

1. Provider context

Hartpury was established in 1948, initially as an agricultural college. Delivering our first Higher Education (HE) provision in 1992, we grew to become the largest specialist Further Education (FE) College provider of HE in the UK. In 2012, we made the strategic decision to become a university. Teaching quality remained a top priority, which resulted in us achieving TEF Gold in 2017 and successfully attaining University status in 2018. We recognised the need to further develop our research and knowledge exchange activities, strategically committing staff and resources to this area, and submitted to REF for the first time in 2021. In partnership with the University of the West of England, we also celebrated our first doctoral graduates that year. Throughout this journey, Hartpury has continued to focus on providing an outstanding academic experience with positive outcomes for our students.

Today, our mission is to be:

‘a specialist niche provider delivering relevant, effective and high-quality education and training for employment in sport, equine, animal and agricultural industries; locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.’^A

Hartpury University uniquely shares a single campus with FE, which is delivered through Hartpury College, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Hartpury University. While FE and HE operate separately, there are synergies such as the curriculum offer (animal, agriculture, equine and sport), engagement with industry, specialist facilities and the opportunity to progress from a Level 2 qualification to a doctorate on a single campus. The FE student population offers unique access to a community of young people which greatly enhances HE student learning.

We are proud of the diversity in academic background of our 2,200 university students, including:

- 66% from a ‘non-A-level’ background (16% higher than the sector average);
- 21% with a declared disability (compared to a sector average of 16.2%);
- For a land-based institution, a relatively low proportion of IMD quintile 3, 4 or 5 (62.8%)¹.

We provide an outstanding student journey considerate of the students’ academic background, supporting effective transition into and through HE. The majority of students (93.8%) study campus based full-time undergraduate (3 years or more) degree programmes. Of these, 6.8% enrol on a programme with an integrated foundation year which supports those who may not have the relevant subject background or Level 3 qualification to successfully bridge the gap in underpinning science, experience, study skills and/or business. Internal data illustrates that our integrated foundation year students achieve a higher proportion of upper awards (2:1 and 1st degree classification) than integrated foundation years in the sector² (8% higher), evidencing the outstanding success of the support we provide at each stage of this approach^B.

Our effective methods of engaging students in applied curriculum is driven by the industries we serve. We strive to produce ‘employment ready’ graduates who apply theory to practice. Students turn their subject passion into academic qualifications and experiences that are recognised and valued by both society and employers. Whilst achieving employment classified as highly skilled is a challenge in our industries (see Section 3.1.3), our students are extremely successful in gaining employment. This is evidenced by 97% of our 2019-20 graduates in the Graduate Outcomes

¹ Data listed are based on full-time undergraduate students in 2020-21, from the OfS Size and Shape dashboard. Part time students accounted for 10 FTE in 2020-21, and due to the small size receive limited focus in this submission.

² National data (64%) taken from the report ‘[OfS \(2019\) Preparing for Degree Study \(p. 4\)](#)’.

Provider name: Hartpury University
UKPRN: 10080811

Survey being in employment, further study or other purposeful activity (compared to a sector average of 95%)^C, particularly impressive considering Hartpury's rural location and high levels social deprivation within the region. Indeed, since the start of Graduate Outcomes, this figure has not fallen below 96%, illustrating our outstanding ability to support our students into employment.

Hartpury's success in producing outstanding graduates is achieved through prioritising, facilitating and rewarding teaching excellence. We invest in our staff and campus. All academic staff are supported to gain, or be working towards, a teaching qualification within their first year of employment (currently 90% of all academic staff have achieved this). We have invested £45m over the last 5 years in our campus-based learning resources. We ensure we have qualified academic staff who can effectively utilise our well-equipped 360-hectare campus and world class facilities in teaching, learning and assessment. The success of this approach is evidenced by the indicators and internal data discussed in this submission, and in the student submission. Hartpury is proud of the recognition of our success, particularly considering we only gained university status in 2018. Recent highlights include:

- Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide:
 - 6th in the UK for teaching quality in 2023 and top 20 in 2022;
 - 14th in the UK for Student Experience in 2023.
- Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF 2.0 2022): Highest quintile of all UK universities, for Local Growth and Regeneration.
- Whatuni Student Choice Awards (WUSCA, 2022)^D:
 - 1st for Lecturers and Teaching Quality;
 - 3rd in UK for Facilities and Careers Prospects;
 - 4th in UK for Student Support;
 - Top 10 for University of the Year and Student Support.
- National Student Survey (NSS): 1st English Mainstream University for Teaching on my Course and 2nd for Overall Satisfaction and Academic Support and 3rd for Assessment and Feedback (2022).
- Graduate Outcomes: Top 20% of UK universities for graduate employability (2022).
- One of the first five Universities in the UK to achieve the University Mental Health Charter (UMHC) (2022).

