

Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023 submission

SECTION 1: Provider Context

Mission and Purpose

1. The University of Salford (UoS/the University) has a heritage dating back to the formation of the Royal Technical Institute, Salford in 1896; itself a merger of technical colleges and institutes designed to meet the demand for new industrial skills. Created to educate and train a growing Greater Manchester workforce, the University received its Royal Charter in 1967. With a past firmly rooted in civic responsibility, the University has continued to build on its guiding principle of industry collaboration as means of preparing students for the future. Through teaching, learning, research and enterprise, the University harnesses the skills, imagination, and enthusiasm of its staff and students to work in partnership with large and small enterprises across the public, private and charitable sectors to change people and communities and deliver lasting economic and social benefit.
2. The University's **Corporate Strategy** outlines the aspiration that by "*pioneering exceptional industry partnerships we lead the way in real world experiences preparing students for life*". It articulates detailed plans that ensure the University builds on its successes to date, reaffirms its commitments as a civic university and sets out a vision for the learner journey that is **bold, distinctive, and provides accessible life-wide learning experiences**, co-created with students and industry, co-delivered on campus, online and in the workplace. The strategy is delivered through four Schools: **Salford School of Arts, Media, and Creative Technology (SAMCT)**, the **School of Health and Society (SHS)**, the **School of Science, Engineering and Environment (SSEE)**, the **Salford Business School (SBS)** and a range of academic-facing professional services focussed on supporting student success. Provision is split across two main campuses: one in Salford and one at MediaCity.
3. A **Campus Masterplan** devised in collaboration with Salford City Council and 5plus architects is designed to develop links with local industry, as well as cultural and residential schemes to create a city district that enhances surrounding communities and helps drive the local and regional economy. It sets out plans to develop University facilities and an innovative campus that can tackle contemporary issues facing businesses and society. This approach has driven the development of physical and digital infrastructure and learning resources that enable world-leading academics, students, and innovation companies to learn and practice together in environments that replicate industry standards and prepare students for success. Delivery of the Campus Masterplan and the transformation of campus infrastructure was highly commended in the **2022 Times Higher Awards Outstanding Estates Team** category.
4. The University has experienced a 13% steady growth in its Undergraduate Full-time equivalent (FTE) numbers over TEF period from 15,080 in 2017-18 to 17,020 in 2020-21. Overall provision grew 18%, from 24,360 to 28,750 over the same period. In addition to the development of undergraduate degree programmes, UoS has an expanding Apprenticeship portfolio and is developing new technical qualifications for the recently awarded The Greater Manchester Institute of Technology (GMIoT).
5. Over the last four years, just over 51% of full-time undergraduate students have been recruited from the Greater Manchester area; approximately 60% of students in total commute to the University and around 70% will remain in the North-West for employment. Over half (52.4%) of the student population is drawn from IMD quintile 1 or 2; more than a quarter (26.1%) are aged over 21 years; a third (30.1%) identify with Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic backgrounds, compared with 13.7% across the HE sector, and one fifth (22.4%) have a declared disability, compared to 15.6% across the HE sector. Compared to a HE sector average 35%, approximately 60% of students' highest qualification on entry to UoS is

BTEC/Other Level 3 qualification. These characteristics, individually and their intersection, inform the design, delivery, assessment, and academic support required to enable all students to achieve positive outcomes.

6. The University has a strong track record of **widening participation and facilitating access to HE** with over 70% of the UoS population drawn from groups underrepresented in HE and / or from disadvantaged backgrounds. As a member of the UniConnect **Greater Manchester Higher** consortia, UoS makes a major contribution to social mobility across Greater Manchester, the wider North-West and nationally. The UoS **Access and Participation Plan** (2020-21 to 2024-5) is central to the University's mission to transform lives, stimulate discovery and to enabling all students to realize their potential. **Educational gains** and value over time are created by equipping students with the knowledge, skills, experience, social capital, civic engagement, confidence, and resilience to improve their lives, and those of local and global communities.
7. The UoS academic portfolio, curricula and approaches to teaching and learning are tailored to the specific needs of the region and its student demographic profile. To ensure this is done consistently and comprehensively, all policies, plans and guidance require an **Equality Impact Assessment**, which considers the impact on students with differing socio-economic backgrounds as well as protected characteristics. Implementation of the UoS **Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policies** are overseen by an **Inclusion, Diversity and Equality Committee (IDEC)**. EDI leads in each School and Professional Service work with a **Workforce Inclusion Action Group (WIAG)** and **Inclusive Student Experience Action Group (ISEAG)** to develop and deliver actions to ensure equality for all staff.
8. An **Enabling Student Success (ESS) programme** designed to deliver the strategic goal of '*preparing our students for the future*' focuses on helping students from all backgrounds to be successful. Its core objectives are to:
 - ensure students experience excellent teaching and support for learning that develops the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in their chosen careers;
 - work with employers to connect students to industry and embed real-world learning, informed by research and professional practice, into the curricula; and
 - provide a range of complementary study and extra-curricular opportunities and support for the development of graduate skills, attitudes, personal competencies, and attributes.
9. A UK Health Security Agency monitoring report (March 2021) describes the particularly challenging Public Health environment and disproportionate impact of the **COVID19 pandemic** (COVID19) on North-West communities. The University's vocationally orientated portfolio and extensive partnership working with external organisations, who were also adapting to the impact of COVID19, created additional complexities and constraints. Practice-based learning could not be delivered as intended, or as students expected, for significant parts of 2020 and 2021. This is reflected in TEF student experience indicators for year three (2020-21) which show a fall in satisfaction for both Full-time and Part-time students in all five indicators. This is anomalous when performance is examined across the four-year time-series. The fall in satisfaction is recovered in all five indicators in year four, for Full-time, Part-time and Apprenticeship students, with several indicators demonstrating higher satisfaction than prior to COVID19 (year two). For example, Part-time students' satisfaction with *student voice* is 17ppt above benchmark in year four compared to 13.1ppt in year two; Apprenticeship students' satisfaction with '*assessment and feedback*' is 9.8ppt above benchmark in year four compared to 4.4ppt in year two. A summary External Examiner overview report (2020-21) includes multiple commendations and praise for the way in which programme teams quickly adapted to online delivery, assessment, and support. These quantitative and qualitative records confirm that the University's response to COVID19 and mitigations were effective. The UoS is not only succeeding in making a good recovery from the effects of COVID19, but has improved the student experience overall.

10. The University of Salford Students Union (USSU) works collaboratively with the University in all aspects of improving the student experience and student outcomes, including through formal **Quarterly Progress Review meetings** and a **Partnership Steering Group**. Student representation features at all levels of academic governance, in Working Groups, Task and Finish Groups and informally through close liaison between Officers, students and staff. In keeping with the strong working relationship, the University and USSU have worked collaboratively to share data and information, and facilitate access to necessary resources, to develop each of the independently written submissions.

Quality Assurance and Enhancement

11. The UoS **Academic Handbook** comprises a set of policies and procedures that support the University's academic quality assurance and enhancement activities. A robust **Scheme of Academic Governance** is in place for monitoring academic standards and the quality of the student experience, with clear delineation of accountability and responsibilities throughout the academic deliberative committee structure; principally **Senate, University Learning and Teaching Committee (ULTC) and School Learning and Teaching Committees (SLTC)**. This is supplemented by the **ESS** programme which steers *enhancement* of student experience and outcomes; it enables the sharing of good practice, identification of areas of concern and devises solutions to develop teaching, teacher and learning excellence through a cycle of continuous improvement.
12. In partnership with Schools, the **Quality Management Office (QMO)** oversees **Programme Design, Approval, Amendment, Review and Withdrawal** policies, procedures and guidance and continuously monitors programme performance through the **Programme Monitoring and Enhancement Process (PMEP)**. Through routine monitoring of the delivery and performance of programmes, timely consideration is taken of qualitative and quantitative management information, key performance indicators and sector-recognised standards. The QMO and Strategy Team identify, annually, a suite of **priority programmes (PMEP+)** that, due to their performance against institutional key performance indicators, require focused support and specific interventions. This **combined process of continuous monitoring and risk-based interventions** provides assurance that UoS maintains academic standards and offers high quality education.
13. Robust internal quality assurance and enhancement processes ensure that all provision meets the OfS ongoing conditions of registration. Independent National and International external audit and review, subject-specific registration with relevant **Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)** and annual External Examiner reports confirm that *academic standards are set appropriately and awards are only granted to students whose knowledge and skills appropriately reflect applicable sector-recognised standards* (Condition B5) and *UoS students receive a high-quality academic experience* (Condition B1). Each HE programme is *up to date, provides appropriate educational challenge, is coherent; effectively delivered; and requires students to develop relevant skills appropriate to the subject matter* (Condition B1). Similarly, external quality assurance mechanisms and the positive outcomes achieved by students confirm that *students are assessed effectively; each assessment is valid and reliable; academic regulations are designed to ensure that relevant awards are credible; and relevant awards granted to students are credible at the point of being granted and compared to previous awards* (Condition B4).
14. The University has invested £116.4m since 2019 through its **Campus Masterplan** and **Catalyst IT strategy** to provide appropriate physical and digital resources to enable student success. The **ESS** programme brings together academic and professional service teams to deliver coherent and coordinated work packages designed to deliver improvements in students learning experience and outcomes. These mutually supportive strategies ensure that *students receive the appropriate resources and support to enable them to engage effectively with the learning opportunities available and to succeed in and beyond HE* (Condition B2). The University meets 32 of the 33 threshold measures for continuation,

completion and progression (the area of progression that is identified as underperforming has now been discontinued) and is demonstrably fulfilling its mission to provide a **positive student experience** and support students to achieve **positive outcomes**, evidenced by *students continuing in their studies, completing their studies, and progressing into managerial or professional employment, or further study* (Condition B3).

