



# **Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023**

## **Summary TEF 2023 panel statement**

**Bournemouth University**

# Summary of outcomes

## Overall: Silver

Typically, the experience students have at Bournemouth University and the outcomes it leads to are very high quality.

### Student experience: Bronze

The student academic experience is typically high quality, and there are some very high quality features.

Very high quality features include:

- effective feedback and assessment practices, supporting students' learning, progression, and attainment
- an effective strategy to integrate research, education, and engagement with professional practice and industry
- effectively integrating research, professional practice, and education to create a stimulating student experience that promotes successful employment
- very high quality support for staff professional development and excellent academic practice is promoted
- physical and virtual learning resources are used effectively to support very high quality teaching and learning

### Student outcomes: Silver

Student outcomes are typically very high quality.

Very high quality features include:

- tailoring effective approaches to ensure students succeed in and progress beyond their studies
- very high rates of continuation and completion for students and courses
- very high quality rates of successful progression for students and courses
- clearly articulating educational gains for students to achieve, why they are relevant, and effectively supporting them to achieve these gains.

# About the assessment

The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) is a national scheme run by the Office for Students (OfS) that aims to encourage universities and colleges (providers) to improve and deliver excellent teaching, learning and student outcomes.

The TEF does this by assessing and rating providers for excellence above the high quality baseline that we expect from all providers. It covers undergraduate courses.

Throughout this document, we use the terms ‘outstanding’ and ‘very high quality’, which are defined in terms of the TEF 2023 assessment as follows:

- ‘outstanding’: the quality of the student experience or outcomes are among the very best in the sector, for the mix of students and courses taught by a provider
- ‘very high quality’: the quality of the student experience or outcomes are materially above the relevant high quality minimum requirements, for the mix of students and courses taught by a provider.

The assessment was carried out in 2022-23 by the TEF Panel, a panel of academics and students who are experts in learning and teaching. This document sets out a summary of the panel’s findings and judgements.

The panel reviewed the following evidence:

- numerical indicators produced by the OfS, using national datasets
- a submission made by the provider, setting out its own evidence
- a submission made by the provider’s students, setting out students’ views.

The panel applied its expert judgement to:

- identify particular features of the student experience and student outcomes that are excellent (above the high quality baseline requirements)
- decide a rating for the ‘student experience’ and for ‘student outcomes’
- decide an overall rating for the provider.

Throughout the assessment the panel took account of the context of the provider and judged how well it delivers teaching, learning and student outcomes for its mix of students and courses.

In making its decisions the panel took account of the OfS general duties and the public sector equalities duty.

# Summary of panel assessment

## Information about this provider

Bournemouth University's strategy is based on the premise of a 'continuous blend between inspiring learning, advancing knowledge and enriching society by bringing together research, education, and engagement with professional practice and industry'.

It is a large university, with 13,250 full-time and 150 part-time undergraduate students. Most of its undergraduate programmes are three years long, to study for a first degree. The most popular subject areas are Business and Management (25 per cent), Nursing and Midwifery (10 per cent), Psychology (seven per cent) and Creative Arts and Design (seven per cent).

Of its students, 19.1 per cent have a disability or learning difference. Students from ethnic minority backgrounds make up four to five per cent of the student population, while 20.9 per cent are from deprived socioeconomic backgrounds. The vast majority were not local to the provider before studying there.

The assessment considered information about the provider's undergraduate courses and students on those courses.

Full details about the provider's student demographics used in the TEF 2023 assessment are available at [www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/data-used-in-tef-2023/](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/data-used-in-tef-2023/).

More information about this provider can be found on the OfS Register at [www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/the-register/the-ofs-register/](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/the-register/the-ofs-register/).

## **Student experience: Bronze**

Throughout this section, we refer to indicators. These indicators are based on students' responses to the National Student Survey. The indicators are 'benchmarked' to show how well the provider performs for its particular mix of students and courses.

Across the student experience aspect, the panel found:

- most features are very high quality
- there is not enough evidence to judge two features to be very high quality.

The panel noted that while the provider submission offers compelling evidence of university wide strategic investment and initiatives to support a very high quality student experience, many were relatively new, with limited evidence of impact on the student experience. There were inconsistencies in how embedded initiatives and approaches were across different subject areas and some student groups.

