City, University of London TEF Submission January 2023

1. PROVIDER CONTEXT

1.1   Introduction

City's founding mission was to promote 'the industrial skill, general knowledge, health and wellbeing of young men and women belonging to the poorer classes'. The University's origins are in the Northampton Institute, founded in 1894 and constituted under the City of London Parochial Charities Act (1883). This vision of a higher education institution committed to social mobility, employment readiness and the local community has driven City throughout its history. City's current self-identification as the University for 'business, practice and the professions' reflects this consistent historic commitment to high quality, supportive and socially engaged education. 'The City University' was created from the Northampton Institute by Royal Charter in 1966 and, as City, University of London, joined the University of London in 2016.

Most of our campus remains in the London Borough of Islington, a small, densely populated inner London borough with an overall population of around 224,000. City also continues to maintain strong links with the City of London - the Lord Mayor of London serves as our Rector. This connection with the City forms the foundation for our focus on delivering an excellent professional and practice-based education for our diverse students that delivers employment opportunities. The majority of our courses are accredited by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs).

We maintain a strong focus on widening participation. Our Access and Participation Plan (APP) applies to over 70% of our home undergraduates. We support young people from areas with high levels of deprivation to access higher education. We were named NEON (National Education Opportunities Network) Higher Education Institute of the Year in 2019 and our award-winning City Cares programme (NEON Awards 2022) – Widening Access Initiative Retention and Progression – supports care leavers, estranged students, asylum seeks and refugees to complete their course of study through tailored support.

In the last eighteen months, City has seen a change of leadership and a refreshed strategy. What has not changed is the strategic institutional commitment to delivering a distinctive education and professional formation to our diverse body of students in a challenging yet supportive environment.

1.2   Our size and shape

City's total student population is 20,686, of which 12,658 are undergraduates. This has grown from 20,211 in 2018/19, of which 11,022 were undergraduates. The makeup of our student body has changed in recent years, reflecting strong demand from local students and the impact of the pandemic which had a substantial impact on postgraduate taught international recruitment. As a result, we now have a greater proportion of undergraduate students than has historically been the case with a UG/PG split of 61% to 39% (2% PGR) in comparison to an historic split of approximately 55% to 45%. The age profile of the student body has also shifted with 41% of the total population aged under 21 compared to 33% five years ago; this reflects both an increased participation rate from the local school-leaving population, and increased popularity of subject areas including Business Management, Computer Science and Economics. HESA data for 2020/21 shows that City has the sixth largest student population in London.

Overall, City's undergraduate population is atypical in the extent of its diversity in relation to UK HE norms. Of our 12,658 undergraduate students in 2021/22, 26% are from outside the UK; 77% of

our UK domiciled undergraduates with a known ethnicity identified as from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) background (up from 70% in 2017/18); the number of students from BAME backgrounds is above the HESA benchmark data in all disciplines.

We provide a tailored approach to supporting excellent outcomes and educational gains for our students, which includes careful consideration of their intersectional identities. In particular, we note from 2021/22 HESA data that:

- In each year of the TEF period, more than three quarters of our UK undergraduates have come from London.
- 41.8% of our students came from the bottom 40% of areas for deprivation when measured by lowest three IMD (Indices of Multiple Deprivation) deciles.
- 7.7% of our London domiciled students come from London's three most deprived boroughs (Barking and Dagenham, Brent and Newham), as defined by the ONS Census through the proportion of residents suffering deprivation in at least one of the defined dimensions (Education, Employment, Health and Housing).
- 65.5% of our UK domiciled undergraduate population lived in their parental/guardian home. Only 4.9% lived in Halls. Travel times in our local area are such that even those who appear to live relatively locally in terms of miles from campus may still face significant journey times.
- 43.5% stated that they were 'first in family' to go on to higher education. This figure rises to 59% if responses such as 'don't know', 'information refused' or the information not given are excluded.

63% of our 92 undergraduate programmes are professionally accredited (excluding 'with placement' variants) and more than half are single honours. The vast majority within scope for TEF are full-time. City does offer some part-time programmes reported in the TEF metrics, made up largely of Return to Practice modules delivered through the School of Health Sciences. We offer a small but growing portfolio of degree apprenticeships, as well as a small number of validated and transnational provision working in partnership with other providers. City has decided not to address these final two groups of students specifically in this submission due to the small denominators.

During the period under consideration, City operated across 5 Schools: Bayes Business School (formerly Cass); School of Health Sciences (SHS); The City Law School (CLS); School of Arts and Social Sciences (SASS); School of Mathematics, Computer Science and Engineering (SMCSE). The renaming of our business school in September 2021 from Cass to Bayes, and a new strategy for that School, is one example of our commitment to improving inclusion. Our recent Race Equality Charter Bronze Award reflects our deep commitment to advancing racial equity across City.

1.3   Our approach to our submission

Our approach to student partnership was commended in TEF 2017. We continue to work in partnership with City Students' Union (CSU) as critical friends, co-creators and co-deliverers of the student experience. Over the past four years, we have worked hard to integrate and empower the student voice through formal structures and regular informal meetings at leadership level so that students have the resources and support that they need to engage as our partners in continuous improvement. This partnership was at the heart of our response to the pandemic.

Members of our TEF Steering Group have met with the CSU leadership periodically to discuss the development of our respective submissions. City staff have supported the CSU Representation & Democracy Manager and sabbatical officers with understanding our metrics and evidence base.

2. STUDENT EXPERIENCE

TEF indicators demonstrate that our students' satisfaction with learning resources and academic support is broadly in line with benchmark overall. Overall satisfaction with teaching, response to the student voice, and assessment and feedback measures, are below benchmark. Within the data, however, there is variation - split indicators demonstrate performance above or on benchmark across all areas in our School of Health Sciences and for students studying English or History, 25% of our student body. Disseminating good practice so we can achieve levels of satisfaction which are consistent across all areas is a challenge we continue to address.

It is clear that we deliver successful educational gain for our diverse student body, as reflected in our Student Outcomes data, considered below. As also noted below, our students acknowledge through the NSS that we invest significantly in learning resources and ensure that academic support is readily available. Nevertheless, a significant proportion are indicating that they are not finding the experience of acquiring the skills and knowledge that they will benefit from in the workplace and beyond a comfortable one.

The reasons for this apparent misalignment are complex. There is a wealth of evidence that BAME students, women and those from disadvantaged backgrounds suffered disproportionately through the pandemic, including from feelings of isolation, at this time. As evidenced above, these populations are widespread within our student body.

Furthermore, on the NSS academic questions where there has been greater dissatisfaction, qualitative feedback from our student check-in calls suggests that City's professional orientation and the financial disadvantage of our students intensified anxiety about changed assessment methods during the pandemic - even though those changes have proved positive in terms of outcomes and narrowing the degree-awarding gap. These factors also drove anxiety about the pandemic-enforced limitations of access to experiential learning.

The 15% growth in our undergraduate population since 2018/19 has been supported by intensive systems work and investment in learning resources, support and student engagement. This has paid dividends in these areas, which our students acknowledge. We continue work to ensure that we have the right systems in place to consistently assure outstanding student experience for that population, while maintaining the distinctive approaches that our strong history of diverse PSRB accreditations requires. While the whole-institutional strategic commitment to ensure higher rates of satisfaction among all our students is concrete evidence of the primary importance of our students' feedback to us, it is also true that there is a range of evidence of features of excellence across all aspects of City's student experience, including their academic experience, which is at odds with some aspects of the NSS feedback. Some of this evidence comes from our students themselves and others from a range of internal and external sources which we will outline here.

Academic experience and assessment

2.1 Student Experience 1 (SE1): teaching, assessment and feedback to support learning, progress and attainment

Across City's subject areas there is evidence of outstanding teaching, which reflects a more positive picture than the materially below benchmark institutional NSS scores from 2020 and 2022 for 'the teaching on my course'. The overall benchmark masks variation at subject level and does

not reflect internal and external evidence including module and programme evaluation, data from peer review of teaching, and from our external examiners.

To support outstanding teaching, City revised the peer review of teaching policy for 2016/17, using evidence from the literature to develop Peer Supported Review of Education (PSRE), an activity which develops performance through non-judgmental peer input. As reported in Parker and Quinsee (2018), in the first year of operation, 83% of 48 reflections submitted after PSRE focussed on classroom teaching or teaching and learning materials. Thematic analysis revealed good practice in relation to student engagement and evidence that staff planned to enhance their practice as a result of the process.

