

## 1. Provider Context

### a. Introduction to submission

The University of West London has made remarkable strides in recent years and can confidently describe itself as a vibrant and genuinely diverse community of higher learning. As an institution defined by a rich palette of cultures, our mission is to inspire our students to become innovative and creative professionals regardless of social background and ethnicity, by connecting them to exciting and rewarding careers. Our broader vision is to be a career focussed, professionally engaged, modern university of quality. A University that challenges, inspires, transforms, and above all achieves. All this is underpinned by the values of **accessibility**, **affordability**, **diversity**, **transparency**, and **accountability**.

*Students are supported unconditionally in their learning journey to achieve based on our belief in three fundamental rights: the right to enhancement; the right to inclusion; and the right to participation (Achievement 2023) [1].*

As evidenced within the *Sunday Times* Good University Guide 2023 [2], we are consistently ranked within the top 15 institutions on a composite of measures for social inclusion, including for black, ethnic, working class, mature and female participation.

The continued enhancement of Teaching Excellence places us firmly in the silver overall rating based on our outstanding student experience metrics and sector standard student outcomes metrics. We are recognised universally for our commitment to widening participation and our pursuit of teaching excellence, this is supported by the awards we have achieved including:

- University of the Year 'Student Experience' 2021 & 2023 *Sunday Times* Good University Guides [2]
- University of the Year 'Teaching Quality' 2023 *Sunday Times* Good University Guide [2]
- NEON Higher Education Institution of the Year 2018 [3]
- Times Higher Education (THE) Business School of the Year and Outstanding Financial Performance 2019 [4]
- Number 1 in the UK for student satisfaction, student voice and academic support in the National Student Survey (NSS) 2022 [5]
- Best modern London university (non-specialist) in the 2023 *Complete University Guide* [6]
- Number 23 out of 121 universities nationwide in *The Guardian University Guide* 2023 [7]

In 2020/21, as per the 'size and shape' dashboard [8], we registered 11,650 undergraduate students (excluding apprenticeships). That represents an increase of 34% from 2018/19. Our student profile is as follows (excludes unknown or NA's):

- 59% of UWL's students are from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds
- 61% of our students are mature learners (aged over 21 on entry)
- 55% of our students are from areas of multiple deprivation (IMD Q 1 and 2)
- 58% of our students are female
- 88% of our students enter with a qualification other than 'A' Level
- 16% of our students are registered with a disability

UWL transforms the lives and prospects of all our students by supporting them to achieve more than they believed was possible. We are particularly proud of those without the cultural and social capital or the financial safety net of many of their peers in other institutions. We have seen life-changing success even amongst the more challenging of our mature students, whose previous educational experience has not given them the confidence or opportunity to succeed academically. They have embraced socially meaningful careers, as well as prospering in sector-leading cutting-edge businesses, the technical professions, law, health, hospitality, and a range of artistic and performing occupations.

We embrace the view that individual successes are built on a holistic view of the student experience where career-focused knowledge, skills and abilities dovetail with the soft skills that are essential for success in work and life. Through the utilisation of our Achievement Strategy 2023, we established integrated core structures to ensure academic staff embed impactful research, scholarship, and professional practice into their courses. We believe in parity of esteem between teaching and research and UWL's continued emphasis on developing impactful research has allowed us to design course portfolios which stretch and challenge our students and their ability to research and evaluate. To support this process the university heavily invested to develop the research profile of the institution as evidenced in the latest Research Excellence Framework (REF 2021) [\[9\]](#) exercise in which the university was the highest climbing institution, rising 29 places, to enter the top 100 research institutions in the United Kingdom for the first time.

The strategic focus of personalising the learning journey of each student has been recognised in the university being awarded the *Sunday Times Good University Guide*, University of the Year for Student Experience and University of the Year for Teaching Quality in 2023 [\[2\]](#). This is the first time in the 42-year history of the guide that one institution has simultaneously won both awards. It is also the second time in three years UWL was awarded University of the Year for Student Experience. UWL's continued strategic commitment to teaching and research has led to a significant rise within the academic league tables. In the latest 2023 Guardian League Table [\[7\]](#) the University was ranked 23<sup>rd</sup> in the UK and 40<sup>th</sup> in the Sunday Times Good University Guide 2023 [\[2\]](#). The ascendancy of the university and the benefit to its students is a clear impact of strategy and implementation plan that includes ongoing evaluation and action of Key Performance Indicators utilised across the whole of the institution to help support our drive for continuous improvement and teaching and research excellence.

National Student Survey (NSS) [\[5\]](#) results demonstrate the university has established itself firmly in the top quartile of institutions across the UK. In 2022 we were first for student experience, student voice and academic support based on the average of all questions. The table below outlines the performance of the university for Overall Satisfaction (Question 27) as reported by the National Student Survey over the past five year's:

Year	% Students satisfied with their course	UWL v Sector Average
2018	79.4%	-4.1%
2019	87.4%	+3.8%
2020	86.3%	+3.7%
2021	77.4%	+2%
2022	84.5%	+8.2%

Our unique and excellent student experience begins at the application and recruitment stage giving students confidence in their choice of course and encourages them to feel part of our learning community even before they embark on their learning journey. Many of our undergraduate courses offer a four-year award which includes a foundation year to ensure students acquire confidence and raise aspirations. There is an overarching philosophy to offer students above average

contact time in small classes delivered by academically and professionally qualified staff. Ensuring this approach has allowed us to develop some of the best student engagement metrics in the sector. Part of this success is students feeling they belong to a learning community that values and acts upon their views as evidenced by question B12.5 an additional question of the NSS 2022 (74%) [10].

Our learning community and excellent student experience is continually underpinned by huge investment in state-of-the-art resources to support the outstanding student outcomes with spend per student currently standing at £7,160 [24]. The University's capital investment programme continues including the recent purchase of two buildings within Ealing to support the 'real world' student experience which is at the heart of our strategy. This estate expansion forms part of the 'Precinct Campus' concept which will see the University become one linked by the many arts establishments located within Ealing, including Ealing Studios, Drama Studios London (DSL) and Questors Theatre to create a creative corridor.

## **b. Scope of Submission**

We are extremely proud of the success of the staff /student partnership and the fact that these efforts are reflected in our performance as evidenced through the metrics found in the TEF Data Dashboard (TDD) [11]. The Student Experience section provides compelling evidence that UWL is delivering excellence with all five experience measures (as well as most split indicators) performing materially above benchmark for each one. Our overall outcome measures for full-time students clearly exceed the OfS's minimum thresholds, and we are broadly in line with benchmark for continuation and progression.

It is worth noting that our part-time provision is made up almost exclusively of students studying on credit bearing and stand-alone modules and not full courses. As shown on the 'size and shape' dashboard [8], 70% of part-time entrants across the four years were studying for less than a year. These would normally be excluded from the Student Outcomes and TEF data dashboards (paragraph 19 [8]) but due to a coding anomaly in HESA they are visible in our statistics. This obscures the outcome data for the small number of part-time students we do have (<100 new entrants each year). Given the relative size of our actual undergraduate part-time provision then,

we will be referring only to full-time first-degree students throughout this document unless otherwise specified.

