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PROVIDER CONTEXT

Our purpose at BU is to inspire learning, advance knowledge and enrich society by bringing together research, education, and engagement with professional practice and industry. Our strategy is based on the premise that the continual blend of these three elements drives and delivers high quality learning experiences and student outcomes. We call this *Fusion*; it has been and remains core to our strategic plans since 2012. Our current BU2025 strategic plan includes a particular focus on outcomes linked to our purpose and we expect our students to contribute to and achieve against these outcomes throughout their time at BU, including through co-creation alongside our staff, and as active citizens in society as students and after they graduate. As such, we have a particular focus on the impact we can have on societal challenges, including the UN Sustainability Goals (UNSDGs).

- 2. For our students Fusion is embodied through working on real world problems, often linked to UNSDGs (in 2021/22 93% of our undergraduate programmes were aligned to one or more UNSDGs, see paragraph 41), developing and applying their research skills, and learning with staff who are demonstrably research active and have experience in industry or practice. We ensure that our learning is directly informed by industry and practice by maintaining an exceptionally high proportion of programmes which are professionally accredited and by supporting a very high proportion of our students to undertake a placement. Based on Discover Uni data, 52% of BU undergraduate programmes had a recognised professional accreditation in 2018/19 rising to 74% in 2022/23, which is significantly above the 2022/23 sector average of 27%. Between 2018/19 to 2021/22, 72% of our undergraduate students enrolled onto a programme with Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) recognition, rising further to 81% in 2022/23. All our undergraduate first-degree programmes offer students the opportunity to undertake a placement experience, and 2020/21 HESA data shows 40% of our full-time, first-degree graduates undertook a placement year compared to 8% across the sector, ranking us 8th in the UK. Furthermore, we strongly encourage those students not undertaking a placement year to undertake short placements since Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) data previously indicated that this has a positive impact on early career achievement especially for those from underrepresented groups in higher education.
- 3. Alongside Fusion we deliver the *inspiring learning* element of our purpose by providing excellence in learning and teaching, learning opportunities and learning resources in high-quality, often new and bespoke environments with a strong focus on an interactive, face-to-face, on-campus experience, providing practical learning experiences to enable students to apply their learning. We call this the *campus premium* and we have invested heavily in this approach, associated facilities (over £130m since 2012) and staff development in order to enhance student learning experiences and student engagement thereby supporting better outcomes for our students. We saw improvements greater than sector level in all five student experience indicators in NSS 2022. This has resulted in the teaching on my course, academic support, and student voice measures being broadly in line with the year 4 benchmark, (with high statistical confidence) and therefore these represent evidence of a **very high quality** feature in that year. We discuss the impact of the campus premium further in paragraph 12 and under SE6 and our resultant overall full-time **continuation and completion** rates are evidence of a **very high quality** feature.
- 4. Our commitment to valuing and rewarding excellent learning, teaching and educational innovation in support of student achievement is embedded in our BU2025 strategy. As a result of our Fusion approach, we have an exceptionally high proportion of staff with teaching or equivalent qualifications, and professional affiliations, and all our academic staff are expected to be research active, or on the pathway to becoming research active. The 2020/21 HESA staff record shows that

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we have 85% of academic staff with an employment function of 'teaching and research' against a sector average of 44%, and 62% of our academic staff have doctorates, compared to 54% across the sector. In the 2020/21 HESA data, we rank 48th out of 134 for the proportion of academic staff holding a higher education teaching qualification or equivalent and our performance is continuing to improve, with the latest internal staff data (November 2022) showing that 80% of academic staff now have some form of teaching qualification or equivalent, 68% of whom have Advance HE Fellowship (see paragraph 83). We submitted 78% of academic staff to the REF2021 exercise (compared to 29% in REF2014) and now place in the top third in the UK for research power. As a result, our students benefit from learning activities designed and delivered by staff who are also leading contributions to the body of knowledge in their disciplines.

- 5. The impact of Fusion combined with our campus premium approach is demonstrated by our student outcomes; our progression rates are consistently above benchmark and demonstrate borderline **outstanding quality**. We deliver excellent employment outcomes for our students and we are consistently above benchmark for progression by year for full-time students, and above overall benchmark for both full-time and part-time students by 2.5% and 1.4% respectively.
- 6. Graduate salaries are well above sector average or above upper quartile consistently across the previous three releases of the Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) dataset. Our proportion of graduates in highly skilled roles has risen by 1.5% in 2019/20 to 77%. This compares to 73% amongst the 164 HE providers in the dataset, ranking us 49th overall. Our latest Graduate Outcomes survey results shows 87% of respondents were in employment or unpaid work (compared to 85% in 2018/19) which is 7% ahead of the sector average. This places us 23rd amongst the 164 HE providers in the dataset.
- 7. Our strategic approach to Fusion, the development of the student learning journey and student progression clearly leads to positive outcomes for our students. This approach is fully evidenced and referred to throughout this submission and underpins our submission for TEF Silver.
- 8. We have taken a collaborative approach to the development of our TEF submission with our Students' Union, SUBU. The TEF student lead and other elected and permanent members of SUBU staff have been members of our TEF committees. BU and SUBU have shared draft submissions and underlying data as these have developed, providing opportunities for discussion and feedback. Key themes from the student submission, including from feedback data collated by SUBU, feature in our submission.
- 9. Note that we are not including any optional programmes (courses) in our submission.

STUDENT EXPERIENCE OVERVIEW

- 10. As we describe further (see SE7) we have a co-ordinated approach to hearing and responding to student feedback and improving the student experience at all levels. We have developed a programme of cross-institutional projects to enhance our student experience and improve student continuation. These are linked to the desired outcomes for students set out in our BU2025 strategic plan: including to ensure that we have a diverse and inclusive environment that enables achievement for all, and that the BU learning experience is personalised and consistently excellent. Actions in the plan are being delivered and include:
 - Enhancing our approach to academic support for individual students with tools and support for Personal Tutors including learning analytics (as discussed further in paragraphs 61-62);
 - Enhancing our academic skills offer to students (as discussed further in paragraph 65)
 - Enhancements to our approach to student voice and engagement (as discussed further in SE7)
- 11. We are taking targeted action where there are pockets of our provision that fall below our expectations and the impact of this is being monitored through our annual monitoring and

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enhancement review process (see paragraph 36). Some examples of action we are taking is discussed in the context of the split indicators, see paragraphs 17-23.

- 12. Prior to 2021, our NSS related student experience indicators were indicating a positive and improving trajectory. Consistent with our strategic approach, our portfolio has a high proportion of professionally accredited, practical, skills-based and creative programmes, and specialist on-site facilities are a core part of our offer to students in our campus premium approach. These facilities include science and skills laboratories, engineering/product design workshops, specialist animation and technical software, and recording and editing facilities as discussed further in SE6. In this context, the periods of campus closure and limited access to facilities necessitated by the pandemic had a particular impact on our students and their learning experience, and this was reflected in our NSS 2021 results. We prioritised as full a return to campus as possible, and as a result, our delivery for 2021/22 was predominantly face to face.
- 13. Digital and online activity is supplementary to the core in-person experience, with staff required to pedagogically justify any significant use of online timetabled delivery. Supplementary online or digital activity might include online sessions to fit around placement activities and the 'flipped classroom' approach for more technical skills sessions where students have said they benefit from being able to work through technical detail at their own pace before applying and developing knowledge and skills in a seminar or practical setting. In 2022/23 we have continued to prioritise face to face learning. 100% of timetabled activity is planned as face to face on at least 85% of units. Only 6% of units have planned more than 15% of their timetabled activity online, and in many cases this reflects patterns of online learning that were in place before the pandemic, although we have retained and built on effective use of online/digital activity developed through the pandemic.
- 14. We saw a significant improvement in our NSS scores in 2022 with improvements greater than sector level in all five student experience indicators. Whilst we remain below the overall benchmarks on the student experience indicators, the positive increase evident in the latest year 4 (2022) data has resulted in the teaching on my course, academic support, and student voice measures improving back to being broadly in line with the year 4 benchmark, (with high statistical confidence) and therefore these represent evidence of a very high quality feature in that year. Assessment and feedback and learning resources have both seen significant improvements compared to sector average but remain 2.6% below the year 4 benchmark, (although there is lower statistical confidence that these are materially below benchmark).
- 15. In the context of this overall improvement, in our analysis of split indicators we have focussed on those where the statistical evidence is the strongest that the indicator is materially above or below benchmark (where 90% of the distribution represented by the shaded bar is above or below the 2.5% guiding lines).
- 16. We have evidence of **outstanding quality** with student experience indicators materially above the benchmark (with strong statistical confidence) in the following areas:
 - Health and social care demonstrate outstanding quality across teaching on my course, academic support and student voice. We have taken a strong partnership approach with students using a variety of approaches to listen to the student voice and provide and respond to feedback including via social media, and through greater levels of engagement with the Students' Union facilitated by the move into the new Bournemouth Gateway Building and access to greatly improved facilities (see paragraph 78).
 - History and archaeology demonstrate **outstanding quality** in academic support and student voice. Teams have focussed on nurturing a stronger sense of student belonging, and the introduction of full-time Mental Health first aiders on field schools and induction week trips is one example of their response to student feedback.