To further celebrate outstanding teaching, our annual Learning at City conference provides opportunities for staff to present pedagogic research and enhancements of teaching practice. The 2022 conference included several sessions about redesigning modules for blended learning with 164 staff in attendance, supporting the many colleagues who have since redesigned modules. At School level, annual learning and teaching awards enable colleagues who have engaged in teaching which has had an impact on student learning to share their practice and inspire others. CSU run annual academic impact awards for academic and professional staff who have made a difference to the student experience. Last year there were over 300 nominations for staff.

Our approach to module evaluation has evolved over the reporting period. Until 2019/20, all students were offered a termly paper-based module evaluation survey aligned with NSS questions, including ratings of teaching and the extent of satisfaction with the overall quality of the module. In autumn 2019, 40% of modules surveyed had above an 80% response rate, and 70% had above a 40% response rate. Notably, these results show higher satisfaction with teaching than NSS scores for equivalent questions. Question 1 in the 2019 NSS received 85.8%, with the equivalent module evaluation question receiving 87%; NSS question 2 received 74.5%, compared to 84% in module evaluations. Similar patterns are apparent, particularly for NSS question 2, in 2017 and 2018, where module evaluations show a higher number of students agreed that staff had made the module interesting than in the NSS. City launched a new online module evaluation process in Spring 2020/21. This enables students to provide feedback in an accessible format, whether they are studying on or off campus and enables City to process results and respond to student comments significantly faster than using a manual system. The response rate was 24.6% in term 3 2021/22, with 4.16 the average score for 'teaching has helped my understanding of the subject'.

As shown in our APP, City consistently performs above the sector for IMD quartiles 1 and 2 at each key stage in the student life cycle, including access, continuation, attainment and progression. Our support for students from all backgrounds has underpinned degree outcomes over the reporting period. In 2017/18 the gap between those receiving firsts or 2:1s was 23% between those with the lowest and highest entry qualifications. This gap has steadily narrowed; 2021/22 figures are comparable for students with the lowest and highest entry tariffs.

Assessment and feedback

City works with approximately 250 external examiners, who submit annual reports highlighting areas of good practice and actions for improvement, drawn together in a thematic report to Senate. In each year of the reporting period the thematic report demonstrates that the majority of externals were satisfied with assessment, citing the breadth of assessment types and innovative assessment methods, as well as the rigour and challenge of City's assessments. Marks were deemed to be fair, appropriate and consistent, with module report forms and clear rubrics cited as good practice.

City's Senate policy requires feedback on coursework within 3 weeks of submission and feedback on end of module exams and projects within 4 weeks. Operational compliance is assured by reporting to Boards of Studies. For example, for the Autumn term 2018, and January 2019 exam period, 93% of undergraduate coursework, and 95% of exams and projects received feedback within these timeframes, with students in the School of Health Sciences receiving 100% of all assessment feedback on time.

An Undergraduate Programme Assessment and Feedback Project, led by the Learning Enhancement and Development Directorate (LEaD) in collaboration with champions in Schools, launched in 2018 to improve and add consistency to all undergraduate assessment. This work produced an Assessment Toolkit, a series of good practice guides, and several School projects undertaken to embed best practice. For the LLB, the project resulted in the development of RACER (Relevant Legal Knowledge, Analysis, Communication, Evaluation, Research & Ethics) marking criteria, development of bespoke module and programme marking criteria and the introduction of step marking, alongside a Student Guide to Assessment and Feedback. For Psychology, changes were made to improve educational alignment between programme learning outcomes and assessment methods/content, improve consistency across modules in terms of workload, re-balance weightings of assessment to better reflect student workload burden and to ensure greater transparency to facilitate student workload planning and thus progression.

In 2018/19, Phase 2 of the project focussed on improving student progression and enhancing student satisfaction through assessment. Participant programmes were identified based on School need and worked with a Learning Development Fellow to review and develop assessment and feedback strategies and implement change. Programmes making extensive changes through the project saw steady improvements in NSS scores related to assessment and feedback, with Psychology receiving 57.8% for question 8 of the NSS in 2018 and 75.7% in 2022, and the LLB increasing from 55.5% to 67.7% over the same period. The impact of the project was also reflected in institutional module evaluations for Autumn term 2019, whereby assessment and feedback scores indicate significantly higher satisfaction for two questions compared with the NSS scores for 2019. NSS question 8 received a score of 67.3% compared to 83% in the equivalent module evaluation question, with NSS question 11 receiving 68.5%, compared to 80% in module evaluation. The impact of the work institutionally was also apparent in the 2019/20 thematic report of external examiners comments (drawing on c. 200 examiners), which highly commended the quality of feedback provided and noted the benefits to enable student progression.

We used student feedback in real time as the pandemic evolved to develop support for students for the upcoming assessment periods (see for example 2.7). A set of assessment and safety net principles was created, benchmarked across the sector and in line with OfS guidance, balancing academic quality and standards with ensuring a fair, accessible and supportive environment for students. The 2019/20 thematic summary of External Examiner reports shows that examiners commended the response to the challenge of the pandemic and the ways in which assessment was adapted without compromising learning outcomes. Our approach contributed to sustained positive continuation and completion rates in 2019/20, including for underrepresented groups, with an average of 88% across all Schools. This also resulted in the closing of the BAME attainment gap institutionally (see 3.1).

Across the reporting period, City has focussed on academic integrity. Our Academic Misconduct Policy was reviewed in response to the recommendations published by the QAA in collaboration with UUK and the NUS in October 2017; an Academic Integrity and Misconduct (AIM) Working Group was established in 2021. Group outputs include student communications regarding

expectations and responsibilities around academic integrity, and how to prevent Contract Cheating, as well as collaboration with CSU on a dedicated AIM webpage and campaign. Whilst noting that we can only provide data for website visitors who have consented, the Student Hub webpages have received over 2,100 views from 1,908 unique users, and CSU's have received 2803 views from 2142 users.

2.2 Student Experience 2 (SE2): course content and delivery inspire students to engage in and commit to their learning and stretch students to develop knowledge and skills

Our course content and delivery are designed to inspire all our students so that they engage fully in their curriculum and wider aspects of learning. City programmes stretch students to develop knowledge and skills, based on two foundations: career focus and inclusivity.

Career focus

City's focus on business, practice and the professions is reflected in the programmes we deliver. We work with 71 PSRBs across a range of disciplines and out of a total of 92 undergraduate programmes, 63% are professionally accredited. Whilst the nature of the accreditation varies by regulator, all involve an approval process or visit and ongoing monitoring and are, therefore, crucial to ensuring the quality of our programmes, professional currency, and that our graduates meet the needs of their professions. City's relationship with PSRBs is defined in our PSRB Policy, our governing Council and Senate are updated annually on our relationships with PSRBs, and all new approval/renewal processes are monitored by Schools and central services to ensure that our programmes remain compliant. A priority of the 2021 Education and Student Strategy was 'student opportunity' with an aim to 'inspire students to enjoy their time at City and to join in opportunities that help them to meet people, explore new perspectives and develop their career goals and employability'. Thus, we inspire our students by designing programmes that prepare them for their chosen profession from the very start of their courses.

More than half of our undergraduate students come from the bottom 40% of areas for deprivation when measured by IMD, and the large majority commute, sometimes long distances. These factors, among others, can present additional barriers to dedicating time outside study to activities which develop employability. City created our first institutional employability strategy in 2019, the Career Activation Programme (CAP). This ambitious strategy was based upon the seminal 2017 DfE publication *Planning for success: Graduates' career planning and its effect on graduate outcomes,* which found that having both (i) 'career focus' by the point of graduation, and (ii) professional experience has a positive impact on long-term graduate employment outcomes. City's CAP made these two aspects of employability development core parts of the student journey for all undergraduates. These two commitments have been realised by transforming the core, credit bearing curriculum of all undergraduate programmes. Thanks to a City investment of £695,000 the CAP has now been fully implemented.

The first part of the CAP is to ensure the inclusion of 'career focus' modules (or elements of modules) which are bespoke to individual programmes. Each module is core and credit-bearing and focuses on equipping all students with (i) an understanding of the career options relevant to their subject, (ii) support with decision making and (iii) knowledge of how to present themselves effectively during competitive recruitment processes. There has been a gradual roll-out over 2019/22 across undergraduates (55% for 2019/20 entrants, 60% for 2020/21 entrants, and 81% in 2021/22): 100% of UG students starting in 2022/23 will have 'career focus' as a core credit bearing element of their programme. Pre- and post-module learning gain surveys from 2021/22 show that the majority of students are more aware of their career options (average 57% before the module

and 82% after) and how their skills and values relate to these options (average 59% before the module and 85% after) after the modules.