Other contextual information: We take this opportunity to thank Hartpury Students' Union (HSU) and the team of three officers, who balanced full-time undergraduate study and their officer duties alongside writing the student submission. The student and University TEF teams worked collaboratively throughout the development process, including a co-sign off of this document by both Academic Board and HSU. As a small provider, our organisational capacity to prepare for the TEF submission has been challenged with the same colleagues balancing TEF and other regulatory developments alongside usual roles, without the support of dedicated planning or data teams.

Historical data coding issues have impacted on the accuracy of the OfS dashboard data relating to completion and continuation for Hartpury University. Section 3.1 provides further information.

We have a validation arrangement with University Centre Weston (UCW) who are submitting to the TEF directly. We worked collaboratively on both submissions but do not focus on UCW here. We

also have a new partnership with the British Racing School (BRS). It had its first intake in 2020-21
Its staff and students fed into this submission.

2. Student experience

We are proud of our outstanding approaches to teaching, learning and assessment that integrates a unique educational environment into excellent educational experiences for our students. Our approach to teaching, learning and assessment is guided by the Hartpury University Academic Strategy, 2020-25, which includes these priorities:

1. Teaching practice will provide learning opportunities that will enable students to realise their potential;
2. Our graduates will be highly employable, recognise the value in what they do, and be able to make positive contributions to society.^E

The governor-led Quality, Enhancement and Standards Committee (QuEST) maintains strategic oversight of progress against the priorities, receiving reports from Academic Board which monitors progress against the strategic plan and scrutinises annual reports and in-year monitoring of associated operational plans and Key Performance Indicators. Detailed scrutiny of the underpinning Staff Development Policy, Teaching Development Scheme and the Hartpury Quality Enhancement Framework is delegated to the Academic Standards and Enhancement Committee (ASEC). Embedded in this structure are student representatives, who are integral to the development, approval, monitoring and scrutiny of associated policies and practice.

2.1 Performance against student experience overall and split indicators:

Analysis of the overall indicators for student experience illustrates examples of outstanding performance. For example, assessment and feedback and academic support both indicate greater than 97% of the statistical uncertainty distribution is materially above benchmark. While many positives, there are two areas where the student experience indicator performance is not consistent – the performance in Year 3 and the performance of male students (and associated male dominated subjects).

Year 3 time series data: Year 3 relates to students who were impacted by Covid-19 in the 3 years of study prior to completing the NSS. Undoubtedly, the restrictions Covid-19 placed on Hartpury's ability to deliver campus based, applied curriculum to students from a variety of academic backgrounds was significant. We worked closely with the HSU throughout this period, including transitions to and from online learning and assessment ^F. We continued to meet our commitment to delivering a minimum of 15 hours of timetabled contact per week for first year students and 12 hours for other students. Modules continued to be delivered and assessed in line with module descriptors, with any deviations considered individually by an institutional level panel. Force-majeure regulations were enacted, reducing academic penalties for non-submission / re-submission, but essentially maintaining the nature of our modular academic framework^{G,H}. Despite all these efforts, students had to transition from high levels of practical delivery utilising a wide range of facilities to contextualising theory into practice and online learning.

Highly specialised curriculum areas with professional body requirements that necessitated access to specific facilities / placement activities were amongst some of the first to return to campus delivery (January 2021), with the rest of our provision returning shortly after (March 2021). Online delivery was reduced to a maximum of two hours per week, and tailored student support services, available either on-site or online, were provided.

The academic integrity of our awards was maintained, (supported by External Examiners (EEs) reporting high levels of confidence in both 2019-20 and 2020-21³ and confirmation from all Professional Accrediting Bodies (PABs¹)), student retention was strong (93.6% in 2020-21) and achievement of first-degree upper awards remained consistent (at 70% in both 2020-21 and 2021-22)^{H,J}. Although the HSU wrote an open letter of support for the approach taken in responding to Covid-19^K, there was a decline in NSS scores in Year 3 despite all efforts. Pleasingly, Year 4 data for teaching on my course, assessment and feedback, and academic support increased and was materially above benchmark. Section 2.3.3 reflects on the subsequent positive pedagogical legacy of Covid-19.

