



NELSON COLLEGE LONDON

VALUE FOR MONEY REPORT

Academic Year 2021-22

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1. Introduction

Nelson College London (NCL) is an independent higher education provider with three campuses in England, located in Ilford and Gants Hill, in East London and Broadstairs, in Kent. NCL has partnered with Pearson to offer two HND Level 4/5 Business and Hospitality Management courses and also London Metropolitan University to offer six undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

These programs aim to offer students a pathway for academic progression and enhance their career prospects. NCL's comprehensive range of programs provides students with diverse academic opportunities and facilitates their professional growth.

At Nelson College London (NCL), Value for Money (VFM) means the optimal use of resources to achieve the intended outcomes as demonstrated by internal and external metrics.

At Nelson College London, we are committed to providing our students with a high-quality education that offers good value for money. We understand that our students make significant investments in their education, and we strive to ensure that they receive excellent teaching, robust support services, and access to state-of-the-art facilities in return.

Our primary objectives include ensuring that all students, regardless of their backgrounds, receive value for money. We secure this value in return for the contributions made by individual students, taxpayers, and interested parties in terms of student participation, experience, outcomes, high continuation rates, and degrees that hold their value over time.

We continuously monitor and enhance our teaching quality, learning resources, and assessment feedback mechanisms to ensure they meet our students' expectations. We also regularly gather and act on student feedback to improve our services and facilities.

We are transparent about how we use our income and resources and take steps to deliver value for money. This includes investing in our infrastructure, improving our teaching and learning resources, and enhancing our student support services.

We are proud of the value we offer to our students and will continue to focus on providing an excellent student experience that is worth the investment.

2. Teaching quality and outcomes

The College uses both external and internal metrics as a measure of the intended outcomes or desired output. The external measures used by the College are externally collected, such as the TEF indicators on student satisfaction with teaching, assessment and feedback (taken from the National Student Survey, NSS), continuation (retention) rates (taken from the Higher Education Statistics Agency, HESA) and graduate outcome data.

TEF 2023

The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023 indicators are metrics used by the Office for Students (OfS) to assess and rate universities and colleges for excellence above a set of minimum requirements for quality and standards. The final TEF ratings reflect the extent to which a university or college delivers an excellent experience and outcomes for its mix of undergraduate students and across the range of its undergraduate courses and subjects.

Student's Views on Teaching Quality at Nelson College London

Measure	Indicator	Benchmark
The teaching in my course	97.0	91.8
Assessment and feedback	95.8	88.0
Academic Support	97.1	89.5
Learning resources	95.6	86.8
Student Voice	96.7	87.5

This table shows the comparison of different educational aspects obtained against their respective benchmarks. All indicators are above their respective benchmarks, demonstrating that the students have a very high-quality educational experience at Nelson College London.

Student Outcomes

Measure	Indicator	Benchmark
Continuation	90.4	83.1
Completion	70.8	62.9
Progression	33	44.3

Student continuation and completion remain well above the sector benchmarks. However, the student progression is 10.3% below the benchmark. We believe the graduate outcomes survey results do not provide the full picture when compared to the historic Destination of Leavers in Higher Education (DLHE) survey. However, we understand that we need to make significant improvements in this area.

Office for Student B3 Condition of Registration

The Office for Students (OfS) has introduced a new condition of registration known as Condition B3. This condition requires that “The provider must deliver successful outcomes for all of its students, which are recognised and valued by employers, and/or enable further study”.

The OfS sets minimum numerical thresholds that are referred to when making judgements about whether a provider is providing positive outcomes for their students. Performance below a numerical threshold does not mean that a provider is not meeting the OfS’s minimum expectations.

B3 Dashboard – Student continuation rate at the Nelson College London

Measure	Indicator	Benchmark
Other UG	90.5	75
First degree	66.7	80
PG taught masters*	-	80

For Other Undergraduate (UG) courses, the measured outcome is 90.5%, which is above the benchmark threshold of 75%. This suggests that the College is delivering successful outcomes for its students in this category.

For First Degree courses, the measured outcome is 66.7%, which is below the benchmark threshold of 80%. This indicates that the College need to improve student outcomes, mainly for students on the BA top-up courses.

For Postgraduate (PG) Taught Masters courses, the data is below the threshold for publication.

B3 Dashboard – Student Completion Rate at the Nelson College London

Level	Indicator	Threshold
Other UG	73.6	65
First degree	72.4	75
PG taught masters*	-	

The completion rate remains above the benchmark threshold.