Approach to Teaching Excellence: Preparing students for the future

15. Ensuring students gain the knowledge, skills, and mindset to succeed in their chosen career is key to the UoS student experience. To enable students to succeed, UoS provides a distinctive learning experience that is created in partnership with learners and industry and designed around relevant real-world experiences.
16. The University is on a journey of rapid and adaptive change. In 2017, UoS introduced an **Industry Collaboration Strategy (ICS)** that identified several **Industry Collaboration Zones (ICZ)** focused on working collaboratively with students and industry for shared benefit. The individual zones have subsequently developed into a consistent employers collaboration framework embedded in all Schools, that include **Industry Advisory Boards**, where curriculum development is tested with industry partners. This clear purpose aligns student expectations with educational delivery and industry need. In particular, the learning experience is oriented around **educational gains** that support personal growth and practical utility. During 2017 and 2018, UoS undertook a comprehensive curriculum review to assess the 'industry readiness' of each taught programme against a distinctive set of **curriculum design principles (2015 Salford Curriculum Plus (SC+))**.
17. From summer 2020, alongside the changes made to learning, teaching, assessment put in place in response to COVID19, UoS has focused its approach to Teaching Excellence through the **ESS** programme. The programme has four key themes: **Academic Success; Customer Service; Leadership and Learning Environment** and comprises several work packages within each theme. Strategic direction of the programme is overseen an **ESS Steering Group** supported by two operational management and delivery groups: the **Academic Success Group and Operations Group**. Each Group's membership includes representation from all Schools, academic-facing professional services, and the student body.
18. The **ESS** programme provides the strategic direction for initiatives under each of the four themes; Schools and Professional Services customise the specific interventions/actions to their local context, as evidenced by the range of examples cited in this submission. Progress against an agreed set of performance indicators is monitored through an interactive **Operational Management Dashboard**. Both qualitative and quantitative measures, benchmarked against HE sector, subject and historical performance are used to inform quarterly reports to the **ESS Steering Group**. **ESS** outputs and outcomes are reported, reviewed, and monitored by the academic deliberative committees; **SLTCs, ULTC and Senate**, with regular reporting of progress to the **Vice Chancellor's Executive Team (VCET)** and **University Council** (see Figure 1: Enabling Student Success programme).
19. The positive impact of **ESS** has been widely disseminated and is evident across the University's improving performance in student experience and outcomes measures and national league table positions: UoS rose 5 places in the Guardian League Table 2023 and 10 places in the Good University Guide 2023. As one of five national **AdvanceHE 'Collaborative Development projects'**, **ESS** is recognised as a sector-leading approach to leadership of change within learning and teaching. A refreshed UoS corporate strategy (2022-27), previous initiatives such as **Industry Collaboration Strategy** and the **ESS** programme have laid the foundations for the further development of a new **2022+ Education and Employability Strategy**.

Figure 1: Enabling Student Success programme

Purpose	Deliver an excellent student experience focused on student success so that every student recruited has equity of opportunity
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Enabling Student Success Steering Group (quarterly)

Chair: PVC Education and Student Experience

Academic Success Group (monthly)

Chair: Assoc. PVC Education and Students

Operations Group (monthly)

Chair: Assoc. Chief Operating Officer

Themes and work packages

ACADEMIC SUCCESS	CUSTOMER SERVICE	LEADERSHIP	LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
Work packages: i. Academic Transition Stage (ATS) ii. Employability, Enterprise, and Entrepreneurship iii. Academic Progress Review (APR) iv. Shape of the Year	Work packages i. Student voice ii. Course organisation and management iii. Student Personas: iv. Learner Analytics	Work packages: i. Salford Academic: ii. Academic leadership, behaviours, practices, and capability iii. Student Progression Administrators (SPAs);	Work packages i. Creating a vibrant campus ii. Effective monitoring of student engagement iii. Embed delivery patterns consistent with engagement & belonging iv. No Detriment Policy v. In Year Retrieval

Implementation of actions by Schools and Professional Services, supported by Learning and Teaching Enhancement Centre

Performance monitoring

Leading KPIs	Entry profile data; Engagement with first assessment; Module marks; First time passes; attendance and engagement; Module Evaluation, Inspire spend; In-year academic retrieval	
Management Assurance	Monthly report to Vice Chancellor's Executive Team (VCET)	Standing report item to Council
Academic Governance	Programme Monitoring and Enhancement Procedure (PMEP)	Senate University Learning & Teaching Committee (ULTC) School Learning & Teaching Committees (SLTCs)

Approach to Teacher Excellence

20. Professional development in teaching and learning is central to the University's **People Plan 2020 plus**. All UoS staff are expected to work to the **Salford Behaviours** and continuously develop their professional practice. They are supported in doing this through **Salford Academic**; a suite of policies, training, support, and guidance that incorporates **Performance and Career Conversations, Workload Allocation** and a clear **Academic Career Framework** that provides staff with structured development in three key areas: teaching and learning, research and enterprise and industry collaboration.
21. To support innovation and development in pedagogy, UoS committed to a dedicated **Learning Teaching and Enhancement Centre (LTEC)** in 2021. **LTEC** is essential to supporting the **ESS Leadership** theme goals to develop **authentic learning and teaching practitioners**, through a broad range of scholarship, awards, and continuing professional development.

22. Aligned to the **AdvanceHE UK Professional Standards Framework**, early career academics have a clear path to demonstrating the indicators of success and impact leading to teaching excellence. New academic staff joining UoS must complete the accredited PgCert in Academic Practice; over the last five years between 30 and 51 staff have graduated from this programme each year. National data show that 66% of UoS academic staff hold a teaching qualification; an increase of 2ppt since 2018-19. Over the last 12 months UoS has increased its AdvanceHE Associate Fellowships by 113%. Currently, 72% of core full-time academic staff hold FHEA, including 48 SFHEA and 5 PFHEA. In addition, the University has four National Teaching Fellows, four Learning and Teaching Chairs and a further three individuals promoted to Learning and Teaching Readers in 2022. Teaching support, Graduate Teaching Assistants and Professional Services staff also engage with pedagogic development
23. **LTEC** and Schools collaborate to provide a series of themed 'spotlight' sessions to support learning and teaching and academic practice. An **Observation of Teaching (OoT)** policy, overseen by QMO and managed in Schools, helps support academic staff in a peer-supported process to identify good practice and areas for development. An **Annual Learning and Teaching Festival** showcases innovations, through a mix of case studies, invited speakers and pedagogical research and scholarship. Investing in a high-performing learning and teaching environment to support excellence in academic practice demonstrates UoS commitment to *fully embedding outstanding support for staff professional development and excellent academic practice across all its provision* (Feature of Excellence SE4).

Approach to Learning Excellence: Educational Gains

24. The University's participatory learning philosophy informs its approach to **educational gains**. Curriculum design, integration with industry, the use of technologies and innovation and engagement with authentic assessment and personal development to refine students' **skills for learning and attributes** for successful employment or further study throughout the learning journey.
25. A range of methods are used to support **personalised educational gains**, beginning prior to enrolment with outreach and widening participation activities designed to raise aspirations and facilitate access to HE. For example, the **Salford Advantage Scholarship** (2013-17) provided students from low-income backgrounds with a non-repayable financial award and the **Salford Alternative Entry Scheme (SAES)** offers mature students a non-traditional, equivalent, entry route to continuing their education.
26. **Academic Progress Review (APR)** is built around five 'enablers' that frame discussions between **Academic Progress Tutors (APTs)** (personal tutors) and students around five 'enablers' for success: 'sense of belonging'; 'sense of purpose'; 'self-efficacy'; 'resilience', and 'engagement'. Students are encouraged to take control of their learning, with an **APT** providing academic support and coaching students through each stage of their learning journey. Following a successful pilot in 2019-20, focussed on supporting transition to HE, **APR** has been widely adopted to support and stretch students at all undergraduate levels. Early engagement with APR provides an opportunity for staff to *clearly articulate the range educational gains intended for UoS students to achieve, and why these are highly relevant to their future ambitions* (Feature of Excellence SO4). Continuous engagement with APR enables student success by providing a consistent point of contact for programme-specific and educational advice throughout student learning journey. The outcomes of the **Academic Transition Stage (ATS)**, **Learning Analytics** and **Student Personas projects**, which form part of the **ESS Academic Success and Customer Service** themes, have helped APTs to guide students to set clear **education and professional goals** and establish the cultural capital for life after study.

27. The impact of this work is evidenced in the TEF indicators which demonstrate continuation rates for all students and modes of delivery are broadly in line with benchmark and Part-time and Apprenticeship students have continuation rates significantly above the HE sector benchmark. Learning, teaching and assessment policy changes in 2015-16 have also impacted significantly on completion rates, moving UoS from predominantly below sector benchmark to in line with sector norms. Graduate Outcomes data are also above benchmarks for Full-Time undergraduates (overall, progression is 72.5% compared with the benchmark of 70.8%) and materially above the benchmark for Part-Time students (96.5% compared with the benchmark of 90.3%).