Secondly, we are committed to ensuring that all undergraduates complete professional experience during their studies, in a format and at a time which suits them. We have created an innovative range of 15-credit professional experience modules which reflect diverse career paths. Roll-out began in 2019 and has now been completed; 100% of undergraduate students starting in 2022/23 have professional experience as a core, credit bearing element of their programme. The modules come in three types; micro-placements are described here, with industry consultation and social action projects described in SE3.

On the Micro-Placement Programme (MPP) students complete a 140-hour project-based placement in the summer. Projects are sourced to enable the student to have ownership of a tangible piece of work they can deliver within the time period, that meets a genuine need for the employer and utilises graduate level skills. All stages of the process are handled by City including the sourcing and vetting of all placement opportunities. MicroPlacements became a credit-bearing module in 2020/21 and have grown in scale over the time of the TEF submission (discounting pandemic disruption in summer 2020). The number of students completing a placement has risen 93% (from 138 to 266) over four years. The total number of students impacted by MicroPlacements is larger than the number who go on to complete the placement (total of 821 in 2021/22) due to a larger number of students having access to pre-placement activities designed to improve placement readiness. In 2021/22, 75% students came from BAME backgrounds, 44% from Widening Participation and 30% from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Our evaluation of the MPP programme is positive, with our 2021/22 survey (completed by 65% of the 266 placement students), for example, showing that at least 25 students returned to their employer for further work experience or a graduate job. 92% strongly agreed or agreed that the MPP had helped them with career exploration, and 94% strongly agreed or agreed that they were more familiar with a real-life work environment and processes with comments such as, 'I really don't think I'd be where I am today if I hadn't done it. For me, completing the MicroPlacement meant I had a job lined up after university and the experience I gained from this job allowed me to stand out and secure my current role with KPMG'. The distinctiveness and impact of MicroPlacements has been recognised by a member of staff winning the 2022 AGCAS Outstanding Newcomer Award for Excellence for her work on the programme. We have also been finalists for eight awards for the excellence of MicroPlacements, from the ISE Development Awards in 2018 to the NUE Best Placement Service in 2022.

Inclusivity

We have developed a set of Learning, Teaching and Assessment principles to drive a consistent approach to effective and coherent programme delivery. During the pandemic, a key priority was to develop the highest-level quality and accessibility of online provision and, as we moved out of the pandemic, develop our blended learning and teaching experience to benefit our predominantly commuter student body. This work was developed in the context of our diverse and unique student profile, to support students who were often disproportionally impacted by the effects of the pandemic and lockdowns. As part of the 'student opportunity' priority of the Education and Student Strategy, we aim to 'Celebrate City's diversity and promote an inclusive, dynamic and sociable community'. From 2019 to 2020, the Student Attainment Working Group developed the Inclusive Curriculum Development Framework (ICDF) in partnership with LEaD. The framework has been disseminated across Schools and adapted for local context, and an Inclusive Practice Checklist

was developed to support the reduction of attainment gaps when reviewing and planning learning and teaching. The ICDF was developed alongside departmental and School-wide decolonising the curriculum groups. A next step is to embed this framework by ensuring staff complete EDI-related training to ensure consideration of cultural perspectives and culturally appropriate teaching practices. It will also be included in our updated Programme Approval and Amendment Process (from 2023), which asks how programmes have embedded the principles of an inclusive curriculum into programme design.

Work to decolonise the curriculum was intensified following the murder of George Floyd and the BLM movements. In 2020/21, this work was developed within Schools, most notably in Bayes when it changed its name. The Department of English, newly established early in this TEF period, founded its entire 'postcolonial spiral' curriculum on embedded decolonised principles. This approach, together with its 'English in the World' focus on internationalisation and employability, has been very successful in terms of both student satisfaction and outcomes. The inaugural and recent NSS scores are 100% for Q1 in 2019 and 2022, and 91.7% and 92% for Q3 in the same years. English was fourth nationally in 2022 with an overall satisfaction score of 95.8%.

The Department of Journalism has appointed new diversity leads who work closely with the Learning and Teaching Director to ensure decolonisation of the curriculum. Guest speakers for modules are chosen to reflect students' diversity and in academic year 2021/22 a core 3rd year ethics module was introduced to explore issues around diversity in journalism. As well as Journalism's City Values session that is part of the Welcome Week offering, a workshop was introduced for 2nd and 3rd year students in their welcome back session that explored having difficult conversations and engaging with those with different views. In the 2021 Graduate Outcomes Survey, Journalism had 96.8% graduate level employment (or further study) for 2019-20, increasing from 93.9% in the previous year. In 2020, WP graduate level employment was 92.3% and BAME graduate level employment was 100%.

SHS introduced EDI inductions for all students from 2020, to ensure they feel included and aware of the support accessible to them. Additionally, a pilot was conducted in 2021/22 to meet the needs of speech and language therapy students of colour who identified a specific need to have a safe space to discuss their diverse needs and experiences in university and practice settings. 22 students took part in mentoring; 11 completed an evaluation which reported improvements in their confidence and owning their individuality. Students reported that they had a better understanding of their role as future speech and language therapists and felt better prepared for work. We aim to develop this programme for other students of colour across the School.

2.3 Student Experience 3 (SE3): research, innovation, professional practice and/or employer engagement to contribute to academic experience for students

We are a research-intensive university, as reflected through our successful REF 2021 submission, and our research excellence informs our curricula. Our academic experience is distinctive, however, in the extent to which it is also highly focused on business, practice and the professions, and tailored in a nuanced way to support our specific student demographic. City's extensive links with PSRBs provide valuable external expert input and quality assurance to 92 UG programmes at City. The formal curricular aspects of academic experience at City are also regularly supplemented by talks or visits from high profile experts from various professions - whether Rishi Sunak during his time as Chancellor or Tina Brown on royal journalism, to give just two recent examples - and regular professional visiting and guest lecturers who form an important part of our teaching provision and culture. This real-world expertise is at the heart of City's conception of the academic

experience. It ensures that all our students have access to networks and experiences equivalent to those experienced by those from more advantaged demographics, as well as to the latest developments outside academia.

The CAP commits to ensuring that all our students have employability education embedded in their programme (see SE2). A key component of this programme and of our wider offer is the social action and industry-led consultancy projects, which are employer directed. These modules involve work in teams to complete projects submitted by employer partners that address real-world concerns. In Bayes Business School, we run a final year module in Business Management where students work as consultants with employers on real-world business projects. Experienced business professionals work alongside the students as tutors. During the period of this submission, 400 students have worked with over 30 employers across diverse sectors. At a Teaching and Learning event in May 2022, we brought together an employer from a major law firm who had taken on a team of our students for the last eight years, and two of the students who had worked with this employer. The students highlighted the opportunities provided by this activity to build connections between theoretical concepts from elsewhere in the course and practical skills relevant to their future employment. The employer talked of being impressed by the insights that the students brought and also by the quality and professionalism of the student presentations. Engineering runs similar credit-bearing projects with Arup, Clancy and Evolve.

Our Sociology Social Action module enables community engaged learning through a core second year module. It is a collaboration between the Careers & Employability and Sociology departments. The module was piloted as an elective in 2020/21, before becoming a core module with 176 students in 2021/22. The module helps develop employability skills by bringing students together into groups to seek out an external community organisation to work with, typically through running events, raising awareness through social media and conducting research. Though it is too soon to assess the impact on graduate outcomes as the first cohort are now in their final year, this first year as a core module has been a huge success with a 95% completion rate and positive feedback from students and organisations. For example, the NSPCC described the student as 'a great communicator', adding that:

> 'her group has produced a very impressive professional fundraising initiative at my request. I have worked with other student groups but these students stood out, as a well organised, well executed group. They produced coherent, concise documents updating me regularly so I could follow their progress.'

We were awarded Silver at the UK Social Mobility Awards (SOMOs) 2022 for our 'sector-leading approach to community-engaged learning'. This collaboration evidences the drive to tackle employability across City, including in disciplines with historically weaker graduate outcomes, rather than acceding to them.

Practice-informed education is typical of a City education. In Law, to select just one example, 'Mediation Law' is a second-year LLB elective, led by a professor who has worked with the Treasury Solicitor's Office and as a practising barrister; it is designed to provide students with the skills needed to participate in real-world mediations. Students are provided with realistic sets of case papers that include sets of instructions and witness statements and are asked to apply the law to the facts, and come to conclusions. This is one of a range of Law modules which incorporate professional legal and other transferable skills as part of their core content. Those include but are not limited to 'Legal Skills' and 'Professional Ethics'.