B3 Dashboard – Student Progression Rate at the Nelson College London

Level	Indicator	Threshold
Other UG	34.9	45
First degree	37.7	60
PG taught masters*	-	80

For Other Undergraduate (UG) courses, the measured outcome is 34.9%, which is below the benchmark threshold of 45%. For First Degree courses, the measured outcome is 37.7%, which is below the benchmark threshold of 60%. This indicates that the college needs to improve student progression into further studies and higher education.

3. Student Experience and Prospects at Nelson College London

Academic experience

The National Student Satisfaction Survey results and TEF Silver ratings clearly demonstrate that the students at Nelson College London are highly satisfied with their academic experience. The student satisfaction with the quality of teaching and learning, the availability of learning resources, and the feedback they receive on assessments is very high and well above the sector benchmark. This positive feedback is a testament to our commitment to providing a supportive and enriching academic environment and the great work our staff are doing.

Resources, support, and student engagement

At Nelson College, we are committed to providing our students with the resources and support they need to succeed. We have invested in state-of-the-art learning resources, including libraries, virtual learning environment (VLE), and digital platforms, to ensure our students have access to the tools they need for their studies.

Our student support services are robust and comprehensive, offering academic support, mental health resources, and career counselling. We understand that each student has unique needs and challenges, and we strive to provide personalised support to help each student thrive.

Furthermore, we believe in the importance of student engagement in decision-making processes. We have structures in place to ensure student representation at all levels of governance, from committees to the College's board of governance. We regularly seek student feedback through surveys and student representative committee meetings, and we are committed to taking action based on this feedback.

Consumer Protection

At Nelson College London, we are fully committed to complying with the guidelines set forth by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) for higher education providers. We ensure that we provide clear, accurate, and timely information to our students so they can make informed decisions about what and where to study. We ensure that our website and the student portal are always up-to-date with accurate and current public information.

Our terms and conditions are fair and transparent, ensuring that we cannot make surprising changes to the course or costs. We have accessible, clear, and fair complaint-handling processes.

We regularly review and, if necessary, amend our practices in line with the CMA's advice. We also inform our students about the number and type of contact hours and expected self-study time.

In addition, we have an open-door policy and encourage our students to notify us of any potential non-compliance with consumer law. We believe in maintaining an open dialogue with our students and are always ready to take necessary actions based on their feedback.

Through these measures, we strive to uphold the highest standards of consumer protection in higher education.

Opportunities

What opportunities are available for students to develop their skills to prepare them for further studies and highly skilled employment.

Nelson College London offers many opportunities for students to develop their skills to succeed in their course of study as well as to prepare them for further studies and highly skilled employment. These activities are briefly discussed below.

Academic Support to Students

Personal Development Plan Survey

The College provides tailor-made learning opportunities to all its students through continuous assessment of their learning needs. At the beginning of the courses, each referred student is required to complete a Personal Development Plan survey. Based on this analysis, the students are referred to workshops (arranged each term), personal tutors and student support lecturers.

Student Support Team

The student support team plays a vital role in identifying students “at risk” of withdrawal or failure and then the team completes and undertakes Individual Learning Plans and set their own objectives for improvement, which the Student Support Lecturers then follow-up. They also attend regular meetings with the Support Lecturers in order to address any problems they may face while working on their assessments or objectives set out in individual learning plans.

Learning Resources

Necessary learning resources are made available to enable students to develop their skills. Every student is provided with a Module Handbook (on the VLE) for each unit taught at the start of each term offering detailed information on unit specification, assessment criteria, learning outcomes, and books recommended for further reading. The College also has an annual subscription to Emerald Insight for e-Journals, and, for university programmes, it has contracted with the e-textbook provider BibliU. Through this arrangement, individual students are licenced to access all their key core textbooks (24/7 online) for a 12-month period. All university students are also provided with Course Handbooks, also accessible through the VLE.

Curricular & Extra-Curricular Activities

Learning opportunities are also provided through guest speaker sessions, workshops, tutorials, cooking competitions, student quizzes and field trips. Teaching materials are made available through the College’s Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and online library, which are accessible 24/7.

The College also runs its own YouTube channels, that contain videos on topics useful to students on all programmes. These videos are scripted, designed, directed and produced by the College academics and media team. The videos are also available to the general public.

Additionally, two computer labs are available for use during normal business hours. Opening times for the labs and the library facilities are extended during assessment submission periods.

Classrooms are fitted with state-of-the-art IT equipment to facilitate teaching and learning, including an interactive BenQ smart board and the technology to deliver online classes. This was extremely useful during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Research Centre

A Research Centre has recently been established to oversee and coordinate the development and implementation of the College research strategy and promote research activities, a central part of NCL's academic activity. The centre will support students who are undertaking research-based projects, to extend their work into potential journal articles for publication. It will also assist course and module leaders to ensure that research projects are delivered to a consistent level of quality and will support engagement with the use of research resources and systems within the College and externally.

