

University of Chichester submission for TEF 2023

1. Provider context

a. Information about our educational mission and strategic aims. The University of Chichester is a highly successful modern university with a proud history stretching back over 180 years. We have two campuses: our Bishop Otter campus, with its origins in the Bishop Otter College (established by the Bishop of Chichester in 1839 to train teachers, and one of the first – from 1873 onwards – to train women teachers), is located in Chichester; our Bognor Regis campus was originally set up in 1946 as an emergency training college for men and women to meet the shortage of teachers after the Second World War. Remaining consistent from inception, our ‘institutional vocation’ (stated in both our Articles of Association and as our principal charitable aim, under the 2011 Charities Act) is ‘the advancement of education’; this includes an emphasis on widening participation to higher education so as to improve lives. Accordingly, and set out most recently in *Open for Change*¹ (our Strategic Plan, 2018-2025), our mission is ‘to provide outstanding education, advance knowledge and benefit the world.’ (p3) In carrying out this mission, our vision is ‘to achieve national and international recognition for the excellence of our teaching, research and innovation.’ (p3) Furthermore, ‘as the only university [based] in West Sussex, we recognise the economic, social and cultural importance of “place” and the need to meet both local and global challenges.’ (p3) Our students (a significant proportion of whom are from non-traditional higher education backgrounds) are intentionally held at the centre of all that we do, including when it comes to strategic-level planning and decision making. This imperative for ‘students (to be) at the centre’ is unambiguously reflected in the design of *Open for Change*, where our first – and of primary importance – strategic aim (aligning with the imperative of Condition B1) is that ‘we will strengthen the distinctiveness of the Chichester student experience as high-quality, personalised, accessible and aspirational.’ (p7) This strategic aim is not left as an abstract, ‘top-level’ statement; it is accompanied by a set of actions outlining how we will achieve this which are regularly monitored, reviewed and challenged, with an unrelenting focus on measurable progress so that we know the extent to which we are succeeding. The set of actions for our primary strategic aim include the following (*Open for Change*, p7): to ‘inspire and motivate staff and students to work together in effective ways to ensure that we continue to be a University that is known for delivering outstanding learning and teaching informed by high-quality research’ (aligning with that aspect of B1 regarding the need to ensure that each higher education course is ‘up-to-date’); to ‘build up the confidence, aspirations and resilience of every student through an engaged and responsive admissions, academic advisor and module co-ordinator system so as to optimise student retention and progression’; to ‘embed both employability and enterprise education in all undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes’.

Crucially, and underpinning everything we do, our educational mission and strategic aims are shaped by our core values of community and relationality. The University’s *Learning, Teaching and Student Experience* (hereafter, *LTSE*) *Strategy (2018-2025)*² articulates this in detail: ‘Our approach to learning, teaching and the student experience emphasises relationality and community. People matter to us and we understand higher education (or “studying”) as something that is undertaken *with* others. This means that all our staff will work with each other and our students to sustain and strengthen an inclusive, supportive/caring and authentic learning community to which all feel that they belong...that they can contribute to shaping and changing and that is built upon positive relationships. It is through these positive relationships that members of our community – made up of staff and students together (‘one but not the same’) – will feel valued, respected, encouraged, inspired and developed (including in terms of their personal growth and aspirations) and be empowered to exceed their expectations. This emphasis on community and positive relationships shape who we are and how we understand our purpose and role.’ (Section 2[a]) This strategy also makes it clear that ‘we believe that a higher education experience should be open and accessible to everyone who has the ability and desire to benefit from it’ (2[b]); that we understand the task of education as ‘a vocation rather than a job’ and ‘accordingly, we are dedicated to “going the extra mile” for each other as we carry it out’ (2[d]); that ‘we affirm non-binary (i.e. “both/and” rather than “either/or”) ways of thinking about what we do as educators...we want to be a University that is known for delivering *both* outstanding learning and teaching (and an excellent student experience more broadly) *and* the highest-quality research because we understand them as inextricable/interwoven, mutually re-enforcing and enriching and, given this, in the best interests of our students’ (2[e]); that we understand (one articulation of our approach to ‘educational gain’) ‘education as concerned with valuing and developing the “whole person”, i.e. “hearts, bodies and minds”’, with this approach involving ‘the formation of graduates who will be motivated and equipped to help make the world a better place through positive engagement with local and global challenges’ (2[h]); that ‘we will equip our students to successfully negotiate and establish themselves with confidence in a global economy...in part this will involve a focus on employability and

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enterprise skills, giving students an opportunity to acquire those attributes, attitudes and skills (including digital skills) relevant to the pursuit of a professional career.' (2[i]) In summary, students at Chichester have joined a learning community where they will be valued and known as individuals, where we will 'go the extra mile' for them, and where they will be educated in a wholistic way by a staff body according to the principle that 'all our researchers teach, and all our teachers research'. This shared sensibility continues to be recognised as delivering effectively for our students. For example, in the *Times Higher Education (THE) Student Experience Survey 2018* (a survey of more than 20,000 undergraduates, carried out by the youth research agency YouthSight), Chichester was ranked in the top 10 higher-education institutions, achieving high scores for 'teacher relationships', 'small-group tuition' and 'quality of staff'.

More recently, this shared sensibility has helped us navigate the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic (when we continued to deliver 'in-person' teaching throughout, other than when the government required universities to curtail this) in a way that put the educational interests and needs of our students first. In *The Guardian University Guide 2022*⁴ (published in September 2021), and in the context of the pandemic, Chichester climbed 8 places to 21st position (out of 121 institutions) after having climbed 44 places to 29th (out of 121 institutions) in the previous 2021 guide.⁵ We ranked 7th (again, out of 121 institutions) in the '% Satisfied with teaching' heading as well as 15th in both the '% Satisfied with course' and '% Satisfied with feedback' headings. In *The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2022*⁶ (also published in September 2021), Chichester ranked 7th (out of 132 institutions) in the 'Teaching Quality (%)' heading and 9th (again, out of 132 institutions) in the 'Student Experience (%)' heading. In *The Complete University Guide 2023*⁷ (published in June 2022), we were ranked 10th (out of 130 institutions) for 'student satisfaction' (defined here as 'a measure of student views of the teaching quality at the university'). In the National Student Survey (NSS) 2021 results – used, in part, to inform these *Guardian*, *Sunday Times* and *Complete University Guide* league table results – we ranked 25th for overall satisfaction (Q27) (out of 156 HEIs and specialist providers that we selected for reasons of comparability), a rise of 26 places on our NSS 2020 result. Again, in the context of the pandemic, we achieved a rank (again, out of 156 institutions) of 12th for 'Learning Community', 13th for 'Academic Support', 16th for 'Student Voice', 17th for 'The Teaching on my Course' and 'Learning Resources', and 21st for 'Assessment and Feedback'.⁸ Our strong identity – shared by students and staff – as a 'learning community' is, we maintain, the foundation that best enables us to deliver continuous improvement and excellence of experience and outcomes for all of our students. In the NSS, our overall 'learning community' performance has exceeded the Office for Students (OfS) benchmark (which is different to the TEF benchmarks) and sector average by at least 6 and 7 percentage respectively in every year (and in 2020 we were higher than the sector average by 18%). For both of the specific NSS questions in the 'learning community' section – 'I feel part of a community of staff and students' (Q21) and 'I have had the right opportunities to work with other students as part of my course' (Q22) – we have exceeded both the OfS benchmark and sector average each year (and in 2020 we were higher than the sector average for Q21 by 26%, with a result of 79.37% versus the average of 53.33%).

We recognise that the emphasis of the defined 'features' (at Annex A of *Regulatory advice 22* and indicating evidence of excellence above the high quality minimum requirements of Conditions B1-4) across the 'student experience' and 'student outcomes' aspects is placed on positive impact and outcomes. We engage with this emphasis in the following 'student experience' and 'student outcomes' sections. However, we also recognise the importance of indicating the ways in which we know that we are succeeding in our stated mission and strategic aims. In this section, we point out that progress in relation to each of the University's strategic aims is mapped and measured against a set of key performance indicators (KPIs). The KPIs for our primary strategic aim to deliver a high-quality, personalised, accessible and aspirational experience for our students include an 'annual improvement in NSS and DLHE [now Graduate Outcomes] metrics' and 'positive measures for student access and retention' (*Open for Change*, p7). Strategic aim KPIs are linked to, and the responsibility of, specific sub-strategies that feed into *Open for Change*. This primary strategic aim and its KPIs are embedded in the University's *LTSE Strategy (2018-2025)*⁹ which provides details of specific operational steps/initiatives in relation to each of the actions (set out in *Open for Change*) for achieving it. Performance against the relevant KPIs is reported to, and discussed at, the University's Learning, Teaching and Student Experience (hereafter, LTSE) Committee (which has responsibility for the *LTSE Strategy*, is chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor [Student Experience], and – as with all our main University committees – has student membership¹⁰) on an annual basis.¹¹

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Following this, and also on an annual basis, further scrutiny and challenge of progress and performance in relation to these KPIs takes place at Academic Board (the University's senior academic committee, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor and with student membership).¹² Furthermore, the University's Board of Governors receives an update, for discussion, at every meeting on the progress against the relevant strategy KPIs – including those relating to the NSS, Graduate Outcomes and Student Retention.¹³ Each year the Board of Governors receives a report entitled *Annual Review – Quality Assessment*¹⁴ which outlines how the University continues to meet its obligations under the OfS requirements for the B Conditions, the main way providers are assessed for quality and standards. Including a mapping of our processes against B1-6, this report provides the information base to enable the Board of Governors to receive assurances from the Academic Board regarding the effective management and delivery of quality assessment, assurance and enhancement. It contains details of key quality management activities considered during the year (i.e. summary of outcomes of internal programme periodic reviews, including external subject specialist confirmation; summary of External Examiners' reports; summary of NSS outcomes; summary of academic partnerships; reporting on student complaints, academic appeals, mitigating circumstances, and academic malpractice; details of student engagement in academic governance; an action plan for the previous and coming years) and any action arising from their consideration. This approach aligns with the current version of the Committee of University Chairs *HE Code of Governance* (September 2020) and is another way in which we know that we are succeeding in our stated mission and primary strategic aim. In addition to this, the Board of Governors receives an annual *Degree Outcomes Statement*.¹⁵ The purpose of this Statement is to articulate how the University meets the expectation that the value of qualifications awarded to students (at the point of qualification and over time) is in line with sector-recognised standards; the focus is on what matters to students and taking steps to enhance their teaching and learning experience. For example, it considers 'teaching practices and learning resources' that 'have had a positive impact on improving student attainment', discusses 'assessment and marking practices' and identifies actions for the forthcoming year (as well as updating on actions from the previous year) that have, most recently, included reviewing 'exit velocity' and 'variation across the University in the number of Firsts awarded', 'final awards and attainment for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and from black and ethnic minorities', and developing 'an internal teaching awards scheme as a precursor to enabling applications to the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme'.¹⁶

b. Information about the size and shape of our provision (including partner providers). In addition to the dashboard data produced by the OfS about the University, we provide here some supplementary information about our context. In 2021-22 (and as per our Higher Education Statistics Agency [HESA] return),¹⁷ we had 5,987 active students; 80% (4,802) were undergraduate, 18% (1,067) were on postgraduate taught programmes and 2% (118) were undertaking postgraduate research. 93.8% were taught by the University and 6.2% through partnerships (not all of which – i.e. our partnerships – are included in this submission; see 1d). Of our 4,802 undergraduate students, 88% were full-time, 6.7% were part-time and 5.4% were apprenticeships (we have chosen not to include evidence about the latter in our submission; see 1d). 75.5% of our undergraduates were 'young' (i.e. under 21) when they started their course; 24.5% were 'mature'. 95.9% were from the UK, 2% from outside the European Union (EU), 1.5% from within the EU and 0.6% from the Channel Islands. 64.6% were female and 36.4% male. 25% of students had a declared disability (with over a third of those in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance [DSA]). 1.1% of students had a different gender identity than the gender they were originally assigned at birth. 91.3% of UK students were of 'white ethnicity', 4.2% had 'mixed ethnicity', 1.3% had 'black' or 'black British-African' ethnicity. Eight other ethnicities constitute less than 1% of the undergraduate population each. Significantly, 47.5% of undergraduates, who responded when asked, confirmed that they were from families where their parents or guardians did not have higher education qualifications. 25.2% of our full-time UK domiciled undergraduates are from families with incomes of less than £25k. 19.4% of our UK students were from POLAR4 quintile 1, 20.3% from quintile 2, 18.6% from quintile 3, 19.5% from quintile 4 and 22.2% from quintile 5. 9.1% of our UK students were from Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) quintile 1, 15.5% from quintile 2, 21.5% from quintile 3, 23.6% from quintile 4 and 30.4% from quintile 5. This information informs the University's strong, ongoing focus on the enablement of 'non-traditional' students into and through (i.e. successful continuation, completion and progression) higher education, as well as our commitment to recruitment activities in our regional coastal/rural areas of socio-economic deprivation, and to serving our local and regional communities. In terms of subject splits (at Common Aggregation Hierarchy Level 1), our undergraduate student population is distributed as follows: 33.5% are studying 'design, and creative and performing arts' subjects; 14.8% 'biological and sport sciences'; 9.1% 'social sciences'; 8.5% 'education and teaching'; 7% 'business and management'; 6.6% 'psychology'; 5.3% 'subjects allied to medicine' (Nursing, Counselling, Physiotherapy); 3.3% 'language and area studies' (English); 2.9% 'historical, philosophical and religious studies'; 2.6% 'engineering and