Whilst we acknowledge our recent move into apprenticeship disciplines, including the joint development of the Metropolitan Police – Police Officer Apprenticeships, we believe the limited outcome data and student experience metrics are insufficient to provide an opportunity for meaningful evaluation at this stage.

### **c. Partner Institutions**

To support our previous strategy *Ambition 2018* [12], over the last decade we have built relationships with a portfolio of select partners aligned to the values of the university. Currently we have 25 UK partners who are in scope and an additional 14 international collaborations which are outside the scope of this submission. Such partners have been chosen as part of a strategy to expand our commitment to widening participation by developing courses with partners in demographics which would have otherwise been underserved.

We pride ourselves on the direct support we offer our partner institutions; this includes a very effective academic link tutor network, offering a range of training and CPD activity including HEA accreditation. Partners are supported by the dedicated staff of the Global Partnership Office who oversee the quality and routine monitoring of our provision with the assistance of the Dean of UK Partners. A bi-monthly Academic Partnership Committee meets to monitor partnership information with the chair reporting actions directly into Academic Board the main university board. The university hosts an Annual Partnership Conference which is attended by all our partners with the objective of information dissemination and networking opportunities. Partner data has been examined within this submission and we are pleased to see that it is in line with the rest of the university.

### **d. Our students as partners**

The University's Board of Governors, Executive, and Senior Management group work in a close and productive partnership with the University of West London Students' Union (UWLSU). The UWLSU wholly endorses the content of this TEF submission and has been fully involved in its preparation alongside its own student submission. Much of this exemplary partnership has been based on a series of promises made with our students wherever they reside. They are:

- ✓ Helping you discover your purpose and translate that into a fulfilling career and a meaningful life
- ✓ Allowing you to work side by side with teacher/professional scholars to expand your learning
- ✓ Actively seeking your ideas, perspectives, and voice
- ✓ Supporting your physical and mental health
- ✓ Providing you with opportunities to meaningfully engage with partners beyond the University community
- ✓ Ensuring you play an essential part in the vibrant wider University community

The university is extremely proud of the ground-breaking positive working relationship with the UWLSU. UWLSU has consistently achieved high satisfaction scores for the NSS over the past

decade, being rated the number one student union in the country for 4 of the last 5 years (based in Question 26 of the NSS [\[5\]](#)). The table below illustrates the strength of the SU's satisfaction amongst our student body and how this compares against the sector average.

Year	% Students satisfied with the Students Union	UWL v Sector Average
2018	74.1%	+17.6%
2019	78%	+22.4%
2020	82.9%	+26.9%
2021	69.8%	+16.5%
2022	74.6%	+22%

The student voice is key to delivering a truly co-created educational experience for our student body. From the TEF Data Dashboards (TDD) [\[11\]](#) it is clear to see that UWL has scored highly for both our full and part time provision with students ranking us 10% above benchmark. Of note is the split for our Allied Health course provision which achieved a score 20.5% above benchmark for student voice for an area which often attracts a high level of negativity across the sector.

The introduction of the 'Big Conversation' is an example of how the UWLSU has worked

with the university to better understand our students from the very outset of their journey. The first of its kind in the UK but now adopted by institutions across the UK, the 'Big Conversation' provides an early opportunity for the individual student voice to be heard and personalised requirements identified, allowing us to draw thematic needs and requirements for the student community. All new students have a one-to-one discussion with a UWLSU student ambassador about who they are and to identify the support they are likely to need through their studies. This triggers communication from our student support services departments to help support the students' needs and further thematic analysis is undertaken. Data and a student perspective of the Big Conversation process can be found within the UWLSU Student Submission.

The 'Student Issues Tracker,' was introduced 3 years ago as a joint support mechanism with information (complaints and comments) gathered by UWLSU and forwarded for action to the University, which has allowed us to identify issues of either an academic or support service nature and rectify them through early intervention. The tracker takes the form of a weekly report which is delivered to the SPVC Education as a RAG rated dashboard to help identify and monitor issues that need to be dealt with. This is monitored at the highest level of the institution, the Vice-Chancellor's Executive (VCE). Heads of Schools and Colleges also receive the tracker and report back to their teams to action any issue identified and provide a tool for ongoing self-reflection and evaluation.

Through our unique partnership with the Students' Union, we have developed ongoing benefits to our university community including involvement in all university boards, committees and quality events including policymaking. Furthermore, our unparalleled partnership can be demonstrated through the following activities:

- Co-creation in the development and validation of curricula.
- Input into the development of new facilities and resources including new gym facilities run by the UWLSU and personalised learning spaces.
- Training student representatives to prepare them to attend Course Committee Meetings and provide information related to issues on the student tracker.
- Full participation in our Access and Participation Policy and member of the APP group and recruitment of APP Equality Champions.
- Supported rollout and participating in training of the university mental health and wellbeing strategy for students and staff.
- Managing course and community backed activity with university funded field trips and guest lectures across all levels of the academic community and industry.
- Liaising and supporting the university sustainability agenda providing engagement as a key stakeholder in our mission to becoming a carbon neutral institution.
- Initiating the 'Special Thanks and Recognition Awards' (STAR) which is a student nominated process recognising academic and support colleagues who have excelled in their support of the student experience.

## 2. Student Experience

### a. Teaching Quality

UWL is committed to embedding outstanding teaching practices and support that is tailored to the needs of individual students to ensure quality of their learning, progression, and attainment. Our TDD [\[11\]](#) metric illustrates the success of this strategy which indicates that 86.6% of students highly rate our teaching quality (this is 5.6% above benchmark based on the TDD). Our analysis of the 2022 NSS [\[5\]](#) data places us 7th in the UK for teaching quality. This is testament to the effectiveness of our academic and central services staff and the holistic support offered to students as they navigated their way through complex difficulties experienced during covid and beyond. We assured ourselves of this by conducting a 'Covid Resilience Survey', to gauge and direct support needed to help optimise student attainment in an enforced digital environment.

Our students repeatedly stressed their desire to return to face-to-face teaching as soon as possible, mainly due to their multiple caring and career responsibilities, IT poverty and accommodation circumstances that restricted home study. We responded by being one of the first universities to open our doors to 100% face to face teaching the day lockdown restrictions were eased in England and our library offered a safe space for our student body when permitted during the pandemic.

Maintenance of the quality of our student experience provision during Covid is evidenced by analysis of the 2022 NSS data [\[5\]](#) with 90% of our students responding that staff were good at explaining things; and over 86% of our students commented on the fact that staff had made their course interesting, and their course was 'intellectually stimulating.' Over 85% of students agreed with the statement 'My course has challenged me to achieve my best work', ranking the University 6th in the UK on this metric. In 'normal' times this is a challenge but during Covid such challenges became even more acute and therefore this outcome is even more pleasing.