Male: While forming a small proportion of the denominator (30%, and therefore subject to less statistical certainty, male students consistently record lower satisfaction compared to females (and also lower completion and, to a lesser extent, continuation - see Section 3.1.1). This is demonstrated in both the sex split indicator and in the male dominated subjects of biosciences, sport and exercise sciences, allied health and medical sciences. In fact, the lower scores were focussed around three specific sports programmes (of which 60% of students were male⁴). In these circumstances, Hartpury's response to low levels of student satisfaction in the NSS at programme level is to launch programme specific interventions led by the Pro-Vice Chancellor and supported by the Head of Department and Programme Managers. The process commenced with a detailed review of the NSS feedback (triggering the intervention), using internal programme and module feedback, EE feedback and in some cases, focus groups were conducted with current and graduated students by an independent senior member of academic staff. For these three programmes, no common feedback themes were identified for wider institutional consideration, so the process resulted in detailed programme-facing action plans. Immediate and longer-term priorities emerged, which were signed off with the provision of additional resource and funding (where appropriate), supporting progress that was subsequently monitored by the intervention team^G. Table 1 illustrates the success of this targeted, programme specific approach.

Table 1: Impact of programme specific interventions on Student Experience NSS scores (cells shaded Gold indicate an increase of greater than 9 percentage points)

| | NSS Results | Teaching on my course | Assessment and feedback | Academic support | Learning resources | Student voice |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| BSc (Hons) Strength and Conditioning | Pre intervention ¹ | 73.4 | 70.3 | 70.8 | 79.1 | 68.8 |
| | Post intervention ³ | 90.0 | 80.0 | 90.0 | 70.0 | 60.0 |
| BSc (Hons) Sports Therapy | Pre intervention ¹ | 77.0 | 43.8 | 66.7 | 91.7 | 66.7 |
| | Post intervention ³ | 92.3 | 80.8 | 84.6 | 89.7 | 80.8 |
| BSc (Hons) Physical Education and School Sport | Pre intervention ¹ | 58.9 | 50.0 | 57.1 | 73.8 | 38.1 |
| | Post intervention ² | 83.3 | 87.5 | 96.3 | 94.4 | 87.0 |

Superscript indicates year of NSS: ¹=2019; ²=2020; ³=2022

³ Annual EE reports (2019-20 and 2020-21) illustrates 'standards of the provision are appropriate', 'quality of knowledge and skills demonstrated by students' and 'the assessment strategy is effective and appropriate' with 19, 19 and 16 out of 23 EEs ranking complete confidence and 4, 4 and 7 ranking broad confidence.

⁴ Numbers based on total number of students eligible to complete NSS in 2019 – 2022 on the three programmes.

Further analysis of student experience indicators reveals:

Teaching on my course data demonstrates that students highly value their teaching experiences at Hartpury, with our overall indicator value 2.2 percentage points above our benchmark and 38.5% of the statistical uncertainty distribution materially above benchmark. Time series analysis illustrates the impact of Covid-19 in Year 3, which was the only year our indicator fell below our benchmark value (only by 0.1 percentage points). The Year 4 data illustrate the benefits of the relevant strategies and returning to campus-based delivery, with Hartpury's indicator value rising by 4.4 percentage points compared to Year 3 (compared to a benchmark rise of only 0.1 percentage points). Analysis of other split indicator data reveals performance above benchmark, with particular excellence relating to the teaching of older students and IMD Q1 and Q2. As illustrated in Section 1, Hartpury has been recognised nationally for the quality of teaching (including best in the UK for Lecturers and Teaching Quality from unbiased and independent students' reviews at the 2022 WUSCA).

Assessment and Feedback is consistently outstanding with our overall indicator value 5.6 percentage points above our benchmark and 99.7% of the statistical uncertainty distribution materially above benchmark. No student or study characteristic split indicators are below benchmark and the majority demonstrate high levels of statistical certainty of above benchmark performance. As illustrated in Section 2.2.2, Hartpury has invested significantly in these areas, and it is pleasing to see that efforts have been so highly effective.