Our [Professional Mentoring Programme](#) was created in 2008 and, to our knowledge, is the largest and longest running programme of its kind in UK HE. We continue to match 400 students a year with a professional in their sector of interest for 6 months of 1:1 mentoring. Impact measures consistently demonstrate the success of the scheme. The statistics below for mentees are averages from the 4 years of this submission (with 1,005 students surveyed and a 20% response rate):

- 91% said that they feel more employable after completing the programme.
- 80% say that they developed (professionally) very much during mentoring.
- 82% say that they developed (personally) very much during mentoring.

Resources, support and student engagement

2.4 Student Experience 4 (SE4): support for staff professional development and excellent academic practice embedded across the provider

Our Learning Enhancement and Development Directorate (LEaD) supports all academic teaching staff with curriculum design and development, assessment, quality enhancement, innovation and educational research, and also supports students with academic skills. There are 52 staff within the Directorate and these are comprised of an academic team including a PT Research Fellow, a digital education team, an academic skills tutor team and an English for Academic purposes (EAP) tutor and the support and development team. Many staff are involved in pedagogic research activity, which is then used to promote good practice through dissemination and staff development. Examples of recent projects are an evaluation of students' experiences of online learning in International Politics, an evaluation of hybrid teaching and an evaluation of students' assessment experiences over the last three years.

LEaD develops resources to support staff. These include a range of toolkits to cover areas such as assessment, curriculum internalisation, small group teaching, and supporting students. In consultation with staff and students, LEaD developed the Inclusive Practice Curriculum Framework to enable staff to embed inclusive pedagogic practice and tackle closing the degree-awarding gap through the provision of sector-informed best practice examples and easy-to-use resources, such as 'the inclusive practice checklist' (see SE2). The Learning and Teaching Hub is a central communications hub and repository of these toolkits, guidance, case studies and good practice accessible for all staff. This was created during the pandemic as a 'one stop shop' for staff that could be rapidly updated. In its first 6 months, the Hub had over 922 users and 4631 page views. The team arranges regular learning and teaching sessions in Schools, either as one-day events such as the Bayes Learning and Teaching exchange, or as bespoke departmental workshops such as those in SHS focused on assessment and feedback.

New staff at City undertake an 'Introduction to Higher Education' induction which provides an overview of support available plus contextual information on the institution and the UK HE sector more broadly. Terms of the one-year academic probation for new academics at City require acquisition of HEA Fellowship to meet descriptor 2 or 3 of the UKPSF (HEA 2011) through our CPD RISES (Recognising Individual Staff Education Success) programme. For those new to their academic career and teaching, enrolment on the MA Academic Practice programme to undertake the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice and gain HEA Fellowship alongside this is required. The number of staff taking the FHEA RISES programme annually has risen from 10 in 2018/19 to 51 in 2021/22. For the same period, the number of SFHEA qualifications annually has risen from 7 to 24. All Graduate Teaching Assistants who are new to their role are required to undertake the first module of the MA Academic Practice Programme, 'Learning, Teaching and

Assessment', which also provides Associate Fellowship of the HEA on completion. Promotion at City necessitates FHEA at least, with Senior FHEA compulsory for staff on the education-track for promotion at higher levels and strongly encouraged for staff on our education and research track. City has had an education-track promotion pathway to professor since 2014. Annual appraisal requires all staff to set education-focused goals, which are reviewed, and City operates an institutional Peer-Supported Review of Education Policy (see SE1).

2.5 Student Experience 5 (SE5): supportive learning environment and student access to a wide and readily available range of quality support tailored to their needs

We offer high-quality academic support tailored to the diverse needs of our students and during the pandemic invested heavily (£1.3 million in total) in student support, including welfare officers in each School, and investment in the mental health and wellbeing team, attendance and engagement as well as digital inclusion.

During the pandemic, we checked in with our students, through a 'Return to City' survey in June 2020 and check-in calls led by CSU (October 2020, January 2021, October 2021, and February 2022). The consistent challenges City's students faced throughout the pandemic included financial hardship – 25% of 2531 students called in October 2020 were worried about finances. Students at City very often work part-time throughout their degrees and with the pandemic-induced loss of part-time work more students already with low household incomes were pushed into further financial hardship. In response to an open text question 'What are you most concerned about returning to study?', over half of the 1755 respondents to the June 2020 Return to City survey identified access to suitable study space, digital hardware and software (often having to share laptops with family/not being able to afford one) and reliable Wi-Fi access to access online learning as concerns. City initiatives to address digital poverty and hardship during the pandemic (see 2.6) were informed directly by ongoing student feedback and engagement.

Student support plans are in place in Schools to proactively identify students who are struggling to engage and to offer tailored support. Both the Student Engagement and Attendance Monitoring (SEAM) project and our Learning Engagement and Analytics Project (LeAP) provide data which is used systematically to monitor students and refer the most vulnerable to the right support service (see SE7). The role of the personal tutor remains central at City to academic support in the context of supporting under-represented students to achieve their outcomes and has been reinforced through a refreshed policy and emphasis on compliance during the TEF period. The pandemic made clear the increased pressures on students, support staff and personal tutors. City thus introduced the role of student welfare officers in Schools to offer wraparound 'first stop shop' advice for students (offering immediate triaging to pastoral and academic support). The officers work in partnership with the academic staff and the University's mental health support providing co-ordinated 1-1 student support. In City Law School, to cite just one typical example, the Student Welfare Officer was contacted by 400 individual students in 2020/21, 24% of the Law undergraduate population. The rise in mental health problems during this time is well documented. In response, we significantly enhanced our health and wellbeing central staffing from 17.5 to 24.9FTE during the pandemic.

Student engagement has been a well-documented challenge nationally during and since the peak of the pandemic. Our commuter student body has requested more online access to content to support flexible engagement with learning, so we have enhanced our digital offer and support. In addition to some of the measures outlined in SE6, we created our Digital Accessibility Project to

ensure all students, including those with particular learning needs, could engage fully with online materials. This Project has had the following impact:

- Accessibility of our Moodle modules is checked termly using the Anthology Ally reporting tools and this has shown an improvement from an average of 57% in 2018 to 77% in 2022, following a series of awareness raising workshops and activities with both staff and students. Use of the Blackboard Ally tool enables immediate feedback to staff on how to rapidly resolve accessibility challenges.
- Improving our captioning facilities for multimedia-based teaching materials by enhancing the automatic captioning. Our caption correction service on request, following a pilot in 2020, corrected 414 multimedia items in 2021/22. Jisc DEI survey 2022 reported that 39% of City's 245 respondents use captions or transcripts in their learning. For recordings of all live teaching there is automated speech recognition captions and transcripts in place for Teams, Zoom and Echo 360 Lecture Capture.

During the pandemic we also worked to create a supportive learning environment online through the creation of our student digital community which has 353 members. This online channel is managed by our Student Digital Assistants with LEaD staff and enabled students to interact and support each other through the period of remote learning in a safe online place (allowing students to join social and information events, meet new people, get advice about digital skills from second- and third-year students, as well as ask questions and participate in webinars.) The Academic Skills team and the English for Academic Purposes tutor provide support for students to enable them to succeed in their studies and achieve their potential. This is provided through individual one to one support, workshops, webinars and various online resources.

2.6 Student experience 6 (SE6): Physical and virtual learning resources tailored to support teaching and learning

City's learning resources are an area of consistently high performance in the NSS and within our internal surveys. In the 2021/22 NSS, 78.7% of students agreed that IT resources had supported their learning, 82.7% agreed that library resources had supported their learning, and 81.9% agreed that equipment had supported their learning. With the exception of 2020/21 (when the pandemic severely restricted access to campus), these figures are high across the TEF period. We strive to make our physical and virtual learning environments fully accessible with study and social spaces to support a majority commuting undergraduate demographic and encourage time on campus. In total, over £90m has been invested in the estate over the TEF period; for example, we introduced 'Test Cells', essential equipment to allow cutting edge experimentation by Engineering students (£5.8M); we invested in improved teaching spaces with upgraded AV facilities across the School of Communication and Creativity (£2.5M); and we refurbished the collection space and Library Services offices (£1.25M). Our new £62m Law School Building, incorporating legal facilities and dedicated Law library, opened in 2021.

In October 2019, Library Services achieved Customer Service Excellence achieving 9 'compliance plus' elements, just one partial compliance and zero fails. We were reaccredited in autumn 2022. We were the first university library in London to reopen in July 2020. This was an institutional priority as we understood from our student check-in surveys that many lacked access to appropriate study space at home. We also provided access to all course readings via Reading Lists Online, in liaison with academic staff in Schools. This built on work from 2018/19 to ensure all students have uninterrupted access to core textbooks on core modules from Kortext. Textbook

usage averaged 96% across all modules in 2021/22 (Kortext usage data). In 2021/22, the library spent £3.8m on collections and content.

