



Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023

Summary TEF 2023 panel statement

Goldsmiths' College

Summary of outcomes

Overall: Bronze

Typically, the experience students have at Goldsmiths' College and the outcomes it leads to are high quality, with some very high quality features.

Student experience: Requires improvement

Improvement is required to be awarded a TEF rating for this aspect.

There are not enough very high quality features to be awarded a TEF rating. Very high quality features include:

- research in relevant disciplines, scholarship and professional practice to contribute to a very high quality academic experience
- a number of approaches to supporting staff professional development and some examples of how excellent academic practice is promoted and rewarded.

The panel did not find any features to be of concern.

Student outcomes: Bronze

Student outcomes are typically high quality and there are some very high quality features.

Very high quality features include:

- very high rates of successful progression for the provider's students and courses
- the provider articulates the gains it intends its students to achieve, and, to some extent, why these are relevant to its students.

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
- ‘Quality assessment report: Computing courses at Goldsmiths College January 2023 – April 2023’ (OfS 2023.59), published November 2023.

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

The provider sets out its mission is to ‘advance knowledge, wisdom and understanding by teaching, study, public service and research, and to make available to the public the results of such research’. It is a single-campus institution, based in southeast London. The provider describes its location as being linked to its long-standing commitment to racial justice.

The provider is a medium-sized institution, with 6,030 full-time and 20 part-time undergraduates in 2020-21. Student numbers have decreased by approximately 7 per cent since 2017-18. Almost all undergraduate students study at first degree level.

The subject mix covers social sciences, arts, humanities and practice-based courses. Amongst full-time undergraduates, the largest subject areas are computing, creative art and design, sociology, social policy and anthropology, and psychology.

The majority of full-time students are female. Around 40 per cent are white, 17 per cent Asian, and 10 per cent are black. Around half of students are local prior to entry.

A relatively high proportion of full-time students are from deprived areas (almost 40 per cent) and around 30 per cent were eligible for free school meals.

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/.

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/.

Student experience: Requires improvement

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:

- two very high quality features
- insufficient evidence of very high quality for the other features.

The panel judged that there were minimal very high quality features for this aspect. The panel applied the criteria, and determined the outcome to be that the provider requires improvement for the award of a TEF rating.

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

Teaching, assessment, and feedback

The panel considered that there was insufficient evidence that this is a very high quality feature.

The indicators provide evidence that:

- 'teaching on my course' is not very high quality for full-time students. There is no indicator evidence for part-time students
- 'assessment and feedback' is not very high quality for full-time students. There is no indicator evidence for part-time students.

The provider evidence also includes:

- a commitment to inclusive assessment practice and a diversification of permitted assessment formats. Students are able to choose their preferred mode of assessment
- external examiners praising the quality and nature of assessment and feedback practices
- departmental education leads are responsible for the design of pedagogical enhancements.

The student submission references the results of a survey, run by the students' union. It indicates largely positive feedback about local level learning and assessment, and is less favourable about provider-level academic and support provision. The number of students completing the survey was not stated, so the panel placed much greater weight on the indicators.

The panel considered that there are a small number of very high quality practices, but there was limited evidence of how embedded these practices are or of their effectiveness.

Course content and delivery; student engagement in learning and stretch

The panel considered that there was insufficient evidence that this is a very high quality feature.

The provider evidence includes:

- an institution-wide curriculum review and the development of a curriculum blueprint. A curriculum renewal is to launch in 2023-24
- a 'Connected Curriculum' involving cross-departmental modules to develop academic skills and cover contemporary issues
- a strategic focus on liberation of the syllabus.

The student submission states that students are positive about tutors' knowledge of the subject area and their ability to deliver the expected learning environment.

The panel considered that much of the evidence related to future plans outside of the scope of the TEF period or to recent developments for which there was no evidence of impact.

Research, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and employer engagement

The panel considered that this was a very high quality feature.

The provider evidence includes:

- case studies showing how research and/or professional practice is embedded in a number of programmes
- a research internship programme which targets underrepresented groups
- external involvement in the design, development and delivery of education.