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technology'; 2.5% 'computing'; 2.4% 'media, journalism and communications'; 1.1% 'law'; 0.5% 'mathematical sciences'. As of December 2022, the University employs¹⁸ 297 individuals on open-ended academic contracts; 20% are Lecturers, 59% are Senior Lecturers, 4.5% are Principal Lecturers, and 6% are Senior Management Team. In addition, we have 10.5% Readers and Professors, all of whom have teaching commitments. A significant proportion of our hourly-paid Associate Lecturers (40%) provide specialist instrumental, vocal, dance and acting tuition in the University's Conservatoire, enhancing the academic fields within this grouping. Throughout the TEF timeframe our student-staff ratio (SSR: the number of students per member of teaching staff) has remained relatively stable, i.e. between 14.4 and 15.2.

The University works in partnership with a small number of low-risk providers who access student loan funding via the University (and who work to support the achievement of the objectives identified in the University's *Access and Participation Plan*). The partners that we have continued to work with throughout the timeframe of the TEF are Chichester College Group (35 undergraduate students) and Platform One (a music college based on the Isle of Wight; 35 undergraduate students). Undergraduate students at these partners are registered with the University but taught elsewhere. Four colleges – Performers College (Essex), Waterbear (East Sussex), The Isle of Wight College, and Activate Learning (Bracknell and Wokingham College) – have ceased accessing student loan funding via the University and are now in partnership with other institutions. As the registering provider, we ensure that the quality of provision taught elsewhere is maintained through a number of mechanisms. We undertake due diligence as an element of partner approval/re-approval; this addresses academic, financial, legal and reputational due diligence. Academic due diligence includes consideration of data against the B3 thresholds defined by the OfS, alongside reports from other agencies such as Ofsted. If the desk-based analysis concludes successfully then an approval/re-approval visit is undertaken. The approval/re-approval Panel includes at least one member who is external to the University with relevant expertise. The Panel checks include staff teaching qualifications, as well as the resources available to students to ensure that they are consistent with those offered directly by the University to its on-campus students. Partners are also subject to annual monitoring, periodic review, external examining and the NSS, which enables the University to assure itself of the quality of the student learning experience.¹⁹ The University also employs a system of Link Tutors to support the partner in achieving an excellent student experience and student outcomes.

c. Other information about the context of our submission. Our community/relational emphasis and shared 'people matter/go the extra mile' sensibility informed the way in which the University and the University of Chichester Students' Union (UCSU) collaborated on the production of our respective TEF submissions. The University and Students' Union pride ourselves on our long-standing, close and non-adversarial working relationship in order to ensure that we deliver the best possible experience and outcomes for our students. Whilst we respect the structural/legal independence of the two bodies, and recognise and welcome the need for open dialogue within which a healthy level of challenge can take place, we nevertheless think of ourselves as part of one learning community ('staff and students together') and understand – based on many years of collaborative working, where we have had to deal with various significant challenges, including the pandemic – that we are more likely to achieve our aims through respectful partnership. University and Students' Union colleagues share information in a transparent fashion (indeed, we have a Data Sharing Agreement in place²⁰) and there is a high level of trust and co-operation. Our shared sensibility is one that the University and Students' Union have cultivated and shaped together and to which we are totally committed. One important expression of this shared sensibility is our *Community Commitment Charter*²¹ which was developed in partnership with the Students' Union (who wrote much of the original text, identifying what matters to students) and approved by the Academic Board. This Charter is, each academic year, jointly signed by the Vice-Chancellor and Students' Union President and disseminated to our students. Everyone in the University community is charged with meeting the obligations set out in the Charter which range across the themes of 'Respect', 'Educate', 'Support', 'Improve', 'Develop' and 'Environment'. These themes are, in turn, elaborated on through a series of points. For example, the points in the 'Educate' section include a commitment to 'make sure the means and measures of assessment are clear with feedback focussing on improvement and progression (for academic work the timescale of return is stated as 3 working weeks)', as well as to 'build well rounded, quality assured and relevant degree programmes involving excellent teaching and learning'. In the 'Improve' section, we commit to using 'effective' and 'relevant means of feedback, such as...course reps, SU Officers...etc. to ensure continual improvement'. Recent examples of how we operate together include reviewing and agreeing (on an annual basis) the University's Student Protection Plan (SPP),²² as well as its policies, procedures and processes for sexual misconduct and harassment.²³ It also includes – discussed later on in this submission – the following: developing and agreeing (in 2022) a 'refreshed' *Programme Board Agenda* for all academic provision, with

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standard items that must be discussed with student representatives at those meetings; developing (in 2020) an agreed set of *Moodle Minimum Standards*²⁴ outlining required information for students that must feature in the online pages for every academic module; re-structuring the University's academic year (standard undergraduate semester pattern: 2022-23 year onwards) to include a dedicated 'student employability, wellbeing and skills week' – with a range of activities delivered for our undergraduate students by academic areas, our Careers and Employability Service and Student Support and Wellbeing team throughout that week – at the end of each semester.²⁵ However, we also stress that we recognise and respect the independence of the student submission and that at no point have we attempted to unduly influence its content in any way. On the contrary, the onus – as always – has been on open, honest and non-pressurising dialogue throughout. To this end, the University and Students' Union convened a TEF Working Group which has met on a regular basis since September 2022.²⁶ This working group (the membership of which includes the Students' Union President, Vice-President and General Manager as well as the Deputy Vice-Chancellor [Student Experience], Director of Quality and Standards and Head of Planning) has analysed and discussed all TEF documentation and data in a completely transparent fashion. All of the University's TEF indicators and data dashboards have been shared with the Students' Union, with nothing kept back, and given rigorous consideration by the working group, including down to the split indicator level and areas where performance may, relative to the rest, be less strong. All evidence from academic and professional service areas across the University, drawn upon for the purposes of the TEF submission, has also been shared with the Students' Union; again, nothing has been kept back. In addition, the student voice more broadly has contributed to this submission via its frequent appearance and privileging in the evidence (quantitative and qualitative) the University already uses to monitor and evaluate the quality of its courses.

d. Statement on 'optional' courses. The University has chosen not to include the following optional courses in its submission (and, accordingly, we have not included evidence about them): (i) validated-only undergraduate courses, where we are responsible for granting the awards to students registered and taught by other providers, whether or not those providers are registered with the OfS; (ii) transnational education (TNE) courses at undergraduate level, delivered to students outside the UK whether through partnership arrangements or not; (iii) apprenticeships at undergraduate level.

e. What we consider to be our overall TEF 'best fit'. The University is fully committed to continuous improvement and delivering a level of excellence for all of our groups of students (including underrepresented groups) significantly above the minimum quality and standards requirements for being registered with the OfS. In terms of the extent to which we deliver excellence above the high-quality minimum requirements for our mix of students and courses, we maintain that the student experience and student outcomes aspects for all groups of our undergraduate students (across the range of our undergraduate courses and subjects) are a combination of typically '**very high quality**' (with some outstanding features) ('Silver') and typically '**outstanding**' ('Gold'). Given this, we consider (on the basis of the quantitative and qualitative evidence across each aspect as a whole) our overall 'best fit' to be typically '**outstanding**', i.e. 'Gold'.

2. Student experience

a. Academic experience and assessment.

SE1: In what follows, we provide further evidence of excellence that is in addition to the NSS indicators. However, in relation to the NSS indicators for this feature (and for SE2 below), we point out that our results for the 'the teaching on my course' section of NSS questions (Q1-4) overall is higher than the sector average by at least 2% every year since 2017 (and, in 2020, higher than the sector average by 6.6%). OfS benchmarks (different to the TEF benchmarks) were available for the NSS sections from 2019 onwards; for this section of questions overall, we have – each year – outperformed those as well. In relation to the 'assessment and feedback' section of questions (Q8-11) overall, we are higher in every year of the timeframe except for 2020 and 2018; we exceed the OfS benchmark in this area in 3 out of 4 years (being only slightly under in 2022: 71.43% vs 71.51%). In relation to our full-time students and 'the teaching on my course' indicator, 56.4% of the distribution is within the benchmark guiding lines – at the top of the region – with the remainder (43.6%) being above the top guiding line. Within the full-time split indicators there is 'compelling', 'strong' and 'probable' statistical evidence that performance is **outstanding** for different groups of our students; for example: 'health and social care courses' ('compelling'); 'mixed ethnicity students', those from 'IMD quintiles 1 or 2', students studying within 'mathematical sciences' subject areas, our '2021 NSS respondents' (all 'strong'); 'other undergraduate' level students and those within 'business and management' subjects ('probable'). For our part-time students (160 students), there is very strong statistical evidence that 'the teaching on my course' indicator is an **outstanding** feature, with 98.5% of the distribution above the 'materially above benchmark' guiding line. Within the part-time split indicators there is

'compelling' statistical evidence that performance is **outstanding** for those studying at 'First degree' level. In relation to our full-time students and the 'assessment and feedback' indicator, there is strong statistical evidence of **very high quality** for this feature, with 92.7% of the distribution within the benchmark guiding lines. Within the full-time split indicators there is statistical evidence that performance is **outstanding** for different groups of our students; for example: those of 'asian ethnicity' and those studying within 'mathematical sciences' ('very strong'); students with 'black ethnicity' and those studying within 'computing' and 'history and archaeology' ('strong'); those studying 'business and management', 'health and social care' or 'psychology' ('probable'). To contextualise one aspect of our full-time performance here: although there is 'strong' statistical evidence that we are below very high standard for courses within 'media, journalism and communications', we point out that this is based on a total of 90 students over the entire four-year timeframe of the TEF. In relation to our part-time students (160 students) and this indicator, there is 'probable' statistical evidence that this is an **outstanding** feature, with 88.3% of the distribution above the 'materially above benchmark' guiding line. Within the part-time split indicators there is statistical evidence that performance is **outstanding** for different groups of our students; for example: 'female students', 'those taught by this university', and 'students aged 31 and over on entry'.

