Higher Education Review of Leeds Trinity University

May 2015

Contents

About this review

This is a report of a Higher Education Review conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at Leeds Trinity University. The review took place from 13 to15 May 2015 and was conducted by a team of four reviewers, as follows:

- Mr Gregory Clark
- Dr Sylvia Hargreaves
- Professor Peter Smith
- Joanne Caulfield (student reviewer).

The main purpose of the review was to investigate the higher education provided by Leeds Trinity University and to make judgements as to whether or not its academic standards and quality meet UK expectations. These expectations are the statements in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code)[1] setting out what all UK higher education providers expect of themselves and of each other, and what the general public can therefore expect of them.

In Higher Education Review, the QAA review team:

- makes judgements on
  - the setting and maintenance of academic standards
  - the quality of student learning opportunities
  - the information provided about higher education provision
  - the enhancement of student learning opportunities
- provides a commentary on the selected theme
- makes recommendations
- identifies features of good practice
- affirms action that the provider is taking or plans to take.

A summary of the findings can be found in the section starting on page 2. Explanations of the findings are given in numbered paragraphs in the section starting on page 6.

In reviewing Leeds Trinity University the review team has also considered a theme selected for particular focus across higher education in England and Northern Ireland.

The themes for the academic year 2014-15 are Student Involvement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement and Student Employability,[2] and the provider is required to select, in consultation with student representatives, one of these themes to be explored through the review process.

The QAA website gives more information about QAA and its mission.[3] A dedicated section explains the method for Higher Education Review[4] and has links to the review handbook and other informative documents. For an explanation of terms see the glossary at the end of this report.

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[1] The UK Quality Code for Higher Education is published at: www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code
[2] Higher Education Review themes: www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=106
[3] QAA website: www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us.
[4] Higher Education Review web pages: www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews-and-reports/how-we-review-higher-education/higher-education-review

Key findings

QAA's judgements about Leeds Trinity University

The QAA review team formed the following judgements about the higher education provision at Leeds Trinity University.

- The setting and maintenance of the academic standards of awards **meet UK expectations**.
- The quality of student learning opportunities **meets UK expectations**.
- The quality of the information about learning opportunities **meets UK expectations**.
- The enhancement of student learning opportunities **meets UK expectations**.

Good practice

The QAA review team identified the following features of **good practice** at Leeds Trinity University:

- the comprehensive Programme Design and Approval Handbook, which provides extensive and useful guidance for programme design teams and approval panel members (Expectation B1)
- the work of the Learning Hub, which provides extensive and valued professional, academic and pastoral support for students (Expectation B4)
- the work of the peer learning mentors, which provides structured and accessible support for undergraduate students and has a positive impact on students' academic development (Expectation B4)
- the provision of extended and relevant work-placement opportunities across all taught programmes, which promotes students' employability (Expectation B4)
- the strong and extensive partnerships with employers, which inform curriculum design and assessment, and promotes students' progression into employment (Expectation B10).

Recommendations

The QAA review team makes the following **recommendations** to Leeds Trinity University.

By September 2015:

- update the Admissions Policy to reflect institutional practice on appeals and to incorporate the principle that all offers are made on the basis of academic criteria and merit (Expectation B2)
- work with the University of Leeds to make explicit the provision for students in the event of termination of the accreditation agreement (Expectation B10)
- clarify the policy on automatic enrolment onto the Level 7 Postgraduate Certificate in its public information for the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education and make the programme specification for the PGCE (Secondary) publicly available. (Expectation C).

By February 2016:

- clarify the entry requirements for international students in the admissions agreements with overseas institutions, to ensure equivalence for all applicants (Expectations B10 and B2).

Affirmation of action being taken

The QAA review team **affirms** the following actions that the Leeds Trinity University is already taking to make academic standards secure and/or improve the educational provision offered to its students:

- the steps being taken to improve the provision and presentation of student data at programme and department level (Expectation A3.3)
- the measures being implemented to improve the review, interpretation and analysis of student performance data in academic reviews (Expectation A3.3)
- the work being undertaken to improve student retention, progression and achievement (Expectation B4)
- the steps being taken to improve student engagement with deliberative committees (Expectation B5)
- the introduction of programme-level assessment and the consideration by external examiners of programme-level achievement data (Expectation B6)
- the action being taken to ensure the timely production, consideration and approval of annual review reports (Expectation B8).

Theme: Student Employability

Employability is embedded into every academic programme at Leeds Trinity University (the University, LTU). Every undergraduate degree programme includes compulsory work placements. The University maintains partnerships with over 2,000 local and national businesses in a variety of sectors that offer student placements.

Employers are involved in the design and development of academic programmes, as well as in placement provision. Alumni are also engaged in the development of students' employability skills.

The University's Careers and Employability Service is highly effective in providing information, advice and guidance to students. The University evaluates the effectiveness of its approach to employability through the Destination of Leavers of Higher Education Survey, demonstrating a high proportion of graduates in employment.

Further explanation of the key findings can be found in the handbook available on the QAA webpage explaining Higher Education Review.

About Leeds Trinity University

Leeds Trinity University was awarded university title by the Privy Council in December 2012. The origins of the institution are traced back to 1966 when two Catholic teacher training colleges were founded: Trinity College and All Saints College. Their mission was to provide the best educational opportunities possible for the children of the poor and to support social justice: aspirations that Leeds Trinity University maintains. Over the last 50 years the institution has evolved and developed, but the Catholic faith foundation remains central to the University's mission, vision and values and is enshrined within its legal objects.

The University is a single campus institution with a strong community identity. It has always been a widening participation institution with 43.9 per cent (2012-13) of students coming from a low socio-economic background. The positioning of students at the centre of all that the University does and the relationship with the local community is a distinctive feature. The overarching vision for the University is to enhance further its reputation for academic quality and to build a reputation as one of three universities in Leeds. This vision includes an ambition to grow from 3,000 full-time equivalents (FTE) students to 4,000 FTE by 2019.

Since the most recent QAA Institutional Audit in May 2009, there has been a number of key structural and organisational changes. Trinity University College was awarded full university status in December 2012. The Vice-Chancellor, who joined the University in January 2013, established a new Executive Team to lead the University through the next phase of its journey. Other changes include restructuring the academic provision from the three faculties that existed in 2009 to four academic departments (Psychology, Sport Health and Nutrition, Humanities and Journalism, and Media and Business) and one institute (Institute of Childhood and Education). The latter was formally established in August 2014 and consists of the previous departments of Primary Education, Secondary Education, and Children Young People and Families.

To support its strategic plan to increase student numbers, the University has reviewed its recruitment and admissions processes and policies and is refreshing its portfolio during 2014-15 for a phased introduction from 2015-16 onwards. In addition, the University is seeking to increase the enrolment of international students with the majority of these students being associated with new partnership agreements. A challenge facing the sector as a whole is the shift from provider-led initial teacher training (ITT) provision to delivery in schools: School Direct and School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT). The University continues to develop new school partnerships and is working more closely with schools and in schools, to provide a greater range of educational opportunities in relation to both different ITT models and Continuing Professional Development activity. In 2014, the University also successfully bid for Early Years Teacher Status (EYTS) numbers.

All of the recommendations identified in the previous QAA review have been addressed. In many cases, the changes in institutional structure and management have led to further review and development in these areas. For example, the University has made considerable progress in the area of student engagement in academic quality assurance, and is working hard to further develop student contributions to its deliberative committees. Learning resources and student support structures have been considerably enhanced and are a strong feature of the University provision.

Explanation of the findings about Leeds Trinity University

This section explains the review findings in more detail.

Terms that may be unfamiliar to some readers have been included in a brief glossary at the end of this report. A fuller glossary of terms is available on the QAA website, and formal definitions of certain terms may be found in the operational description and handbook for the review method, also on the QAA website.

1 Judgement: The setting and maintenance of the academic standards of awards

Expectation (A1): In order to secure threshold academic standards, degree-awarding bodies:

a) ensure that the requirements of *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* are met by:

- **positioning their qualifications at the appropriate level of the relevant framework for higher education qualifications**
- **ensuring that programme learning outcomes align with the relevant qualification descriptor in the relevant framework for higher education qualifications**
- **naming qualifications in accordance with the titling conventions specified in the frameworks for higher education qualifications**
- **awarding qualifications to mark the achievement of positively defined programme learning outcomes**

b) consider and take account of QAA's guidance on qualification characteristics

c) where they award UK credit, assign credit values and design programmes that align with the specifications of the relevant national credit framework

d) consider and take account of relevant Subject Benchmark Statements.

Quality Code, *Chapter A1: UK and European Reference Points for Academic Standards*

Findings

1.1 The University aligns its programmes with the *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ). The Programme Design and Approval Handbook (PDAH) is the definitive guide for programme developers to ensure that programmes adhere to national qualification and credit frameworks, Subject Benchmark Statements and institutional requirements. It includes multiple references to the FHEQ and clear guidance on its use in the design and approval of new programmes. The PDAH requires programme design teams to consider and embed QAA guidance on qualification characteristics and provides templates to support this.

1.2 The Taught Course Academic Regulations (TCAR) require that progression and the award of qualifications is dependent on the achievement of positively defined learning outcomes. Standard templates for programme specifications demonstrate the use of positively defined learning outcomes, including for subsidiary awards. The programme specification template also requires explicit mention of how the FHEQ, Subject Benchmark Statements and qualification characteristics have been incorporated into the programme. Guidance for this is supplied via the PDAH, alongside templates for generic learning outcomes, appropriate to the different levels of award.

1.3 The University's credit framework was approved in 2009 and is detailed in TCAR. It is presented as a matrix of aligning award titles, FHEQ levels, the number of academic

credits at each level, and how these correspond to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System. The University offers awards from Level 4 through to Level 7. The University does not have research degree-awarding powers. Its research students are awarded degrees from the University of Leeds, an arrangement governed by an Accreditation Agreement. Approval of research degrees is conducted under the oversight of the University of Leeds' Graduate Board.

1.4   The University's processes for the use of external reference points in the design and development of programmes enable this Expectation to be met in theory. The review team explored the effectiveness of these processes by scrutinising relevant documentation, including the Taught Course Academic Regulations; the Programme Design and Approval Handbook; External Examiners' reports; and documentation relating to programme approval. The team also met relevant University staff during the review visit.

1.5   Programme approval documentation makes due reference to appropriate external reference points, including the FHEQ; Subject Benchmark Statements; and professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB) requirements. Programme approval panels include two external participants, providing external confirmation on the alignment of programme proposals to relevant frameworks. New programmes are also scrutinised and recommended for approval by Academic Board, confirmed by Learning and Teaching Committee, and given formal approval into the University programme catalogue by Approvals Group.

1.6   The programme approval process produces an in-depth report, demonstrating due consideration of the FHEQ and other relevant external frameworks. There is evidence of the validation panel considering the application of the FHEQ through discussions on the appropriateness of modules at each level.

1.7   External examiners report annually on threshold standards, confirming that the University's programmes align with the FHEQ, Subject Benchmark Statements and other discipline developments.

1.8   The evidence confirms that the University makes appropriate use of external reference points to ensure threshold academic standards, therefore Expectation A1 is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A2.1): In order to secure their academic standards, degree-awarding bodies establish transparent and comprehensive academic frameworks and regulations to govern how they award academic credit and qualifications.

Quality Code, *Chapter A2: Degree-Awarding Bodies' Reference Points for Academic Standards*

Findings

1.9   Responsibility for University leadership and management rests with the Vice-Chancellor, advised by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic (PVCA), the Chief Operating Officer and the Director of Finance, who collectively form the Executive team.

1.10   Academic Board, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, is established as the University's supreme academic decision-making body. It has delegated responsibility from the Board of Governors for the development and oversight of the academic standards of the University. Academic Board also acts in an advisory capacity with respect to the strategic development of the University's academic work and the oversight of the whole student experience.

1.11   Following the award of university title in 2012, the University instigated a review of its academic framework. The new structure was designed to provide increased focus on the student experience, student engagement, and learning and teaching. The standing committees of the Academic Board comprise the Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC), the Student Experience and Engagement Committee (SEEC), the Planning Committee, the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC). Some operational responsibilities are delegated to other bodies, such as the Approvals Group, the Reviews Group and the External Examining Group, which act on behalf of the LTC. LTC first met in March 2014; the Approvals Group has been in operation since May 2014. Departmental Academic Committees (DACs) are established as local decision-making bodies chaired by Heads of Department and comprising staff and students, which may refer business to Academic Board or to any of its committees.

1.12   Outside the formal academic deliberative structures, the Senior Management Group (comprising the Executive, academic and service department heads and the President of the Students' Union) and the Academic Leadership Forum (comprising the PVCA, the academic heads and the Director of Quality) discuss, share and operationalise decisions affecting the University.

