

BPP  
PROFESSIONAL  
EDUCATION

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# LEARNER WRITTEN

SUBMISSION



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## Introduction

We place feedback from our learners at the heart of the BPP experience. This Learner Written Submission provides an impression of what it is like to be a learner at BPP and offers recommendations and examples of good practice across the group. It aims to provide an insight into the learner experience and demonstrate how their views are incorporated into the decision-making and quality assurance processes of BPP.

The Learner Written Submission has been introduced for the first time and we feel this additional effort, in producing a submission specifically for learners, is both appreciated and worth the extra work as continuous improvement is within the DNA of BPP, allowing BPP to go from strength to strength.

As a comparison, within the university sector, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and the Office for Students (OfS) recognise the theme of 'Students as Partners' as integral and quintessential to UK Higher Education, with a move towards students being considered partners in all aspects of their student experience, including in the design and delivery of programmes. 'Students as Partners' is more than just involving students in feedback requests; it is also the involvement of students in actively engaging and in shaping and enhancing their learning experiences. 'Students as Partners' principles and approaches are pertinent to many aspects of enhancement and innovation in curriculum and pedagogy which ultimately correlates with positive learning experiences and outcomes for students. We believe the good practice of 'Students as Partners' is directly translatable to aspects of Apprenticeship and PQ experiences.

This Learner Written Submission is written by the Student Experience team, using direct feedback from a range of representatives within the Apprenticeship, Professional Qualifications and Professional Development space.

This document is even more important as we adjust to a 'new normal' in the post-pandemic world where learner needs and expectations may change because of Covid.

I hope you find this document useful in encapsulating the learner experience over the past year.

Most importantly, I would like to thank all those who helped provide data that we used to create this document.



**Hajra Babariya**

GROUP HEAD OF STUDENT EXPERIENCE



# Feedback Sources

Many feedback mechanisms have been used to identify learner feedback and produce this submission, ensuring that we embody BPP's message of 'Student and Learner Centricity', 'Students as Partners' and 'Together we change'.

The robust evidence base for this document includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Feedback from Learner Voice Representatives, including that of their peer groups, programmes,
- Coaching reviews;
- Direct learner feedback;
- A range of surveys including but not limited to Apprentice Surveys and Daily Feedback Surveys;
- Learner Staff Liaison Committee (LSLC) minutes; and
- Tailored thematic focus groups.



## CHAPTER 1

### METHODOLOGY



# Learner/Student Voice Representative Training

This past year has been unique; some of our longer-term Voice Representatives, who would normally attend face to face training sessions, have attended training sessions have all been facilitated online. It is unquestionable that there are many challenges adapting to a virtual world at such short notice. To this end, completing training and producing this shared document in an online environment is testament to the challenging work of the Voice Representatives and BPP.

Providing training to learner representatives is essential for them to effectively carry out their roles. Learner representatives commended this training as engaging, thorough and equipping them with the essential skills they needed to represent their peers.

## CHAPTER 2

### PREPARATION AND BACKGROUND





We would specifically like to thank all the staff who have had sessions with the learners and the co-authors of this Submission, without whose input, support, and guidance this document would not be possible, are as follows:





# Learner Voice



## CHAPTER 3

### LEARNER VOICE AT BPP



Through the Learner Voice, BPP works collaboratively with the learners to continue to improve their experience at BPP. In addition to surveys that are run at various stages of the learner journey and the learner representation on the quarterly Apprenticeship Steering Committee, BPP have introduced Learner Staff Liaison Committees (LSLC).

The LSLC is a new additional feedback mechanism by which learners and staff can communicate and obtain feedback about all aspects of the BPP experience, including feedback on their programme, facilities, welfare, careers, activities, and pro bono services. Learners are elected to the LSLC at the start of the year to represent their cohort. These representatives meet with staff to raise any issues, suggest areas for improvement and offer feedback on new initiatives. LSLCs has been well received by learners and there is scope to continue to introduce them across all learner programmes.