We have embedded outstanding teaching, feedback and assessment practices that are highly effective and tailored to supporting our students' learning, progression and attainment. This is confirmed by our External Examiners. For example, an External Examiner's report for the BA (Hons) Primary Teaching (with 264 students, in 2018-19, 6% of total undergraduate students) states that 'students achieved well in the assessments moderated, with the majority demonstrating some very good knowledge of the teaching and learning of science in the primary school. Those attaining higher marks demonstrated exceptional knowledge in their work, and this was clearly evident. The aims for the different modules were appropriate, clear and well thought out to meet the needs of the students in order for them to develop both their pedagogical and subject knowledge. All modules provided very good opportunities for students to link both theory and practice. Those attaining high marks did this very successfully which was acknowledged well by the marking team. Assessments are entirely appropriate and well thought out. I liked the differences in design (for example the blog in PTS502) which enabled the students to combine their creativity with academic work. This was well suited to those students who wanted to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding using different styles and formats.'²⁷ Another example is from an External Examiner's report for the BA (Hons) Acting (with 59 students, in 2018-19, 1.3% of total u/g students), which states that 'I saw an excellent range of students across all the modules I looked at and student achievements spanned a range of marks. I was also able to see both new writing productions at the Tristan Bates theatre in London and was impressed by all the students (although there was clearly a range of ability). I was also given student work to look at that had achieved high, mid and low marks. The students were assessed across practical work and vivas as well as written work, which is entirely appropriate for this kind of course and enables the students to be assessed across a number of different platforms and excel in a number of different areas. The practical work and the viva make an excellent combination, offering students the chance to both experience performance and put skills into practice and then reflect through the viva where knowledge and understanding can be articulated. The curriculum is entirely appropriate and reflects the desire of the course to offer more actor training and opportunities for the students to be involved in practical work with professional practitioners (writers and directors).'²⁸ On our BSc (Hons) Psychology provision (116 students, in 2021-22, 2.4% of total u/g students), the External Examiner's report states that 'assessment is a particular strength of this programme, which carefully combines a good range of assessment methodologies with consistency of assessment types across levels to allow students to build on their previous assessments and best benefit from feedback, which in turn is some of the best I've seen. As a result, students perform extremely well on the programme and there is clear evidence of value added, with strong improvements as students move through the programme.'²⁹

We commit, as set out in our *Community Commitment Charter*,³⁰ to 'make sure the means and measures of assessment are clear with feedback focussing on improvement and progression (for academic work the timescale of return is stated as 3 working weeks)' – i.e. we have a 3 working week turnaround time/timescale for **all** our students to receive feedback on their assessments and work closely with the Students' Union to monitor this. One example of an embedded assessment practice that further enhances this process comes from across our Institute of Sport provision, where staff have changed the way they feed back to students. Scripts are not annotated with comments but, rather, a marking matrix (incorporated into our Module Assessment Feedback [MAF] system, used across **all** of the University's academic provision, whereby assessment feedback is completed by staff and received by students electronically) has been developed to ensure that feedback links directly to how the assignment has met (or not) the criteria. This approach is

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underpinned by a '7 point rule' for providing feedback; staff completing the assessment feedback aim to have given 7 points in total, spread across each of the matrix headings (including 'Strengths' and 'Areas for improvement'). The balance of these 7 points varies depending on the grade, e.g. the weaker the grade, the more points under the 'Areas for improvement section'.³¹ This approach is also intended to help with consistency between assessors; it was undertaken in direct response to NSS 2018 feedback and External Examiner comments regarding consistency of feedback. This approach aligned all module feedback across all programmes in the Institute of Sport and has, therefore, directly impacted every student on every module (around 900 students each year, 20% of total u/g students). External Examiner and student feedback was monitored and has been very positive since implementation. In their 2019-20 annual monitoring documentation, the Institute of Sport shared this work as an example of best practice. Further staff development was undertaken at an Institute of Sport team day in December 2020 to further refine the level and style of feedback (through sharing best practice). In order to ensure a consistent and effective experience for **all** our students, the University as a whole moved to online submission, feedback and return of work (also known as electronic management of assessment [EMA])³² at the end of 2018 (in time for Semester 2 of the 2018-19 year) after noting the volume of uncollected scripts meaning students were not engaging with their written feedback. Colleagues in the University's Conservatoire have further enhanced this process by utilising online video feedback (recently received by 112 students, 2.3% of total u/g students), with a student on the (L6) 'Classicism' module commenting as follows: 'I found the video feedback really useful. It felt more personal than written feedback...I much preferred it to written feedback.'³³ These activities are underpinned by the University's *Digital Strategy*, promoting the use of digital technologies in enhancing teaching, including encouraging the use of Panopto to record audio or video feedback on assessed work.³⁴ Staff across the University are making an increased amount of video content available to our students (e.g. in our Business School, where 115 students, 2.4%, have recently received feedback in this way). In 2019, 67,740 minutes were delivered (1,129 hours); in 2020, 3,586,785.7 minutes were delivered (over 59,779 hours); in 2021, 2,138,755.6 minutes were delivered (over 35,645 hours). This is much higher than it was pre-pandemic, with our academic staff embracing the benefits of video for learning and teaching.³⁵

Assessment strategies for individual programmes of study are tested through programme approval and confirmed by External Examiners. For example, in relation to one of our newer programmes – the BA (Hons) Sociology (16 students, in 2021-22; 0.33% of total u/g students) – the External Examiner confirms (in their 2021-22 year report) that 'the design of the programme is excellent and the way the modules have been set up, will really help students build up their knowledge and skills incrementally. The assessments are appropriate and will enable further learning. It is a new programme and clearly a lot of thought has gone into the design and delivery of the programme.'³⁶ That assessment is valid and reliable is scrutinised through our programme approval and periodic review processes. As another example (one that also evidences our monitoring of quality across our partners), the periodic review report for our Early Childhood provision (which has 96 students, studying at the University and partners, which include Chichester College Group, Brockenhurst College, Fareham College and Havant and South Downs College) noted that 'the Panel and Team discussed how students are supported to achieve across the provision. The Team explained that departmental colleagues liaise with External Examiners as well as partners to ensure comparability of standards across marking, moderation and feedback to support student progression and achievement. The Panel noted in the recent External Examiner's report for BA Childhood that there had been positive comment regarding the feedback provided for students.' As this programme is also taught and assessed by academic partners of the University (local FE colleges), the report also notes that 'the Panel sought to explore with the Team how comparability of standards across marking and moderation was managed between the University and partner colleges. There is a lot of work undertaken to share information across parties including teaching materials. Moderation meetings are held each Semester where partner colleagues are invited to attend and practice is shared in order to maintain and enhance quality and consistency. The department has produced guidance on what represents "good" feedback and how this links to marking criteria for standardisation and sharing purposes. The Team stated that it works with partners in the spirit of genuine collaboration and added that it was organising a childhood conference at the University this year with involvement from partners.'³⁷

The University undertakes an annual review of its *Academic Regulations* and has sought to ensure that relevant awards are credible. Following a review in 2018-19, the University removed across **all** (100%) of our undergraduate provision the 2% 'automatic upgrade' rule, whereby student profiles within 2% of the upper classification were so awarded if their independent project (or dissertation) fell into that upper classification. However, the independent projects/dissertations fell into innumerable credit volume categories, from 90 credits in Fine Art to 15 credits in International English programmes.

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Modelling showed removal of this rule would cause around a 5% decrease in the volume of Firsts and 2:1s awarded, bringing the University more in line with OfS expectations. Accordingly, this action was taken.³⁸ Undergraduate awards are calculated on a 40/60 weighting with the higher weighting attributed to Level 6. The University's grading criteria, set out in its *Academic Regulations*, have incorporated the sector-agreed standards, i.e. outcome classification descriptions for FHEQ Level 6 and FQHEIS Level 10 degrees. **All** External Examiners are asked to comment on whether spelling, punctuation and grammar is assessed. For example, the External Examiner for our BA (Hons) Dance programme (35 students, in 2021-22; 0.73% of total u/g students) stated that 'within feedback given to students, scripts are annotated (sometimes highly) and due attention is given to assessing and correcting spelling, punctuation and grammar.'³⁹ The University is also seeking to reduce the 'awarding gap' between white and black/ethnic minority students having noted research which argues that the gap all but disappears for coursework grades, as opposed to a marked gap remaining when it comes to examinations (specifically, another university had found that the difference was derived largely from marks awarded for examinations, where there was a 13% gap between first- and second-year white students and their black/ethnic minority peers, rising to nearly 17% for the third-year cohort. Conversely, the gap in coursework grades was just 1 to 2 % among first- and second-years, and 5% for final-year students).⁴⁰ Accordingly, the University has sought to reduce the volume of formal examinations across **all** of our undergraduate curriculum (from 147 u/g formal examinations in 2021-22, to 92 in 2022-23), and has halved the number of formal examination weeks during the academic year from four to two⁴¹. New coursework tasks, replacing assessment by formal examination, have focused on 'authentic assessment' opportunities to support graduate outcomes.

Another example of embedded practices to support student learning progression and attainment – and to ensure a consistent and effective experience for **all** our students, including in relation to quality and accessibility of learning – is our work on *Moodle Minimum Standards*.⁴² In September 2020, the Academic Board agreed a minimum standard for all Moodle module pages; specifically, a minimum threshold of information is specified and required on all module pages under the following headings: 'module information', 'staff contacts', 'module content', 'assessment and feedback', 'resources and student engagement'. Our Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) team created a Moodle Minimum Standards (MMS) handbook template plug-in; currently, there are 4,363 in use across the University. The MMS help page has been viewed over 5,000 times, and is the second most read of our 26 Moodle support pages.⁴³

SE2: For Q3 of the NSS indicators ('the course is intellectually stimulating'), we are higher than the sector average in every year of the TEF timeframe except for 2022 (80.23 vs 81.59%); we exceed the OfS benchmark in every year. For Q4 ('my course has challenged me to achieve my best work'), we are higher than the sector average in every year by as many as 6 percentage points (in 2021); we exceed the OfS benchmark in every year. In addition, we maintain that the 'learning opportunities' set of NSS questions – not included in the TEF NSS indicators, but including 'my course has provided me with opportunities to explore ideas or concepts in depth' (Q5) and 'my course has provided me with opportunities to apply what I have learnt' (Q7) – are relevant to this feature as well. For the latter (Q7), we are higher than the sector average in every year by as many as 6 percentage points (in 2020); we exceed the OfS benchmark every year. We also maintain that our strong identity as a 'learning community' enables us to deliver an excellent experience for all of our students. In this regard we think Q22 of the 'learning community' NSS section ('I have had the right opportunities to work with other students as part of my course') – also not included in the TEF NSS indicators – is relevant to this feature given that it covers course delivery, engagement and skills development; for this question we are higher than the sector average and OfS benchmark in every year of the timeframe.

Our course content and delivery inspire our students to actively engage in, and commit to, their learning, and stretch them to develop knowledge and skills to their fullest potential. For **all** (100%) of our academic provision, External Examiners (covering just over 120 programmes of study) are asked in their reporting template to comment on the following: '*Enhancement - the quality of the student learning experience as revealed by meetings with students*'.⁴⁴ During the timeframe of the TEF, **all** (100%) External Examiners have responded positively in this regard with nothing being identified by them that presents a substantive risk to the student experience. Educational challenge is tested through programme approval and our provision is mapped to the *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications* (FHEQ). As an example, a 2020 approval report for our BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy provision notes that 'there is alignment with FHEQ reflected through undergraduate and postgraduate level requirements of programmes'.⁴⁵ Appropriate educational challenge, as it relates to course content, delivery and student engagement, is also affirmed by External Examiners. For example, the External Examiner for our BA (Hons) Physical Education and Sports Coaching programme has written (in

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their report for the 2018-19 year; 87 students, 2% of total u/g students) as follows: 'Given the difficulty of considering two similar, but differing concepts in Physical Education and Sports Coaching, this degree is very well designed. There is clear evidence of progression through the degree, e.g. games, research methods and performance analysis. The degree recognises the differing exit routes of the students. The aims and outcomes of the degree are appropriate for the wide range of employability purposes. Reflecting on pedagogical practice in a teaching and/or coaching environment is a considerable strength of the degree. A range of assessments are evident across the different modules.'⁴⁶

Another example of how course content and delivery inspire our students to actively engage in and commit to their learning – stretching them to develop knowledge and skills to their fullest potential – comes from our Theology, Philosophy and Religious Studies areas. It relates to work that has been undertaken across **all** (100%) of this provision to ensure a better integration of contents and skills, so as to strengthen a culture of active, participatory and engaged learning. One of our Readers

writes about this approach as follows: 'We have worked to integrate the teaching of content and skills. While it is tempting to teach the key figures of the history of philosophy (here are the main ideas of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*) on the one hand, and philosophical skills (here is what makes a good argument) on the other, we endeavour to do both simultaneously (how can we, together, make arguments about the relevance or irrelevance of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* for thinking about politics today?). This approach consists of emphasising student participation throughout teaching sessions, rather than dividing teaching into lectures and seminars. Prolonged periods of lecturing inevitably contribute to students taking a more passive role for at least part of the session. To avoid this passivity, students are encouraged to engage with texts and ideas and take a role in shaping the direction of the class discussion. The focus is on asking questions together which we then can work collectively to answer. They are also prompted to think about how class discussions prepare them for assessment tasks. For example, they are asked to formulate introductory paragraphs for essays (if you were writing on Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* and its relationship to liberalism, how would you open that essay? What would be your thesis statement be?).'⁴⁷ A different example is on display in the work being done by our Professor of Literature and Environment⁴⁸ to promote sustainability in the curriculum. Here, encouragement is given to students to engage with issues of environmental, social and economic sustainability through their learning, particularly through Ecocriticism (the study of representations of nature in literature which assumes that we live and write in a 'more-than-human' world). This Professor also leads the University's Sustainability Forum, which includes representatives of staff and students and is tasked with embedding 'Education for Sustainable Development' into the curriculum.