SECTION 2: STUDENT OUTCOMES

2.1: CONTINUATION

28. At 90% overall, *there are outstanding rates of continuation for all UoS students and courses* (Feature of Excellence SO2). These high continuation rates have been consistently (0.8-1.0ppt) above benchmark over the TEF time period. The data also demonstrate good comparison (variance ≤ 1.0 ppt) to the HE sector average with the most recent year 0.8ppt above sector benchmark. Continuation rates for Full-Time students are above benchmark in 20 of the 21 student demographic split indicators. Students traditionally under-represented in HE (mature students >21 years; Black, Asian, and Other ethnic groups; IMD quintiles 1 and 2; ABCS quintile 1 and those eligible for free school meals), who make up the majority of the UoS student population, have particularly strong continuation rates materially above benchmark (variance is ≥ 1.6 ppt). Part-time and Apprenticeship students' continuation indicators show strong performance overall (9.7ppt and 3.8ppt, respectively, above benchmark [100% and 86.1% materiality]) and in each of the four years of the time series. High continuation rates are also evident in each of the four Schools, with a significant positive variance (≥ 2 ppt) in Business and Management, Engineering, Health and Social Care, Law, Architecture, Building and Planning, Chemistry, and Medical Sciences.
29. During the TEF period, UoS has refined its policies and developed several institutional and School **initiatives and projects** aimed at delivering inclusive, authentic, outward facing curriculum models and pedagogies, assessment, marking and feedback practices, designed to enable success and supporting **continuation**.
30. The **ATS** work package is designed to improve retention and continuation of Level 3 and 4 students, in particular, through nine interventions covering all aspects of the student experience. The package of measures includes incorporating '**Practice for Success**' formative assessments to scaffold learning; amending teaching, learning and assessment to incorporate methods introduced during COVID19 (for example, use of the 'flipped classroom' and digital technologies such as **the Learning Science Lab Simulation platform**), and enhance academic support by making greater use of **SPAs**. The nine areas for intervention were informed by internal and external benchmarked data, conversations with students and FE tutors; best practice identified in pedagogic research and scholarship focusing on transition to HE skills critical to first year undergraduate students' success.
31. Central to the **ATS** work package is the identification and embedding of a set of **Academic Transition Stage Skills (ATSS)**. All UoS undergraduate programmes were required to integrate ATSS into their teaching at Level 3 and 4 by the start of academic year 2022-23. The effectiveness of this initiative is evidenced in reduced 'in year attrition' for Level 4 students from 8.2% (2019-20 cohort) to 7.9% (in the 2020-21 cohort), with a corresponding improvement in progression to the next level of study on the same programme from 71.1% (2019-20 cohort) to 72.8% (2020-21 cohort).
32. Professional support services were also required to align their provision with ATSS. For example, in 2018 a set of minimum threshold expectations for Levels 3 and 4 **Academic Induction** was introduced to the **Welcome, Registration and Induction programme**.

These expectations are premised on the recognition that induction plays a significant role in helping new learners make a successful transition into HE studies.

33. In 2021-22 the University undertook a major revision of its academic calendar, for implementation in 2022-23. The **Shape of the Year** work package, a component of the ESS Academic Success theme, was designed to enhance student engagement and deliver improvements in continuation and completion. All undergraduate summative assessment in Trimester 1 has been timetabled to complete prior to Christmas break, with Trimester 2 starting earlier in the calendar year to reduce the inter-Trimester break in learning and sustain engagement with the University. Evidence from Trimester 1 2022-23 module review indicates that these changes have been effective in supporting students experience with 75% of undergraduate respondents (8,071) agreeing or strongly agreeing that '*the timetable works effectively for me*'.
34. A further outcome of the **ATS** work package was an amendment to the **Assessment and Feedback Policy** to reduce the use of formal written examinations and the introduction of a formal opportunity for early reassessment at Levels 3 and 4. **In Year Retrieval (IYR)** allows eligible students to recover failure in some summative assessments prior to a re-assessment period and thus closer to the point of delivery. Analysis of the resit outcomes shows that the pass rates of students taking IYR in 2020-21 were higher (89%) than those not taking this opportunity (88%), confirming that early intervention contributes to continuation at this level.
35. In addition to institutional initiatives, targeted interventions by Schools have further improved UoS overall continuation rates. For example, in 2021 SBS introduced an **immersive learning** approach to the delivery of a module which spans the entire UG Business Suite of programmes (circa 350 students). The 20 credits '*Understanding Organisations*' module is delivered in block mode during weeks 1-4 and includes in-person industry visits. The module has supported student transition to HE by enabling extended induction activities to be embedded over the four-week period. An assessment submission point in week 4 allows the early identification of students disengaging from teaching and learning activities. The outcomes of this approach have been very positive with a 93% pass rate. Similarly, SAMCT introduced a three-week immersive performance project aimed at supporting students' confidence at the start of their studies. The impact of this project is evident in cohort continuation which has increased from 87.9% in 2018-19 to 89.7% in 2019-20 and 91.7% in 2020-21.

2.2: COMPLETION

36. Over the TEF time period, Full-Time students' completion indicators are materially below benchmark in years one, two, and overall (2.9ppt); this position has been recovered in the most recent year with continuation (85.3%) 100% broadly in line with benchmark (85.8%). By contrast Part-Time students' completion indicators over the same time period have been above benchmark in all years and materially above benchmark (5.4ppt) overall. The same strong improved position observed for Full-Time students in year four is also seen for Part-Time students (9.3ppt above benchmark). The corresponding split indicator data shows that all Full-Time student characteristics (except ethnicity 'other') are below benchmark and all Part-Time student characteristics are above benchmark. The University's more recent continuation data indicates a 1.7ppt improvement in completion of Full-Time students compared to the previous cohort, indicating that recovery from COVID19 measures, and interventions designed to support completion, are delivering the intended outcomes.
37. A **Student Support Policy** establishes principles for providing support to students, including UoS staff and partners' responsibilities. The **Student Engagement, Interruption and Withdrawal Policy** sets out, alongside the **Student Charter**, the expectations of students' to engage with their studies, and sources of advice and support to guide students where continued engagement with learning becomes challenging. These include: **Academic APTs, SPAs, Programme Leaders, askUS** (the University's 'one-stop-shop' dedicated specialist

support service for all student enquiries) and the ongoing support available to facilitate re-engagement with learning following a period of interruption.

38. In addition to academic support, the University also provides a range of pastoral and welfare services to assist students in completing their studies. For example, each undergraduate student receives a £150 towards easing the financial pressures of studying. Students from low-income backgrounds and those from Low Participation Neighbourhoods are also eligible to apply to the '**Inspire**' scheme for an additional £500 per year to support their studies. A total £1.75m has been awarded between 2018-19 and 2021-22 distributed to 2,262 individual students. In addition, specific targeted bursaries (care leavers, estranged students summer award, estranged students award) amounting to £400,000 have been allocated to 674 students over the same period. A suite of policies and procedures are in place to determine reasonable adjustments necessary to assist students overcome barriers to study, due to either a disability, impairment, long-term physical and / or mental health conditions, autistic spectrum conditions or specific learning differences (**Reasonable Adjustment Plans/Carer Support Plans**), or personal and medical circumstances that seriously impinge on students' ability to complete an assessment (**Personal Mitigating Circumstances Procedure**).
39. Personalised academic support is central to helping students' sense of belonging, and ensuring that they are supported and able to develop their academic self-efficacy. The University's **Personalised Academic Support Policy** (including **APR**) describes the points of contact available for programme-specific and educational advice. **APR** provides structured support for students to engage in effective personal development and professional growth across all levels of study. There is an emphasis on increasing learner autonomy and challenging students to stretch beyond their current capabilities. **APTs** refer to the UoS **Employability Skills** and **ATSS** throughout **APR** conversations to help students reflect on their development and explicitly name the skills which students are developing, the **educational gains** they are making at each level and support students to record these and identify areas for development.
40. The introduction of **Student Experience Managers**, **SPAs** and **Graduate Tutors** in 2018-9 was designed to further support **APR**. Working closely with the Associate Deans and Student Experience Managers, **SPAs** are embedded in all Schools (four in SBS and SSEE; three in SHS and SAMCT) and work with programme leaders, academic staff, and Professional Services teams to help students successfully progress through their course. They monitor engagement with teaching and assessments and refer students to specialist support services, as required.
41. Since 2021 **APTs** and **SPAs** have used the **JISC learner engagement analytics** suite to facilitate a deeper understanding of how students behave and interact with the curriculum, including attendance monitoring of scheduled events such as lectures and seminars. The platform helps to identify and support students at risk of non-completion through early intervention and allows students to manage their own learning experience with tailored support.
42. The value of **SPAs** to supporting students' completion is evident in the increasing number of students supported and the range of interventions. For example, **SPAs** in SSEE supported 1,180 students (with 2,860 interventions) in 2018-19 and over 2,500 students in 2021-22, requiring 6,477 interventions. Similarly, SAMCT **SPAs** supported 1,383 students, rising to 3,695 over the same period with a corresponding increase in interventions from 1,813 to 3,304. The impact of these interventions on completion is seen in the type of issues resolved. For example, SHS **SPA** 'non-submission' interventions rose from 54 in Trimester 1 2020-21 to 368 in Trimester 1 2021-22 with 'attendance' interventions falling by from 680 to 1,250 over the same period.
43. **Graduate Tutors** provide specific transition advice to Level 3 and 4 students and support the recruitment, training, and deployment of peer mentors. The University has drawn on its

collaborative approach to working with students to build a supportive learning environment that enables timely completion by co-designing a **Peer Assisted Learning (PAL)** programme. Students participating in the scheme report finding it beneficial to their learning, with several participants in the first year applying to train as PAL leaders in the second year.

