

## TEF provider submission 2023

### Provider context

*“The University of Greenwich truly delivers Education without Boundaries. It provides an outstanding offer to a diverse student community, changing their lives forever, and impacting the world around them.”* (Lord Paul Boateng, Chancellor, University of Greenwich)

#### Education without Boundaries

At the University of Greenwich (UoG) our students have an **outstanding, relevant, and authentic educational experience** that gives them the best possible start to their future journey. Education without Boundaries is the practical application of the UoG values of inclusivity, collaboration and impact, as set out in our 2030 Strategy, *This is Our Time*. We build upon our students’ lived experience and prior education, we remove barriers to their ongoing university journey, and we support them to fulfil their potential. Our students are at the centre of our decision-making, enabling us to provide a truly exceptional educational journey that challenges, supports, and prepares them for future life and work with a strong ethical and sustainable foundation.

Our strength is in **knowing our students** and understanding their specific circumstances and needs. This knowledge informs our whole approach, ensuring we provide the teaching, environment, resources and support they need to develop their unique life experiences into attributes that will open doors to opportunities. Whether they are first in family to go to university, dream of being a business owner, or want to develop their passion for a subject through to a PHD, we give our students the best chance to fulfil their ambitions.

Our exceptional educational provision combines high-quality teaching, practical skills, and meaningful work experience. Together with a curricula that is work-based, values-led, and practice and research-informed, **we ensure our students are ready for whatever comes next**. The range of professionally focused courses in our four faculties of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Education, Health and Human Sciences; Engineering and Science; and the Greenwich Business School (GBS), are a draw for many of our students who see the direct links to employability and a secure future. Subjects such as architecture, law, performing arts, teacher-training, nursing, paramedic science, agriculture, forensic science, pharmacy, engineering, and business and management are popular choices for those seeking a clear pathway to a job and value for money. For other students, we offer the opportunity to develop their passion for a subject whilst retaining an employability focus. We do this by supporting students to recognise the skills they develop and their applicability to a wide range of careers. For example, our Humanities graduates have gone on to work in publishing, copywriting, corporate operations in urban planning, social media communications, events management, youth work, teaching, librarianship, museums, heritage, HE admin and many other industries.

Our dynamic physical and digital campus services foster a real sense of community, breaking down boundaries between academic disciplines and people’s physical locations. We bring staff, students and partners together to engage with local, regional, national and global agendas to be part of the change we all want to see.

The UoG educational experience is **a transformational experience** – for all of our students.

#### Being inclusive

Our **diverse student population** face a range of material challenges, with many coming from deprived backgrounds (44% from IMD quintiles 1 and 2<sup>1</sup>) and facing financial hardship that requires them to work to support their studies. Recent Greenwich Students’ Union (GSU) research shows that 39% of our students work over 20 hours a week and 19% work more than 40 hours.<sup>2</sup> A

substantial number of our students are local or commuting, with 70% of our applications coming from within a 30-minute drive of the university<sup>3</sup> and 77% of students being UK domicile. We have a large BAME cohort (16% Black, 18% Asian, 5% Mixed and 3% Other, compared to 35% White students). Many of our students enter via non-traditional routes, with 23% having taken BTECs and 30% have an Access or Foundation course on arrival. 67% of our undergraduates are under 21, 22% are 21-30 on entry and 11% are older than this. We recognise that many of **our students share a story of common barriers to HE study**, including poverty, structural racism, the lack of natural belonging that comes from attending a 'campus university' and sometimes having been out of study for a long period.

We have strategically created **spaces that are welcoming and accessible** and allow us to utilise technology to support wider engagement and more inclusive approaches to teaching and learning to accommodate our huge variety of students. Our inclusive practice has been further enhanced by the development of our critically acclaimed **Inclusive Curriculum Enhancement Tool** and supported by our **Student Inclusivity Consultants**.

As a university, we understand that most people will experience challenges with their mental health and wellbeing at some point in their life. This can be a real barrier to engaging fully in their educational journey, which is why we are committed to creating a culture of openness and support for our whole community. We have been early adopters of a **whole university approach to mental health**, co-creating our first university-wide Health and Wellbeing strategy with students in 2019. This work has spanned the development of personal skills to manage wellbeing alongside services to directly support students in need. We are proud that wellbeing is now integrated into our curriculum, extra curricula activities and embedded within our support services, and further details of this work are in the submission.

#### Being collaborative

Our institutional approach is to embrace collaboration to help achieve success. We work in partnership across the board, with students, industry partners, professional bodies, alumni, and the local community. We are in constant dialogue with students and with the Students' Union. Our **strong relationship with GSU** has resulted in an amplification of the student voice at Greenwich. Our students and Sabbatical Officers are represented at every level of the University, have a place in all of our decision-making processes including staff recruitment, and are part of every celebration.

*"I have worked in five different Students' Union across London and the South-West and the relationship between the University and Students' Union here at Greenwich is one to be celebrated. There is a mutual trust and respect between the two organisations. The Senior Team care about the Sabbatical Officers, as people, but also as trusted representatives of the students. ( [redacted] CEO of GSU).*

We actively seek and listen to student feedback and respond to the many challenges they face every day. We co-create our curricula with students to ensure our provision is innovative and relevant, and that we are empowering students to be active participants in their own education. Through co-creation, our students can draw on their lived experience and knowledge to actively inform an inclusive educational offer and practice. This creates a strong student community that feels connected to the University, leading to connected Alumni who come back to teach and mentor others.

We also draw on our **extensive industry connections and partnerships** to further enhance our offer. Our partnership hub brings together a strategic network of organisations who are working with us in research and development, co-creation, accreditation, apprenticeships, and who provide direct

employment opportunities for the students. Our impressive network includes some of the UK's biggest companies, including Adecco, RSK Group, Alcotel Submarine Networks ASN), MoSys, Discovery Park (Kent) Visit Greenwich, London and Kent Chambers of Commerce, Charlton Athletic Football Club, Peabody, JP Morgan, Santander, DNEL/Coca Cola, Capital FM, and the Stephen Lawrence Foundation. Through our partnerships with professional bodies, our students graduate with accreditations that give access to graduate level employment, professional networks and resources the minute they start their careers.

The UoG is a key partner in our local communities, contributing directly to the economic growth and prosperity of Southeast London and the Medway region, through skills provision, employment, research, and innovation. There is a strong correlation between our academic provision and employment sectors in the Medway region. The **civic role** of the University acts as an exemplar for students in their role as members of their different communities and provides them with opportunities to make a difference through projects we run with partners, such as Charlton Athletic Community Trust in the Royal London Borough of Greenwich.

### Being impactful

We meticulously track our progress to ensure that we are delivering the impact that we promise. And we are proud of our achievements to date.

We have the **4<sup>th</sup> highest social mobility rate** of students in England, according to the Institute for Fiscal Studies<sup>18</sup>, demonstrating that we have more students coming from poorer backgrounds and more graduates in the top of income distribution. We are the **3rd Best UK University in 2022** according to StudentCrowd awards, based entirely on student opinion. The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide in 2022 ranked us as the **top modern London university and first in Kent for graduate prospects**. We are **8th in the People & Planet** University League for environmental and ethical performance. The success of our approach is further evidenced by the recent growth of our taught or registered students by 15% from 2018/19 to 2020/21, now standing at 15,710. In addition, we have 12,850 TNE undergraduate students, making a total of 28,560.

We want to do more and are laying the foundations to extend our impact even further. We have made a **substantial investment in staff**, creating 28 new executive senior roles across the University, with a new PVC Education and Associate Deans for Student Success in every faculty, leading and embedding our educational strategy. These roles were recruited to ensure an inclusive leadership team: 48% of the senior management team are female and 26% come from a BAME background, compared to sector-averages of 40% and 7.7% respectively<sup>4</sup>. These appointments are already having impact, as evidenced through improvements in our key student-centred KPIs, such as an increase in our NSS Student Satisfaction score to 76%. Their work will be amplified through Associate Head of School – Student Success roles in every School, supporting the day-to-day of delivering our offer.

Our staff are encouraged and supported to participate in **pedagogic research** that enhances our programmes and student support in an evidence-based manner. Our expertise in this area has led to external funding for five collaborative pedagogic projects in the past two years. Pedagogical research is a priority within our Research and Knowledge Exchange sub-strategy and will be further resourced and supported to ensure we continue to innovate in our educational practices.

Our academic and professional staff know they can make a difference and will be supported to deliver for our students. From the dedicated Student Success roles to the focus on staff skills and development, we are prepared for the challenge of delivering an innovative and inclusive offer to our students and supporting them throughout their student journey. **Our values-led leadership has**

**driven wider cultural change** within the University and continues to underpin our commitment to delivering an outstanding student experience which is inclusive, impactful and relevant, resulting in graduates who are work and life ready.