Course content and delivery that engages students, stretching them to develop knowledge and skills, is also in evidence in the careful design of Mathematics modules on our current undergraduate Primary Teaching provision (275 students, 5.7% of total u/g students) which integrate the evidence-base for subject knowledge development in Mathematics teaching. Principally, this is designed around the Roland, et al. (2009)⁴⁹ formulated 'Knowledge Quartet', a framework for developing student teachers' understanding of foundational, transformational, connection and contingency knowledge for teaching mathematics. Both work-place practice in schools and University module content integrate the knowledge quartet to students' professional practice. As a result, they have an excellent academic experience that seamlessly extends University modular learning into workplace learning. That our programmes are effectively delivered to inspire and stretch students is confirmed by external professional bodies. For example, a Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Panel recently explored the use of theatre/theatrical learning as part of Nursing provision at the University. It was noted that 'this has been an incredibly popular initiative and the University is looking at ways of building support around this to sustain delivery whilst allowing potential for inter-disciplinary applications. It was added that Theatre and Physiotherapy students have been involved in exercises and this offers exciting inter-professional learning opportunities.'⁵⁰

SE3: We use research in our disciplines, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and employer engagement to contribute to an outstanding academic experience for our students. At cross-institutional level, we have developed three overarching themes to provide a framework to the University's strategic priorities for research as well as, given their inseparability as we understand them, teaching. These themes are inclusive and multi-disciplinary in nature, reflecting the wealth of different approaches our researchers-as-educators take in contributing to knowledge and making meaningful change in the world. They reflect the full range of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and are being used for 'framing' all future research submissions as well as our teaching and outreach activities. The intention is that the research and teaching of all of our academic staff will be mapped against these themes. These themes are: (i) *Culture and Community* (research that explores culture, society, and/or the role of the individual as a social actor), (ii) *Health and*

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Wellbeing (research that contributes towards ensuring quality of life from infancy to old age), and (iii) *Smarter Solutions* (research that addresses the challenges and needs of the twenty-first century by making human-made systems work better).⁵¹ Our provision is both mindful of current thinking and practices in the sector (e.g. 'student as producer') and, crucially, reflects our commitment to undergraduates as articulated in *Open for Change* (p7), which states that we will 'inspire and motivate staff and students to work together in effective ways to ensure that we continue to be a University that is known for delivering outstanding learning and teaching informed by high-quality research.'

Accordingly, students are involved with relevant research to enhance an excellent academic experience. Interactions between staff and students stimulate our interdisciplinary and collaborative culture, driving both world-leading research and research-led teaching.

For 10 years, our Psychology team have also run POWER ('People and Well-being in the Everyday Research Centre') research seminars 3 times per semester, which are intentionally inclusive of, and well attended by, undergraduate students. The same is the case for their 'Research Café' events, run over lunchtimes twice per semester). Scholars from across all our Humanities programme teams lead modules designed and delivered to allow students to access their research, i.e. these modules (233 students, in 2021-22; 4.9% of total u/g students) directly reflect the research of the academics who teach them so as to allow students to gain the most from their education. Programmes of study have been designed where research specialisms can be followed from Level 4, to Level 5 and then Level 6. For example, one of our Senior Lecturers who has published on British history has developed approved modules on the 1980s ('Thatcherism and After', Level 4), postwar Britain after 1945 ('Angry Young Men to Cool Britannia, Level 5), and debates and controversies in British history ('British Culture Wars', Level 6). Students on BA (Hons) History and BA (Hons) Modern History programmes work with scholars at each level of the programme, facilitating progression and specialisation. This model is replicated by each member of our Humanities staff and the modules they deliver. A further example of this is from our BA (Hons) Creative Writing provision, where our Reader in Creative Writing has developed a core strand of fiction and creative non-fiction writing that, in each case, is informed by their work as a successful novelist, journalist and former British Council cultural diplomat. This approach to module design and student progression also means there is a consistent feedback loop from staff who offer support from Level 4 through to Level 6.⁵²

As well as our programme content being informed by the research of our staff, it also connects with professional developments. For example, our BA (Hons) Audio Production and Music Technologies is led by our Professor of Film, TV and Games Composition, a composer of film, television and video game music. They compose music for racing simulator video games

as well as being Editor-in-Chief of the academic journal dedicated to the study of sound and music in video games

Our BA (Hons) Esports degree (59 students, in 2021-22; 1.2% of total u/g students) allows students to explore the esports industry to boost their employability, versatility, and adaptability within one of the world's fastest growing markets (in 2022, the global esports market was valued at just over 1.38 billion U.S. dollars).⁵³ Students benefit from our industry partnerships with companies including HyperX, DXRacer, Twitch, ARRI, and AVID, and are able to access industry standard software such as Nuke, Maya and Houdini. The programme provides a wide insight into the esports industry, as students explore event promotion and management, stage online and live room competitions, and gain an understanding of commercial sponsorship opportunities, marketing, and other business aspects. Scientific theory underpins the application of knowledge through the curriculum, including investigating the physical and psychological impacts of high-level gaming that considers the role of the central nervous system, energy demands, nutrition, repetitive movements, and endurance activities.

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We use industry representatives in our periodic reviews and programme approval activity. For example, in the 2021 periodic review of our Creative Industries provision (358 students, in 2021-22; 7.5% of total u/g students), the industry representative on the Panel was the Director of Photography for InkyDink Pictures. The Panel noted that the provision was clearly industry-led, that the project element of the programmes enabled support for this aspect of employability, and that all modules included reference to the skills required for employability (i.e. it was embedded throughout the programme, rather than as an individual stand-alone module).⁵⁴ The BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing programme approval activity involved collaborative working with clinical partners from across the local NHS region as well as private voluntary agencies. This approach was commended in the approval reporting as follows: 'BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing – *Partnerships are in place to support collaboration at strategic and operational level.*'⁵⁵ In relation to employer engagement, the External Examiner for our BA (Hons) Acting for Film provision (156 students, in 2021-22, 3.2% of total u/g students) notes that 'I'm very pleased to say that the Chichester Conservatoire programme gives students everything they need to equip themselves for a career in the screen arts. The standard of performance and articulation of the form strives for, equals and often surpasses what will occur in a professional arena, with a livewire grasp of the skills required to perform and block for the camera evident among the best examples of practical work.'⁵⁶ Our Acting for Film provision has also been accredited by Spotlight UK, a prestigious industry agent with studios in the West End who offer a national graduate membership scheme enabling graduates from our programme an opportunity to be represented to casting professionals in the industry in their final year of study and beyond.

b. Resources, support and student engagement.

SE4: We have outstanding support for staff professional development and excellent academic practice is embedded across provision. At cross-institutional level, our *Professional Development Programme*⁵⁷ for **all** staff includes a dedicated section on 'Enhancing the Student Experience: Learning and Teaching' designed to enhance the quality of teaching and enable student success. For example, sessions are offered on the following: 'Academic Adviser Briefing', 'I Wish I'd Known That Earlier' (specifically for new staff), 'Engaging Learners', 'Learning Through Failure', 'Developing your Academic Career to Focus on University Learning and Teaching', 'Digital Accessibility (Designing out Barriers to Learning)', 'Student Engagement Tools', 'Blended and Flipped Learning', 'Engaging Students in Blended Learning'. We monitor take-up for learning and teaching related professional development; in the TEF timeframe, 350 colleagues have attended sessions.⁵⁸ A focus on learning and teaching is also embedded in our annual appraisal documentation. As part of discussing and agreeing the annual Performance Review Development Plan (PRDP), it is made clear in our guidance that line managers and their academic staff should consider 'those aspects which are particularly important to the achievement of the University Strategic Plan regarding excellence in...the student experience (and the Learning and Teaching Strategy)', and that 'for learning and teaching, staff should refer to the Advance HE UK Professional Standards Framework (PSF) for guidance.'⁵⁹ The University's *Academic Career Progression Policy - Promotion and Appointment to Professor and Reader* has included, throughout the TEF timeframe, a 'Promotion and Appointment to Professor and Reader (Teaching and Learning Route)'.⁶⁰ We have launched, in 2022, our inaugural *Vice-Chancellor's Teaching Excellence Award Scheme*,⁶¹ where successful nominations will also be put forward to the AdvanceHE National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS). Our ongoing commitment to continuing professional development for academic and professional services staff, is also evidenced by an increased number of HEA Fellows at the University. In 2020, the University had 131, including a Principal Fellow and 13 Senior Fellows. By 2021 the University had 49 Associate Fellows, 145 Fellows, 16 Senior Fellows, and one Principal Fellow.⁶²

The University offers a Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (PGCertL&THE), available to **all** staff, including those teaching on our partner programmes. We expect our staff who are new to teaching in higher-education to undertake the PGCertL&THE; our *Professional Development Programme* states (p22) that 'where a member of staff is new to teaching in Higher Education, there is an expectation for successful engagement in professional development focussed on learning and teaching in Higher Education', and that 'these programmes are appropriate for people who have direct contact with students as part of their roles, including lecturing staff who are new to HE, postgraduate students who teach, and learning support staff.' Successful completion of the PGCertL&THE results in both a postgraduate certificate award from the University and FHEA. Feedback from staff that have undertaken the PGCertL&THE includes the following: (i) 'The PGCert has benefitted me as it makes me think of every student in the room and how am I going to reach them to optimise their learning', and (ii) 'It demonstrated the research behind learning and teaching practices and helped me to improve my own teaching through reflection and change. I found it useful and challenging to be observed and to take on board suggestions for improvement.'⁶³ In the last 4 years, 75 staff have

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completed the PGCertL&NTHE (including FHEA), and 65 have completed the first module (the University Certificate in Professional Practice – UCPP – that also leads to AFHEA on successful completion).⁶⁴ In terms of other professional development opportunities, staff have affirmed the value of training delivered internally,

as follows: 'Please may I relay my genuine appreciation for the AdvanceHE Professional Development Course for External Examiners which was delivered by University staff last year. As a direct result of this, I was able to review the assessment provision within the Conservatoire [1,008 students, in 2021-22; 21% of total u/g students], deliver in-house professional development to Programme Coordinators in enhancing coherence in the writing of module descriptors, guide colleagues towards greater consistency through a collective exploration of variability in academic judgment, and oversee the creation of a new marking matrix within the Acting for Film provision. As a result, colleagues have voiced greater awareness and confidence in their ability to create programmes of study, and students have voiced greater confidence in the consistency of their assessment feedback. The training delivered through the AdvanceHE External Examiners Course was genuinely transformative, as are so many of the other professional development courses we are offered. I'm genuinely continually impressed by the outstanding variety and relevance of the sessions we're given access to - it's honestly one of the reasons I love working here.'⁶⁵

SE5: In relation to the NSS indicators for this feature, our results for the 'academic support' section of questions (Q12-14) overall are higher than the sector average and the OfS benchmark in every year of the timeframe. Reflecting our relational emphasis, Q12 ('I have been able to contact staff when I needed to') and Q13 ('I have received sufficient advice and guidance in relation to my course') are both higher than the sector average and OfS benchmark in every year of the timeframe. Q14 ('good advice was available when I needed to make study choices on my course') is higher than the sector average in every year of the timeframe except for 2020; we are higher than the OfS benchmark in every year except for 2018. There is 'probable' statistical evidence that the academic support indicator constitutes an **outstanding** feature for our full-time students; 88% of the distribution is above the 'materially above benchmark' guiding line. There is 'compelling' statistical evidence that the 'Academic Support Indicator' is an **outstanding** feature for our part-time students (160 students); 99.2% of the distribution is above the 'materially above benchmark' guiding line. Within the full-time split indicators there is statistical evidence that performance is **outstanding** for different groups of our students; for example: 'male students' and those studying within 'business and management' and 'health and social care' ('compelling'); those of 'asian ethnicity' or 'black ethnicity', those studying within 'mathematical sciences' and 'students surveyed in the 2021 NSS' ('very strong'); 'UK students', 'mixed ethnicity' students, those studying within 'computing', 'politics' or 'psychology' and 'students taught elsewhere' ('strong'); those students 'aged 31 or over on entry', 'all quintiles of IMD' and 'first degree students' ('probable'). Within the part-time split indicators there is 'compelling' statistical evidence that performance is **outstanding** for the following: 'students aged 31 and over on entry', 'students from the UK', 'those studying at first degree level', 'all IMD quintiles', 'female students', and 'those taught by this university'.

