



University of
Central Lancashire
UCLan

Teaching Excellence Framework 2023

Provider Submission

SECTION 1: PROVIDER CONTEXT

We believe in “helping people to seize every opportunity to flourish in education, at work and for life”¹. This Provider Submission evidences our very high-quality approach to teaching excellence and student outcomes.

Our Mission

1. We are a modern university with nearly two centuries of experience delivering Higher Education and widening participation (WP). The University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) is a large, innovative multi-campus university with c35,000 students studying courses in Lancashire and across the world. Proud of our game-changing role in delivering widening participation and as a significant anchor institution, we transform lives by providing an outstanding educational experience, creating prosperity and opportunity in the communities we serve.

2. Our University Strategy¹ was refreshed in 2021. Of the six priorities described within, two are of specific relevance to the TEF – *Student Opportunity and Success* and *Leading the Way in Modern Learning*. The Strategy reaffirms our Mission, summarised as follows:

- To deliver real-world, practice-based education.
- To ensure our extensive curriculum offer is research informed and employer engaged.
- To push boundaries with our innovative ideas and our research expertise.
- To improve the lives of people across Lancashire, the UK, and the world.
- To demonstrate that we care about sustainability and our valuable natural environment.
- To promote healthy and sustainable lifestyles, to support the physical and mental wellbeing of our students, colleagues, and communities.
- To ensure that our educational programmes are collaborative and partnership-based, bringing the life-changing benefits of higher education to communities worldwide.
- To encourage every student to become a global citizen.
- To be a genuine anchor institution.

3. Our ambition is to be a leading UK university with national and international influence, delivering real-world, practice-based education. Together our students and staff, and over 200,000 alumni, link us to almost every country across the globe.

Our Places and Partnerships

4. As an anchor institution with a WP mission, we have invested in significant campus developments to provide opportunity and respond to local need. The Preston Campus has c26,000 students studying a range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses and Degree Apprenticeships (DAs). In 2017 we commenced a £200m campus-wide masterplan and have now completed a new Student Centre and University Square, changing the face of the city and ensuring excellent facilities for our students. Our Sports Arena is Preston’s premier multi-sports venue and is free for all students, as is access to gym facilities across all our campuses.

5. Our Burnley Campus serves a population of over 500,000 residents in east Lancashire and has significantly developed since its creation in 2009, providing courses relevant to the current and emerging needs of the economy in the region. This includes a focus on training key workers through our delivery of Medicine, Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work. By 2020-21, our Burnley Campus had grown to 1,445 students, on track for our target to grow to 4,000 by 2030.

6. Our Westlakes Campus was established in 2005 and is based at the Westlakes Science and Technology Park in West Cumbria. It offers vocational courses in areas such as Medicine and Nursing, and by 2021-22 was supporting c300 students. Overall, we make a significant contribution to healthcare education in the North West, with c1,000 students each year working with healthcare providers to support workforce development and placement opportunities.

7. We have an overseas campus in Cyprus which opened in 2012 to offer a range of Sports, Business, Law, Education, and English degrees for the benefit of c1,000 students each year. In 2017 the University acquired Training 2000², a DA training provider in Blackburn. The learner population is c1,200 apprentices and 120 Traineeships, increasing access to Level 3 learning in Lancashire and leading to progression pathways to DAs at UCLan.

8. UCLan helped develop the nationally renowned 'Preston Model', retaining economic value within the city by maximising local procurement and community activity. The University dedicates significant resources to local and regional priorities, and as a major employer has supported 4,500 FTE jobs across Lancashire, generating £220m in annual gross value added (GVA) for the North West economy through education, research and scholarship. Recent regionally focussed projects funded by us, our partners and the EU have supported 2,000 businesses and 2,600 individuals, creating 486 jobs and increasing the GVA from £15m to £31m. During the pandemic, UCLan undertook civic duty in operating a LAMP testing laboratory for NHS staff across the North West and also provided NHS accommodation; operated an asymptomatic testing centre; produced thousands of valves, visors and face masks; and donated significant PPE to Trusts, councils, and third sector organisations.

9. We have 21 partnerships with UK FE colleges and specialist training providers and operate a network across the North West to deliver Initial Teacher Education (ITE) for the post-compulsory/14+ sector with more than 1,000 students qualifying as teachers during 2018-19 to 2021-22. Graded with 5-star excellence in the 2022 global QS Stars ratings³ for Internationalisation as well as Teaching, Employability, Facilities, and Inclusiveness, we have partnerships operating globally including in China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, and the Middle East. In 2021-22, trans-national education courses were delivered to 6,711 students on over 80 programmes at 16 centres across the world, with a strong focus on academic quality rather than quantity. This includes a collaboration with Hebei University in China to deliver UCLan degrees onsite to over 800 students a year. Our internal Overseas Student Satisfaction survey⁴ highlights our global profile: In 2022 we saw our best performance since the survey's inception in 2016, with scores including 87% for overall satisfaction, 'staff are good at explaining things' (91%), 'I have been able to contact staff when I need to' (89%), and 'marking/feedback criteria are made clear in advance' (89%).

10. UCLan leads the Lancashire-wide Future U project⁵, part of the OfS Uni Connect Programme, bringing together universities, colleges, schools, and businesses to help learners overcome barriers to progression to HE. Future U engaged c30,000 young people between 2017-2021. Of these, 19,000 were from geographical areas of deprivation and had at least three postcode indicators for disadvantage.

Our Mix of Courses

11. As a WP institution that recruits significantly from the region, we deliberately ensure we provide a comprehensive portfolio to support all student aspirations. We offer over 350 undergraduate courses covering the full spectrum of Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Business, Science, Engineering, and Health. In line with our Mission, most of these have a Foundation Year to support students with fewer UCAS points. We are one of only four universities in the UK to offer Korean at degree level and have the largest cohort of students studying the language of any university in Europe. We are one of less than 10 universities - and the only post-1992 institution - to offer all of Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, and Optometry. We are the biggest trainer of the region's health workforce. Our vet school is the first of its kind in Lancashire, and the second in the North West. We have significantly developed Degree Apprenticeships to offer additional pathways for learners. This includes being the first English university to offer the Social Work Degree Apprenticeship, and the launch of the first Police Apprenticeship courses in Cumbria.

12. This significant and diverse portfolio is key to our Mission and, along with our equally diverse student population, speaks to the challenges and the corresponding and inevitable spread of performance that can be seen across the metrics.

Our Mix of Students

13. Full-time students account for the significant majority of our UG numbers at 90% of the population over 2018-19 to 2021-22. Our growing DA learners account for 7%, and part-time mode accounts for 3%. These groups are referenced accordingly throughout this document. Half of our UG students are the first in their family to participate in HE, a significant proportion. Approximately three-quarters originate within the region and remain after graduating, contributing to socio-economic development in line with our anchor institution mission.

14. Students from areas of high deprivation (IMD Q1) have constituted the largest proportion of our student body for the past five years, increasing between 2018-19 (20.2%) and 2020-21 (21.9%). are from state schools, consistently above our HESA benchmark, the 23rd highest proportion nationally (20/21 First Degree students)⁶. We have a strong track record for WP, with 23.2% of our intake being eligible for free school meals, compared to the sector average of 17.3% (2019-20)⁷.

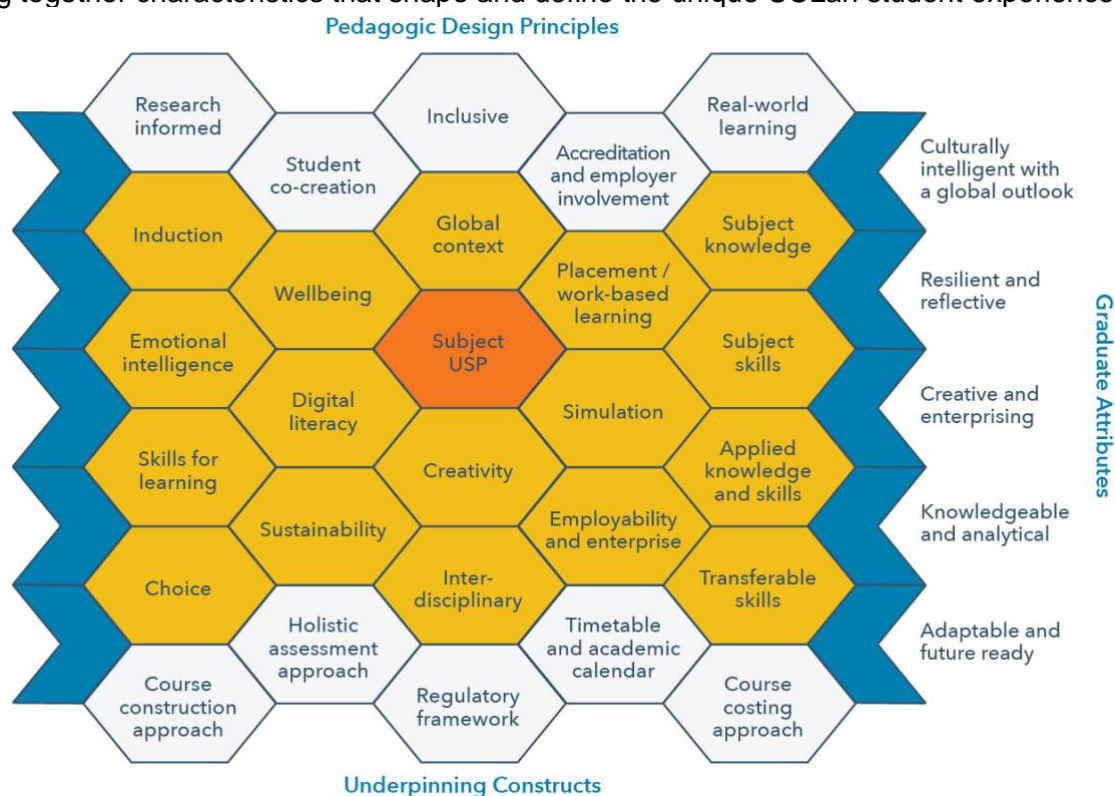
15. We have a large proportion of mature students, increasing from 40.4% in 2018-19 to 43.4% in 2020-21. Over that period our proportion of mature students has been at least 10pp higher than the sector average. Our proportion of international students has also risen from 12% to 21% in that time. In 2019-20 to 2021-22 we saw an increase in student carers (from 183 to 410), in Care Leavers (from 45 to 63), and also in Estranged students (from 70 to 151).