From the NSS additional 'B' questions [10] 85% of our students believed the range and balance of approaches to teaching had helped them learn - 15% above the sector average for England. Furthermore, 89% of students responding to question B13.2 believed their course stimulated their interest in the field of study (8% above the sector average); and 83% of students responded that their course had stimulated their enthusiasm for further learning (13% above the sector average).

***Our Achievement 2023 Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy [13], firmly commits us to delivering transformational opportunities for our students via a high-quality teaching and learning environment. We believe passionately in developing our curricula based on the principles of research informed, industry led and professional recognition.***

Currently, over 50% of courses delivered at UWL are recognised by the relevant PSRB organisation [14]. Where such recognition is not available, we work with the most relevant sector bodies to create industry panels, deliver Master Classes, webinars and employ visiting industry practitioners and professors to ensure the best real world learning experience as related to careers is available for our students. An example of this excellent feedback from various PSRB's is illustrated below.

***"The teaching and delivery is of the highest calibre. Also, your courseware is top dollar by the way 5 star"* External Verifier for APM – Accountancy**

The university undertakes an Annual Educational Review (AER) of all courses within the portfolio. This enables senior staff, course managers and UWLSU to discuss Key Performance metrics linked to the success of student continuation, completion, and progression for each course. Staff development and future resource requirements are also discussed within the AER process. This strategic process has had significant impact on the delivery of the curriculum evidenced through changes to the course portfolio, enhanced teaching infrastructure, staff development, improvements in recruitment and national student survey results.

Underpinning the AERs are a variety of monitoring activities to continually improve UWL's strong teaching quality. These include Module Evaluation Survey (MES), teaching observation and the UWLSU student issues tracker. Course Committee meetings occur each semester encourage students and staff from across the university to report ongoing issues. These meetings feed into the appropriate College or School Board which can be progressed as necessary to Academic Board.

We undertake a rigorous peer observation scheme, to enhance outstanding teaching quality. The purpose of the observation of teaching practice is threefold: to achieve consistency and transparency in UWL's approach to teaching observations; to ensure we are recognising and capturing good practice; and, finally, to ensure we are identifying CPD needs for our staff. Our teaching observation policy ensures that we can meet regulatory needs and provide appropriate recognition, support, and development for teaching staff. The process is designed to be supportive and to help staff reflect on areas in which they need to develop their practice. We require 100% completion of teaching observations of all academic permanent staff members of at least once

every two years (including our partner institution and sessional staff – Hourly Paid Lecturers) which has been achieved in the last round and is on track for the current observation period.

The demand of the pandemic to change delivery methodologies saw the need to accelerate our execution of online learning technology and was supported through the launch of *UWLFlex*, the University's flexible education model that guided teaching, learning, assessment, and support during this period, and which now forms the basis of a rich holistic online provision to enhance students' experience of in-person learning. This process was led by our Centre for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT), the University's academic development unit. One of the lessons learnt from the evaluation of *UWLFlex* was the need for flexibility to help support the student which significantly improve engagement. The project was one of six short-listed for the **THE Awards 2021** in the 'Technological or Digital Innovation of the Year' [\[15\]](#) category.

#### **b. Course content and delivery**

We are increasingly focussed on creating courses that allow 'real life practice.' All validation events must include input from an employer panel and co-creation with UWLSU from the developmental stage ensures core content and overall ambition reflect current and future practice in any given area. Employer engagement is paramount to the success of UWL graduates; several schools and colleges have formed Employer Engagement Boards which allow companies the opportunity to act as a conduit into the curriculum content and support the learning.

**The range of employers who have been co-opted onto such forums [\[16\]](#) including Segal, British Airways, Heathrow Airport, Amazon Web Services (AWS), Siemens, British Aerospace, International Hotel Group, Hilton Hotels, and IBM.**

Our prime West London location ensures access to a range of employer interactions which are embedded into the curriculum and progression outcomes which affords a significant positive impact on the student experience and outcomes. From across all school and colleges in the institution there is a wide range of engagement at a local and central London perspective as well as national and international level with students undertaking visits to Heathrow, London Stock Exchange, Lloyds of London, the Savoy, Abbey Road Studios, BBC Radio and TV productions, NHS Hospital Trusts, Broadmoor Hospital, plus a range of museums and exhibitions. For students who are unable to fund such trips the university and UWLSU provide necessary funding so all can participate.

Our courses draw on external expertise from professional practice, employers, and graduates to enhance the student experience. Our public lecture series has seen a range of eminent speakers address critical issues that face local, national, or international environments. A recent audit of our Prevent procedures found that the university has welcomed over 300 guest speakers [\[14\]](#) during the last academic year. In addition, our academic disciplines provide further external expertise: the Victor Ceserani Annual Lecture invites distinguished speakers from the hospitality industry to address our students and the sector; and film, fashion and music students collaborate at the end of each year on a range of projects including the summer catwalk which offers students the opportunity to showcase their designs in front of an invited industry audience.



To inspire and engage students we have invested significantly in the latest innovations in simulation technology to help students experience to create a 'real world' environment. Students benefit from ultra-modern facilities including a Boeing 737 flight simulator, simulance (ambulance simulator), radio studio, design laboratory, gold standard recording studios, drama theatre, crime scene lab, food innovation lab, geonomics lab, bio-science labs as well as highly specialised culinary kitchens. We know that practical based environments have an impact and are appreciated by our students, with 86% of our students reacting positively to NSS 2022 additional question B7.5 'Practical activities on my course have helped me learn' [10] which is 13% above the sector average.

Since its inception in 2018, our 'Today's Problems: Tomorrow's Solutions' strategy [17] has resulted in diversification of the course portfolio into STEM related subject areas. This links with our overall Achievement Strategy 2023 [1] and supports the needs of our local employers and economy which has identified major gaps in graduates qualified within these areas.

***To support this development the university has launched a range of research/specialist centres to encourage the development of our STEM portfolio including the Geller Institute of Aging and Memory (GIAM), PRISM Music and Screen, Centre for Inequality and Levelling Up (CEILUP), the West London Food Innovation Centre (WLFIC), Cybersecurity and Criminology Centre (CCC), The Richard Wells Research Centre for patient safety and The International Centre for Hospitality and Aviation Resilience Management (ICHARM).***

We launched a new School of Biomedical Science as a direct result of our push into the STEM portfolio to ensure true widening participation. The curricular in a range of schools has changed to reflect this strategic direction, including the London Geller College of Hospitality and Tourism, which has reviewed its portfolio with STEM modules being added to help meet employer's needs. The most recent additions to the undergraduate portfolio include degrees in Human Genetics, Human Biology, Genomics with Bioinformatics, Biomedical Informatics, Biosciences and Biochemistry and Audio Software Engineering

### **c. Assessment and Feedback**

Our assessment and feedback strategies embed outstanding practices which evidence effective results and allow students to be supported in learning, progression, and attainment. We consistently score highly within this metric for all four related questions within the NSS [5] as illustrated below. Furthermore, since the inception of our Achievement Strategy 2023 [1] our performance has improved both internally and across the sector.