The University works hard to ensure a supportive learning environment, and our students have access to a wide and readily available range of outstanding quality academic support tailored to their needs. For **all** (100%) of our academic provision, External Examiners (covering just over 120 programmes of study) are asked in their reporting template to comment on the following: '*Quality - strategies for education for sustainable development, learning resources and support available to students*'.⁶⁶ During the timeframe of the TEF, **all** (100%) External Examiners have responded positively in this regard with nothing being identified by them that presents a substantive risk to quality.

All of our academic areas have arrangements for providing academic, pastoral and professional development tutorial support to each one of their students; this is known as our Academic Adviser (AA) system.⁶⁷ **All** (100%) our students have an AA assigned to them from the point that they begin their studies with us and it is expected that they will have at least two scheduled meetings per academic year to review academic progress. This well-established system has been in place for many years (preceding the TEF timeframe) and we consider it central to the way in which we provide outstanding quality academic support tailored to the needs of our students. As stated in our *The Role of the Academic Adviser: A guide for staff* (2022/23) document (p2): 'Academic Advisers are a key contact point between the University and the student. As an Academic Adviser you can offer support at a more individual level than is sometimes possible within a formal teaching context, especially on large programmes.' Our AA system is predicated on the understanding that 'students arrive at University with widely different attitudes, prior learning and expectations and with different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Students may have succeeded easily at school, college or other prior entry route, and then find it hard to adapt to the more independent atmosphere of University. Alternatively, they may have experienced

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academic failures in the past and struggle with low self-confidence.' (p2) In part, the role of the AA is to 'encourage effective study patterns, and generally contribute to a more fulfilled student experience', as well as to 'offer continuity throughout the programme and beyond, writing references or offering informal advice long after graduation, particularly as part of an ongoing subject-specific network.' (p2) Given the central importance of this role, we monitor it closely. For example, in our student records system (accessed, so as to check, in January 2023) less than 1% out of our total number of undergraduate degree programme registered students (approximately 4,900 in 2022-23) do not currently have a named AA in the dedicated field on their record with that heading.⁶⁸ In our Induction Survey (October 2022), undertaken with our new undergraduate entrants, 80% of students confirmed they had met with their AA by the end of their first taught week.⁶⁹ In addition, AA training takes place each year (during the pandemic it continued online), delivered by the Director of Students, Support and Information Services. In 2021-22, 120 staff undertook this training. So far this year (2022-23), 80 members of staff have undertaken the training.⁷⁰ Students can view their AA details on 'Student ChiView' (student portal) with an option to email them direct. The last Ofsted inspection of our initial teacher education provision (329 u/g students) affirmed our AA system, stating that 'strong pastoral care ensures that most trainees across all phases successfully complete their programme, even when facing considerable personal barriers', and 'pastoral care on the programme is exceptional, is readily available and tutors are reported to go the 'extra mile' when required.'⁷¹

Closely linked to our AA system are a range of other initiatives delivering outstanding quality academic support for our students that is tailored to their needs. **All** of our students have access to our Academic Skills Advisers who offer support to help them fulfil their academic potential. Students can access study skills workshops, one-to-one tutorials and online resources for support in a number of areas set out on our central *University Study Skills – Academic Skills Support* guidance pages on Moodle.⁷² The guidance on these pages is wide-ranging and detailed (accompanied by interactive videos) and includes the following: 'how to improve your grades', 'academic writing', 'essay planning and structuring', 'critical thinking and writing', 'literature reviews', 'exams and revision', 'reading, research and note-taking', 'grammar and punctuation', and 'reflective writing'. This guidance is increasingly accessed by students: in 2018-19, the study skills web pages received 3,971 unique views; this rose to 4,103 unique views in 2019-20, 4,603 in 2020-21, and – a significant increase (reflecting our focus on study skills with pandemic impacted cohorts joining us) – 18,782 in 2021-22. In terms of student attendance at 'in-person' study skills sessions, this has ranged from 1,479 in 2018-19, 1,254 in 2019-20, 816 in 2020-21 (due to the impact of the pandemic), 1,511 in 2021-22 and (to date) 1,455 in 2022-23.⁷³ In addition to this, academic areas have various referencing guides in place (these vary by discipline/course).⁷⁴ We also have a long-standing relationship with the Royal Literary Fund (preceding, again, the TEF timeframe) whereby Royal Literary Fellows (RLFs) are based with us throughout the academic year to offer one-to-one support with any aspect of students' writing skills to make it as clear and effective as possible, e.g. support for students who need help to interpret an assignment brief, or with planning and structuring an essay or dissertation, or who have a writing-related issue. Both in-person and online sessions last up to 50 minutes, are entirely free of charge and confidential. The work of the RLFs is informed by the relevant academic area referencing guides and they have their own University Moodle page.⁷⁵ Due to reduced demand during the height of the pandemic, our 2 RLFs were reduced to 1; in 2022-23, student demand for sessions has increased so much that the Royal Literary Fund are restoring the second RLF.

The University has a Student Retention and Engagement (SRE) Adviser, working in partnership with academic staff, specifically AAs. This work is closely linked to the operation of, and monitoring of data from, the University's *Student Attendance, Engagement and Absence Policy*⁷⁶ – supported by our Students' Union – which was introduced prior to the TEF timeframe. This policy is operationalised via the University's electronic Student Attendance Management (SAM) system, designed to enrich the student engagement process from initial registration to graduation, thus enhancing retention and attainment. SAM allows the University to collect, process and analyse student engagement (with timetabled sessions) data and provide automated reporting and analytics. The SRE Adviser supports this work to maximise student retention and (re)engagement with studies. For example (a typical intervention), 'Student A' was referred to the SRE Advisor by their AA in November 2021, regarding wellbeing and engagement concerns; a review of SAM data showed that their engagement in the 14 days prior had dropped below 50%. There were no obvious patterns of preference with class engagement, but morning sessions appeared to be poorly attended overall. When met with, 'Student A' talked about their physical and psychological wellbeing, and how this impacted upon their behavioural and cognitive engagement. They had passed Level 4 confidently; however, they were concerned about management of their first Level 5 assessment period. There was an improvement in attendance following the meeting in November and, following the action plan meeting with the SRE Advisor, 'Student A' was confident enough to ask for extensions to help

them manage assessment deadlines. As a result, they achieved 100% completion of assessments for Semester 1 and communicated as follows: 'I really appreciate all the help you've given me over the past year - I genuinely feel like I started getting somewhere with your help so thank you!! 😊'.⁷⁷ The SRE Adviser also supports the University's intermission and withdrawals processes for students, both of which are continually being enhanced and involve academic staff (the AA, Programme Co-ordinator and Head/Director of the academic area) in a dialogue to explore any further support that might ensure continuation of study for any student activating these processes. This has led to a more responsive and consistent service for students, part of our commitment to continual improvement.

SE6: In relation to the NSS indicators for this feature, our results for the 'learning resources' section of questions overall exceeds the sector average and OfS benchmark in every year of the TEF timeframe. Q18 ('The IT resources and facilities provided have supported my learning well') is higher than the sector average and OfS benchmark in every year. Q19 ('the library resources [e.g. books, online services and learning spaces] have supported my learning well') is higher than the sector average each year except for 2020; we exceed the OfS benchmark in each year except 2019 and 2018. Q20 ('I have been able to access course-specific resources [e.g. equipment, facilities, software, collections] when I needed to') is higher than the sector average each year except for 2019; we exceed the OfS benchmark every year. In relation to our full-time students and the 'learning resources' indicator, there is 'very strong' statistical evidence that this feature is **outstanding**, with 96.8% of the distribution above the 'materially above benchmark' guiding line. Within the full-time split indicators, there is 'compelling' statistical evidence that performance is **outstanding** for those from 'IMD quintile 1 or 2'; it is 'very strong' for 'students taught by this university', 'strong' for 'female students' and 'students who had previously been eligible for free school meals', and 'probable' for 'black ethnicity' and 'mixed ethnicity' students, 'male students' and '2020 NSS responders.' To contextualise one aspect of our full-time performance here: although there is 'very strong' statistical evidence that we are below very high standard for courses within 'engineering', we point out that this is based on a total of only 20 students over the four-year TEF timeframe. In relation to our part-time students (160 students) and this indicator, there is 'compelling' statistical evidence that this feature is **outstanding**, with 99.7% of the distribution above the 'materially above benchmark' guiding line.

The University's physical and virtual learning resources are tailored and used effectively to support outstanding teaching and learning. Since 2017, the University has invested over £50m on new teaching spaces. These include an industry-standard creative/digital technologies and engineering and design facility (Tech Park) on our Bognor Regis campus, and a new teaching block – as well as a fully refurbished and equipped building for our School of Nursing and Allied Health – on our Bishop Otter campus. We have also refurbished and re-ordered our Learning Resources Centres (LRC) on both campuses to include cafés and facilitate opportunities for social learning and group work. Similarly, we have introduced social interaction spaces in other buildings, with the aim of increasing formal and informal learning between students.⁷⁸ We have targeted expenditure where most needed by students, with additional funding going to support students with dyslexia and other learning needs, as well as to students with mental health needs. Our programme approval and periodic review processes ensure that students have access to resources and support to ensure a high-quality academic experience. For example, in a recent co-approval report with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) it was noted that 'the NMC Panel was keen to hear further about the "digi-ecosystem" espoused by the team as part of the provision. The team stated that it is seeking to create synergy between systems used as part of learning and teaching and to help develop digital literacy, with aligned systems such as MyPAD/ placement allocation system/ SITS. It was added that this is to include use of simulation and virtual reality technologies and to assist in developing new skills for learners.'⁷⁹ Also important in this regard is the work of our Library Services Team to deliver continual improvement of specific resources for our students. In the timeframe of the TEF, the University has focused on increasing access to online resources for our students. Our ebook stock has increased from 182,812 in 2018-19 to 235,027 in 2021-22. Indicative reading for taught modules is available via online reading lists. In a period of 90 days in 2022 there were 57,684 student interactions with our reading lists.⁸⁰ In a survey of our students conducted by our Library Services Team in May 2022 (440 students responded), responses to the question 'Is there anything that you would like to let us know that we have not already asked?' included the following: 'You're doing a great job'; 'Like the inclusion of Special Collections'; 'Resources available are great and the subject librarian presentation extremely useful'; 'I think the library is great and the staff are very knowledgeable'; 'I love the library!'; 'Thank you for all your help and support'; 'Staff are always friendly and helpful'; 'Staff were amazing during the pandemic.' In terms of engagement with the physical space, 82% of respondents confirmed that they came to the library to study rather than 'just' to borrow a book, indicating that they continue to value our libraries as places to work.⁸¹ 69 students indicated their willingness to be part of a Library Focus Group, meeting once a semester to