## Student Experience

### Academic experience and assessment

We highly value **inclusivity** as an institution, and our commitment is demonstrated through our student recruitment processes, our approach to curricula and the targeted support we provide to students. As a result, our students have an outstanding experience that is personal and supportive.

To reflect the different needs and demands of our unique student body, we have a **diverse range of pathways** into and through our HE provision. Over the past four years, we have developed new demand-sensitive courses, including 53 apprenticeships, micro-credentials, continuing professional development and our innovative flexible elevate programmes.

*The university's new and innovative portfolio of **elevate programmes** aim to provide accessible education, flexible support and foster a spirit of enterprise, for students to fulfil their potential and embark on successful careers. This has been achieved by multiple intakes throughout the year and a hybrid approach to pedagogy, whereby students spend one day a week on campus. The programmes embody our modern approach to curricula: they are practice-based, international, and provide an ethical education for sustainable development by placing study within wider social, political, moral, and economic contexts. This has proved highly popular with 21 students enrolled on the first year of our LLB Law in Practice and 31 on our BA Business Management and Leadership programme.*

Our success with the 15% of our students who take a **first degree with integrated foundation year** is evidenced through their **continuation rates being materially above benchmark**. This option enables them to develop their academic skills, knowledge and confidence and provide them with a strong start for their continuing studies. Our international students are supported through our own embedded International College, UGIC, which prepares them for HE study on our campus, with full access to our facilities and services, and pathways directly onto their chosen degree. We also offer top up degrees, enabling students to enter with a level 5 qualification and convert it into a full degree. Our dedication to creating multiple pathways into UoG has resulted in programmes of study in which practitioners, such as those in Health and Social Care, can undertake modules as CPD and build them into a full degree over time. We see this as an important way to develop wider opportunities for lifelong learning and continued education.

We currently have **8 FE UK regional partners and 27 international Trans-National Education (TNE) partners**, who provide the opportunity to study a Greenwich programme to students either unable or unwilling to study on campus. Our commitment to **enhancing the quality of our partner provision** is shown by us being one of the first universities to sign up to the Quality Assurance Agency's QE-TNE scheme and Ecctis's TNE Quality Benchmark review process. All partners are expected to adhere to UoG's policies and processes unless appropriate modification is supported and agreed by our Academic Council. Robust due diligence prior to agreeing a new partnership and annual programme and institutional review processes ensure all partners provide continuous high-quality provision that fits our mission.

A good example of our strong partnership provision is with **FPT in Vietnam**, to whom we franchise our Graphic and Digital Design programmes and offer top up degrees in the School of Computing and Mathematical Sciences and the BA (Hons) Business Management programme. Curriculum

development has been managed to ensure local relevancy; localised case studies, practical assessments and regular feedback on the design of teaching materials ensures we have programmes that fully meet local requirements. FPT and the UoG have worked hard to ensure our students in Vietnam feel part of the overall Greenwich University experience. Students have reported their overall learning environment is very different to local high schools, with them able to express their ideas and creativity and learn in a more interactive way. Their outcomes have been exceptionally positive, with a 100% employability rate within a year of graduation.

Having opened up opportunities to study at the UoG, we have transformed our approach to curricula, **building on students' lived experience**, and providing stimulating opportunities that recognise the strengths their diverse backgrounds bring – they succeed because of, not in spite of, them. Prof. Owusu-Kwarteng, an international expert on race and educational experiences, has spearheaded work whereby our Sociology students create sociological autobiographies illustrating how their lived experiences relate to social and political structures and the intersections between them. This has led to three anthologies, podcasts such as *Black British and Kickin' it*, three global online undergraduate autobiographical conferences in collaboration with the Universities of Calgary, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Delhi, and the dissemination of the practice to other disciplines within UoG. For example, Criminology students have reflected on the relevance of evidence from academic literature to their communities or any community they have observed. We also provide extra-curricular opportunities for students to talk about their lived experiences, which provides a sense of solidarity and the value of diversity. During Covid-19, transgender students worked on a trans writing event, *Trans W/rites*, followed a year later by *Rainbow W/rites*, created by the LGBTQ+ community, and finally *Queer W/rites*. We plan to build on this fantastic practice of drawing on students' autobiographies by mainstreaming it across the University and we have shared it in CPD workshops as an example of inclusive, engaging practice.

We are very proud to have developed an **Inclusive Curriculum Enhancement Tool**, which is used across the institution to ensure we develop materials through an inclusivity lens. The tool has been recognised nationally and adopted by many other educational providers, including the University of Essex, Wellington College, Milton Keynes College, Eaton College, Tiffin School, and St Philomena's Catholic High School for Girls. The tool has been widely used across the sector to evaluate the extent to which curricula are accessible, how well students see themselves reflected, and to help develop the skills needed to contribute positively in a global and diverse environment. Our everyday use of this tool has been supported by a **new CPD site**, developed on our VLE in 2020-21 to share resources and good practice on making curricula and assessments more inclusive. We have **embedded inclusivity in modules within the PGCertHE** programme, which new lecturers undertake as part of their professional development, to ensure greater awareness and critical understanding of the issues around equality, diversity, and inclusivity. The PGCertHE core module includes material on culturally responsive pedagogies, as well as practical ways to enhance inclusivity in learning, teaching, and assessment. We have created new **'Inclusivity Consultant' student roles** in conjunction with GSU, who audit and feedback on modules.

Our strategic commitment to being an inclusive university drives our **ambition to fully close all award gaps**. Eliminating the BAME awarding gap, which stood at 11.8% in 2020/21, is a particular focus – it is one of the university's nine KPIs and is seen as a collective responsibility by the University's leadership. We already have several tools to support this ambition including a value-added dashboard at programme and module levels to provide required data, Module Monitoring Reports, Programme Monitoring Reports on the BAME awarding gap, and training workshops to support reflective development. Using in-house research, we have developed student personas to

understand BAME student journeys and challenges. We also **recognise and celebrate success** in closing the BAME Award Gap in our SHIFT teaching and learning conference and at our Student Led Teaching Awards.

Whilst we have made significant progress in understanding the issues and how to address them, our ambition is for greater and faster impact. A new **Award Gap Task and Finish group** are building on current achievements through an evidence and data-led approach to ensure we are consistently embedding impactful practices across the University. We believe that we are on track to eliminate the BAME and other award gaps by 2030 or before.

**Our disabled students are supported by a unique, first in sector scheme**, Support Through AccessAbility, Retention and Transition (STAART). The significant positive impact this has on our students was recognised in 2021 by a Levelling Up Universities Award.

**STAART** sends out a positive message to our disabled students that we welcome and take them seriously. STAART Transition days introduced disabled students to university life and relevant services, provided them with a campus tour and the chance to register early. During the transition events, colleagues attended as examples of successful disabled staff. STAART recently launched the Principles of Disability (SPoD), which were co-designed by our disabled students, graduates and staff, and have been showcased as good EDI practice by London Higher.

To provide positive role-models and deliver the support our disabled students need to succeed, we employ students with a disability or diversity as STAART ambassadors, to bring balanced, first-hand experience of the challenges and achievements of university life. The university has also established a network of staff in each faculty as local disability named contacts (DNCs). The STAART ambassadors and DNCs worked with students to create a Greenwich Inclusion Plan (GIP), which makes provision for reasonable adjustments. They also helped students apply for government-funded Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). Additional financial support was available for disabled international students who are not eligible for DSA, which was based on evidence of need and replicates support available to home students.

As a result of our consistent inclusive practices, **our disabled students have rated us materially above benchmark in the NSS** for academic support, and bordering this for teaching, assessment and feedback, learning resources and student voice.

*“...seeking support from the well-being service was a positive turning point in my life. I received consistency and ongoing non-judgemental support”*

Practice-based, interactive pedagogy

Our outstanding student experience is a result of our commitment to learning through practice. We support our learners through our **five-stage pedagogy** which takes students through theory, application of theory to practical tasks, simulation of realistic tasks, review of their practice to foster reflectivity and understanding, and the opportunity to test that out in a real-life environment.

Learning through practice is made possible by our **strategic investment in technology** to support greater accessibility, innovative interaction, and greater integration of tools into our curricula. Our digital and estates strategies build on what we have learnt during the pandemic about how to maximise our use of space and technical resources and are driven by our understanding of both the needs of our students and the fast-changing world of work. This university-wide approach has resulted in a better student experience. **Student satisfaction with teaching** has improved significantly over the past four years, with the **most recent year being above threshold** for full-time students and materially above it for part-time students.