# Quality of Teaching

One of the most important parts of this document is feedback on the quality of teaching which is at the heart of academic and professional standards at BPP.

At BPP, the quality of teaching continues to be an area of strength. It is evident from the feedback we have seen that BPP quickly and successfully transitioned to online learning where this was not already the case, from in-centre classes, allowing learners to continue their studies without major disruption.

The quality of the teaching this year continues to be praised by learner representatives, observing that tutors are professional, passionate and have a detailed knowledge in their respective areas.

**Below is feedback specifically from PQ learners:**

“

“[my tutor] is one of the best tutors I have ever had. He does not just focus on the technical stuff; he provides clarity on the big picture of the topic and how we apply it on a day-to-day basis.”

“

“Honestly, THE best tutor I've ever had with BPP. [Their] engagement with all students, even via the chat box was incredible. He made every session enjoyable.... He went through topics slowly enough to understand, but quick enough to keep the engagement up. He is incredibly knowledgeable, not just of the syllabus but also of the exam itself. In addition to being knowledgeable, he is fantastic at sharing his knowledge... Seriously, I cannot get over how much I'm blown away by his lectures.”

Learners have also commented that tutors continue to use different techniques within classes to cater for distinct types of learners and place the learner experience during the pandemic at the heart of their approach. As an example, some apprentices have had their learning supported through polls, interactive whiteboards, academic games, and videos.

## CHAPTER 4

### THEMATIC FEEDBACK



# A Welcome Enhancement:

## Daily Feedback Survey

The transition to online learning has been a comparably seamless process. A survey was introduced almost immediately, to give learners the opportunity to provide feedback after every online session and these comments are reviewed daily by BPP to ensure that any concerns are quickly actioned. The daily feedback survey is recognised as being innovative in the sector and a feature of good practice.

This feedback is reflected in the daily tutor scores, which is a new survey run on Qualtrics and managed by the Group Head of Student Experience, Hajra Babariya, and Head of Learning and Teaching, Joel Mills. This survey has received over 85,000 responses in less than 15 months and a satisfaction score which currently stands at 4.39 out of 5. Responses are anonymous and are reviewed daily with the Group Head of Student Experience and the Head of Learning and Teaching and shared with the IT Director, the Learning and Teaching Team and School representatives. The Pro Vice-Chancellor, Juliette Wagner, chairs a call with senior school leads three times a week to review and act on feedback.

**These are some feedback comments received directly from surveys, showing their dedication to helping learners:**

“

“The senior team’s response to Covid-19 was proactive and dynamic.”

“

“Very approachable to ask questions in and out of class and was very knowledgeable about the syllabus and how it will be examined.”

“

“One of the best tutors I have had. He offered to go over things at lunchtime or after class. He waited for [us] to finish typing questions in the chat box before he moved on. He made the revision course more fun as he was so enthusiastic, this was really appreciated.”

# Course Quality

The session quality remains high for modules. Tutors have adopted various course delivery styles that allows learners to engage through group presentations, quizzes, and business simulations. The breakout rooms tend to be innovative and sector leading allowing for interaction and enhancement. Tutors are proficient in how to use the platform and the classes have been well run.

“The presenter was knowledgeable, encouraging and helpful.”

Learners on PQ courses commented that the course notes and revision summaries were well structured and assisted them in learning during classes. Furthermore, the tutors structured their teaching around making the materials engaging and pushing students to go beyond them at times. This approach to the course catered for a wide variety of learning styles. This is partially reflected in the PQ end of module CSAT Customer Satisfaction score which stood at 89% in April 2021.

“Very easy to get engaged and involved with the study

“[Our tutor] used anecdotes to make the material 'come alive'.”

Learners have commented that the recorded lectures in the applicable programmes has been helpful in scenarios where individuals may not be able to attend a live session, this has been further improved for accessibility with the introduction of single sign-on. Given the work commitments of many apprentices this extra degree of flexibility has been welcomed and is something our learners wish to keep post-pandemic. The timely uploading of recorded lectures on the Hub/VLE drew praise as it aided the learner experience. In addition, learners commented that the availability of these recorded lectures and sessions is of significant use during revision.