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explore further enhancements to the service across both campuses. Students are consulted on priorities for our libraries and, this year (2022-23), we purchased additional single study booths at their request. In addition, over the past four years, we have also seen strong growth in the use of Moodle, our virtual learning environment. We keep Moodle up to date, with annual upgrades, and collect and review data from staff and student user journeys. Page views have increased from 5,717,444 in 2018-19 to 8,505,628 in 2021-22.⁸² This summer, and by way of continual improvement, we will upgrade to the latest version (4.1), which is a complete re-design of the user interface, making it more accessible, easier to navigate and more secure. An example of where our physical and virtual learning resources are tailored and used effectively to support outstanding teaching and learning comes from our BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing provision, where second year students have simulated learning sessions on 'Airway Assessment' and 'Oxygenation' of patients. Here, 'flipped' learning sessions were delivered, whereby practitioner/lecturer facilitation was based on prior knowledge learning and previous experiential learning to enhance student assessment skills, with robotic mannikins used to recreate breath sounds within a scenario of a deteriorating patient. Evaluation from students included the following feedback: 'Sets an example of the professional I want to be'; 'Love it, it is good to practice where I am not always being judged'; 'A great way to reflect on practice and receive honest feedback.'⁸³ On this programme, we also engage in online activity to support clinical placement learning. All students are required to complete 9 'Skills for Health' electronic mandatory learning components prior to entering the clinical placement. Data indicates that the majority of students complete in excess of this, and up to 20 units. All students are expected to complete an online medication course to develop their safe medication practices. Again, data indicates that all students complete their formative assessments with an average of 97% success.⁸⁴

SE7: In relation to the NSS indicators for this feature, our results for the 'student voice' section of questions overall is higher than the sector average except for 2020 and 2018; we exceed the OfS benchmark each year except for 2022. For Q25 ('it is clear how students' feedback on the course has been acted on'), significant in terms of our responsiveness to the student voice, we are higher than the sector average every year; we are above the OfS benchmark for five of the years, but below in 2018. In relation to our full-time students and the 'student voice' indicator, there is 'strong' statistical evidence this is a **very high quality** feature, with 92.1% of the distribution within the benchmark guiding lines. Within the full-time split indicators, the statistical evidence that performance is **outstanding** for students studying at 'other undergraduate' level is 'compelling'; it is 'very strong' for 'asian ethnicity' students and students within 'education and teaching' and 'psychology'; it is 'strong' for 'black ethnicity' and 'mixed ethnicity' students, those within 'business and management' and 'health and social care' subjects, and 'students taught on a subcontracted out basis'. To contextualise one aspect of our full-time performance here: although there is 'very strong' statistical evidence that we are below very high standard for courses within 'engineering', we point out that this is based on a total of only 20 students over the four year TEF timeframe (the first few years of this new provision). In relation to our part-time students (160 students) and this indicator, there is 'compelling' statistical evidence that this feature is **outstanding**, with 100% of the distribution above the 'materially above benchmark' guiding line. We embed engagement with our students, leading to continuous improvement to the experiences and outcomes of our students. We are committed to ensuring students are represented at all levels within the University; they have representation on University-level committees (e.g. Academic Standards Committee, LTSE Committee, and Academic Board) and the Board of Governors. The President of the Students' Union provides an annual report to the Academic Board and the Board of Governors. In addition, there is the Student Forum – an advisory body to Academic Board and the Vice-Chancellor's Group (VCG), and chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) – which is designed to 'facilitate discussion between the Students' Union and the Senior Management of the University' on 'significant cross-University matters that impact on students.' The SU is 'authorised to bring any other student representative to any meeting of the Forum.' The Forum can 'discuss and make recommendations to the VCG on any matters affecting the student experience at the University' and 'items for discussion can be raised by student representatives for recommendation for action elsewhere within the University.'⁸⁵

Engaging students – so as to improve their experiences and outcomes – is a key principle of our longstanding Programme Board system. This Programme Board system extends across **all** (100%) of our academic provision (i.e. every taught academic programme is required to have one) and is a formal opportunity – at least two board meetings per academic year are required, scheduled to maximise the availability of the elected student representatives (from each year/level of the programme) in attendance – to listen to the voices of students. These boards are used for the following purposes: 'to provide opportunities for staff, students and others to discuss key matters relating to the Programme and to share best practice'; 'to monitor the workload and assessment of students'; 'to discuss the External Examiner's report,

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draft a response, and monitor follow-up actions'; 'to review the development of the Programme and to discuss and agree proposals for revision and enhancement (e.g. minor changes)'; 'to discuss the feedback from the NSS (and other relevant surveys) and the response and action taken by the academic area'. In June 2022 – following close collaboration between the University and the Students' Union to develop it – Academic Board approved a 'refreshed' *Programme Board Agenda*, to be used by **all** (100%) programmes, with standard items that **must** be covered at those meetings with student course representatives in attendance. These items include: 'Programme Co-ordinator's report/update (to include NSS feedback where appropriate [usually in the form of a 'You Said, We Did' pro-forma]); 'Student input and feedback (including suggestions of best practice)' from student representatives at each level of study; 'Learning Resources matters'; 'Learning and Teaching matters' and 'Issues raised by Student Representatives (not previously covered by the agenda)'. The relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor (who line manages the leader of the academic area within which the programme is located) and Students' Union Vice-President are included in the distribution list for the notes of all such boards across the University.⁸⁶ The Programme Board structure operates to make continual improvements that benefit students, based on their feedback, across the University's provision. By way of example, and focussing on one academic area – History & Politics – some enhancements that have been made on the basis of dialogue with students at boards are: (i) students reported at various Programme Boards that some of the modules heavily rely on group work and students giving each other feedback. In weeks with low attendance, students felt that this seminar format was disadvantageous to them. In response to their feedback, the learning strategy for the following modules was amended to better illustrate the combination of set task completion and weekly seminar participation (with the changes welcomed by the students): HMS5220: Re-litigating the Past; HMS5219: Environment and State in Britain; HMS5216: Ideologies, Politics and Culture; HMS6213: A Global History of the Cold War. These changes impacted students on programmes across the Humanities provision, but mainly within History & Politics (History & Politics Programme Board, 2 December 2021); (ii) HIL124: Contemporary Europe: 1914-2001 was reinstated with a revised module title: 'War & Peace: Twentieth Century Europe and Global Conflict'. The assessment format changed from exam to essay assignment. This module is offered on five of the six programmes in History & Politics (History & Politics Programme Board, 12 December 2019); (iii) the assessment format of PCH401: Introduction to Politics (now module HMS4214: Introduction to Political Ideas) was changed from exam to essay to address student requests for more essay writing practice during their course (History & Politics Programme Board, 12 December 2019); (iv) History & Politics students requested changes to the Dissertation handbook guidance with clearer instructions; this was addressed and a session on dissertation layout offered (History & Politics Programme Board, 22 March 2021).⁸⁷ A further example of continual improvement is drawn from our BA (Hons) Primary Teaching programme. Beginning via a Programme Board discussion in 2019,⁸⁸ it was identified that students were concerned about the balance of group projects as assessments on the programme. As a response, the number of group assignments that are summative assessments were reduced. The process started in 2019-20 with a minor change of module PTCCM6 and has continued up to 2022-23 with a move from a group to individual presentation in PTP501. In terms of impact/outcomes, where group assessments have been removed as summative assessments, there has been an increase in student satisfaction via module evaluations. For example, in 2021-22, 63% of students rated the assessment expectations for PTP501 as being good or higher; in 2022-23, this jumped to 83%.⁸⁹

The University utilises a number of other mechanisms to engage students. Students on **all** modules have a formal opportunity to evaluate and feed back to the relevant Module Co-ordinator on their experiences. This is normally done via module evaluation questionnaires or equivalent. Having analysed these evaluations, Module Co-ordinators feed back to students any changes which have been made as a result of comments received. At programme/academic area level, External Examiners meet, annually, with groups of students and their feedback is commented upon in the examiners' reports. A summary of the External Examiners' reports, and responses to these by the programme, are made available to students via their Programme Board. Students have access to representation on all matters that affect the learning experience. Student representatives are trained and supported by the Students' Union, in partnership with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience). At the academic area level, a periodic review panel includes a student from outside of the subject. Students studying the subject also meet with panel members to discuss their courses during the periodic review process.

3. Student Outcomes

a. Positive outcomes.

SO1: We deploy and tailor approaches that are highly effective in ensuring our students succeed in and progress beyond their studies. For example, our pioneering 'From Adversity to University' project – a unique programme that has

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supported homeless people, refugees, and care leavers into education, located within our Institute of Education and Social Sciences⁹⁰ – enables us to offer an innovative bridging module in, for example, academic writing skills. One is now training to be a barrister. Similarly, one student a career as a teacher. A key output arising from this project was the creation of a toolkit to enable other providers to offer their own programmes to support key vulnerable groups.⁹¹ This is an example of how the University has utilised a ‘theory of change’ in its activities. We defined the goals of the intervention, as well as the expected outcomes and impacts, determining the resources and inputs required for successful intervention. We identified the activities needed for successful intervention and what success would look like, taking account of risks and uncertainties. This is illustrated in the University Partnerships Programme (UPP) Foundation report (November 2021),⁹² alongside measures of progress. Student testimony evidences the effectiveness of this approach.

She comments as follows: ‘The bridging course gave me something to focus on, it gave structure and meaning in my life that I had lost altogether. I discovered the joys of research, essay writing and academia. The course gave so much more than that too, it gave companionship of likeminded individuals, the drive and belief that I could do anything I put my mind to and hope for the future. It, quite literally, transformed my life.’⁹³ Our students regularly affirm the positive outcomes they have achieved through studying with us. For example, a student who had studied on our Early Childhood provision wrote to one of their lecturers as follows: ‘I just wanted to thank you for inspiring me to take action to make a change in Early Years. I am leaders of a new campaign group Early Years Equality that is quickly gaining momentum. We will be fighting for better funding and more recognition for the role we play in society...Thank you again for being an excellent lecturer and an inspirational woman!’⁹⁴

Elsewhere in our provision, External Examiners regularly confirm – this example is from our our BSc (Hons) Sport and Exercise Science, BSc (Hons) Sports Coaching Science and MSci (Hons) Sport and Exercise Science provision (124 students in 2021-22, 2.6%) – as follows: ‘Employability skills are embedded within the programmes. An excellent example of this is the two Work Based Learning modules that encourage students to gain practical experiences as well as critically self-evaluating their performance and approach to the activity. These modules appear to provide students with a good framework to gain professional experience in an area of their own interest.’⁹⁵ Closely related to this, and ensuring that our students progress beyond their studies successfully, we currently have over 30 programmes (with a total of 1,405 students currently studying on them; 28.6% of total u/g students) recognised by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs).⁹⁶ PSRBs and the programmes which they have are accredited or endorsed (confirming that the provision meets professional standards, provides a route through to the professions and are recognised by employers) include the following: the BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy – recognised by Health and Care Professions Council and the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy; BSc (Hons) Psychology – recognised by the British Psychological Society; BA (Hons) Social Work – recognised by Social Work England; BA (Hons) Sport Management – recognised by the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA); BSc (Hons) Sport and Exercise Science – recognised by the British Association of Sport Exercise Sciences (BASES); BSc (Hons) Mathematics – recognised by the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications; BA (Hons) Humanistic Counselling – recognised by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP); LLB (Hons) Law – recognised by the Solicitors’ Regulatory Authority (SRA) and Bar Standards Board (BSB); and our English language provision – recognised by the British Council.⁹⁷

In March 2022, as part of the National Careers Week, the University’s Careers and Employability Service and the Students’ Union collaborated to run a joint employability event. The event had two main objectives: to raise student engagement with our careers services and to expose students to business opportunities in an informal way through ‘speed networking.’ A broad spectrum of employers (21 in total) attended, all with live vacancies open to our students. They included: Marriott Hotel, West Sussex County Council, SI Protect, Goodwood, etc.). The employers listened to student ‘pitches’ and gave them advice. One testimony received from West Sussex County Council was as follows: ‘What a great career development event, it was fantastic to meet so many enthusiastic, interesting students and, we hope to welcome them as future employees! Well done to the Students Union and Employability Service for a successful event.’ This collaborative Speed Networking event was successful in terms of engagement and positive feedback from students, some of them having been contacted the following day by employers to discuss jobs opportunities. One of our Digital Marketing students fed back as follows: ‘I wish to offer my congratulations on running a successful and personally very useful evening last night through the connectivity evening. I found a lot of interesting opportunities to explore.’⁹⁸ To