Our focus on **in-person teaching and interactive, practice-based learning** has resulted in pedagogical practices that have fostered strong student communities and opportunities for meaningful co-creation with staff. Student feedback during the pandemic highlighted the importance of social interaction and we provided the greatest possible opportunities for direct interactions between staff and peers by **maximising in-person teaching** following the Covid-19 lockdowns. More in-person teaching has allowed our students on vocational programmes greater access to practice-based learning, and to take advantage of our outstanding specialised equipment and laboratories at our three campuses.

In health care, our students are taught in our **award-winning, sector-leading Greenwich Learning and Simulation Centre (GLASC)**. Here, they have utilised the latest VR and Mixed reality tools to gain a learning experience as close to real life scenarios as possible. This has provided a safe space in which to test the limits of both the theory and their understanding. UoG has a unique set up which allowed students to experience the complexity of the life cycle of a patient as they move between multiple environments. Our simulation of an emergency has brought together students from across the allied health disciplines (paramedics, midwives, and nurses) and taken them through the patient journey from triaging a patient in a home environment (a flat), through the ambulance journey to an operating theatre and then onto a hospital ward. This is changing health training in the sector and through this combination of pedagogy, facilities, and our collaboration with the NHS we are delivering expert health practitioners ready to work in the contemporary health care environment.

This practice-based pedagogy is highly engaging and supports the **development of professional skills through authentic, experiential learning**. Outside of the simulation environment, clinical placements enable the students to apply their skills and learn in the workplace.

Mental Health (MH) students have fed back on their exceptional learning opportunities:

*"By seeing the outcome of the mistakes made during the learning process, I gain powerful insight into the consequences of actions."*

Students thus develop not just clinical skills but competencies such as anticipatory expertise, which are so important for our health students. NHS Trusts have been exceptionally impressed with the quality of our students, with undergraduate nurses achieving the Annual Staff Awards Pre-registration Student of the Year at Darent Valley Hospital.

The GLASC staff team have won numerous awards for their work: at the Zenith Global Health Awards 2022, the technical director was nominated for the 'Advancing Health with Technology' award, whilst the Centre won 'Outstanding Team' and 'Excellence in Education and Research'. To maintain this exceptional standard of education, we stay relevant and focused on health service needs through our co-creation opportunities with partners and professional bodies, as well as through our various Advisory Boards.

Understanding how our students best learn has driven our **strategic approach to the integration of technology in the classroom**, allowing us to deliver content in a more inclusive way and build on our pedagogic approach to theory and practice. For example, in Psychology, programme content is pre-recorded to enable students to prepare for live sessions at times that suit them. The **in-person sessions are interactive** and use an audience-response system (ARS) to allow students to engage through different formats, such as chat, polls, quizzes and asking questions. The team found that the recorded content supported understanding because students were able to

pause and rewind. The **benefits of pre-recording** were positively reported on by students in a Students' Union survey during Covid-19.<sup>5</sup>

*"I found the use of pre-recorded lectures to be particularly beneficial ... Through this, I was able to gain an element of confidence regarding the topic and therefore use the seminars as an opportunity to ask questions and contribute to group discussion... [This] increased the quality of my learning" (Psychology student).*

These practices are standard across the institution, with the strategic use of learning technology supported by both the Digital Strategy and a dedicated committee of experts and university representatives. Over the past four years, **265,029 participants have used the ARS**, giving a total of almost 1.2 million responses. Similarly for **lecture recording, 2021/22 saw over 725,000 views** and downloads recordings by 44,000 users, and over a million views and downloads in 20/21 with a similar number of users. A recent HEPI report shows that lecture recordings are the most in-demand digital learning resource.<sup>6</sup> They are particularly important to our substantial body of commuting students, who watch the videos whilst travelling, and to our students for whom English is a second language who can change the speed and use the captions to aid understanding.

#### Authentic curricula

In line with our commitment to an educational culture of excellence, we provide our students with a learning experience that is authentic and relevant to their future work and the fast-changing global environment. Our inclusive curricula build on the expertise of our staff and students, drawing on their lived experiences, and is relevant to the world of work through **co-creation and collaboration with employers and professional bodies**.

In 2021, the University approved a new **curriculum framework** that sets out the expectations for programmes in line with the 2030 strategy. Programmes must be inclusive, personalised, employment-focused, global in outlook and informed by our research. Shaped by co-creation, they support the learning of sustainability competencies, and are delivered in innovative ways. The framework's resources and reflective questions are used by module leaders to enhance their provision. It has been embedded into the approvals process, with programmes having to state how they meet the dimensions to gain authorisation for development and final approval.

Our authentic and relevant curricula in action is best demonstrated through an example from our School of Design, our **Creative Advertising degree**, which was approved in early 2022. The programme rationale was to increase gender representation in the advertising and creative industries through an inclusive programme focused on employability. The programme was co-designed with internationally-renowned advertising agency, M&C Saatchi, and based on the research of our Faculty of Liberal Arts and Sciences Diversity Interest Group. The degree is interdisciplinary, with roots in arts, media, culture and social sciences; and students considered questions of representation, identity, consumption, reception and aesthetics. As such, they developed anticipatory, normative and collaborative competencies, critical thinking, self-awareness, and integrated problem-solving skills, all of which are UNESCO key competencies for sustainability. In a field that is reliant on consumerism, students have been taught to question both the values brands stand for and whether there are more sustainable practices that advertising can adopt. Our Advisory Board ensured content was cutting edge and relevant and student feedback ensured the content and pedagogy speak to and build on their needs and aspirations. As the degree and the partnership progresses, we expect further opportunities for staff and students including research, work placements and employment.



Links to industry and practice are evident in all our programmes. Faculties have extensive industry networks that support provision by co-designing curricula, feeding back on programmes, providing case studies, guest lectures, support for assessments, and supporting wider events such as coffee morning meet and greets, career fairs and hackathons. Students have responded to this and see how important such connections are for **employability, ensuring courses are exciting** and at the cutting edge, and importantly, relevant to their career ambitions. We have **advisory boards** embedded in each Faculty and use them extensively across the University to feedback on the curriculum and ensure content is informed by the latest market trends and practices.

**Live case study assessments** from our industry partners give students authentic experiences and the opportunity to connect with real world problems. Our students on the BA International Business undertook consultancy to advise Cassava Republic, an independent African Press with offices in Nigeria and the UK on a strategy to expand into the US market. Learning about global business strategies with a real business partner was a very positive learning experience for our students. Our students also focus on projects local to the University and surrounding communities – for example, engineering students have participated in the Ebbsfleet Garden City Pre-Construction Project, being undertaken by Balfour Beatty in North Kent, to design new homes and associated infrastructure. The students contributed directly to the project and received feedback directly from Balfour Beatty.

Our students produce assignments directed at authentic audiences: our health students created an Adobe Spark reflective journal on a potential sexual health promotion initiative to stimulate their creativity, develop their digital skills and develop their ability to communicate to a particular audience; our law students undertook assessments that included Court and United Nations Simulated tasks. In the latter, students worked in groups to present propositions from the perspective of a country, and these were voted upon, as at the real United Nations. We are **above benchmark overall as an institution for assessment and feedback in the NSS**, and the inclusive nature of our assessments is shown by the **higher ratings compared to benchmark given by BAME students and those with a disability**.

As an institution, we place high value on students undertaking **placements** because they provide invaluable opportunities to apply campus-based learning to professional practice, enabling students to practice, refine and master the skills they need to become professionals. 193 undergraduate programmes have a sandwich year and 42 modules have placements or internships as part of their content. To support this, we have over 200 links with industrial partners offering placements, and 190 of our programmes are accredited by Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies. Our ambition is to go even further and continue building on these links.

### [Resources, support and student engagement](#)

#### Diverse, expert staff & a culture of excellence

We recognise that our staff are our students' greatest learning resource. Through our People Enabling Strategy, we support our staff to be their best and have embedded a **culture of excellence and sharing**. Thorough inclusive recruitment practices ensure we have the right staff to deliver on our promise of Education without Boundaries. Our career pathways support staff to be expert practitioners, teachers, researchers, and entrepreneurs. We provide outstanding support for staff professional development, resulting in sector-leading rates of staff with teaching qualifications. We ensure that we use our academics' time effectively through our new academic workload model.

**Our staff body is truly diverse**, bringing real value to our students who can see themselves represented in them and in the different experiences, perspectives and knowledge our staff have. We are committed to being an inclusive employer and have a strategic aim to be a leader in equality,

diversity and inclusion by 2030. As a result, our staff body is already proudly diverse, with 5% of staff declared as disabled, 30% BAME, 6% LGBT+ and 57% female, compared to sector-averages of 6% disabled, 16% BAME and 54% female<sup>4</sup>. Many of our staff come from non-traditional academic backgrounds, having been first-in-family to go to university themselves and/or having entered the academic community from a practice background.