1.13   Following the grant of taught degree awarding powers in 2009, the University undertook a review of the academic regulations and established its own regulations for students first admitted to Leeds Trinity University awards in 2010-11, detailed in the TCAR. Since that date, two different sets of regulations have applied to undergraduate and taught postgraduate provision, respectively for programmes leading to Leeds Trinity Awards and for those running under the Accreditation Agreement with the University of Leeds, to which the University of Leeds' regulations continue to apply. Currently 14 (taught provision) students remain registered under the accreditation arrangements with the University of Leeds. The University's postgraduate research programmes lead to awards of the University of Leeds and the University of Leeds Ordinance and Regulations for Research Degrees apply.

1.14   The University's academic framework governing the award of academic credit and qualifications allows for this Expectation to be met in theory. The review team tested the Expectation through scrutiny of committee terms of reference, the TCAR, the University of Leeds Ordinance and Regulations for Research Degrees, the PDAH, the Academic Review

Handbook, academic review reports, minutes of meetings, and in meetings with staff and students.

1.15   Academic Board exercises its responsibility for setting and maintaining academic standards effectively through oversight of the University's academic governance, awards and regulatory frameworks; and evidenced through its quality assurance processes; programme approval, withdrawal and suspension activity academic review; and external examiner reports.

1.16   The TCAR stipulate the criteria for the award of a qualification, progression requirements and the classification of awards. The regulations are kept under review by the Academic Registrar; and the Academic Regulations' Editorial Board is charged with annual review, proposing changes arising from developments in learning and teaching, and preparing the new edition for each academic year. The regulations set out provisions for credit transfer and the general principles concerning the recognition of prior learning and admission with advanced standing. Detailed guidance is contained in the 'Principles and Guidelines for the Recognition of Prior Learning'.

1.17   Staff have access to the regulations on the University intranet and are kept abreast of changes through email updates, workshops and annual briefings (to which students are invited) provided by Academic Registry. Student programme handbooks provide summary information on the assessment regulations, together with a link to the full set of academic regulations on the intranet.

1.18   The University has comprehensive and transparent academic frameworks and regulations governing the award of academic credit and qualifications, therefore Expectation A2.1 is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A2.2): Degree-awarding bodies maintain a definitive record of each programme and qualification that they approve (and of subsequent changes to it) which constitutes the reference point for delivery and assessment of the programme, its monitoring and review, and for the provision of records of study to students and alumni.

Quality Code, *Chapter A2: Degree-Awarding Bodies' Reference Points for Academic Standards*

Findings

1.19   Programme specifications are produced to a template, and provide the definitive record for all taught programmes. The template specifies the relevant FHEQ levels; how Subject Benchmark Statements have been incorporated; learning outcomes for the programme and subsidiary awards; and an analysis of how the outcomes of each module in the programme ensure that overall programme learning outcomes are met. Definitive module information is presented in module specifications, also to a standard template.

1.20   The PDAH sets out a comprehensive process for making modifications to modules and programmes. Major modifications require approval by the Approvals Group, while minor modifications can be approved at the department level through Department Academic Committees. Proposed changes are also discussed with student representatives through departmental Student-Staff Academic Committees. The Academic Quality and Standards Office ensure modifications are correctly categorised as major or minor.

1.21   The University has introduced a new system to ensure programme specifications are accurate year on year. The Academic Quality and Standards Office sends the latest version of each programme specification to heads of departments, to confirm the accuracy of the content for the current academic session. This version is then made available to staff and students. At the end of the academic session, departmental Panels of Examiners are required to verify that programmes were delivered to the specification.

1.22   The University process ensures that one definitive record of each programme is kept and has processes in place to maintain the accuracy of these records. This enables the Expectation to be met in principle. The review team tested the effectiveness of the process by meeting staff and students involved in course approval and review. The team also reviewed evidence provided by the University and considered programme and module information on the University website.

1.23   The Academic Quality and Standards Office works with the departments to ensure conditions of approval have been met and are reflected in the programme specification. The definitive programme specification and module descriptors are logged in the programme pages on the University website, virtual learning environment (VLE) and the Programme of Study Catalogue.

1.24   The process for overseeing major and minor modifications to programme specifications is robust, and allows the University oversight of changes to programmes as they develop. Tracking by the Academic Quality and Standards Office ensures that modifications at the module level do not affect the programme level learning outcomes. The process includes appropriate safeguards that enable the Approvals Group working with the Academic Quality and Standards Office to trigger a full programme re-approval if necessary.

1.25   The University has appropriate processes to ensure definitive records are maintained for programmes of study and student records. The review team therefore concludes that Expectation A2.2 is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.1): Degree-awarding bodies establish and consistently implement processes for the approval of taught programmes and research degrees that ensure that academic standards are set at a level which meets the UK threshold standard for the qualification and are in accordance with their own academic frameworks and regulations.

Quality Code, *Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards*

Findings

1.26   The University's programme approval process comprises six stages: planning approval; programme design and consultation; departmental academic approval; resources approval; institutional academic approval; and completion. The PDAH sets out clearly and in considerable detail the University's requirements and guidance for taught programme design, development and approval. Approval panels must consider how programme and module aims and learning outcomes fit with the FHEQ, Subject Benchmark Statements and other external requirements, and scrutinise the appropriateness of the methodology adopted for testing the attainment of learning outcomes.

1.27   The programme design stage must include consultation with at least one external subject specialist, employers and, where appropriate, the relevant PSRB. The departmental approval stage comprises formal approval by the relevant DAC.

1.28   Approval panels must include a student representative, two external subject specialists from different higher education institutes (HEIs) and a relevant employer or professional practitioner. Panel members are asked to submit commentaries on programme proposals in advance of the approval event. The PDAH specifies a number of areas for consideration and comment by panel members including, with respect to academic standards, programme and module learning outcomes, and in particular their fit with the FHEQ, Subject Benchmark Statements and other external requirements.

1.29   The panel will meet the programme team, and may meet with other groups, such as employers, current students and/or recent graduates as appropriate.

1.30   Consideration by the approval panel leads to unconditional approval with or without recommendations; conditional approval with or without recommendations; deferral of approval; or rejection. The Approvals Group Chair is responsible for checking the timely completion of conditions, in consultation with the approval panel Chair. Final approval is granted by the Academic Board, normally by Chair's action, upon receipt of a recommendation from the Approvals Group endorsed by the LTC. Approval is normally for six years.

1.31   Until 2014, periodic review incorporated programme re-approval. From 2014-15, periodic review and programme re-approval have been decoupled. Under current processes, there is a separate re-approval of all programmes following periodic review, using the normal academic approval process.

1.32   Students may be accepted as candidates for research degrees of the University of Leeds while registered at Leeds Trinity University. These arrangements are under the general supervision of the University of Leeds Graduate Board. The Graduate Board is responsible for securing the standards of research degree programmes awarded by the University of Leeds and prescribes arrangements whereby the criteria, regulations and learning outcomes for the award of different types of research degrees are clear, rigorous and widely available.

1.33   The design of the University's processes for the approval of taught programmes enables the Expectation to be met in principle. The review team tested the Expectation through scrutiny of the PDAH, programme-approval documentation, programme specifications, minutes of meetings and in meetings with staff, students and employers.

1.34   During the design phase, programme teams consult with external examiners and/or external University specialists and give appropriate consideration to the requirements of PSRBs. Teaching staff contribute to programme design.

1.35   The development and design of proposed new programmes are considered formally at departmental level by the relevant DAC and the Student-Staff Academic Committee (SSAC). Module descriptors and programme specifications are approved at departmental level by the DAC, which confirms that the required consultation process has been completed, before proposals proceed to the next stage of the approval process.

1.36   Approval panels include appropriate external membership to provide relevant subject and professional expertise. Recent programme approval documentation indicates that the University's current requirement for approval panels to include two external subject specialists from different HEIs and one relevant employer or professional practitioner is being met. Staff and students who have served on approval and review panels confirm that they received a full and effective briefing from the Academic Quality Office before undertaking the role. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) has chaired all recent approval panels. This role is to be extended to other senior staff with experience of panel membership, and staff confirmed that training will be provided as appropriate.

1.37   At the approval event, panels pursue, with programme teams, lines of enquiry arising from the advance scrutiny of the documentation, allowing the opportunity to raise any outstanding matters relating to academic standards. Typically, learning outcomes, assessment schemes and any PSRB requirements provide the focus for these discussions, which demonstrate appropriate consideration of academic standards.

1.38   Approvals Group meeting minutes confirm consideration of new programme proposals, and record the satisfactory completion of approval conditions. No programme proposal has yet been progressed to Academic Board approval stage under the revised procedures, although the former processes worked effectively.

1.39   The University has in place, and consistently implements, programme approval processes that ensure that academic standards are set at a level which meets the UK threshold standard for the qualification and are in accordance with its own academic frameworks and regulations. Therefore, the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.2): Degree-awarding bodies ensure that credit and qualifications are awarded only where:

- **the achievement of relevant learning outcomes (module learning outcomes in the case of credit and programme outcomes in the case of qualifications) has been demonstrated through assessment**
- **both UK threshold standards and their own academic standards have been satisfied.**

Quality Code, *Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards*

Findings

1.40   The University has a robust process for ensuring that threshold standards and its own academic standards are met through the achievement of module and programme learning outcomes. This process is designed at programme and module level and is documented within the PDAH which requires the programme specification to set out programme learning outcomes in terms of knowledge and understanding; intellectual/cognitive 'thinking' skills; physical skills specific to the subject; and employability skills within the context of the corresponding programme's learning, teaching and assessment. The programme specification also maps how module learning outcomes deliver those programme learning outcomes and, where appropriate for intermediate qualifications. The programme specification is approved at programme approval. Formal processes for the approval, amendment and review of new programmes require that all programmes and modules have a clearly defined structure with learning outcomes expressed at programme and module level. The definitive programme specification is maintained and updated by the Academic Quality and Standards Office.

1.41   Similarly the Module Descriptor maps learning outcomes for the module against the programme learning outcomes of the programme delivering that module within the context of that module's learning and teaching content, structure and assessment.

1.42   Assessment is subject to the TCAR underpinned by the Handbook on Assessment Practice. The TCAR include sections on the accumulation of academic credit (credit is awarded by the Board of Examiners to those students who have satisfied the requirements in respect of the modules for which they are registered), the determination of marks, progression and the conferment of awards. Credit for a module is awarded to students who achieve at least 40 per cent (undergraduate) or 50 per cent (postgraduate) in the overall module assessment, although a marginal fail on one 20-credit module may be condoned in some circumstances.

1.43   The processes for setting academic standards and academic credit enable this Expectation to be met in principle. The review team tested the process in place by reviewing documentation relating to the PDAH, programme approval, amendment and review documentation and external examiner reports. The review team discussed assessment arrangements in a number of meetings and reviewed information for students regarding assessment, including module descriptors, on the VLE. The learning outcomes assessed for each assessment task are clearly set out for students. Students whom the team met during the review were clear about their assessments and said they found assessment briefs and criteria to be clear.

1.44   Programme specification guidance provides that learning outcomes must be set at the appropriate level in the FHEQ, produced with reference to Subject Benchmark

Statements and/or any other relevant forms of externality, and that learning outcomes should be expressed in a form that permits their achievement to be demonstrated through assessment.

1.45   There are clear procedures for moderation. Assessment is moderated internally and by the external examiner where work contributes to classification. All award-bearing programmes with taught elements must have both an external examiner and be assessed at Panels and Boards of Examiners. External examiners as set out in the External Examiners' Handbook are required to assess whether the standards set for the programme are appropriate for its award by reference to the FHEQ and Subject Benchmark Statements and to recent discipline development/practice and comparability with the sector. External examiners must confirm, using the assessment descriptors, that assessment is appropriately directed at the learning outcomes. Therefore Expectation A3.2 is met, and the associated risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.3): Degree-awarding bodies ensure that processes for the monitoring and review of programmes are implemented which explicitly address whether the UK threshold academic standards are achieved and whether the academic standards required by the individual degree-awarding body are being maintained.

Quality Code, *Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards*

Findings

1.46   The University's programme review processes are designed to ensure that the academic quality and standards of provision meet institutional aspirations and external reference points. Oversight of the monitoring and review of the University's academic provision is exercised by the LTC on behalf of Academic Board and discharged in detail by the Reviews Group.

1.47   The Academic review process comprises annual review at module, programme, departmental and institutional level, with action planning for continuous improvement; and periodic (quinquennial) review at departmental, centre or subject area level, informing both action planning for continuous improvement and proposals for changes to academic provision. Programme-level review was introduced for annual review of the 2013-14 academic session. The Academic Review Handbook sets out the processes, documentation and evidence requirements, and roles and responsibilities for academic review, together with the annual planning cycle for the current year, the University's periodic review schedule for 2011-18 and an indicative timetable for individual periodic reviews.