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Nursing and midwifery, and medical science have evidence of outstanding quality within
assessment and feedback. In nursing and midwifery extensive work has included sharing best
practice to clarify assessment criteria and guidance, and ensuring consistency in assessment
feedback.

- 17. Where split indicators relating to student experience are materially below benchmark (with strong statistical confidence) they generally show the same trend as at institutional level, with improvements in 2022, and we also provide examples below of the impact of targeted action including in response to feedback from students.
- 18. In *sport and exercise sciences, the teaching on my course* and *academic support* are materially below the benchmark (with strong statistical confidence). Before NSS 2021, % agree scores in this subject area were improving and were within 2% of the overall subject benchmark. Satisfaction levels have improved in 2022 by approximately 10% and 8% respectively. The team have recently taken steps to enhance the teaching experience by including more real-world opportunities, for example through consultancy projects and guest lectures, and have adopted a more consistent approach to providing feedback and presenting unit content on Brightspace using intelligent agents and checklists. Staff have also developed a range of learning resources to provide more consistent academic support through Brightspace and have piloted the co-creation of assignment briefs with students. This has been mainstreamed by the team from 2022/23.
- 19. In *computing, the teaching on my course* indicator is 71.8% against a benchmark of 75.9%. The Computing Department introduced a teaching quality working group in 2021/22 to provide guidance to support the review of teaching, learning and assessment resources across all core units. In the latest level 6 My Course Feedback survey (see paragraphs 58 and 114-115), 89% of respondents in the Department of Computing and Informatics said teaching staff made the subject engaging 'very often' or 'fairly often'.
- 20. Whilst academic support within law is below the benchmark (with strong statistical confidence), overall scores were above the benchmark of 69.4% for this subject in years 1 and 2. In year 4 scores improved to be broadly in line with the overall benchmark and are therefore evidence, in this year, of a very high quality feature. Targeted action by the law team has included the development of a professionally oriented, student-centred model of student support through the 'BU Law Community' which includes a programme of weekly events focussed on the development of research and legal skills. In addition, prompted by student feedback to build their confidence and work with external partners, the team host regular Legal Skills Conferences with professional engagement from regional legal firms.
- 21. Within general, applied and forensic sciences, academic support is 10.9% below the 76.1% benchmark. Following a drop in the latest 2022 NSS, focussed actions are in place to address this. For example, the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology are using a targeted survey to better understand the makeup and expectations of the student body and working to better tailor support such as strengthening first-year study skills support, and implementing a very open departmental structure, where students can access any and all members of staff if they need help, support or advice. Evidence from the recent level 6 My Course Feedback programme survey suggest this is having a positive impact with 100% of respondents in the Department responding 'fairly well' or 'very well' to 'how well have teaching staff supported your learning'. The Life and Environmental Science Department have restructured forensic programmes, providing additional discipline specific support and additional teaching in forensic laboratory skills, forensic genetics and forensic identification techniques.
- 22. In *biosciences* the % agree for *academic support* has been between 72% and 73% across the years considered, with a dip to 64% in NSS 2021 against an overall subject benchmark of

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77.5%. The team are taking action to focus on strengthening academic support, including new laboratory and fieldwork experiences, refreshed, bespoke teaching guidance for the department, and a focus on staff/student communications to encourage good practice. There is evidence that this is having a positive impact with the latest level 6 My Course Feedback survey indicating that 87% of respondents in the Department of Life and Environmental Sciences said teaching staff supported their learning either 'very well' or 'fairly well'.

23. For *students with a disability* we had a fall of 21% to 60.2% satisfaction with *learning resources* in 2021. In 2022 there was a recovery to 73.5% although this remains behind the overall benchmark of 78.4%. This pattern is also seen in both *students under 21 years* where the overall indicator is 3.2% below benchmark and *non-UK students*, where it is 4.7% below. However, both indicators have shown some recovery in 2022, with *students under 21 years* satisfaction with *learning resources* improving by 16.5% and *non-UK* by 4%.

Academic experience and assessment: Student Experience Aspect 1 (SE1)

- 24. In implementing our strategic Fusion approach, we have adopted a set of 'Fusion Learning' principles which are a framework underpinning the development of our learning, teaching, assessment and educational environment. Delivery of these principles supports educational gain at BU as discussed further in SO4-6. Fusion Learning includes the following principles:
 - Learning is personalised. Excellent education is characterised by personalised learning using
 inclusive pedagogies to suit differing learning styles and diverse backgrounds. The Centre for
 Fusion Learning, Innovation and Excellence (FLIE) supports staff in the design, delivery and
 evaluation of excellent and innovative education practice across BU. FLIE provides targeted staff
 development towards consistently excellent pedagogic practice and supports the implementation of
 academic policies and practice.
 - We embed PSRB accreditation requirements. Our programmes are enriched through our work with employers, practitioners and professional bodies. We proactively engage with our PSRBs so that they have input into our curriculum, teaching methods, assessment practices and professional standards. This puts our programmes at the forefront of developing academic skills alongside up to date knowledge and skills that we know are required and valued by employers.
 - We embed problem-based/enquiry-based/action learning in the design of our programme delivery and assessment to develop student independent learning skills and encourage student engagement, active learning and critical thinking through the integration of real life scenarios. In the NSS 2022 optional question 'Practical activities on my course have helped me to learn', 74% of students agreed (against a sector average of 73%).
 - Learning is multi and inter-disciplinary. Our programmes are designed to include opportunities for students to interact with students and staff from other academic disciplines and experience learning activities in a range of academic environments, and we offer a number of cross-faculty and inter-disciplinary programmes. We are adopting a more open curriculum, providing students with opportunities to enrich their learning by taking optional units from disciplines in other faculties.
 - Students are researchers. We embed research and research skills in our curriculum across all undergraduate programmes. A new cross-disciplinary 'Understanding Research Methods' unit was developed in 2021/22 as complementary content on research methods for all levels. This online module includes content and activities on the use of research methods, supporting staff to deploy research methods curriculum as appropriate within their unit learning goals. We developed and implemented Research Weeks across all of our faculties to further expose students to academic research at discipline level and for staff and students to celebrate and share their research.
 - The **JISC/EU digital competences framework is embedded**. We used the JISC/EU frameworks to develop our Digital Pedagogies Framework, to support staff in developing their Fusion Learning

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pedagogies and use of digital tools. The Framework provides guidance using 'Universal Design for Learning' so that staff can ensure that all students can access and participate in an inclusive learning environment with appropriate flexible learning resources and approaches to support and engage students. Themes on assessment and feedback, and related resources are designed to support staff in their design of student-centred assessment and feedback.

- 25. Our learning and teaching Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) was upgraded in 2018 to a new modern scalable Cloud hosted solution, Brightspace, and a significant programme of development for teaching and support staff was rolled out to support implementation. Brightspace hosts learning and teaching materials, assessment briefs, assessment submission and formative and summative feedback. We have structured the platform to enable a more consistent experience for students through the use of standard templates for staff to create unit and learning resources which embed constructive alignment, and bitesize learning content for a more scaffolded learning experience. We have incorporated key student engagement tools into Brightspace unit areas as default templates for staff, based on positive student feedback, including discussions boards, intelligent agents and padlets.
- 26. The pandemic had a significant impact on our ability to deliver our core learning and teaching model. Re-establishing our Fusion-based model of learning and teaching in 2021/22 led to significant improvement in our NSS scores in 2022 with improvements greater than sector level. The teaching on my course indicator is broadly in line with the benchmark (with high statistical confidence) and therefore evidence of a **very high quality** feature. The positive increase evident in the latest year 4 (2022) data underlines this with only the year 3 (NSS 2021) results being materially below the benchmark.
- 27. We have adopted the principle of assessment *for* learning rather than assessment *of* learning, and assessment design that is student-centred. This is underpinned by a requirement for formative assessment tasks in all units in which students develop assessment literacy and become active learners by taking responsibility for self-evaluation and development of their learning through acting on feedback and feedforward.
- 28. Programme teams deploy appropriate types of assessment to support the Fusion Learning approach to meet discipline and PSRB requirements and to ensure that inclusive, authentic and discipline-relevant knowledge and skills are developed. Students therefore experience a broad range of different types of assessment including live client briefs, research-based assignments and projects, industry and PSRB-led competitions and multi- and inter-disciplinary assignments.
 - An example of aligning assessment to our Fusion Learning principles of problem-based and interdisciplinary learning includes 'Hacking for Sustainability', an inter-disciplinary and entrepreneurial Business School unit in which teams of students learn and apply lean start-up methods to solve a real national security or defence problem alongside a government sponsor.
 - In the Psychology Department, linked to the Fusion Learning principle 'Students are Researchers', undergraduate students studying the 'Emotions, Mental Health and Affective Neuroscience' unit are assessed by writing a research grant application that aims to convince a potential funder of the merits of an emotion and cognition orientated research project.
- 29. We updated our Generic Assessment Criteria in May 2021 to align with the QAA Outcome classification descriptions for the Framework Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) level 6 which set out new graduate outcomes statements. Our criteria define typical characteristics of assessment at all levels and ranges, including the higher mark ranges, and help staff and students identify higher-level assessment attainment, supporting academic challenge and stretch at the upper mark ranges.

