support the School’s Production Design, VFX/Model-making and Exhibition & Event Design degrees.

There has been significant progress in 2017-18 and up to the date of this report in progressing this phase of the project. A business case has been submitted to TVCA, and this is expected to be considered by the TVCA Cabinet in late January 2019. A planning application is about to be submitted to HBC in respect of The Northern Studios and The Scott Building. If the business case is approved, building work could start in March/April 2019 and be completed by April 2020.

**The proposed future third phase of ISQ involves:**

* **The creation of live/work units** combining residential accommodation with studio or workshop space. The Live/Work accommodation will bring commercial buildings in Church Street back into use and provide potential move-on space for the tenants of the managed workspace in Whitby Street. The cost of this element of the project is estimated to be £1.25m.
* **The creation of additional teaching space and teaching studio space, a technology enabled Library / Learning Resource Centre, new student union facilities and related campus infrastructure to support the School’s developing curriculum offer.** The School does not have a dedicated learning resource centre (LRC). With an increasing emphasis on e-learning, a modest dedicated LRC facility at the rear of the Church Square building would facilitate the move to a greater emphasis on e-learning aspects of the student experience as well as providing an HE-appropriate environment with enhanced journal and book stocks. Works have been estimated at £2.075m.

Phase 3 is not currently being pursued.

**Student accommodation**

* The School now operates 3 halls of residence
  + Crown Halls (56 beds)
  + Titan House (44 beds) – added from September 2018
  + Lime Crescent (24 beds) – leased up to Sep 2019 with a further 2 year extension available to Sep 2021
* The School worked quickly with Thirteen Group, who operate all of the above halls, to add Titan House as an additional offering to students for 2018/19. The decision to progress the project was taken in January 2018 when the UCAS deadline for application passed and the School was able to form a view as to whether there was an immediate need for additional accommodation.
* Having been modified for student use Titan House provides bed space for 44 students and includes social space on each floor. This project has increased the number of beds available for School undergraduates from September 2018 to 124.
* Lime Crescent is likely to have reached the end of its useful economic life at the end of its lease in 2021. The School is currently considering a number of options for the creation of additional bedspace. It is mindful of possible private sector development in this respect.

**Middlesbrough**

Only minor works projects have been completed since the Accommodation strategy review in 2016. The School has examined a long term maintenance strategy, but the value of backlog maintenance is high.

Since the 2017 Annual Report the School has submitted an Expression of Interest to TVCA to relocate its FE campus into the centre of Middlesbrough. Development funding has been granted, and using external consultants and working closely with Middlesbrough Borough Council (MBC) a preferred site has been identified. The School is in the process of appointing professional advisors and is working towards the submission of a business case to TVCA for consideration at its May 2019 Cabinet meeting.

The success of the project remains in the balance. This is heavily dependent upon the School making a successful economic case to TVCA and the politics surrounding the potential approval of the project by representatives of the five Tees Valley local authorities represented at the TVCA Cabinet.