1.48   Annual review processes require module leaders to complete a module review report at the end of each module delivery. The template requires the presentation of student achievement data, together with a description of forms of assessment, a review of any actions from previous years and proposed actions for the next session.

1.49   The standard content of programme annual review (PAR) reports and departmental annual review (DAR) reports includes data sets extending over five years where possible, with identification of trends, required action and comparison with University data and any national benchmarks. They also cover student progression and achievement; programme demographics; student: staff ratios; programme evaluation (Student Evaluation Surveys, National Student Surveys; SSACs and others); and student employability. Reports must also indicate, with evaluation, any changes implemented as a result of feedback from external examiners and any relevant external body.

1.50   The DAC scrutinise both PAR and DAR reports, and supporting evidence. PAR reports are approved by DACs. DAR reports are scrutinised by the Reviews Group and approved by LTC. DAR reports inform the Institutional Annual Quality report (IAQR), which is compiled by the Academic Registrar and normally submitted to LTC for endorsement prior to its consideration and approval by the Academic Board.

1.51   Periodic review entails the submission of a departmental self-evaluation document and an extensive range of supporting documentation, for scrutiny by the DAC and, subsequently, by a review panel including external academic, professional/employer and student membership. The process involves an internal pre-review event scrutiny meeting, and a review event including meetings with students, staff, appropriate employers, professional practitioners, and representatives of partner organisations. The review report includes a judgement on the setting and maintenance of threshold academic standards of awards, and is considered by the Reviews Group, LTC and Academic Board. A one-year

monitoring follow-up is received by the Reviews Group, with a report of its conclusions to LTC and thence to the Academic Board.

1.52   The University's processes for the monitoring and review of programmes are comprehensive, detailed and thorough, and so enable this Expectation to be met in principle. The review team tested the Expectation through scrutiny of the Academic Review Handbook; committee terms of reference; annual programme, departmental and institutional reports; periodic review documentation; papers and minutes of meetings; external examiner reports; and in meetings with staff and students.

1.53   Module review reports provide student achievement data and information on forms of assessment, as required, together with appropriate evaluation and proposed actions for the next session. External examiners confirm that standards at all levels of study are appropriate and comparable with other universities.

1.54   While not consistently providing comprehensive coverage of all the areas indicated in the Academic Review Handbook, for instance, comparisons with university and external benchmarks, PARs analyse and comment on data and identify areas to be addressed. All reports include analysis of external examiner reports and set out programme responses and actions taken in response.

1.55   DAR reports provide headline data in all the areas covered by the PAR reports; analyse and comment on external examiner reports; and identify actions and initiatives for implementation within and across the relevant department. Annual reports record the completion of actions arising from the analysis of data, as well as from external examiner reports. Such actions relate, for example, to revisions to assessments, to interview processes and the enhancement of employability skills within the curriculum.

1.56   In 2013 the University set up a new Planning and Information Office which was established to provide data, which enables academic staff to focus on programme evaluation rather than data presentation. Annual reports confirm that this initiative is working effectively to improve the provision of management information.

1.57   The University recognises that while the provision and presentation of data is good, it can be enhanced further, and is continuing to review the production of data sets and its work in this area is well underway. The review team **affirms** the steps taken to improve the provision and presentation of student data at programme and department level.

1.58   Staff training was provided to support the review, interpretation and analysis of student performance data in academic review. The University recognises a need for further training and has identified this as an institutional priority for the current year. The review team **affirms** the measures being implemented to improve the review, interpretation and analysis of student performance data in academic reviews.

1.59   Although some delays occurred in the first year of operation of the new Academic Review process, effective institutional oversight is maintained through Academic Board's scrutiny of the IAQR. Academic Board also exercises its responsibility for oversight of academic standards through consideration of the External Examiners' Overview Report and, via LTC, the scrutiny of institutional-level and department-level student retention, progression and achievement data and the analysis and evaluation of associated improvement initiatives. That evaluation indicates concerns that the University's students are achieving less well in relation to degree outcome than those from comparable, benchmark institutions and that retention and progression figures are not as healthy as the University would expect, which the University is robustly addressing.

1.60   Periodic review panels are chaired and constituted in accordance with University requirements (or the requirements in place at the time of the review), including external membership. Review panel members are able to frame their pre-event comments and establish lines of enquiry on the basis of extensive evidence. Self-evaluation documents cover the range of matters specified by the Academic Review Handbook.

1.61   Review events pursue lines of enquiry identified from advance scrutiny of the SED and supporting documentation. Review panels undertake close scrutiny of student retention, progression and achievement levels which, as noted above, fall below University expectations and are being robustly addressed.

1.62   Overall, the University's annual and periodic review processes are operating effectively. Academic Board maintains appropriate oversight. The University has in place and implements programme monitoring and review processes which explicitly address whether the UK threshold academic standards are achieved and whether its own academic standards are maintained. Therefore, Expectation A3.3 is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.4): In order to be transparent and publicly accountable, degree-awarding bodies use external and independent expertise at key stages of setting and maintaining academic standards to advise on whether:

- **UK threshold academic standards are set, delivered and achieved**
- **the academic standards of the degree-awarding body are appropriately set and maintained.**

Quality Code, *Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards*

Findings

1.63   The University sets out clear requirements regarding the use of external and independent expertise in setting its own and threshold academic standards in its PDAH, including an expectation that programme developers will consult relevant employers at design stage to incorporate a 'real-world' perspective and that, wherever possible, the University's awards should be PSRB-accredited. Programme developers are required to engage in consultation with both external subject specialists (either the external examiner involved in the subject areas in question or an expert from another institution) and with employers/PSRBs, regarding how the programme meets their expectations and needs. This consultation is summarised on a 'consultation portfolio', Form NP2, for consideration at Departmental Academic Committee and at the institutional Approval Panel.

1.64   The design of programme approval, monitoring and review processes makes appropriate use of external expertise, and enables the Expectation to be met in principle.

1.65   The review team tested documentation relating to the PDAH, programme approval documentation, and documentation concerning Annual and Periodic Reviews. The review team also discussed arrangements for the involvement of external and independent expertise with staff and employers.

1.66   Senior academic staff at the University emphasised that there is external involvement at a very early stage of the design process, and that conversations are held with employers from the outset, starting with an employer forum to seek informal advice and then a more formal email circulation of documentation to external subject specialists and external examiners. PSRBs inform programme and module design, for example, minimum contact hours in certain core topic areas are incorporated into module descriptors and programme specifications at the instigation of a PSRB such as The National Council for the Training of Journalists, and similarly for other PSRBs.

1.67   Programme Approval Panel membership must include two external subject specialists from different HEIs and one relevant industry specialist/employer or professional practitioner. The Academic Quality and Standards Office convenes the Programme Approval Panel and CVs are obtained for external members.

1.68   As set out in the Academic Review Handbook, Annual and Periodic Review take account of recent PSRB and OFSTED inspections or accreditations as well as external examiners' reports and issues raised by departmental employers' forums. Periodic Review Panel external membership is the same as that required for a Programme Approval Panel.

1.69   LTC receives an annual register of PSRB activity and accreditation reports and responses. Departments are required by the University to advise PSRBs of any programme changes. LTC retains a University of Leeds academic staff member after the expiry of the

requirement to do so under the accreditation agreement as it values the externality and is considering external input from other HEIs on its other committees in future.

1.70   External examiners are central to the maintenance of academic standards and are consulted as part of the programme approval process. The University cites examples of programme amendments which originated with comment from external examiner reports. External examiners are required in the External Examiners' Handbook to provide comment on programme content, balance and structure at the point of validation, revalidation or modification and are required to assess whether the standards set for the programme are appropriate for its award by reference to the FHEQ and Subject Benchmark Statements and to recent discipline development/practice and comparability with the sector.

1.71   The University appropriately uses external involvement in the setting and maintenance of academic standards. Expectation A3.4 is therefore met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

The setting and maintenance of the academic standards of awards: Summary of findings

1.72   The University has comprehensive academic frameworks and regulations to govern the setting and maintenance of threshold academic standards. These are clearly detailed in the Taught Course Academic Regulations, the Programme Design and Approval Handbook, and the Academic Review Handbook. The review team saw evidence that these processes were operating effectively.

1.73   The University has recently introduced five-year datasets on student performance to be considered as part of the annual review process. The review team affirms the steps taken to improve the provision and presentation of student data at programme and department level. The review team further affirms the measures being implemented to improve the review, interpretation and analysis of student performance data in academic reviews.

1.74   Extensive use is made of external advisers in programme design, review and assessment processes. The University makes effective use of employers and practitioners in addition to external subject specialists and retains an academic adviser from the University of Leeds on the Learning and Teaching Committee.

1.75   All Expectations in Part A of the Quality Code are met and the risk associated with each is low. Therefore, the review team concludes that the setting and maintenance of the academic standards of awards offered by Leeds Trinity University and on behalf of the University of Leeds **meet** UK expectations.

2   Judgement: The quality of student learning opportunities

Expectation (B1): Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes.

Quality Code, *Chapter B1: Programme Design and Approval*

Findings

2.1   Academic Board has ultimate responsibility for the approval of programmes. The more detailed planning and monitoring of programme approval activity and scrutiny of proposals is undertaken by the Approvals Group, reporting to LTC. The guidelines and procedures for programme approval are reviewed by the Approvals Group and approved by the LTC annually, subject to oversight by the Academic Board. The programme approval process comprises six stages: planning approval; programme design and consultation; departmental academic approval; resources approval; institutional academic approval; and completion.

2.2   The PDAH prescribes in considerable detail the processes, documentation requirements and roles and responsibilities for each stage, supported by a series of templates covering planning and resources approval and academic approval, together with programme and module specification templates, the contents of which must comply with the University's guidelines for programme design.

2.3   The initial planning and resource approval stage comprises scrutiny of programme rationale; outline programme design; marketability; relationship to the University's Strategic Plan and departmental plans; and top-level resource issues. Following approval at this stage by the Planning Committee, the proposed new provision may be advertised to prospective students, with the qualification that it is 'subject to approval'.

2.4   The design and consultation stage involves a wide range of groups including all teaching staff; students; the Employer Partnership Manager; Library staff; IT Services and Media Services Staff; external subject specialists; and employers/professional bodies. The PDAH provides comprehensive design guidelines, covering academic strategies, policies and regulations; award titles; programme aims and objectives, including external reference points and input by employers and PSRBs; programme content and structure; learning and teaching; assessment; entry requirements; progression, classification and award requirements; external examining arrangements; staff expertise; and student support.

2.5   Following a check by the Academic Quality and Standards Office for completeness and clarity, institutional academic approval focuses on scrutiny of documentation and an approval event, conducted by an approval panel chaired by a senior academic member of the University staff and including a student representative, two external subject specialists from different HEIs and a relevant employer or professional practitioner.

2.6   Consideration by the approval panel leads to conditional or unconditional approval, with or without recommendations; deferral of approval, or rejection. The Approvals Group chair is responsible for checking the timely completion of conditions, in consultation with the Approval Panel Chair.

2.7   The PDAH provides clear definitions of 'major' and 'minor' modifications to provision and sets out a detailed list of possible programme and module modifications, together with the associated submission deadlines for the current year. Modifications classed as 'major'

are at programme level and require sign-off at institutional level by the Approvals Group (normally through chair's action) following departmental approval at the Departmental Academic Committee (DAC), and Planning Committee approval where the modification necessitates significant new learning resources. All modifications classified as 'minor' are at module level and are signed off by the DAC. Modification proposals are presented on templates provided in the PDAH. Programme teams and/or Heads of Department must involve students and teaching staff in preparing proposals and are required to consult, as appropriate, with a range of other groups, such as the Employer Partnership Manager and Library staff.

2.8   The University's processes for the approval of taught programmes, as set out in the PDAH, allow this Expectation to be met in principle. The review team tested the Expectation through scrutiny of the Programme Design and Approval Handbook; committee terms of reference; minutes of meetings; programme design and approval documentation; and in meetings with staff, students and employers.

2.9   The initial planning and resource approval documentation covers marketability and recruitment; fit with the University portfolio; programme design; any planned professional accreditation; and human, physical and information technology resource implications. The consideration and approval of resource requirements in all these areas operates in accordance with the University's processes.

2.10   Programme teams consult widely on programme design, seeking feedback from teaching staff; students; other university departments; external subject specialists; and relevant PSRBs. Typical comments from external specialists cover assessment strategies, employability focus and skills and the range of optional modules. Students confirm that they are represented at the formal stages of development of new programmes at SSACs, DACs approval panels, LTC and the Academic Board (though the Approvals Group does not include student membership); that they are fully involved in the discussions; and that their contributions are valued and carefully considered. Staff and students are briefed on their role by the Academic Quality Office and the Students' Union.