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30. External Examiners provide assurance regarding the extent to which assessments offer the appropriate level of stimulation and challenge that encourages students to engage with their studies. Examples of where External Examiners have commented that students have been assessed effectively in a challenging and appropriately comprehensive way, include:

- "Assessments are appropriate to test performance against those desired outcomes and offer students a good level of stimulation and challenge with a variety of components to stretch individuals and teams while developing independence, knowledge, understanding and skills," BA (Hons) Multimedia Journalism, Faculty of Media and Communication, July 2022.
- "I had the pleasure of observing some excellent examples of student work, some of which was of the highest standard expected for students at that level. The marks provided on units is varied and shows a good use of the entire range available," BSc (Hons) Sports Therapy, Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, July 2019.
- 31. Our External Examiners are also required to comment on how effectively assessment and feedback are used to support student development, progression and attainment. Based on a total of 637 External Examiner reports received between 2018/19 and 2021/22, 99.7% of reports agreed that assessment and feedback was effective. Only two reports over this four year period (for two different programmes) contained a negative response to the *yes/no* question relating to the effectiveness of assessment and feedback. Remedial action taken in response to these concerns had a positive impact, with no concerns recorded for these programmes in the subsequent year's report. Examples of where our External Examiners have expressed high regard in relation to our assessment and feedback support learning, progression and attainment, include:
 - "Assessments have been designed to support students in developing and attaining the relevant academic skills. The academic team provide a high standard of assessment feedback, offering students detailed and constructive guidance on how they can continually improve their work," BA (Hons) Social Work, Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, August 2021.
 - "It is very clear that assessment and feedback are used very effectively to support students' development, progression and attainment on the course," BSc (Hons) Psychology, Faculty of Science and Technology, July 2019.
- 32. External Examiners also consider the reliability of assessment by the requirement to comment on the soundness and fairness of assessment processes. Of the 637 External Examiner reports received between 2018/19 and 2021/22, 99.5% of reports agreed that 'The processes for assessment, examination and the determination of awards are sound and fairly conducted'. Over this four year period, only three reports (for different programmes) contained a negative response; one of which related to a postgraduate programme. In the other two cases, one examiner was unable to make a judgement on this question based on the sample of assessment materials they received; this was rectified the next year and remedial action is in the process of being taken for the other instance which involves reviewing the communications and support provided to staff and students in relation to exceptional circumstances procedures.
- 33. Our External Examiners consistently confirm that academic standards are appropriate for the qualification and the academic level, with all Examiners responding positively to the *yes/no* question relating to the standards of BU awards during the submission period. External Examiners also confirm that the standards of student performance are comparable with similar programmes or subjects in other UK institutions, with just two concerns noted out of 637 reports which related to a single CPD unit delivered at levels 6 and 7.
- 34. Our student attainment is broadly in line with sector levels and our overall proportion of First and Upper Second class degrees has remained relatively static between 2017/18 and 2020/21 at circa 80% against a sector average of 79%, based on HESA data. We aligned with the July 2022 UUK

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'statement related to degree classification' in our most recently published 2022 Degree Outcomes Statement. This confirms that we have preserved standards consistently over this period, including through the pandemic and, alongside the very positive feedback from our External Examiners, provides further assurance of the reliability of standards of our degree awards.

Academic Experience and Assessment: Student Experience Aspect 2 (SE2)

- 35. The first component of our purpose at BU is to inspire learning, and we design our programmes to engage students in their learning whilst developing knowledge, skills and graduate attributes. Our Fusion Learning principles support delivery that is engaging and our graduate attributes define the key characteristics our students are encouraged to develop whilst studying for their degree programme. They are embedded in our programme learning, teaching and assessment activities, and intended learning outcomes as appropriate. A BU graduate is a creative innovator, a potential leader and a global citizen. We design our programmes to enable students, through their experiences of research, education and professional practice, to develop these attributes, for example; to find creative, innovative, flexible, relevant and feasible solutions to problems, to be open to different disciplines, ideas and approaches and to show a sense of responsibility and determination to make a contribution to society.
- 36. Our Fusion Learning approach is embedded into programme approval, annual monitoring and periodic review, and through this we ensure that our programmes are up to date, with curriculum content appropriately informed by current knowledge and practice in the subject area and developments in learning, teaching and assessment. Our Annual Monitoring and Enhancement Review (AMER) process facilitates an ongoing review of programme performance against institutionally defined, core data metrics, alongside ongoing reflection on practice. Core metrics include student experience and student outcome measures such as teaching, feedback and assessment. AMER enables institutional oversight of action taken to enhance student learning and the academic experience, as well as specific actions focussed on outcomes measures of continuation, completion, and progression. Live action plans are continuously monitored and updated in response to up to date metrics as they become available throughout the year.
- 37. Practical learning activities in which students apply their knowledge and skills are key elements of Fusion Learning. Students value this opportunity, and 74% of students agreed in the NSS 2022 optional question 'Practical activities on my course have helped me to learn' (against a sector average of 73%). In our most recent level 6 My Course Feedback, 81.2% of respondents believed that their course has helped them to develop knowledge and skills they think they will need in the future, and 81.0% of responding students gave a positive response to the question how often teaching staff make the subject engaging (i.e., said 'very' or 'fairly often').
- 38. Placement provision is a core component of Fusion, supporting students to gain practical experience and learning to underpin theoretical learning and to develop relevant knowledge and skills. All of our undergraduate taught programmes offer opportunities to undertake a placement experience, so that learning is directly informed by industry. Our programmes offer mandatory and optional placements, and these may be long or short depending on the discipline area. We continue to have a high proportion of students on placements with the latest 2020/21 HESA data showing 40% of BU full-time, first-degree graduates experiencing a placement year compared to 8% across the sector. This ranks us 8th in the UK for the proportion of our students undertaking placement years. We design our programmes to integrate and build on placement learning at level 6 and this is mainstreamed given the proportion of students undertaking a placement. As an example, in the BA (Hons) Business and Management programme, a core level 6 unit, 'Strategic Management', builds on learning from the placement year and in addition, students can choose a

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consultancy project (for their 40 credit dissertation/final year project) which can be an opportunity to further extend the placement experience.

- 39. One of our Fusion Learning principles is that 'Students are Researchers', and our programme design principles require us to integrate opportunities for students to engage in research and demonstrate research skills. All students undertake capstone undergraduate dissertations or projects which are informed by the highest expectations of the FHEQ at level 6 regarding the development of perspectives and arguments based upon academic insight and application at the boundary of knowledge of the discipline.
- 40. Since the launch of the 'Understanding Research Methods' unit in January 2022 (developed as part of the 'Students are Researchers' principle, see paragraph 24), engagement has been positive and more than 60% of the total student population have used the unit content, with positive student feedback. Faculty Research Weeks provide a range of opportunities for students and staff to work collaboratively on projects. Recent examples from the Faculty of Media and Communication involved Media Production students streaming a live presentation from the Poole Gateway TV Studios on their research on TV Studio Pedagogy.
- 41. We believe that students are engaged and inspired by their role in changing the world for the better, and as described in paragraph 2, we have a particular focus at BU on enriching society by addressing societal challenges. In 2021/22, 93% of our undergraduate programmes were aligned to one or more of the UNSDGs, for example through the programme intended learning outcomes. The Times Higher Education Impact Rankings measure universities against the UNSDGs and BU rose to 42nd globally in 2022, out of 1,406 international universities, up from 74th in 2021, and joint 8th overall for UK universities in the rankings. Embedding UNSDGs in this way also supports our students in developing the BU graduate attributes and as early career professionals including: being a global citizen; finding creative, innovative, flexible and feasible solutions to problems; preparedness to challenge and drive change; a sense of responsibility and determination to make a contribution to society and ethics, integrity, respect, and valuing diversity and inclusivity.

Academic Experience and Assessment: Student Experience Aspect 3 (SE3)

- 42. We believe that combining research and professional practice with education in our academic community provides a student experience that is stimulating, engaging and stretching academically, and which enables students to progress successfully into employment. The impact of this approach is that our students have an academic learning experience based on the latest research and experience from practice, opportunities to participate in research as well as professional practice through placements, and that they graduate with research skills, depth of theory, critical thinking and professional experience.
- 43. Our focus on Fusion drives concepts of co-creation and co-production; staff, students and external stakeholders coming together to create, share and inspire knowledge. For example, staff undertaking a piece of research with undergraduate students and engaging or involving an external stakeholder in that work, brings together education, research and professional practice. We have a performance indicator to measure staff/student co-authored publications per academic FTE to monitor our progress towards developing lifelong learning through Fusion.
- 44. As part of our Fusion Learning principles, PSRB accreditation requirements are embedded into programme design and curriculum, and this contributes to the academic experience of our students. Based on Discover Uni data, 52% of BU undergraduate programmes had a recognised PSRB accreditation in 2018/19 rising to 74% in 2022/23, which is significantly above the sector average of 27%. Between 2018/19 to 2021/22, 72% of our undergraduate students enrolled onto a programme with PSRB recognition, rising further to 81% in 2022/23. The positive impact of our

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placement experience and high levels of PSRB recognition and accreditation are also evidenced by the employment and outcomes data for our students, see SO3.