Year	% Students satisfied with their course Feedback and Assessment (NSS)	UWL v Sector Average
2018	72.1%	-1.2%
2019	79.7%	+6.3%
2020	79.5%	+6.9%
2021	77.2%	+8.6%
2022	80.1%	+11.6%

There is a clear continuum in our assessment and feedback policy honouring the commitment from our previous TEF submission in 2017 and resulting in the embedding of the following: the submission, grading and feedback of assessed work must all be delivered electronically, unless the assessment prohibits it (for instance, submission by artefact or performance); and all feedback should be returned to students within 15 days.

Based on Question 11 of the 2022 NSS [\[5\]](#) survey 'I have received helpful comments on my work' the university achieved an 82%

satisfaction rate demonstrating that our students are not just happy with the speed of the feedback but, in addition, with the level of critique offered, this sentiment is further reflected in the MES [\[18\]](#) results we have achieved for semester 1 during the current academic year. As an institution we have realised that for students from BAME background there is a need to help encourage submission of their work. This led to the university launching a student attainment project (SAP2) which was funded by the Office for Students (OfS) in collaboration with two other institutions. One part of the project was to introduce checklists, so students felt confident in submitting their work. This aptly named 'Fit to Submit' (FTS) [\[19\]](#) policy has helped increase the number of submissions and reduce the attainment gap.

Staff are encouraged to set innovative and rigorous assignments which encourages challenge and support students in allowing a thorough understanding of the learning outcomes. To enable this, staff are supported by workshops and written guidance developed by our educational development team (CELT) and aligned to our mission that allows them to develop engaging assignments that are consistent in their approach to level and learning outcomes. Effective use of formative and summative feedback is key to our teaching and learning strategy and play a distinctive role across all our modules to ensure students consistently understand the task and purpose of an assessment, enhancing their resulting achievement.

Our External Examiners play an essential role in informing and developing the assessment and feedback mechanisms within the institution. From being part of the workshop panel at validation through to attending assessment boards and authoring their annual reports our externals have helped drive forward our continuous improvement in assessment and feedback scores within the NSS. The latest round of external examiner annual reports demonstrates their confidence in our feedback and assessment processes as illustrated below [\[14\]](#):

External Examiner Annual Report Questions	% of EE's in Agreement with Question
<i>standards being appropriate for the award</i>	100%
<i>sector recognised standards</i>	100%
<i>the assessment of student/apprentice performance being of a comparable standard to other institutions</i>	99.5%
Is there evidence of appropriate links between teaching on the course and scholarship, research, and professional practice	100%

Examples of last year's excellent external examiner comments can be seen below:

*'...the team has a very high standard of teaching and assessment and a strong student support structure that is reflected in strong student work and engagement. I can see strong commitment to teaching and learning with an emphasis on professional skills and employability, which is clearly successful and will prepare students for their careers.'* - **External Examiner BA (Hons) Electronic Music Production BA (Hons) Music Recording and Production**

*"I have always been impressed with the range and appropriateness of the forms of assessment used across the programme. They enable students to develop a range of transferable skills, and to enhance their employability."*

*"The whole programme of study enhances the employability of the students, enabling them to develop a range of skills and knowledge that will serve them well in the future."* - **External Examiner BA (Hons) Politics and International Relations**

#### d. Research & Professional Practice

The University is committed to the continual professional development of its staff. We do this so our students are provided with an outstanding academic experience based on contemporary, relevant, and stimulating curriculum and to retain and inspire staff.

We believe passionately that research and teaching are complementary. The link to research helps ensure our staff are passionate about their subjects and this is conveyed in their teaching as our NSS scores demonstrate. Students recognise the strength of teaching based on research input which is confirmed by Question B7.4 (NSS 2022) [10], highlighting that 86% of our students benefited from modules which were informed by current research. This is 8% higher than the English sector average. Of note is that 100% of our external examiners found evidence of the linkage between teaching and research and professional practice [14]. All our students are taught by staff actively engaged in research and/or professional practice. Teaching staff are encouraged and supported to be active researchers and 65% have a Doctorate. The University submitted 7 Units of Assessment to REF 2021[9], covering all our major subject areas. Nearly 80% of the impact of our research submitted in the REF was judged to be outstanding (4\*/3\*) in its reach and significance.

Our academic staff hold positions on one of three streams: research academic, teaching academic, or academic practitioner, with promotion opportunities designed to encourage seamless promotion opportunities from lecturer to professor. This is supported by merit awards for exceptional performance and further responsibilities.

Academic staff play an active role in engaging with business activities focussed on regional growth and development, including in January 2023 hosting events for supporting local business seeking to develop export and overseas opportunities in Oman, and bringing business together to identify their future skills needs for the Local Skills Improvement Plan. This engagement with both business, public and third sectors is reflected in UWL's KEF2 metrics, that saw above cluster performance in 'working with business', 'working with the public and third sector' and 'CPD and graduate start-ups' perspectives. Other data sources reflecting direct engagement and relationships with business are our growth of apprenticeship activity, nearing 1000 apprentices across levels 5-7, across 193 employers, and success in securing funds through Innovate UK's KTP Capability Building [\[20\]](#).

UWL's level of engagement with KE is reflected HE-BCI [\[21\]](#) data over the last 4 years, which shows growth in key areas relating to how UWL works with businesses, against a picture of a sector-wide decline in median average. To build on these achievements UWL launched a new KE strategy [\[22\]](#) in 21/22 with a focus on further growing KE activity, including a deliberate approach to enhancing the academic culture of engagement with business across the range of KE activities, from supporting innovation to ensuring students are fully prepared and skilled to tackle the business challenges of the future. This strategy is geared to supporting the broadening of UWL's curriculum to include more STEM capability, allowing UWL develop further strength in innovation engagements as well as our traditional strengths supporting organisations to acquire the skills and talent they need to succeed.

#### **e. Academic Support**

UWL academic support begins before students arrive on campus with a four-week pre-induction bridging activity to create a sense of belonging to university, build confidence in students for what they will be studying, and generate awareness of support services available to them. Whilst this is a strategic approach to improve access the focus is on the early identification of the needs of the student. The ongoing positive impact of this strategy is recognised in the 2022 NSS [\[5\]](#) where UWL is ranked 3rd overall for Academic Support.