The student submission does not directly reference many of the initiatives cited by the provider, but does describe how the community of students and staff working together supports excellence in scholarship.

The panel considered that the evidence in the provider and student submissions indicates how research in relevant disciplines, scholarship and professional practice to contribute to a very high quality academic experience. The panel considered that there were a number of case studies but that there was limited evidence of how these activities relate to the provider's mix of courses and students.

Staff professional development and academic practice

The panel considered that this was a very high quality feature.

The provider evidence includes:

- 150 staff hold Advance HE Fellowship, and there is one National Teaching Fellow
- there are local fora for sharing good practice, as well as an annual teaching conference
- the Teaching and Learning Innovation Centre delivers a PGCert in Learning and Teaching, and provides specialist expertise to academic departments.

The panel considered that the evidence indicates that there are a number of approaches to supporting staff professional development and some examples of how excellent academic practice

is promoted and rewarded. The panel considered that the evidence of the reach and impact of these approaches was limited.

Learning environment and academic support

The panel considered that there was insufficient evidence that this is a very high quality feature.

The indicators provide evidence that:

- 'academic support' is not very high quality for full-time students. There is no indicator evidence for part-time students.

The provider evidence also includes:

- a strategic induction programme, Goldstart, although there was no evidence of engagement or impact
- personal tutoring, an alumni mentoring scheme, and pre- and in-session English support
- a variety of support provided by the library, including workshops and one-to-one sessions.

The panel considered the very low indicators and whether they might be of concern. The panel reviewed the quality assessment report on the provider's computing courses, which was primarily focused on computing students but showed some evidence of institutional approaches to student support. Therefore, the panel did not find this feature to be of concern.

The panel considered that there was limited evidence of the reach and impact of the provider's approaches to the learning environment and academic support.

Learning resources

The panel considered that there was insufficient evidence that this is a very high quality feature.

The indicators provide evidence that:

- 'learning resources' is not very high quality for full-time students. There is no indicator evidence for part-time students.

The provider evidence also includes:

- well-resourced library provision, which has had significant investment during the TEF period
- a VLE with templates that meet minimum accessibility requirements
- some examples of specialist software.

The panel did not identify any evidence in the student submission relating to this feature.

The panel considered that there was limited evidence to indicate that physical and virtual learning resources are used effectively to support very high quality teaching and learning.

Student engagement in improvement

The panel considered that there was insufficient evidence that this is a very high quality feature.

The indicators provide evidence that:

- 'student voice' is not very high quality for full-time students. There is no indicator evidence for part-time students.

The provider evidence also includes:

- a student rep system which is managed by the SU
- a number of departments hold regular fora involving student reps and the head of department.
- examples of working in partnership with students, although there is limited evidence of the impact of this work.

The student submission suggests a distinction between how students perceive their voice is heard at a tutor level and at provider level, though the panel placed much greater weight on the indicator evidence.

The panel considered the very low indicators and whether they might be of concern. The panel reviewed the quality assessment report on the provider's computing courses, which was primarily focused on computing students but showed some evidence of approaches to student feedback and engagement that were likely to apply across the provider. Therefore, the panel did not find this feature to be of concern.

The panel considered that there was limited evidence of the reach and impact of the provider's approaches to student engagement in improvement. The panel also considered that the student submission evidenced that provider-level approaches were less effective.

Student outcomes: Bronze

Throughout 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.

The panel considered the provider's high proportion of students eligible for free school meals (FSM) as context in this aspect, but noted that the evidence in the three outcomes indicators suggests that students eligible for free school meals performed worse than students not eligible for free school meals.

Across the student outcomes aspect, the panel found:

- two very high quality features
- three features where there is insufficient evidence of very high quality
- one feature where there is insufficient evidence to reach a judgement on its quality.

The panel applied the criteria and considered that the rating with the best fit is 'Bronze'. This is because some features 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 that there was insufficient evidence that this is a very high quality feature.