16. Our commitment to nurturing our diverse population has encouraged an increase in the numbers declaring a disability, from below sector average in 2018-19 (13.9%) to 6.4pp higher in 2020-21 (23.4% compared to 17%). 1,125 students with a declared disability in 2020-21 had a mental health condition, compared to 545 in 2018-19, demonstrating a concerning rise in this area.

17. The pandemic had a significant impact on our specific mix of students as described above. Our work to mitigate this is referenced in various sections and is summarised in 73 and 122.

The UCLan Curriculum Framework

18. A distinctive feature of the University is our Curriculum Framework (CFW), developed in 2020 to bring together characteristics that shape and define the unique UCLan student experience:



19. The *Blockbusters*-inspired 'gameboard' approach sets out the common 'curriculum characteristics' that students experience while travelling through their learner journey and contribute to the development of the graduate attributes outlined on the right of the board. The pedagogic design principles at the top represent key considerations that characterise our approach to designing our signature learning experience. Underneath is a set of underpinning building blocks to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

20. The creation of the Framework was led by a cross-institutional group in 2019-20 with representation from academic areas, professional services, and the Students' Union. This included identifying strengths, themes, and expertise that we wanted to embed consistently across the portfolio, and important considerations such as inclusivity that should be developed and embedded into the curriculum. Stakeholder feedback and engagement included a full staff survey, academic committee discussions, and market research including local and national employers, UK and international students, prospective students, and alumni. From September 2020 we initiated a whole-institution portfolio review to ensure all provision would be revalidated to embody the Curriculum Framework, with the 'curriculum characteristics' brought to life in ways that are appropriate for each subject. Validation documentation was revised to include thresholds for compliance and a mapping exercise subject to full panel scrutiny. Over 32 separate validation panels have taken place to date, with the remaining Schools to complete by the end of 2023.

Notes on our Approach to the Teaching Excellence Framework

21. The Curriculum Framework articulates our offer and runs as a 'golden thread' throughout the TEF submission.

22. We limited the scope of our Provider Submission to those OfS-defined TEF optional courses where data is contained within the OfS TEF dashboards. Therefore, Degree Apprenticeships are included in our submission, while 'validated-only undergraduate courses', our TNE provision, and 'other HE modules that don't lead to a full qualification' are not included.

23. We provided support for the Student Submission through meetings to share data and drafts, and to discuss our approach to educational gain. We are grateful for the hard work and dedication of our students in shaping their response and the work they do to support their fellow students.

Summary

24. UCLan is the third largest university in the North West and Lancashire's largest provider of graduate level qualifications. A multi-campus, global institution, fully committed to our WP mission. Two-thirds of our research outputs are recognised as world-leading or internationally excellent. UCLan is one of only two universities who feature in both the English top 50 REF Power rankings⁸ and the English top 10 for Full-Time Social Mobility⁹. We succeed in research, and in helping our students to seize every opportunity to flourish in education, at work, and for life. We do this through our Curriculum Framework; through our real-world, research-informed, practice-based education; and through creating prosperity and opportunity in the North. Our students and graduates deserve the very best. **This** is our distinctive offer, and our provider context.

SECTION 2: STUDENT EXPERIENCE

2.1 Academic Experience and Assessment

Evidence of Embedding Excellent and Effective Teaching (SE1)

25. With our full-time students, we are operating within the tolerance of the NSS 'quality of teaching' benchmark, just -2% below on aggregate over the four-year period. Over this time there was a period of operating just below benchmark before dipping with Covid-19, and then strong recovery to now just -1.6% below benchmark in 2022 - a positive trajectory realised through investment in strategic initiatives. It is good to note that for international students this metric over the four-year period (representing 1,050 students) is an outstanding 3% above benchmark.

26. Apprenticeship learners on aggregate is -0.6%, very close to the benchmark. Looking at the trend over the four years we see strong performance in 2019 and 2022 at 2.4%, indeed just 0.1% below the threshold for outstanding quality.

27. Part-time students represent just 3% of undergraduate students with - on average across the 4-year period. This includes data too low to be counted in 2022, reinforcing the small numbers of part-time students we have. We believe it is important to consider here absolute performance rather than just performance against benchmark. The TEF benchmarks in the main are higher at part-time level, so while we see reduced performance against benchmark, the actual performance is *stronger*, with 80.1% for part-time students compared with 78.9% for full-time. In terms of part-time performance at a subject level, of a total part-time population of just 180 students over the entire four-year period, 40 are from Engineering subjects and 20 are from Allied Health. These account for the largest numbers at subject level, and it is pleasing to note that the teaching scores are strong in both of these areas, with 81.9% for Engineering, and 87.5% for Allied Health.

28. Turning to focus now on subjects for our full-time students, there is evidence of outstanding quality for teaching in Media, Journalism and Communications, Business and Management, Mathematical Sciences, and Creative Arts and Design. This includes large populations of students – 930 for Business and Management, and 740 for Creative Arts and Design. Languages, Pharmacology, and Nursing and Midwifery are significant for their population size and metric performance below benchmark. However, these areas have strong metrics for progression (Nursing and Midwifery - 93.6%, in line with benchmark) and completion (Pharmacology - 95.9%, 3.2pp above benchmark).

29. It is important to review NSS metrics that are not available in the TEF dashboard, but further illustrate outstanding performances. This includes subject level performance in Building at 88% - the third highest in the UK, and Forensic and Archaeological Sciences – 92%, and second highest. Reviewing the 'overall satisfaction' NSS metric reveals outstanding performances, including Creative Writing at 100% and Applied Psychology at 95%, both scores the highest in the UK. This demonstrates the very high and outstanding quality of our taught provision, which overall is skewed on aggregate by some relatively low performance for subjects with large cohorts (eg Nursing, and Pharmacology).

30. In 2020 UCLan initiated a cross-institutional work programme targeting the areas that skew overall performance. An external consultant worked with nine course teams – Asia Pacific Studies, Counselling and Psychotherapy Studies, Film Production, Health and Social Care, Nursing, Pharmacy, Policing and Criminal Investigation, Sexual Health Studies, and Social Work. In 2022 there were solid improvements in five of these: Adult Nursing (Preston Campus), Social Work (Preston Campus), Film Production, Policing and Criminal investigation, and Sexual Health Studies. There was some improvement in Pharmacy, and Counselling and Psychotherapy Studies. Two areas (Policing and Criminal Investigation, and Sexual Health Studies) show two years sustained improvement.

31. In 2021 and 2022 the institutional programme of activity continued to evolve¹⁰. This included the circulation of a 'good practice guide'¹¹ to aid course teams in developing localised interventions in response to their NSS performance, a Teaching Observation Scheme designed to improve quality of

teaching (see 33), expectations for the use of the VLE, a revised approach to Personal Tutoring, guidance on communicating changes to timetables, and the investment in a new system for capturing and responding to student feedback – *Unitu* (see 79, 80).

32. The external consultant was recommissioned in 2022 to undertake further work with Nursing, a low performing subject for 'Quality of Teaching' with a large and complex cohort. The North West was one of the areas hardest hit by the pandemic, with high rates of infection for prolonged periods. This impacted on the region's healthcare providers and therefore impacted directly on student nurses' experience on placement. It is significant to note that subjects allied to Medicine now have the lowest rates of overall student satisfaction within the NSS subject groups across the sector, and this satisfaction has dropped in the last two years. This is a particular issue in the North West where the 3rd best provider of Adult Nursing (out of eight providers) has an overall student satisfaction of just 54%. At UCLan, 2020 saw a 52% increase in enrolments due to the public's response to Covid-19 but also as a drive to increase the number of registrants working within the NHS. The School expanded delivery from one campus base within Preston to delivery across Burnley and Westlakes campuses to create a 'near to home' and 'near to practice' experience. This compounded the complexity of timetabling and resourcing during the peak of the covid period, leading to a loss of identity and sense of community, but this has now been addressed by working closely with timetabling to deliver a more consistent student experience.

33. Alongside a School-led Peer Observation of Teaching scheme, an independent Teaching Observation Scheme launched in 2021-22 to identify areas of strength and development, led by an independent academic team specialising in pedagogy. 111 independent observations were undertaken in its first year and an evaluation theme was that the pandemic period of remote learning had affected the development of student-student and student-teacher relationships, with observations revealing that final year students were often relating to their peers in a manner which might usually be expected of freshers encountering each other in the early weeks of term. These insights contribute to the understanding around the dips in student NSS feedback during the pandemic. Rebuilding a sense of identity and community is forming a longitudinal piece of work at an institutional and course level. Returning to the subject of Nursing (see previous), the observations are helping our academics to build confidence in large-scale delivery as classes return to face-to-face teaching, aiming to positively influence the quality of teaching metric in the next few years.