- 45. Our PSRB bodies confirm that our programmes develop appropriate knowledge and skills and contribute to the academic experience for our students, recent examples of this are:
 - "The business-oriented modules on the courses also provide students with the knowledge and understanding to be able to pursue their own business opportunities after graduating. This is a commendable addition to the course structure and one which will positively benefit the regional growth of the games sector in the future." TIGA accreditation report November 2021, BSc (Hons) Games Software Engineering and BSc (Hons) Games Design, Faculty of Science and Technology.
 - "The course provides multiplatform teaching across broadcast, print, magazines features and online, giving a broad-based understanding of journalism skills. The emphasis is on creating effective multimedia journalists who are fully equipped for industry." British Journalism Training Council accreditation report April 2021, BA (Hons) Multimedia Journalism, Faculty of Media and Communication.
 - "The Department is committed to ensuring all programmes have a clear and explicit employability and industry engagement offering at all levels...both embedded in the programmes and units and extracurricular...The permanent contact with the tourism business ensures the awareness of specific needs and their incorporation to the curriculum content." UN World Tourism Organisation accreditation report April 2019, undergraduate tourism and hospitality management programmes, BU Business School.
- 46. As part of our Fusion Learning principles, we embed industry-led consultancy projects and assignment briefs across our programmes. For example:
 - Communications and Journalism have a number of industry-led assessments that create real-world scenarios such as the level 6 'Campaign Planning' unit in which students respond to a brief as part of the Global AdVenture competition set by the European Institute for Commercial Communications Education. Clients over the last 10 years have included Legoland, Amnesty, Asahi Beer, European Space Agency, Coca Cola, European Commission.
 - In the Business School 'Fundamentals of Marketing' unit students have an opportunity to choose one of six businesses or charities as their live brief for an assessment. As part of this assignment, student groups develop a marketing plan to provide real life solutions for a variety of problems related to UNSDGs. This assessment also aligns to the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) standards around societal impact and responsible business practice.
 - The Department of Computing and Informatics are currently partnered with JP Morgan to deliver Computing in Business week (CiB) for all level 4 students to work in teams to tackle an industrial challenge and showcase their solutions in an open day. This approach to teamwork is part of the British Computer Society accreditation requirements.
- 47. Aligned to our Fusion Learning focus on problem-based learning and co-creation, we launched the Student Project Bank in 2016, offering students the opportunity to work with an employer on a live project with real world impact. Projects all have an element of problem solving for the community and also link to the UNSDGs, and development of BU graduate attributes. Project opportunities being offered during 2022/23 include the development of a video campaign to raise awareness about breast cancer in Ghana, a project with local bus companies to improve accessibility and sustainability, and a project with Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch Council on waste management and environmental impact. All projects are facilitated by BU to ensure students develop their employability skills and get the most out of the experience as well as meeting the

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project requirements. During 2022/23 we aim to enrol at least 150 students in Student Project Bank projects with a particular focus on under-represented groups and programme areas with lower placement take-up and lower progression rates.

- 48. The Showcasing Undergraduate Research Excellence Conference (SURE) is our annual conference launched in 2015 giving undergraduate and recent graduates the opportunity to showcase their research completed as part of a dissertation, unit assignment or whilst on placement. As well as giving students a supportive platform to showcase their work, the conference gives others at BU and externally an insight into the variety of research undertaken by our undergraduates and makes an excellent addition to student CVs. Each year we award prizes in a number of categories, with awards including funded spots to participate in the British Conference of Undergraduate Research (BCUR). Our students' research can also contribute to solving world problems across the full breadth of sustainability issues and we have recently used the UNSDGs to assess where student work has links across environmental, economic and social issues and have presented awards in recognition of excellence. In 2022 some of the student work that was recognised presented research into understanding the impact of technology on flexible working, work on representations of feminism in a TV series which raised issues of race, class and gender in modern media and work on magnetic bacteria in migratory species, and the implications of human activity.
- 49. We also provide platforms for students to publish their research in scholarly open access, peer reviewed journals hosted by BU. Examples include the BU Law Review and the Journal of Promotional Communication, which provide co-creation and co-publishing opportunities for students and staff in the Faculty of Media and Communications. BA Advertising student co-authored an article with their supervisor, , which went onto win the EdCom (European Institute for Commercial Communications Education) prize for best student thesis.
- 50. We discuss further under SE4 (from paragraphs 83-90), our focus on staff as being both engaged with practice and industry as well as active researchers, and excellent educators. We consider that students benefit from routine contact with staff who are engaged in research, and our academic staff integrate their own research throughout our provision, for example, the 'Media Perspectives' in the Media Production Department offers a range of lecture series based on current staff research.

 Resources, Support and Student Engagement: Student Experience Aspect 7 (SE7)
- 51. Engaging with students and embedding continuous improvements in response to their feedback is core to our delivery of the excellent student learning experience that is a key part of our strategic approach. Over the last few years we have substantially reviewed our frameworks for capturing and responding to student perspectives and feedback, aiming to obtain good quality relevant data which we translate into specific, effective actions to improve the student experience.
- 52. We were closing the gap to the sector on the *Student Voice* questions until 2021 when our scores in this area fell. However, we have seen a substantial improvement of 8% in 2022 and our year 4 indicator provides evidence of a **very high quality** feature with the indicator broadly in line with the benchmark (with strong statistical confidence).
- 53. Student voice is systematically embedded into our deliberative committee structures at Faculty and institutional level. SUBU Sabbatical Officers and senior permanent SUBU staff sit on the Academic Standards and Education Committee and Senate and have regular meetings with the Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor. We established an executive Student Voice and Engagement Committee (SVEC) chaired by the Vice-Chancellor in January 2022. Membership includes multiple students across all Faculties and broad staff membership to ensure effective discussion can take place across all areas of student experience. The impact of this committee has

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been to reinforce the feedback received through other routes and provide transparency and accountability around actions in response.

- We ensure that all students have the opportunity to provide feedback on their student experience 54. and for this feedback to be considered at unit, programme, department, Faculty and University level. We also respond continuously to student feedback through our work with SUBU. A jointly developed policy on student engagement and feedback fosters collaborative working between BU staff, student representatives and SUBU officers. Students elect representatives to present their views and perspectives at each level of programme and Faculty governance: student representatives who have regular interactions with Programme Teams (including at Staff Student Forums as described below), department representatives who attend Department Committees and Faculty representatives who attend Faculty Academic Standards and Education Committee meetings. SUBU supports our student representation system by training representatives and operating a simple online feedback tool (SimOn) which is used to collate student feedback. Question 26 of the NSS, 'The students' union (association or guild) effectively represents students' academic interests', was consistently rated ahead of the sector average prior to NSS 2021. There was a fall in the rating for this question in 2021, however in the latest NSS 2022, satisfaction scores are once again above sector average.
- 55. Staff Student Forums (SSFs) were implemented in all programmes at the start of the 2020/21 academic year to create a more informal and collaborative framework for obtaining and responding to student perspectives and feedback. SSFs are a partnership between the programme team and the elected student representatives for the programme. They enable programme teams to explore and further understand and respond to feedback provided through a range of mechanisms, including those raised by student representatives. The SSFs are particularly valuable in enabling a quick response to practical issues or student concerns which can be resolved by immediate action, for example through changes to day to day practice, provision of specific information or developing communications.
- 56. Student surveys provide us with consistent, comparable information about students' learning experience and the broader student experience, and provide more context and granularity to NSS results. In the last two years we have substantially reviewed our student surveys, to provide more good quality feedback, that we can use to identify and implement specific, effective actions to improve the student experience.
- 57. Previously our established Mid-Unit Student Evaluation survey (MUSE) was used to capture student progress on each unit at every level and enable students to reflect on their learning. We have piloted (2021/22) and now implemented (2022/23) a new unit evaluation survey 'My Unit Feedback', intended to elicit richer, more personalised and more reflective feedback to give us a better understanding of the issues and challenges in the students' learning journey and to measure and evidence elements of 'educational gain' as discussed in section SO4 to SO6. This survey operates at every level from level 0 (Foundation) to level 7.
- 58. We have also introduced (piloted 2021/22 and implemented 2022/23) a new annual mid-year study survey, 'My Course Feedback' across levels 4 to 6 to capture feedback on the wider student experience across their entire programme of study. The 2022/23 level 6 'My Course Feedback' survey received 765 responses from a survey population of 3,014, giving a response rate of 25%. There was an even distribution of responses across three faculties with the response rate for the Faculty of Media and Communication slightly lower at 15%. This is intended to deliver a greater level of insight into their learning experience in each year of study. The survey uses a number of questions from the new (2023) NSS question set, but supplements these with additional questions to provide us with more granular information about specific factors affecting the student

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experience. For example, to inform our actions on continuation and attainment we are asking students to tell us about specific factors which impact on their attendance and level 4 students will be asked about their experience of arrival/induction. Later this year we will consider extending this survey to level 0 (Foundation) and/or level 7.