44. One of the key aspects of the **SPA** and Graduate Tutor roles is to support students to submit assessments **on time, first time**. The effectiveness of the SPA interventions is evident from the analysis of non-submission of summative assignment rates, which show a reduction in the percentage of students failing to submit an assessment from 6% (A-level entrants) and 7% (BTEC/Other Level 3 qualifications entrants) in 2019-20 to 3% and 4% respectively in 2020-21. Over the same time period, the percentage of student who passed all modules without resit increased from 52% to 62%.
45. Student mental health and wellbeing is recognized as a significant factor in determining whether students can complete their studies. The **Greater Manchester (GM) Universities Student Mental Health Service** supported students of the five GM universities throughout COVID19. By June 2022, over 960 students across the partner universities had been supported; 97% of service users rated the staff as good or excellent, and 98% rated the overall experience as good or excellent. The development of a UoS **Student Mental Health and Wellbeing strategy 2020-23** was a collaborative endeavour between students and staff that drew on learning from students' experiences of COVID19. The widely publicized strategy has encouraged more students to access pastoral and welfare support. Referrals to Counselling and Wellbeing services has increased by an average 200 additional referrals per week in 2021-22 compared to 2018-19.
46. In addition to cross-institutional initiatives driven by **ESS**, targeted interventions by individual Schools have further contributed to the improved UoS completion rates seen in year four. For example, in 2019-20, SSEE undertook a comprehensive review of the Undergraduate curriculum. The **Curriculum Enhancement Project (CEP)** sought to improve the quality and performance of learning and teaching activities including student engagement and timely progression towards completion and graduate employability. The outcomes of the project included more structured and explicit formative assessment opportunities within in the curriculum to scaffold learning alongside a reduction and standardisation of the number of assessments per 20 credit module. Simultaneously, the School launched the **SEE Engage** project which aimed to increase early support for Level 3 and 4 students and students 'at risk' of not engaging (for example, those returning from interruption and repeating students). The combination of these two Schoolwide projects led to improved continuation and completion outcomes. For example, in 2020-21 a total of 885 students were identified as 'at risk' of non-engagement. Through a sustained programme of multi-disciplinary interventions and support 93% (825) of these students were supported to continue and complete their studies.
47. Library Careers and Enterprise services have also developed resources to support students to complete their studies. Initially introduced in 2018-19 as a standalone eLearning course, **UniSkills**, included a suite of interactive resources, student voices, and mini assessments designed to deepen learning. In 2021, to further increase reach and embed skills development, the standalone course was extended to a **suite of eLearning units** designed to be integrated flexibly into all programmes. In 2022, the approach was extended further, as part of a three-stage institutional approach to include these learning materials in (i) UoS's pre-arrival platform **StartSmart**, (ii) course-specific academic inductions, and (iii) **'Academic Essentials'** units integrated into modules at appropriate points to scaffold students' learning.
48. The University's integrated approach to academic and professional support *ensures that UoS deploys and tailors approaches that are highly effective in ensuring its students succeed in and progress beyond their studies* (Feature of Excellence SO1).

2.3: PROGRESSION

49. Full-time students' progression indicators are broadly in line with benchmark in all three years of the TEF period and overall (1.7ppt above benchmark). Split indicators for Full-time students are broadly in line or materially above benchmark in all split demographic characteristics. Progression indicators for all Part-time students are materially above benchmark. In total fifty-four of the sixty-one TEF progression data categories are broadly in line, or materially above, benchmark demonstrating *outstanding rates of successful progression for UoS students and courses* (Feature of Excellence SO3).
50. The University's important role as a '**place-maker institution**' in the North-West is evident in its success in supporting students into professional and managerial employment or further study in areas of low graduate employment in highly skilled jobs. The **educational gains** made by students and the UoS's contribution to **social mobility** is evidenced by the progression indicators for lower ABCS and IMD deprivation quintiles which are broadly in line, or materially above, benchmark for Full-time students; all indicators are materially above benchmark for Part-time students. The University is ranked 6th in the **English Social Mobility Index (SMI) 2022**, rising from 14th place in 2021. Similarly, the Geography of Employment Quintiles are in line with, or materially above benchmark (for quintiles 4 or 5) for Full-time students. Part-time students demonstrate a stronger profile overall (at 96.5% the indicator value is 6.1ppt above benchmark) with progression 97% materially above benchmark and quintiles 1/2 and 3 also materially above benchmark (93.2% and 97.7% indicator values, respectively).
51. The University's strong foundation in addressing workforce needs is clearly evidenced in the **Industry Collaboration Zone (ICZ)** strategy which aligns with the dates of the progression data (2017-20) for this TEF exercise. The strength and depth of the University's working relationship with industry and commerce is evidenced in its **Knowledge Exchange Framework** rankings which confirmed very high engagement in '*working with business*'; '*IP and commercialisation*' and '*CPD and graduate start-ups*'. The **Academic Success** theme of the ESS programme, guided by the University's **Work Based Learning Policy**, has harnessed these links through professional networks, **School Employability Groups**, and **Industry Advisory Panels**, to direct the development of placements, the use of live briefs and authentic assessment to provide students with the real-world experiences required by employers. As a result, students are skilled in citing authentic work-related activity during interviews and able to evidence their skills and suitability for employment. Over 220 UoS programmes are accredited with more than 50 **PSRBs**, providing further external validation of their currency, sector-relevance, and enhancement to graduates' employment prospects.
52. Career readiness starts at registration with students indicating their career aspirations and work experience early in their HE journey. During the academic year 2016-17, **Careers and Enterprise** services conducted a scoping exercise to identify students' career support needs, resulting in **online careers registration** being introduced for all entrants from 2017-18. Since 2018, over 90% of entrants, in each year, have engaged with the online career registration. The data from these surveys is primarily used by the Careers and Enterprise team to target interventions, provide personalised support and specific information about work-based learning, careers, and employment advice. The effectiveness of this approach is evident in students' progression with over 50% of 2018-19 qualifiers (year two) materially above the benchmark; this indicator value was sustained for 2019-20 (year three) qualifiers entering the workplace during COVID19.
53. For provision below benchmark, both 'English Studies' and 'Sport and Exercise', which are within 3ppt of benchmark, have received support to provide a stronger focus on higher skills. For example, timetabled social media and preparing for a career advice sessions have led to an increase in progression to 'any further work or study' for 90% of Sport Science students in 2019-20 and 100% for Exercise and Nutrition. Within Economics, insights events covering career guidance and CV development has been aligned to the design and delivery of a Level

5 Professional Development module. This sustained support has resulted in a substantial increase in 'Highly skilled work or further study' from 59% to 85% between 2018-19 and 2020-21 and now places Economics in TEF indicator metrics materially above benchmark.

54. The University's progression data for all ethnicities remains above benchmark overall, reinforcing the University's commitment to inclusivity and reducing inequalities. **Progression** is materially above benchmark for both Black and Other students studying Full-time. Initiatives that have contributed to this outcome include, the University's sponsorship of a **'Black Solicitors Network North'** where eligible students have automatic membership, entitling them to access to a range of events and courses. Students who meet certain socio-economic criteria may also join the Network's **Grassroots Programme** which allows further access to mentoring and support. This has contributed to the 4% above benchmark progression of Black students into managerial and professional employment or further study.
55. Arts and the creative industries are traditionally challenging areas of graduate employment, with many students adopting freelance portfolio careers which can take longer to mature after graduation. In response, as part of the University **Campus MasterPlan** and **ESS Environment theme**, new facilities were developed for SAMCT. **'The New Adelphi'** building enabled more creative industry enterprise opportunities to become available to students, including a **Studio Salford** commercial unit (design, PR and media projects), **New Adelphi Theatre** (production and events), **Pipeline Media** (professional short course and executive training), **Live Music** (production and events) and the **Digital Curation Lab** (digital preservation services). These facilities are used to enhance student opportunities to develop skills for employment alongside developing relationships with key external organisations (including, for example, **HOME, Manchester Animation Festival, Edinburgh TV Festival, Low Four Music Studios, Open Eye Gallery, and Tate Liverpool**) by working on live projects, briefs, and exhibitions. An example of the impact of this activity is the increase in *'any further work or study'* in *'Performance'* from 84% to 93% (2019-20 to 2020-21) which is also above sector average.
56. An identified reduction in Law graduates' progression to *'any further work or study'* in 2017 led to several initiatives which successfully increased progression rates for this subject area to 93% in 2020. One of the key factors in the success was the introduction of credit bearing pro-bono activities within a **'Law in Action'** module. This allows students to gain credit towards their degree, from clinical legal skills embedded in the programme that equipped students with the necessary sector-specific skills on graduation. In partnership with **Freedom Law Clinic**, students are also able to enhance their employability and practical legal skills by participating in the **Salford Information and Legal Knowledge Scheme (SILKS)** which exposes them to criminal appeal cases involving serious offences.
57. Within SHS, the development of digital skills has been a key focus to support progression. For example, the Radiography team implemented a **Digital Skills Framework** into the curriculum in 2019. Dedicated career days, job application sessions, preparing for interview support guidance, and a clinical placements expansion project has resulted in 100% of Radiography graduates achieving *'Highly skilled work or further study'* each year from 2017-18 to 2019-20. A key contributor to the high levels of success in the health and social care programmes (9.7ppt above benchmark) is ensuring that placement opportunities are available and appropriate. UoS ensures this for its students as a member of the **Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership** where workforce demands are considered as a joint responsibility of the University and employers.
58. In addition to employment readiness and skills development embedded into the curriculum, the University has dedicated teams in all Schools to support students' access to work experience and placements opportunities with local voluntary and charity organisations such as **Salford CVS** and **Salford Foundation**. Many of these experiences are designed to widen students' life skills in preparation for employment. Within SHS an extensive **Private, Independent and Voluntary Organisations (PIVO)** network has been developed to widen

career opportunities. The effectiveness of this approach is evidenced within the Podiatry programme which has seen an increase from 92% to 95% in progression to '*highly skilled work or further study*' between 2018-19 and 2020-21.