34. UCLan currently has 10 National Teaching Fellows (NTF), further evidencing our very high quality of teaching. For example, [redacted] has national influence for curriculum change, generating a demand for learning through literacy. He was also recognised in the 'Outstanding Research Supervisor of the Year' category in the THE Awards [redacted] led the vision and operational framework for an immersive case-based learning midwifery curriculum that stimulates social and active learning with real-world application. This approach has national and global impact, and our Curriculum Framework 'real-world learning' design principle in action. In addition, Lecturer in Medical Microbiology [redacted] was shortlisted in the 'Most Innovative Teacher of the Year' category in the THE Awards [redacted].

35. The Golden Roses is an annual awards event led by the Students' Union. Categories include student support, lecturer of the year, and for staff that go 'above and beyond'. Student engagement is consistently high – 3,004 nominations have been received in the last four-year period, leading to 74 awards presented to staff, demonstrating strong engagement with student cohorts.

Excellent Assessment and Feedback Practices (SE1)

36. The 'Assessment and Feedback' NSS metric is one of our strongest areas in demonstrating outstanding student experience: aggregate performance for full-time students is 2.6% above benchmark, and for international students for the same time-period is an exceptional 7.9% above benchmark. Overall, we were 2.4% above the benchmark in 2020-21, increasing to 3.3% above the benchmark in 2021-22.

37. At subject level, this success shines through; with Creative Arts and Design (+2.8% above benchmark), Performing Arts (+4.1%) and Media, Journalism and Communications (+10.4%). This level of performance is borne out over a variety of subjects including Business and Management (+8.1%), Psychology (+4.1%) and Medicine and Dentistry (+8.3%), illustrating the wide impact of our excellence in assessment experience.

38. There is significant improvement demonstrated in our Degree Apprenticeships, which on aggregate currently perform just above benchmark (+0.3%), whilst demonstrating significant improvement in the last two years; from very high quality in 2021 (+1.8%) to outstanding in 2022 (+6.1%).

39. We have recognised we still need to replicate this within our very small Part-Time cohort. We have identified good practice in specific subjects, most notably our Allied Health courses (78.8% over the last four years) and have sought to replicate good practice across the provision. Our early success in this area is borne out in the latest NSS results; scoring 81.9% for Assessment and Feedback across all part-time respondents (3.3% above the sector), alongside a significant rise in Overall Satisfaction rates (77.8%, up 3.5pp on our 2021 performance).

40. The outstanding quality of our assessment and feedback NSS performance links to work undertaken in 2016. A strategic institutional project was undertaken in partnership with the HE Academy to deliver a series of assessment workshops and revise module assessment in line with governing principles to ensure students were not over-assessed. 30 workshops took place for 459 academics, and 896 module descriptors were amended as a result¹².



41. The Curriculum Framework (see 18) built on this work with the inclusion of a 'Holistic Assessment Approach' as a key underpinning concept – stating, “courses must have a holistic approach to assessment, ensuring an appropriate distribution of summative assessment using a subject-appropriate diet of assessment”¹³. A range of resources were developed, including such work as authentic assessment, designing out academic misconduct, and improving the consistency of marking and standards. These resources were revised in 2021-22 with a renewed cross-institutional assessment focus and the formation of 11 guiding principles for assessment and feedback¹⁴ to ensure consistent application of best practice.

Excellent Course Content and Delivery (SE2)

42. The CFW (see 18) provides the vehicle for describing our approach to excellent course content and delivery. Below, key 'curriculum characteristics' (course content) and then 'pedagogic design principles' (course delivery) are explored to demonstrate how these elements are brought to life across our provision.



43. Our DigiLearn programme provides sector-wide collaboration and knowledge exchange across higher education, further education, schools and beyond, with over 1,350 members. It encourages academic staff to build digital capability and confidence in their professional practice. The programme supports three progressive levels: 'Practitioner', 'Advocate' and 'Champion'. Currently we have 244 Practitioners, 17 Advocates, and 18 Champions. Students are given direct access to a Study Skills Hub and a self-assessment tool to guide students to the most appropriate pathway for their development needs. Since the start of the 2022 academic year there have been 35,437 video views across the platform with a total completion score of 79% representing strong student engagement.

43.1 Subject-based embedding includes a digital humanities module and the redesign of a foundation module, both of which teach students how to use digital tools and platforms and encourage critical thinking to how technology shapes society, politics, and relationships. In addition, digital skills have been embedded into Psychology and Computer Science where students remotely access a server which emulates a high spec computer instead of needing to purchase expensive computers in order to study at home, opening up access for disadvantaged students.



44. The Creative Innovation Zone (CIZ) challenges students to meet an interdisciplinary industry challenge, pitching concepts and business plans directly to the employer. In the last 4 years CIZ has worked with more than 2,000 students studying Animation, Architecture, Engineering, Fashion, History and Humanities, Fashion, and Medicine. Students learn how to engage with peers from outside their subject area and increase their emotional intelligence, team working ability and understanding of industry expectations, leading to greater employability and opportunities.

44.1 Interdisciplinary opportunities are embedded to provide signature learning experiences. For example, in 2019 and with permission from the BBC we recreated a missing *Doctor Who* episode. The project inspired a team of 100 collaborators working across faculties and professional services and alumni. In a world-first, it was endorsed by the BBC and hosted on the official BBC *Doctor Who* YouTube channel. The project was showcased on the BBC, Radio Five Live, the Guardian Online and the Sunday Times Culture Supplement: *"This dramatization... is 100% successful; beyond am-dram or pastiche and closer to authentic period restoration. Can UCLan remake all missing Doctor Who episodes from now on?"* For a student project to achieve such promotion is a significant achievement, boosting the profile and employability of the students. The project went on to win the Special Jury Award at the Learning on Screen Awards 2020.

44.2 In March 2021 UCLan became the third university to receive the Baby Friendly Initiative Gold Award and is the first HEI to achieve recognition of the Midwifery and Health visiting programmes simultaneously. The team created a new Interprofessional education (IPE) event concerning infant feeding, in line with UNICEF's Baby Friendly Initiative. 193 students from Medicine, Physician Associate, Health Visiting and Midwifery courses were involved. A further example is UCLan Publishing, the University's in-house publisher, and its real-world interdisciplinary approach linking together students from animation, illustration, language, and acting. UCLan Publishing won the Nick Robinson IPG Best Newcomer Award 2019, and the Times Higher Education Excellence and Innovation in the Arts Prize 2018.



45. Our Study Abroad scheme has been sending students overseas for over 35 years. This exchange programme allows students to experience a different culture and develop personally and professionally. Students study in USA, Canada, Hong Kong, China, Japan, Korea, Philippines, Europe, Australia, UAE among others, and between 2018-19 and 2020-21, 1,353 students took part in associated internships and summer schools, and 499 students came from partner universities to UCLan.

45.1 Other examples include students in the School of Humanities, Language and Global Studies that attend a study trip to stay with indigenous people in Taiwan and have also visited the Demilitarized Zone between North and South Korea. The latter of these trips has resulted in a poster exhibition sponsored by the South Korean government. Also, students gained an understanding of child refugees living on the island in Lesvos. The project gave a voice to children fleeing conflict and persecution through art projects, peer support, and an e-book sharing dialogue between Metadrasi, asylum-seeking children, and children from partner school Marsden Heights Community College in East Lancashire. The work was shortlisted in the THE Awards in 2020 for International Collaboration of the Year.



46. In 2019 the School of Justice was shortlisted for Outstanding Contribution to Work Experience in the National Undergraduate Employability (NUE) Awards 2020, recognising increased commitment to help maximise work experience opportunities for our students.

46.1 Other examples of work-based learning include Fashion Promotion with Marketing delivering live project briefs and competition briefs, all geared to realising industry and real-world expectations. Colleagues in Business designed a 'pop-up charity event', utilising interactive workshops where business ideas are created and developed by groups of students. The 15-room Eye Health Clinic

provides Optometry and Ophthalmic Dispensing students with an authentic experience, receiving referrals from the local hospital as well as optical practices, so students can test patients with interesting eye conditions. In addition, our National Centre for Remote and Rural Medicine was set up to address the issues of recruitment to healthcare positions in remote and rural areas. The programme has already shown success, with students who have been trained in the area seeking work there on graduation, and now has almost 200 students at any time. And as part of our undergraduate programmes in Mathematics, students can undertake a teaching placement in a school/college setting. Many choose to apply for teacher training and go on to teach in local schools. 67% of these students have secured 'Institute of Mathematics and Its Applications' Teacher Training scholarships.

46.2 During the pandemic, 1,045 student nurses were given the opportunity for paid placements and join the NHS workforce, and 681 volunteered. This both supported the pandemic response and enabled students to graduate either early or at least on time despite the challenges faced.



47. In the School of Sport and Health Sciences, students' own wellbeing is intertwined with their learning to support the wellbeing of others. Three of the core courses embed the professional standards for the 'Health Navigator' award. The BA (Hons) Outdoor Adventure Leadership programme and the Frontier Education programmes, delivered across the University, offer therapeutic opportunities to students. In Business, wellbeing is taught in relation to a range of human resources modules, ensuring that graduates are prepared for ethical and principled management. In Asia Pacific Studies, wellbeing and support is embedded in a module, including input from the central support services team.