The programme teams were also praised where they were able to offer flexible online sessions and half day tutorials during the past year.



# Starting the Programme (Induction)

Most learners felt well supported during induction. Learners found the key documents, including learning plan, joining instructions, VLE access and induction webinar details especially useful. Some learners have suggested the learning plan could be even further improved by digitising more elements of it and focusing more on a learner's personal journey.

“Keep doing what you're doing. The induction was very helpful for seeing the tutorial online environment prior to the start.”

## Area for Consideration

Some learners commented that it would be useful to meet other learners studying the same course to feel part of a group and part of the wider BPP learner population. Learners also felt it might be beneficial to have a scheduled “catch-up” session a few months into their programmes, once they have started studying, for them to be able to share how they are adapting to balancing work and study.

# Timetables

For those learners who receive timetables, these are received ahead of their start date and include the time of their live session. This also details the timings of summative / formative assessments and revision periods on the run up to the end exam. This allows apprentices time to prepare in advance and book any additional study days with their work which they might like around exam dates. This advance notice is helpful and appreciated by learners.

# Library

Learners who use the Library Service, feel that BPP excels in this area providing a fantastic library and service. The consensus on feedback has been that there are lots of online books, resources, and articles readily available and accessible, and that all resources are easy to find and download online.

Learners commented that library staff are helpful, and have praised the team's informative sessions, newsletters, and chat functions, which allows queries to be answered quickly and efficiently.

Apprentices and online learners used the online library for work even before the pandemic. These groups have shared positive experiences with the library to date – the ‘Ask a Librarian’ sessions are particularly useful when learners have any urgent queries. In addition to this, the library email address typically responds to queries within 24 hours which is an immense help as library resources are intrinsic for study. There are extensive materials which are available which means BPP does not limit access to gain further understanding or knowledge on topics.

The responsiveness of the library team, the innovative ‘Ask the Librarian’ sessions, the engaging library newsletter and the range of online resources including free access to the Financial Times are features of good practice.

## Area for Consideration

Some learners commented that there remains uncertainty as to whether the library is ‘for them’ or only accessible to learners on certain programmes. Further initiatives to advertise the library to learners would be beneficial, for instance a video on the homepage of the online library which explains how to use the online library and mentions apprentices.



# Employability Support

As learners are typically already in long term employment when they begin their programme, many do not take advantage of employability support although they benefit from the Career Ready skills offered by BPP. However, this year BPP went above and beyond to support apprentices who, through no fault of their own, were made redundant because of the pandemic. This extra support in allowing learners to progress with their studies made a massive difference to the affected individuals.

“My experience throughout my apprenticeship journey has reflected positively in my interviews where I was able to showcase my transferable skills and experience.”

## Area for Consideration

Learners are aware that BPP offer application, assessment centre and interview skills workshops/support, however, these could be better communicated and shared with apprentices who specifically might find themselves in a position where they need to re-apply for the next level apprenticeship.



# Coaching

Apprentice learners believe that the quality of coaching has stayed strong and even improved, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Coaches at BPP are approachable and willing to offer guidance and help to learners from a distance via Skype or Teams calls. Coaches are also attentive, and the learners can expect short turnaround times for their queries.

The coaching model is highlighted as an area of **good practice**, although learners noted the structure can differ slightly by programme. Learners particularly like having an assigned coach for the duration of their programme because of the pastoral and mentoring benefits this brings.

“It is really nice knowing you have someone to talk to about any issues without having to wait for programme support or lectures.”

“My coaches’ ongoing support has made a big difference!”

“From the bottom of my heart, I want to say a truly heartfelt thank you for everything [my coaches] have done to support me over this phase of my apprenticeship. You really have been a massive help and support to me, and I couldn’t have asked for better people to support me.”

“My coach has been nothing but supportive, empathetic, sensitive and understanding about the challenges I’ve been facing both professionally and personally.”

“Highly qualified coaches and tutors are well trained to make the transition into education.”