We run a number of student-led purchasing schemes: [More Books](#) and [Read for Research,](#) schemes that enable students to suggest titles to support their learning and research, contributing to the educational value of the library collections. Library Services offers additional support to students with accessibility needs including extended book loans, alternative formats and access to the Assistive Technology Rooms, with personalised support for the available technologies provided on a 1-2-1 basis. Students with a declared disability indicate satisfaction with learning resources above the benchmark. This indicator reflects work at City throughout the pandemic to make learning virtual and physical environments accessible and inclusive for all our students.

Accessibility and inclusivity are key considerations in our processes when purchasing any new library resources. Library Services have undertaken a number of EDI and wellbeing initiatives to enhance the student experience beyond core course readings. For example, [Liberating City Library](#) is a student-led purchasing scheme introduced to help improve the diversity of the library's collections. An extensive package (8000+ titles) of EDI e-books has been added to the collection, and access to fiction, leisure reading, and wellbeing titles is now enabled via a subscription to OverDrive.

In 2016/17 the University commenced the [Designing Active Learning Initiative](#) (DALI). This involved installing the latest technology to support teaching in 210 learning and meeting spaces. The project has included significant investment over the four years covered by this submission: £1,515,000 enabling 36 rooms to be enhanced in 2018/19; £2,311,242 enabling 48 rooms to be enhanced, with an extended timeframe through to 2020/21 due to practical and supply chain issues in 2019/20; and, £1,464,000 enabling 25 rooms to be enhanced in 2021/22.

In response to student demand the [Growing Access to Lecture Capture](#) (GALA) project has installed lecture capture across all of City's centrally timetabled spaces. Since 2019, this project has doubled the number of lecture capture enabled spaces from 57 to over 125. As part of the Inclusive Synchronous Learning Activities Project (ISLA) project, 41 hybrid learning spaces have been installed to accommodate teaching for on-campus and online students at the same time. In addition, 4 lecture theatres have been upgraded to include additional microphones to capture student participation and improve audio. Overall, this has enabled blended delivery through the pandemic and enabled lecture capture as standard. The School of Health Sciences were early adopters of lecture capture and most staff have been using this facility since 2018; this is reflected in above benchmark scores for learning resources in these subject areas. In 2021/22 to further support the use of lecture capture City's policy was changed to an opt out policy.

Through the pandemic, a digital literacy and inclusion programme was developed, including a [Digital Inclusion Fund](#) to support students experiencing digital poverty. 475 students benefited from access to the Digital Inclusion Fund in 2020/21. Alongside digital hardware and software these students received support from digital literacy coordinators. Students who took part in the scheme rated support received as positive: 70% of students had a positive experience of applying to the fund, 75% felt the fund enhanced their online learning, while 82% felt it improved their academic performance. The percentage of students saying this is a problem for them dropping from 29% in 2020/21 to 11% in 2021/22. This work has resulted in a laptop loan scheme, additional hardship support for digital literacy and the expansion of digital literacy support. We also rolled out LinkedIn Learning in June 2021 to support the development of digital and other employability skills. Since September 2021, 1,989 undergraduate engagements have been recorded with this service. Key

findings from the Jisc Digital Experience Insights student survey (245 respondents in December 2019, 504 in April 2021, 283 in April 2022) show City students are now no more likely to lack a suitable device to use than their peers at other UK HE institutions.

2.7 Student experience 7 (SE7): Engagement with students, leading to continuous improvement to the experiences and outcomes of students

Engagement with students can take various forms, ranging from student voice opportunities that all students will be aware of and pro-active institutional engagement with our most vulnerable students which is triggered by our systemic 'back room' monitoring processes. We pride ourselves on both, as well as on our close co-operation with our Students' Union and their engagement initiatives. Broadly speaking we find that students are more appreciative of having the right opportunities to feedback and of the availability of staff to listen to their concerns than they are of being clear about the action that has been taken in response to their feedback (eg. NSS scores 2019 for Q23 'right opportunities' 83.6% agree, Q24 'staff value students' opinions' 74.1%, Q25 'clear how feedback has been acted on' 64% agree). We are working hard on systematic communications in response to this and are confident that our engagement with students is effective in improving their outcomes.

Our Education and Student Strategy has made partnership with CSU a priority; this is reflected in CSU rising 8% points in the NSS between 2020 and 2021. Our partnership approach was already embedded when we worked closely with CSU in March 2020 to agree a package of learning, teaching and assessment mitigations to support students during the initial impact of the lockdown, and again on a revised set of assessment arrangements in 2021 (see SE1 on assessment).

In a sector-leading 'Student Check-In' calls programme, CSU has telephoned students to gather feedback directly and works with the University to act on this feedback. Since 2020, CSU has called 3,500+ new and returning students to check that they have everything they needed to start at City and understand their needs. Regular reporting informs institutional response to student feedback in real time. This results in positive impacts for student experience, for example: (i) Students wanted module leaders to better communicate the services of Academic Skills team to build student academic confidence. As a result, programmes integrated sessions into their teaching and all students were registered on a Moodle module with access to a range of resources including academic skills. (ii) We invested in a City Connects Fund to support activities in Schools to build student community to support belonging following overwhelming positive feedback from students about community-building activities at the start of 2021/22: over 67% of 2420 respondents to CSU check-in calls had engaged with events, 89% of 1018 who responded to the welcome survey agreed that they were made to feel part of the City community.

City introduced termly CSU Student Voice reports to Senate in 2019/20. These are expansive and detailed in both qualitative and quantitative feedback, providing School-specific views which academic staff can respond to immediately. Regular meetings occur at both School and University level to agree and monitor actions in response to the Voice reports. The combination of the check-in calls and the Student Voice reports has resulted in significantly raised levels of satisfaction. Feedback from check-in calls in November 2022 has been positive, with 94% (of 344 students) feeling part of City's Community and 89% stating that the course had met their expectations.

In 2019/20, CSU introduced the 'Issues and Wins' online form as an agile audit of activity and needs, targeted at programme representatives. The 'wins' shared by programme representatives provide substantive examples of the impact of their roles on programmes:

- Introduction of discussion forums to modules to support exam revision.
- Creation of 'student-only study sessions' to prepare for examinations.
- Support for students with general individual extensions for dissertation title submissions.
- Extended coursework deadlines for assignments where there was a reasoned case specific to student circumstances.

In 2019/20, 739 trained programme representatives were surveyed. 110 responded with the majority describing that they had a positive experience during the academic year and most felt able to create real change in their School while developing skills for the future; 85%, + 2% from 2018/19). In parallel, University-wide opportunities remained for students to have regular opportunities to feed back at a School level through Student Staff Liaison Committees, Student Experience Committees, local surveys and focus groups and online module evaluations (see SE1). In 2020/21, of the 136 programme representatives surveyed, 86% felt their feedback was influential in changing things.

Supporting attendance is one of the ways in which we help students to successfully engage with their studies and improve continuation. Over this four-year period, we have adapted and developed our approach to student engagement through both our SEAM project and LeAP projects (see 2.5). SEAM was piloted in 2018/19 and rolled out further in 2019/20, before being paused at the point of the pandemic. SEAM improved the recording and management of student attendance through using the latest available technology to enable staff to identify students absent from their lectures and to trigger an appropriate intervention, normally through their Personal Tutor. They proactively make contact to offer support.

Attendance and engagement monitoring implementation was adapted for our blended learning offer in 2021/22, with the acceleration of LeAP where in person attendance data was reviewed alongside VLE engagement data from our developing learning analytics platform. Reports for online engagement developed via Moodle from April 2020 were used in addition to other information to identify students who may need follow-up support. The reports showed improvement in student engagement between April and May 2020, and a high level of online assessment completion rates (88%) across all Schools during the summer assessment period in 2020. Support measures that were also put in place were tailored to specific cohort needs; for example, students on professional health care programmes attending clinical environments were provided with access to a dedicated phone line to report specific challenges faced together with priority access to City's counselling service. Analysis of online engagement data by cohort, School and demographic was used alongside analysis of other engagement data (eg. self-declaration forms, second sits, and missed assessments) to inform additional support from staff in our academic Schools for students returning in 2020/21 to ensure that we were offering support to students identified at risk of not continuing.

3. STUDENT OUTCOMES

TEF data demonstrates steady improvement in our continuation data – rising to being materially above benchmark in the latest year. Our completion data is in line with benchmark across all four years, having also risen significantly in Year 2. Progression has risen steadily and remained on benchmark throughout the TEF period.