Arrangements for Pastoral Support to Students

Nelson College engages a proactive and preventative approach to Pastoral Support, beginning with our Personal Academic Tutors and the College "Open Door Policy". Both mechanisms provide the confidentiality required from such a service, alongside further signposting, should this be required and agreed. Pastoral Care is a feature of both staff training and student inductions. The provision of professional counselling, alongside online resources such as "Plumb" (also providing counselling and 24/7 online support) and "Talk Campus", a peer-to-peer resource providing an opportunity for students to talk anonymously about anything; mental health, depression, self-harm, eating disorders, a bad break-up or a relationship, stress and studies. Talk Campus prides itself on being extremely non-judgemental.

Welfare Provision

Students can gain advice on how to receive financial support from the college and any adjustments that help with their studies. The Student Welfare Officer will aim to remove the identified barriers to students' study progress and prepare an individualised supporting plan.

The college has face-to-face counselling available for students as well as an online platform where students can schedule video-call counselling; access well-being resources and use 24-hour chat counselling using their mobile phone or computer device. Students have access to well-being related events and trips to network and socialise with other students which helps improve their confidence.

Disability Support

Nelson College London offers a wide range of support services to students with disabilities and encourages a positive climate of disclosure. The College will make reasonable adjustments in order to support applicants/students with disabilities, long term medical conditions, or a specific learning difficulty. Such adjustments will arise from an identified need relating to the relevant disability which will be determined during a one-to-one meeting with the 'Disability Support officer' and with the support of evidence submitted by the applicant. If an applicant requires individual

adjustments, then they must register with the 'Disability Support Team' and provide appropriate evidence, in line with the College eligibility criteria.

Additional Welfare initiatives also run by the College include the following:

Description	Target (%)	Achieved (%)	Status	Commentary
Raising awareness of Student Welfare support	Induction sessions/ in-class visits and during events	Achieved	Ongoing	Induction session for the September 2023 cohort Drop-in class week commencing 11th September Coffee morning events week beginning 18th September
Social media campaign to promote financial and mental health support available	Financial support/ Mental Health content is posted every Friday	Achieved	Ongoing	Weekly social exposure
Coffee Mornings with students	To connect with students outside of their learning environment and find out their needs	Achieved	Ongoing	Gants Hill Campus 18th, 20th and 28th September
Stress Relief Boxing session	Promote mental health benefits of physical activities such as boxing	Achieved	Ongoing	Free day passes are available to students
Money Charity workshops: Mind your money and financial resilience & the psychology of money	Develop skills and behaviour to manage finance and build financial resilience for students	Achieved	Ongoing	Scheduled for 26th September 2023 (Gants Hill Campus)

Workshops:

- Mind your Money
- Financial Resilience & the Psychology of money
- Cancer awareness tea party
- Get Fit, Be You

The student Welfare team arranged two workshops from The Money Charity organisation. Students can learn and develop an invaluable life skill to manage their money well. The workshops are interactive and engaging with real-life examples, and students leave with useful tools to build financial resilience.

The cancer awareness workshop is designed to help raise awareness of breast cancer and provide useful information on the signs and symptoms of breast cancer and ways of preventing it, including how to perform a self-examination and access proper screening.

The Get Fit, Be You workshop aims to educate students on the impact of good nutrition on their body and how physical exercise affects their mental and physical strength.

Details of careers guidance available to students

A key pillar of the employability support offered to students is channelled through the College's Knowledge Exchange Centre (KEC).

The KEC team hosts a series of employer-related events, such as the annual Employability Forum and other employability workshops, whilst also arranging industry-specific guest speakers. An exciting feature is the plethora of supporting initiatives, which include the KEC Mini Guide series, incorporating CV writing, cover letter writing, interview techniques, etc.

We also deliver the highly accessible 5-Minute How to and Nano Learning Moment videos (to be found on the College's two YouTube Channels). This support also continues through individual blogs and social media activity.

Additionally, the Career Advisory Service (CAS) was launched in 2021. This service enables students to seek one-to-one guidance with employability professionals on matters specific to them as individuals. This service operates hand-in-hand with a Self-Assessment of Aspirations form and the NCL Career Planning Journal, available to all students to help them prepare for and record their career planning journey. This journal provides guidance on crucial areas such as selecting the right employer, interview preparation checklists and even aspirational charts.

