



Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023

Summary TEF 2023 panel statement

Bradford College

Summary of outcomes

Overall: Silver

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

Student experience: Silver

The student academic experience is typically very high quality.

Very high quality features include:

- very high quality teaching, feedback and assessment practices that support students' learning, progression, and attainment
- course content and delivery that effectively encourages students to engage in their learning and stretches students to develop their knowledge and skills
- the use of scholarship, professional practice and employer engagement to contribute to a very high quality academic experience for students
- very high quality support for staff professional development, and the promotion of excellent academic practice
- a supportive learning environment in which students have access to a readily available range of academic support
- effective engagement with students, leading to improvements to their experiences and outcomes.

Student outcomes: Bronze

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

Very high quality features include:

- effective support for students to succeed in and progress beyond their studies
- the provider's articulation of the educational gains it intends its students to achieve
- effective support for students to achieve the intended educational gains.

About the assessment

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

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

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

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

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

The panel reviewed the following evidence:

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

The panel applied its expert judgement to:

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

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

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

Summary of panel assessment

Information about this provider

Bradford College sets out its vision ‘to create a better future for all through education and training’ and a mission of ‘working together to transform lives’. The provider’s strategic objectives are to ‘be a truly inclusive college; to deliver a curriculum that meets the needs of learners, employers and the community; and to deliver an outstanding student experience’.

In 2020-21, the provider had 1,100 full-time students and 360 part-time students. Courses are delivered at a large campus in the city centre.

The provider offers a wide range of subject areas with the largest being Education and Teaching, which 24.5 per cent of students study. 16.6 per cent of students take courses in Allied Health, followed by Health and Social Care (13.2 per cent), Computing (9.1 per cent) and Business and Management (8.1 per cent).

Undergraduate students are more likely to be local (75.2 per cent), and 84.8 per cent of full-time students come from the most disadvantaged areas (based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation measure). 33 per cent of students were eligible for free school meals and over half (53 per cent) of students are Asian. 19.9 per cent of students have a disability or impairment to learning.

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

Full details about the provider’s student demographics used in the TEF 2023 assessment are available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/data-used-in-tef-2023.

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

Student experience: Silver

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

The panel considered that the student experience is typically very high quality for most groups of students. Across the aspect it found:

- six features were very high quality
- for one feature there was not enough evidence of very high quality.

The panel noted these very high quality features in the context of the socioeconomic characteristics of the region where the provider operates and the students it serves. It found that the very high quality features apply to most groups of students, including students from areas with low participation in higher education.

The panel applied the ratings criteria and considered the best fit rating to be 'Silver'. This is because the evidence best fits the description: 'all features of the aspect are very high quality for most groups of students'.

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

Teaching, assessment, and feedback; Course content and delivery, and student engagement in learning and stretch

The panel considered these two features to be very high quality.

The indicators showed:

- for full-time students there was initial evidence of very high quality 'teaching on my course' and 'assessment and feedback'
- for part-time students there was initial evidence that 'teaching on my course' was very high quality and that 'assessment and feedback' was outstanding.

The provider and student submissions provided evidence of inclusive and student focused teaching, feedback, and assessment practices, including:

- a set of learning principles that guide curriculum development and are used to address gaps in outcomes for different student groups
- an internal student survey showing positive feedback on diversity and inclusivity in the curriculum, including 96 per cent of students from ethnic minority backgrounds
- a future technologies strategy to ensure the curriculum meets local skills shortage
- a mandatory requirement to involve external industry experts, including employers, in programme development and reviews

- adopting project based teaching methods to encourage students from disadvantaged backgrounds to engage in study, leading to an increase in student achievement
- enhancing the curriculum through engaging employers such as offering masterclasses, site visits, and placements, and the opportunity to gain additional sector related qualifications
- external examiner endorsements on course design, assessment, and feedback
- student feedback is positive around their experience of teaching, learning, and assessment in both the written and video TEF submissions; and shows satisfaction with teaching quality, challenge from tutors, assessment feedback quality, and relationships with employers.

The panel noted that the indicators provided initial evidence of very high quality, but that for some subject areas with a high proportion of students, indicators suggested not very high quality. However it considered the submissions showed substantial evidence of very high quality for the two features.

Considering the evidence in the round, the panel concluded that the provider has embedded very high quality teaching, feedback and assessment practices that are effective in supporting its students' learning, progression, and attainment. It also found that course content and delivery effectively encourages the provider's students to engage in their learning, and stretches students to develop their knowledge and skills.

Research, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and employer engagement

The panel found this feature to be very high quality.

The provider and student submissions provided evidence including:

- a vocationally relevant and employer engaged approach which ensures the curriculum meets local skills shortages. This has led to the development of innovative programmes with employers, including online, blended and flexible delivery
- that staff engage in professional practice and are members of professional bodies, contributing to current industry knowledge
- student feedback showing they appreciate tutors' professional expertise in teaching and learning, noting that tutors provide opportunities for students to join projects outside the college and understand how practitioners work in the wider community
- that students also say they benefit from employer engagement through work placements, guest speakers, and masterclasses
- external endorsements highlight how professional relevance and practice is embedded into the curriculum.