As an institution whose mission has always been focused on social mobility and professional practice, our conception of educational gain is primarily focused on achieving and evidencing what the TEF guidance calls 'work readiness'. Our conception of work readiness, requires however, that

we prioritise the two other broad areas that the TEF guidance foregrounds as educational gain: academic development or 'value added' and personal development. We are highly conscious of, and directed towards, an outcomes-driven approach to educational gain as this is why many students choose to study at City.

Our success at achieving educational gain is monitored and evidenced using a range of measures and methodologies. This multi-dimensional approach is aligned with the conclusions of the 2019 OfS Learning Gain pilot. In 2016, City was one of 15 universities who contributed to the careers stream of this national pilot to investigate 'Careers Registration' as a measure of learning gain using HEFCE funding, led by The Careers Group, University of London. This work informed our developed sense of 'work readiness. At City, conceptualising, achieving and evidencing gains is purposeful and embedded, as well as aligned to EDI aims. City's APP and its measurement methodologies are embedded rather than marginal. Academic gain is evaluated through robust core assurance and monitoring systems (see SO6).

Positive outcomes

3.1 Student Outcomes 1 (SO1): Tailored approaches that are effective in supporting students to succeed in and progress beyond their studies

Our APP, supplemented by targeted work driven by our Attainment Working Group and the Network for Racial Justice, monitors the success of students from socially under-represented groups in HE (City's majority). The City Cares programme provides support to students from specific groups who are known to experience particular barriers to entering and succeeding in Higher Education (see SO2). During the pandemic, we worked closely with CSU to provide an assessment mitigation package which was fair to all students during the pandemic, taking into account digital challenges (see SE6, SE7 and SO6). As in many HEIs, these had positive results for our attainment gap (see below) and many are to be retained as a result of careful analysis. City analyses data at School, department, and programme levels to identify trends and target action to tackle attainment gaps, without contravening our high academic standards. Several variables have contributed to narrowing these gaps, including online and open-book assessments, and a modified personal circumstances process which has impacted the overall reduction in the attainment gap. Alongside this, there has been ongoing work driven by the APP and Student Attainment Project for our Schools to develop action plans to tackle the attainment gap and embed the inclusive curriculum framework.

As a result, City wide, there has been a reduction in the attainment gap between White and BAME students, and between UK UG students living in areas with the highest and lowest levels of relative deprivation (as measured by IMD). The BAME awarding gap decreased from 12.1% in 18/19 to 4% in 2020/21, see table below. The gap between students from IMD Q1 and IMD Q5 has reduced from 6.7% to 0.6%.

City Univeristy of London
UG student 1st/2:1 attainment 2016 to 2021
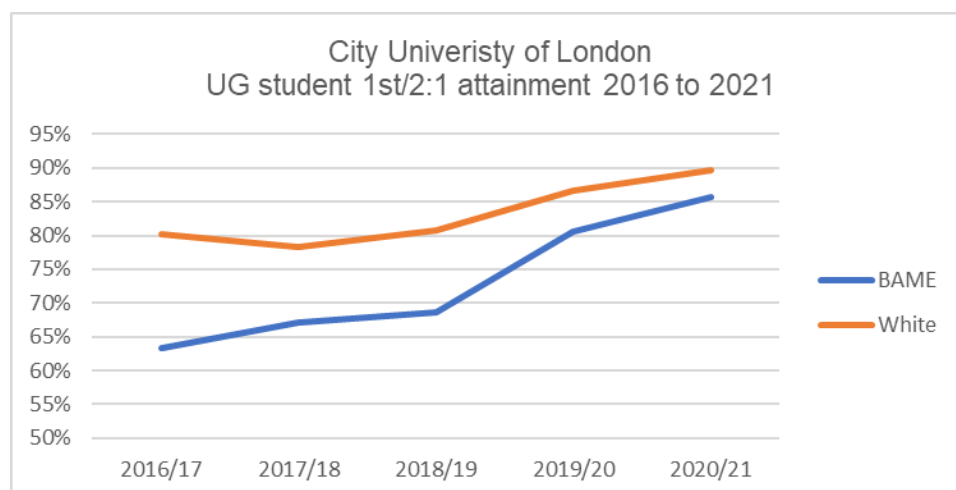
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
BAME (blue line)	63.4%	67.2%	68.6%	80.6%	85.6%
White (orange line)	80.2%	78.3%	80.7%	86.6%	89.6%

Many sections of this submission detail our work on increasing graduate careers outcomes, as we work to further our institutional mission. In addition to our work with students during their time at City, we work with our students beyond their studies, providing proactive support for unemployed/underemployed graduates. Our provision is strongly based on data; initially collected via online processes at graduation and subsequently via a telephone survey at 6 months after graduation. Graduates identified as benefiting from support (based on current employment status, course of study and other characteristics) are proactively encouraged to engage with 1:1 coaching. This calling campaign has been successful in engaging those who most need support; for example, in 2021/22 31% of the graduates contacted in this way booked a career coaching appointment as a direct result of this contact. Overall, graduate engagement with this service is strong, with 1,398 graduates engaging with careers appointments and an average of 2 appointments per graduate. Asking graduates to select a statement which best summarises their stage of career thinking at every interaction with the Graduate Coach indicates that 100% of graduates moved on in their career readiness as a result of the coaching provided, eg. from 'I know what I want to do but I lack confidence when applying/interviewing' to 'I've successfully achieved my goal'. The rationale of using the 6-month telephone survey to prioritise students in most need of support has been borne out by there being a correlation between data reported in the 6-month telephone survey and subsequent Graduate Outcomes showing that the percentage of students who were unemployed at 6 months and still unemployed at 15 months improved from 2017/18 (48.5%) to 2018/19 (43.3%).

3.2 Student Outcomes 2 (SO2): continuation and completion rates for students and courses

Our strategic focus on EDI, which includes our access agreement and Access and Participation plan for UK students, has informed additional specific work to support disadvantaged student groups, through the development of discrete, bespoke activities to ensure successful progression throughout the student lifecycle.

The City Cares programme, designed to support students with specific challenges, has expanded over the last three academic years and now includes care-experienced students as well as care leavers, young, estranged students, young adult carers and Sanctuary scholars (asylum seekers

and refugees). In 2019/20, 71 undergraduate students were enrolled on the City Cares programme and of these, 96.75% either progressed into the next year of their studies or graduated.

CityBuddies, a scheme where more experienced students mentor new students, expanded in 2019/20 with our highest number of matched mentees yet. We recruited and trained 325 mentors and were able to match them to 1017 new UG students to support continuation. Based on internal progression data (full-time, first-degree students' outcomes based on a student's activity at the end of the HESA reporting year in their first year of study), 97% of WP students progressed from Y1 to Y2 in 2019/20 compared to 92% in 2018/19. The move to online study in March 2020 meant that recruitment for mentors had to adapt. Through improved weekly reporting in the recruitment phase, we worked closely with Schools to minimise impact on mentor recruitment and were able to recruit 355 mentors in this period.

Ahead of 2018/19, changes were made to the City Education Grant (CEG) to improve student outcomes and experience. Using the OfS 1 framework and statistical model of evaluation, we evaluated the impact of changes to support for cohorts in 2018/19 and 2019/20. Students under the old system of financial support had significantly lower continuation rates compared to their counterparts. Students who received financial support in 2019/20 under the new system were 5.6% more likely to continue into their second year. 72% of 103 respondents said that receiving financial support was 'very important' to being able to continue financially at university. 58% strongly agreed that receiving financial support helped them to engage in multiple factors supporting positive student experience and wellbeing – eg. participating with other students and feeling less anxious. Improvements to the information provided to students applying for financial report have been embedded as a result of this research and all students have access to online budgeting and financial advice.

In April 2020, working with CSU, we concluded a research project to better understand the experience of our commuter students. Following this, in 2021 we introduced the 'Key to City campaign'. This campaign provided a 'how to be a student guide' to all students with specific targeted information on commuting and life at City. The open rates for emails were an average of 83% and 80% of students said they had all the information they needed to be confident to start at City. As well as benefitting commuters, the campaign won an award from Think Student in the category of Best Campaign Promoting International Study. We invested in part-time opportunities for students to work at City so they can better balance working commitments alongside their studies and we embedded employability in the curriculum. We reviewed support for students to ensure that it works for all our students by embedding flexible offering of online and in person support and considering academic office hours at times that work for our students. During the pandemic we provided additional funding and study space support for our commuter students not living in accommodation with other students by providing additional hardship support. This raft of measures has reduced risks to continuation and completion. This raft of measures has reduced risks to continuation and completion.