We provide robust professional development to enhance teaching practices. **75% of our teaching staff had a HESA recognised teaching qualification** in 2020/21, compared to an English sector average of 59%.<sup>7</sup> CPD is encouraged at all career stages by the provision of both workshops and web-based resources, with over 500 people enrolled into our Blended Learning VLE in 2019/2020.

We have a culture of educational leaders supporting and **mentoring** other teachers and inspiring students. Successful applicants for HEA fellowships and UKAT recognition regularly mentor others for these awards. For example, \_\_\_\_\_ has taught nurses and midwives for almost 33 years. His excellence has been recognised through a National Teaching Fellowship, Principal Fellowship of the HEA, becoming a Queen’s Nurse and an OBE. \_\_\_\_\_ has mentored almost 20 successful applications for Senior Fellowship of the HEA with the intention of empowering and inspiring them to enhance their education as he has enhanced his own practice over the years.

The University has embedded a culture of sharing good practice and excellence through, for example, its **annual learning and teaching conference**, SHIFT, which has been running for 16 years, and its **pedagogic journal**, Compass, both of which are open to staff at partner institutions. Every SHIFT session encourages co-presentation with students, which supports students’ development and encourages staff to teach in student-centred ways. SHIFT is one forum that supported the development of virtual reality from computer-based modelling to immersive environments - enabling us to scale up and be innovative in practice-based learning and training.

We ensure **consistently high standards are embedded** across the University through clear expectations and processes. The production of high-quality VLE sites is supported by an institutional Moodle Baseline, which sets out expectations in terms of content, structure, accessibility, and compliance. Assurance that teaching, assessment, and feedback quality is consistently high occurs through the university’s Peer Supported Development Scheme, whereby staff work with someone from another School within their faculty to review their teaching and/or assessment practices. Assessment practices are also underpinned by our Assessment and Feedback policy, which is based on the institutional findings of research conducted with the Transforming the Experience of Students Through Assessment (TESTA) methodology. Through our approach to developing all staff across the University, and through providing processes that support best practice, we deliver the best educational experience to our students.

#### [Inclusive, empowering learning resources](#)

Our strategic planning for physical and virtual learning resources is driven by our understanding of our students’ needs, our learnings from the pandemic, and our pedagogical approach and ambitions. Our learning resources are central to our inclusive education, with student hubs to support a sense of belonging, and free access to everything students need to succeed such as laptops, learning spaces and Wi-Fi. Our students appreciate the investment we have already made, as evidenced through our excellent results in this area. We were **materially above benchmark in year 3 for full-time student satisfaction with learning resources**, and significantly so (92.4% compared to a 82.9% benchmark) for part-time students in the most recent year.

Our library collections are fully accessible and allow materials to be embedded into teaching, and we have **substantially expanded our electronic collections** over the past four years in line with

our strategic principle of being digital by default. Our students have a quiet place to study, with Greenwich's three libraries providing **extended open hours**. This need became acutely apparent during the Covid-19 pandemic, when 20% of students reported not having a suitable, safe space to study in their accommodation.<sup>8</sup> The University only shut its libraries for three months in 2020 - a far shorter time than most of the sector - making them a safe and secure venue for study throughout the pandemic when students had few alternatives.

Our **Student Hubs Initiative** provides a sense of community, particularly for our commuter-students, and gives space to study, access academic and pastoral support and share recreational time with peers. At our Medway Campus, students have access to both the Student Hub, which is a Students' Union space created with £2.5million investment from the UoG, and the Drill Hall library. The library supports a variety of study types and is a hub for academic skills, IT, and pastoral support. The library café is an important focal point for students and there is an exhibition space with ever-changing vibrant art exhibitions. A similar role is played at our Greenwich campus by the Dreadnought Building, which brings together GSU, student-facing services, academic and teaching spaces, offices for academic and professional services staff, and an atrium for meeting and socialising – on average it sees over 8,000 users a week during term-time.<sup>9</sup> Likewise, the Dome at our Avery Hill Campus is the home of the Students' Union and students can access workstations, a café and gym.

Our commitment to further removing barriers is evidenced in our approach to ensuring **all students have access to essential equipment and resources**. Laptops are available for loan via lockers at each of the three libraries - this is vital for students who face financial difficulties and, by making the loans available to all students, borrowing is normalised. In addition, there are over 800 open access PCs and an additional 700 PCs in teaching labs. In 2020-22, during the period of Covid-19 lockdowns, additional support was made available to ensure students could access their learning digitally. This included sending over 200 laptops and over 100 4G dongles with 12 months free internet to students, enabling online remote access for students who required access to specialist software and devices, and making several pieces of software available for use from home on students' own devices. The University is continuing to issue laptops to our students as part of the hardship funds, alongside the loan system, as well as dongles to students without wifi.

#### World-class learning environment

Our Student Success Sub strategy, and Digital and Estates enabling strategies, are all focused on continuing the investment to enhance and further integrate technology into our teaching spaces to deliver on our pedagogical ambitions and our commitment to inclusivity. All our campuses offer outstanding learning environments, including HyFlex classrooms, and sector-leading practical and simulation spaces. We ensure that these are fully and effectively utilised to support our authentic curriculum.

During the pandemic, our **HyFlex facilities** enabled students with health issues, illness, self-isolation, and caring responsibilities to continue to engage and this has increased our ability to provide a more inclusive experience for all students going forward. We have continued our investment, now having committed over £5 million for HyFlex-enabled classrooms, lecture theatres, group study rooms, academic support hubs and meeting rooms to support flexible modes of teaching. Room and technology designs have been refined from student and staff feedback and include state of the art ceiling microphones that allow open conversations between students and staff in the room and those joining online.

Our ability to transform the educational experience through integrated technology and pedagogy is best demonstrated through our development and use of simulation technologies. Our innovative work in both Health and Law has informed a university-wide approach. **Our simulation facilities are award-winning, industry standard and sector leading.** They enable us to provide an authentic learning experience to build the skills and experience our students will need on graduation. Our purpose-designed Moot room for law students, which opened in November 2021, provides the opportunity to practice public speaking and advocacy skills in a realistic courtroom setting. As well as moot training, it has been used for competitions, such as the Oxford University Press Competition, where student mooting teams competed against each other as either the defence or prosecution.

State-of-the-art simulation facilities in the Health Sciences developed through an £8 million investment by the University have enabled our students studying Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedic Science to get realistic experience of diagnosing, triaging and treating patients, as discussed earlier. The facilities have also amplified our partnership with the NHS, enabling the co-creation of new teaching methods and content. The NHS regularly use our facilities, allowing our staff and students to be closer to the work environment they are preparing for.

We have ensured that the learning environment is fully inclusive by working with Lifecast Body Simulation to create **bespoke, culturally, and physically representative manikins** that reflect the diversity of our student, staff, and patient populations. We recently launched the world's first manikin of a child called 'Gwen' with Down's syndrome, developed in collaboration with industry, the Downs Syndrome Association, and Gwen's family, . The extent of the manikin's life-like features are shown by the reaction of Gwen to it:

*"I've seen pictures of Gwen Manikin and I thought they were pictures of me in hospital... What I am most excited about is the difference it will make- it is genuinely life saving and ... it's about time!"*

Our students have told us how important these facilities are to their educational experience. Their exceptional quality is reflected in our nursing and midwifery students rating us **materially above benchmark** (with 97.3% certainty) for learning resources in the NSS. Our law students rate us as materially above benchmark for learning resources in the NSS.

Our Digital Strategy commits us to making virtual and augmented reality an important element of learning and teaching by 2030. We believe that VR and extended reality tools can help our students develop cultural awareness and understanding to prepare them for the world of work, such as corporate cultures, how organisations operate and what they can expect on a first day at work. We are therefore investing £400,000 to develop a **virtual trading room**, which will have Bloomberg terminals and live trading data to create a realistic learning environment for our business and management students and give academics the opportunity to design modules that blend financial theory with real-world events. We are also investing £150,000 in a **multi-platform media room**, equipped with the latest industry-standard marketing and advertising software and devices where students can analyse real life business case studies, and gain experience of developing marketing campaigns, blogging, designing and social media. In the Creative Industries we are building on our expertise in virtual production with our recent AHRC grant of over £1m that will support our new Shared Hub for Immersive Futures, providing staff and students with an opportunity to prototype and experiment in immersive production and to develop skills in line with industry needs.

Our historic campuses and exemplary learning resources are an integral part of our students' learning experience and **fully integrated into curricula**. For example, the School of Design embeds studios, technologies, craft workshops and model making in the curriculum, focusing on design diversity, inclusive design and United Nations sustainable development goals. They are supported

by the Stockwell Street building, in which the Design School is based, being a recognised example of green infrastructure, nature-based solutions and ecosystem services provision. The building has the largest roof gardens in the UK, with an apiary on top, and a living wall alongside crit pits.