# Logbook/ Workbook

Some learners are required to complete a Logbook and/or Portfolio. These learners agree that there needs to be more information given during a programme as to why a Logbook and/or Portfolio is required and ensure expectations are clearly set from the start of their program, for instance, during coaching calls. A primary reason for this recommendation is that the evidence required for each knowledge/skill/behaviour (KSB) often cannot be sought retrospectively.

Some cohorts reported that they were not confident in completing Logbooks/Portfolio entries as they had not been provided with examples, however, learners are happy with the detailed feedback that they receive for their entries.

# Assessments

Learners have adapted well to online exams, and, for those undertaking Inspera exams, the new structure was welcomed. Some learners received a tutorial 48 hours before their exam to help them familiarise themselves with the Inspera platform and this was identified as an area of good practice. The consistent feedback from learners is that the open book exams are a much better mode of assessment because they better reflect the realities of work.

PQ students also identified the achievement ladder as an area of **good practice** because it contained highly useful extra questions that could support assessment preparation.

When submitting assignments learners noted that there can be discrepancies on the quality of feedback received, although they praised the ability to flag poor feedback and have it remedied.

## Area for Consideration

As much as the marking guides can be helpful, learners would give the recommendation that more revision materials need to be provided in the form of past papers and MCQ's where applicable.

"...some more advice on approaching a multiple-choice exam would've been beneficial."

# Technology

Overall, there has been increasingly positive feedback as the year progressed. Learners commented that Adobe Connect, after recent updates, made the learning experience "easier and more approachable," particularly because it had all the functionalities needed for productive learning.

The change for some learners from the VLE to the Hub has been helpful and a smooth transition with lots of insights into the Hub before the full transition took place. The Hub has the potential to be a better organised platform and is more interactive (including the Virtual Practice Environment) which makes it an ideal adaption to prepare for the new SQE style of exam.

## Area for Consideration

Learners noted broken links and finding it difficult to navigate to the information they needed as areas for improvement for the Hub. Learners feel that the Hub could be updated more regularly to reflect and to check that all the hyperlinks are working. The separation of materials on the Hub is good as it makes it easier to find resources. Nonetheless, some resources are still buried, such as the announcements; giving the announcements their own tile would improve this. Similarly, notifications and alerts would be useful for important updates such as exam results, updated syllabus etc.

"BPP are always looking to use the most interactive technology to engage apprentices in their studies. The introduction of the VPE (Virtual Practice Environment) alongside the Hub allowed apprentices to experience a mimicked workplace and attempt "real life" scenarios, improving workplace skills. BPP always invite feedback on the technology they use, to ensure the programmes run smoothly and efficiently, particularly during the course of the pandemic when all teaching was changed to online."



# Learner Engagement & Programme Support

The Apprentice Champion Engagement Forum has been identified as an area of good practice. The forum provides a unique opportunity for learners across different programmes to engage with each other and work together to improve the apprentice experience. Those involved in the forum identified the Apprentice of the Year Award as a further example of positive engagement.

Learners consistently noted they wanted more opportunity to engage with their fellow learners, suggesting email groups, organised Skype calls and online forums as potential options. Learners would like their skills coaches and tutors to help initiate these support networks to prevent learners from feeling isolated or unsure of where to access information. Similar feedback was shared by PQ learners who found themselves unable to keep in contact with their peers after their course ended due to no personal information being permitted to be shared during the course.

## Learning Support

The Learning Support team has been supportive and helpful during remote learning this year. They have adapted to having online meetings with learners, allowing learning support arrangements to be made via these online meetings. Apprentices were made aware of the learning support options during their induction.

Learners noted it was easy to apply to discuss their most suitable options with the learning support team. Also, when support was implemented, lecturers were informed to ensure individuals gained the most appropriate help throughout their course. This is reviewed during individuals' progress reviews and alterations are made where necessary.

### Personal Testimonial – Anonymous learner:

'My experience with learning support has been incredibly positive... The way that any additional learning support requirements are built into the online exam platform, by showing exactly the additional time to be added in advance of the exam, provides great reassurance that all measures are in place and greatly reduces anxiety for me.'