The College also hosts an employability-specific website for students, the NCL Careers Hub. This enables students to upload CVs for reading by one of the ubiquitous AI CV Readers (and then work with the CAS team to improve it, based upon the findings). Students may also attend a mock AI Interview (with questions based upon their own CV) and access a series of training modules. There are both website and mobile application versions of the site.

Library and Learning Resources/Individual & Group Study Facilities

The Library and Learning Resources Centre (LLRC) operates across the Ilford, Gants Hill and Broadstairs campuses. Its primary function is to provide teaching and learning resources and support to students and staff at Nelson College London. Resources include core text and recommended reading books which are procured in line with the requirements of respective programme units. Support involves workshops and training courses designed to develop or enhance the students' and staff technical software knowledge and experiences.

Conferences and Forums

Student Engagement Strategies at Nelson College London consist of numerous activities that include both the Learning, Teaching, Engagement and Enhancement Conference and the Employability and Entrepreneurship Forum. Both were held on the 10th of May 2023 and complemented each other very well.

Learning, Teaching, Engagement and Enhancement Conference

The LTEEC is a cross-college mechanism for staff and students to come together to identify and share good practice and to support the enhancement of learning opportunities.

The Conference addressed a key priority of the Office for Students: “Equality & Diversity in Teaching and Learning.” This then became the key theme for the 2023 event. Throughout the afternoon, students were appraised of the plethora of college initiatives already in place, ensuring that equality and diversity applies to every aspect of the NCL student experience.

Employability and Entrepreneurship Forum

This event brings together employers, entrepreneurs and students in an open, free-flowing, forum; it affords students the opportunity to pose any questions that they might have to a wide variety of employers; anything from CV-content tips, to standing out at interviews, all the way through to workplace advice and career pathways.

This year the event featured twenty-eight employers and entrepreneurs, giving up their precious time to be on hand to help and support our students, by offering expert guidance to students on their future career plans.

4. Fees, funding, and efficiency

Income Breakdown

Income Breakdown	£000s	Percentage
Course fees and education contracts	11194	93.57%
Funding body grants	530	4.43%
Other income	238	1.99%
Investment Income	1	0.01%
Total income	11963	

The primary source of income is from course fees and education contracts, which contribute a significant 93.57% of the total income. Other sources, such as funding body grants, other income, and investment income, contribute a relatively small portion of the total income.

Expenditure Breakdown

Expenditure Breakdown	£000s	Percentage
Staff costs	2559	27.2%
Operating expenses	6444	68.6%
Depreciation and amortisation	344	3.7%
Interest and other finance costs	51	0.5%
Total expenditure	9398	

The primary expenditure is on the operating expenses, which include IT and Library expenses, Student support and bursaries, costs to run and maintain all campuses and other administrative costs. Staff costs also make up a significant portion, including academic and non-academic staff salaries, pension and national insurance contributions.

Student Financial Support

Briefly describe available financial support and amounts spent during the academic year.

1. NCL Hardship

The Hardship Fund is a grant of up to £1,000 for students who face unexpected financial difficulties and need help with their living costs. The fund does not cover tuition fees or lifestyle choices. The fund is limited and subject to eligibility checks. The money can be used for essential living costs, IT equipment, internet access, or childcare costs.

2. NCL Bursary Package

NCL Bursary package is available for up to £1,000 for disabled students and up to £2,000 for students who have experienced care in their lives. This support is to help students with transition to higher education as well as support their living expenses. The fund is limited and subject to eligibility checks. The money can be used for books, equipment, travel, or other expenses. To be eligible, students must be care leavers, care experienced, or disabled and have proof of their status. They must also be UK residents, home students, and in receipt of the maximum Maintenance Loan. Care leavers and care experienced are those who have been in care at any stage of their lives, including those who have been adopted, estranged, or unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

Capital Developments

Briefly state any developments during the academic year or planned for upcoming years.

The Board of Directors acquired the Broadstairs campus buildings from Canterbury Christ Church University on 27th May 2022. For this campus is currently used as an NCL campus for academic delivery, the College needed to get approval from its internal board and committees and as well as from the awarding bodies and the OfS.

The Academic Planning Committee on its meeting held on the 31st October 2022 recommended the Academic Board to proceed with an application to Pearson to recognise and accredit the Broadstairs Campus. Following the approval by the Academic Board on its meeting on 17th November 2022, the College made an application to Pearson for approving this campus as a site to deliver the Pearson programmes, which was subsequently granted by Pearson on 13th February 2023.

Subsequently, the College reported to the OfS on 27th February 2023 as a reportable event in which the College outlined its intention to add a new campus. The OfS confirmed in its email on 14th of March 2023 that it is satisfied with the information provided and it requires no further information or actions.