The provider evidence includes:

- doubling of student support staff between 2015-16 and 2020-21, in response to student union research
- interventions to support student progression, enterprise and further study
- an employability strategy and continuing support for graduates
- work placements and internships are offered by most departments.

The student submission includes feedback that suggests some students feel there is a difference between the offer of support and resources, and their delivery. The panel considered that there was some evidence of the provider's support for students to succeed in and progress beyond their studies, but did not consider this to be compelling.

Continuation and completion rates

The panel considered that there was insufficient evidence that this is a very high quality feature.

The indicators provide evidence that:

- continuation is not very high quality for both full-time and part-time students

- completion is not very high quality for full-time students. It is outstanding for part-time students.

The provider evidence includes:

- industrial action and the pandemic have contributed to these indicators. The indicators for years prior to the pandemic also showed that the provider's performance was materially below benchmark in those years
- providers in London have higher non-continuation rates than providers elsewhere in England. The panel considered this as contextual evidence however it did not change their view of the continuation indicator evidence
- internal data showing improved rates of continuation for some groups of students.

The panel considered that the indicators do not provide evidence of very high or outstanding rates of continuation or completion across the provider's mix of students and courses. The panel also considered that the evidence in the provider submission was insufficient to demonstrate that this is a very high quality feature.

Progression rates

The panel considered that this is a very high quality feature.

The indicators provide evidence that:

- progression rates are very high quality for some groups of full-time students, but not very high quality for others. There is no indicator evidence for part-time students.

The provider evidence includes:

- that the provider's high proportion of commuter students - students living and studying in London - are less likely to benefit from employment opportunities in London
- the provider's subject mix, with a focus on creative subjects, which meant that a longer term view of successful progression is more appropriate for the provider's students
- LEO data which shows that students at the provider out-perform average earning rates for the sector five years after graduation
- details of successful alumni, although these were largely from before the TEF assessment period.

The student submission did not provide any direct evidence relating to progression rates.

The panel considered that the indicators provided evidence of very high rates of progression for only some of the provider's students. The panel considered that the evidence in the provider submission, when considered in the context of the provider's mix of students and subjects, led to the conclusion that this is a very high quality feature.

Intended educational gains

The panel considered that this was a very high quality feature.

The provider evidence includes:

- details of intended educational gains set out in the provider's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy as follows:
 - 'Liberate our degrees'
 - 'Research-teaching synergies'
 - 'Extending our reach'
 - 'Graduate futures'

The student submission did not provide any direct evidence relating to intended educational gains, but did provide some evidence that the four themes are valued.

The panel considered that the provider articulates the gains it intends its students to achieve, and, to some extent, why these are relevant to its students.

Approaches to supporting educational gains

The panel considered that there was insufficient evidence that this is a very high quality feature.

The provider evidence includes:

- decolonisation of the curriculum and inclusivity, which are linked to the 'liberate our degrees' theme
- examples of student-led enquiry and building of communities of learners.

The panel considered that there was strong evidence in the provider submission on how it supports its students in relation to the 'liberate our degrees' theme, but there was limited evidence of supporting educational gain in relation to the other three themes.

The panel considered that there was insufficient evidence that the provider effectively supports students to achieve the educational gains it has articulated.

Evaluation and demonstration of educational gains

The panel considered that there was not enough evidence to suggest a quality level for this feature.

The provider evidence includes:

- the provider's intention to implement a methodological framework for measuring and evaluating educational gains from 2023-24
- the provider currently measures unexplained gaps between different groups of students and uses a value-added measure.

The panel considered that it did not have sufficient evidence to suggest a quality level for this feature. The panel also noted that a provider will not be prevented from being awarded higher TEF ratings solely based on an absence of developed educational gain measures.

Overall: Bronze

The panel judged that the provider requires improvement for the award of a TEF rating for the student experience aspect. The panel judged that the best fit rating for the student outcomes aspect was 'Bronze'.

The panel judged that the best fit overall rating is 'Bronze'. It judged that overall there are some very high quality features and that there are no features which are clearly below the level of very high quality or which are of concern.