# Inclusion and Diversity

BPP is committed to promoting equality and tackling any discrimination that creates barriers to learning and celebrating a range of cultures, sexualities, ethnicities, genders, and backgrounds to ensure fair access to learning facilities.

There is a Reverse Mentoring programme at BPP, which has recently been launched with learners, whereby BAME learners mentor faculty to share what it is like for them to attend the University and to provide a cultural exchange. By approaching the dialogue at an individual level, staff and students can have open conversations, leading to far greater appreciation for diversity and inclusion. The Inclusion team also run Inclusion and Diversity podcasts which is a great initiative. Highlighting these initiatives to the wider learner body would be welcome as there remains some uncertainty that these services are open to learners as well as students.

The Inclusion team provides guidance and support in relation to inclusion and diversity at BPP. The team's Diversity groups facilitate opportunities for learners to connect and provide each other with peer-to-peer support. The work of the Inclusion team covers all aspects of the learner experience, including learning and teaching, staff training, IT accessibility and other areas of inclusive practice.

Learners who access the VLE/Hub can contact the Inclusion team via the Query Form if they have any concerns with respect to racially motivated harassment. The Inclusion Team have a wide network of relationships with external partners and run events to promote and foster inclusion and access to both education and employment.

All feedback we have seen shows that BPP is inclusive and provides all their learners with equal opportunities. Learners have suggested that further work could be done to engage with employers to ensure the inclusive environment extends to all parts of their programmes.





# Safeguarding and Counselling

BPP places a lot of importance on staff and learner mental health. To this end, safeguarding is an important service to make sure the right care is given. In the present climate, a lot of learners are struggling to cope with the side effects of a pandemic, including financial issues, lack of social interaction, move to online classes and other adverse ramifications, all of which contribute to elevated levels of anxiety, depression, and mental health difficulties.

The Safeguarding team has always been appreciated for the quality of services provided. Safeguarding has also been more clearly demarcated during this time, being advertised in the signature of every email from BPP. This is a positive step for individuals who could utilise this service during these challenging times.

Learners have noted that safeguarding initiatives are well integrated into their programmes, with tutors regularly reference safeguarding and wellbeing topics during taught sessions. The Apprentice Engagement Forum ran by the Safeguarding team this year has also been identified as an area of good practice and a tangible example of BPP teams ensuring their services are aligned with learner needs.

## Area for Consideration

The counselling service is incredibly important for a wide variety of learners. However, feedback suggests more can be done to raise awareness of the Total Wellness counselling service amongst learners.



# A Welcome Enhancement:

## Time out Tuesday wellbeing sessions

The physical, emotional, mental, and social wellbeing of learners has been a major priority of BPP during these challenging times. International cohorts expressed facing a difficult transition phase in their lives due to struggles with living away from family and being unable to have the opportunity to network and socialise in a face-to-face environment.

*'I highly praise BPP for the focus on wellbeing that has been made since the start of the pandemic, particularly in light of the heavy criticism many other universities have faced for their lack of support for their students. There are such a wide range of options for students seeking wellbeing support, I am really impressed with the efforts made. The online Community space has been a huge step in allowing students to feel supported and connected in such unusual times and has really overcome any gaps in support and opportunities provided to smaller campuses in comparison to the London, larger campuses. The initiative of Wellbeing Tuesdays is really great, and the Community is filled with wellbeing discussions and competitions which is really positive to see.'*

**(Solicitor Apprentice)**



# Virtual Campus

The Virtual Campus is an innovative sector-leading, engaging, and welcoming online space for BPP learners, staff, and alumni – a safe space to socialise, make friends, attend events and benefit from the university experience. It has aided the formulation of a wider BPP community and the number of learners using the platform continues to grow.

The Virtual Campus has been a great initiative that has brought together the learners of BPP in a time when we are physically apart. It has provided a way to connect, network, wind-down, meet new people and enter fun competitions weekly. Learners have enjoyed the different forums available and found it easy to use, having a social-media interface and being accessible as a smart phone app, with lots of opportunities and competitions to get involved with.