Study skills offer a range of Study Skills Summer Schools (SSSS) for mature learners and One Day Workshops for new and returning students. SSSS help attendees prepare for the transition to higher education, by developing their study skills and raising their confidence in demonstrating these skills. We offer a range of SSSS for all students, but we recognise that new mature learners require more focus. Participants socialise with UWL teaching and support staff, academics, and current students which allows them to start developing friendships and a sense of belonging to help them settle into their studies and gain confidence. These workshops have proven extremely effective in reducing withdrawal rates across all levels for our mature students before joining who need to understand their study patterns due to care and work commitments. The table below highlights the success our SSSS [\[23\]](#) have had in helping students enrol and succeed:

Summer School	Average 1 <sup>st</sup> Submission rate	Average 1 <sup>st</sup> year credits gained (Max 120)	Average 1 <sup>st</sup> year grade	Average Continuation	Average Progression
Mature - attended SSSS	97%	105.8	64.4	94%	90%
Mature – Did not attend SSSS	90%	90.9	60.1	84%	75%

The on-campus induction is an initial two-week period with the first week based around the university programme of activity consisting of: Presentation from the Wellbeing Team, Transition to University workshop by the counselling team, DSA application support, Wellbeing Peer Mentoring introduction; Campus Tour and the Big Conversation. This is then followed in the second week by a School and Course specific activity.

In recent years we have operated an extended 'continuous' induction period which has been designed so that students are able to learn about the requirements and support available to them in a more relaxed paced manner, enabling them to learn of all our services and support offered without being overwhelmed. Additionally, following feedback within the 'Big Conversation' we offer a Quiet Induction for students who have requested it which includes the processes and interactions standard induction involves.

Our Study Support Team offers a wide range of tailored support for our students including general study related skills, English language support, access to our Royal Literary Fellows (RLF), maths café and IT support. Sessions are offered as workshops which can be accessed online or on campus as well as one-to-one study support appointments and drop-in sessions for when students need support the most.

In partnership with UWLSU we operate a peer mentoring scheme designed to build students confidence and sense of belonging and in turn positively impact continuation, attainment, and graduate outcomes. Evaluation of our peer mentoring programme indicates peer mentors and mentees outcomes are above University average.

The panel outcomes report from our **Bronze Athena Swan Award** highlighted that the University's peer mentoring scheme, which has been adapted so that students can ask for a mentor/mentee with similar lived experience to them, to be good practice.

Furthermore, the panel also commends the Student Union (SU) Equality Champion role which was created to help raise the student voice in operational and strategic matters; the Equality Champions are encouraged to think of ideas that will make a positive difference to equality and to bring these ideas to regular meetings held with key staff.

Every student has a named Personal Tutor who in turn are supported by Lead Personal Tutors (LPTs) who are experienced Personal Tutors within each Academic School. LPTs are seen as the conduits to student success – listening to students, helping them to recognise issues and identifying the most appropriate means to support them. They participate in a forum to explore and

identify actions and good practice that can be taken forward through UWLs formal teaching and learning structure.

All student support services support UWL's inclusive curriculum strategy. However, Library Services has a strategic priority to develop resources and course-related materials to be more inclusive and representative of our students' diversity. Library Services participate in course approvals and reapprovals, and work collaboratively in developing a more inclusive stock selection.

#### **f. Physical & Virtual Learning Support**

As a partial response to and consequence of the pandemic, we have been able to accelerate the development of our learning resources both physical and virtual which are tailored to the needs of our students and effectively support outstanding teaching and learning.

UWL continues to invest to provide the best physical, human, and digital resources available.

**The Complete University Guide (2023) [6] demonstrates our investment in our student learning environment with our spend on facilities above sector average (ranked 41<sup>st</sup>) and within the top five of our competitor set.**

Investment in facilities currently stands at over £180 million for the period between 2016 and 2022 [24]. This has created access to state-of-the-art resources where students can develop their practical and professional skills, as well as generating experience of real-world simulation working autonomously and in the workplace. New facilities include a new sports centre at Gunnersbury Park as well as a UWLSU run centre based at St Mary's Road. We have invested in a new post-graduate Marcia Worrell Centre to help develop our research capabilities.

**This very substantial investment is highly valued by our students who during the NSS 2022 ranked UWL 7<sup>th</sup> in the UK for learning resources [10].**

Students ranked our library resources in 9<sup>th</sup> place and our IT resources were ranked 5<sup>th</sup> across the UK [10]. Each academic School and College has a dedicated Subject Librarian, who works closely to enable study resources, and provide delivery of information literacy in the curriculum with a focus on critical and workplace-related information literacy.

We continue to grow the library collection, with a specific focus on growing our eBooks collection. This includes the launch of *Perlego* during the start of academic year 22/23 which offers students an additional one million eBooks that cover a range of subject areas within our curriculum. The library seeks regular student feedback from students by working in partnership with the UWLSU to improve its offer and is proud to have been awarded a 'Customer Service Excellence' accreditation.

All students have access to *Blackboard* for which we have a standard template designed to consistently scaffold student learning outside the classroom. We have invested in *Blackboard Ultra* which offers additional functions for accessibility, and this will tremendously help us address



the needs of the 16% of our students who have a declared disability, and of others who may not have registered their disability. UWL advocates engagement with *LinkedIn Learning* to provide training and development resource for teaching, student learning, and student and staff development. We use *Panopto* to record timetabled lectures and upload to *Blackboard* under the 'UWL Replay' banner. Students also have access to *Campus Press*, a tool allowing them to create their own blogs, wikis, and online portfolios in a safe and supported environment. These digital tools are underpinned by pervasive high-speed Eduroam wireless.

## **g. Student Engagement**

The University's Student Services department provides a proactive, responsive, and flexible service for all students. This holistic approach is designed to encourage students' independence and builds their resilience, helping them manage situations with self-assurance. The service includes careers advice, volunteering opportunities, financial support, funding advice, immigration advice, scholarships and bursaries administration, disability and mental health support, counselling, faith, placements, and employment and is offered through the student hub. It has also introduced a new welfare team whose role is to 'triage' students and act as a central dissemination point to ensure all students are receiving appropriate support as quickly as possible. The University offers out of hours support for financial and accommodation emergencies and subscribes to Nightline, a confidential listening, support, and practical information service for students which is available from 6pm to 8am during term time. Alongside UWLSU, the Student Services department is a critical and valued one stop shop for student engagement outside of the curriculum.

The UWL Retention group was initiated several years ago, led by SPVC student experience, to address continuation and success by ensuring that we have regular, central oversight of attendance, engagement, submission, extension, mitigation, and continuation. The group meets weekly and reviews student non-attendance/engagement data which is collated by the central strategic planning team and is displayed as the retention dashboard which is also available via sharepoint to all stakeholders who are expected to engage with the data. This strategic group provides institutional oversight and recommendations for actions that are highlighted from learner analytics data to enable coproduction of strategic interventions to the benefit of individual students.