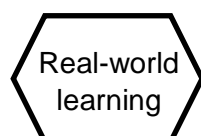


48. In Biology, sustainability is a theme running through all three years of the course. In the School of Business, they address the key issues of sustainability and ethics, encouraging students to apply knowledge to critically appraise the complex interactions and trade-offs between environmental, economic and social objectives. Rather counter-intuitively, Architectural Technology staff 'banned' the use of the word 'sustainability' to encourage students to think more deeply about what this means in relation to their future practice. The Asia Pacific Studies course addresses issues relevant to that geographical area, including the ethics of sustainable development as well as the implications of modernisation and the legacies of colonialism and imperialism.



49. The Curriculum Framework outlines 'pedagogic design principles' that inform our courses for the benefit of all students, including inclusivity in the curriculum. In 2021 we initiated a cross-university project entitled *Curriculum For All*, that outlined points of enquiry for course teams alongside the development of workshops and resources. The School of Applied Health and Wellbeing has set up a joint staff-student programme of activities to evaluate the School's decolonising agenda as a result, providing a range of resources and support for academic staff. Similarly, the School of Justice works with students to reimagine what a decolonised programme would look like and how it might be practically achieved.

49.1 The student cohort studying healthcare associated degrees in the School of Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences is diverse, and it is recognised that in their future careers they will be involved in services that must be inclusive and responsive to all sectors of the population. Course and module leaders have examined where protected and other characteristics could be included within course delivery, such as discussing gender differences in cardiovascular disease, ethnicity differences in cancer prevalence, and also responding to student requests for more diversity in representative images shown. This will ensure that our graduates will be better equipped to meet the needs of the patients they will be working with.



50. Our association with the Graduate Fashion Foundation, the National Festival of Making, and The British Textile Biennial gives our Fashion students transformative real-world projects. Students on Sport and Exercise Science and Coaching and Performance courses have supported Premier League and Championship football teams, providing match data to facilitate important coaching decisions. Students

have been providing GPS data and analysis to the Welsh Rugby League team as part of the Rugby League World Cup in 2022, and every year graduates are offered employment with the clubs they worked with.

50.1 UCLan has led nationally on the development of community-based service-delivery clinical training programs such as Dentistry and Optometry. The model integrates real-world learning delivered within communities. Our Dentistry provision commenced in 2007 and has 300 graduates, 67% of whom work in the North West. Optometry commenced in 2019 with the first graduating cohort in 2022. This unique Lancashire experience marks an innovative shift in the traditional health care worker development and training and provides sustainable benefits in health improvement and workforce retention.

50.2 Real-world learning took on a sharper edge during the pandemic. medical students and over 300 nursing students were graduated early to join the healthcare frontline, carrying out foundation doctor-level clinical duties and nursing tasks including taking blood, inserting cannulas and catheters, giving injections and swabbing patients for vital Covid-19 tests.

Contributors of Excellence in the Student Academic Experience (SE3)

51. Our student academic experience is informed by three key contributing considerations: being research-informed, the involvement of employers, and the embedding of employability and enterprise. These are part of the Curriculum Framework and are explored below.



52. We argue that a research-informed curriculum is vital for ensuring students are equipped with skills, knowledge, and experiences at the cutting-edge of real-world learning. In the REF exercise in 2021 we submitted to 19 units of assessment – the most of any university in Lancashire. Our REF Power metric places us 63rd overall and 50th for universities in England. For Sport and Exercise Science, Leisure and Tourism the REF Power score was 13th, and for the Allied Health Professions Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy 18th, for Area Studies 18th, and Archaeology 20th, demonstrating the weight and impact we place on research.

52.1 Through a 10-week paid internship with one of UCLan's research units, students develop skills and experience and consider postgraduate study and careers in research. Students comment on the internships' "immeasurable importance and significance [for] their learning journey" and of having seen "the passion lecturers have for research". This reflects UCLan's commitment to embedding widening participation – and research informed teaching – into our activities. The scheme recruits around 50 interns per year across all areas of the University's research activity.



53. The second iteration of the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF2) provides further evidence of our work with employers and our impact in KE during 2018-19 to 2020-21. The University performed at or above average in its Cluster for six of the seven perspectives. We demonstrate very high engagement in three of the seven perspectives – Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and graduate start-ups; local growth and regeneration; and in working with the public and third sector – and are one of only three universities within the Cluster to be put in the top tier for this area.

53.1 UCLan has 214 accredited courses, across 79 accrediting bodies. This includes being one of only seven to receive national accreditation from UAUK and CIfA for Archaeology and Anthropology courses. In March our School of Medicine MBBS course was added to GMC's list of bodies approved to award UK medical degrees and received prestigious accreditation from the Royal College of Surgeons in England. In 2021-22 Comensus supported co-creation of an enriched curriculum in over 29 programmes at Foundation, UG and PG level.

53.2 We operate a Leaders in Residence scheme - a high-calibre network providing the University with influential connections with a breadth of experience and specialist knowledge. Leaders in

Residence include brand designers, entrepreneurs, curators, artists, designers, directors, CEOs, founders, actors, presenters, editors, agents, authors, and journalists. The scheme launched in 2019 and by 2021 had 56 Leaders in Residence. Aligned with the scheme is our annual Careers Jamming Session (cJam), a vehicle for connecting employers with students preparing for their first industry experiences. This involves speed networking sessions where students pitch for placements. Since 2018, cJam has worked with more than 300 employers and offered 270 placements.



54. The Lancashire School of Business and Enterprise has been awarded the Chartered Association of Business Schools Small Business Charter recognising how enterprise is embedded within the curriculum. The Award for Enterprise engages employers to set challenges and more than 30 students from diverse disciplines work to meet two briefs: one from a business, the other from a charity. This creates opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and creative thinking. Students have the programme recognised at graduation and receive a certificate of achievement. Students have also gained employment as a direct result of taking part in the programme.

54.1 From 2018, the School of Justice has offered client-facing student general pro bono advice clinics focussing on areas such as consumer, commercial, and employment law. In 2019, a specialised Immigration Law Clinic to service advice related to asylum issues was launched. In the same year, a Business Law Clinic was created to support SMEs unable to afford legal advice. In 2020, the School expanded into non-legal pro bono work and enabled students to engage with the work of the Missing Persons Investigations Unit and the Cyber Crime Advice Helpline. In 2021-22 the Clinics engaged with approximately 60 clients seeking advice, and over 30 student volunteers involved. 280 students have benefited from Clinic experiences between 2018-2022.

54.2 The Centre for Volunteering and Community Leadership (CVCL) and Comensus, working with over 500 local community organisations, supports students to volunteer in a range of community and healthcare settings. The scheme has supported more than 21,000 University students and local young people through volunteering and social action and contributed over £11m to the local community in volunteer time. The scheme has twice been awarded the Investors in Volunteers (IiV) quality standard. The IiV final report states: "CVCL demonstrates that volunteering is understood and embedded across the organisation... [including] the contribution of student volunteers to the local economy, and their 'priceless' social value". CVCL has a track record in providing access routes to FE/HE courses at UCLan, particularly for BAME communities in East Lancashire, making a sustained contribution to the 'levelling-up' and social mobility agenda. In 2020/21, 43% of our student volunteers were from a BAME background.

2.2 Resources, Support and Student Engagement

Embedding Excellent Academic Practice (SE4)

55. The Centre for Collaborative Learning (CCL) was formed in 2020 to identify and embed excellence in learning and teaching. The Centre supports the delivery of the strategic priority *Leading the Way in Modern Learning*¹⁵, supports the implementation of the Curriculum Framework, and coordinates events to celebrate research and practice. 'CCL Connect' is an online community to support collaboration and sharing good practice, innovation, ideas, and resources. The forum supports 800 academic staff to develop knowledge, competency and confidence around teaching and learning and facilitates the effective transfer of good practice throughout our portfolio. CCL hosts The DigiLearn Sector community (see 43).

56. Teaching staff on Lecturer contracts are supported to achieve Fellowship status (FHEA) and this forms an element of the criteria for promotion to Senior Lecturer when they reach the appropriate pay-scale spinal point. Currently, the percentage of UCLan staff holding Fellowship Status is 65%. Our average over the past 4 years has been in the range of 66.6%- 64.6%, notably higher than the sector average (range 40.7%-46.1%). For our Fellowship Scheme over the past three years of comparative data we continue to be above sector average regarding the number of 'FHEA' awards made. Our accredited Advance HE portfolio offers a taught PGCAP and Associates programme

leading to Fellowship (FHEA) and Associate Fellowship (AFHEA) respectively, and a direct Fellowship Route. These new iterations to the targets set within the Strategic Plan placed great importance on staff accreditation for learning and teaching.

57. We offer staff development and advancement through a portfolio of learning opportunities for new and existing academics and for those supporting learning, and structured support for those seeking recognition for their practice (HEA Fellowship, National Teaching Fellows, and CATE awards). CCL's development programme is designed to enhance academic practice and respond to the needs of colleagues at each career stage, with around 50 workshops on offer. Themes include Academic Advancement (CPD); Assessment and Feedback; Collaborative Practice; Content Creation and Curation; Inclusivity, Support and Wellbeing; Learning Design and Development; Facilitating Student Engagement; and the Digital Learning Environment. UCLan introduced a learning and teaching pathway from Senior Lecturer to Reader and Professor in 2017, to recognise excellent pedagogical practice and leadership. Professors and Readers have been confirmed in the four-year period.

Ensuring an Excellent Learning Environment and Quality of Academic Support (SE5)

58. Our aggregate performance in the 'Academic Support' metric demonstrates our very high-quality support for students (-0.1% compared to benchmark). There has been significant improvement, climbing to 0.2% above benchmark in 2022, evidencing commitment to this area. Our focus on supporting international students has seen us achieve an outstanding 5.8% against benchmark.