Considering the evidence holistically, the panel found the best fit rating to be 'Bronze', due to some features being very high quality for most students at the provider.

The panel's assessment of the student experience features is set out below.

### **Teaching, assessment, and feedback**

The panel considered this feature to be very high quality.

The indicators showed:

- for full-time students there is compelling evidence of very high quality 'teaching on my course'. This includes differences across subject areas with some below benchmark and a couple above benchmark (Allied Health and Health and Social Care). There is limited evidence of 'assessment and feedback' being very high quality
- for part-time students there is initial evidence that 'teaching on my course' is below the level of very high quality, and that 'assessment and feedback' is below the level of very high quality (there is evidence of both indicators being materially below benchmark).

The panel interpreted the indicators to give initial evidence of a very high quality feature.

The provider and student submissions show a strategic commitment to quality teaching, feedback, and assessment through various approaches, including:

- offering personalised learning through its centre for fusion learning, innovation and excellence, which supports staff to design, deliver, and evaluate innovative practices
- 74 per cent of programmes being accredited by professional, statutory and regulatory bodies, with 81 per cent of undergraduate students enrolling in these courses
- integrating placement opportunities in all undergraduate programmes

- a large number of external examiner reports highlighting the effectiveness of its assessment practices
- student feedback highlighting an initiative called SimOn that allows students to comment on current approaches and ideas for improvement, with students presenting their thoughts at programme level meetings
- students also stating that academic staff have access to resources, guidance, and toolkits for effective teaching, feedback, and assessment, although there is some variability in how individual staff members follow this guidance and best practice
- students noting instances of assessment and exam scheduling being too close together, but there is positive feedback about when best practices are followed and when the spacing of assessments/exams suits students.

The panel noted the provider recognises that there are clear opportunities for enhancement in practices. However, it also considered that despite the provider submission noting its inclusive approach to curriculum design, the indicators for 'teaching on my course' and for 'assessment and feedback' for disabled students gave evidence of below benchmark performance.

Overall however, the panel judged that there is enough evidence to indicate this is a very high quality feature for most student groups, and concluded the provider has embedded very high quality teaching, feedback and assessment practices that are effective in supporting its students' learning, progression, and attainment.

### **Course content and delivery; student engagement in learning and stretch**

The panel rated this feature very high quality.

The panel looked at the provider and student submissions and found evidence of very high quality, including:

- how its Fusion strategy aims to integrate research, education, and engagement with professional practice and industry. This approach is integrated into programme design, delivery, and assessment; and monitoring, review arrangements, and core data can demonstrate its effectiveness
- a recent student survey that showed 81.2 per cent of respondents said their course helped them develop knowledge and skills needed for their future
- the student submission praises course content quality, structure, accessibility, detail, variety, enjoyment, and usefulness. It also highlights areas for improvement including more interactivity in some teaching sessions and improving consistency in timetabling.

Considering all the evidence the panel concluded that course content and delivery effectively encourage the provider's students to engage in their learning, and stretch students to develop their knowledge and skills.

## **Research, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and employer engagement**

The panel found this feature to be very high quality.

The provider submission shows evidence of a very high quality feature, including:

- integrating research, professional practice, and education to create a stimulating student experience that promotes successful employment
- integrating external regulator accreditation into programme design, with 81 percent of undergraduates enrolled in recognised programmes
- offering all programmes placement opportunities with a high student engagement rate of 40 per cent. Student feedback shows satisfaction with placement support.
- Integrating industry focused projects and assignments via platforms like the student project bank
- holding events such as research conferences and platforms for students to publish their research in peer reviewed journals.

The panel did not find enough evidence of an outstanding feature, as the submission contained little information on the impact of initiatives on academic experience.

Considering the evidence in the round the panel concluded that the provider uses research in relevant disciplines, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and/or employer engagement to contribute to a very high quality academic experience for its students

## **Staff professional development and academic practice**

The panel found this feature to be very high quality.