59. The University uses an all-system approach to supporting students into employment. Leadership programmes, mentoring by alumni and support from careers advisors ensures support is available to all students in a variety of formats. This has been particularly effective for non-vocational programmes using interview readiness (**CareerSet** and **ShortlistMe**) alongside job seeking skill development workshops. Services provided for all students include one-to-one careers and enterprise appointments (online and on campus) and mock interviews. Employment focused events such as **festival of entrepreneurship and careers fairs** are also provided. The development of the on-campus recruitment agency '**Unitemps**' has also been able to provide part-time work experience for undergraduate students and more permanent opportunities for graduates.

SECTION 3: STUDENT EXPERIENCE

3.1: TEACHING ON MY COURSE

60. The UoS strategic aims and goals for teaching and learning are underpinned by the University's Corporate Strategy that commits to *excellence in teaching outcomes for all students through a relevant curriculum which is informed by real world research and professional practice*. This commitment is articulated in the **University's Programme Design, Approval, Amendment, Review and Withdrawal Policy (2022)**.
61. During 2017 and 2018, UoS undertook a comprehensive **curriculum review** to assess the 'industry readiness' of each taught programme against a distinctive set of **curriculum design principles (SC+)**. These were refreshed in 2017-18 and 2022 to reflect the University's changing pedagogies as a result of COVID19, the greater use of hybrid (blended) learning and teaching and delivery of higher technical skills as part of its growing Apprenticeship portfolio. The **principles** (inclusivity, co-created curricula and delivery, active and collaborative learning, real world and experiential learning, digital fluency, learner autonomy, authentic assessment, education for ethical behaviour, research-informed curriculum and path to professional) are embedded in UoS provision along with a commitment to develop academic practice, focusing on technology-enabled, active and collaborative learning and pedagogic practice, centred on work-based learning and preparation of students for professional careers.
62. The effectiveness of this approach is evident in the UoS **2022 NSS** results which show 17 subject areas, across all four Schools, with learning and teaching satisfaction scores above 85% in the *learning and teaching scale*. The '*teaching on my course*' TEF indicator for Full-time students shows that the University is broadly in line with benchmark (77.9% compared to a benchmark 80.1%) overall and for most split demographic categories, although female, those aged 21-30 and Asian students report satisfaction with teaching below benchmark. The Part-time student indicator is also in line with benchmark (83.4% compared to 82.7%) while Apprenticeship students' overall indicator is materially above benchmark (85.1% compared to 81.2%). There is an observable improvement against benchmark for all study modes over the four-year period. Indicators for Full-time students are consistent in years one, two and three, including through COVID19, with satisfaction in year four (76.5% against a benchmark of 77.3%) showing an improvement on previous years, in relation to benchmark, including prior to COVID19. This improving trajectory is also evident for Part-time and Apprenticeship students, with satisfaction 6.7ppt above benchmark in year four. The HE sector has seen little recovery post COVID19 in the '*teaching on my course*' scale of the NSS between 2021 (80%) and 2022 (80%). UoS, however, has improved its performance in the overall scale (2.2ppt) in 2022, and in each of the individual questions making up this scale, compared to 2021.

63. The University's planned upgrade of its **Virtual Learning Environment** from **Blackboard** to **Blackboard Ultra** was accelerated in 2020-21 in response to COVID19. This provided a refreshed interface, new online teaching tools and clearer, more accessible learning environment for students. Further investment in supporting functions such as: Blackboard Ally, the accessibility checking platform; Blackboard Collaborate virtual classroom; and integration with the Office365 platform enabled staff and students to collaborate and coproduce learning and teaching activities more easily. A substantial suite of staff development activities, including an 8-hour Online Teaching Development Programme involving self-directed materials and synchronous online workshops were put in place to provide staff with the necessary skills to use the upgraded Blackboard platform effectively.
64. The University's curriculum design reflects new modes of delivery, learning from COVID19 and is informed by the development of future technology-enabled practice to connect students to dynamic, interactive, professional on-campus and virtual experiences. The effectiveness of this approach is evident in feedback captured in Student Voice meetings with Level 4 and 6 course representatives discussing students experience of a 'flipped classroom' and the improvement seen in engagement and first-time pass rates. Following the positive feedback and outcomes, the **Mathematics** programme team committed to embed this method of delivery in all timetabled sessions. Evidence from Trimester 1 2022-23 module reviews also indicate that the changes have been effective in supporting students learning experience with 79% of undergraduate respondents (8,071) agreeing or strongly agreeing that '*any changes in the course or teaching have been communicated effectively*'.
65. Increased investment in the **LTEC** in 2021-22 has resulted in further enhancement of teaching quality, evidenced by an increase in satisfaction in nine questions in NSS 2022. A newly launched **LTEC Hub**, accessed on 21,000 occasions by 1,500 unique users in the first six months of launch, holds resources including monthly 'spotlight' sessions on key teaching themes alongside workshops to develop practice and use of technology alongside a digital exchange to house best internal and external practice (43 contributions were uploaded in the first six months of 2022). This central strategic approach to academic development is reinforced through Schools tailoring additional year-round development sessions for academic staff. These sessions, captured in School Quarterly reports to the ESS Steering Group, have included designing an inclusive curriculum and reflections on blended delivery modes. These reports confirm that UoS *uses research in relevant disciplines, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and/or employer engagement to contribute to an outstanding academic experience for its students* (Feature of Excellence SE3).
66. Case study examples of strong teaching practice, include staff working with industry partners on work-based learning opportunities, enabling students to apply their learning and skills in real-world environments. For example, in the Creative Arts and Design subject area, academics working on the BA Fashion Image Making and Styling programme partner with Selfridges department store to deliver an annual live brief, providing students with the opportunity to contribute content promoting fashion in an annual sustainability project '**Project Earth**'. Selected work is printed across a range of promotional material and sold through the Selfridges chain nationally. The impact of this approach is evident in the TEF indicators. The University's Creative Arts and Design subject area is materially above benchmark for '*teaching on my course*', with an indicator value of 81.9% compared to a benchmark value of 78.7%. The NSS results in 2022 for *teaching on my course* in the Fashion subject area was 95%, more than 15ppt above a sector average of 79%.
67. Aligned with the University's **ESS** programme, SSEE initiated a School-wide undergraduate **CEP** in 2020 that involved adopting enhanced scaffolded learning approaches, further integrating employability skills in the curriculum, and embedding year-round teaching and learning development sessions for all staff. A positive impact is evidenced within the School's in subject areas previously below TEF indicators for '*teaching on my course*' that have improved over the 2019-22 time period. For example, the Building Surveying subject group improved from 57% satisfaction in 2020 to 73% in 2022. In the Architecture subject area,

satisfaction in 2022 is 97%, a 9ppt improvement from 2020. Similarly, the Chemistry and Chemical Sciences subject group has seen an increase in satisfaction from 76% in 2020 to 78% in 2022.

68. The strength of teaching and learning practice across all Schools is evident in the module review responses for Trimester 1 2022-23. Of the 2,660 free-text comments received from 8,071 undergraduate responses, 65% referred to '*teaching*' as the best thing about their module, with the most commonly cited reason (29%) for this positive response as '*a great teacher/positive experience with a teacher*', confirming that *course content and delivery is designed to inspire the students to actively engage in and commit to their learning, and stretch students to develop knowledge and skills to their fullest potential* (Feature of Excellence SE2).

3.2: ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

69. The UoS's **Assessment and Feedback policy**, guidance and training have focused responsibility on all programmes to promote authenticity, ethical, collaborative and industry-informed practice into assessment. Module specifications clearly outline the learning outcomes of the specific subject areas and student's development of transferable skills.
70. **Authentic Assessment** is one of the key elements to fulfilling the goals of the ESS Academic Success theme. This approach is embedded in the curriculum design principles used in all UoS provision and has contributed to the strong '*assessment and feedback*' indicators in the TEF student experience aspect. Of the 26 subject areas, only two are materially below benchmark; only 'other UG' is below benchmark, albeit is a very low proportion of the total student body. All three age categories are either broadly in line or above the benchmark. Both those reporting and those with no reported disability have satisfaction levels broadly in line with the benchmark. All categories of ethnicity are either broadly in line or above benchmark. Female students report higher levels of satisfaction (above benchmark) with assessment and feedback than males' overall. The UoS NSS 2022 results for '*assessment and feedback*' are also above sector average and maintain the above sector performance over the past four years (2022 = 69.3% (68.5%); 2021 = 68.7% (68.6%); 2020 = 74.1% (72%); 2019 = 75.2% (73%)). Each of the University's four schools have either met the sector average or exceeded it over the last four years.
71. In 2020, as a result of the outcomes from the **ESS ATS** work package, Senate approved an amendment to the **Assessment and Feedback Policy** incorporating a requirement that no formal written examinations are used in Trimester 1 assessments for students at Levels 3 and 4, unless required by PSRBs. The amendment is designed to support students' transition to HE, develop confidence in HE learning methods, and support continuation. Its effectiveness is evidenced in improved average pass rates (from 58% in 2018-9 to 90% in 2020-21 for Level 4 students and from 64% to 89% for Level 3 students over the same period). There has been a corresponding improvement in average module marks over the same period from 37% to 57% for Level 3 students; and from 34% to 57% for Level 4 students.
72. Feedback from a USSU survey identified that students may encounter difficulties in navigating assessment feedback. As a result, the **Assessment and Feedback Policy** guidance was amended to include three key areas of feedback using a standardised template (what you did well in this piece of work, where improvements could be made, what should I consider for future assessments). Responses to module review in Trimester 1 2022-23 show that improvements to feedback have been effective, with 78% of undergraduate students completing the questionnaire (8,071) agreeing or strongly agreeing that '*lecturers provided clear information about the assessment and marking criteria for this module*' and 73% agreeing or strongly agreeing that '*feedback provided on practice or early assessments in the module has helped me to prepare for subsequent assessment*'.