# **Appendix A: Key Performance Indicators**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **2017-18** | **2018-19** | | |  |  |
|  |  | Actual (FY) | Target | Target @ 15/01/2019 | Target at DBD (06/05/2019 |  |  |
| **(HE.CD) Curricula Developments** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | HE Attendance | 85.0% | 85.0% |  |  |  |  |
|  | HE Retention (in-year L4) (HE.5) | 89.0% | 90.0% |  |  |  |  |
|  | HE Retention (in-year L5) (HE.5) | 92.0% | 90.0% |  |  |  |  |
|  | HE Retention (in-year L6) (HE.5) | 96.0% | 90.0% |  |  |  |  |
|  | HE Retention (in-year overall) (HE.5) | 91.0% | 92.0% |  |  |  |  |
| **(HE.HE) Increasing HE Orientation & Growth** | | |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | HEA Fellowship |  |  |  | |  |  |
|  | HE Applications (L4) (HE.1) | 685 | 833 | 766 | 783 |  |  |
|  | HE Applications (L4 external) (HE.1) | 558 | 673 | 628 | 637 |  |  |
|  | HE Firm Applications (L4) (HE.2) | 243 | 337 | 7 | 249 |  |  |
|  | HE Firm Applications (L4 external) (HE.2) | 181 | 256 | 6 | 188 |  |  |
|  | Proportion of apps outside TV | 72% |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Proportion of apps outside TV & 'Hinterlands' | 47% |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | L4 Recruitment | 243 | 337 |  | |  |  |
|  | The 2019 Recruitment target is 337, The Fundable number of students at 1st October is **565**. | | | | | | |
|  | At 1st November 2018 for HEFCE, and Retention, Achievement and Success we have **561** Students | | | | | | |
| **(FE.CD) Curricula Developments** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | FE Retention (FE.7) | 93.4% | 94.2% |  |  |  |  |
|  | Maths & English Attendance (FE.6) | 86.5% | 90.0% |  |  |  |  |
|  | FE Attendance (excl. M&E) (FE.6) | 90.5% | 90.0% |  |  |  |  |
| **(FE.HE) Increasing Growth** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | FE Applications (FE.1) | 620 | 660 |  |  |  |  |
|  | FE Firm Applications (FE.3) | 381 | 350 |  |  |  |  |
| **(FE.HE) Increasing HE Orientation & Growth** | | |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | FE to HE Internal Applications (HE.6) | 127 | 196 |  |  |  |  |
|  | FE to HE Internal Firms (HE.6) | 62 | 81 |  |  |  |  |
| **(AL.HE) Increasing HE Orientation & Growth** | | |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Users who visit CCAD website | 100.3k | 160.9k |  |  |  |  |
|  | Social Media followers |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **(AL.SU) Sustainability** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Staff Absence Overall | 3.72% | <=5% |  |  |  |  |
|  | Staff Absence Split (long : short) | 42 : 58 | 60 : 40 |  | |  |  |
|  | Separation Rate | 14% |  |  | |  |  |

# **Appendix B: DAPs Criteria Update**

With the advent of the Office for Students (OfS) earlier in 2018 it was clear that the process for awarding degree awarding powers (DAPs) would change. Updated guidance was published on 24 October 2018 by both OfS and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). This sets out in some detail the process in respect of “Full DAPs” – analogous of the previous TDAP process – and “New DAPs”. This appendix sets out further details (in outline only).

**Published Documentation**

The key documents are:

* Regulatory advice 12: How to apply for degree awarding powers (OfS October 2018); and
* Degree Awarding Powers in England: Guidance for Providers on Assessment by QAA (QAA October 2018)

The following section is an extract from the OfS documentation:

The OfS may authorise a registered higher education provider to grant taught awards, or research awards, or both, under section 42 of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA). Such an authorisation may allow a provider to grant:

* taught awards or research awards of any description
* specified taught awards or research awards (for example, BSc Maths)
* taught awards or research awards of a specified description (for example, only at bachelors’ level, or only in specified subject areas)

The OfS may authorise providers to grant different types of degrees. Providers will be able to apply for authorisation to grant:

* foundation degrees only (Level 5 or the FHEQ)
* awards up to, and including, bachelors’ degrees (up to and including Level 6)
* all taught awards (up to and including Level 7)
* research awards (Level 8 and research masters’ degrees at Level 7)

Providers may apply for these authorisations on a subject-specific basis, or covering all subjects. Providers authorised to grant taught awards of any description will be authorised to grant all taught awards that fall within the definition set out in section 42(3) of HERA.

The OfS may grant a New DAPs authorisation to a provider that has been delivering higher education for less than three years. It may grant a Full DAPs authorisation to a provider that has been delivering higher education for three or more years. In each case, the authorisation will be time-limited for three years. A provider that has held a Full DAPs authorisation for three years may seek an authorisation without a time limit – the OfS will separately publish its approach to such ‘indefinite DAPs’.