- 59. Both new surveys are managed in a similar way to the MUSE survey: the feedback and responses or actions in response are promptly communicated to students, recorded within unit monitoring reports and fed into programme and department-level annual monitoring action plans

 Resources, Support and Student Engagement: Student Experience Aspect 5 (SE5)
- 60. In order to aid the delivery of the *inspiring learning* element of our purpose, alongside Fusion we have set strategic objectives to ensure that we provide personalised support and a supportive learning environment that enables all to achieve. Our academic staff provide day to day academic support for students at a programme level, and have access to a range of resources to further signpost to additional or specialist support where needed.
- 61. We provide every student with a named member of staff as the first point of contact for academic support and in 2022/23 we strengthened this support further, transitioning from our established Academic Adviser model to a Personal Tutor model. Our Personal Tutors are a core part of our academic support at an individual level. We have re-affirmed the purpose of the Personal Tutor role and provided new communications for students with the aim of increasing student engagement with this support. For staff we also re-affirmed the scope and aims of this support and developed a new suite of detailed and specific guidance. Tutors support students through reflective dialogue on their academic progress, study choices, obstacles to learning, transitions, and breadth of opportunities at BU.
- 62. The Personal Tutor role is supported by learner analytics tools including Brightspace and Jisc Learning Analytics capabilities (as discussed further in paragraph 117). A note taking system is provided to record student-Personal Tutor interactions and is helping Personal Tutors to have more informed and personalised conversations with students. The tools will generate new types of data about learning and student experience and help us both to provide enhanced support to individual students, and to address common issues through programme design and management and intervention strategies to support continuation and progression. Further work will take place through 2023 to identify how we can develop our use of learning analytics and other tools to support student outcomes.
- 63. Our Library and Learning Support team deliver a comprehensive study skills programme covering a wide range of digital and academic skills. All levels of students across all faculties have access to study skills workshops and individual appointments with subject specialist Faculty Library Teams and bespoke in-curriculum teaching created in partnership with academic staff. The strength of the Faculty Library Teams is that they are embedded in faculties, meaning that resource provision, programme development, learning opportunities, research skills, and communications (such as new targeted Brightspace Announcements) happen at the right time to optimise the student learning experience. For individual appointments, students can choose either face to face or online delivery depending on their preference. This change was initially prompted by the pandemic and has made the full range of study skills support more accessible to students.
- 64. Across the sector, the number of hours of study skills instruction has fallen since the pandemic; however, 2020/21 SCONUL statistics show that of 138 HE institutions who provided this data, BU ranks in the top 25% for hours of study skills delivered. Students consistently rate our study skills support positively. Between 2018 to 2022, on average, 91% of students who attended a study skills workshop agreed that it had improved their understanding of the subject and 90% articulated that their confidence had increased.

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65. We are investing further in our academic skills support offer in 2022/23, and have put in place dedicated maths and academic writing tutors. This support is being targeted in particular to level 4 students with the aim of supporting transition to HE, and continuation into level 5, particularly for those with non-traditional qualifications. These additional services, along with current services and resources, are being brought under a new central learning development initiative during 2022/23, the Academic Skills Hub. The development of the Hub has been informed by close consultation with students through a series of student workshops and focus groups. The Hub will provide students with a single point of entry for all academic skills support services.

- 66. Our Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) scheme, initially launched in 2001, is one of the longest running peer mentoring schemes in the HE sector and runs on the first year of every level 4 undergraduate programme. Placement PAL supports level 5 students in advance of their placement year. PAL fosters support between students, building personal resilience in a safe and inclusive environment, supporting transition into university and improving learning and study skills. Our PAL Leaders undergo comprehensive facilitation training and, working in close collaboration with Programme Leaders, facilitate highly relevant and discipline-specific workshops and seminars. In the 2020/21 academic year we trained 153 second year undergraduate PAL leaders who each delivered approximately 13 hours of PAL sessions for first year students, equating to 2,262 hours across BU.
- 67. PAL at BU was commended in TEF 2017, and since then we have built on our strengths. The PAL online presence, in particular, has been developed to increase accessibility and visibility of the support on offer. Subject based online PAL communities and a new online PAL Leader Facilitation course has been implemented in Brightspace offering additional modules on assignment briefs and interpreting feedback as we know this is a priority for students. In addition, we have established the PAL Placement Student role, recognising the added value of a student working directly with the PAL team to provide insight into the student experience and support PAL Leader development. In 2022/23, PAL is being piloted for Foundation Year students and 'Introduction to PAL' sessions have been embedded into the pre-arrivals pages on Brightspace so that new students are aware of the benefits of engaging at an early stage in their university experience,
- 68. In 2020/21, we supported a student PAL Leader to gain Advance HE fellowship in the Associate Fellow category. The unique skills and experience gained by this student as a PAL Leader enabled them to demonstrate the required level of support for learning development. We are building on this innovative achievement in 2022/23 through a pilot scheme targeting student Peer Support Leaders (former PAL Leaders recruited to support and develop new PAL Leaders).
- 69. To ensure that our learning environment is supportive and meets the pastoral and academic support needs of our students, we provide a range of integrated support services tailored to individual student needs. Our AskBU team provide a central point of contact for any student with a question or concern and the team will ensure students are linked to other support services to meet their needs. Our Achieve@BU initiative across all levels provides early intervention as the first point of contact and triage for any issues or concerns regarding student engagement with their studies or experience. This can include personal or study concerns, general issues and wellbeing issues. This early intervention approach ensures that students are provided with adjustments and tailored support as soon as a need or concern is identified.
- 70. According to Advance HE, in 2021 the average % of students declaring a disability across the sector for undergraduate first degrees was 16.4%. At BU, 19.8% of these students declare a disability. Our student outcomes measures provide evidence that these students are supported to achieve good outcomes with fulltime continuation, completion and progression rates all above benchmark and considered **very high quality** for students reporting a disability.

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71. Alongside core support for all students, our Additional Learning Support (ALS) service supports students with impairments, health conditions, learning differences, neurodiversity and mental health. The service promotes positive attitudes towards disability and works strategically to ensure a pro-active, anticipatory approach to inclusivity, which is one of our BU values, and facilitating the provision of reasonable adjustments to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 to ensure all students can access their learning. This is achieved by working with the faculties to develop a personalised enabling framework, the aim of which is to teach students active learning strategies, techniques and skills that empower them to become reflective, independent learners with academic and transferable skills for employment. Students are supported by qualified and specialist staff through one to one study skills and mentoring sessions which meet their individual needs. This provides a safe space for students to practice their study skills and develop a better understanding of the impact their disability has on their learning.

- 72. Specialist Mental Health Mentors support our students who have a diagnosed mental illness to manage their wellbeing alongside the demands of study. Holistic assessments are undertaken to identify any potential barriers to learning and encourages the student to develop awareness of their strengths in managing their studies and when they need to seek support. In 2021/22 we embedded an Online Health Questionnaire (OHQ) in the enrolment process to encourage students with a disability or additional learning need to register with the ALS team and engage with support, including any reasonable adjustments required based on their specific diagnosis for them to access their learning. In 2021/22, 1541 students registered with the ALS Service, of which 1269 had declared their disability via the OHQ prior to arrival, which is encouraging as it enables us to engage with them early and provide individual support.
- 73. Given our focus on the benefit of a placement experience, we have specialist placement support in place provided by dedicated roles based in Faculties. These student-facing roles support students to secure a placement, and then to prepare for being on placement. Students are also supported throughout their placement by a dedicated Placement Coordinator, who provides a link with BU and supports students' transition from the placement experience back to their studies.
- 74. Our students confirm that they are well supported, and in our 2022 level 6 My Course Feedback survey, 87.5% of respondents felt that teaching staff had supported their learning ('very well' or 'fairly well'), and this was largely consistent across all Faculties. When asked for more detail on positive aspects of this support, the most frequent examples chosen were 'I knew how to contact staff' (75%) and 'I felt comfortable asking staff for support or guidance' (61%). The NSS optional question results in 2022 for 'This course does not apply unnecessary pressure on me as a student' and 'The volume of work on my course means I can always complete it to my satisfaction' demonstrate better than sector average satisfaction levels by 5% and 8% respectively.
- 75. Data from our internal MUSE survey (see paragraph 57) suggests that increases in student satisfaction seen within academic support in NSS 2022 have been embedded and we anticipate further improvement going forward. In NSS 2022 in question 12 'I have been able to contact staff when I needed to', improved by 4.3% to 78.2% which is broadly in line with the sector average. Between 2020/21 and 2021/22 level 5 MUSE scores improved by 1.3% to 84.2% (the MUSE 2020/21 response rate was 24%, and in 2021/22 was 20%).

Resources, Support & Student Engagement: Student Experience Aspect 6 (SE6)

76. Our principle of the campus premium supports inspiring learning and we provide a high-quality environment with a strong focus on practical learning experiences to enable students to apply and evaluate their learning. Our facilities include science and skills laboratories, engineering/product design workshops, specialist animation and technical software, and recording and editing facilities. We have invested significantly in the development of our physical and IT resources since 2017 with

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new specialist facilities and resources. The Complete University Guide in 2023 shows our facilities spend per student is above the average putting BU 45th in the UK (10 years ago BU ranked 102nd).

77. We have historically received high rates of satisfaction for *learning resources* with year 1 and 2 indicators broadly in line with the benchmark of 86%. However, our NSS 2021 results were particularly impacted by periods of campus closure (see paragraph 12). Our scores in *learning resources* have improved but remain 2.6% below the year 4 benchmark, (although there is lower statistical confidence that this is materially below benchmark). The latest 2022 level 6 My Course Feedback survey shows 83% of respondents responded *'very well'* or *'fairly well'* to *'how well have learning resources (IT/Digital and Physical) supported your learning?'* suggesting satisfaction in this area is continuing to improve.