We use our campuses as **live venues for learning and experimentation**. Our students have gained valuable experience as stewards on film and TV productions taking place on the Greenwich campus, most recently on *Olly*, directed by Sir Steve McQueen. These opportunities give them paid work experience and an understanding of how the industry works and what productions of this scale are really like. It boosts their motivation and morale and is a strong attraction for studying film and television at Greenwich. Our Events students also made use of the critically acclaimed Alexander McQueen Fashion Show in 2022 as a living laboratory case study, considering the logistics, cost and brand implications for both McQueen and the UNESCO world heritage site on which we are based in their contrast and association with each other. Students considered the ethnic mix of models and how this contributed to a progressive, commercial positioning.

#### Student partnership for continuous enhancement

Students are at the centre of everything we do and we see them as our most important partners. Our students are experts in their own right, and we are committed to understanding and appreciating their lived experiences. This is reflected in the development of an inclusive curricula. Secondly, we see them as co-creators helping us to develop content and processes that are authentic and relevant. The impact of our partnership approach is reflected in the excellent NSS results in this area - **student voice in the most recent year is close to being materially above benchmark** for full-time students and is materially above benchmark for part-time students. We recognise that over the past four years there has been slightly lower satisfaction with student voice amongst non-UK domicile students. In 2018 GSU made changes to their voting system to make it more inclusive and following this in 2021/22 all the officers were from a BAME ethnicity and there was an international student as president in both 2021/22 and 2022/23. This has already helped us to develop a stronger International Student voice, with the first international president championing the creation of **Global Greenwich**, which provides events and drop-in support for our international students.

We recognise that the formal and informal representation of the student voice through the GSU and the Student Representative system is crucial to making sure we deliver on our promise of an outstanding educational experience. Students are represented in our **Governance structure**, they have access to the VC and the Senior team, and through these mechanisms they can raise and collaboratively resolve the issues voted on as student priorities for the year.

The NSS is seen as a key source of evidence about the student experience because its high response rates make it representative of student views. We have adopted an **NSS Task Force** approach to recognising and sharing good practice from highly rated programmes and focusing support on programmes that perform less well. Each year, the University holds a good practice sharing event and an awards ceremony. Programmes with an overall student satisfaction below the University's target of 90% were tasked with implementing an improvement plan and those below average entered the NSS task force. This was led by the Vice Chancellor and Deputy Vice Chancellor and brought together GSU, key contacts that support enhancement work, senior staff in the faculty and the programme team. This allowed the University to take collective responsibility for NSS outcomes and to collaboratively formulate short and long-term strategies for moving forward.

This has resulted in **overall improvements against our benchmark in all the TEF NSS scales from year 2** (when the task force was introduced) to year 4 and some notable successes. For example, task force support helped Film and Television Production to increase its overall level of

satisfaction to 84% in one year. Through the task force, we are supporting programmes with NSS scores below benchmark, such as those in Law and Sports and Exercise Science, who both took part this academic year. To support programme leaders to make changes while students are still with us and across all levels, we also run a programme level survey each year for students not covered by the National Student Survey (NSS).

To build on our success with the NSS task force and ensure that all programmes use data to inform their development, we are currently implementing a **Continuous Improvement Tool**, which will bring together all the key metrics relating to a programme's performance. This will allow programme leaders to see how their programme is performing holistically, and in real time as the data becomes available. This will support a process of continual reflection with programme representatives and identification of the most impactful interventions.

Faculties **employed students** to maximise the student voice in content creation and provide peer support. The impact of this is shown in the School of Health Sciences, who recruited final year student demonstrators both to support classroom skills delivery and develop healthcare scenarios for use in teaching.

*“Being a student Demonstrator has allowed me to enhance my clinical ability and skills not only in the classroom, but also in clinical settings. I have been allowed and encouraged to generate scenarios ... Being a student Demonstrator has been an invaluable experience.”*

#### Preparing our students for success

Providing an educational experience that transforms the lives of our students requires the right environment and support. We provide exemplary academic support: teaching students to research, read and write for academic study, and developing their numeracy and digital skills, resilience and ability to learn from peers. This builds not just their capability but their confidence and self-belief. This is a fundamental part of the educational gains from studying at Greenwich and is the foundation of our students' success at university and into their lives beyond. We support our students at every stage: in the transition to university, through the first few weeks of arriving, and throughout their journey with us. **Our student satisfaction with academic support for full-time students has been within 0.4% of being materially above benchmark for the past two years** – demonstrating the improvements and robustness of practice in this area. It is materially above benchmark for students 31 years and over, suggesting that we do an excellent job of tailoring the support to meet the needs of our students who have been out of study for some time.

We start by helping our students to **prepare for university**. As soon as they have a place at UoG they receive an invitation to enrol on LevelUp, a VLE course comprising of recordings and activities to develop academic, information literacy and digital skills as students transition into HE. Over the past three years, 2,180 students have enrolled in the course from across the University. Student feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

To ensure that all students have time dedicated to supporting transition, we have developed an ambitious university-wide initiative, GREFest. This comprises **three weeks of induction activities**, including workshops on what to expect and how to prepare for university, how to develop academic skills and use the library resources, and how to learn online. An average of almost 4,500 students have engaged with GREFest each year since its launch in 2020, with students feeding back:

*“I am terrified of reading and really don't enjoy it but it [the session on reading] gave me lots of strategies to feel more confident reading. I will definitely be going back to re-listen to this session.”*

We know that academic support is most likely to be accessed as the need arises and that support at the start of the year will need reinforcing throughout. We therefore offer a **range of readily available support**, with multi-week courses throughout the year on themes such as academic writing, reading for university, academic integrity, and Global English. For students who prefer to learn at their own pace and time, potentially fitting it around part-time work and caring responsibilities, we also have series of short courses on the VLE to support the development of Digital Capabilities, Information Literacy and Academic Integrity. Additional support is available through individual tutorials with librarians and tutors.

Writing is a key academic, work and life skill. Good writing skills enable students to effectively demonstrate their learning and thus its support and development is key to our inclusive education. The university has invested £320,000 this year to provide all students with access to **Studiosity**, an online essay-checking service providing study skills advice 24/7. Students can get feedback on spelling and grammar, essay structure, academic writing and referencing. Research has demonstrated that Studiosity use develops independent learners with improved confidence, motivation, study-skills and better well-being.<sup>10</sup> Studiosity is well-subscribed by students from all faculties with usage averaging just over 4,000 unique students a year and rising. Whilst most students get quick, effective support, for the minority requiring a greater level of support, Studiosity signposts them to Academic Librarians and Tutors.

We recognise the importance of numeracy to many of our subjects and to students' life skills and ability to manage personal and professional budgets. **Greenwich Mathematics and Statistics Help (MASH)** is available to all university undergraduates. For example, MASH supported the development of numeracy required by trainee nurses to gain their qualification and the GCSE-level mathematics required by trainee teachers, as well as the advanced specialist mathematics for students studying mathematics or similar subjects. It also prepared students for psychometric testing when applying for graduate jobs. Students have fed back:

*“MASH has been an integral part of my studies as I was able to expand my problem-solving skills by understanding better how to research information and study and solve questions given. ... MASH allowed me to have another supportive study space where I could work and bond with my classmates.”*

We are also placing increasing emphasis on supporting **digital literacy**. Many of our students reported difficulty with new technologies such as MS Teams at the start of the pandemic<sup>5</sup>. To enable students to gain the most from our blended and flexible learning, we encourage them to use the Jisc Digital Capabilities tool to self-assess their digital skills and identify areas for improvement. Students can then develop their skills through the VLE course on Digital Capabilities and through the support of our student Digital Champions. We have also invested in **LinkedIn learning**, which provides access to over 16,000 expert-led courses on a wide range of topics, allowing students to select and tailor the support to their personal needs.

Academic success depends not just on skills but also confidence and belief in students' ability to learn, so we offer ongoing opportunities to challenge and stretch our students intellectually and personally. **'The Student Conference'** is run annually at Greenwich, building students' confidence, both from presenting and from positioning our students as the experts, as they teach us about their experiences and achievements and inspiring others. As well as changing our students and staff mindsets, it also allows greater networking opportunities between them. Keynote speeches address hot topics in student experience and help to frame the conversations.