The panel considered the evidence to show that curriculum content and delivery is informed by professional practice and employer engagement, with students enjoying extensive opportunities to benefit through both staff and employers.

Considering all the evidence, the panel concluded that the provider uses scholarship, professional practice and employer engagement to contribute to a very high quality academic experience for its students.

Staff professional development and academic practice

The panel found this feature to be very high quality.

The evidence in the provider and student submissions included:

- an emphasis on embedding employability through practicing and expert teaching staff
- a formal staff appraisal system that identifies development needs and shares best practices
- staff are supported to seek recognition through the Higher Education Academy, with a target for recognition of 100 per cent by 2024-25. Currently, 34 per cent of staff are recognised as Fellows with 32 per cent of these being Senior Fellows
- positive feedback from students on the industry experience of the staff and its impact on teaching and learning.

The panel considered the evidence to show that staff maintain and use their professional practice and scholarship which informs and enhances teaching and learning. Overall the panel concluded there is very high quality support for staff professional development and excellent academic practice is promoted.

Learning environment and academic support

The panel found this feature to be very high quality.

The 'academic support' indicator provided:

- initial evidence of very high quality for full-time students, with some variation across courses
- initial evidence of outstanding quality for part-time students, with some variation across courses.

The evidence in the provider and student submissions included:

- a personal tutorial system that is addressing academic progress and barriers to learning
- individualised and needs-based additional learning support, that includes assistive technology, accessibility guidance and one to one sessions

- a compulsory academic skills module and support with academic skills development , which students say they value to help them succeed in their studies
- mandatory staff training on equality, diversity, inclusivity, and mental health awareness
- positive student feedback on tutors' accessibility, support, and their learning environment, with a survey showing 94 per cent of students feel challenged to do their best by tutors.

The panel considered that the evidence shows a coherent approach to supporting learners with academic and wellbeing assistance, which recognises the mix of students as a whole as well as individual students.

Considering all the evidence, the panel concluded that the provider fosters a supportive learning environment, and its students have access to a readily available range of academic support.

Learning resources

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

The 'learning resources' indicator showed:

- for full-time students, initial evidence of not very high quality
- for part-time students, initial evidence of outstanding quality.

The provider and student submissions included evidence such as:

- extensive improvements to address learning resources including IT and library resource
- each higher education program has a named academic librarian for staff and student support
- some staff have received awards from the Council for Learning Resources in Colleges
- student satisfaction with the library has increased, reaching 87% agreement in the 2022 national student survey
- offering IT equipment to students facing financial disadvantage, with laptop loans available for the duration of their studies. IT equipment and accessibility tools are also offered to disabled students
- external examiners endorse the provider's digital learning approach and student comments are also positive about learning resources and the virtual learning environment, especially in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

The panel weighed up all the evidence and noted that the provider has recognised the need for, and is in the process of, enhancing learning resources for students. However the panel found that there was limited evidence of any impact as yet. The panel therefore concluded that, at this point, there was not enough evidence of a very high quality feature.

Student engagement in improvement

The panel found this feature to be very high quality.

The 'student voice' indicator provided initial evidence of very high and outstanding quality.

Evidence in the provider and student submissions included:

- engagement with students through course representation, committees, and the student council where students act as part of the management team for the department
- student participation in self-assessment, as well as reviewing quality improvement plans and student outcomes
- change resulting from student consultation is increasing, such as the provision of one to one meeting rooms which benefit all students, and in particular those with a disability
- student feedback that shows they appreciate individual recognition, accessibility to staff, and the provider's commitment to equality and diversity. However, students note that while feedback is valued, they are uncertain how it is acted on
- responses to the national student survey 2022 shows almost 80 per cent agreed with the statements in the student voice section.

Considering the evidence in the round, the panel concluded that the provider effectively engages with its students, leading to improvements to the experiences and outcomes of its students.

Student outcomes: Bronze

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

Considering the evidence holistically, the panel judged that there are typically high quality student outcomes, and there are some very high quality features for most groups of students.

Across the student outcomes aspect, the panel found:

- three features are very high quality
- two features where there was not enough evidence of very high quality

The panel did not form a view on the quality of one feature.

In making its assessment, the panel took into account the context of the provider's student body.

The panel applied the ratings criteria and considered the best fit rating to be 'Bronze'. This is because some features of the aspect are very high quality for most groups of students.