The provider submission outlines evidence of a very high quality feature, including:

- 85 per cent of staff balance teaching and research roles
- 73 per cent of staff hold teaching qualifications, while 68 per cent hold fellowships
- new teaching staff complete the PG Certificate in Education Practice for Fellowship
- all staff participate in peer reflection on education practice to enhance student experience and support professional development
- 78 per cent of eligible staff were submitted the to the research excellence framework 2021 - a notable increase from 29 per cent in 2014 due to investment in research and staff development.

Considering all the evidence, the panel judged there is very high quality support for staff professional development and excellent academic practice is promoted.

## Learning environment and academic support

The panel found there was not enough evidence to rate this this feature very high quality.

The data in the 'academic support' indicator was too uncertain to provide any initial evidence of very high quality. There are significant variations across different subjects.

The provider submission showed evidence of a number of initiatives, including:

- transitioning from using academic advisors to individual personal tutors, using digital tools to generate new types of data
- utilising learner analytic software tools
- offering a study skills program through library and learning support services, however, data on session uptake and impact is lacking
- putting a peer assisted learning program in place, with extensive student access.

Student feedback highlights the benefits of the peer assisted learning programme to both mentees and mentors. Student feedback notes inconsistency in the effectiveness of peer assisted learning across programmes.

The panel considered that the student submission overall shows students are satisfied with the approachability of the teaching staff and good advice, but that there was inconsistent communication across programmes between staff.

Considering the evidence in the round that panel found that there was not enough evidence to judge this feature to be very high quality. This was due to the variability of the indicators showing that the provider's approaches are not yet fully embedded in across all programmes. However, the panel recognised as positive new initiatives being implemented by the provider that need time to fully develop and become embedded across most of provision.

## Learning resources

The indicator provided initial evidence that 'learning resources' is below benchmark for full-time students.

The provider and student submissions added some evidence of very high quality, for example:

- student feedback shows they generally find learning resources positive, with a 72 per cent positive rating across 18 programmes. But they suggest room for improvement in resource quality and lecture recordings in the virtual learning environment
- a student survey showed mixed results when asked about resource availability and learning needs being met
- high quality, interactive on campus learning experiences are prioritised. The approach was developed through consultation and has had significant investment since 2012.



The panel considered there is clear evidence that both physical and virtual learning resources are used to support teaching and learning, with ongoing enhancements in train to increase their effectiveness. The panel noted that the provider's focus on in person delivery led to it to being more affected than most during the coronavirus pandemic, and suggested it may not have the ability to effectively change direction in response to particular external stresses. The panel also noted the improving trend in the indicators.

The panel looked at all the evidence and concluded physical and virtual learning resources are used effectively to support very high quality teaching and learning, but noted that this is a borderline very high quality feature. This is due to the provider's delayed response to the coronavirus pandemic and limited information around the quality and impact of interventions during this period.

### **Student engagement in improvement**

The panel did not find enough evidence of a very high quality feature, though there was enough evidence of the feature being high quality.

The indicator for student voice gives initial evidence that the provider's performance is below benchmark. The panel noted that by TEF year 4 there was improvement such that the indicator is broadly in line with benchmark.

The provider and student submissions offer evidence of various methods to involve the student voice, including:

- an executive student voice and engagement committee chaired by the Vice Chancellor, with student representation on a range of deliberative committees
- introducing an annual survey to capture overall programme feedback, with a 25 per cent response rate from students
- revising unit feedback mechanisms in the past year. However, there was no compelling evidence the provider acknowledged or intervened in subject areas which are below very high quality for student voice
- student feedback is positive overall about engagement methods, including joint policy efforts with the students' union. But despite this, around a third of a student focus group were unaware of how student voice was represented at the provider
- recently establishing staff-student forums across all programmes.

While the panel found there was not enough evidence for a very high quality feature, it noted the provider has recently implemented a number of initiatives that are showing signs of positive impact, although needing more time to develop.

## **Student outcomes: Silver**

In this section, we refer to indicators. The indicators for continuation, completion and progression rates are based on national data about higher education students. The indicators are benchmarked to show how well the provider performs for its particular mix of students and courses.

Across the student outcomes aspect, the panel found all features were very high quality. The panel found evidence that there was little to no variation of the very high quality features across students, but that there was some variation between subjects.