Academic Support is consistently outstanding with our overall indicator value 4.6 percentage points above our benchmark and 97.9% of the statistical uncertainty distribution materially above benchmark. Like other student experience indicators, a decrease in time series data in Year 3 and male dominated subject areas is seen, although all remained above benchmark. In addition to the high NSS scores in this area, EE feedback demonstrates high levels of confidence in the supportive learning environment, and access to a wide and readily available range of outstanding quality academic support⁵. Our strength in this area is further demonstrated by Hartpury being placed 4th in both 2020 and 2022 for student support (WUSCA, 2022)⁶.

Learning resources time series data illustrates the disproportionate impact Covid-19 had at Hartpury compared to the wider sector although 88.1% of the statistical uncertainty distribution for the overall indicator is broadly in-line with benchmark. While in Year 4 Hartpury's indicator value increased by nearly 5 percentage points compared to the previous year, the benchmark data increased further (by 7.5 percentage points). NSS analysis revealed that programme specific resources had improved, but IT and library resources areas had not returned to pre-Covid levels.

The slow recovery for IT and library resources NSS scores post-Covid (Year 4) was unexpected, resulting in a review of wider sources of relevant feedback regarding these services. Analysis of the end of year annual EE report (2021-22)⁷ revealed high levels of complete confidence in the learning resources provided. Analysis of Programme Review and Departmental Committee meetings did not reveal any IT / library related concerns either. Interestingly, the 2020-21 United Kingdom Engagement Survey (UKES) of all non-completing students, recorded that only 4 and 8 out of 207 survey completers responded negatively about the library and the IT services

⁵ Annual EE reports (2021-22) confirm 'Students on these modules have experienced a supportive learning environment, with access to a wide and readily available range of outstanding quality academic support and learning resources' with 11 out of 12 rating complete, 1 rating broad confidence.

⁶ Whatuni Student Choice Awards were not held in 2021

⁷ Annual EE reports (2021-22) confirms 'Students on these modules have experienced a supportive learning environment, with access to a wide and readily available range of outstanding quality academic support and learning resources' with 11 out of 12 rating complete, 1 rating broad confidence.

respectively. Of those students who completed the survey, 22.2% were disability students and predominantly female and therefore representative of the student body^L.

We discussed the situation with the HSU, who conducted a survey (as discussed in the student TEF submission) directly with the student body, asking questions which aligned to the NSS, but using what they felt to be more Hartpury specific terminology. students completed the survey with respondents spread across all academic departments. Results showed that 80.4% and 96.4% of respondents rated the IT services and the library as good (or better) respectively. What became evident is that the students were utilising a large number of associated resources and perceiving them of high value as is reflected within the student submission. Based on the review of multiple sources and through the work with our student partners, we are confident this upward trajectory in learning resources will continue, but we will continue to closely monitor this area.

Student Voice is outstanding with our overall indicator value 2.9 percentage points above our benchmark and 62.5% of the statistical uncertainty distribution materially above benchmark illustrating the successful, collegiate relationship Hartpury has with the student body. Split indicator analysis shows strong performance in areas including those studying other undergraduate courses (both level of study and course type undergraduate level 5+), non-UK and female students. The HSU-led student forum is particularly successful, providing a unique opportunity to have all student representatives sharing experiences (at least 3 forums per year, increasing during 2019-21 in response to the Covid-19 challenges). The forum facilitates student conversations across levels, subjects and modes of study, and is inclusive of all student groups, providing a unique environment for the student voice to flourish. In fact, there are several examples in this submission which explain the benefits gained from discussion in the forum including the Inclusive Teaching and Learning Guide (Section 3.1.2) and our approach to feedback (Section 2.2.2).

Hartpury believes the initiatives outlined within Sections 2.2 and 2.3 have contributed to the outstanding performance illustrated in both indicator and in-house data.

2.2 Academic experience and assessment:

2.2.1 Curriculum design

Through industry relevant course content and delivery, designed to support our entire student body, students are inspired to actively engage in, and commit to, their studies and achieve their fullest potential. While the value of our approach to curriculum design is well established (positively recognised in the HER (2014)^M and TEF (2017)^N as good practice), we continue to enhance our approaches including:

Employer led curriculum design and review, informed by leading employers / experts:

Annual EE feedback confirms the complete / broad confidence in the industry relevance of the curriculum⁸ endorsing a revised institutional approach to curriculum development and review. Implemented in 2019, the approach ensures curriculum is not only industry led, but is also industry leading^O. For example, the equine department (first to follow the approach) collaborated with three groups of world leading industry experts, employers and alumni over a four-month period to determine the future needs of the sector^P. Outcomes resulted in a future relevant curriculum (as confirmed by the Periodic Strategic Review Panel), with emerging areas such as the need to enhance human practice to ensure the sustainability of the equine industry. Critically, the process illustrated that in order to be successful, practice within our own equine facility had to evolve.