2.11   Programme approval panels are chaired by a senior academic member of the University staff and include student membership. Panels include independent external specialists, complying with University requirements applying at the relevant date and, most recently, satisfying the current requirement for two external subject specialists from different HEIs and one relevant employer or professional practitioner.

2.12   Panel members provide written comments in advance of the approval event, typically covering marketing and recruitment; course content; learning outcomes; relevant PSRB requirements; learning, teaching and assessment; staffing; and physical resources.

2.13   Staff state that they value highly the guidance provided by the PDAH, not only on the programme approval procedure but also on programme design. The review team considered the comprehensive Programme Design and Approval Handbook, which provides extensive and useful guidance for programme design teams and approval panel members is **good practice**.

2.14   Approvals Group meeting minutes confirm consideration of new programme proposals, and record the satisfactory completion of approval conditions, under the revised procedures. The Approvals Group tracks minor and major modifications to provision. Accumulated modifications trigger a full programme re-approval in cases in which the Approvals Group, in its own judgement, considers this to be necessary.

2.15   The guidelines and procedures for programme approval are reviewed by the Approvals Group and approved by the LTC annually (formerly by the Collaborations and

Validation Group and the Academic Quality and Standards Committee), subject to oversight by Academic Board.

2.16   The University, in discharging its responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operates effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes. Therefore, Expectation B1 is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B2): Recruitment, selection and admission policies and procedures adhere to the principles of fair admission. They are transparent, reliable, valid, inclusive and underpinned by appropriate organisational structures and processes. They support higher education providers in the selection of students who are able to complete their programme.

Quality Code, *Chapter B2: Recruitment, Selection and Admission*

Findings

2.17   The University's Admissions Policy is aligned to the University's Strategic Plan and its commitment to widening participation is detailed within its Office for Fair Access, Access Agreement and subsequent action plan, which is monitored by the Access and Success Group. The Equality and Diversity Policy is used to inform the University's recruitment, selections and admissions procedures. Authority for recruitment and admissions is delegated from the Vice-Chancellor to the Assistant Academic Registrar (Student Administration) for the majority of undergraduate and taught postgraduate provision.

2.18   The University has recently moved to a centralised decision-making process for its admissions, for the majority of its taught programmes, in response to previously identified challenges with a devolved system. Staff in the Central Admissions Team liaise with departments to set entry requirements and discuss individual cases where necessary. The University reports an improvement on turnaround times since operating the new system.

2.19   The Admissions Policy stipulates minimum entry requirements for each type of programme, for example undergraduate or foundation degrees. It also outlines additional considerations given to international applicants, including English language proficiency scores. The University also employs contextualised data for admissions and the Admissions Policy details how applicants should be informed of this process.

2.20   The Student Recruitment Group is responsible for reviewing the Admissions Policy and entry criteria. Weekly recruitment reports are produced by the Planning & Information Manager and distributed to staff involved in recruitment and admissions, to ensure activity is monitored.

2.21   Postgraduate research admissions are covered by a separate policy available to prospective students via the postgraduate research admissions section of the University website. This policy was developed in line with the University of Leeds Accreditation Agreement. It outlines documentation required from applicants, typical entry requirements, and additional requirements from international students. The postgraduate research tutor oversees admission of research postgraduate students, exercised in line with these requirements.

2.22   The Admissions Policy is published in full on the 'How to Apply' pages of the University website, and is available to all applicants. This section of the website also outlines the procedures for application and selection, including recognition of prior learning. The University publishes an undergraduate prospectus and postgraduate course guides. The undergraduate prospectus includes clear information about facilities, entry requirements, course outlines, tuition fees and financial support. Applicants are advised in advance if interviews are part of the recruitment process via an interview letter. This letter includes details of the structure and criteria of the interview.

2.23 Should the University withdraw a programme prior to its commencement, the University contacts applicants advising them of the change, and offers to assist the applicant in exploring alternative programme options.

2.24 Induction information is sent to successful applicants during the summer. The University has developed a pre-entry and arrivals site on its intranet for new students containing relevant introductory information for new students in one place. Specific information is provided for those studying at foundation, undergraduate and postgraduate level.

2.25 The design of the admissions process enables the University to meet the Expectation in principle. To test the application of the process, review team analysed relevant documentation and met current students and staff to discuss their experience of the process.

2.26 Students confirmed that the admissions process was clear, met their individual needs, and provided them with the support and information they required to make an informed choice. Academic staff confirmed that they are in regular contact with the Central Admissions Team and gave examples of effective working between departments in this area.

2.27 The University publishes an Applicant Feedback and Complaints procedure, available from the University website. It is brought to the attention of applicants on the University's 'How to Apply' page. This procedure states that it does not permit applicants to appeal against a selection decision, a statement repeated in the University's Postgraduate Research Admissions Policy. However, this is contrary to the University Admissions Policy, which states that any candidate may appeal against an admissions decision. The Admissions Policy also indicates that the University will only make an offer to a disabled applicant once the University is satisfied it is able to meet the applicant's access needs. The University was reviewing its approach to the consideration of applications from disabled applicants, and was considering a proposal to separate the academic offer from consideration of an individual's needs in order to reflect that the offer is not dependent on those considerations. Staff met by the review team stated that the assessment of reasonable adjustments is now separate from, and conducted subsequent to, any offer to study at the University. In light of these matters the review team **recommends** that the University update the Admissions Policy to reflect institutional practice on appeals and to incorporate the principle that all offers are made on the basis of academic criteria and merit and the sequencing of assessment of reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants. The recommendation in Section B10, to clarify requirements for admission of students from overseas institutions within admissions agreements, also relates to this Expectation.

2.28 The review team considers that the University operates effective processes for the recruitment, selection and admission of students. Therefore, Expectation B2 is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B3): Higher education providers, working with their staff, students and other stakeholders, articulate and systematically review and enhance the provision of learning opportunities and teaching practices, so that every student is enabled to develop as an independent learner, study their chosen subject(s) in depth and enhance their capacity for analytical, critical and creative thinking.

Quality Code, *Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching*

Findings

2.29   The Strategic Plan sets the overarching objectives for the University. The nature of the Plan reflects the transition that the institution is undergoing, having acquired full University status in December 2012. The Plan identifies the need 'to consolidate Leeds Trinity University as a provider of outstanding education, developed and delivered in partnership with our students, business and industry, led by research and advanced practice' as a strategic priority. This echoes the University vision to be 'renowned for developing socially impactful, highly employable individuals through pioneering, research-led learning and teaching.' The Strategic Plan is monitored by using an action plan.

2.30   The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy (LTAS) provides the framework for the delivery and enhancement of learning and teaching, based on four strands: student recruitment, student attainment, student satisfaction and student graduate employability.

2.31   The current LTAS is to be superseded by formal adoption of a new strategy currently in draft form. There has been wide consultation on the draft strategy, including significant student input. The new LTAS will 'focus on enhancing learning opportunities so that students are supported to become confident individuals and independent learners with well developed critical thinking and analytical skills and a clear ethical perspective'. The development process is overseen by LTC through a Strategy Group but the Student Experience and Engagement Committee (SEEC) has a key role in ensuring it is informed by current institutional good practice. The new draft LTAS seeks to define the characteristics of a Leeds Trinity University graduate and create a strategy which is applied, collaborative and engaged. The LTAS is to be monitored by an action plan, setting out implementation stages, locus of responsibility, performance measures and current status. The University also measures the impact of the LTAS within the National Student Survey (NSS) Institutional Action Plan (2012-15) at the Student Experience and Engagement Committee and the Academic Board.

2.32   The Learning and Teaching Strategy provides an appropriate framework, which is designed to allow the Expectation to be met in theory. The review team considered the effectiveness of the learning and teaching provision through the scrutiny of strategy documents, policies, procedures and relevant committee paperwork. The team also met staff and students during the review visit. Both staff and students demonstrated awareness of the University's approach to learning and teaching.

2.33   The recent appointment of a Professor of Higher Education Pedagogy is intended to ensure that the approach to learning and teaching remains progressive, fit for purpose and research-led. The appointee is to develop a Centre for Research into Higher Education Pedagogy, as a support for academic staff development.

2.34   The Equality & Diversity Committee considers actions needed to ensure equal and effective opportunities for students. The minutes of the Committee confirm that consideration is being given to ways in which equality and diversity issues can be pursued and disseminated. The Committee also oversees reasonable adjustment in accord with the

Policy on Reasonable Adjustments in Assessment and Marking for Students with Specific Learning Difficulties. Improved data will allow more thorough evaluation of the effectiveness of actions taken in enabling all students to reach their potential.

2.35   The self-evaluation document indicates that all recently appointed academic staff must hold, or be working towards, a teaching qualification, and are encouraged to seek HEA Fellowship. Staff confirmed that there has been a strong response to this, which has encouraged reflection on teaching practice.

2.36   There is annual appraisal for all staff, which helps to identify staff development needs. Peer Observation of Teaching is expected for all staff on an annual basis, following guidelines approved by Learning and Teaching Committee. Compliance with the policy is tracked at departmental level. Observations can involve staff across departmental boundaries, which facilitates the sharing of good practice. There is a range of staff development opportunities, including a Learning and Development Day for academic and professional services staff. In 2013-14 this focused on 'The Best Possible Experience for Our Students' and included student input. For September 2015 the plan is to run a day focusing on the use of technology in teaching as part of furthering the LTAS. Professional service staff are also encouraged to undertake staff development.

2.37   The majority of teaching is undertaken by permanent LTU academic staff. The University aims to appoint doctoral level research active/professional practitioner academic staff. Graduate Teaching Assistants are PhD students on a contract that includes teaching responsibilities. Appropriate training is provided to ensure that they are appropriately prepared for teaching activities. There is an induction programme for academic staff, and detailed mentoring arrangements.

2.38   Information provided by the Planning and Information Office allows trends in data to be monitored at programme and departmental level. Recent improvements are reported to standard review data sets including the creation of a Planning and Information Office to provide data at aggregated and programme levels. The information provided by the Planning and Information Office allows trends in data to be monitored at programme and departmental level. This data will allow analysis by student characteristics.

2.39   The development of the new LTAS incorporates consideration of the requirements for the physical learning environment and the trialling of flexible learning spaces. Plans are embedded in the University Estates Strategy and the Campus Master Plan. The resource plan is submitted to the University Board of Governors and managed by the Planning Committee. Resource requirements are considered as part of the programme approval process.

2.40   There are multiple opportunities for students to feed back about their programmes, through Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs), the Student Wall, Student Forum, focus groups and personal interaction with lecturers. MEQs are discussed at SSACs and overseen by DACs.

2.41   The Student Charter sets out expectations for the University and for students; this is reviewed on a regular basis, and there has been student involvement in its development and review, primarily through student representation on the Governing Body and the Student Engagement and Enhancement Committee. The Student Submission suggests that there is limited recognition of the Charter among students, but that they were aware of it.

2.42   All students are allocated a Progress Tutor to provide academic advice (including on modular choice) and referral advice as personal tutors. This is an area proposed for further development in the new LTAS.

2.43   The University's approach to learning and teaching is working effectively. Expectation B3 is therefore met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B4): Higher education providers have in place, monitor and evaluate arrangements and resources which enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.

Quality Code, *Chapter B4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement*

Findings

2.44   The framework for enabling student development and achievement is embodied in the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan and the Learning and Teaching Strategy are described in Section B3.

2.45   A range of teams is involved in providing student support, summarised in the Progress Tutoring Handbook. Information about the support available is provided in various ways. Progress Tutors were previously known as personal tutors: the change was to emphasise that academic staff can offer support on progress whereas personal or pastoral issues can be referred to student support services.

2.46   The Learning Hub was set up to provide students with support in developing their study skills. A key focus of the Hub has been on students seen to be underperforming, providing them with specific help and advice, and helping to build their confidence. In addition to the work of the Learning Hub and the peer learning mentors, a number of initiatives have been launched at departmental level to reinforce the steps taken to improve student retention, progression and achievement. These include the setting of weekly tasks that are monitored, peer assessment, weekly group progress tutor meetings and follow-up of students who are seen not to be engaging with their studies.

2.47   The extent to which equality and diversity is taken into account by the University is monitored by the Equality and Diversity Committee; Equality and Diversity Officers have responsibility for issues in their areas. All staff go through an online induction covering equality and diversity issues.

2.48   All degree programmes provide opportunities for students to undertake placement activity as part of their degrees. This is seen as a distinctive aspect of LTU programmes, producing graduates who are ready for work and employable. All degree programmes include Professional Development and Placement Modules unless a strong rationale is provided. All these modules include a preparatory stage, with presentations on aspects of the workplace. Detailed feedback is provided by placement hosts, although placement providers are not involved in the formal assessment of students.