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enable further progression activity, the University's academic year (standard undergraduate semester pattern: 2022-23 year onwards) has been restructured to include a dedicated 'Student employability, wellbeing and skills development week', organised in collaboration with our Students' Union and involving a range of activities delivered for **all** (100%) undergraduate students by academic areas, our Careers and Employability Service and Student Support and Wellbeing staff throughout one week at the end of each semester.⁹⁹ In addition, one of our partners, Platform One, explains how employability is essential to the design of their curriculum: 'Taught content is based around up to date and progressive examples and industry protocols. Platform One employ a Music Industry Liaison, and this post facilitates regular dialogue with industry professionals to focus on opportunities for students.' Their 'Employment in the Creative Industries' module allows for the explicit exploration of 'What next?' and is key to their students preparing for the transition to industry. studied at Platform One; during this time, Platform One were able to support the development as a professional

Platform One maintains that these opportunities and outcomes are evidence of learning gain.¹⁰¹

SO2: In relation to our full-time students there is 'probable' statistical evidence that the 'continuation' indicator overall is a **very high quality** feature, with 88% of the distribution within the benchmark guidelines and 12% above the upper guideline. Within the full-time student split indicators for continuation there is 'compelling' statistical evidence that performance is **outstanding** for 'course type – other undergraduate Level 5+' and 'level of study – other undergraduate'. In addition, there is: 'very strong' statistical evidence that performance is **outstanding** for students within the 'health and social care' subject area and those in 'year 2' of that indicator, i.e. those starting in 2017-18; 'strong' statistical evidence that performance is **outstanding** for 'non-UK students' and students within the 'media, journalism and communications' subject area; 'probable' statistical evidence that performance is **outstanding** for 'students aged 31 and over', 'students within quintile 1 of "Association Between Characteristics of Students" (ABCS)' (those with the lowest probability of continuing), and those studying 'english'. To contextualise some aspects of our full-time performance here: (i) although there is 'very strong' statistical evidence that we are below very high standard for students on course type 'foundation year', we point out that this split metric represents the outcomes of only 25 entrants (shown as '30' on the TEF dashboard as the data is rounded) over the four-year period, with each student accounting for four percentage points of the outcome. The provision concerned is also split over three academic areas namely engineering, psychology and education. students did not continue, of which were in engineering (including product design; this provision is no longer running). Engineering was a brand new subject area for the University at the start of the TEF timeframe and – reflecting our mission to meet both local and global challenges – is part of our strategic plan to open up degree level engineering provision within West Sussex where, previously, there had not been any. Had more students continued than did so, the metric would have been on benchmark. We recognise that students on the foundation year of integrated degree courses require considerable additional support and this is provided, evidenced by the majority of students continuing from Year 0; (ii) although there is 'probable' statistical evidence that we are below very high standards for students with 'other ethnicity', we point out that this is based on only 30 students and that of these – from different subject areas – did not continue; (iii) although there is also 'probable' statistical evidence that we are below very high standards for students studying within 'engineering', we point out that this is based on a total of 66 students, 13 of which did not continue. of these non-completions were integrated foundation year students and removing these foundation year students from the calculations would give an 87.5% completion rate (which would be within the benchmark guidelines). In relation to our part-time students (410 students) there is 'compelling' statistical evidence that the 'continuation' indicator overall is an **outstanding** feature, with 100% of the distribution above the 'materially above benchmark' guiding line. In relation to our full-time and part-time (the figure for the latter being 530) students there is 'compelling' statistical evidence that the 'completion' indicator overall is an **outstanding** feature, with – for both groups – 100% of the distribution above the 'materially above benchmark' guiding line. We have outstanding rates of continuation and completion for our students and courses. For example, according to the *Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Performance Profiles* (for the 2020-21 academic year and published on 28 July 2022), Chichester's completion rate for undergraduate ITT students (of 92%) is above the national average (of 87%).¹⁰²

SO3: In relation to our full-time students there is 'compelling' statistical evidence that the 'progression' indicator overall is a **very high quality** feature, with 99.6% of the distribution within the benchmark guidelines. Within the split indicators for this feature there is 'compelling' statistical evidence that performance is **outstanding** for those studying within 'education and teaching'. To contextualise an aspect of our full-time performance here: although there is 'strong' statistical evidence that we are below very high standard for courses with postgraduate components, we point out that this is based on 54

students in total, where 14 graduates had not gone on into professional level employment, further study or another positive outcome. 11 out of 30 students on our MSci Advanced Applied Psychology – over 3 years – are also in this category. In relation to our part-time students (180 students) there is ‘compelling’ statistical evidence that for the ‘progression’ indicator we are below very high standard, with 99.5% of the distribution below the ‘materially below benchmark’ guidelines (however, within the split indicators there is ‘very strong’ statistical evidence that performance is **outstanding** for ‘students taught through a subcontractual relationship’). To contextualise two aspects of our part-time progression performance here: (i) our Foundation Degree in Teaching and Learning Support is a part-time programme for students who are employed as Teaching Assistants (TA) in school. The programme develops the skills required to be an effective TA and, in some cases, course fees are paid by the employer as staff development. Some students progress to further study to become teachers, while others continue in their existing role. Work as a TA is classified as ‘medium-skilled’ for the purpose of TEF but is an important vocation requiring a range of competencies. The benchmark for this course is calculated to include part-time courses leading to qualified teacher status (QTS) which are not directly comparable with this Foundation Degree. In addition, for last year’s (2021-22) completing cohort of 20 students, 18 are currently undertaking further study with us (via a Level 6 ‘top-up’, either on Early Childhood Studies or Primary Teaching programmes), and has caring responsibilities; (ii) in relation to our Humanistic Counselling provision and progression performance, the issue is not related to our BA (Hons) Humanistic Counselling (where 89.9% of leavers are currently in highly skilled jobs) but, rather, with our Certificate in Counselling Skills which is a Level 4 qualification comprised of only 2 (15 credit) modules. This certificate programme does not attract funding from Student Finance England; because of this, it attracts students who are seeking to develop their counselling skills for personal reasons, rather than actively seeking a job in this field (those who seek employment usually opt to continue their studies on our BA Humanistic Counselling provision). We have very favourable rates of successful progression for our students and courses. For example, according to the *Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Performance Profiles* (for the 2020-21 academic year and published on 28 July 2022), the employment rates for (former) Chichester undergraduate students are above the national average; 79% of our 2019-20 completers (73 respondents in total) were teaching in a state school compared to 61% nationally.¹⁰³ This is due, in part, to the way that we work with others. The University works in partnership with over 350 schools across 7 local authority areas to train teachers. Schools contribute to the design and quality assurance of our curriculum through membership of strategic steering groups (the Primary and Secondary Steering Committees, both of which meet once each term, i.e. 3 times per year) that ensure that our courses meet the needs of employers.¹⁰⁴

b. Educational gains.

SO4: We clearly articulate the range of educational gains we intend our students to achieve, and why these are highly relevant to our students and their future ambitions. ‘Educational gain’ is discussed at meetings of both the University’s Student Forum and LTSE Committee (and the TEF Working Group).¹⁰⁵ There is full student representation and participation in the discussions at these meetings. The intention of these discussions is to develop our measures for educational gain, identify the most effective approaches for delivering it and evidencing that it is happening in practice. Our current definition of what we want our students to gain from their educational experience – with reference to the specific character and mission of our institution – is drawn from two main sources: (a) *Open for Change*, our *LTSE Strategy (2018-2025)* and *University Commitment Charter*, which already resonate with (b) some sector-wide work that has been undertaken on ‘learning gain’, most significantly the *Final Evaluation of the Office for Students Learning Gain Pilot Projects (July 2019)*.¹⁰⁶ In this evaluation, learning – which we also understand as educational – gain is defined overall as ‘a change in knowledge, skills, work-readiness and personal development, as well as enhancement of specific practices and outcomes in defined disciplinary and institutional contexts’ (p5, 1.2). Here, learning/educational gain is also understood as having three dimensions: (i) ‘measures of general cognitive gain’ (‘what students think and know’); (ii) ‘measures of soft skills development’ (‘affective measures of attitudes and how students feel, and behavioural measures of students’ engagement’); (iii) ‘employability and career readiness’ (‘largely behavioural measures of activities students have undertaken in preparation for the world of work’) (p6, 1.6). We have agreed to adopt this definition, understanding it to encompass the areas of academic development (including gains relating to the development of subject/disciplinary knowledge as well as academic skills, for example critical thinking/reasoning/reading/evaluation, analytic and quantitative reasoning, problem solving, situational judgement, academic writing, and research and referencing skills/methods); personal development (including gains relating to the development of student resilience, self-efficacy, motivation, engagement, confidence and wellbeing, as well as soft skills – for example communication, presentation, time management, and networking and interpersonal skills); work readiness (including gains relating to the development of

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employability skills, and skills self-assessment – for example professional resilience, teamworking, commercial awareness, leadership and influencing). Further details regarding how we are supporting and evidencing these educational gains beyond the measures of continuation, completion and progression used in the TEF indicators, and in ways that are relevant to the mix of our students and courses, follow in the rest of this section.

In relation to ‘measures of general cognitive gain’ (‘what students think and know’), this is measured by the development of the progression in learning outcomes through levels of study (as articulated in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications [FHEQ]) and student achievement of those. **All** our programmes of study are designed to enable students to gain knowledge of and experience in problem solving, quantitative reasoning, critical reading and evaluation, disciplinary cognitive gain, critical reasoning skills, situational judgement, and research methods (this design process is, in part, assisted by the requirement for all undergraduate provision to complete our standard *Module Descriptor* pro-forma¹⁰⁷). In relation to ‘measures of soft skills development’ (‘affective measures of attitudes and how students feel, and behavioural measures of students’ engagement’), we know that our enhanced reading list software provides us with fine grain, cross-institutional information of how and when students engage, and where that may be jeopardised (i.e. we can see who accesses library resources). Additionally, and with the support of the Students’ Union, we implemented electronic attendance monitoring to enable automated collection and analysis of student presence and engagement. That information then feeds into our enhancement actions to ensure students continue to develop, attain and progress satisfactorily, or pause to repeat effectively (where appropriate). For ‘employability and career readiness’ (‘largely behavioural measures of activities students have undertaken in preparation for the world of work’), we proactively support our students to engage with work placements, co-curricular activities, skills self-assessments, employability-enhancing experiences, and study abroad. Many of our entrants initially lack the ‘social confidence and capital’ that aids their eventual employability, and ensures they can articulate what they have to offer to potential employers. We enable them to thrive educationally, socially and emotionally, help them to reflect on valuable professional and soft skills they have developed, and to grow in self-belief, personal advocacy, aspiration and appetite to compete in the graduate employment market. In the NSS 2022, our (optional) ‘Personal Development’ score overall was 76.9%, comparing favourably to an English average of 73.8% and evidencing our commitment to – and impact in – these aspects of ‘work readiness’. In the NSS 2022, the ‘Personal Development’ group of questions include B1.1 – ‘The course has helped me to present myself with confidence’, where we scored 78.6% against an English average of 71.7%, as well as B1.2 – ‘My communication skills have improved’, where we scored 81.1% against an English average of 78.3%.