We have achieved high levels of student engagement in our MES; this year in Semester One 22/23 [18], 45% of our students responded to our online surveys providing valuable insights into their learning experience at module level. Further evidence of engagement came through the additional questions in NSS 2022 [10], where 80.63% of students indicated that they felt they were part of a group committed to learning (against 61.78% sector average for England) which signals not only that they engage with learning but also with their fellow learners. Overall, for section B12 we scored 19% above sector norm for belonging to a learning community'.

We support students' transition and extension into higher education by providing an extensive induction period, extended contact time, and maximize its effectiveness through smaller, more

interactive classes. Analysis of weighted contact time shows that more than 80% of teaching takes place in classes of fewer than 28 students [14], a statistic indicative of our commitment to high quality teaching. NSS 2022 Additional Question B7.2 [10] 'the range and balance of approaches to teaching has helped me to learn', at 15% above the sector, confirms our students' appreciation of our student-centred approach. Within section 3.b we talk about a range of OfS, and NHS funded projects we have received to help support students through such transitions.

Student engagement has been enhanced through our Volunteering programme which encourages students to sign up and undertake a range of activities to help in their local community. Enthusiastically and purposefully coordinated by the V Team, student activities and successes are celebrated annually at the 'V' Awards that are attended by senior staff, students, community groups and tutors.

In line with our Achievement Strategy 2023 [1] we provide opportunities and projects to raise attainment and aspiration and to promote higher education to young people and adult learners from under-represented groups. Current activities include:

- The *National Saturday Club* programme, giving young people aged 13-16 the opportunity to study a creative subject every Saturday morning. This year's Saturday Club focuses on the theme of Society and Change.
- Our *Young People's Lecture programme*, where we work with a small group of Year 12 students through a series of workshops and meetings, building towards an afternoon of motivational speaking organised by young people, for young people.
- Storytelling programmes and workshops, aiming to develop learners' language, literacy, and performance skills.

### 3. Student Outcomes

As demonstrated throughout this submission the university is committed to delivering positive outcomes for all our students and we have a strong track record of doing that. We are unwavering in our approach; we will always act in the best interests of our students as we recognise that positive outcomes depend on individual aspirations, wellbeing, and circumstance. Such a personalised approach is clearly highly valued by UWL students.

We are wholly committed to supporting students through their qualification and onwards into further study and/or highly skilled employment. At times this can mean confronting ethical dilemmas and regulatory contradictions. Whilst we continuously support and encourage continuation, completion, and progression we acknowledge that there are instances where students would be better served by making different choices. At UWL, we work tirelessly to understand and support every student and part of our excellence lies in the impartiality of the advice we provide to those that need to make difficult choices. Even at UWL where there is bespoke attention and support available, we must accept that sometimes it simply is not enough to help students overcome the challenges they face

We can cope with the impact this approach has on our metrics if

those decisions ultimately lead to a transferral, deferral or withdrawal that is in the best interest of the individual. We are clear that there is something to be gained from their time at UWL even if they do not continue or complete their course.

This approach is particularly pertinent given the demographic profile of the University. At UWL we are all too familiar with the characteristics of students who are at a disadvantage when considering student outcomes. Three out of ten UWL students come from the lowest ABCS quintile [8], a group that is typically underrepresented in higher education and tends to experience lower continuation, completion, and progression rates. We are also aware of the numerous factors preventing this group from achieving positive outcomes e.g., digital poverty, financial hardship, family prioritisation and commuting, to name just a few.

In recent years, we have tried to make better use of our data, to shine a light on these factors and target them more specifically using a theory of change both through our APP and various other strategies and plans. We have outlined several initiatives that have been implemented on the back of similar processes in the previous section i.e., capital investment in international student support, 24/7 library support, Student Hub, targeted financial support, as well as OfS funded projects and research.

This is all part of a comprehensive approach to improving both student experience and therefore outcomes, and it should be apparent that individual student well-being very much takes centre stage. In the next three sections, we will cover B3 outcomes more specifically (as presented on the TDD) but we would ask the panel to reflect on the fact that everything we do within the student experience is intended to flow through and result in positive student outcomes. Where we provide commentary on B3 outcomes we're operating under the assumption that the panel has the accompanying data to hand.

#### **a. Continuation**

Our overall continuation rate is broadly in line with benchmark, and it has been consistently since 2016/17 [11]. We work tirelessly to improve student continuation rates, and that's evident in the fact that a significant proportion of our split-indicators already above benchmark (materially or otherwise) [11] e.g., partner provision, mature students (31 & over), ethnic minority students (Black, Asian, and other), as well in several different subject areas e.g., Health & Social Care, Law, Sociology, Allied Health, and Nursing and Midwifery. We are particularly content that this list includes several groups that are typically underrepresented in higher education. The consistency with which we are delivering positive outcomes, both temporally and demographically, provides us with a solid foundation from which to make further progress. This has been the focus of our efforts over the last three years and will continue to be so.

The student retention framework is critical in ensuring that students are fully supported in their studies and are identified in a timely manner as being at risk. As highlighted earlier within this submission we have developed a range of support mechanisms to help engage students to continue their studies. Through our academic and pastoral support framework we support our

students throughout their journey at UWL. We are also acutely aware of the ever-changing external environment and the impact that can have on student requirements. Take for example the issue of digital poverty which has had a profound impact on our students since the pandemic. We assisted with the distribution of laptops and introduced 24-hour library opening hours [24], but it does remain a major concern that students have not had access to the full range of resources available to help with their studies. Similarly, we have now revised and increased our bursary offering to help students through a cost-of-living crisis which is having a disproportionate effect both in terms of reach and impact on our student demographic.

From our internal data we are confident that our continuation data will perform similarly to previous years and once again significantly exceed minimum standards set by the OfS [33].

## **b. Completion**

Our overall completion rate (80.2%) [11] exceeds the minimum threshold set by the OfS and although it does fall below benchmark overall, the indicator had been broadly in line in two out of the four most recent years of available data. There are plenty of other instances in which our performance falls broadly in line with benchmark and others still, such as in Health & Social Care and our subcontracted provision, that exceed benchmark. It is also true that UWL's completion rates fell at a steadier pace than benchmark over the four-year period, and by fewer percentage points overall [11].

However, we do pay close attention to the split indicators and recognise that a number of them are below benchmark. Some of these are symptomatic of specific challenges facing certain demographics, namely students from ABCS quintile 1 (4.9% below benchmark) [11] and to a lesser extent non-UK domiciled students. International student completion rates are reasonably high in and of themselves at 84.6% but are one of our worst performing splits when it comes to performance against benchmark (-5.6% below). Other indicators such as IMD, ethnicity and age on entry are contributors to those broader ABCS quintiles [11]. In addressing these issues, it is important to recognise the fact that split-indicators are not independent. By targeting the factors underpinning these splits, we are likely to impact several indicators simultaneously. We are also aware that our disadvantaged demographic is overrepresented in courses carrying an integrated foundation year [34]. If we exclude these from our metrics, we would expect our first-degree indicators to fall broadly in line with benchmark (between 80.8% and 85.8%). In identifying this specific area of concern, we have put in place additional measures that span the entire student lifecycle, from admissions to graduation, and beyond.