However, some learners reported that they have not yet engaged in the Virtual Campus as much as they would like due to placement commitments and due to the fact at the start of the year there was less engagement and posts on the forum; following this they did not continue to engage. This issue has already been resolved with the Virtual Campus now being more well-established with learners and with engagement increasing, with over 9000 members on the platform. Study is much more than having access to an online learning platform, in terms of personal, social, and professional development; the Virtual Campus goes a long way in fulfilling what it means to be at BPP.

Learners appreciate the Virtual Campus, and this is reflected in the amount of engagement it has received in the past few months. It is a pivotal resource in these challenging times, being at home and not allowed to meet other learners in person. Many learners have appreciated the immense effort of the Pro-Vice Chancellor, Juliette Wagner, in creating the Virtual Campus and commented that it has been a fantastic initiative.

Recently, learner engagement has reached new heights with many thanks to the engagement team who are constantly rolling out events and topics for learners to participate in or discuss on the Virtual Campus. Learners would welcome additional events tailored to their needs and for further engagement on the platform from their tutors and coaches.

The innovative Virtual Campus is recognised as an area of **good practice**:

“This is clearly important to BPP as it at the forefront of many communications received. I believe the introduction of BPP Community, the online platform, has really positively impacted the inclusion that apprentices feel. Furthermore, the plethora of online events available to apprentices has been positively received, really creating a community university feel, which would otherwise be lost on the distant learners.”

## Students, stay connected on Virtual Campus

Check out our Virtual Campus on [community.bpp.com](https://community.bpp.com) where you can:



### Connect

Stay in touch with your BPP community



### Advance

Check out our online employability and professional development events



### Enjoy

Take part in a wide range of activities and discussions - plus enter competitions to win top prizes!



# Recommendations

## Peer Support:

Where possible, learners would appreciate the chance to meet with fellow course peers at the start of their programme to facilitate support networks and create a wider sense of a BPP community. This should be an event facilitated by the programme team during the induction period and learners should be encouraged to share their details to keep in touch.

## Logbooks:

Learners would benefit from logbook entry examples being provided at the start of their courses, the expectations of what is expected from entries could also be more clearly set out during coaching sessions and contact time.

## Advertising Services:

The feedback identified that whilst impressed with the opportunities and services available to learners more could be done to promote these resources. Teams could strive to host special events and inductions for learners and post material relevant to them onto forums such as the Virtual Campus.

## CHAPTER 5

### RECOMMENDATIONS



# Areas of Good Practice

## Quality of Teaching:

Learners have consistently reported excellent satisfaction surrounding the quality of teaching they have received, and this is reflected on the variety of surveys run across the group. The message from learners is to keep the interactive and creative elements of online teaching as we transition back to face-to-face.

## Quality of Coaching:

Learners have celebrated the renewed focus on mentoring within the coaching relationship and many have provided glowing feedback on their experiences. The pastoral, academic and professional benefits of coaching are abundantly clear.

## Daily Feedback Survey:

The daily feedback survey, with over 85,000 responses, has been well received by learners. It is reviewed regularly under the guidance of the Pro Vice-Chancellor to make clear improvements and is recognised as being innovative in the sector and a feature of good practice.

## Safeguarding:

Learners felt the safeguarding team demonstrated good practice, particularly during the Apprentice Engagement Forum. Learners considered the safeguarding team as aware of their needs and willing to change their practices to accommodate these.

## Virtual Campus and Student Engagement:

The Virtual Campus has received positive feedback from learners from its inception and is another positive highlight coming out of the pandemic. It provides an invaluable avenue for learners to continue engagement through events put on by clubs, societies, and the University across all centres. The Students' Association presence on the Virtual Campus has been invaluable throughout the pandemic. The online engagement, content, competitions and events and has been well received by learners across the group.

## CHAPTER 6

### AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE





We thank BPP for their support in continuing Good Practice measures and making improvements based on suggestions and recommendations.