- 78. The design of all our major estates projects has been informed by extensive collaboration with our academic community and reference visits to HE, professional and commercial buildings throughout the UK, resulting in new types of facilities and spaces, tailored to our portfolio and curriculum needs within which our students and staff can learn and collaborate. Since 2017 we have invested over £80m in our estates infrastructure to support student engagement and learning, including:
 - Christchurch House Science Laboratories: total estates and equipment investment circa £5m over two phases in 2019 and 2020 to deliver 600m² of specialist teaching space for biomedical, medical and health science programmes.
 - Poole Gateway Building: total estates and equipment investment circa £32m in 2020 to deliver a 5000m² new build development offering high spec animation, media and sound production facilities for teaching and research. The building features multi-camera TV studios equipped with 4K (Ultra High Definition) cameras, a film studio and sound stage, music studios, edit suites, motion capture studio and critical listening lab, as well as animation and games PC and Apple Mac laboratories equipped with industry-standard software and the latest post-production editing eco-system allowing for online collaboration between students working on group projects. There are also study spaces for cross-faculty collaboration.
 - Bournemouth Gateway Building: total estates and equipment investment circa £50m in 2021 to deliver a 10,000m² new build development offering a wide range of teaching and research facilities for our Faculty of Health and Social Sciences as well as increased library, study and social collaborative space for all BU students. The building features a range of specialist simulation rooms including an operating theatre, ambulance simulation, maternity birthing room, nursing wards and a community home environment. It also contains an MRI scanner which benefits not only our students, but can also be used for practitioner training by NHS trusts in the region, as well as providing a valuable research resource that beneficially impacts society and our community. Faculty teams highlight the positive impact that the move into this new facility has had on student experience (see paragraph 16).
- 79. In 2018 we launched our Digital and IT Transformation programmes linked to our BU2025 strategy. An overall commitment of over £35 million was made into improving, upgrading and developing student facing and supporting infrastructure, platforms and solutions. Since the last TEF submission, as well as the implementation of our new VLE, Brightspace (paragraph 25) we have launched a new desktop and laptop upgrade programme. In total, we have invested in over 3,500 new devices to date with plans for up to 2,000 new student-facing devices in the summer of 2023. Significant recent IT investments have included flexible hybrid solutions such as Office 365, Zoom, application virtualisation and our custom remote access systems. The combination of the systems deployed enables multi-use scenarios across our physical technology estate and can facilitate access to nearly all our 900 software applications from any location worldwide.

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80. We have also invested heavily in information and cyber security solutions and in 2021 our dedicated investment programme is strengthening BU's monitoring and defences to ensure our virtual environment for learning and teaching is secure.

- 81. For Library and learning resources, SCONUL data for 2020/21 puts BU in the top 25% of all UK universities for FTE students per library study space and FTE students per library workstation. The quality and number of independent study spaces has been enhanced by the opening of a new library in the Bournemouth Gateway Building in January 2021. The new Weston Library is open to all students and provides over 200 collaborative and individual study spaces which are accessible 24/7. Its integration within the main Faculty of Health and Social Sciences building and its close proximity to student residences have made it a more inclusive and vibrant learning space. Since 2021/22, the main Talbot Campus Library also opens for 24-hours during peak exam times, with ringfenced study areas for postgraduates and final year students.
- 82. Based on SCONUL data for 2020/21, our Library investment in information resources as a percentage of total institutional expenditure is in the top 25% of all UK HE libraries. Our well established 'e first' policy and the increase of e-resource provision during the pandemic, as an integral component of an institutional-wide online reading list strategy, resulted in a 34% increase in article downloads per FTE student between academic years 2018/19 and 2021/22 and premium student access to resources to support hybrid learning. The targeted implementation of Kortext personal digital texts in 2021 further enhanced the accessibility of e-resources through provision of 90 titles across 173 units providing undergraduate students with a personal e-copy of essential texts on their reading lists.

Resources, Support and Student Engagement: Student Experience Aspect 4 (SE4)

- Ensuring staff maintain a balanced portfolio of education, research and professional practice is at 83. the heart of Fusion, and our commitment to valuing and rewarding excellent learning, teaching and educational innovation and alongside embedding Fusion is enshrined in our BU2025 strategy. As a result, we have an exceptionally high proportion of staff with teaching qualifications, as well as professional affiliations, and all our academic staff are expected to be, or to be on the pathway to becoming, research active. In the latest HESA data from 2020/21, we rank 48th out of 134 for the proportion of academic staff holding a higher education teaching qualification or equivalent. 73% of our staff hold a teaching qualification, compared to 68% of teaching staff holding a teaching qualification (HESA data). Our performance is continuing to improve, with the latest internal staff data (November 2022) showing that 80% of academic staff now have some form of teaching qualification or equivalent, 68% of whom have Advance HE Fellowship at some level. The 2020/21 HESA staff record shows that we have 85% of staff with an employment function of 'teaching and research' against a sector average of 44%, and 62% of our staff have doctorates, compared to 54% across the sector. Our performance indicator data from 2022 shows that 13% of our academic staff are active practising professionals and 44% of current academic staff hold recognised professional affiliations.
- 84. Since 2012/13, we have increased our academic staff by 46% and the student/staff ratio has improved from 21.6 in 2012/13 to 19.2 in 2020/21. The number of professors and associate professors has increased by 243% from 40 in 2012/13 to 137 in 2020/21. We submitted to REF2021 with c.78% (513 FTE) of eligible staff, compared to 29% (161 FTE) in REF2014, which reflects our progress of engaging more staff with research. We submitted to 13 units of assessment (UOAs), up from 8 UOAs in REF2014. The increase in the number of UOA submissions demonstrates an increase in the strength and volume of research across our academic portfolio. When ranked according to research power, we are placed 51st out of 157 institutions (up from 98th in RAE2008 and 76th in REF2014). This puts us in the top third of

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institutions in the UK, and as the institution with the second largest increase in research power rank since REF2014. As a result, our students benefit from learning activities designed by staff who are leading contributions to the body of knowledge in their disciplines.

- 85. Our taught PG Certificate in Education Practice programme has Advance HE accreditation so that those completing the course are eligible to also be considered for Advance HE Fellow. All new staff who do not have a teaching qualification are expected to complete this programme when they join BU. We also have Advance HE accreditation for our CPD route to Advance HE accreditation, 'TeachBU'. Through this programme staff can gain Associate through to Senior Fellow, and staff are also supported to apply directly to Advance HE for Principal Fellow.
- 86. Our Academic Career Framework is aligned to our BU2025 strategy and applies to all academic staff. The Framework articulates Fusion and outlines the opportunities and processes related to; career structure, promotion, appraisal, pay progression and probation, and ensures that there are appropriate means to recognise and reward the range of academic contributions. The related output matrix also helps to ensure that staff can access development opportunities to support them in building their academic identity and careers. This includes leadership development and other support such as coaching skills for Personal Tutors, and mentoring support.
- 87. We provide a range of opportunities for staff development and sharing best practice in pedagogical practice including Education Enhancement sessions; a 'showcase' area in Brightspace, and the Staff Resources section of Brightspace. Examples of good practice that have been shared include use of audio feedback in summative assessments; use of social media to enhance cohort identity and use of Intelligent Agents to support students through automated personalised messaging based on their VLE activities and engagement.
- 88. We offer a university-wide Education Excellence award to celebrate and showcase learning and teaching delivery practices with real impact on student experience. Nominations are open twice yearly to propose staff for their excellent pedagogical practices and creativity to engage students in their learning. For example, academic staff led a new initiative for well-being support sessions designed to help students to cope with stress, build resilience, and manage their motivation.
- 89. All staff are required to engage annually in 'Peer Reflection on Education Practice' (PREP). PREP focuses on improving the student experience through a discursive, developmental and collegiate approach to highlight, build on and disseminate good practice and support staff professional development. Annual education enhancement themes are identified at a Faculty level, as an outcome from our annual monitoring process (AMER, see paragraph 36), and may be based on areas for development, for example, as a result of student feedback data including NSS.
- 90. We established an annual Fusion Learning symposium in 2021, to provide a platform for the sharing of best practice. Momentum is building with 20 presenters in 2021 and 50 presenters in 2022. Significantly, SUBU showcased their student survey results mapped against the themes from the Digital Pedagogies Framework, and the results of their findings informed the next iteration of the Framework and supported our student-centred Educational Excellence staff workshops.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

91. The excellent learning experience, resources and support at BU, and the impact of our Fusion approach, is that we achieve outstanding or very high-quality outcomes for our students. Our progression rates are consistently above benchmark and provide evidence of borderline outstanding quality (overall rates for both full time and part time are above benchmark by 2.5% and 1.4% respectively). Our full time continuation and completion overall rates are evidence of a very high quality feature.