Amongst the variety of approaches already detailed, one impactful strategy that we have employed in recent years has been to increase our students' sense of belonging and community. In 2018/19, 70.3% of UWL students (vs. 69% in the sector) agreed with the statement 'I feel part of a community of staff and students' [10], by 2020/21 that figure had increased to 79% while the sector fell by 1 percentage point. QAA published [32] statistical evidence to suggest that this feeling is inexorably linked with both continuation and completion, and trends in our own internal survey data lead us to the same conclusion. This year's PULSE survey [25], for example, shows that our

students are reporting increased levels of optimism and are more confident when it comes to their ability to succeed in their studies. This is a good example of our holistic approach in action.

Another key objective is to make the course portfolio more flexible for students. We find that many of our students need to interrupt their studies due to caring and/or career commitments (amongst other things), and so we believe that by developing increasingly flexible pathways we will be able to improve our completion rates. Our attempts include introducing staged qualifications in some areas (foundation degree and L6 top-up), validating step-off points, delivering alternative types of provision (i.e., apprenticeships) and offering stackable credit-bearing CPD courses.

As well as improving completion rates, we have also been focused on eradicating awarding gaps. We have made significant progress in recent years, particularly with respect to ethnicity, disability, gender and IMD [11] as evidenced through our access and participation plan [26].

	2018/19	2021/22	Change
<b>BAME v Non-BAME</b>	15.20%	8.90%	6.3%
<b>Gender</b>	-0.10%	3.00%	-2.90%
<b>Age on Entry</b>	5.00%	7.50%	-2.5%
<b>Disability</b>	5.20%	-0.60%	4.60%
<b>IMD quintile 1 &amp; 2</b>	15.70%	8.40%	7.30%

Widening participation and strategic actions towards eliminating completion, attainment and outcome gaps remain consistently established foci of institutional efforts. We are delighted to have been acknowledged by the academic community with the following awards which also demonstrate our

sustained commitment for equality of success for all our students:

- **NEON Higher Education Institution of the Year 2018** – UWL commended on significant investment in widening access for under-represented groups and embedding robust support mechanisms to ensure success [3]
- **THE Awards Business School of the Year 2019** – based on work to reduce the BAME attainment gap. Our submission through the 'Challenge' programme received particular praise as, a strategy aimed at providing employability skills and training for BAME students who may otherwise find themselves at a disadvantage on competitive career pathways. Described as 'truly admirable' and as having 'demonstrable impact', judges noted that the programme had 'clearly been effective in driving business engagement, student retention and, as a consequence, social mobility.' [4]
- Our **Fresh Minds for Business** programme won the *NEON Levelling Up Award 2021* based on its commitment to act as an engine of growth for the local economy. [27]

UWL was awarded funding by the OfS to undertake a range of projects linked to widening participation and wellbeing including:

- **People Like Us** – a project run in partnership with the NHS which works with current students and local community members with lived experiences to create support groups for BAME students. This project is particularly focused upon students from BAME backgrounds with mental health challenges. [28]

- **Mind the Gaps** – a programme for undergraduate students who identify as first in family to attend university or studying without other forms of familial support (i.e., estranged students, mature students, care experienced students, international students, and others). [29]

These examples provide direct evidence of actions that support our drive towards consistent equality of opportunity of outcomes for all UWL students.

### c. Progression

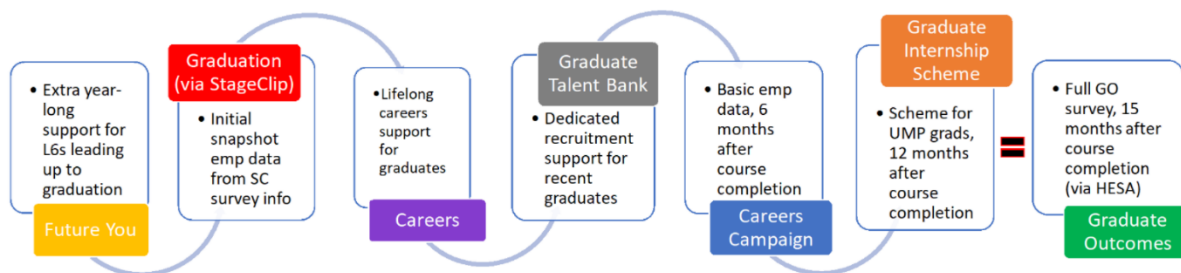
We deliver graduate outcomes that are broadly in line with benchmark, and we have been improving consistently since 2017/18 [11]. In 2019/20, 70.7% of our students went on to managerial or professional employment, further study or to achieve other positive outcomes. That is broadly in line with benchmark and just 0.8 percentage points short of the sector average for full-time first-degree students. Our specific commitment to producing career ready graduates is further reflected in the graduate outcomes accompanying salary data. 69.3% of our graduates who reported salary information were earning £24,000 or more [30], far higher than the 60% achieved by both our comparators and the sector in general. Furthermore, 71.3% of our graduates reflected that they were utilising the skills that they learnt during their studies, 6 percentage points higher than the sector, and almost 8 percentage points higher than our comparators (London modern) [31].

There's further encouragement in the consistency of our performance across demographics. Most of our split-indicators are broadly in line with benchmark [11] and some, notably creative and performing arts are materially above – something we are particularly proud of given the challenging external environment many Arts students are still facing in the wake of the pandemic.

**Future You** – During the final year of study students receive a fortnightly email which signposts them to a range of services and support to help them transition into the 'World of Work'. Advice and top tips will include study support for thematic areas identified as issues in the final year including the dissertation, career readiness and networking opportunities as well as information on post graduate courses and our graduate internship programmes.

Our course portfolio is built around existing employer needs and their expectations relating to future skill requirements and shortages. In previous sections we have demonstrated our commitment to that approach through strategies such as 'Today's problems: Tomorrow's solutions', the expansion of our STEM portfolio and a culture of regional/civic engagement. Equipping students with industry ready skills (both academic and personal) is critical to their future success. However, at UWL we recognise the fact that whilst talent (including learned skills and abilities) is evenly distributed, opportunities are not, and that is often a notable barrier to entry for many of our students given the diversity of our population. To mitigate that, we deliver specific support to students entering their final year and provide lifelong career support for our graduates.





At UWL, lifelong career support is not seen as a passive exercise. We re-engage our students at graduation by asking them to respond to a short survey in return for a video clip of them receiving their award. This provides the careers service with a great opportunity to identify and then actively support those who are not satisfied with their current circumstances. One method they use for doing that is the graduate talent bank. This is an exclusive service aimed at providing UWL graduates with dedicated recruitment support – from support with applications to networking sessions, and workshops - to find a graduate level position and kickstart their graduate career. The most important aspect of the talent bank is that it includes positions that are only available to UWL graduates. We very much see this as our mission to meet the needs of employers coming full circle.