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

Approaches to supporting student success

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

The evidence in the provider and student submissions included:

- recognition of the non-traditional educational backgrounds and disadvantages faced by its students, with a commitment to supporting all students to succeed in and progress beyond their studies
- evidence of positive trends resulting from initiatives, such as the continuation rates of first degree programmes improving
- details of how the provider's strategy and its access and participation plan aim to improve continuation and completion rates, with data showing a three year improving trend in both young and mature students' continuation rates
- student comments showing they value individualised support and effective feedback via formal one to one tutorials and through more informal access to tutors and support staff. Students are also positive about the general learning environment.

The panel considered that the submission and indicator evidence relating to the learning environment and academic support were also relevant to this feature. However, the student outcomes indicators (outlined below) provided less positive evidence in terms of how the support for students leads to excellent levels of continuation, completion and progression.

The panel considered that the evidence shows the college is aware of the challenges its students face and has a coherent set of approaches to support all student groups. Overall, the panel concluded that the provider effectively supports its students to succeed in and progress beyond their studies, and that this is a very high quality feature.

Continuation and completion rates

The panel considered there was not enough evidence to reach a view on the quality of this feature.

The indicators showed:

- for full-time students there was initial evidence that 'continuation' was not very high quality, while 'completion' was very high quality
- for part-time students there was initial evidence that 'continuation' and 'completion' were very high quality.

The provider and student submissions provided further evidence for this feature, including:

- acknowledging challenges in continuation and completion and putting in mechanisms to address this, including academic skills modules and a cross college strategy to ensure a focus on knowledge employability and personal development

- implementing more targeted interventions to improve continuation and completion rates, such as individualised support and referrals and aligning the curriculum to industry needs
- the student submission did not provide substantial evidence for this feature but expressed positivity about the college's efforts to promote positive outcomes.

The panel considered the provider recognised where there was a need to enhance student continuation and completion rates and has put in place strategies to address this. However, these are yet to show notable impact. The panel also found that the indicators presented a mixed picture.

Considering the evidence holistically, the panel concluded there was not enough conclusive evidence to reach a view on the quality of this feature.

Progression rates

The panel considered there was not enough evidence of a very high quality feature.

The 'progression' indicator suggested some evidence of not very high quality, but with limited certainty in the data for full-time students. For full-time and part-time students, there was variation across courses and student groups.

The provider and student submissions included the following evidence:

- acknowledging progression challenges, setting this against the disadvantaged socioeconomic background of its student body and the region
- planning to withdraw the business and management programme due to poor progression, focusing on more vocationally relevant subjects with better progression rates
- highlighting the positive contribution of students to the economy but that for many, career choices and opportunities do not align with standard occupational classification

While the student submission did not provide substantive evidence relating to this feature, there was individual feedback from one student about how they had gained promotion at work as a result of the skills and knowledge gained during their studies.

The panel considered that the provider recognised where there was a need to enhance progression rates and has put support strategies in place to tackle this. However, the panel judged that the impact of these are yet to be demonstrated. The panel noted the indicators show that for many groups of students progression is below very high quality. Considering the evidence in the round, the panel judged that there was not enough evidence of a very high quality feature.

Intended educational gains; approaches to supporting educational gains; and evaluation and demonstration of educational gains

The panel considered intended educational gains, and approaches to supporting educational gains, to be very high quality features.

It judged there was not enough evidence of very high quality for the evaluation and demonstration of educational gains.

The evidence in the provider and student submissions included:

- the graduate attributes the provider intends its students to achieve, with a stated commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, challenging injustice and social inequalities throughout the learning process
- a focus on academic skills at level 4 followed by employability and personal development at levels 5 and 6
- the approaches adopted to enhance employability and enhance progression, including sector related qualifications, employer engagement, guest speakers, placements, and masterclasses
- the offer of strong student support as detailed under the learning environment and academic support feature, along with comments from students to say they value personalised care
- positive comments from students about personal growth with increased confidence and aspiration as a result
- how students' achievement of graduate attributes skills is monitored, through learning outcome plans. The provider is introducing measures to evaluate progress more, however there is limited evidence yet of its effectiveness.

Considering the evidence holistically, the panel found that the provider articulates the educational gains it intends its students to achieve, and why these are relevant to its students. It also judged that the provider effectively supports its students to achieve these gains.

However, for evaluating and demonstrating educational gains the panel concluded that there was not enough evidence of very high quality, while noting that the provider is taking initial steps to evaluate the educational gains it intends for its students.

Overall: Silver

Applying the guidance and the panel's expert judgement, the panel found the overall 'best fit' rating to be 'Silver'.

The panel considered the student experience aspect to be 'Silver', and the student outcomes aspect to be 'Bronze'.

In reaching this decision, the panel considered there was compelling evidence that the very high quality features apply to most of the provider's groups of students, including students from disadvantaged backgrounds and areas of low participation in higher education.

The panel noted that, in addition to the very high quality features set out above, there were also some elements of very high quality evidenced in the completion indicators.

In judging 'Silver' to be the best fit, the panel concluded that across all the available evidence the student experience and student outcomes are typically of very high quality.