73. The **LTEC** has provided workshops and 'spotlights sessions' designed to embed good practice and coach staff and create effective assessment strategies. Examples include 'Approaches and tools for inclusive feedback', 'Feedback rich environments, who generates the feedback and how?', 'Exploring Feedback Culture: finding the hidden value', and 'Using rubrics as a feedback tool'. Building on these development sessions and following concerns raised at Student Voice meetings by Level 5 course representatives about potential bunching of assessments, the **Chemical Sciences** programme team amended the delivery of two modules to a 'long-thin' format over two Trimesters to give greater flexibility in assessment deadlines and improve students' engagement with learning. The effectiveness of these changes is seen in the 13ppt improvement in students' satisfaction with '*assessment and feedback*' scale of NSS 2021 and 2022.
74. Individual Schools continually monitor and adjust the effectiveness of their assessment and feedback practices to ensure that they meet the needs of their subject disciplines. For example, assessment and feedback practices in the SHS are focused on professional practice across the range of health and social care professions, with many assessments aligned to real life issues. Video recordings of assignment brief discussions allow students to access assessment support at any time, and audio feedback of assessments is inclusive and meets diverse student learning needs.
75. During COVID19, the Vice-Chancellor invoked the **Regulations for Exceptional Circumstances** and committed to a 'safety net' approach so that no student was disadvantaged in their academic performance. The **No Detriment Policy**, implemented in 2020-21 meant that the overall mark awarded to a student for the year would not be lower than the overall mark achieved up until 15 March 2020 (i.e., the date from which face to face teaching and assessment was suspended). A review of the impact of 'safety net' measures on first-degree results 2020-21 undertaken by the **Academic Regulations (AR) Sub-Committee** and reported to ULTC in May 2022, concluded that the No Detriment Policy had effectively mitigated any potential disadvantage, and changes to teaching and learning practice and assessment methods had been used equitably. Application of the No Detriment Policy ceased in 2022-23. The cumulative effect of mitigations and adaptations to assessment practices on degree outcomes continues to be monitored by the **AR Sub-committee**.
76. As part of the **ESS** programme focus on continuous improvement, and taking lessons learned from educational initiatives implemented across the HE sector, some UoS assessment types, changed as a result of COVID19, have been adopted permanently due to their effectiveness. Feedback modes are also more varied, including use of verbal feedback on some assessed work either in-person or recorded format using '**Screencast**'. This digital tool enables the marker to record their feedback whilst viewing the student's digital submission. The student can watch as the marker highlights sections of their work with commentary.
77. A summary of External Examiners reports 2020-21 received by ULTC in April 2022 noted that all External Examiners reported that curriculum content and assessment methods during 2020-2021 were appropriate, with many praising the wide range of assessments, fair marking processes and internal moderation. The feedback given to students was acknowledged to be, overall, very good with some excellent features. Adaptations to assessment due to COVID19 were described as having been effective and well designed, confirming that *UoS has embedded outstanding teaching, feedback and assessment practices that are highly effective and tailored to supporting its students' learning, progression, and attainment* (Feature of Excellence SE1).

3.3: ACADEMIC SUPPORT

78. Academic support for UoS students begins at Welcome, Registration and Induction with specific **Academic Induction** events, resources and activities made available to students to enable them to plan their learning journey as a scaffolded path towards employment or further study. Activities introduce students to Problem solving, Self-reflection, Innovative thinking and Risk-tasking, Collaborative working, Professional attitudes, and Digital confidence
79. The University is broadly in-line with the TEF indicators for '*academic support*' (99.5%) for Full-time students, overall. There are no examples of above benchmark indicators among student demographics and characteristics for full-time students. This contrasts with the experience of part-time and Apprenticeship students where most indicators in each demographic characteristics are above benchmark. First degree, young students perform broadly in line with benchmark. However, smaller populations with student profiles that differ from the majority show more variability. Examples include mature learners, other undergraduates and disabled learners, a significant proportion of these students are materially below the benchmark:
80. Full-time students aged between 21-30 years report below benchmark (2.7ppt) satisfaction with *academic support*. Part-time students' overall indicator is materially above benchmark. Comparing the indicators across years suggests that NSS 2021 reflects the views of students most significantly impacted by COVID19. The HE sector has seen little recovery post COVID19 in '*academic support*' scale of the NSS between 2021-22 (74%). However, UoS, improved its position in both the overall scale (1ppt) and individual questions (up to 3ppt) in 2022 compared to 2021.
81. Throughout the four-year TEF period the University has delivered coherent academic and professional support services to enable student success via the **ESS programme Academic Success** and **Customer Service** themes. These themes have addressed underperformance seen in year one, where almost 16% of the population was materially below benchmark; with the impact evident in year two where a proportion of students reported satisfaction with '*academic support*' materially above benchmark and the remainder broadly in line.
82. **SPAs** and **APTs** play a crucial role in guiding students towards relevant academic support by making timely interventions to support students' learning engagement. The effectiveness of the role can be seen in the number of interventions supported over the last four years. In **SBS** for example the number of students supported by **SPAs** has risen from 352 in 2018-9 to 2,060 in 2021-22 with a total of 578 and 6,555 intervention in each year respectively. These are supplemented by online academic progress tutor hosted one-hour small-group weekly **Student Support Sessions (SSS)** designed to champion students' academic and employability development alongside fostering a sense of community. Attendance and engagement data from Blackboard indicate that 67% of Level 4 SBS students participated in these sessions. The integration of academic, personal, and professional development support is illustrated in action taken at module level to support student experience and success. Following concerns raised by course representatives at Student Voice meetings, the **Architecture** programme team revised mechanisms for supporting use of personal development plans to improve engagement, self-directed learning, and completion. The effectiveness of these interventions is seen in the 39ppt improvement in students' satisfaction with NSS '*academic support*' scale, between 2021 and 2022.
83. **The Library, Careers and Enterprise** has partnered with course teams to develop students' skills for learning specific to their course. This has included designing a flexible suite of **eLearning** or a blend of **e-tivities** and in-person activities available to academic teams to embed in individual programmes. This **co-curricular academic support model** includes a choice of online or on-campus workshops and 1:1s with increased evening delivery; drop-ins and exam stress packs, plus high-quality interactive eLearning resources accessible 24:7 via

the Library website. Approximately 15% (3,600) of students access the Library's study skills workshops, appointments and eLearning support including writing, study and research skills, digital literacy, numeracy, communication, and self-efficacy. Between 7000-8000 (c.30%) students a year benefit from academic skills development delivered as an integral part of their programme, ensuring that essential academic support reaches all students who need it at the right time. Students recognize the effectiveness of this approach. Module review responses for Trimester 1 2022-23 (8,071) included 2,660 free-text comments on the 'best thing' about the module; '*academic support*' was identified in 9% of these comments as the reason for this positive comment.

84. In 2021, the **ESS** programme recognised the potential and scalability of this integrated blended model of academic skills development and guided the transformation and expansion of **UniSkills** into a flexible suite of **Academic Essentials eLearning** content designed to be embedded at the appropriate time for learners in all programmes. In 2021-22, the content was embedded in module sites within the UoS Blackboard VLE. **Academic Essentials** is increasingly well used, receiving over 58,000 pageviews in 2021-22. Feedback from students remains consistently strong, with 94% reporting a positive impact on their study habits. The work has also been shared at international conferences, and in a recent report in the *Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education*.
85. In 2019-20, supported by an internal **Salford Community for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (SCELT) scholarship**, **SBS** introduced **Academic resilience support workshops**. The effectiveness of the workshops was measured using Cassidy's Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30). While participants had lower than average levels of academic resilience before the workshops, the post-workshop scores were significantly higher than average. The workshops have subsequently been developed into a regular workshop series and an openly available interactive eLearning resource which is embedded into several programmes.
86. Writing skills are essential both to students' academic achievement and to the excellent communication expected by employers. To ensure that the diversity of students' learning needs is supported, the University has complemented its workshop-based programme, **Wordscope, with Pearson's Smarthinking**, a flexible online round-the-clock service that offers students personalised feedback on any piece of writing within 24 hours. Pearson 2021-22 year end usage report, confirmed that 98% of students would recommend **Smarthinking** to a friend. Feedback from academic staff has been similarly positive, acknowledging its impact on confidence and forward-planning and the ways in which it complements module tutors' feedback and support. As a result, it has been made available to all Level 3 and 4 students from 2022-23.
87. Further specialist academic support is provided via the University's **Mathscope clinic**, the **Learn English for Academic Purposes (LEAP) programme** and the **Disability Inclusion Service**. Over 3,600 students made use of the Library Services co-curricular academic support services in 2020-21, demonstrating their continued value through the disruption of COVID19. Students consistently report a positive impact through post-event feedback forms (3,136 responses in 2020-21 and 2,051 responses in 2021-22), with over 90% reporting an increase in confidence as a result of engaging with a workshop/eLearning and 100% following a 1:1 appointment.
88. In academic years 2020-21 and 2021-22, COVID19 was at its peak with North-West particularly affected compared to many regions of the UK. This had a demonstrable impact on students' satisfaction with academic support, as evidenced in the TEF indicator for year three, which saw a fall among both Full-time and Part-time students' satisfaction with '*academic support*' (2.7ppt and 7.9ppt, respectively). In the most recent year, these values have recovered to broadly in line and materially above benchmark for Full-time and Part-time students respectively, providing assurance that the adjustments to academic support put in place during COVID19 and subsequent developments in response to students changing

learning needs are meeting students' expectations.