Six months after course completion we run the *Careers Campaign* which involves contacting recent UWL leavers, to remind them of the Careers Lifetime Support offer, and to discuss additional support made available through the Careers and Employment Service, and to notify them of various CPD events and fairs that are programmed for them. For those that are still struggling twelve months after graduation we run the graduate internship scheme, the aim of which is to enhance the employability skills of students by providing them with real-world experience of working in a professional working environment, either internally at UWL or externally with local SMEs. As a result of these large-scale initiatives, very few students find themselves needing to use the career service and as months since graduation become years, so too does the scale of our outreach.

There are a few exceptions to our otherwise strong performance, but we are working specifically to support and improve outcomes in these areas. Again, ABCS quintile 1 [\[11\]](#) students

are an area of focus for us, as are the subject areas Computing and Law (two highly competitive graduate routes). One of the challenges we face is that despite many of our graduates entering employment in their chosen industry, they traditionally take more time to progress in than you might otherwise expect e.g., Hospitality. This is evident in the fact that 70% of our students surveyed agreed that their current activity fits within their career plans, 1.8% higher than our comparators (modern universities across the capital), and 83.2% reported that their activity was meaningful which is again above our comparators and in line with the sector average [\[31\]](#).

With such a strong focus on employment it is no surprise that one of the biggest ‘challenges’ we face is that relatively few of our student progress on to further study. Just 8.4% of 2019/20 graduates were in further study at the time of being surveyed, 6.2 percentage points below the sector average [31]. This is a sizeable difference and one that has so far prevented us from moving above benchmark. Targeting students at risk of achieving negative outcomes and promoting further study as an option is incredibly difficult. UWL’s track record of employability is what so often leads applicants to us, and often they are reluctant to deviate from that path. This is something that we have been considering in recent years, and as a result we have introduced £2000 alumni studentships [24] to improve accessibility to postgraduate study here at UWL, and we have also been able to identify gaps in our portfolio through a postgraduate portfolio review that will give students a more natural route into further study.

Based on our current trajectory – and the work we have done since then – we are hopeful that in 2020/21 we will be above benchmark for graduate outcomes.

#### 4. Educational Gain

At UWL we describe educational gain for all our students through the lens of our established graduate attributes. These underpin our strategic approach to curriculum design and authentic assessment.

**Professional** – the language used throughout a student’s learning journey addresses them as future professionals instigating a self-awareness and aspirational mindset that builds confidence for future success. We support students achieve this attribute occurs through opportunities including: UWL Leadership Award, volunteering, and placement opportunities. Life-time careers support is afforded to all alumni. We measure the development of individual students and evaluate our overall success through our PULSE and Graduate Surveys, and through engagement with their lifetime membership of the Alumni network.

**Confident** – the data from our NSS 2022 B1 [10] questions shows that our curriculum and support services help develop these skills and our students leave with a high of confidence and self-esteem. We can demonstrate the success within this area based on the data below and through the development of our Peer Mentorship programmes, APP Champions and student voice responses.

NSS B1 - Personal Development	UWL 2021	UWL 2022	HEI Average 2022	Difference 2022
Satisfaction for personal development	79%	86%	74%	12%
For confidence in presenting themselves	78%	85%	72%	13%
Communication skills	81%	89%	78%	11%
Confidence in tackling unfamiliar problems	76%	84%	71%	13%

**Resilient** – The resilience of our more challenged students is evident and is something we identify and celebrate as they develop through their course. Helping them to understand and value self-worth and to highlight the skills they must have to simply ‘survive’ and ‘succeed’. We look to

demonstrate this attribute through the work with UWLSU and projects funded by the NHS and OfS such as our Wellbeing Module, Mind the Gap and People Like Us initiatives. We are looking to measure the success of such programmes over the next two years.

**Networked** – as a university which puts employability at the centre of our offer, we work with an extensive range of employers to create the right networking opportunities for our students including opportunities across courses. Our Placement and Employment Service team support the student employment journey from enrolment to post-graduation. The service offers a huge range of employment opportunities through its jobs database, on campus recruitment agency (Talent Bank) Careers and Part-Time Jobs Fairs, LinkedIn Learning, and Employer Engagement Events (Virtually and on site). The team work to increase student and graduate employability skills, employment and increase Graduate Outcomes. The Placement and Employment Service assists students on all courses with integrated internship and placement have dedicated Placement Officers providing support, and opportunities to ensure students meet their learning outcomes. As our network of employers continues to grow ownership of this KPI will be monitored by the Alumni and Development Office who have also been tasked with investigating how we can improve such activities as part of our new strategic plan Impact 2028

**Globally aware** – from a holistic viewpoint we want our students to understand and engage in the sustainability debate independent of which ever sector or career they chose to follow. In 2023 the university achieved Eco Campus Platinum status and our work has also been recognised by the UK's People and Planet University League Table where we are ranked First Class [\[24\]](#).

Sustainability is embedded through course content and environmental sustainability is an identified thread which is continuously promoted in the student and staff weekly communications. In July 2021 we produced our first Sustainability Report, and our objectives and goals are monitored by our new Sustainability Board. It is this board that has been tasked with implementing our academic sustainability strategy which will see curricular enhanced and student outcomes within this area measured.

## 5. Conclusion

This submission never loses sight of our core mission of offering access to quality higher education for all our students. UWL's continuous ambition for growth and success has been driven by the strategic plan *Achievement 2023* which as it nears its successful completion has seen the University look forward to the next set of strategic priorities. This has earned UWL widespread national recognition as a leader in student success including graduating under-represented minorities and limited income students. We also demonstrate throughout this submission, how UWL operates at the confluence of excellence in teaching and research, to deliver the highest quality teaching-led and research-informed curricular. The data used within this submission including the NSS and TDD, indicates convincingly our excellence in the student experience and student outcome aspects of the Teaching Excellence Framework. This shows that the University continues to be the destination for the brightest and the best, striking a balance between high-quality, rigorous curriculum with real-world learning opportunities in and outside the classroom.

Our success is evidenced through the awards and accolades we have enjoyed in recent years which include:

- University of the Year 'Student Experience' 2021 & 2023 Sunday Times & The Times Good University Guide [2]
- University of the Year 'Teaching Quality' 2023 Sunday Times & The Times Good University Guides [2]
- National Education Equalities Network (EON Higher Education Institution of the Year 2018 [3]
- THE Business School of the Year & Outstanding Financial Performance 2019 [4]
- Number 1 in the UK for student satisfaction, student voice and academic support in the National Student Survey (NSS) 2022 [5]
- Best modern London university (non-specialist) in the 2023 Complete University Guide [6]
- Number 23 out of 121 universities nationwide in The Guardian University Guide 2023 [7]

As we transition into the next strategy 'Impact 2028', the university will stay true to its values, aims and mission.

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