2.49   As part of its strategy, the University has put in place a range of appropriate measures to enable student development and achievement; which enable the expectation to be met. The review team considered the effectiveness of the measures in place to enable student development and achievement through the scrutiny of strategy documents, policies, procedures and relevant committee paperwork. The team also met staff and students. Both staff and students bore witness to the effectiveness of the actions taken.

2.50   The relatively small scale of the University facilitates interaction between students and staff. There is active liaison between departments and the professional services, for example in relation to information technology and the library. Improvements to resources have been made in response to past feedback in the National Student Survey (NSS).

2.51   Students and academic staff stated that the Learning Hub appears to have had a significant impact on student achievement. Feedback from the Learning Hub through its reporting enables the identification of common issues affecting students, which can then allow adjustments to curriculum content to anticipate key areas that affect student

achievement, for example in relation to quantitative skills. The strength of the Learning Hub is further evidenced by the records that are maintained to monitor the number of referrals and interactions of students with it. The work of the Learning Hub, which provides extensive and valued professional, academic and pastoral support for students, is **good practice**.

2.52   One aspect of the work of the Learning Hub has been the development of the Peer Learning Mentor Scheme, which is highly regarded by students and staff alike. Peer learning mentors are students at levels 5 and 6 who have been trained to provide extra support to students in their departments. They hold drop-in sessions and run forums on the Learning Hub VLE page, where students can post questions about their course. The work of the peer learning mentors has been instrumental in improving the academic development of students, helping to improve student retention, progression and achievement. Students who have acted as peer learning mentors testified to the benefits that they received from undertaking the role, in terms of improving their confidence in course material and links formed with other mentors. The team considers the work of the peer learning mentors, which provides structured and accessible support for undergraduate students and has a positive impact on students' academic development is **good practice**.

2.53   The review team observed a range of measures designed to facilitate students' academic development in addition to the Learning Hub and peer learning mentors, such as Progress Tutors, academic study skills sessions and pastoral support offered by the Student Services team, library and information technology support. The INTRO week is seen as critical in helping students to make the transition into higher education. This is supported by helpful documentation issued to students on arrival, augmented via social media. The review team **affirms** the work being undertaken to improve student retention, progression and achievement.

2.54   Students reported that there were occasional problems with Progress Tutors not contacting their tutees while on placement, but there was evidence from meetings with students, academic staff and the placement providers that this was not a major concern. Employers and placement providers confirmed that they are regarded by the University as partners in the placement and work-based learning opportunities, that the process is managed well and ensures that placements are of mutual benefit to students and employers. The team considers the provision of extended and relevant work-placement opportunities across all taught programmes, which promotes students' employability, is **good practice**.

2.55   While the University has experienced low retention and progression rates in the past few years, initiatives such as the Learning Hub, peer learning mentors and other support for students has had a significant positive impact on student retention and achievement. There are several examples of good practice around student support and, enabled by improved student data reporting and analysis, the University is taking effective steps to support students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential. Therefore Expectation B4 is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B5): Higher education providers take deliberate steps to engage all students, individually and collectively, as partners in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience.

Quality Code, *Chapter B5: Student Engagement*

Findings

2.56   Student engagement is seen by the University as 'active participation by students in learning, reviewing practices and processes and in social, cultural and spiritual activities'. A Student Experience and Engagement Strategy is in draft format and was discussed at the Student Experience and Engagement Committee in January 2015. This Strategy is intended to coordinate existing and planned initiatives and to promote student engagement in committees. Students are represented on all key academic deliberative committees, and on SSACs.

2.57   There is a range of mechanisms designed to capture the student voice, through MEQs, the NSS, focus groups, meetings with the PVCA, Student Voice Week, the Student Wall and open consultations on the Strategic Plan and Learning and Teaching Strategy. The MEQ process is being standardised, using an online evaluation system to analyse questionnaires completed in paper form. Examples of these reports are clear and easy to interpret. The standard questions include a section asking students to identify ways in which they could improve their learning experience. This seems to have been successful in raising awareness of the need for students to engage with their own learning, and the responses to the question on this topic are generally reflective.

2.58   The Student Submission reports a very positive relationship with the University and the Leeds Trinity Students' Union (LTSU) draft strategic plan 2015-18 has 'getting the student voice heard: engaging with the University in partnership' as one of five key themes. This was presented at the University Board of Governors by the LTSU President.

2.59   The University has in place policies, procedures and mechanisms that enable student engagement to take place, in principle. The review team considered the effectiveness of the measures in place to enable student engagement through the scrutiny of strategy documents, policies, procedures and relevant committee paperwork. The team also met staff and students.

2.60   Student engagement in committees has been a challenge in recent years. The University has introduced a range of measures intended to address this. A report on student representation was discussed at the Academic Board, and action recommended. There is evidence of low engagement of students with Student-Staff Academic Committees (SSACs) in terms of the number of meetings held and attendance. Attendance at DAC meetings seems to have been a challenge also, although documents indicate that DAC is not quorate without at least one student representative being present. Student Experience and Engagement Committee (SEEC) minutes state that attendance had been 'very low'. The relatively small size of the University allows students and staff to regularly interact and ensures student feedback is heard and acted upon. According to staff, this may lead students to believe that normal interactions with staff render attendance at formal meetings less important.

2.61   The University has taken steps to address student engagement in formal committees. In particular a focus on improving attendance and contributions to SSACs and DACs. LTSU has now taken over the responsibility for training of student representatives. Student representation is recognised via Vice-Chancellor's Certificate of Student Representation and Student Academic Representative Awards. These awards are

mentioned on student transcripts. A recent innovation is the holding of pre-meeting surgeries for LTC and SEEC by the Director of Student Support to promote student attendance and contributions at meetings. This is to be extended to other committees from 2015-16 and to be reviewed. Attendance at committees is to be a key performance indicator (KPI) in the Strategic Plan 2014-19. Staff and students reported improvements in engagement in the current year, following the measures introduced. Graduate interns have been used on projects to promote aspects of student engagement. Departments have worked alongside University efforts to promote student engagement with committees and the introduction of the peer learning mentors has helped to promote student engagement by producing better-informed students who are more able to contribute effectively. There are plans to use residential activities to provide additional development for course representatives, and a professional function has been provided in the LTSU to provide continuity.

2.62 The review team **affirms** the steps being taken to improve student engagement with deliberative committees.

2.63 Although there have been some issues concerning the active engagement of students in deliberative committees in recent years, the University has been aware of this, and has put in place a range of measures to encourage more active engagement by students. The early indications are that these measures are having some impact. Therefore Expectation B5 is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B6): Higher education providers operate equitable, valid and reliable processes of assessment, including for the recognition of prior learning, which enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification being sought.

Quality Code, *Chapter B6: Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning*

Findings

2.64   The University's policy framework for assessment and accreditation is articulated through the TCAR with specific requirements, such as those of PSRBs, detailed in individual programme specifications. The TCAR describes arrangements for assessment, credit accumulation, credit transfer, progression and award.

2.65   The TCAR is supplemented by a Handbook on Assessment Practice which specifies assessment strategy, marking, assessment feedback, Panels of Examiners, Boards of Examiners, notification of results and reassessment arrangements. All assessment is in the English language. The pass/fail threshold is clear and placed within the context of an eight-band set of generic marking criteria.

2.66   The PDAH sets out requirements for consideration of assessment strategies, which are recorded in Programme Specifications. The Handbook provides guidance on assessment instruments, on loading, timing, and consideration of how well employer and PSRB expectations are met. Minor programme modifications may include changes in assessment mode. Assessment briefs incorporate specific assessment and progression requirements and are readily available to students. There is evidence of innovative practice in assessment design and external examiner commendation of good assessment design.

2.67   The TCAR also permits Recognition of Prior Learning and is supplemented by separate guidance, Principles and Guidelines for the Recognition of Prior Learning. Individual Recognition of Prior Learning documentation demonstrates that claims are duly processed, recorded and available for review by the external examiner prior to meetings of panels of examiners.

2.68   The University's examining board structure is set out in the Terms of Reference/Standing Orders of the Academic Board and its committees. Boards of Examiners act with delegated authority from Academic Board to determine progression and/or award based on results submitted by panels of examiners. Panels confirm the correct application of assessment processes and consider module assessment outcomes. Provisional and confirmed marks are made available to students via the e-Vision portal. The Mitigating Circumstances Procedure ensures matters impacting on student performance are dealt with fairly, consistently and equitably. The University also has a Policy on Reasonable Adjustments in Assessment and Marking for Students with Specific Learning Difficulties. External examiners and the Procedural Examiner confirm the correct operation of panels and boards.

2.69   Overall the University's policy framework for assessment is clear and comprehensive, and enables the Expectation to be met in principle. The team examined the regulations and minutes of key committees. They looked at information available online to staff and students; considered external examiner reports and spoke to academic and professional staff and students during the visit.

2.70   Since gaining taught degree awarding powers in 2009, the University has made a number of significant changes to its assessment regulations and arrangements, which better reflect the nature of the University while ensuring that its awards are comparable to similar institutions, and meet the relevant Expectations of the Quality Code. The changes followed extensive internal and external consultation, modelling and review of effectiveness through multiple quality assurance structures.

2.71   The University reviewed its policy on grading in 2012-13. The Director of Quality had tested the cross-University application of the new criteria and found no significant discrepancies between the new and old systems. The move to significantly more online marking also allowed Heads of Department at local level to monitor due application and to enable the sharing of good practice in use of the University's generic descriptors to inform marking criteria.

2.72   In 2013-14, the University reviewed its internal moderation conventions regarding standardisation, double-marking of dissertations and moderation of a defined proportion of other assessments. External examiners receive a sufficient sample of assessed work to assure maintenance of academic standards. The University also reviewed its methodology for degree classification adding a mark profile of classifiable credits to the calculation of two averages, one of which is weighted to account for 'exit velocity'. The Procedural Examiner analysed the impact of the classification change and potentially of other factors in student achievement in 2013-14. The proportion of students directly impacted by the classification change was just over 3 per cent. Overall achievement levels were consistent with those in comparable institutions.

2.73   Two further aspects of assessment are currently under review: anonymisation and programme level assessment. Since 2010-11, the University's Anonymous Marking Policy applies to examinations and all coursework except at level 4. LTC commissioned a review of the policy but deferred a decision until the completion of further internal study in 2015-16, including pilot programmes.

2.74   The University is also considering making work placement opportunities part of programme level assessment in some departments, and is looking more generally at devising assessments that relate to learning across the whole programme. The matter was being taken forward within the context of the University's new Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy and departments would have scope to contextualise that Strategy at programme level. Programme external examiners are provided with programme level information: programme handbooks, programme specifications, programme mark sheets and both programme and departmental review reports. The External Examiners' Group (EEG) and LTC were about to be requested to approve an immediate extension to the external examiner report form to allow for a greater focus on programme level comment to be made by programme external examiners. The review team **affirms** the introduction of programme-level assessment and the consideration by external examiners of programme-level achievement data.

2.75   The University has developed bespoke mechanisms to explain significant changes in assessment to students, such as the *Degree Calculator* intranet site in relation to degree classification. All key dates relating to assessment are made available directly to students via the Infozone intranet site.

2.76   Students were clear about what is expected of them in terms of assessment, about how assessments are marked and about how progression and award are achieved. Students were able to discern greater complexity and challenge between the different levels of their programmes. The Student Academic and Professional Misconduct Policy and Procedure provides thorough and consistent guidance to students on academic good

conduct/avoidance of plagiarism. Plagiarism-detection software is used for both diagnostic and detection purposes. Students were positive on both the timeliness and usefulness of assessment feedback and academic staff reported significant improvement since the University's adoption of a pre and post-assessment verification pro forma which allows Heads of Department greater oversight at local level of the assessment process. The University also evidenced improved NSS satisfaction ratings in this area and complimentary external examiner comment on the use of assessment feedback.

2.77   The review team considered the University's assessment-related policies and procedures, had discussions with academic staff, professional services' staff and students, and reviewed detailed supporting documentation evidencing the University's application of its policies and procedures both at operational level and at the level of oversight by academic deliberative committees and panels and Boards of Examiners. As a result, the review team is satisfied that the University operates in practice equitable, valid and reliable assessment processes. Expectation B6 is therefore met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B7): Higher education providers make scrupulous use of external examiners.

Quality Code, *Chapter B7: External Examining*

Findings

2.78   The roles and responsibilities of the University's external examiners are set out in the External Examiners' Handbook which is explicitly aligned with the Quality Code and appends Chapter 6 (Assessment of Students and Recognition of Prior Learning) and 7 (External Examining). Panels of examiners confirm the correct application of assessment processes and consider module assessment outcomes. The Board of Examiners, acting with delegated authority from Academic Board, determines progression and/or award. The University appoints subject external examiners and a procedural examiner. A subject external examiner is assigned to every module contributing to a final award.