*“It was an amazing experience. A great way to educate and inspire other students. Amazing aid for networking.”*

We know that having access to a **Personal Tutor** can make a real difference to our students in terms of their academic success. All students have a personal tutor who proactively helps them to acclimatize to life at university and to become a professional in their field. As a mechanical engineering student recently said of their tutor:

*“[My tutor] helped so much to be the person I am now, academically and personally. Tutors leave a good impact on you, and you leave university with that impact ready to face life.”*

Our University Personal Tutor Blueprint (published in 2020) ensures consistency of practice and provides resources for staff to guide the sessions and interactions. We also provide **innovative cohort-based support for personal tutors to gain UK Advising and Tutoring (UKAT) accreditation**. Recently, this role has been expanded in many schools to cover resilience and wellbeing and to get students to work together for charitable purposes. We have built on this good practice and developed a new Personal Tutoring Framework which includes further training for staff, as well as greater resources to support students in areas such as health and wellbeing.

We know that students learn from each other and we have provided opportunities for them to support each other, as well as developing their own mentoring skills. We are currently rolling out a **University Mentor Scheme** originally developed in GBS. In 2021/22 the scheme had 260 participants, holding over 500 mentoring sessions. 80% of mentees reported a major improvement in their confidence after an individual mentoring session. This approach sets the scene for a more advanced coaching approach, which is in development for both staff and students. From the moment a student accepts an offer until the day they graduate, our students are supported by us - and it is this support that enables us to deliver on our ambition to transform their lives.

## Student Outcomes

### Positive outcomes

We are committed to providing an educational experience that prepares our students for a successful future. We are ambitious for all our students and provide everyone with the support they need to complete and succeed in their studies, develop work and life skills, and progress to further study or graduate level employment.

Because we understand our students' needs, we have achieved outstanding student outcomes by **tailoring our approach** to our student body: every new undergraduate student receives a phone call to identify any support needs, with further calls at key moments through the academic year; we use attendance monitoring to identify students who need additional support and follow up via different communication modes; we provide support for the cost of living, with particular support for commuter students who struggle to pay for transport onto campus; and we support international students affected by disasters in their home country. In terms of work-readiness, we also employ large numbers of our own undergraduates, to better prepare them for work and to help us understand and tailor our support to their needs; we have introduced support for finding graduate-level part-time work given the proportion of our graduates that work part-time; we focus on local employers for our local students; and we provide support for gaining jobs with ethical employers. We also ensure that all our students, particularly our carers and BAME students, have access to entrepreneurial support, including short courses, bursaries, and a fully inclusive curriculum.

To ensure **consistency**, we meet regularly with programmes that require support to improve continuation, completion and/or progression rates. In this way, we pick up programmes that excel in



student satisfaction but are below benchmark for student outcome measures, such as our Forensic Science programmes. Whilst many enhancements have been implemented since the last surveyed cohort left the programmes, we were still able to identify additional actions that could enhance progression outcomes, such as providing taster sessions for careers outside of forensic sciences.

Our approach is **highly effective**: the value-add score for our students in 2020/21 was 1.07, showing that our students achieve outcomes better than average in the sector, and the score impressively stood at 1.04 for our students from IMD quintiles 1 and 2<sup>11</sup>. We are at benchmark for continuation, completion, and progression overall. The most current of these metrics is continuation, with lags as cohorts progress through their studies to completion and then continue on to further study or employment. It is therefore in **continuation** where the results of our innovation are particularly clear with **several marginalised groups materially above benchmark**: students 31 years and over, Black students and ABCS quintile 1.

Many of our positive outcomes result from the work described under 'Student Experience', such as our inclusive curriculum and positioning students as experts, which have both been shown to support a sense of belonging<sup>12</sup>; our practice-based pedagogy and authentic curricula, which have strong employability benefits; and our strong support for academic skills development. This section shows how we have built on this strong foundation, to provide outstanding support for student outcomes.

#### Continuation and completion

We provide both central and programme-level support to ensure that our students continue and complete their programmes of study. Our support is targeted to break down the barriers to study our students face, such as mental health difficulties, financial hardship, and concerns about instability in countries of origin.

As a result of this tailored and ongoing approach, **continuation and completion rates have been consistently at benchmark for full-time students and 100% materially above it for part-time students**. Our success in supporting students that may traditionally be most at risk of dropping out is well illustrated by our continuation rates for ABCS quintile 1 students being materially above benchmark. This success is even more impressive, set in the context of London having a non-continuation rate 1.4% higher than the rest of the country, due to the high percentage of commuter students making engagement difficult and the cost of living in the capital.<sup>13</sup> We ensure all our students feel welcome and part of the community through our welcome activities and innovative retention project. All three campuses provide **welcome activities** to introduce students to the University, the Students' Union, extra Curricula activities and opportunities, and their programme of study.

The **innovative Retention Project** is run in collaboration with the Students' Union and was shortlisted for a Times Higher Award in 2022. Students were asked during phone calls about their programme experience, loneliness, engagement in extra-curricular activities, other pressures being faced and awareness of University and SU services. If students were not aware of the latter, additional information was provided, and if any issues were raised that could not be resolved during the call, an escalation form was completed for further referral with the student's consent. 753 direct referrals were processed in 2021-22 directly linking students with the relevant support services within 24 hours of the call. 93% of the students referred continued with their studies.

To amplify the support for our students, we have improved our systems and processes and, in line with our Student Success Sub Strategy, we are investing in a new **Student Lifecycle Management system**. This will support staff to handle student enquiries with a built-in case management system and communication tools to ensure that all student queries and cases are managed effectively,

efficiently, and confidentially and that where students face a range of issues these are dealt with holistically.

Another area we have targeted improvement efforts is around the completion rates of our **international students**, which has been below benchmark. The benefits of this are starting to show in our continuation data. Our international students have faced very specific difficulties over the last few years due to natural disasters, economic crises and war in their home countries. To address the increased stress, we have put in tailored support to help them continue engaging with their studies. In 2021 and 2022, this support was provided to students from nine different nations, following floods, earthquakes, protests, economic and political crises. As an example, following the outbreak of the conflict in Ukraine, we called all our Russian, Belarusian and Ukrainian students and held several support meetings and lunches in collaboration with GSU. We provided them with information on available hardship funding, Extenuating Circumstances claims, support for summer accommodation, visa advice and wellbeing support. This personalised support has been well received by students and enabled us to deliver a quick and effective response tailored to individual circumstances.

As many of our students face difficulties engaging in their education due to financial concerns, we have a number of well-established **bursaries**, such as our Care Leaver Bursary and EU Bursary. We also offer a Greenwich bursary of up to £700 to those from low-income households and a commuter bursary of up to £1,000, which has been awarded to 145 students since 2019. The latter has been particularly important recently, as the **cost-of-living** crisis is affecting our students significantly and this risks continuation and completion of their studies. GSU research shows that 30% of students' incomes do not cover their essential living costs and 44% have less than £50 disposable income per month. We have introduced a range of measures to address this, including: doubling our hardship funds, publishing a cost-of-living checklist, launching open pantries across our campuses to provide free staples and sanitary products; making leftover food from catering available for free thirty minutes before closing time twice a week; and we are giving a free TOTUM discount card to all full-time first year students. We are also currently piloting free Community breakfasts twice a week and providing non-means-tested food vouchers to ensure that students are not hungry while they study. We also have an edible garden at our Avery Hill campus, where students can grow fruit and vegetables and take them to eat free of charge.

We know that university is a time when many students can suffer from anxiety and there is heightened psychological distress due to the absence of established support networks and academic, social and financial pressures.<sup>14</sup> We have an excellent Student Wellbeing Team, whose work was supplemented over the past few years by the **Mentally Healthy Universities project**, funded by Goldman Sachs and delivered by the mental health charity, Mind. The project delivered workshops and support to over 500 students and 40 staff over the two years of the project, despite being impacted by lockdowns. 90% of students reported positive impacts from the sessions.

We have supported over 800 members (almost 40%) of staff to undergo **Mental First Aid training**. This has enabled support to be delivered as part of personal tutoring. To ensure that all students benefit from consideration of wellbeing, we have **embedded wellbeing into the curriculum**. In 2019 we took part in an AdvanceHE project on this topic and went on to embed the expectation in our curriculum framework in 2021, meaning that it is embedded in our approvals process for new programmes and support is available to staff through our Curriculum Framework VLE.

#### Further study

Removing barriers and creating new pathways into further study for our students is another way in which Education without Boundaries is delivered at the UoG.

Acknowledging that for our students one barrier to further study is financial, we offer several **discounts and scholarships** to our graduates. Support is targeted at those who most need it through the annual 75 Greenwich Postgraduate Scholarships for final year students with low household incomes. Each £5,000 scholarship is used as a fee waiver on any master's degree at the University. We also offer an alumni discount of £1,000 on any PGCE teacher training course or master's degree not funded by government or the research councils. We prioritise and fast track the applications of our graduates. At MPhil/PhD level, our alumni can apply to have their home fees waived through our annual VC Scholarship programme, with 45 studentships supported in 2022/23.