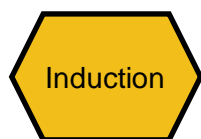
59. We demonstrate an outstanding level of support experience across a wide range of disciplines: From a large subject population such as Business and Management (+7% above benchmark), to other successful areas like History and Archaeology (+7.6%), Sports and Exercise Sciences (+4.9%) and Medicine and Dentistry (+5%).

60. We recognise we have work to do to bring some subjects up to our expectations of outstanding quality. We have been at the forefront of ensuring strong progression for Nursing and Midwifery students (93.6% progression rate) over the recent period for those tackling placement and graduating during the pandemic. We want to learn from this, in replicating successes in academic support, such as our Foundation Degree Nursing Apprenticeship students, who have high levels of satisfaction relating to support in this year's NSS (74.1%), and how our vocational routes can learn from outstanding practice from our more traditional courses across the University.

61. While performance against benchmark is lower for part-time students, there has been improvement in our 2022 results; rising 4% since 2021 for academic support. This improvement is also reflected in the support we offer to our Degree Apprenticeships, where we have seen improvement in our rates from 0.4% above benchmark in 2021 to 4.3% in 2022, demonstrating our drive for outstanding levels of academic support across our whole student population.



62. An excellent learning environment must be inclusive. We developed a set of inclusive practice standards¹⁶ to normalise anticipatory reasonable adjustments for the benefit of all students. This has helped to reduce the need for individualised adjustments, improve accountability, and improve learning.



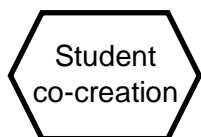
63. The pandemic disrupted learning for all new students and we adapted our *Get Ahead: Start* pre-arrival programme aimed at under-represented groups to provide enhanced support for all. The aim was to create a community, support the transition to Higher Education, and build confidence. The resultant *Getting Ready* programme received approx. 7,000 unique webpage views, demonstrating strong engagement.

This was supplemented by an online event for under-represented groups and 78.8% said they felt more prepared for university as a result.

63.1 An Academic Advisor (AA) role was introduced in 2018-19. Training workshops attended by 695 staff were provided from 2018 to 2020 to explore the real-world issues faced by AAs. As noted in an internal audit, “a comprehensive training programme is in place and accessible on the staff intranet, including academic advisor training, signposting, and boundaries of the staff support that should be given”¹⁷. Our work on AAs was disseminated to the sector with a well-attended and received conference workshop¹⁸. In 2019-20 the University invested in 36 Student Coaches to review student engagement analytics. 17 Student Coaches have so far completed ILM Level 5 in Coaching and Mentoring and the others are supported to complete this. In 2021-22 we developed a new Personal Tutor framework, revising the previous AA role, with enhanced resources. Over 250 Personal Tutors have been recruited for the 2022-23 academic year.



64. We have invested substantially in our central team providing academic skills support for students across our campuses, and the bespoke tutorials offered can be undertaken online and face-to-face to cater for different needs. Induction talks were held to break down barriers and encourage students to reach out for support and attracted 1,096 students in 2022. Across 2021-22, 1,800 students booked onto skills workshops, 593 students attended bespoke School and subject specific workshops, 697 students attended tutorials, and over 720 hours of drop-in support at the Preston Campus led to a further 286 students seeking and gaining support.



65. Our Peer Academic Study Skills (PASS) scheme enables current students to support new students transition into independent learning. Our PASS leaders are paid, in recognition of our WP population and high levels of deprivation. First year students reported clear support for the PASS scheme (average 3.7/5), especially for help with assignments (average 3.9/5) and for developing a sense of belonging (average 3.66/5 on settling into UCLan and average 3.2/5 for meeting people). Student qualitative data showed that the PASS sessions helped with socialising and networking, gaining confidence and motivation, and getting academic and career suggestions.

65.1 Utilising the skills of its international students, the School of Humanities, Languages and Global Studies supports native speakers as ‘language assistants’ in its courses. Many students have limited experience of talking to native speakers which develop their language skills. The languages team has observed that through these classes, students develop positive peer relationships and build a learning community that fosters a sense of belonging to their course. Students reported that the classes “are a fantastic asset... if there would be conversation classes every day I would attend.”

Excellent Physical and Virtual Learning Resources for Teaching and Learning (SE6)

66. Our performance relating to the NSS ‘Learning Resources’ metric demonstrates that we offer a very high-quality experience to students. At full-time, over the past four years, we have seen consistent performance in-line with benchmark, on aggregate over this period at only 0.2% below the benchmark whilst never falling 1% below, demonstrating our persistent approach to offer very high-quality resources in line with technological advancements. Our international student population achieved an outstanding 4.4% above benchmark for this metric.

67. We have examples of outstanding quality at subject level with Biosciences (+5.4%), Mathematical Sciences (+4.9%) and Business and Management (+3.5%). Also, we have very high-quality elements in subject areas where investment in learning resources is essential to learning, such as Medical Sciences (+1.2%) and Medicine and Dentistry (+0.6%). We have specific, smaller subject populations that need further development. We can, however, illustrate strong recovery in 2022 relating to Physics and astronomy (72% for Learning Resources), and for Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (77%), when considering whether “students are able to access course-specific resources.”

68. Our most recent NSS scores demonstrate significant improvements relating to part-time students, rising from 77.5% in 2021, to 90.7% in 2022, nearly 10pp above the sector. We remain in-

line with benchmark (-1.1%), with specific subject areas such as Allied Health offering an outstanding level of experience (+4.4%). Our Apprenticeship population has similarly improved on a very high-quality aggregate score (+1.2%), where we have demonstrated outstanding quality in 2021 (+4.8%) and in 2022 (+3.6%).

69. In 2017 the University commenced a £200m Campus Masterplan, including a £1.2m multi-faith and spirituality centre in 2018, £8.15m for newly-created social spaces in 2018-19, and a £30m Engineering Innovation Centre completed in 2019-20. A £60m new Student Centre and University Square, providing a one-stop-shop for support services, was completed in 2020-21.

70. Over the past 4 years there has been considerable investment in Media facilities. Our Media Factory contains facilities that encourage collaboration between subjects in Arts and Media. There has been investment within our theatres and TV studio space with new LED lighting equipment, leading to a reduction in maintenance and reducing our environmental impact through University-funded sustainability initiatives (£194,000 in 2018).

71. The multi-campus Library Service provides our students with online and physical learning environments to promote and encourage independent learning, providing access to over 310,000 printed materials. The return to on-campus learning post-pandemic has seen a 9pp increase in our NSS scores relating to library services (85%), 2pp higher than the sector average.

72. Our significant collaboration with Microsoft has featured in multiple case studies and press releases¹⁹ and provides staff and students with opportunities to develop and exploit cutting-edge technology. Blackboard Learn is the University's VLE, supporting 11,554 modules and 29,771 users.

73. During the pandemic, recognising the levels of deprivation among our student population we tackled digital poverty by providing 880 laptops and 200 internet dongles for students. We provided a new web portal to help students get connected to online learning environments. For students with high-end application requirements, we built a virtual environment to host software so students could study without needing access to high-spec computers at home. This supported our Engineering cohorts who were unable to access facilities on campus during lockdown. Unfortunately, UCLan then suffered a cyber attack in 2021 which led to a double-impact on these students as the alternative facilities were unavailable while essential recovery work took place. This factor affected the 'Learning Resources' NSS results for Engineering, which dropped to 68% in 2021. Following recovery, satisfaction increased in 2022 to 76%, including significant improvements in Aerospace (+21.9pp between 2021 & 2022) and Construction (+26.4pp).



74. Learning resources unlock the potential for simulated learning and teaching, and this is a strong theme running across UCLan. In Forensic Science, we have integrated simulations into modules as a pre-laboratory activity, revision tool and as a tool to support theory. Use is high: in 2019-20 the biosciences library of simulations was used 15,315 times and the chemistry library 1,752 times. The most used simulation, on setting up a microscope, was used 833 times by 446 different users.

74.1 Health and Care and Allied Health and Wellbeing developed a framework for embedded authentic simulation-based learning across pre-registration programmes, investing in 15 and 8-bedded hospital ward settings with immersive technology, a paramedic space with real-size ambulance, midwifery facilities, and two primary care consultation rooms, and invested in a range of manikins with life-like functionality. In addition, there is a telemedicine facility and an immersive interactive simulation room which can transform into a variety of locations supported by artificial and virtual reality technology. 95% of the 50 Level 4 students undertaking a simulated placement stated they are more confident afterwards, saying that "it felt like a ward" and critically that it was "a safe space to learn from mistakes". Level 5 and 6 students commented that it provided "excellent realistic scenarios". Further, our investment in veterinary science has seen us become the first university in the UK to receive state-of-the-art interactive vet-specific 'Anatamage' tables that allow students to undertake virtual anatomy dissection on a wide variety of animal species.

74.2 Other examples of simulation include Virtual Reality to supplement overseas travel undertaken by students as a creative response to limitations imposed by Covid-19. The approach has been recognised by the Association for Tourism in Higher Education, awarding the certificate for 'Innovation 2021', and the Council for Hospitality Management awarding 'The Share Award for Innovation in Teaching and Learning'. In addition, our crime scene facility provides 15 residential flats to simulate a range of crimes such as burglary, assault, and murder, for the benefit of approximately 500 students each year. Further, *Hydra Minerva* is a multi-room facility where participants immerse themselves in complex major incident scenarios. Participants engage in 'in the moment' knowledge-based problem solving.