The panel applied the criteria and considered that the rating with the best fit is 'Silver'. This is because all features of student outcomes are very high quality for most groups of students.

The panel's assessment of the student outcomes features is set out below.

### **Approaches to supporting student success**

The panel considered this to be a very high quality feature.

The provider and student submissions add evidence of a very high quality feature including:

- offering career planning and skills support that targets support where need is higher - over half of students engaging with this during 2020-21 being from underrepresented groups
- students have opportunities for placements, with 40 per cent of full-time, first degree graduates taking part, compared to eight per cent for the sector
- 88 per cent of students were satisfied with placements in a recent national student survey
- academic departments providing tailored support for progression, such as the business school employability programme which gets students closer to industry through meeting and networking with future employers
- changing reassessment submission dates to improve rates of students continuing on their courses
- new student retention coordinator roles aiming to share good practice, develop learning analytics, and carrying out proactive interventions for students who are not engaging in their studies.

Overall, the panel considered this feature to be very high quality, as the provider supports its students to succeed in and progress beyond their studies.

### **Continuation and completion rates**

The panel considered this to be a very high quality feature.

The indicators show:

- for full-time students there is compelling evidence that 'continuation' and 'completion' are very high quality. However, there was some variation across subjects

- for part-time students there is very strong evidence that 'continuation' is very high quality, while there is compelling evidence 'completion' is below benchmark.

The panel noted the provider clearly identified most areas below very high quality in its submission and the credible actions it is taking to enhance them.

The provider's submission outlined that recent changes to reassessment and in-module retrieval policies have shown early signs of success, and this is supported by internal data.

Looking at all the evidence together, the panel considered this feature to be very high quality as there are very high rates of continuation and completion for the provider's students and courses.

## **Progression rates**

The panel considered this to be a very high quality feature.

The indicator showed for full-time students there is compelling evidence that 'progression' is either very high quality or outstanding, with some variation across subjects.

The provider submission added further evidence of a very high quality feature including:

- graduate salaries are consistently higher than the average in the sector, with data showing they have above average earnings one, three, and five years after leaving the university
- strong alumni networks and guest speakers contribute to the positive progress of students
- placements have positive impacts on student outcomes.

Overall the panel judged there are very high quality rates of successful progression for the provider's students and courses.

## **Intended educational gains, approaches to supporting educational gains and evaluation and demonstration of educational gains**

The panel considered these features to be very high quality.

The provider submission shows evidence of very high quality, including:

- emphasising educational gains through its 'Fusion Learning' principles, involving real world problem solving and the development of research skills
- a high proportion of professionally accredited programs – 74 per cent compared to the sector average of 27 per cent
- high student engagement in placements. 40 per cent of full-time first degree graduates undertook a placement compared to the eight per cent sector average.

The panel noted that the provider is in the process of developing ways to measure educational gains focusing on a deeper understanding of a student's development across their learning journey. Plans include student self-evaluation, through surveys on course and unit feedback, with

pilot phases producing positive results. The provider also discusses how learning analytics will support timely interventions and better understanding of issues affecting educational gain.

The panel considered indicators for continuation, completion, and progression show evidence of positive impact. Considering the evidence in the round, the panel judged all three features are very high quality. It concluded the provider clearly articulates the educational gains it intends its student to achieve, why they are relevant to its students as well as how it effectively supports them to achieve these gains. Its evaluation methods are currently in development, with a positive first tests and pilots.

## **Overall: Silver**

Based on the guidance and the expert judgement of panel members, the panel found the 'best fit' rating to be 'Silver'.

The panel considered student experience features to be 'Bronze'; and student outcomes features to be 'Silver', and gave equal weight to both. It carefully examined the evidence across all features, student groups, subjects, and courses.

In judging 'Silver' to be the best fit the panel noted that:

- while it considered that there was not enough evidence of very high quality in some student experience features, there was sufficient evidence that most features were very high quality for some students
- across all features there was evidence of embedded or new initiatives that contributed to very high quality outcomes for most students, as well as very high quality features
- the provider has put in place a strategic and organised response to recognised inconsistencies.

Overall the panel concluded the evidence shows student experience and student outcomes are typically very high quality, consistent with a rating of 'Silver'.