The overarching criteria for the authorisation for DAPs are:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| For New degree awarding powers (New DAPs) | An **emerging** self-critical, cohesive academic community with a **clear commitment** to the assurance of standards supported by effective **(in prospect)** quality systems. |
| For Full degree awarding powers (Full DAPs) | A self-critical, cohesive academic community with a **proven** commitment to the assurance of standards supported by effective quality systems. |

A provider that has been delivering higher education for less than three years does not have a sufficient track record to apply for a Full DAPs authorisation. It may instead apply for an authorisation on a probationary basis. This type of authorisation is referred to as New DAPs. A provider that does have a sufficient track record to apply for a Full DAPs authorisation may nevertheless apply for New DAPs if it prefers to do so.

It is clear from the overarching criteria that it is far easier to meet the New DAPs assessment criteria. The OfS has provided the following overview of the New DAPs process.

**Figure 1: Overview of the New DAPs process**



It is apparent that the probationary monitoring period represents a good opportunity to develop the necessary systems and processes – particularly in respect of the criteria relating to ‘scholarly activity and the pedagogic effectiveness of staff’ – that the School currently judges it would not meet in making a Full DAPs application. The following extract from the QAA guidance is particularly relevant:

“Providers that have a track record are likely to be able to provide evidence that one or more of the DAPs criteria are met on initial submission. Such evidence will also be considered as part of the New DAPs test. Providers that can demonstrate that one or more DAPs criteria are met on submission may receive less intense monitoring during the probationary period, delivering a risk-based and proportionate approach to assessment.”

School representatives were due to attend an OfS information event on 26 November 2018 but unfortunately this event was cancelled. Until further information has been obtained from either OfS or QAA relating to the detail of the New DAPs process, the School is unable to make a sufficiently informed judgement about whether it should submit a New DAPs application.

# **Appendix C: HE Transfer Criteria**

The key regulations are currently contained in the document *‘Transfer of A Further Education Corporation To The Higher Education Sector’* (BIS, September 2015). However, these regulations are overdue for review by DfE. Currently the regulations stipulate an enrolment criterion for transfer, which is that the full-time equivalent enrolment number for higher education courses must exceed 55 per cent of the total full-time equivalent enrolment number. In addition to fulfilling this criterion, colleges seeking sector transfer must meet all the following criteria:

**Criterion 1** - Provision:

* You bring new or highly distinctive provision into the HE sector (primarily in terms of subject, but possibly also in terms of learning environment or approach), and so would add to the HE sector’s diversity, but in an area which has academic credibility as a fit subject or specialism for an HE provider; and/or
* You make provision which, in subject coverage or delivery, is already found in the HE sector, but you have a standing and repute that would enhance the sector overall and/or you make provision that will add to the skills, growth or economy of your locality.

**Criterion 2** - Demand: You can demonstrate strong demand from students and a strong employment record.

**Criterion 3** - Quality assurance and academic standards and performance: We need to be assured as to the current and future management of your academic standards, the quality of your learning and teaching and your academic performance.

**Criterion 4** - Financial sustainability: We need to be assured that you are financially viable and sustainable with a low risk of failure on financial grounds over the medium to long term. This should give students reasonable confidence that they will not be at risk of not being able to complete their course as a result of financial failure.

**Criterion 5** - Management: We need to be assured that you are well managed with sound management practice in place and the capacity to develop in line with your strategic plans and the financial strategy that supports those plans.

**Criterion 6** - Corporate governance: We need to be assured that you are well governed and comply with the accepted principles of good governance.

In addition to these ‘hurdles’, the guidance notes that “any college considering a major change to its delivery model, including a transfer to the HE sector, must undertake a Structure and Prospects Appraisal (SPA) and consider carefully and thoroughly the impact on its communities, consulting widely and transparently on its proposals, and taking explicit account of the views of the people (learners, employers and the broader community) that it serves.” Given the outcome of the Area Review, the Schools does not consider that the SPA would be likely to raise significant difficulties. Given HEFCE’s attitude to the School it seems unlikely that the Office for Students (OfS) would be swayed by any likely objectors.