Across our provision, in our curricula, we teach students resilience. For example, emotional and cognitive resilience and techniques to improve resilience from a psychological perspective are a focus of a L5 Counselling Psychology module ‘Lifespan Development’¹⁰⁸). Professional Resilience (PR) is delivered across all levels of study in the University’s Conservatoire. It is embedded into our undergraduate provision, with 211 students (4.4% of total u/g students in 2021-22) undertaking resilience modules across Levels 4-6 in 2021-22 (with 17 students at L6 and over 180 students at L4) and over 200 students taking them this year (2022-23).¹⁰⁹ One of our Professors of Learning and Teaching undertook research in 2019 on the impact of professional resilience training on university students’ self-efficacy. The students had all completed the PR module. The study aimed to document the impact of professional resilience training on students. It was hypothesised that self-efficacy and wellbeing would improve over the course of the year-long module and that there were wider benefits to academic/musical learning. The results of the research show the effectiveness of the PR module in relation to the whole person. Overall, there was a significant difference over time with ‘Self-efficacy for Learning’, ‘Self-efficacy for Performing’, and ‘Resilience’. Specifically, both self-efficacy scores and the ‘Confidence’ and ‘Adaptability’ subsections of the ‘Resilience Scale’ showed significant increases from the midpoint to the end of the module. The findings were summarised at the University of Chichester’s Research Conference in 2019.¹¹⁰

The University embraces the strategic imperative to deliver a high-quality, personalised, accessible and aspirational experience for our students and, vitally, to know how we are succeeding in this regard. Accordingly, the emphasis on the regular monitoring/measurement, review and challenge of progress against our primary strategic aim was recently enhanced further by the decision of Academic Board to establish an Education Committee – superseding the LTSE Committee, although continuing with all of its work alongside an expanded range of responsibilities – to ensure an optimal fit of the University’s committee structure and activities with the B Conditions as well as close alignment with the measurement of educational gain. The Education Committee is continuing with the work established by the LTSE Committee on ‘Enabling Student Success’, a standing agenda item designed to ‘explicitly demonstrate the University’s

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emphasis on how it is enabling student success in a variety of ways'¹¹¹; thus far, this has included, for example, initiatives such as 'building resilience into the curriculum' and the Chichester *Graduate Attributes Framework*. The duties of the Education Committee also include the following: 'to progress actions in relation to the University's *LTSE Strategy* through managing performance against KPIs, lead indicators and quality metrics and measures (such as feedback from external examiners, PSRBs, employers/industry, alumni, etc.) and to provide an annual update on Academic Quality and Standards to Academic Board and the Board of Governors'; 'to determine policy and oversee arrangements for the systematic collection of student feedback and for the monitoring and improvement of student outcomes and satisfaction with their learning experience'; 'to monitor and determine measures to improve student retention, progression, achievement and outcomes, including employability, ensuring appropriate reflection within the University's Degree Outcomes Statement.'¹¹² Our *LTSE Strategy 2018-2025* also has a strong focus on employability, particularly on the personal development of individuals during their time at university. In 2021, the *LTSE Committee* commissioned a cross-institutional approach to supporting this development. The Graduate Attribute & Student Employability Working Group (GASEWG) was formed to identify a common and consistent set of attributes unique to Chichester's students. The purpose of the project was to make explicit the skills development already embedded in the curriculum and to define how these skills then translate into graduate behaviours. In collaboration with all academic areas, the University's Senior Management Team (SMT), the Students' Union, and with contributions from employers, the Group developed a common language to raise students' awareness of these skills and behaviours and to help them build confidence in articulating them when in an employment context. The University's *Graduate Attributes Framework*¹¹³ consists of seven distinct attributes we aim for our graduates to embody: 'confident', 'considerate', 'conscientious', 'curious', 'collaborative', 'creative', and 'courageous.' These seven attributes can then be applied across four individual developmental contexts: 'personal', 'professional', 'civic' and 'academic'. The next stage of this project is to develop student-led 'pathways' that we will embed into our new careers and employability software platform (i.e. *TargetConnect*). These pathways will enable us to capture students' career readiness from entry, and then year-on-year as they progress and undertake a range of employability related activities. Not only will this support measuring learning gain for the activities undertaken, it will also support the Careers and Employability Service to intervene directly with students to provide tailored support opportunities and additional activities and to respond to individual/group requirements. Study and Work Abroad has been integrated within the Careers and Employability Service to acknowledge the positive benefits these opportunities have for student employability. To support employability, we offer the opportunity to **all** students to study and work abroad as part of their programme. Despite disruption caused by Brexit and the pandemic, we extended our Erasmus+ projects to May 2023 and benefit from the Turing Scheme. We organised 28 outgoing mobilities and work placements. During mobilities, students acquire subject-based knowledge, and gain a range of soft skills that directly align to their development. According to Gone International (Report 2015),¹¹⁴ there is a positive impact on graduate outcomes as a result of international mobilities, including a higher employment rate (11% of those in full-time work compared to 2%), higher salaries and higher academic achievements compared with non-mobile students. Further to this, experiences abroad have a positive impact on students' self-identity, self-efficacy, and more.¹¹⁵ In terms of our students, a 2nd year BA (Hons) Creative Writing student in 2022 said: 'In my second year, I spent a semester studying English Language and Literature in Switzerland and it ended up being one of the most rewarding experiences of my degree!...I was able to study English literature from the perspective of a non-native speaker which I found immensely interesting. It has completely changed the way I view literature and writing...While it could be difficult at times, it was the challenge that really made me a better person. Studying abroad motivated me to do things out of my comfort zone and become a more outgoing person. Through my semester abroad, I learned how to be more self-advocating, communicative, and flexible.'¹¹⁶

SO5: Our approaches to supporting our students to achieve educational gains are evidence-based, highly effective and tailored to them and their different starting points. For example, each semester our Psychology staff ask alumni to present their journeys from students to professionals to current students. Our programme co-ordinators work with alumni to ascertain the skills currently required in the market; this then informs changes to modules (e.g. a recent alumnus relayed that working as a Psychologist in the Ministry of Defence requires knowledge of project management techniques. The following year, this content was added to the programme as PSY302: Project Management and Presentation Skills¹¹⁷). Psychology staff also set up the Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) initiative. PAL is a form of collaborative learning that has been implemented in a variety of universities with good success.¹¹⁸ A core feature of PAL is that it is run and led by students for their peers. PAL has been developed and embedded in a wide range of modules, but seems particularly appropriate in the context of service modules (e.g. mathematics taught to non-specialists, such as Psychology and

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Criminology students). In our Primary Teaching area, students have evaluated the 'Making Change Happen' module as follows: 'The module made me more open to accept that things can and should change in Primary school and sometimes fighting for a project to benefit the children is better than leaving things stagnant. It also showed me the type of school I wished to work in. I now work in a very small village school, with access to our own outdoor learning environment in which we have made significant changes that impact the learning and SEMH of our children.'¹¹⁹ In their summer 2022 report, the External Examiner for the BA (Hons) Primary Teaching wrote of this module that 'you continue to provide your trainees with this brilliant opportunity to build their own confidence in leading and group work, contributing to the community and producing outcomes that are truly something to be very proud of.'¹²⁰ Supported by the University's Careers and Employability Service, staff in our Business School have enhanced their approach to work placements; student participation in their work placement modules has increased from 37% in 2018-19 to 72% in 2021-22. At the end of a 10-week placement, students are asked to reflect on the skills acquired through this opportunity; employers are also asked to feed back on the skills and behaviours demonstrated by students. In 2021-2, of the 28 students participating, received offers of employment; students were scored highly by employers on their work ethic, punctuality and willingness to perform.¹²¹ In the annual *Trainee Online Questionnaire* conducted by Ofsted for all Initial Teacher Training (ITT) providers, Chichester students have consistently agreed or strongly agreed that their training programme will make them a good or better teacher (97% in 2022; 96% in 2021; 95% in 2020). For the latest available national comparative data (relating to those responding in 2021), the proportion of overall positive responses to this questionnaire from Chichester students exceeded the sector average (91% Chichester compared to 87% across all ITT partnerships in 2021).¹²²

SO6: We evaluate the educational gains made by our students, and demonstrate that they are succeeding in achieving the intended gains. For example, our Psychology academics ask their students to report on their learning gain in their final year of their programme via a simple open-ended live survey question: 'What did you learn from your programme?' This practice generates communication and knowledge of learning gain perceived by our students. Students in that academic area indicated learning gain across 3 themes: (i) skills (e.g. using SPSS, a statistical software package heavily used in the social sciences; debate; analysis; leadership, etc.); (ii) knowledge (theories, techniques, cognitive, etc.); (iii) self-awareness (stress management, determination, independence, etc.). Psychology staff also collect data from first-year students in Induction Week regarding 'What do you hope to achieve through this programme?' Mapping their answers from Week 1, Year 1 to Semester 1, Year 3 provides students with meta-cognition of their own learning gain (i.e. 'learning to learn').¹²³ In partnership with Chichester College Group, we offer an innovative FdA Teaching Dance in the Private Sector. Students study half of the practical modules (leading to an ISTD qualification) at the College, and the more theory-based modules at the University, enabling progression to the final year of a BA (Hons) programme. Students on this FdA have stated that 'we all feel that this new course has set us up for a variety of different careers within the dance industry... we have gained skills in teaching and genre-specific techniques as well as expanding our knowledge of theatre design, choreography and dance anatomy, to name just a few.' Graduates have, variously, gone on to the following: teach modern and tap to a wide range of age groups and deliver dance workshops in schools across West Sussex; undertake an apprenticeship in Producing for the Sonia Sabri Dance Company; gain qualified teacher status [QTS] with a local academy trust in West Sussex to teach dance at a Chichester secondary school; study for a Master's degree in Dance Movement Psychotherapy alongside working with children with complex neurodivergent needs.¹²⁴ In part, our evaluation of the educational gains made by our students (including how our students evaluate these gains) is informed by reports from our External Examiners. For example, the External Examiner's report – referring to the 2021-22 academic year – for our BA (Hons) Education degree contains the following: (i) 'The students talked well about the value-added nature of the degree, and were clear on how their degree had not only improved relevant content knowledge for their future careers, but also recognised that they had gained worthwhile employability skills that would stand them in good stead in the future'; (ii) 'Employability skills are woven implicitly into assessments for many of the units – as importantly as anything else, it is really encouraging that students recognise this.'¹²⁵

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- ¹⁰⁹ Data on Professional Resilience module take-up/student numbers and student outcomes/impact across University of Chichester Conservatoire provision. Held in Conservatoire DMS (acc. 12/01/23).
- ¹¹⁰ Ritchie, L., Sharpe, B.T., O'Donnell, M., and Hunt, E. (2019) 'Impact of professional resilience training on university student's self-efficacy.' Presentation at University of Chichester 2019 Research Conference: Open for Change (05/07/19).
- ¹¹¹ LTSEC minutes, May 2022, Part B, Item 7: 'Enabling Student Success'. Held in LTSEC DMS.
- ¹¹² Academic Board minutes, Nov. 2022, Part B, Items 16.2 and 16.2.2.: 'Academic Board Committee Structure Revisions' and 'Education Committee Constitution and ToR'. Held in USO DMS.
- ¹¹³ The University of Chichester *Graduate Attributes Framework*, developed 2021-22 by the Careers and Employability Service (hereafter, CES) in collaboration with GASEWG and SMT. Held in CES DMS.
- ¹¹⁴ UK Higher Education International Unit (2015) *Gone International: Mobile students and their outcomes*. Report on the 2012/13 graduating cohort (London, UK Higher Education International Unit), <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/UUKi%20reports/gone-international-mobile-students-and-their-outcomes.pdf>.
- ¹¹⁵ Netz, N. Who benefits most from studying abroad? A conceptual and empirical overview. *High Educ* 82, 1049–1069 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-021-00760-1>.
- ¹¹⁶ Student testimony on study abroad experience, 2022. Held in CES DMS.
- ¹¹⁷ PSY302 module descriptor. Held in AQSS DMS.
- ¹¹⁸ <https://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/stuart-capstick.pdf>.
- ¹¹⁹ Words from PET and PTS graduates who completed the *Making Change Happen* module in 2017-2021 in response to the statement 'Ways in which the module *Making Change Happen* has benefited me now that I am a primary school teacher', Dec. 2022. Held in PET/PTS DMS.
- ¹²⁰ BA (Hons) Primary Teaching, 2021/22, External Examiner's report. Held in AQSS DMS.
- ¹²¹ CES Work Placement Provision data. Held in CES DMS.
- ¹²² Data taken from: *Trainee Online Questionnaire* (results 2022), published by Ofsted (Oct. 2022); *Trainee Online Questionnaire* (results 2021), published by Ofsted (Sep. 2021); *ITE Inspection Data Summary Report 2022*, published by Ofsted (Jan. 2022). Held in Institute of Education DMS.
- ¹²³ Student Survey data, Institute of Psychology, Business & Life Sciences (hereafter, IPBLS). Held in IPBLS DMS.
- ¹²⁴ Chichester College Group, Graduate Outcomes data. Held in TEF Working Group DMS.
- ¹²⁵ BA (Hons) Education, 2022, External Examiner's report, rec. 26/07/22. Held in AQSS DMS.