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Positive Outcomes: Student Outcomes Aspect 1 (SO1)

- 92. As we have set out in paragraphs 1-7 and in relation to SE2 and SE3, our Fusion approach supports the success and progression of our students. The positive outcomes described above demonstrate the impact of our approach and evidence suggests students also value it with results from optional questions asked through the NSS 2022 demonstrating exceptional satisfaction given our high proportion of placements, with 88% of BU respondents agreeing with the statement 'My placements have helped me to develop my general life skills' which is the same as the English average. This result carries more weight for BU than for most, given the proportion and number of students that undertake a placement at BU; a significantly higher proportion/number than the vast majority of HE providers. In addition, research from Cibyl in 2022 found that 67% of surveyed BU students agreed that they had been provided with skills necessary for the labour market, compared to a national average of 63%.
- 93. Alongside our Fusion approach, as explained in SE5, we provide a range of integrated, tailored support services to help our students to succeed and progress. In particular, Personal Tutoring enables students and academic staff to collaboratively identify ways to support student continuation and progression, including signposting to additional resources or specialist support.
- 94. Having equipped our students with relevant knowledge and skills, we support them to progress and develop their careers. CareersBU is our free careers and employability service for our students and graduates, offering one to one appointments to help students to hone their career plans, develop their skills and make informed choices. Research from Cibyl in 2022 found that 77% of surveyed students were satisfied with our careers service, compared to a national average of 68%. Support was offered virtually during national lockdowns but we returned to offering face to face support as soon as restrictions allowed. We are one of only a handful of universities to have returned to face-to-face careers fairs this year, with over 4,000 students attending our three-day fair in October 2022. CareersBU offers a range of group workshops and webinars, many delivered in partnership with employers. During 2021/22 we delivered 80 events attended by over 1,400 students and graduates including events with industry professionals, workshops on personal brand, making the most of LinkedIn, and assessment centres.
- 95. To further develop skills valued by employers outside the core curriculum, our CareersBU team offers a multi award winning extra-curricular skills award called the Graduate Skills Programme. The programme focuses on supporting students to understand and articulate their values and key transferable skills and is delivered in partnership with industry through a range of virtual learning, skills masterclasses and extra-curricular activities delivered by employers. Between 2017/18 and 2020/21, 2,350 students registered with the programme, more than 2,500 individual students attended skills masterclasses and over 400 awards were issued to participating students. Key external recognition for this innovative programme includes: the Career Centre Innovation Award at the Abintegro Academic Conference July 2018; the European Association for International Education award for 'Innovation in Internationalisation' September 2018; and the Excellence in Education for Sustainable Development Award in July 2021.
- 96. The CareersBU service is open to all but a focus is placed on targeted support towards programme areas and student cohorts where need is higher, with reference to Graduate Outcomes survey and Longitudinal Educational Outcomes data as appropriate. During 2021/22, CareersBU delivered over 150 in-faculty programme specific sessions reaching more than 2,500 students with a focus on programmes with lower outcomes. Also during this period, we piloted a new award element of the Graduate Skills Programme exclusively with students on a targeted group of programmes with below sector benchmark graduate outcomes.

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97. During 2020/21, 53.5% of students engaging with CareersBU were from one or more underrepresented groups. These groups make up 47% of the Bournemouth student population as a
whole and this over-representation is an important indicator that we are reaching students who will
most benefit from the support. We know, for example, that BAME students and students from
lower-income backgrounds face barriers in the labour market and typically have lower graduate
outcomes nationally, often lacking the 'social capital' and networks which enable career
progression. We place a strong focus on increasing social capital, for example network
development through access to employers at our careers fair, panel events and Graduate Skills
Programme. The service has recently broadened its reach by delivering pop-up careers stalls
across both BU campuses, staffed by student Careers Champions, further engaging students who
may not be proactively seeking the service out.

98. Alongside CareersBU, many of our academic departments offer their own tailored support. For example, the Business School Employability Programme was developed in 2011. This was designed for Business School students in liaison with Programme Leaders and industry experts; offering a series of workshops and events delivered by industry professionals. The programme of workshops and events provides students with the opportunity to develop key skills and competencies, such as networking, group work, personal resilience, and leadership that are invaluable to them when applying for placement/graduate roles. Participating students have the opportunity to get closer to industry by meeting and networking with future employers. The effectiveness of the programme is evidenced in the outstanding results Business School graduates demonstrate, particularly in progression into highly skilled jobs, see paragraph 111.

Positive Outcomes: Student Outcomes Aspect 2 (SO2)

- 99. Our full-time **continuation** and **completion** rates, both at an overall level and consistently across the time series split indicators, provide evidence of a **very high quality** feature with indicators that are both broadly in line with the benchmark (with strong statistical confidence). As described in paragraph 3 we believe that this is evidence of the impact of our Fusion approach, campus premium, and our work to ensure that programmes are engaging and our learning environment is excellent both in terms of the opportunities and the support provided.
- 100. Furthermore, two subjects, engineering and health and social care have overall full-time indicators for continuation and completion which demonstrate evidence of **outstanding quality** with the indicator materially above the benchmark (with strong statistical confidence). The social care team have focussed on the development of a strong learning community between students and staff, with an emphasis on collaboration. Within engineering, maths support was introduced in 2018/19 in recognition of the varying backgrounds and diversity of students entering the courses (commended by the IMechE in 2019) and we have now expanded this through additional investment in new dedicated Maths and English tutor roles in 2022/23 as part of our Academic Skills Hub development (see paragraph 65).
- 101. We monitor the appropriateness and effectiveness of our academic regulations on an ongoing basis to ensure our regulations support awards while not presenting unnecessary barriers to continuation and completion. In this context we were concerned about the impact of reassessment on continuation of some level 0/level 4 students, particularly those required to complete several reassessments over the summer period. Following a successful pilot in 2021/22 we modified our assessment regulations to include the provision for level 0 and level 4 students to retrieve a failure in an eligible Semester 1 unit by opting to resubmit the assessment mid-year, whilst learning is recent, rather than undertaking reassessment over the summer period. This change has helped to spread the reassessment load across the year for those students and enables students to access academic support during term-time. The data from 2021/22 shows that of the 452 failed

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assessments eligible for in-year retrieval, 215 students submitted (47.6%). This has had a positive impact on continuation; students who attempted an in-year retrieval attempt had a 71.2% pass/proceed rate compared to 39.6% for those who did not. We will continue to evaluate this data to determine if a similar approach would be beneficial to students at levels 5 and 6.

- 102. In the 2022/23 academic year we are investing further to enhance student retention including the recruitment of four new Student Retention Coordinators. This team are identifying good practice that can be shared, developing learning analytics, creating consistent processes for interventions, such as proactively contacting non-engaging students, and seeking to engage students who are not attending campus, for example, using 'pop-ups' in student halls. At the end of the initial phase, we will be able to identify interventions that impact positively on student continuation.
- 103. Only one subject area, *politics*, has a full-time **continuation** indicator materially below the benchmark (with strong statistical confidence). There is a high degree of volatility in this subject, with small numbers of students, and 2 years are above the overall benchmark and 2 years are below. Much has been done to foster community with politics students to enhance their sense of belonging and support engagement, including 'Big Fat Politics' events, a very successful film club, simulation events, and trips.
- 104. Geography, earth and environmental studies is the only subject area materially below the full-time **completion** rate benchmark (with strong statistical confidence). Whilst the rate of 86.9% is 5.6% below the benchmark, the completion rate has improved to 98% in year 4 and is therefore an indicator of **outstanding quality** in year 4. Action to support student completion includes a review of the programme content and revising units to include greater subject specificity and industry relevance, and the introduction of new optional units.
- 105. The **completion** rate for *full time non-UK students* is 86.1% compared to the 90.2% benchmark. There is an upward trend with the latest year being 89.2%.
- 106. There are a number of *part time* continuation and completion indicators which are materially below the benchmark (with strong statistical confidence). However, these indicators are impacted by low volume of data and by the characteristics of these cohorts which are largely made up of professionals undertaking specific units as part of continuing professional development. The low rates in the first two years of the time series spilt indicators have been addressed, as evident in the later years; for example the part time completion rate is 1.7% above benchmark in year 4 and provides evidence of borderline features of **outstanding quality.**

Positive Outcomes: Student Outcomes Aspect 3 (SO3)

- 107. The impact of our commitment to Fusion Learning, as described in paragraphs 2 and 24, is demonstrated by our progression rates, which are consistently above benchmark and represent borderline **outstanding quality**.
- 108. Progression rates for full time and part time students are above the benchmark by 2.5% and 1.4% respectively. The time series split indicators show full time progression rates are consistently above benchmark and demonstrate borderline **outstanding quality**. The latest Graduate Outcomes survey results for BU show 87% of respondents were in employment or unpaid work compared to 85% in 2018/19, an increase of 2% and 7% ahead of the sector level of 80%, and this places BU 23rd amongst 164 HE Providers. BU graduates reported to be in high skilled roles has risen by 1.5% in 2019/20 to 77%. This compares to 73% amongst the 164 Higher Education Providers contained within the data, ranking BU 49th.
- 109. Graduate salaries are well above sector average or above upper quartile consistently across the previous three releases of the LEO dataset. In the latest LEO 2022 dataset, average earnings for BU graduates 1 and 3 years after graduation place BU in the upper quartile and above the sector average 5 years after graduation. In addition, the percentage rates of BU graduates in further study

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and/or sustained employment 1, 3 and 5 years after graduating are all above the sector average in the 2022 LEO data.