Excellent Engagement with Students leading to Continuous Improvement (SE7)

75. The 'Student Voice' NSS metric demonstrates our consistent very high-quality level of engagement with students. Over the last four years, we have regularly been in-line with benchmark. For our full-time cohort, we have seen that improve by 2.5pp against benchmark over the last two years of available data (-1.3% in 2021 to 1.2% in 2022). Our aggregate performance in this metric for international students is an outstanding 7.7% above benchmark.

76. We have subjects that offer outstanding levels of engaging with the student voice, including Philosophy and Religious Studies (+17.6%), Law (+7.5%) and Media, Journalism and Communications (+8.8%). While we look to replicate this across all subjects, we are aware that some, namely those related to Nursing and Midwifery and Pharmacology, Toxicology and Pharmacy necessitate some additional intervention. The academic experience of these groups has been disproportionally impacted by the pandemic, following difficulties with studying on placements and with an accelerated need for graduates in the job market. However, we can point to high completion and progression (93.6% for Nursing and Midwifery), as positive areas to build back student experience within these areas.

77. Our very high-quality level of engagement with our full-time students is replicated across other levels of study. Part-time cohorts have regularly shown to be in-line with benchmark levels of Student Voice (-0.5% on aggregate over last four years), with our 2022 rates putting us a clear 7.2% above the sector. We have seen improvement relating to Degree Apprenticeships, with significant aspects of outstanding quality demonstrated in our two most recent sets of data; 2021 (+4.3%) and 2022 (+3.1%).

78. The Students' Union plays a critical role in the experience and outcomes of our rich, diverse student population. The Union trains and supports Course Representatives and School Presidents, operates an advice centre, and facilitates sports clubs and societies. The elected President is a member of the University Board, and the Vice President Education, Vice President Welfare, and Vice President Activities, are formally constituted members of University committees and working groups to ensure that the student voice is at the heart of decision-making across the University. The representation system has seen an average of 480 reps appointed each year in the last four-year period. All Schools also elect a School President – a 'super rep' that helps coordinate themes and work closely with senior managers in Schools to respond to issues and sharing of good practice. A Module Evaluation Questionnaire has been developed to provide consistent feedback across all taught modules. In addition, students share feedback each semester via Student Staff Liaison Committees that track and monitor actions and progress. Students also provide feedback each year through Golden Roses nominations (see 35).

79. The award-winning student voice platform '*Unitu*' enables students to provide real-time feedback to deliver faster responses. A joint pilot with the Students' Union began in October 2020 with 3 Schools that had problematic NSS scores: Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences, Nursing, and Engineering. *Unitu* allows students, course representatives and staff to collectively raise, discuss and resolve academic and more general experience issues. By the end of the initial pilot in February 2021 there had been 9,682 views of 246 pieces of feedback, with 873 votes, and 94% of posts had been

resolved. UCLan engagement was reported by *Unitu* as higher than average across the sector and led to improved engagement from Schools. Following the success of the pilot, *Unitu* has now been rolled out to all students and Degree Apprenticeship learners.

80. In July 2022 *Unitu* presented an impact review for the first full year of operation. This compared UCLan to other institutions. 8% (470) of our students were unique posters to the platform, compared to benchmark of 5%, demonstrating good levels of involvement. This is underlined by the numbers of unique student voters at 46% (2,668 students), compared to benchmark of 28%. 100% of students at UCLan responded to confirm they have had “the right opportunities to provide feedback”, compared to a benchmark of 95%, and 90% of our students felt “staff value mine and other students’ feedback” compared to a *Unitu* benchmark of 84%, and 81% responded with “it’s clear how students’ feedback has been acted upon” compared to 77% benchmark. This evaluation confirms our planned rollout to full implementation has been successful and increased the effectiveness of feedback, leading to continuous improvement. Examples of changes made based on feedback received include a new online Student Hub, increased wellbeing drop-ins, a partnership with Blackbullion to offer financial advice, and improved control of priority car park spaces for students with disabilities.

81. Students engage with course design and review, and input into discussions for enhancements and changes to courses. As part of Periodic Review, the Panel meet with a representative group of students to explore their experiences on the course to inform review outcomes and conditions.

82. We developed a formal process of including students in the selection process of academic staff. This was introduced in 2021, and a review was undertaken of progress for the period up to January 2022. 31 out of 59 recruitment panels had student involvement, typically including a presentation by candidates to a group of students, and a student joining the formal interview panel. Issues including student availability led to the 52% take-up in this initial period, and further work continues to mitigate the barriers to engagement to increase this.

83. We have run a ‘Student Panel’ since 2010, providing a structured opportunity for students to influence decision-making and shape the experience of students. We recruit c340 diverse students each year, and as students remain on the panel until they graduate, the panel size is normally between 1,000 and 1,200 students. Examples of engagement include consultation on the University’s Strategic Plan, reviewing the structure and content of student communications, and taking part in a survey during Covid-19 to identify students’ most pressing needs to find out what we could best do to help in the return to campus.

SECTION 3: STUDENT OUTCOMES

3.1 Delivering Positive Outcomes

Effective and Tailored Approaches to Ensuring Students Succeed and Progress (SO1)

84. Three fundamental factors are critical to ensuring that students succeed and progress – strong underpinning learning and teaching; developing a sense of belonging; and tailored student support. Building on the learning and teaching commentary discussed in Section 2, we have worked to develop a sense of belonging, including through pre-arrival support (see 63), a revised Welcome and extended induction programme, and ensuring the curriculum reflects our diverse student community (see 62).

85. In 2019 we established an early intervention model, investing in a predictive learner analytics system to review engagement data and identify students at risk of withdrawal. This enables us to proactively reach out to offer them support. RSM, the University’s current internal audit provider, noted the data sources used by UCLan to identify early signs of disengagement in students is in line with models seen across the sector²⁰. Recent data (2021-22) shows that 6,900 students met with a student coach (see 63.1), with 2,193 having a formal appointment and 771 referred to other specialist

University support services. This resulted in a significant reduction in the number of students considered at risk in relation to the University's engagement and attendance policy.

86. The Building Essential Skills Together (BEST) project was created in 2019 to identify methods to assess and develop foundational skills of numeracy, literacy, and resilience required to flourish at university. Students successfully progressed through working levels as detailed below:

| | Crossing 1 level | Crossing 2 levels | Crossing 3 levels |
|---------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| English | 112 | 14 | |
| Maths | 43 | 6 | 0 |

87. The approach was piloted across 10 courses in 2019-20 and a further 6 courses in 2020-21. We have subsequently invested in facilitating a full roll-out across all students in their first year of study. The Language Academy additionally provides international students with bespoke English language support, tailored to the needs of courses including Engineering, Medicine and Business. Typically, this supports 800 students per year.

88. It is pleasing to note through our Access and Participation Plan²¹ that our progression to highly skilled employment or further study ethnicity gap has narrowed from 7% to 2% in the most recent data (2019-20), 2pp better than the sector average of 4%. There has also been a strong improvement in disabled students progressing to employment or further study. In 2022 we signed the care-leaver covenant, committing to support an independent student forum and increasing access to paid internships. We signed the City of Sanctuary pledge and have introduced a Sanctuary Scholarship, comprising a fee-waiver and up to £5,000 support per annum. We deliver a Student Transition and Residential programme in the summer for offer-holders who have a declared disability, and we have seen the attainment gap between disabled students and non-disabled students vanish in the past 2 years.

89. In 2020-21, 25% of our students declaring a disability had a mental health condition, while in 2019-20 it was 27%, and in 2018-19 24%. These high proportions indicate the importance of interventions and support to ensure students succeed and progress. In 2019 a PwC internal audit summarised that it was "evident from the review that UCLan offers a leading welfare service". We were noted as one of the first universities to recognise the need to combine all student facing support services into one function¹⁷. We invest substantially in student support with a focus on mental health and wellbeing, evidenced by coming first place in the Student Welfare League Table in 2020. In addition, we came third in the 2022 HUMEN Mental Health University League Table out of 80 universities surveyed and were top for the number of students most satisfied with the mental health support (79%). This is true for our Degree Apprenticeship learners who spend less time studying on campus, but our services reach similar proportions of these learners (15.3% of DA learners in 2021-22 accessed services, compared to 20.1% of non-apprentices), indicating strong engagement and reach for all our learner types. In 2021-22 we joined the Student Minds Mental Health Charter programme to further our work in this area which is critical to ensuring students are supported to succeed and progress.

90. When considering mental health, and the four-year TEF period in question, it is impossible to ignore the all-pervasive impact of the Covid-19 pandemic that posed a threat to student success. Tailored measures that we took to mitigate this included successfully distributing £1.4m of OfS hardship funds directly to students in need; distributing 880 computers and 200 broadband dongles to facilitate online learning; waiving third semester accommodation fees in halls; providing food, personal hygiene, laundry, and specialist wellbeing support for students in self-isolation; and free food for students in halls and on campus.

91. Student Wellbeing Ambassadors are UCLan students recruited and trained into a paid, professional role. The programme helps students with disabilities to maximise their experiential outcomes through peer support. A student commented that "the support I have received has allowed me to access all areas of my curriculum" and another that "It has given me a degree of independence

and the confidence to make choices that I might have otherwise been afraid to make". UCLan has now received funding from TASO for an evaluation of the programme, partnered with Cambridge University as independent evaluators, looking at a range of quantitative and qualitative data to test the theory of change on which this intervention is based.