2.79   From 2014-15, subject external examiners have also been charged with overseeing the overall standard and coherence of each programme. Academic staff confirmed active and consistent engagement with subject external examiners in the oversight of academic standards of modules and programmes.

2.80   The Procedural Examiner oversees the working of the Board of Examiners; adherence to the University's TCAR; consistency of treatment of all students including in relation to equality and diversity; and the implementation of the University's arrangements for classification and award. The Procedural Examiner provides a key check and balance on the consistent and fair application of the University's assessment arrangements and offers informed comment on such issues as classification changes and the automatic uplift of marks at the threshold boundary of pass.

2.81   The University's external examining arrangements are overseen by EEG on behalf of LTC. The University retains full responsibility for its external examiners where delivery is shared with others and shares reports from external examiners with those collaborative partners. External examiners are nominated by departmental academic staff. Nominations are considered against eligibility criteria and a person specification, for appointment by EEG and reported to LTC. The Academic Quality and Standards Office (AQSO) provides a detailed report, which sets out full detail of subject external examiner allocation including workload and responsibilities for programme-level oversight. The AQSO maintains a central register of external examiners (both incoming and outgoing) to avoid reciprocity. University staff serving as external examiners elsewhere receive appropriate workload recognition. Appointments are made for a probationary year and then a further three years, although the University reserves the right to terminate an appointment if circumstances so demand.

2.82   The TCAR and External Examiners' Handbook are comprehensive, detailed, and explicitly aligned to chapters of the Quality Code. They enable the Expectation to be met in principle. To evaluate their application in practice, the team scrutinised regulations, handbooks, minutes of key academic committees and external examiner reports, and spoke to staff and students.

2.83   External examiners receive a comprehensive induction pack. The University offers additional support for practitioner external examiners and mentors for first-time external examiners with a mid-year review by AQSO. Local level briefing for external examiners is provided by the Chair of the Panel of Examiners who also discusses with the external examiners any sampling of student work beyond the set minimum.

2.84   The External Examiner Handbook specifies the full responsibilities of the role. Subject external examiners may request to meet students. External examiners also have responsibilities in relation to the Recognition of Prior Learning and duly processed and recorded claims for Recognition of Prior Learning must be available for review by the external examiner prior to meetings of panels of examiners. They may also request prior sight of assessment instruments, other than draft examination papers for modules contributing to the calculation of a named award. Additionally, in line with Guidance to Departments: Exams and Tests, external examiners must see draft online tests. Overall, where a programme is significantly assessed by coursework, the number of assessment instruments signed off by an external examiner can be low.

2.85   External examiners must produce an annual report in accord with a University template including coverage of: actions taken in response to the previous report; learning objectives and the programme specification; consistency with the FHEQ, Subject Benchmark Statements and current professional and disciplinary practice; assessment and marking; the academic standard of assessed work; the quality of learning and teaching; resources; comparability with the Sector; the assessment process; the administration of assessment including the sufficiency of the sample of assessed work; their own participation in the assessment process and the sufficiency of the guidance and support offered to them; the dissemination of good practice; professional, PSRB requirements; and, for external examiners in their final year of service, an overall view of their term of office. External examiners may also write separately in confidence on an individual student or to the Vice-Chancellor with serious concerns. They are additionally alerted to QAA's Concerns Scheme. A large sample of external examiners' reports provided evidence of due oversight by the external examiners and their consistent and appropriate use of the report template.

2.86   External examiner reports are considered at local and institutional level by Programme Leaders, the Chair of the Panel of Examiners/Head of Department, the Director of Quality, the Academic Registrar and the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) who is the formal recipient. Anonymised reports and draft departmental responses are available via the VLE to students along with an explanatory overview. External examiners' names and home institutions are made known to students but it is emphasised that direct contact is not permissible. The role of the external examiner is also explained in the programme handbook. All reports are considered by EEG. The LTC and the Academic Board consider an annual overview of reports produced by the Academic Registrar, which identifies themes and issues of generic or institutional significance and aspects of good practice. The AQSO compiles an annual digest of external examiner report comments on learning resources for consideration by the Director of Library and Learning Resources. EEG also approves responses, forwarded by Departmental Academic Committees, before these are sent to the submitting external examiners. The External Examining Group then monitors progress of actions commissioned within responses and reports in turn to the LTC.

2.87   Reports are considered, acted upon and responded to, although, in some instances, minuting of consideration and action is limited. Students were aware of the role of external examiner, had seen external examiner reports and were aware of reports being considered at Departmental Academic Committees and Student-Staff Academic Committee. Actions commissioned within responses to external examiner reports are also included in annual review action plans.

2.88   The Procedural Examiner's annual report and the response to it by the Academic Registrar is considered by EEG and informs the annual overview of external examiners' report and from 2014-15 has been included as an appendix. In this form, the Procedural Examiner's report and the response to it is also seen by the higher level deliberative academic committees.

2.89   The University's procedures and templates support its external examining arrangements, confirmed by meetings with staff and students. There is detailed supporting documentation and comprehensive information available online to staff and students. Overall, the University makes scrupulous use of its external examining arrangements and that these arrangements are secure. Therefore Expectation B7 is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B8): Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective, regular and systematic processes for monitoring and for review of programmes.

Quality Code, *Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring and Review*

Findings

2.90 The University's programme review processes are designed to ensure that the academic quality and standards of provision meet institutional aspirations and external requirements. They are aligned with the Quality Code and based on the principles of peer-review, students at the core of the process, departmental ownership of academic provision, and a focus not only on the assurance of standards and quality but also on development and enhancement. The Academic review process is described in detail under Expectation A3.3.

2.91 The Academic Review Handbook sets out the standard content of Programme Annual Review (PAR) and Departmental Annual Review (DAR) reports, requiring the necessary descriptive elements to be accompanied by an evaluation of strengths and weakness and a forward-looking action plan. The required content of both reports is extensive, covering areas including programme development; admissions; student progression, achievement and employability; learning and teaching; student engagement; student feedback; external comments; research and external engagement; resources; equality and diversity; and an action plan. University processes require initial DAC scrutiny of both PAR and DAR reports, together with any supporting evidence. PAR reports are subject to approval by DACs. DAR reports are endorsed by DACs and subject to scrutiny by the Reviews Group and approval by the LTC.

2.92 The departmental submission for periodic review, comprising a self-evaluation document and supporting evidence, must be informed by departmental review of data; the comments of external examiners and professional bodies; curriculum modifications since the previous review; annual review reports, including student feedback; and the outcomes of consultation with staff and students in the department, relevant support service staff, the PVCA and external subject experts.

2.93 Evidence requirements for periodic review include module evaluation questionnaire results; module review forms; student handbooks; samples of students' work; samples of staff research; DAC and Student-Staff Academic Committee minutes; staff academic profiles; Student Experience Survey and NSS data; register of peer observation; student admission, progression, achievement and employability data; external examiner reports and associated correspondence; and reports from relevant professional bodies.

2.94 Review panels are required to arrive at formal judgements on the setting and maintaining of academic standards, the quality of student learning opportunities, the quality of information, and the enhancement of student learning opportunities; to make any recommendations; and to record any strengths and features of good practice. The report, together with the department's response, must be submitted to the Reviews Group for consideration. The full report must also be considered by LTC and forwarded to Academic Board. One year after the report and departmental action plan are considered, the Reviews Group is responsible for monitoring progress against any recommendations, reporting its conclusions to LTC and thence to Academic Board.

2.95 The University's processes for the monitoring and review of programmes, comprehensively set out in the Academic Review Handbook, allow this Expectation to be met in principle.

2.96   The review team tested the Expectation through scrutiny of the Academic Review Handbook; committee terms of reference; papers and minutes of meetings; module, programme, departmental and institutional review reports and action plans; and in meetings with staff and students.

2.97   Module, programme and departmental annual reports are evaluative and cover the areas required under the University's processes. They review actions from previous years and their effectiveness; address strengths and weakness; provide analysis of student evaluation, identifying any necessary actions; consider resources; comment on research and scholarly activity; and set out proposed action for the following year. Module and programme review inform departmental review. Action plans are clear and most are detailed, identifying priorities, associated actions and persons responsible, and setting out dates for completion and progress to date.

2.98   The timescales for production of the Institutional Academic Quality Report (IAQR) 2012-13 had presented problems. Because of the time allowed for drafting, the draft report was presented to Academic Board for approval, and subsequently approved by the Academic Board Chair's action, without first being considered by the LTC. Delays also occurred in the consideration and approval of the 2013-14 DAR reports. Owing to the timescales for review, the DAR reports, although they had been considered by the Reviews Group were neither considered nor approved by LTC before the IAQR 2013-14 was prepared and submitted to the Board of Governors. However, effective oversight of annual review was maintained by Academic Board, which had had access to the full range of draft DARs, together with the outcomes of the Reviews Group's scrutiny and discussion of the draft PAR and DAR reports.

2.99   The University is taking action to address the timescale issues that have occurred in annual review. It has reviewed timelines and put in place a revised annual planning cycle, supported by revised DAC meeting schedules, with a view to ensuring timely production and consideration of PAR and DAR reports before submission for scrutiny by the Reviews Group. The review team **affirms** the action being taken to ensure the timely production, consideration and approval of annual review reports.

2.100   The University's annual review processes are operating effectively overall. There is appropriate consultation on periodic review submissions within departments (including students), and externally, with subject experts; and the scrutiny of periodic review documentation leading up to review events, by the DAC, scrutiny groups and full review panels, operates in accordance with University requirements.

2.101   Periodic review panels are chaired and constituted in accordance with University's requirements (or the requirements in place at the time of the review), including external and student representation. SEDs are comprehensive and evaluative documents and cover the range of matters specified by the Academic Review Handbook, including reviews of action plans arising from the last periodic review and future action planning.

2.102   Review panel members are able to carry out their responsibilities effectively. There is generally rigorous scrutiny by review panels, which reach judgements, identify features of good practice, and make recommendations in accordance with University procedures.

2.103   Staff and students who have served on review and approval panels confirm that they received a full and effective briefing from the Academic Quality Office before undertaking the role. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) has chaired all recent review and approval panels. This role is to be extended to other senior staff with experience of panel membership, and staff confirmed that training will be provided as appropriate.

2.104   The University, in discharging its responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operates effective, regular and systematic processes for monitoring and for review of programmes. Therefore Expectation B8 is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B9): Higher education providers have procedures for handling academic appeals and student complaints about the quality of learning opportunities; these procedures are fair, accessible and timely, and enable enhancement.

Quality Code, *Chapter B9: Academic Appeals and Student Complaints*

Findings

2.105   The University has clearly separated procedures for academic appeals and complaints. There is an audit trail of approval by deliberative academic committees including cross-reference to the Quality Code: *Chapter B9: Academic Appeals and Student Complaints*. Dissemination to staff took place as part of the updating of assessment regulations and processes. The appeals process for postgraduate research students is administered by the University of Leeds.

2.106   The academic appeals procedure has three stages: informal, formal, and appeal to the Vice-Chancellor. The Academic Registrar filters appeals in terms of sufficiency of grounds, then may indicate there is no case to answer or refer to the PVCA. Students may then appeal to the Vice-Chancellor, although there are no specific grounds that need to be demonstrated by the student at this stage.

2.107   The University's procedures are under review in order to ensure that they are in line with the new Office of the Independent Adjudicator's *Good Practice Framework*, published in December 2014. Appropriate procedures are in place to allow the Expectation to be met.

2.108   The review team considered the effectiveness of the procedures for academic appeals and student complaints through the scrutiny of strategy documents, policies, procedures and relevant committee paperwork. The team also met staff and students.

2.109   Small numbers of complaints or appeals make it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the process or to identify trends. A thorough report was prepared for LTC in November 2014 to evaluate academic appeals during 2013-14, when new procedures were introduced.

2.110   Details of complaints and appeals processes are provided for students through programme handbooks and in induction material and the Student Charter. There is a clear link on the VLE. The Student Submission noted limited awareness by students of the procedures for appeal and complaints, but also notes that this may reflect the fact that few students wish to complain or appeal.

2.111   The focus on individuals in the formal process may not be desirable or sustainable should student numbers increase in line with the University's target. However, the small number of cases suggests that the process has worked effectively to date. Therefore Expectation B9 is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B10): Degree-awarding bodies take ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, irrespective of where these are delivered or who provides them. Arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with organisations other than the degree-awarding body are implemented securely and managed effectively.

Quality Code, *Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others*

Findings

2.112   The University has yet to validate or franchise its own programmes for delivery at other institutions and does not intend to do so at present. In its International Strategy, the University states the intention to increase the relatively small number of 'deep' international partnerships but of a type similar to its existing delivery models of student exchanges, study abroad and admissions arrangements. There is a similar strategic intent for home partnerships.