89. Many UoS students have challenges which focusses resources on providing appropriate academic support to help them overcome potential barriers to learning and success. The effectiveness of the University's integrated approach to academic support is evident in feedback via the 2021 NSS where a student commented that *"Above all, professional and friendly personal tutor's support throughout first and second year is second to none. Most tutors across modules and years are approachable and generally give constructive advice. Library support and resources are very good, vast majority of library staff are very friendly and happy to help with anything. I felt very safe when it was necessary for me to visit the campus during the pandemic, all safety measures were taken."*
90. UoS students have *access to a wide and readily available range of outstanding quality academic support tailored to their needs and ensures a supportive learning environment* (Feature of Excellence SE5).

3.4: LEARNING RESOURCES

91. UoS is committed to providing an enriched learning and teaching environment which is high quality, pedagogy driven and digitally enabled. Full-time students' satisfaction with '*learning resources*' during the TEF period reflects the impact of COVID19 on students learning experiences. From high levels of satisfaction in years one and two (87.3% and 87.7%, respectively), satisfaction fell to 71.2% in year three, improving in year four to 79.5%. In all years, the indicator is broadly in line (years one, three and four) or above the benchmark (year two). A similar pattern is observed for Part time and Apprenticeship students.
92. Responses to the individual questions making up the '*learning resources*' scale in NSS 2021 show that, while there was a decline in satisfaction across all three areas, performance was below benchmark (but not materially below) for IT services and facilities and course specific learning resources. The indicator for Q18 (IT resources) was 70.3% compared to HE sector average of 71.9%, a difference of 1.6ppt, and the indicator for Q20 (Course specific resources), was 69.4% compared to a benchmark of 73.8%, a difference of 4.4ppt. An analysis of the NSS free text comments suggests that the primary reason for the fall in satisfaction in 2021 was the measures taken in response to COVID19 and the impact this had on students' ability to access learning resources, which have since been addressed.
93. Plans to develop the physical and digital infrastructure required to deliver the industry relevant programmes are set out in the **Catalyst IT Strategy** and the **Campus Masterplan** and delivered through the **ESS Environment** theme work packages. These strategies have driven the development of physical and digital infrastructure, and other learning resources. For example, UoS has completed a major refurbishment of biosciences teaching laboratories; created new social learning and touchdown spaces to support student belonging; modernised and upgraded diagnostic radiography facilities and equipment; developed simulation suites to support policing provision; developed a new £65 million Science and Engineering facility; turned the campus public realm into a living laboratory through the **IGNITION Nature Based Solutions Living Laboratory**; built **Energy House II** research facility to analyze the impact of green infrastructure in a real-world urban environment, and provided a space in **The North of England Robotics Centre**, opening in 2023, for small and medium sized enterprises, academics and students to innovate in robotics, artificial intelligence, and machine learning.
94. Each of these facilities have been designed to facilitate students, academics and industry partners working together on cutting edge industry facing projects. They provide industry standard facilities and equipment including teaching laboratories, lectures theatres and other teaching spaces designed to be used flexibly and equipped with the digital technology needed to support face to face and hybrid learning. These developments have enhanced students learning experience and contributed to their success as evidenced by responses

from 8,071 undergraduate students (at all Levels) to a Trimester 1 2022-23 module review questionnaire which found that 84% agreed or strongly agreed that *'the learning spaces for this module were satisfactory and appropriate for the scheduled session'*.

95. **Digital technologies** have also been used to connect staff, students, employers, to enable innovation in teaching and learning and provide learners with real world experiences that enhance their employability.
96. New learning resources have been deployed to enable students to develop their **employability skills** and obtain industry recognised certifications and that will enable them to succeed in their chosen career. In 2019-20, for example, **LinkedIn Learning** was made available to all staff and students. **LinkedIn Learning** provides current industry-standard online courses, with digital certifications, across a wide range of digital, creative, and professional skills. The UoS Careers and Employability Service has used LinkedIn Learning content to create over 35 careers learning paths for students, complementing existing careers and employability resources. The UoS has one of the highest activation rates and usage of **LinkedIn Learning** in UK HE, with 34% of students having activated a license (9,569 students).
97. Similarly, the University has a formal Shared Goal Agreement with Microsoft to offer **Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS)**, an industry-standard micro credential that is made available to all UoS students. **MOS** offers students a rigorous digital skills development experience and an advanced, globally recognised, certification alongside their degree. The MOS programme can be taken by students as a co-curricular award and has been embedded into specific UoS modules; for example, the Level 4 **Digital Business Skills** module offered by SBS. Over 350 students per year have registered on the module with a pass rate of over 70% each year since its launch in 2019-20.
98. Students experience of, and access to, learning resources was disrupted in 2020-21 by COVID19. The University responded by adapting and innovating its learning and teaching, changing its facilities, digital platforms and learning resources to maintain a high-quality learning experience for students. Several of the University's planned digital and technology-enabled **ESS Environment** work packages were accelerated to enable staff and students to quickly adapt to the increased hybrid and online working environment.
99. For example, New digital technologies were introduced to ensure our students could continue to develop their laboratory and clinical skills. **The Learning Science Lab Simulation platform** was introduced to enhance the learning experience of student on biological, biomedical, and chemical science programmes and the **Clinical Skills Net®** provided peer reviewed resources based on the most up-to-date guidelines and evidence to enable students to continue to develop their clinical skills. Similarly, **Oxford Medical Simulation (OMS)** is a virtual environment where learners carry out patient assessments following the same process as they would in real life. Clinical Skills Net and OMS provide students with valuable experience at a time when access to placements and hands on clinical skills sessions were limited. While COVID19 provided the catalyst for the introduction of these new technologies, these resources are now a core part of clinical skills programmes and their contribution to enhancing students learning experience and success is evidenced by responses from 1,898 undergraduate SHS students (at all Levels) to a Trimester 1 2022-23 module review questionnaire which found that 83% agreed or strongly agreed that *'the resources for this module supported my learning'*.
100. In 2020-21, the Library prioritised the acquisition of **e-textbooks** for key programmes and modules in and in support of the transition to blended learning and in recognition of the difficulties students faced in accessing printed books. This significant financial investment ensured that all students had seamless and instantaneous access to core textbooks from their personal devices. Access to new and enhanced digital and technology enabled facilities was supported by the University's **Salford Education Technology Fund** which provided

additional support for students at risk of experiencing digital poverty. In the last three years, it has supported over 1500 students to purchase a laptop. Over the same period, the number of laptops available for students to borrow on long and short-term loans increased from 288 to 500 and negotiation with UoS's Internet Service Provider provided heavily discounted broadband access using mobile 4G / 5G routers to students. Students who received funding were surveyed in May 2021 with 72% of respondents saying that the fund had provided access to online learning that was previously unattainable. During the same period, a **Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) and Application Virtualisation** solution was implemented enabling the virtualisation of over 200 pieces of software. This gave staff and students access to core learning and teaching software from any location. These developments have enhanced students learning experience and contributed to their success as evidenced, confirming that *physical and virtual learning resources are tailored and used effectively to support outstanding teaching and learning* (Feature of Excellence SE6).

3.5: STUDENT VOICE

101. The Student Voice is critical to how the UoS is organised and run. Every student can provide feedback on the education environment, the campus, extracurricular opportunities, or other aspects of University life. A **Student Voice and Engagement Team** works with the student body and staff, championing the student voice and leading the capture and representation of the student voice through a number of methods.
102. Student voice is embedded in all levels of the University's **Scheme of Academic Governance**. Sabbatical Officers, student representatives and individuals drawn from the student body also regularly join Task and Finish or Working Groups and present directly to the University Council. USSU and senior members of the University's academic and professional service discuss strategic and operational matters at **Quarterly Progress Review meetings** and a **Partnership Steering Group**. All students can provide feedback through informal interactions with staff, by contacting **AskUS** or via the University's web-based feedback platform **Let's Talk!** Students are also encouraged to engage with National student voice exercises such as the **NSS** and **Graduate Outcomes Survey (GO)**.
103. In addition to feedback from national surveys, the University and USSU use a range of internal mechanisms to capture the student voice, including a **Salford Student Survey**, completed within the first 6 weeks of students joining the University and designed to provide students with the opportunity to evaluate their current academic and personal skills and identify areas for improvement or development. The survey outcomes are also used to inform enhancement to University services and facilities. A **Module Review** questionnaire completed each Trimester in each year of study provides feedback to inform the University's academic performance monitoring and development and enhancement of teaching and learning. Supported and trained by the USSU, student **Course and School representatives** provide ongoing feedback to the University through regular meetings with module tutors, programme leaders key stakeholders including Pro Vice-Chancellors / Associate PVCs, Associate Deans, and Directors of Professional Service.
104. Student feedback captured through the full range of student voice mechanisms are recorded and monitored through **PMEP**. Performance issues identified against a suite of lead indicators generate actions which are captured in **Programme Action Logs (PALs)**. These actions are assigned to staff in the relevant School or Professional Services. **PALs** are reviewed each Trimester and feed into **School Action Logs (SALs)**. Each Trimester, **School SLTCs** receive a **School PMEP Trimester report** and approve actions including identifying matters that require escalating to relevant professional services boards, Senate committees and, where required, to **VCET**.
105. NSS 2022 results, considered through this committee infrastructure, show UoS students' satisfaction rose by 2.7ppt to 71% compared to 2021; a substantial improvement compared to the sector average rise in 'overall satisfaction' of 0.9ppt from 2021. This improvement in

overall satisfaction has continued in more recent module review results for Trimester 1 2022-23 where 79% of undergraduate students at all Levels completing the questionnaire (8,071) agreed or strongly agreed that *'overall, I am satisfied with the module'*. UoS NSS 2022 results for *'teaching on my course'* also improved by 2.0ppt to 77%, compared to no change in the HE sector average compared to 2021, and satisfaction with *'assessment and feedback'* improved for UoS students by 1.0ppt to 70%, above the sector average which fell by 1.0ppt to 67%. The area of *'academic support'*, also saw an increase of 1.0ppt to 70%. The largest improvement was seen in satisfaction with *'learning resources'* which increased by 8.0ppt to 80%.