We recognise that there is more to do – only 15% of our 2019/20 graduates went on to further study, compared to a sector average of 20%. One way in which we are seeking to support further study is to introduce a **research pathway** into all our programmes. This will give additional support to our students to develop the skills and confidence to continue into further study. In addition, new pathways such as that of **Masters level apprenticeships**, will allow students to combine further study with employment, helping to mitigate the financial risks of further study.

### Entrepreneurship

We support our students to fulfil their ambitions, in particular, those of starting their own enterprise, developing a product or turning a passion into a career. We are committed to ensuring that all our students have the opportunity to start their own business while at the University. The number of self-employed graduates is growing, with a large proportion of these graduates coming from subjects in engineering, the creative arts, media and education, and being based in London<sup>15</sup>. Self-employment offers a way for our graduates to gain meaningful employment, with our graduates having established ethical companies such as The Cheeky Panda, which produces bamboo tissues, and the social enterprise, G Beatz, which provides exclusive nightclub evenings for adults with disabilities. The development of entrepreneurial skills, such as problem-solving, anticipatory thinking, advocacy and financial planning, and an entrepreneurial mindset is exceedingly valuable for all graduates as they enter the employment market and move forward in their lives.

Our **student enterprise centre, The Generator**, is designed to offer support for students and graduates at any stage of their entrepreneurial journey and is a key resource in our wider employability agenda. We raised awareness of entrepreneurs and the start-up world through events like our Power Talks from entrepreneurs, which were designed to inspire students. We supported the development of entrepreneurial skills through workshops, delivered in partnership with external providers such as Google, who ran our popular digital marketing training. Students could discuss their ideas or businesses with an enterprise advisor and attend start-up weekend bootcamps, which supported them to turn ideas into businesses in just three days.

We provide more in-depth support for the development of viable businesses through our annual **Enterprise Challenge** competition: students receive six months of training and mentoring to develop an idea into a viable model, with the chance to win a share of £14,000 in prize funds. Support is available to expand and develop trading businesses via bursaries of up to £1,250, a summer accelerator school providing expert training and mentoring, a co-working space, bookable hot-desks, and a website with links to project resources and funding sources.

*"I would recommend taking part in the Enterprise Challenge to anyone who is interested in starting/running their own business. ... Through the workshops and mentorship, you will learn so much."* (Entrepreneur, who graduated from UoG in 2020)

On average, around 1,000 students access the Generator's services each year - this increased to 1,247 in 2020/21 with the introduction of an online offering. Of these, 100 developed business

plans through the Enterprise Challenge, and 18 received funding through the Enterprise Challenge competition or our bursary programme to grow and launch businesses. A further 26 were supported by the University endorsing a tier 1 start-up visa, allowing them to stay in the UK for two years to begin a business. To ensure that the Generator meets students' needs, we work with alumni, who often provide talks and act as mentors and judges for the Enterprise Challenge. Our advisory board is also chaired by an alumni and multi-award winning entrepreneur,

Given the importance we place on both inclusion and entrepreneurship, it is important that the Generator is accessible to all our students. We therefore launched a new initiative in 2020-21, **'GreHacks', which has equality, diversity and inclusion at its heart**. 'GreHacks' is a series of two-day hacks, run in partnership with local organisations, designed to engage students typically underrepresented in extra-curricular development opportunities, including those with caring responsibilities, BAME and disabled students. The two-day format means that students only need to arrange cover for their caring responsibilities over the course of a weekend. The project provides bursaries to cover caring costs, and travel costs for disabled students, to remove financial barriers to participation. Sessions are filmed so students can access learning materials at their own pace. To ensure ethnic diversity across the delivery programme, including our speakers, mentors, and partner organisations, we work with Foundervine, an entrepreneurial network focussed on ensuring diversity within the start-up sector, and emphasise this in our student recruitment. We also promote EDI via our partner organisations. In 2020/21 our partners included Tree Shepherd, a local social enterprise working with disadvantaged community groups, Cassava Republic Press, a small, independent African publisher, Made in Greenwich, a local shop supporting enterprise, and Peabody, a housing association working with many of our student communities.

161 students gained meaningful consultancy experience in GreHacks first year, taking part in 4 different hacks. 55% of students were from the target groups. 10 of the students have continued to work with the Generator on their own business ideas and 5 students were taken on as interns at each organisation. A second-year student in Business Management fed back:

*"The challenge really captivated me because it focused on inclusion and diversity and support for young people. Because we were creating solutions that would take hold in Thamesmead, which is a very similar place to where I grew up, it really resonated with me."*

### Employability

Our progression rates are at benchmark for full-time students and materially above it (100%) for part-time students. Evidence suggests that Londoners who study in London and remain there for work face substantial difficulties gaining graduate-level employment.<sup>16</sup> Given our student demographic, which includes a high proportion of local, commuter students, being at benchmark is therefore a significant achievement. This is reflected in the University being placed as the **top modern London university and first in Kent for graduate prospects** by The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide in 2022.

The University is committed to developing our students' confidence, social capital and employability skills to enable them to gain the graduate-level employment they deserve. We have always placed a strong focus on employability: as already explained, we develop professional skills through practice-based pedagogy and provide relevant, authentic curricula in partnership with industry and employers. We have put in place several initiatives that are impactful for the progression of our students including: professional accreditation of courses, mentoring schemes, providing students with industry placements, meaningful employment whilst they study, and our innovative Greenwich Employability Passport.

We have developed **flexible, innovative** ways of undertaking **placements** to increase the number available and to expand the range of organisations students can engage with. For example, our Psychology programmes contain a 50-hour work experience component, based on feedback from employers who wanted to offer short placements. Students also appreciate this approach as it provides the chance to relate their experiences of work across multiple modules, and to submit assessments that linked module content to employability skills. Similarly, our Business and Management programmes offer virtual internships, increasing the options open to students; and we have approval from the Nursing and Midwifery Council for our adult, children's and mental health nursing students to undertake up to 600 of their 2,300 practice hours as simulated practice.

We know many of our students need to work to support their studies, and to ensure that this is meaningful work that will develop the skills and experience required for graduate-level employment, we are committed to increasing the opportunities for students to work for us. We look for opportunities to employ them: for example, events students were recruited to organise our staff awards, whilst design students created the trophies. As a result, **we currently employ over 450 students** and run our own JobShop to allow staff to recruit students in valuable career-enhancing roles, such as research assistants. We have the largest Student Ambassador scheme in the country, employing approximately 350 students each year to work in a variety of roles. We ensure that disabled students get the opportunity to work for the University to enhance their employment prospects – currently, 11% of our Student Ambassadors class themselves as disabled and work to enhance accessibility.

We have a higher percentage of students compared to the sector that need to work part-time during their studies, and then continue to work part-time on completion of their studies. To support their needs, we have launched a **part-time jobs fayre**. This helps students find meaningful, graduate-level, part-time employment in a context where part-time work is less likely to be classified as graduate-level (56% is graduate level, compared to 77% of full-time employment).<sup>17</sup> Likewise, our strategy focus on **working with local businesses** increases their relevance to the significant portion of our home students who are locally-based and wish to find jobs in commutable areas.

Our successful university-wide **Career Mentoring Scheme** supports our students to articulate the relevance of their skills and experiences to employers, and to understand better the range of options open to them. In October 2022 alone, we recruited 664 new alumni and employers to act as mentors, and we have 248 mentors from JP Morgan this year, demonstrating the value they place on their work with us. We have seen increasing engagement from students since the launch in 2019/2020. We currently have 920 student mentees, approximately 60% of whom identify as BAME across our four faculties. This has undoubtedly helped our full-time students of 'Other' ethnicity to be materially above benchmark for progression and our 'Black' students to be approaching this.

We tailor this important support even further with specific career mentoring schemes in different disciplines, and catering to different student communities. We proudly work with the Ministry of Justice on their Graduate Aspirations Programme, which provides career mentoring from a civil servant to students from underrepresented groups, with 90 students registered this year; and we have developed a partnership with the 1 Hour Project, which enables industry experts to donate their time to mentor students from less advantaged backgrounds who typically have limited access to professional networks.

The **Greenwich Employability Passport** scheme is another ongoing well-established university-wide tool which incentivises students to build the skills and evidence that will enable them to secure graduate-level employment. This is utilised both in the curriculum and alongside it through our

employability service. It acts as a highly accessible pathway for students to engage in employability activity and recognise the value of developing their experience and skills. Students are awarded points for participating in activities such as interactive workshops to prepare for job applications and interviews, work experience (including placements, internships, and part time employment) and the career mentoring scheme (referenced earlier). When students meet set milestones, they are rewarded with employability related events or endorsements that student feedback has confirmed is of practical value to their career aspirations. This includes access to networking events with local and national employers, professional photo sessions to enhance CVs and LinkedIn profiles, and a university endorsed LinkedIn recommendation.