92. We are recognised as a centre of excellence in British Sign Language (BSL) and Deaf Studies, featuring in the OfS disability case studies²². The BSL Interpreting Team provide 2,000 hours annually for students to access their studies. Speaking of the interpreter, a student commented "I can honestly say that I would not be graduating without support... I didn't want to admit I was struggling to keep up in classes. goes above and beyond in interpretations, checking I understand what is going on and can participate fully in classes". Another student on being awarded the Oxford University Press Law Prize in recognition during their studies commented "I could not have achieved this without the BSL team's support".

93. In 2021 we won OfS funding to create and deliver an interdisciplinary and intersectional initiative. The Creative Mental Health Framework (CMHF)²³ harnesses the impact of creative practice on mental health to reach UCLan's LGBTQ+ student community following the pandemic. Students produced a magazine TV series broadcast on Sky TV, recorded podcasts highlighting LGBTQ+ mental health challenges, performed a theatre show celebrating stories of those who have taken part, and created artwork with Tate Liverpool curating an exhibition at the gallery. A peer-to-peer creative network reaching over 300 LGBTQ+ students has been set up with Student Services and 30 students trained as mental health ambassadors to support peers and reduce stigma. The project has so far led to significant increases in students accessing help and talking openly about their challenges and raising awareness among the wider student community.

94. The Centre for SME and Enterprise Development helps over 150 student and graduate businesses. Students have commented that the Centre "is an excellent resource...the gold standard of what is being offered out there and is head and shoulders above everything else." The Centre delivered 84 classroom sessions to 2,630 students, 573 one to one business mentoring hours, and 57 workshops to 228 students and graduates. A network of 'Entrepreneurs in Residence' brings real-world expertise and entrepreneurial practice to support students. The network includes Founders, Managing Directors, and Chief Executives.

95. The Matrix-accredited Careers Service provides impartial careers advice and guidance, employability events, workshops and employer talks. The aims of the team are measured through student feedback processes. The results across 2021-22 were universally consistent with other years. From the 277 completed student responses we found that 92.8% of students felt they had made 'excellent' or 'lots' of progress after the meeting, and 96% of students are 'very or quite' confident following intervention with a Careers Advisor. 99.3% who expressed an opinion said they would recommend the service to others. Overall, the service was rated 4.8 out of 5 stars.

96. Since 2018, our Graduate Internship programme has provided 174 paid internships across a wide variety of roles, with an overall investment of £522,218. A longitudinal survey of previous interns via LinkedIn showed that many are now in satisfying careers. We adopted a new online platform, Handshake, and achieved an award for the most registrations amongst all universities during the launch period (17% of all our students in first 4 months). The early adoption of Handshake means our students have access to over 15,000 employers and over 2,000 vacancies each month and can network and message recruiters directly.

Rates of Continuation and Completion (SO2)

97. When considering our metric performance relating to student outcomes, we have consistently demonstrated that we offer a very-high level of quality for students progressing through to graduation. Whilst we have improved in the latest set of available data in relation to full-time completion (0.2% above benchmark), we acknowledge that our full-time continuation performance has declined recently, at below benchmark. We believe that our increasingly complex mix of students outlined in

Section 1 partially accounts for this, although it is important to note that our aggregate continuation metric for full-time international students is 1.5% above benchmark, and completion is at 2.6% above benchmark. In addition, for continuation, Black students are on aggregate +1.6pp above benchmark compared to White students (-1.7pp below benchmark), and for completion, Black students are +2.4pp, just below the threshold for outstanding, and Asian students are +2pp above benchmark, close to the threshold, compared to White students (+0.1pp above benchmark). These outcomes indicate outstanding support is in place for ensuring the success of these students and the challenges they face.

98. We are proud of our outstanding levels of performance for part-time students and Degree Apprenticeships, recording significant levels of continuation (8.6% & 2.9% above the benchmark respectively) and completion (9.6% for part-time). To address performance in particular subjects for continuation, completion, and progression, in 2021-22 we initiated a retention and achievement whole-institution priority²⁴. While there are pockets of provision that we acknowledge need raising, we have subject areas of outstanding quality, for example Pharmacology, Toxicology, and Pharmacy (+3% above benchmark for continuation, +3.2% for completion), General, Applied and Forensic Sciences (+2.9%) and Law (+3.3%). We recognise achievements in the absolute rates delivered for students - Medicine and Dentistry (88.1% continuation), Architecture, Building and Planning (85.4% continuation) and Physics and Astronomy (84.9% progression rate) illustrate how we are raising student outcomes in demanding, professional subjects, despite the challenges of being a university that focuses on widening participation.

99. Our Humanities Foundation Year students enter the University with relatively poor experiences of education and exhibit under-confidence in their academic abilities. We support students to develop through research, metacognition, and emotional intelligence. One student noted "The skills we learnt... have set us up perfectly for university life and we all feel like we had an advantage compared to the other first year entry students". Another wrote "I just want to say I could never have achieved this without the grounding the foundation gave me... Foundation gives people a chance to prove themselves and it's a truly great thing".

Internal data has shown a 11% increase in good degree outcomes as well as increased student completion. Over 80% of Foundation Year entry students graduate with a degree.

Rates of Progression (SO3)

100. Over the past four years our progression metric performance has consistently been in-line or higher with the benchmark across all modes of our provision. We consistently deliver a very-high quality level of progression to graduate employment, as demonstrated in our full-time aggregate performance.

101. As noted in 13, a significant proportion of our students originate within the region, half of whom are the first in their family to participate in HE and are firmly embedded within their communities. The data²⁵ supports this: 72.4% of our graduates remain in the North West, while only 4.2% move to London. This high proportion has therefore restricted access to high quality employment opportunities compared to graduates in larger cities, where the density of job opportunities is greater and salaries higher. According to the most recent Longitudinal Earning Outcomes data release, students who reside in the North West five years following graduation are expected to earn on average £6,200 less per year than those living in London. This provides some geographical context to explain the lower number of students progressing into graduate level jobs, which is for our full-time students 1% below benchmark over the four-year period. However, it is important to note that 38% of UCLan graduates are earning £24,000 - £26,999, 12pp *higher* than the sector. This is partly due to a large proportion of graduates from our Nursing courses, our biggest cohort of graduates, earning between £24,000 - £26,999, delivered 93.6% of Nursing and Midwifery students into graduate employment over the last four years.

102. Graduate outcomes for Law have been lower than benchmark. Our students are both competing with other universities which are perceived as high status and as outlined above are seeking to remain in the North West. To enhance employment opportunities, we developed

collaborative activities with local employers, including placements and employability weeks, and a compulsory professionalism spine to enhance student confidence and job application skills. In addition, our lower scoring Languages performance may be due to lower response rates from those graduates who we know to be in successful careers abroad, related to their language specialism. Working and living outside the UK makes them more difficult to contact during the survey period. We have worked to increase progression pathways including new postgraduate routes such as Interpreting and Translation with Korean, Japanese and Spanish.

103. Aspects of our provision provide outstanding opportunities for our graduates. This is demonstrated in some of our most populous student groups; in Health and Social Care (+6.7% above the benchmark) and Biosciences (+6.7%), and high absolute performance for our Medicine and Dentistry (83.6%) and Allied Health (76.4%). We also deliver outstanding quality in less vocational routes that typically struggle in the sector to deliver such levels of excellence; graduates related to Media, Journalism and Communications (+3%), Performing Arts (+2.9%) and Creative Arts and Design (+2.2%).

104. In accordance with our vision, we strive to ensure very high graduate outcomes across our entire student base; this can be demonstrated in our excellent metric performance within our part-time and apprenticeships cohorts. Ofsted rated UCLan as 'good' in its first inspection²⁶, commended for "providing clear routes into professional careers" and "highly effective employer engagement". And with our part-time cohort, we have demonstrated outstanding levels of graduate opportunities which have risen significantly against the benchmark over the last three years of the Graduate Outcomes survey (+1.6% > +3.2% > +6.2%), as we aim to best prepare students from a range of backgrounds in various levels of courses into skilled employment.

Students who are registered with us but taught elsewhere

105. 10% of our full-time student population is delivered through partners. Burnley College, Spirit Studios and Runshaw College account for over two thirds of this. It is challenging to feedback on interventions in response to partner performance due to the time-lag with the data and the provision changing significantly over the period; indeed Runshaw College have ceased delivery of HE and are no longer a partner organisation.