2.113   Nevertheless, the University has recently developed a comprehensive Academic Collaborative Activity Handbook (ACAH), drawing on practice elsewhere in the Sector and enabling the University, should its strategy change, to have in place governance and management arrangements for the full range of models of delivery with others. The ACAH provides a typography of collaborative arrangements, twin-track business case and academic approvals, monitoring of PSRB accreditation, confirmation of partners' legal capacity and wider due diligence at partner approval and reapproval, model approval and agreement documentation and a clear schedule of partners' respective responsibilities.

2.114   Collaborative provision is subject to the same quality assurance mechanisms for annual review, student engagement and representation and external examining as for on-campus provision. With no significant broadening of the University's range of collaborative arrangements in prospect, staff had not yet had to address whether, in operation, particular aspects of management and administration of collaborative activity might require other than the default position of arrangements as for on-campus provision.

2.115   The ACAH includes clear policy statements, such as assessments always to be in the English language, serial franchising ('sub-contracting') to be prohibited and the University to retain responsibility for admissions and oversight of marketing and publicity. The ACAH also identified areas where, within determined limits, some delegation might be permitted on a case-by-case basis: assessment (for example, a panel of examiners might be delegated to a partner but would always report to the University Board of Examiners) and certification (where the University would produce degree certificates and diploma supplements but transcripts might be delegated). The framework for managing provision with others is appropriate at present, and enables the Expectation to be met in principle.

2.116   With no delegation or franchise of the University's own programmes having yet taken place, the review team was not able to verify the application of the ACAH with regard to working with other organisations to deliver University programmes. However, the review team was able to verify the application of the ACAH for the collaborative activities duly recorded in the University's publicly available Academic Partnership Register such as School Direct Agreements and arrangements for the import of marks/credit from student study abroad.

2.117   Admissions agreements with three overseas universities for entry to the MA Business Management pre-dated the ACAH and the current arrangements are ambiguous with regard to the programme's entry requirements and whether an applicant must have fully completed their undergraduate programme. The review team **recommends** that the

University clarify the entry requirements for international students in its admissions agreements with overseas institutions to ensure equivalence for all applicants.

2.118   The University signed an accreditation agreement with the University of Leeds in January 2012, which expires on 31 August 2015, for the provision of both University of Leeds's taught programmes (now substantially replaced by the University's own taught programmes) and University of Leeds's research degree programmes (which are proposed to continue until such time as the University obtains research degree-awarding powers). The University is confident that a new accreditation agreement will be concluded before the expiry of the current agreement. The current agreements offers insufficient detail on how students studying at the University for a University of Leeds's award would be safeguarded in the events of the agreement's termination. The review team therefore **recommends** that the University work with the University of Leeds to make explicit the provision for students in the event of termination of the accreditation agreement.

2.119   The University's arrangements for student placement and student employability are set out in more detail in Section B4 and in the Commentary on the Theme of Student Employability. Student placements are subject to the University Policy on Placement Support and University feedback and monitoring. Proportionate due diligence is in place for the University to assess the health and safety of placement venues and the University seeks to ensure that student placements also meet any relevant PSRB requirements. The University assesses student placements through professional development and practice modules on a pass/fail basis, after receipt of an employer's report but assessed by University academic staff taking account also of a portfolio and summative report. The students whom the review team met were broadly satisfied with the University's student placement provision and its efforts to improve students' employability.

2.120   Employers confirmed the strength of the University's student placement provision and the University's clear guidance and support for employers offering placements, including assessment and monitoring arrangements. Employers also confirmed that their engagement with the University was a true partnership extending beyond the provision of student placements. They corroborated much of the evidence provided by the University in relation to employer engagement and the University's efforts to improve students' employability. Employers are involved in forums and advisory boards, and offer guest lectures and master classes. Some are involved in related volunteering programmes, the development of enterprise and entrepreneurial awareness, participate in University-facilitated employer network events, and engage in reciprocal use of resources and facilities. Employers may also offer mock employment interviews, professional skills' development and opportunities to inform and to update assessment and programme curricula. The employers were complimentary of the University's responsiveness and business-oriented approach. The University's strong and extensive partnerships with employers, which inform curriculum design and assessment, and promote students' progression into employment is **good practice**.

2.121   Overall, the University takes ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities when delivering provision with others and has effective and secure arrangements in place for delivering such learning opportunities. Expectation B10 is therefore met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B11): Research degrees are awarded in a research environment that provides secure academic standards for doing research and learning about research approaches, methods, procedures and protocols.
This environment offers students quality of opportunities and the support they need to achieve successful academic, personal and professional outcomes from their research degrees.

Quality Code, *Chapter B11: Research Degrees*

Findings

2.122   The University currently provides research degrees as an accredited institution of the University of Leeds (UoL). In essence, the UoL sets academic standards but LTU provides learning opportunities. There is a detailed protocol setting out how the UoL procedures are implemented at the University. The UoL Graduate Board oversees all arrangements for postgraduate research programmes at the University, including admission, progression and examination and decisions about awards. The accreditation agreement with UoL expires in August 2015, and at the time of the review was being renegotiated.

2.123   The University has the strategic aim of acquiring research degree awarding powers by 2022 and its strategy for expansion of postgraduate research provision is designed with this in mind. The Research Strategy has set a target of 20 completed PhDs by 2016. There have been five completions to date; at 10 February 2015 there were 13 full-time and four part-time registered students.

2.124   Measures have been put in place to build and safeguard the research environment for research students, although it is too early at present to fully evaluate their effectiveness. Research students have been co-located to facilitate interactions between them, and necessary research resources have been provided as required. Postgraduate research students have supervisors in the University as well as co-supervisors or mentors at UoL. The students reported a high level of satisfaction with the resources and arrangements being provided for them.

2.125   Appropriate policies, procedures and protocols are in place that in principle allow the Expectation to be met. The review team considered the effectiveness of the arrangements for postgraduate research students through the scrutiny of strategy documents, policies, procedures and relevant committee paperwork. The team also met students, supervisors and the postgraduate research tutor.

2.126   The Postgraduate Research Forum provides an opportunity for students to raise issues of concern with the postgraduate research tutor. Meetings are informal, so no minutes are kept. Students have monthly meetings with their supervisor, and are provided with ample opportunities to meet their training needs. Students are encouraged to present their research at LTU. In addition, there is a £1,000 per year allocation of support per student for conference attendance.

2.127   A comprehensive Handbook provides clear information about protocols, and sets out clearly the division of responsibilities between the University and UoL. Students declared themselves fully knowledgeable of the processes and the division of responsibilities between the University and UoL.

2.128   As part of its Research Strategy, the University expects and encourages staff to pursue higher research degrees as appropriate and as early as reasonably possible. The Strategy also sets priorities to increase the marketing in order to attract UK, EU and overseas postgraduate research students and to develop a research training programme.

As part of the Strategy, students will be represented on University committees and a Postgraduate Research Student Forum will be facilitated by the University. Students confirmed that this Forum was already functioning effectively.

2.129   Supervisors of PhD students are required to undergo training in their role; supervision is recognised in the workload planning model. Notes are kept for all meetings between postgraduate research students and their supervisors.

2.130   The evidence suggests that the process is working well in practice to date, although the first full cohort of students has only recently been recruited. The team was satisfied that the University has put in place comprehensive and appropriate measures to ensure effective provision of learning opportunities for postgraduate research students. Therefore Expectation B11 is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

The quality of student learning opportunities: Summary of findings

2.131   There is widespread good practice in the area of student support and development. In particular, the role of the peer learning mentors provides structured and accessible support for undergraduate students, and has a positive impact on students' academic development. The mentors are supported by the Learning Hub, which additionally provides extensive and valued professional, academic and pastoral support for students. Students also engage in extended and relevant work-placement opportunities across all taught programmes, which promotes their employability. The University has strong and extensive partnerships with employers, which informs curriculum design and assessment, and further promotes students' progression into employment.

2.132   The University has strong and effective quality assurance arrangements, particularly for the design and approval of programmes, as exemplified in the comprehensive Programme Design and Approval Handbook. The regulatory and quality assurance framework has undergone recent and extensive revision, and there are a number of work strands currently in process to further improve the University's oversight and management of the quality of learning opportunities. In particular, the University is introducing programme-level assessment and the consideration by external examiners of programme-level achievement data, to broaden the University's view of the whole programme, rather than focusing only on individual modules. The University has strengthened its procedures for annual monitoring to ensure the timely production, consideration and approval of annual review reports. Work is also being undertaken to improve student retention, progression and achievement, at all levels of the University. Students have many opportunities to give their views on the quality of their learning experience but steps are also being taken to further improve formal student engagement with deliberative committees.

2.133   The team identified a few areas where the University could further clarify or improve its quality assurance policies, procedures or practice. The University should update the admissions policy to reflect institutional practice on appeals and on the sequencing of assessment of reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants. It should work with the University of Leeds to make explicit the provision for students in the event of termination of the accreditation agreement, and clarify the entry requirements for international students in the admissions agreements with overseas institutions, to ensure equivalence for all applicants.

2.134   The review team concludes that the quality of student learning opportunities at Leeds Trinity University **meets** UK expectations.

3 Judgement: The quality of the information about learning opportunities

Expectation (C): UK higher education providers produce information for their intended audiences about the higher education they offer that is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy.

Quality Code, *Part C: Information about Higher Education Provision*

Findings

3.1 The University's website contains detailed information about the organisation. This includes its Strategy; organisational and governance structures; financial information; and the University's Equality and Diversity Policy. The Director of Marketing and Communications is responsible for the accuracy and design of the University website. Before publication, website information is subject to departmental checks and scrutiny by the Marketing Team. The University produces printed prospectuses for its undergraduate programmes and course guides for its postgraduate programmes, with further details on programme structure and module content listed on relevant pages of the University's website, alongside Key Information Set (KIS) data, where available. The University takes into account the accessibility of its prospectus via a checking process, and its website includes software to allow visitors to access the site through mediums such as large text, or read aloud files. Programme specifications provide the definitive source of information published on the website and made available to current students through the virtual learning environment (VLE) and programme handbooks. The Student Charter is made accessible to all students via the website.

3.2 The University's procedures for the quality assurance of information allow the Expectation to be met in principle. The review team scrutinised the University's approach to managing information through consideration of policy documents and procedures. The review team also considered the accessibility and accuracy of information produced by the University through the website, prospectuses, student handbooks, programme specifications and policy documents. Discussions were held with staff and students to explore the approach to the provision of information.

3.3 Students confirmed that information provided is generally accessible and clear, both prior to admission and during their study. Students' handbooks and the VLE provide in-depth information enabling students to understand how to succeed academically. Staff demonstrated knowledge of the procedure for checking and updating information on departmental webpages. The process for ensuring that programme and module specifications are up to date, following any minor or major modifications, is robust.

3.4 Information on fees payable for each course is detailed within the undergraduate prospectus, postgraduate course guides, on the course website pages for each programme, and on the Student Finance section of the University website. There are no specific details provided on additional costs. Minutes of student-staff committees in one department did indicate some uncertainty about additional course costs associated with a particular degree programme, and the University's compulsory undergraduate placements have travel costs associated with them. The University does issue a general statement on their website about the potential for additional costs.

3.5 Information on the University's quality assurance processes is made available to staff and students through the Taught Course Academic Regulations, the Programme Design and Approval Handbook, the Academic Review Handbook, the Academic

Collaborative Activity Handbook, and the External Examiners' Handbook. The Programme Design and Approval Handbook is a clear and accessible document, guiding staff and other stakeholders through the relevant processes in an accessible manner (see good practice in paragraph 2.13). There are inconsistencies between some of the procedures set out in the University's Admissions Policy and the practice described by staff met by the review team, which is addressed in Section B2.

3.6   Information provided to applicants regarding the Level 6 Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) contains inaccuracies. Programme specifications for the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (Secondary) are not made available to applicants. Students commencing the Level 6 Professional Graduate Certificate in Education Secondary are automatically enrolled to take 60 credits towards a Level 7 Postgraduate Certificate. However, this is not made clear in documentation provided to prospective students, which states that applicants can choose to take 60 additional credits towards the Level 7 award. In order for a student to opt out of the Level 7 credits, they are required to either formally withdraw or 'wilfully fail' these modules: outcomes which appear on their final transcripts. This is not made clear in pre or post-entry documentation Students raised this issue at an SSAC, particularly their belief that these credits were optional, and the University confirmed the automatic enrolment policy. Programme handbooks do not provide specific information on how students withdraw from the Level 7 credits. Therefore, the review team **recommends** that the University clarify the policy on automatic enrolment onto the Level 7 Postgraduate Certificate in its public information for the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education and make the programme specification for the PGCE (Secondary) publicly available.