Since the pandemic, our dashboards indicate that continuation rates for UK UG students who started their studies in 2019/20 and returned, re-registered and were active at City in their second year in November 2020/21 have increased by 11.8% (from 86% to 97.8%). This increase was reflected across all under-represented groups. While the overall increase in continuation can be partly linked to interventions designed to mitigate the impact of the pandemic (safety net, 2019-30; mitigation package, 2020/21), we have maintained our focus on improving continuation rates for all students.

3.3 Student Outcomes 3 (SO3): progression rates for students and courses

City's overall progression to professional employment is institutionally strong. This is not inevitable, given our student demographic, but as it is core to our mission, it is a consistent strategic and operational focus. A 77.7% graduate employment rate in the last Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) evidences City's excellence in supporting students to go on to achieve career success as defined in the 'graduate voice' questions: highlights in the 2019/20 results included 100% of graduates from our Optometry and Radiography programmes, 95% from Speech and Language Therapy and 91% from Actuarial Science and Journalism, who were in positive destinations. Students across year groups overwhelmingly believe that we support them to realise their ambitions: in the 2019/20 GOS, 80% of graduates reported that they 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that their current activity fit with their future plans and 81% of graduates reported that they feel their activities are meaningful.

As an internationally focused university (27% of our UG students were non-UK domiciled, 2020/21), we are equally committed to supporting international students to achieve career success. The unreported Graduate Outcomes performance for this cohort also demonstrates our excellence in this area. The 2019/20 data quoted here is typical of City international graduate outcomes: 85% of non-UK graduate respondents were in graduate level work or further study, including 88% in business subjects where international students make up the majority of the cohort.

Graduate earnings data also evidences City's success in equipping our students for longer term positive outcomes. In the Longitudinal Educational Outcomes (LEO) analysis, 90% of City's 2016/17 graduates were in sustained employment and/or further study 1 year after graduation, compared to the national rate of 89% and the London rate of 85%. Five years after graduation, City graduates were earning a median salary of £30,700, compared to an average of £27,600 for both national and London universities.

In 2022, Bayes Business School came top in the UK in an [Adzuna](#) survey of graduate earnings, their graduates registering average salaries of £52,167 five years after graduation. This conclusion was reached following analysis of over 120,000 jobseeker CVs uploaded to Adzuna's website between 2019 and 2022. Adzuna used text mining technology to look at the career pathways taken by recent graduates.

However, we recognise the importance of understanding and addressing where our performance is lower, especially across particular programme areas and across our diverse cohorts where barriers to entry exist. For example, we are proud to have one of the most diverse LLB cohorts in the UK, with over 80% of students from BAME backgrounds and 60% from IMD 1 and 2 areas. As well as being the 10th largest undergraduate Law cohort in the country, we are second in the UK in terms of lower socio-economic backgrounds, 10th in the UK for our proportion of BAME students studying Law at undergraduate level. To equip our students to buck EDI trends in the legal profession, during the TEF period, we have embedded employability modules and skills throughout our UG degrees, as well as co-curricular initiatives like the Employability ay at the Inner Temple for years 1 and 3.

In addition to the initiatives outlined elsewhere in this submission, the strategic curriculum initiatives outlined in SE2 and SE3 are also reinforced through a personalised approach to students' employability development by engaging in high quality, impactful extra-curricular employability support at the time and in the mode which best suits them. This includes investments in our digital provision in order to personalise our service to all students, including the most vulnerable, in support of strong employment outcomes:

- CV software: In 2020, we invested £80,000 over the following 3-year period to procure CV software VMock to enable a greater proportion of our students to benefit from feedback on their CV and free up valuable time in appointments with careers guidance staff for more impactful discussions. Since its implementation in 2021/22, 2,492 students have benefitted from the software and 87% of those who revised their CV based on feedback saw an improvement in their CV score.
- Personalised newsletters: Software investment implemented in 2020 has enabled personalised Careers and Employability email content. This has resulted in improved student engagement rates with email communications; open rates have improved by 60% and click rates have quadrupled.
- During the TEF period, we delivered 15,740 1:1 careers advice and guidance appointments. Student feedback indicates that 91% of students who come to appointments not feeling knowledgeable or confident leave having improved their understanding and confidence with the topics discussed.
- The Careers and Employability department includes the paid temporary employment service Unitemps, a dedicated service for students to work in paid temporary employment on campus and with partner local employers. In the period 2018/22, 10,373 students worked through Unitemps in more than 15,600 individual jobs, earning a total of £2,645,710. During the TEF period, which included the Covid19 pandemic, we saw a growth in students employed through Unitemps by 30% and a City investment of £750,000 in this service. The excellence of our provision was recognised by being awarded Unitemps Branch of the Year in 2019.

Despite the pandemic challenges of the TEF period, City Ventures (the student entrepreneurship team) continued to deliver a rich, varied programme of student entrepreneurship education and support services to undergraduate, postgraduate and alumni entrepreneurs across the business start-up life cycle, with City remaining in the top 10 universities for external investment received for graduate start-ups (HESA).

Participation in City's distinctive GradVantage scheme is ringfenced for final-year UK students from disadvantaged backgrounds without future career plans or professional experience, studying on undergraduate courses with historically lower levels of graduates successfully able to transition into professional work or study. At its heart, GradVantage consists of careers and employability workshops (now called GradVantage Academy), and the opportunity to apply to paid graduate-level internships within City and with external employers. Participants also have access to 1:1 career coaching from a designated team of Careers Consultants and the opportunity to review their CV (in 2020/21, participants who used the VMock AI system to review their CVs showed an average score improvement of 15% when submitting it for a second time). Other elements of the programme in various years have included speed recruitment events and practice assessment centres where participants receive individualised feedback.

All GradVantage students have at least one demographic characteristic under-represented in the professional graduate labour market (a care-leaver; a disability; first generation in their family to attend University; lower socio-economic background (NS-SEC 4 – 7); mature (over 21 on entry); 1st Quintile of POLAR 3 or from a low-income background; or from a BAME background). Santander funding has been partly utilised for external internship payments (matched by the employer) which exceeded the Santander goal of at least 80% of students receiving internships from a widening participation background by the end of 2020. Approximately £80,000 of APP funding was awarded to the initiative during 2020/21 and 2021/22, which funded a total of 24 paid

graduate-level four- or five-week internships within City across the two years, as well as enabling up to 200 recent graduates to take part in practice assessment centres delivered by Gradcore.

Through the 2018/19 programme, 75 WP and/or BAME students attended work readiness workshops entitled 'Selling Yourself', 'The Hidden Graduate Job Market' and 'Overcoming Graduate Job Hiring Challenges'. 82 students received 1:1 career coaching. 33 students went on to attend a speed recruitment event to be interviewed by employers offering paid graduate internships. 10 students subsequently obtained paid graduate employment with these employers. These internships ranged from 1 to 12 months, the average duration was just under 4 months.

In 2019/20, when delivery was impacted by the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the GradVantage Academy had to be pivoted very quickly to an online model, 84% still found this part of the programme 'very engaging' or 'somewhat engaging'. Students were assigned a Careers Consultant to support them and most (89%) felt very or moderately supported by them. Nine graduates were placed in 8-week graduate-level paid internships with a variety of SMEs during summer 2020, which was particularly valuable at a time when other work experience and graduate job opportunities were severely limited due to the pandemic. Additionally, 45 recent graduates went through the application and interview process for the internships and received extensive feedback, which was valuable to them when applying for further graduate roles. Overall, there was a 154% increase in the number of GradVantage participants in the 'Succeed' stage of career readiness (ie. ready to apply for graduate-level work and further study) at the end of the programme compared to the beginning.

In 2020/21 and 2021/22, 95% of participants found the topics covered in the GradVantage Academy (careers education) useful. 94% felt more confident about assessment centres afterwards. 100% of the students who did an internship said they 'really enjoyed' it, and that the recruitment process was 'excellent' or 'good'. In 2020/21, 14 participants were placed in internships. In total, they worked for 64.5 weeks, earning £27,451.20.

77.8% of students who took part in GradVantage in 2020/21 were in professional level work or study when followed up approximately six months after graduation. This is 2.9% higher than the general population surveyed at the same point.

Educational gains

3.4 Student Outcomes 4 (SO4): provider articulates the range of educational gains it intends its students to achieve, and why these are relevant to its students and their future ambitions

Our founding institutional mission to provide for 'the industrial skill, general knowledge, health and wellbeing of young men and women belonging to the poorer classes' succinctly encapsulates the three kinds of educational gain suggested by the OfS and its learning gain project as major areas of gain: work readiness; personal development; and academic gain. The intention to deliver on these is consistently articulated in our various strategies, policies, student- and public-facing documents. Our current APP, for example, states our aim 'for all students to achieve positive outcomes at City no matter their background, ethnicity, disabilities, age, personal or family circumstances'. Our Education and Student Strategy pledges: 'At City, we work closely with our students to ensure they thrive and are successful academically, personally and professionally'.