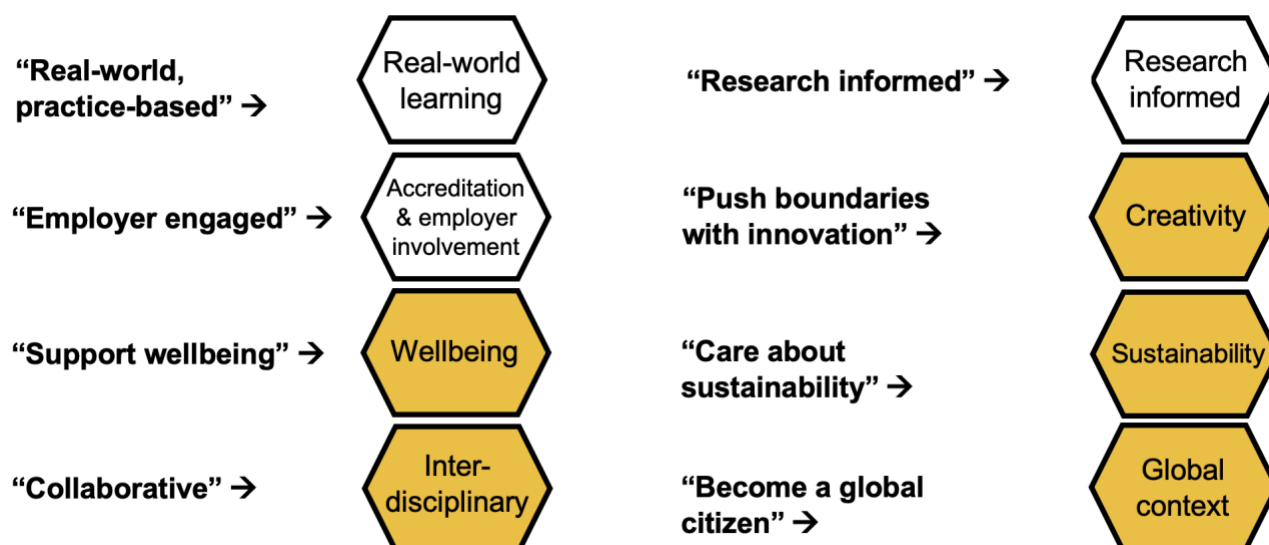
106. Concerning Continuation and Completion - In line with our Early Intervention approach, partners introduced tracking measures to support early identification of 'at risk' students, increased pastoral support, and enhanced the physical space HE students utilise for study. Concerning Progression, data is limited due to the changes in the timeframes the data is collected, resulting in lower engagement with the Graduate Outcomes Survey amongst our partner population. Spirit Studios highlighted that they increased emphasis on the importance of gaining employment experience through regular workshops, masterclasses and panels with industry professionals.

107. We are working to share good practice through our Partnership Network Forum to raise collective performance. PWC identified that the forum between UCLan partner colleges facilitates regular communication about matters including employability as best practice²⁷.

DELIVERING EDUCATIONAL GAINS

Articulating our Educational Gains for Students (SO4)

108. Our Mission (see 2) is embedded into the student learning journey through the Curriculum Framework as represented below:



109. The Curriculum Framework elements provide students with a greater skillset, summarised in the CFW as a set of ‘graduate attributes’. These are how we define Educational Gains, as they relate to academic and personal development, and work readiness:

- Culturally Intelligent with a Global Outlook
- Resilient and Reflective
- Creative and Enterprising
- Knowledgeable and Analytical
- Adaptable and Future Ready

110. We commissioned an external agency, Groundswell Innovation, to undertake independent market research to develop the Graduate Attributes, in parallel with the development of the Curriculum Framework in 2019-20. Their objectives were to – (1) work to improve the distinctiveness of UCLan graduates as employable talent; (2) enhance the student experience enjoyed by UCLan students, to ensure graduates leave as fully-rounded individuals; and (3) assess the extent to which the proposed graduate attributes match the perception of the lived UCLan student experience, employer requirements, and student perception of desired Graduate Attributes. Methodology included holding structured conversations with different stakeholder groups, including SME employers in the North West, public sector representatives, large company representatives, entrepreneurs, prospective students, UK and international current students studying at UCLan and regional competitors, and alumni. The final research report clarifies the need for the Graduate Attributes; employers surveyed did not perceive graduates as ‘employment-ready’ and the final proposed set as outlined above was met with broad agreement.

Effective and Tailored Support for Students to Achieve Educational Gains (SO5)

111. The graduate attributes are developed by students as they travel through the Curriculum Framework, itself a tailored approach as it is brought to life in ways that are appropriate to each subject. Aspects of this have been explored in detail throughout this document, including the common curriculum characteristics, and the pedagogic design principles that inform design and delivery.

112. A mechanism that has proven effective is our *Graduate with Confidence* programme: In the final weeks before graduation, students are invited to a focussed week of careers, employability and enterprise activities designed to boost confidence as they transition into the workplace. All participants

are encouraged to contribute to interactive workshops which reinforce the skills and knowledge expected from recruiters. Students noted “I have gained more confidence...and definitely think I would do better in the future” and “it really has given me the push I needed to start my job hunt and optimise my employability”. Students self-evaluate their development. On average, the scheme contributed a 40% increase across employability skills with participants reporting an increase from 14% to 108%.

113. The Centre for Volunteering and Community Leadership has worked with the Institute of Leadership and Management to offer a portfolio of accreditation qualifications and professional development pathways for students alongside studies (see 54.2). Monitoring and assessment is via an online platform which identifies the Graduate Attributes as key skills that have been developed, assessed, and achieved. So far, 1,092 Students have benefitted: 344 achieved an ILM qualification alongside their undergraduate course and 718 received a volunteer recognition.

Demonstrating Students Succeeding in Achieving Intended Gains (SO6)

114. The Graduate Attributes are part of the Curriculum Framework course review process. Our approach to evaluating the ultimate achievement of these as educational gains is therefore informed by our progress of implementing the CFW. As the portfolio reviews began in 2021, it is premature to measure them as achievements at the end of a 3-4 year course of study. However, it is important to underline that the design of the CFW and the Graduate Attributes recognise and formalise key aspects of the UCLan approach to preparing students for graduate success over many years. Therefore, when it comes to demonstrating student success in achieving intended educational gains, what follows is a set of current, trial, and proposed measures. These will in turn inform further development of the approach to Educational Gains for the next TEF period.

115. The Graduate Outcomes Survey demonstrates our students achieve significantly:

- 88% of UCLan (19/20) graduates are in employment, 4pp above the sector.
- 83% of UCLan (19/20) respondents described their current activity (work/further study etc.) as meaningful; a 2pp rise since last year.
- 69% of UCLan (19/20) respondents said they were utilising what they had learnt during their studies in their current activity; 2pp above the sector average.

116. The last one is particularly pertinent in the context of the additional skillset provided by the Curriculum Framework, geared to ensure they are well-rounded, ‘work-ready’ graduates set up to achieve for life. In addition, in terms of the ‘creative and enterprising’ Graduate Attribute, it is pleasing to note that the KEF 2 exercise confirmed our CPD, and graduate start-ups, are in the top quintile across the sector (see 53). In 112 we outlined the *Graduate with Confidence* scheme that contributed to a 40% increase across all employability skills and increased levels of confidence, following participation.

117. We can demonstrate that the Curriculum Framework is robustly considered and implemented during course portfolio and review, with course teams mapping the CFW expectations against their modules to meet threshold criteria. Example comments from the independent review panels include: “The course curriculum framework mapping indicates a wide variety of core competencies that will be developed by the course,” and “Students will develop a range of core subject knowledge and skills, as well as being able to develop their emotional intelligence and employability skills amongst other attributes”²⁷. As we move to completing the implementation of the CFW, we are reviewing the External Examiner process to include more formal feedback on the Graduate Attributes to assist with evaluation from the 2022-23 academic year.

118. The *Brief Resilience Scale* was piloted in 2019-20; a short question tool that measures students’ perceptions of their own resilience, specifically their perceived ability to bounce back from stress. The tool links to online resources that the students can review and development activities they can undertake. 641 students completed the pilot. 176 completed one of the activities associated with it. Encouragingly, 157 took a further test. Access to the tool is maintained through the University and is an example of the curriculum characteristic ‘skills for learning’ in the CFW.

119. We are developing two proposals to embed the evaluation of student success of achieving educational gains:

- a) A formalised method of capturing the development of the Graduate Attributes of each through a collection of evidence in a Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) that students would receive alongside their degree transcript. Provisionally entitled the UCLan Advantage, the proposal is currently under development for a potential longitudinal pilot in 2023-24.
- b) A graduate survey that would take place at the point of graduation, then at 6 months, and again at 12 months, to evaluate the extent to which our graduates feel they embody the Graduate Attributes at different stages of life beyond UCLan.

Conclusion

120. UCLan is a very high-quality HE provider with outstanding features, as evidenced throughout our Provider Submission. We are proud of our 200-year history of Widening Participation, and we fully recognise and *embrace* the challenges that presents. This includes an extensive and unique post-1992 course portfolio to broaden opportunities for all and an innovative curriculum framework, brought to life in ways that work for each subject, to support the success of all our students.

121. Equal to the challenge of delivering this innovative offer is the continually-evolving diversity of our student population. Every student is unique and has varying learning and support needs. We have therefore invested in early intervention approaches, personalised student support and wellbeing, and inclusive pedagogy to provide outstanding and tailored learning opportunities. We are proud to be first in the Student Welfare League Table in 2020, and third in the 2022 HUMEN Mental Health University League Table.

122. Our Mission drives our strategic initiatives and operational activity. As an anchor institution with a clear civic mission, we refocused our efforts during the pandemic to support our students and our partners. Recognising the heightened challenges facing our specific mix of students due to the pandemic we successfully distributed £1.4m of OfS hardship funds, and 880 computers to combat digital poverty. We also waived third semester accommodation fees, provided specialist wellbeing support for students in self-isolation, and free food for students in halls and a provision for all on campus. We facilitated paid placements for 681 student nurses alongside 20 medical students and 300 nursing students that we graduated early to join the frontline. Further, we operated both a LAMP testing laboratory for NHS staff and an asymptomatic testing centre, produced thousands of valves, visors and face masks, donated significant PPE to Trusts, councils, and third sector organisations and provided free student hall accommodation to NHS staff.

123. Our Mission is critically more than just words: it is what we do. Our strategic Curriculum Framework supports each student across the student lifecycle to deliver educational gain as evidenced by our graduate outcomes. The Graduate Outcomes survey demonstrates the number of graduates in employment, and that 'utilising what they had learned in their studies' are both above sector average. This outstanding result indicates we are getting this right - this complex integration of courses and students. This demonstrates that we are succeeding in our Mission: ***helping people to seize every opportunity to flourish in education, at work and for life.***

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