- 110. In the 2019/20 Graduate Outcomes survey the proportion of BU respondents who 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' to all three graduate voice questions is broadly in line with the sector average. 86% of BU respondents agreed that their current activity is meaningful, 76% of BU graduates agreed their current activity fits with their future plans and 69% agreed that their current activity was utilising what was learnt during their studies.
- 111. This strong progression performance is further evident through the subject split measures where four subject areas; business and management, engineering, media, journalism and communications, and health and social care are materially above the benchmark (with strong statistical confidence) and therefore demonstrate evidence of outstanding quality, whilst many other subject areas demonstrate borderline evidence of outstanding quality. Examples of good practice at subject level include:
 - Media Production hold events hosting industry professionals and companies for talks, advice and student networking. These include extra-curricular, such as 'Meet the Professionals' run through BA (Hons) Television Production within the curriculum, for example in the level 6 Career Pathways unit. There are very strong alumni and student networks which provide networking opportunities, and there is a strong visiting speaker programme, including alumni.
 - Journalism and Communications strongly reinforce industry relevance such as through the Journalism Awards Night, which is organised with local employers and a marketing placement event where level 6 students showcase their experience to level 5 students.
 - In Engineering, the "[high] percentage of students undertaking placements" in this department was commended by IMechE following a programme accreditation event in 2016. Placement participation in this department is higher than the BU average.
 - See also paragraph 98, activities supporting progression in business and management.
- 112. Only two subject areas in general, applied and forensic sciences, and geography, earth and environmental studies are below the benchmark for progression (with strong statistical confidence). Both subjects have shown an improvement in progression rates in the latest data for 2018/19 graduates. A suite of new core and optional units have been introduced to help improve progression in these subjects. New forensics units will enhance the practical and professional skills and employability of students, and a generic research project has been replaced with a specific level 6 forensic project unit with enhanced subject specific guidance. A new Laboratory Skills unit will also provide students with practical experience of a wide range of specific forensic techniques required by industry. The new geography units provide more subject specific focus which will mean that future graduates have a stronger grounding in their core subject areas making them more attractive to potential employers. All archaeology programmes in the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology gained full accreditation from the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) in 2019 supporting an increased focus on employability.

Educational Gains: Student Outcomes Aspects 4, 5 and 6 (SO4, SO5 and SO6)

- 113. Our approach to measuring educational gain is emergent. We are seeking to introduce a deeper understanding of a student's development through their learning journey whilst maintaining traditional measures such as measuring achievement and meeting intended learning outcomes. We intend to use a range of measures to capture the extent of students' education gains and increase our understanding of how to support and increase those gains.
- 114. One of the measures we will use is student self-evaluation of educational gain through our new My Course Feedback and My Unit Feedback surveys (see paragraphs 57 58). The questions for these surveys were designed using Bloom's Taxonomy of Higher Order Thinking Skills for a more

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personalised level and self-reflective style of feedback at each level of study. The My Course Feedback survey asks questions to help us better understand the issues and challenges in the student's learning journey which may impact on their educational gain and also asks level 6 students to reflect on their educational and skills gain at an overall programme level and as they look forward to future career and personal development.

- 115. The surveys will assess evolving student perceptions of how their learning is relevant to their future careers. Level 4 students are asked in the Mv Unit Feedback survey to reflect on the extent to which their knowledge and understanding of the unit topics has developed by the end of the unit. At higher levels students are asked to reflect in a more advanced way on their learning, in terms of their ability to analyse and apply their knowledge, including understanding its impact and how to use it to create new solutions. This approach is complemented by the inclusion in the level 6 'My Course Feedback' survey of the NSS question about how well the course has helped the students to develop the knowledge and skills that they think they will need in the future. The pilot phases of the My Unit Feedback survey illustrated that whilst both level 4 and level 6 students showed similar responses about their ability to apply the knowledge gained from their unit themselves (50% of both level 4 and level 6), the results also indicate that level 6 students showed an increased confidence in their ability to conceptualise the learning with a deeper understanding of their interpretation of knowledge (48% of level 4 and 64% of level 6), analysis (48% of level 4 and 61% of level 6) and comparing the use of the learning (50% of level 4 and 55% of level 6) in their unit. As a pilot, we recognise the limitations to the validity and reliability of the data, however, the pilot has provided very useful feedback for full survey implementation and for considering the needs of students at different levels of educational study.
- 116. Over time, as more survey data is captured, we will be able to better evaluate student perceptions of educational gain and how this has supported the achievement of outcomes. It will be possible to track cohorts across levels to demonstrate their perceptions of educational gain, and we will also be able to intersect survey data across a range of student characteristics with other measures such as placement uptake, attainment and graduate outcomes.
- 117. We are also developing our use of learning analytics (see paragraph 62) to increase our ability to identify and understand the development of educational gains. The system provides programme teams and Personal Tutors with data on student engagement and performance that will not only enable timely and personalised interventions to support individual students in their educational gain but also increase our overall understanding of the factors which affect educational gain and the effectiveness of support provided in increasing educational gain. The student-facing component of our learning analytics dashboard provides students with data they can use to reflect on their learning and seek relevant support to further develop educational gain, and we plan to track the impact of this on continuation and achievement data and in the responses to the surveys.
- 118. Our approach to supporting students' educational gain is that it is delivered through our Fusion Learning model. The Fusion Learning principles are designed to support the development of the skills and graduate attributes expected of learners. To ensure these principles are embedded in all programmes, our Programme Structure and Curriculum Design Policy includes the Fusion Learning principles as a key reference for all programme development. This ensures we clearly articulate the Fusion Learning principles in the intended learning outcomes at unit and programme level from design stage through each periodic review.
- 119. Evidence of the effectiveness of embedding Fusion Learning principles in support of educational gain includes commendations from external panel members through programme approval and review panels, such as:

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- "The obvious approach to interdisciplinarity... from within the development team and across the Faculty as a whole. The approach to interdisciplinarity was felt to reflect the strength of the cross-faculty working practices which would be of great benefit to the students", Media and Communication Foundation Year, Faculty of Media and Communication, March 2021.

 "The team's embodiment of fusion, for example via co-creation, student involvement in research, inter-disciplinarily within the curriculum and cross-Faculty collaboration",
 Undergraduate Sociology and Criminology programmes, Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, July 2019.

Conclusion

- 120. Our purpose at BU is to inspire learning, advance knowledge and enrich society by bringing together research, education, and engagement with professional practice and industry. We call this *Fusion*, and our strategy is based on the premise that Fusion drives and delivers high quality learning experiences and student outcomes.
- 121. For our students Fusion means working on real world problems, developing and applying their research skills, and learning with staff who are research active and have experience in industry or practice. We ensure that our learning is directly informed by industry and practice by maintaining an exceptionally high proportion of programmes which are professionally accredited (74% compared to sector average of 27% in 2022/23) and supporting a very high proportion of our students to undertake a placement (40% of our full-time, first-degree graduates undertook a placement year compared to 8% for the sector in HESA 2020/21, ranking us 8th in the UK).
- 122. Alongside Fusion we deliver the *inspiring learning* element of our purpose by providing excellence in learning and teaching, learning opportunities and learning resources in high-quality, often new and bespoke environments with a strong focus on an interactive, face-to-face, on-campus experience, providing practical learning experiences to enable students to apply their learning. We have invested heavily in our campus premium approach, facilities (over £130m since 2012) and staff development in order to enhance student learning experiences and student engagement thereby supporting better outcomes for our students. We saw improvements greater than sector level in NSS 2022 which resulted in the teaching on my course, academic support, and student voice measures being broadly in line with the year 4 benchmark, (with high statistical confidence) and therefore these represent evidence of a very high quality feature in that year. Our resultant overall full-time continuation and completion rates are evidence of a very high quality feature.
- 123. Our commitment to valuing and rewarding excellent learning, teaching and educational innovation in support of student achievement is embedded in our BU2025 strategy. We have an exceptionally high proportion of staff with teaching or equivalent qualifications (80%), as well as professional affiliations (44%) and all of our academic staff are expected to be research active, or on the pathway to becoming research active. In addition, we submitted 78% of academic staff to the REF2021 exercise (compared to 29% in REF2014) and now place in the top third in the UK for research power. As a result, our students benefit from learning activities designed and delivered by staff who are also leading contributions to the body of knowledge in their disciplines.
- 124. The impact of Fusion combined with our campus premium approach is demonstrated by our student outcomes; our progression rates are consistently above benchmark and demonstrate borderline **outstanding quality**. We deliver excellent employment outcomes for our students and we are consistently above benchmark for progression by year for full time students, and above overall benchmark for both full time and part time students by 2.5% and 1.4% respectively.
- 125. Graduate salaries are well above sector average or above upper quartile consistently across the previous three releases of the Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) dataset. Our proportion of graduates in highly skilled roles has risen by 1.5% in 2019/20 to 77%. This compares to 73%

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amongst the 164 HE providers in the dataset, ranking us 49th overall. Our latest Graduate Outcomes survey results shows 87% of respondents were in employment or unpaid work (compared to 85% in 2018/19) which is 7% ahead of the sector average. This places us 23rd amongst the 164 HE providers in the dataset.

126. Our strategic approach to Fusion and the development of the student learning journey and student progression clearly leads to positive outcomes for our students. This approach is fully evidenced and referred to throughout this submission and underpins our submission for TEF Silver.

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