These schemes, and our consistent good practice around employability, are **embedded directly into the curriculum**. A great example is the core first-year Personal and Professional Development module, which is shared by GBS's 41 programmes. The module requires students to complete a technical skills MOOC; a video assessment which develops academic and employability skills; and a 'mock job application' based on a placement opportunity using real-world questions to support students to be work-ready. The latter brought to life by the students receiving presentations from students in higher years returning from a placement. One student reflected:

*"[This] introduced me to further benefits I can gain from a year in industry, and specific steps I had to follow...to secure a position."*

Second year students can further build on this learning through the 'Future Paths' module, which was co-designed with students and taught to around 800 second-year GBS students. In it, students explore different graduate paths open to them, with the support of specialist employability and enterprise teams. They complete a virtual internship and an equality and diversity training course. On passing the module, students can complete Microsoft Office Specialist Certification.

## Educational Gains

Because our focus on outcome goes beyond helping students develop specific skills, our graduates are **life-ready**, not simply 'work-ready'. We build their confidence, develop their career aspirations and support their social mobility. The University's commitment to Education without Boundaries has led to **repeated recognition as being sector-leading for social mobility**, with the University ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the Institute for Fiscal Studies 2021 index,<sup>18</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> in the HE Policy Institute's 2022 index,<sup>19</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> worldwide for reducing inequalities in the Times Higher Impact Rankings for 2022.<sup>20</sup>

### Productive, ethical citizens

The rounded education we provide builds on the lived experiences of our students and prepares them to live productive and ethical lives, contributing positively to local, regional, national and global communities.

The biggest challenges our students face in their personal lives are also those set out in the Sustainable Development Goals. It is no surprise that they are highly motivated to tackle these. Our students are passionate about **sustainability** and want to live their lives in ways that are sustainable both for themselves personally and for wider society. In partnership with GSU, we have published guides to sustainable homes, halls, work, money habits, spending and fashion; and collectively we run a student and staff network, the award-winning Eco Team Greenwich, which was a finalist in the Green Gown Awards 2020. We bring these values to life in our Green Week and the Ethical Food and Fairtrade Fortnight, and through participation in the London Student Sustainability Conference, which raises student awareness of sustainability issues. Our outstanding commitment and activity in these areas has resulted in a 1st Class rating and 8<sup>th</sup> place in the People & Planet University League

for our environmental and ethical performance; and a 2022 Levelling Up Universities Award in the ‘Harness the energy transition’ category.

In addition, our graduates act as positive influences fighting for **social justice and inclusion** in the workplace and society. Our alumni [redacted] was inspired to become Hackney’s youngest ever councillor while still at university with us after his politics lecturer challenged his views and gave him a safe space to work out what he stood for. He has been recognised for his work to engage young people with politics.

*“The best thing about the University of Greenwich is the relationship with lecturers and the support they give. It was 100% important to my development. I didn’t just get an education, I found clarity of purpose.”* [redacted]

Our Curriculum Framework provides staff with resources to develop **effective, evidence-based curricula** that develop students’ awareness, skills and competencies to support inclusive, sustainable practices in a global context. Examples of how this plays out are given in the ‘[Authentic curricula](#)’ section. Alongside our curricula, **GSU fosters ethical behaviours** and awareness through practices such as promoting Black, Disability, LGBTQ+ and Women’s History Months, championing pronoun use and the development of an updated accessibility map of our campuses.

We place strong emphasis on peer support through our inclusivity consultants, digital champions and student ambassadors, which has been shown to enhance inter-cultural competence and build community cohesion.<sup>21</sup> Students work in partnership with the University, and positioning them as experts through student conferences, further **develops their self-identity**, how they view themselves and their relationships with others.<sup>22</sup> This is further enhanced through our work on autobiography, as described in the ‘[Academic Experience and Assessment](#)’ section.

#### New mindsets and attributes

We ensure that our graduates have a **growth mindset** and are prepared for **lifelong learning**. Our academic support helps our students develop academic confidence, and the tools to develop awareness of their needs. Throughout their educational journey with us, the Personal Tutors and Course Leaders play key roles, helping our students to own their experience, build their determination to succeed, and provide practical assistance to help them manage specific learning challenges. [redacted] of Wandsworth-based A2i Dyslexia CIC, a social enterprise that aims to raise awareness of specific learning difficulties within the local community, articulates the impact of these relationships:

*“My biggest inspiration was my course leader, who made me believe in myself and inspired me to reach my full potential despite my Dyslexia and specific learning difficulties.”*

We also encourage our students to recognise their **lived experience as expertise** they can share with others both within the University and within the wider sector. A good example is [redacted] students who presented at the [redacted] conference on her personal experience as a disabled student with mental health difficulties, something she described as:

*“completely invaluable to my experience as a disabled student.”*

She has said that two years ago she would never have thought it possible that she would speak to people she did not know, demonstrating the educational gain from her time at Greenwich.

We also develop our students’ awareness of their own **wellbeing** giving them the tools to manage their motivation, and any difficulties they may face during their studies. As described in the ‘[Continuation and completion](#)’ section, we do this through integrating wellbeing into the curriculum,

providing online resources, university-wide resilience workshops and support from our excellent Wellbeing team.

#### Personal, professional & academic skills

Our students graduate as work-ready professionals. They leave UoG with a greatly enhanced skill set and professional attributes formed through our curricula and distinctive pedagogy. We are rightly proud of the support provided by our academic support team, our employability team, and of the opportunities our students have had within the curricula and through placements and work-based experiences.

Our students gain a wide range of practical, academic, and self-management skills through our [Authentic curricula](#). They collaborate with peers and work in teams, use different approaches and perspectives to solve **complex, real-world problems**, often set by our industrial partners, and have the experience of working to deadlines and delivering to different audiences. The use of simulation and review, described in our '[Practice-based, interactive pedagogy](#)' section develops **reflective practitioners** who can anticipate the impact of their actions.

Academic skills are also supported centrally, through our strong support for **academic development** via GreFest, LevelUp and our VLE courses. This work further develops life competencies, such as numeracy, literacy, time management and the ability to continue to learn and grow as a professional as described in our '[Preparing our students for success](#)' section.

We provide strong support for **employability skills**, as described in our '[Employability](#)' section, through our innovative placements and industry-supported curricula. Furthermore, we have extended our use of VR technologies to simulate work environments that give students a sense of what corporate and professional environments feel like, increasing their confidence and sense that they belong there. Our students leave having had experience of real and simulated workplaces and understand the expectations on them as professionals.

## Conclusion

**Our students are at the centre of everything we do** and are true co-creators in their education. Recognising our students as experts, we take seriously their input and voice, and our deep relationship with the GSU enhances and amplifies the partnership. Acknowledging and building on their lived experiences and prior learning, we provide the best opportunities to develop the skills and attributes they need to fulfil their career and life ambitions.

We understand the barriers to success that our students face, and we have put in place in a variety of **support measures and scaffolding to help every student progress**. We ensure all students can access technology, expertise, and resources, regardless of which campus they are on, whether they are at home or commuting. We understand that university can be a time of anxiety in a rapidly changing world. We have therefore embedded wellbeing into the curriculum to support students to manage their health and wellbeing and have excellent support services for times of difficulty. Financial struggles pose a major barrier for our students, and we have put in place a range of support to ensure our students are not hungry and have the resources they need to succeed. Our commitment to inclusivity drives us to challenge the systemic barriers that our students face and to truly deliver an Education without Boundaries.

Our unique educational experience comes to life through the **exceptional learning environment** we offer. Our cutting-edge facilities, integrated technology and inclusive estates provides the setting for innovative practice-based pedagogy and new modes of delivery that suit our students and allow



greater access to HE. Our diverse body of staff is supported to develop their expertise and to be role models for current and future students.

Our offer to students begins from before they enrol, with superb academic support that fully prepares them for success and which continues to support students throughout their studies. Our curricula are relevant and authentic, shaped by students' voices, as well as through our excellent partnerships with industry, professional bodies, and the local communities. Our standout practice-based learning lifts our students experience from theoretical understanding gained in the classroom, to the **real-world application** of that learning. Our students really are work ready when they leave UoG.

At UoG the educational experience is more than a qualification. Our students are motivated by the bigger challenges that face society, and we give them the space and support to use their expertise and passion to develop their **sense of purpose**. Our university values help shape and direct that transformation. When our students graduate, they are ready to take on the next challenge.

Our students have an outstanding, relevant and authentic educational experience that gives them the best start to their future journey. **UoG education is a transformational experience – for all our students.**

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