106. The embedded approach to enabling student success and interventions UoS put in place during COVID19 have been more effective in maintaining student satisfaction, compared to the HE sector. Nevertheless, TEF indicators for this period show that, overall, satisfaction with *'student voice'* is below benchmark and materially below benchmark for several subject groups and student demographic characteristics. UoS students reported low levels of satisfaction in year three of the TEF period, coinciding with students experience of COVID19. Subject areas and alternative programmes of study (other UG, other UG at Level 5+) where satisfaction with *'student voice'* was lower than benchmark include areas with strong industry links and substantial practice-based delivery such as laboratory classes, work-based learning, site visits and field work, which was significantly impacted by National restrictions that disproportionately affected UoS students due to the increased frequency and time the North-West spent in 'lockdown' in comparison to other areas of the UK. The high-proportion of Health-related provision at the UoS, which also makes up a significant proportion of UoS overall student numbers, meant that many UoS students were also directly involved in frontline COVID19 support (nursing and midwifery) where concerns about professional practice were also raised. By contrast, subject areas with indicators above benchmark include social sciences such as Politics 70.1% (4.9%) and Sociology, Social Policy, and Anthropology 71% (4%) where the nature and pattern of delivery was not disrupted to the same extent.
107. The University and USSU are aware of the challenges raised by students and are taking deliberate steps to address the areas of weakness reported prior to and during COVID19, as evidenced by the improved levels of satisfaction reported in year four.
108. Improving the efficient and effective capture of student feedback, providing timely responses to this feedback, and taking decisive action is a joint priority of the University and the USSU. Led by the USSU, UoS has supported an enhanced **USSU Student Voice Process**, designed to improve recruitment, training and support for **Student Representatives**, whilst increasing the structure and frequency of required engagement meetings between staff and students at both programme level, and subject/Directorate level (both meetings occurring at least twice a Trimester). These are supplemented by monthly meetings between the Associate Deans Student Experience and course representatives. At the start of academic year 2022-23 522 course representatives were in place across the University.
109. Improvements in the **Student Representative** training and support has created a sense of belonging and empowerment. For example in SSEE, the Sabbatical Officer and School Representatives co-designed and co-delivered the Directorate level **induction events** and organised and implemented School level **peer support socials** and **Student Voice promoting events** that provided further opportunities for informal capture of student experiences that have informed ongoing improvements. **Sabbatical and Voluntary Officers** have also led and/or co-led sessions and created safe spaces to allow inclusive capture of student voice at **Collectives and listening events**. Through inclusion of Student Representatives in all key business activity, a supportive and truly collaborative student experience is created which helps drive academic success. Trimester 1 2022-23 module review responses reflect this collaborative approach, with 72% of SSEE undergraduate respondents (1,266) agreeing or strongly agreeing that *'any changes in the course or teaching have been communicated effectively'*.

110. In 2021, a **Student Voice Working Group** was established as part of the **ESS Customer Service** theme with the explicit aim of improving **Institutional student voice processes** including engagement with student voice mechanisms and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of responding to student feedback. Module review has been transitioned from a paper-based system to a sophisticated online system (**EvaSys**) which has facilitated a more comprehensive capture of student views and enhanced the visibility of action taken as a result of student feedback. In 2022, process improvements were put in place (more strategic, supportive, and personalised automated communications to encourage completion and academic staff response within a shorter timescale) and an Institutional minimum threshold completion rate of 50% was applied. A transparent '*you said, we did*' feedback process embedded within the online system provides a response to students completing the questionnaire within two weeks of closing the survey. As a result, survey completion rates increased by an average 12.2ppt across the university between Trimester 2 and Trimester 3 2021-22. This positive improvement has continued into Trimester 1 2022-23 with a further 2ppt improvement in completion rates compared to Trimester 3 2021-22 and a 6.6ppt improvement in Trimester 1 2022-23 response rates compared to Trimester 1 2021-22.
111. Improved processes for continual capture of the Student Voice have facilitated a more timely response to student needs and better designed initiatives to enhance the student experience. For example, feedback from NSS qualitative comments and student representative forums indicated that commuting students were not remaining on campus between scheduled sessions and were therefore missing classes as they didn't have anywhere quiet and comfortable to eat, relax, study, or socialise. In response, the university re-purposed an area on campus (University House) into a '**commuter student**' lounge that provides food preparation, study, and social spaces. This has helped develop a sense of belonging, on campus engagement in student support services and improved completion rates among the significant proportion of UoS commuter student groups.
112. Similarly, following positive feedback from course representatives about industry partners co-delivery, workplace visits and 'Dragon's Den' style pitches to industry professionals in **Pharmaceuticals Science**, the programme team amended the teaching, learning and assessment to incorporate these activities as a core Level 6 module. The effectiveness of these interventions is seen in the 28ppt and 27ppt improvement in students' satisfaction with '*teaching on my course*' and '*assessment and feedback*' scales respectively, between 2021 and 2022. The module tutor evaluation report also noted "*Overall the changes made last year had so much impact on student satisfaction and employability that we decided to make it core on BSc Pharmaceutical Science*".
113. Acting on student feedback from staff-student forums and NSS, staff within SAMCT amended extra-curricular activities, designed to enhance professional practice in Journalism programmes, to ensure they were embedded more inclusively in the curriculum. Academic and technical teams established two public-facing news and sports TV channel and websites **Quays News** and **Salford Now** to enable students to work with academics to produce professional editorial content. These were adapted to include engagement with both platforms in '**newsday**' modules at Level 5 and 6. Both initiatives were recognised in external sector awards, including the **2020 Educate North Student Experience Award** and the **National Student Television Awards**. Students also won individual awards for platform content with the **Royal Television Society (RTS)**, **Broadcast Journalism Training Council (BJTC)** and **BBC Radio 4's Today Student Journalism Awards**. The impact on students learning experience is also evidenced in improved progression metrics, which are above sector average, and Graduate Outcomes for the Journalism subject area, where 65% of 2017-18 graduates were in highly skilled employment or further study 15 months after graduation. This figure increased to 73% for 2018-19 graduates and 79% for 2019-20 graduates; the sector average for 2019-20 was 68%.
114. The range of evidence provided, confirms that the UoS works collaboratively with students in

all elements of Student Voice, working towards transparent, inclusive, and accessible processes that ensure *student engagement is fully embedded and leads to continuous improvement in student experiences and outcomes* (Feature of Excellence SE 7).

SUMMARY: Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes

115. The University's success in attracting and retaining students is evident in its exceptional continuation rates. At 90%, *there are outstanding rates of continuation for all UoS students and courses* (Feature of Excellence SO2). These high continuation rates have been consistently (0.8-1.0ppt) above benchmark in each of the four years of the TEF period and overall. The UoS's industry-focused portfolio, principled curriculum design and pedagogies are particularly *effective in ensuring that students succeed in and progress beyond their studies* (Feature of Excellence SO1). Fifty-four of the sixty-one TEF indicators and split indicators for progression are above benchmark. These *outstanding rates of successful progression are observed for all students across the full range of courses and modes of delivery* (Feature of Excellence SO3).
116. Apprenticeship, Full- and Part-time students' satisfaction, overall, with '*teaching on my course*' and '*assessment and feedback*' is broadly in line or materially above benchmark indicating that the University has consistently *embedded outstanding teaching, feedback and assessment practices that are highly effective and tailored to supporting its students' learning, progression, and attainment* (Feature of Excellence SE1). The University's comprehensive whole-systems approach to supporting students engagement with learning throughout their learning journey, ensures that *course content and delivery is designed to inspire the students to actively engage in and commit to their learning, and stretch students to develop knowledge and skills to their fullest potential* (Feature of Excellence SE2).
117. The University's long-standing, exceptional, industry and practitioner collaborations inform the development of contemporary curricula, exposes students to real-world challenges that develop employability skills through authentic assessment that enhances graduates' employment prospects. Full- and Part-time students' progression to managerial or professional employment, further study or other positive outcomes is above benchmark in each year of the TEF period and overall, demonstrating the effectiveness of the University's approach to *using research in relevant disciplines, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and/or employer engagement to contribute to an outstanding academic experience for students* (Feature of Excellence SE3).
118. Investment in a dedicated LTEC and systematic, structured, programme of support for developing and rewarding high-performing learning and teaching practitioners is illustrative of the University's *outstanding support for staff professional development and excellent academic practice which is fully embedded across all of its provision* (Feature of Excellence SE4). Part-time students, in particular, have taken advantage of the *wide and readily available range of outstanding quality academic and professional support available at UoS, that has been tailored to their specific needs* (Feature of Excellence SE5); demonstrated by completion rates that are consistently and materially above benchmark in each year of the TEF period and overall.
119. UoS has invested £116.4m between 2019 and 2022 to develop high quality learning spaces, facilities and physical and digital resources that are *tailored to provide students with real world learning experiences and used effectively to support outstanding teaching and learning that equips students with the skills they need to succeed in their chosen careers* (Feature of Excellence SE6). The UoS works collaboratively with students in all elements of Student Voice, working towards *transparent, inclusive, and accessible processes that ensure student engagement is fully embedded and leads to continuous improvement in student experiences and outcomes* (Feature of Excellence SE 7).

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