3.7   On completion of their studies, students are issued with an award certificate and a diploma transcript, with itemised module marks, details of placement activity completed, membership of professional bodies and other relevant extra-curricular activity undertaken by the student, including Student Representation and Student Academic Representative Awards. The University maintains central records to ensure this information is accurate, subject to a robust checking process. The University does not currently issue a Higher Education Achievement Report, but is considering joining the scheme.

3.8   The University has appropriate procedures for ensuring the accuracy of information provided to the public, students and staff and therefore concludes that the Expectation is met. However, the inaccurate information provided to prospective and current students studying the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education poses a moderate risk to applicants and students, in terms of their expectations and understanding of the nature of the programme they are applying for.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Moderate

The quality of the information about learning opportunities: Summary of findings

3.9   The University has appropriate procedures for ensuring the accuracy and accessibility of information provided to interested parties. Its website contains detailed information about the organisation, the programmes and other opportunities it offers. Programme specifications provide a definitive source of information about programme content and structure: these are published on the website and contained in a single electronic library to ensure they are kept up to date.

3.10   Students' handbooks and the VLE provide in-depth information enabling students to understand how to succeed academically. Quality assurance policies and procedures are clear, detailed, thorough and accessible. Student transcripts provide relevant information and the University maintains central records to ensure that this information is accurate.

3.11   Information about additional course costs could be made clearer and more explicit, particularly costs associated with compulsory placements, which could be clearer on programme pages on the website and prospectus.

3.12   The University should clarify, in public information, the policy on automatic enrolment onto the Level 7 Postgraduate Certificate for the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education, in order to ensure students have a clear understanding about the nature and level of the course they are applying for. The team also found that the PGCE (Secondary) Programme Specification was missing from the website.

3.13   All graduating students are provided with an award certificate on completion of their studies and a diploma supplement incorporating the transcript. This includes information on a student's modules, results, placement activity and any relevant extra-curricular activity. This is subject to a robust checking process to ensure accuracy. The University does not currently issue a Higher Education Achievement Report, but the University is considering joining the scheme.

3.14   The review team concludes that the quality of the information about learning opportunities **meets** UK expectations.

4 Judgement: The enhancement of student learning opportunities

Expectation (Enhancement): Deliberate steps are being taken at provider level to improve the quality of students' learning opportunities.

Findings

4.1 The University Strategy reflects the desire to build upon the awarding of full University status in December 2012. In particular, the goal is to 'consolidate the University's position as a provider of outstanding education, developed and delivered in partnership with our students, business and industry, led by research and advanced practice'.

4.2 The learning and teaching strand of the Strategy is embedded in the new Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, currently in draft form. This sets out how the University intends to improve the quality of its education provision in the context of increasing student numbers. The University declares a commitment to a continuous cycle of enhancement, enshrined in the statement of values. This is supported by the Student Submission, which shows awareness of the University's commitment to continuous improvement.

4.3 The appointment of a Professor of Higher Education Pedagogy and the establishment of a Centre of Higher Education Pedagogy are partly intended to enable the integration of enhancement initiatives in a more systematic manner than has been possible in the past. The Learning and Teaching Award Scheme (recently introduced) encourages innovation through the funding of small-scale projects; the Professor of Higher Education Pedagogy will oversee these awards to ensure alignment with the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy (LTAS) and to ensure that good practice is disseminated.

4.4 Although there is no explicit and separate Enhancement Strategy, the ethos of continuous improvement is embedded in the new LTAS, and so enables the Expectation to be met in principle.

4.5 The review team considered the effectiveness of the approach to enhancement through the scrutiny of strategy documents, policies, procedures and relevant committee paperwork. The team also met students and academic and professional service staff.

4.6 Staff acknowledged a widespread ethos of enhancement, and were keen to improve the quality of their learning and teaching. Good practice is identified and disseminated through informal and formal means. The annual review process has been changed in order to encourage the sharing of good practice, and staff engage well with Learning and Teaching Development Days. Departmental Academic Committees include representatives from other departments and the Academic Leadership Forum provides opportunities for the sharing of good practice.

4.7 The University is responsive to feedback from students through a variety of means, including formal Student-Staff Academic Committees and a more informal Student Voice Wall. Formal quality assurance processes that promote enhancement include peer observation, which can involve cross-department observations. Learning and Teaching Committee brings together Heads of Academic Departments; the Approvals Group has representation from all academic departments. There has been wide consultation among staff and students about the new LTAS.

4.8 There has been significant activity to improve aspects of students' progression, retention and achievement, for example through the development of the Learning Hub and

the work of the peer learning mentors (see Section B4). Staff webpages provide examples of good practice in the use of the VLE.

4.9   Appropriate steps are being taken to systematically enhance the student experience, at institutional, departmental and programme levels. Therefore the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

The enhancement of student learning opportunities: Summary of findings

4.10   Enhancement is embedded within the University Strategy and within the new draft Learning and Teaching Strategy. The University declares a commitment to a continuous cycle of enhancement; a view which is supported by students.

4.11   A Professor of Higher Education Pedagogy has been appointed, and a Centre of Higher Education Pedagogy has been established, partly to enable the integration of enhancement initiatives in a more systematic manner. The Learning and Teaching Award also encourages enhancement and sharing of good practice.

4.12   Good practice is identified and disseminated in a number of ways, for example through the annual review process, Learning and Teaching Development Days and the Academic Leadership Forum.

4.13   The University is responsive to feedback from students through a variety of means, both formal and informal. The University has also undertaken significant activity to improve aspects of student's progression, retention and achievement.

4.14   The review team concludes that the enhancement of student learning opportunities **meets** UK expectations.

5   Commentary on the Theme: Student Employability

Findings

5.1   Every undergraduate degree programme at Leeds Trinity University includes compulsory work placements. The University maintains partnerships with over 2,000 local and national businesses in a variety of sectors that offer student placements. Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) programmes require students to take school placements throughout their programme, while other undergraduate degree programmes include a six-week placement at Level 4 (or an equivalent university project where necessary), and another six-week placement at Level 5, both embedded in a module called Professional Development and Placement (PDP). This module has a generic assessment requirement as outlined in the Programme Design and Approval Handbook, but academic staff are allowed flexibility to develop content that meets the requirements of particular disciplines. Workshop activities underpin PDP modules to enable students to reflect on the skills they have developed in their placement activity.

5.2   The University has a policy on placement support, which sets out expectations for students and employers during the placement. Employers are encouraged to maintain contact with the University throughout students' placements. University placement tutors are the main point of contact for employers hosting a student's placement, and these tutors work to ensure that the process is satisfactory for both parties. Employers are actively encouraged to evaluate the effectiveness of the placement and the students who undertake it, by means of an online form to be completed at the end of the placement. Students are encouraged to explore this feedback with their placement tutor and use it in their future skills' development. Placement tutors review arrangements, share best practice and discuss employer feedback through the Placement Coordinators' Group.

5.3   In addition to industry placements, the University has recently established a film production company, Trinity Vision, developed to enable more film and media students to undertake production-related placements. The film production team develops placements for students and establishes broader industry links to support skills' development and graduate employment.

5.4   Employers are also involved in the development and approval of academic programmes. The University consults employers on programme design, and an industry representative is included as a panel member for the approval of new programmes. Academic departments are establishing departmental employer forums, to further strengthen the links between industry and academics, and support the involvement of employers in the curriculum design and development process.

5.5   The University's Careers and Employability Service provides information, advice and guidance to students, maintains the University's partnerships with employers, supports students in accessing placements, and advises on curriculum development in the area of employability. This is in addition to a number of one-off events and themed weeks to develop students' skills in areas such as entrepreneurialism and CV writing.

5.6   Alumni are also engaged in the development of students' employability skills. A recent event organised by the Psychology Department brought alumni together with current students in their final year of study. The event provided an opportunity for students to network with successful alumni and raise their aspirations for future employment. The University plans to expand this initiative to other academic departments.

5.7   The University evaluates the effectiveness of its approach to employability through the Destination of Leavers of Higher Education Survey, demonstrating a high proportion of

graduates in employment. It also carries out its own surveys relating to employability and in a recent survey found that over half its students had gone on to further part-time work or volunteering as a direct result of their undergraduate placement.

Glossary

This glossary is a quick-reference guide to terms in this report that may be unfamiliar to some readers. Definitions of key operational terms are also given on pages 29-32 of the [Higher Education Review handbook](#)

If you require formal definitions of other terms please refer to the section on assuring standards and quality: www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality

User-friendly explanations of a wide range of terms can be found in the longer **Glossary** on the QAA website: www.qaa.ac.uk/Pages/GlossaryEN.aspx

Academic standards
The standards set by **degree-awarding bodies** for their courses (programmes and modules) and expected for their awards. See also **threshold academic standard**.

Award
A qualification, or academic credit, conferred in formal recognition that a student has achieved the intended **learning outcomes** and passed the assessments required to meet the academic standards set for a **programme** or unit of study.

Blended learning
Learning delivered by a number of different methods, usually including face-to-face and e-learning (see **technology enhanced or enabled learning**).

Credit(s)
A means of quantifying and recognising learning, used by most institutions that provide higher education **programmes of study**, expressed as numbers of credits at a specific level.

Degree-awarding body
A UK higher education provider (typically a university) with the power to award degrees, conferred by Royal Charter, or under Section 76 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, or under Section 48 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992, or by Papal Bull, or, since 1999, granted by the Privy Council on advice from QAA (in response to applications for taught degree awarding powers, research degree awarding powers or university title).

Distance learning
A course of study that does not involve face-to-face contact between students and tutors but instead uses technology such as the internet, intranets, broadcast media, CD-ROM and video, or traditional methods of correspondence - learning 'at a distance'.
See also **blended learning**.

Dual award or double award
The granting of separate awards (and certificates) for the same **programme** by two **degree-awarding bodies** who have jointly delivered the programme of study leading to them. See also **multiple award**.

e-learning
See technology enhanced or enabled learning

Enhancement
The process by which higher education providers systematically improve the quality of provision and the ways in which students' learning is supported. It is used as a technical term in our review processes.

Expectations
Statements in the **Quality Code** that set out what all UK higher education providers expect of themselves and each other, and what the general public can therefore expect of them.

Flexible and distributed learning
A programme or module that does not require the student to attend classes or events at particular times and locations.
See also **distance learning**.

Framework
A published formal structure. See also **framework for higher education qualifications**.

Framework for higher education qualifications
A published formal structure that identifies a hierarchy of national qualification levels and describes the general achievement expected of holders of the main qualification types at each level, thus assisting higher education providers in maintaining academic standards. QAA publishes the following frameworks: *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and *The Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland* (FHEQIS).

Good practice
A process or way of working that, in the view of a QAA review team, makes a particularly positive contribution to a higher education provider's management of academic standards and the quality of its educational provision. It is used as a technical term in QAA's audit and review processes.

Learning opportunities
The provision made for students' learning, including planned study, teaching, assessment, academic and personal support, and resources (such as libraries and information systems, laboratories or studios).

Learning outcomes
What a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completing a process of learning.

Multiple awards
An arrangement where three or more **degree-awarding bodies** together provide a single jointly delivered **programme** (or programmes) leading to a separate **award** (and separate certification) of each awarding body. The arrangement is the same as for **dual/double awards**, but with three or more awarding bodies being involved.

Operational definition
A formal definition of a term, establishing exactly what QAA means when using it in reviews and reports.

Programme (of study)
An approved course of study that provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification.

Programme specifications
Published statements about the intended **learning outcomes** of programmes of study, containing information about teaching and learning methods, support and assessment methods, and how individual units relate to levels of achievement.

Public information
Information that is freely available to the public (sometimes referred to as being 'in the public domain').

Quality Code
Short term for the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, which is the UK-wide set of **reference points** for higher education providers (agreed through consultation with the higher education community, and published by QAA), which states the **Expectations** that all providers are required to meet.

Reference points
Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured.

Subject Benchmark Statement
A published statement that sets out what knowledge, understanding, abilities and skills are expected of those graduating in each of the main subject areas (mostly applying to bachelor's degrees), and explains what gives that particular discipline its coherence and identity.

Technology enhanced or enabled learning (or **e-learning**)
Learning that is delivered or supported through the use of technology.

Threshold academic standard
The minimum acceptable level of achievement that a student has to demonstrate to be eligible for an academic **award**. Threshold academic standards are set out in the national **frameworks** and **subject benchmark statements**.

Virtual learning environment (VLE)
An intranet or password-only interactive website (also referred to as a platform or user interface) giving access to **learning opportunities** electronically. These might include such resources as course handbooks, information and reading lists; blogs, message boards and forums; recorded lectures; and/or facilities for online seminars (webinars).

Widening participation
Increasing the involvement in higher education of people from a wider range of backgrounds.