Based on a marketing survey conducted by the Marketing and Recruitment department of the College that there is a strong demand for the College courses from widening access mature students to study at the NCL's Broadstairs campus. The marketing analysis suggested that there is circa 88,000 adults in Isle of Thanet who do not have any HE qualification and there is a sizeable population number to support recruitment of students for NCL. Additionally, the marketing analysis indicate that circa 8,500 students (including some of those who attend 6th form) attending secondary schools per year with approximately 1,700 students completing their secondary school every year. In addition to the fresh school leaving students, there must be many mature students who have not undertaken HE. Together with the school leaving students and mature students, NCL should be able to recruit a sizeable number of students into its Broadstairs campus.

To exercise caution, the marketing department expects to recruit circa 100 students in the first year over two HND courses, consisting of 50 students onto HND Business and another 50 students in HND Hospitality Management. However, we expects the numbers to grow to over 400 students per year.

The Board of Directors express our unwavering support for the College's mission, which is grounded in promoting the public good by ensuring that students from all backgrounds have the opportunity to access, succeed in, and progress from the courses offered. This noble goal resonates deeply with us, we firmly believe that investing in the College's surplus is aligned to the College's mission will yield significant benefits for both the College's staff, students and its shareholders in the long term and short?

The Board is committed to investing its surplus funds beyond the amount needed by the liquidity coverage, to properties, residential and commercial estates and other form of tangible assets. While these investments do indeed offer the potential for capital gains and rental income, their significance transcends these monetary gains. They play a pivotal role in fortifying the College's financial stability, enabling it to leverage these assets for financial adaptability and resilience, all while generating non-educational income and at the same time they allow strategic and long-term partnerships with our tenants to provide students with opportunities to gain valuable work placements. These real-world experiences not only enhance students' practical skills but also enable them to build crucial professional networks. Additionally, field trips and vocational skills-based workshops taking places in our tenant premises enrich the

learning experience, offering students insights beyond the classroom that can be invaluable in their future careers.

The Board of Directors is considering a number of investment opportunities. We decided to make investment in areas which will undoubtedly play a pivotal role in the College's success and make it financially sound and stronger. The asset classes the Board invest will not only secure the College's future but also ensure its long-term financial stability. The potential for generating rental income from these assets will provide a continuous source of revenue that can be reinvested in the College's core mission and further expand the educational opportunities available to students.

Furthermore, wisely diversifying the College's portfolio of assets is a prudent financial strategy. It will allow the College to weather economic fluctuations and secure a sustainable financial future. By investing in areas that align with the College's mission, we not only promote the public good but also ensure that the College remains a reliable and influential College for generations to come.

In conclusion, the Board remains committed to have a multifaceted strategy to invest in properties and tangible assets. Our investment approach not only offer the potential for financial gains but also solidifies the College's financial foundation. With a strong balance sheet, the College gains the ability to adapt to financial challenges, generate non-educational income, and fortify its resilience in an ever-changing world. This investment not only benefits the College but also safeguards its mission of promoting education and community development.

Efficiency and governance at Nelson College London

Briefly describe in one paragraph what arrangements are in place for effective management and governance of resources at NCL.

The College ensures that there are adequate and effective arrangements in place to secure value for money for students, taxpayers, and other interested parties. Leadership commitment, institutional autonomy, and staff engagement are key enablers of efficiency.

The Audit Risk and Remuneration Committee receives assurance that satisfactory arrangements are in place to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness. It makes an independent judgment on the effectiveness of the College's value-for-money arrangements.

The college ensures efficiency through a multi-faceted approach that includes operational, academic, and strategic measures.

- Operational efficiency involves streamlining processes and operations to reduce waste and improve productivity.
- Academic efficiency can involve measures such as improving student outcomes, enhancing teaching methods, and optimising resource allocation for academic programs.
- Strategic governance involves making decisions that align with the university's mission and goals, promoting efficient use of resources.

The College also undertake comprehensive reviews of student outcomes, revenue-generating activities, and operating activities to identify areas for growth and efficiency. Moreover, the college is increasingly focusing on sustainability, which can lead to efficiency of resource use and cost savings. This involves integrating sustainability into the curriculum, engaging students and staff in sustainability initiatives, and implementing carbon management strategies.

The College's approach to value for money takes account of quality and fitness for purpose to determine whether goods and services represent good value. The College is accordingly committed to spending well and spending wisely to achieve excellent student outcomes.

Students at Nelson College will find their fees employed effectively to provide a worthwhile student experience, and there is data to support this conclusion.

Enquiries

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