Our primary focus is on ensuring that our students have the best chance possible of gaining employment which betters their life chances, with the best possible degree outcomes and personal development serving that objective. We aim to support and engineer better opportunities for our graduates than trends for their socio-economic grouping might have predicted, and, by implication,

to improve society through promoting opportunity for all who have ability, regardless of background. As this submission has documented repeatedly (see SE2, SE3, SO1-3), enabling our diverse community of students to develop the professional relationships and experience required to explore and access competitive and prestigious professions is a critical element of a wide-ranging suite of support tailored to support them achieve their ambitions.

External evidence, including from the 2019/20 Graduate Outcomes survey, indicates the presence of systemic barriers in the labour market faced by graduates from the disadvantaged backgrounds which are prevalent in our undergraduate population. EDI is therefore necessarily integral to our educational gain philosophy, as it has been since our Victorian founders prioritised the wellbeing of 'the poorer classes'.

3.5 Student Outcomes 5 (SO5): provider's approach to supporting students to achieve those gains are evidence-based, effective and tailored to students and their starting points

Our effectiveness as an enabler of the social mobility of our students is evidenced throughout this submission and by the TEF student outcome dashboards, which demonstrate a relatively consistent level of success for all groups of students. Here we include further evidence that this success is evidence-based, tailored and mapped to student starting points:

- *Closing the graduate prospects gap for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds.* Our gap in progression to highly skilled employment or further study for between students from IMD 1 and IMD 5 areas has improved from 13.1 percentage points for 2017/18 graduates to 4.9pp in 2018/19 and 4.7pp in 2019/20 (UK UG data excluding unknown IMD and unclassified outcomes).
- *High performance in social mobility rankings.* The Sutton Trust's Universities and Social Mobility: Summary Report (2021) examined how many young people who grow up economically disadvantaged move into high income groups when they reach adulthood, and which university pathway they have taken. City was ranked third in the UK with 5.3% of our graduates going into high-income groups. This strong performance was based on high scores in both how many students we admit from lower socio-economic backgrounds (15%) and the proportion of this population that are successful in becoming high earners (35%). Utilising the HEPI English Social Mobility Index methodology of Graduate Outcomes analysis, City consistently demonstrates success in having a positive influence on the life chances of our most economically disadvantaged students with rankings of 7th in 2021 and 9th in 2022.
- *Social Mobility Award success.* City saw success in the UpReach Student Social Mobility Awards 2022 where the University's GradVantage programme was a finalist for 'University Progression Initiative of the Year'. At the same awards ceremony, our ability to enable our students to thrive was recognised by the inclusion of City Law School's student in the 'UpReach Ten' which celebrates ten students from across the UK who have achieved outstanding success academically, professionally or personally. On receiving her award, the student said: 'Just being nominated is an honour… there are a lot of mentors, lecturers, peers, and employers who can see the potential in me to succeed, I just needed to see that for myself. I have so much to offer as a graduate, and I have the ability to achieve whatever I want in life if I just put my mind and heart to it'*.

A key enabler for students from disadvantaged backgrounds to develop confidence is becoming comfortable and familiar with corporate office environments. One of many schemes tailored to students' starting points is the Industry Insights Programme, which enables students to attend an

immersive day or half day at an employer's office. Their time can be spent on panels, workshops, networking, and/or an office tour. In 2018/19, 56 students attended 7 such events which resumed post-pandemic with 66 students attending 3 events in 2021/22. Furthermore, the impact of this initiative extends beyond the students who attend the events as 295 students have benefited from experiencing the competitive application process during the period of this submission.

To ensure that events are relevant to all students, we insist all employers include information on their Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategies as part of the day. A brief summary of respondent statistics below relate to our Industry Insight event in 2021/22 with Lloyds Banking Group that was specifically targeted at BAME students (29 student attendees):

- 91% felt either very confident or confident in applying for graduate roles.
- 100% felt very confident or confident that Lloyds were committed to improving EDI.
- 100% felt that Lloyds had a fully inclusive working environment.
- 100% felt that the session gave them the confidence to network with professionals.
- 100% of respondents felt more empowered to apply for a role within Lloyds.
- 100% of respondents felt they were able to reflect on the skills necessary for the role
- 100% of respondents would recommend an insight day to other students.

3.6 Student Outcomes 6 (SO6): provider evaluates the gains made by its students, and demonstrates its students are succeeding in achieving its intended gains

Our ability to support our students' educational gains is underpinned by the systematic use of a range of internal methods for collating and analysing evidence.

Our use of Graduate Outcomes data in the evaluation of employability educational gains, for example, is multi-layered, co-ordinated and evidence based:

- We analyse our institutional performance to understand our progress in supporting all students to achieve success post-graduation.
- We breakdown our data at course level to target bespoke interventions towards cohorts at highest need of additional support (eg. GradVantage, see SO3).
- We analyse our outcomes by student characteristics to understand the varied experience of our diverse student communities in the professional labour market to target bespoke interventions towards individual students at highest need of additional support (eg. GradVantage).
- We use Graduate Outcomes data in the design of our Career Activation modules to ensure our pedagogy is optimal in its relevance for the cohort, eg. industry speakers reflect the sectors our students will enter.

Careers and Employability are proactive in supporting colleagues across the institution to engage and utilise Graduate Outcomes data by making the data accessible on an institution wide internal SharePoint site.

Our APP is crucial to ensuring the evaluation of educational gains. It is informed by a detailed provider analysis of 5-years of data, that identified inequalities in outcomes across the student lifecycle including gaps between continuation and progression between BAME and White students and those from the least and most deprived area. The APP set a 5-year target with yearly milestones and an investment plan of a proportion (20% of higher fee income around £3.3 million) of higher fees income directed to resources and delivery to reduce these gaps. Our progress against these targets is monitored annually and we have seen gains across all stages in the current APP cycle.

City has developed an evaluation framework, based upon the work of NERUPI and we are working to embed evaluation across all activities that support City's APP Theory of Change. For example, in 2020/21 City undertook a detailed evaluation of City Cares programme using the framework to identify what works and to make short- and longer-term recommendations that have been included in the ongoing development of this service for our most vulnerable students.

Academically, we closely monitor the progress of our students through Assessment Boards, which, in addition to the standard confirmation of results, note any students who interrupted their studies or withdrew during the year and approve extenuating circumstances claims; academic and welfare staff then make referrals to the pastoral and academic support systems (see SE5). Assessment Boards also receive modular level statistical analysis (mean, mode, standard deviation) which compares module results across defined academic years. Any unexplained fluctuations or concerns are flagged and added to the Board's Risk Register. The work of Assessment Boards is supported by Module Panels and Preliminary Assessment Panels to ensure that any progression issues are picked up as soon as possible.

Additionally, our Annual Programme Evaluation (APE) process assists in tracking student progression and achievement. APEs are designed to act as the single action plan for programme planning and development. It provides a mechanism for staff to review a programme's success at the end of each academic year and to capture actions designed to enhance that programme. Schools are asked to quantify and comment on the number of students progressing between programme stages and the degree classifications students have achieved upon completion. In 2022/23, Schools have additionally been asked to comment on the relevant OfS B3 data for their subject area. All APEs are reviewed by the Schools' Board of Studies and a summary report is drafted for review by City's Senate. Finally, every 4-5 years, all programmes are subject to a Periodic Programme Review, which considers employability, student progression and completion, and the student experience.

Conclusion

City is proud of our record of enabling students to fulfil or exceed their assumed potential with us. We welcome a diverse student cohort annually and offer a wide range of academic, support and career initiatives that enable us to raise success levels for all students, irrespective of background and prior opportunities. Through working in partnership with our students, we have managed to sustain this through the very challenging circumstances of the pandemic, with strong measures of educational gain, whether measured by academic achievement or employment outcomes.

Our strategic work to address inequalities in outcomes throughout our students' journeys shows significant benefit, in particular improved continuation and graduate outcomes. Where we have demonstrated positive impact, we have shown a clear understanding of the diversity of our student community and tailored our teaching and learning, assessment, support and career initiatives to support a positive experience in an inner London context with positive outcomes. We believe that we have delivered on the pledge of our founding mission, in the most challenging of periods, to promote 'the industrial skill, general knowledge, health and wellbeing of young men and women belonging to the poorer classes.'

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