⁸ EE annual reports 2020-21-22 years confirms confidence in our provision relative to that required by industry and the sector with 17 out of 20 EEs ranking complete, 3 ranking broad confidence

Hartpury launched the Horse Welfare Advisory Board^Q which, we understand, is the first of its kind in the sector. The aim is to bring together world-leading industry experts, researchers and Hartpury equine staff and students, to promote and encourage the application of objective research to equestrian practice that will ultimately advance the welfare of horses, including their interactions with humans. Outputs will not only inform Hartpury activity but will also inform wider national / international practice. This holistic approach was identified as good practice by the Periodic Strategic Review Panel (which included external national / international panel members) ensuring students consistently experience the latest approaches to horse welfare – in curriculum, practice and extra-curricular activities at Hartpury.

Industry endorsed curriculum: Hartpury has committed significant resources to ensure curricula embed professional practice and employer engagement, contributing to an outstanding academic experience for all our students. This is achieved through not only embedding a mix of work-based learning through assessed industry relevant placements or live briefs, but also with professional endorsements, accreditations and/or certifications. In 2020, 8 programmes were accredited by PABs rising to 23 (including 40% of all undergraduate programmes) by 2022^G. Today, all Hartpury undergraduate programmes have an embedded placement offer within credit bearing modules, with 64% being compulsory, comparing very favourably to a sector figure of 45%^R.

Hartpury Academic Framework (HAF)^S: See Section 3.2.

2.2.2 Assessment and Feedback for Learning

Hartpury has embedded outstanding assessment and feedback practices which are highly effective and tailored to support all students to engage, progress and achieve – a statement supported by our indicator performance and EE feedback^{9, 10}. The approach is directed by the Assessment Cycle^T and overseen jointly by the Deputy Academic Registrar (ensuring quality and standards) and the Head of Teaching and Learning (championing pedagogical best practice).

We commit to an assessment for learning approach in our academic regulations and an ‘inquiry-based’ approach to assessment has proven particularly successful. Strategically, Hartpury has committed to ensuring each student experiences at least one live brief within their academic journey, with many experiencing far more (i.e. an opportunity for students to engage in a real-world task, resulting in creative solutions or ideas). This approach enables students to explore, develop and establish their academic and professional interests. This extremely successful approach is further evidenced by results from an internal survey where 96% of students recognised assessment integrated real-world problems¹¹.

Embedding outstanding feedback practices which are highly effective and supportive of our students’ learning and progression has been achieved via student-staff co-authored feedback guidelines. Following student and staff consultation in 2018-19, there was a focus on improving the quality (rather than quantity) and accessibility of feedback, by requiring staff to provide three points of feedback and three points of feedforward. All feedback was to be constructive, actionable (signposting additional resources), personalised (using examples), linked to programme or wider aims and expressed in student friendly language. This successful approach is evidenced by the

⁹ EE annual report (2021-22) confirms assessments are valid (likely to add value to a student’s learning) and reliable (enable discrimination between different levels of knowledge and skills) with 11 ranking complete, 1 broad confidence.

¹⁰ EE annual report (2021-22) confirms assessment and feedback practices are highly effective and tailored to supporting the students’ learning, progression and achievement with 10 ranking complete, 2 broad confidence.

¹¹ Internal Start of the Year Survey completed over three of the previous four academic years (2018-21) (n=713) 96% of students recognised assessment integrated real-world problems.

outstanding indicator results and internal data which demonstrates that 95% of students rated the quality of feedback as good or excellent¹².

Ensuring institutional consistency (particularly important in our modular structure with students sharing modules across departments) was critical to the successful implementation of the feedback guidelines. To achieve consistency, feedback guidance was integrated in the new staff induction programme and featured heavily in the staff handbook. In addition, we have found timely annual departmental feedback refresher sessions to be invaluable. Scheduled prior to the first assessment submission dates of the academic year, departmental specific feedback workshops led by the Head of Teaching and Learning re-engages staff with the guidelines. In addition, institutional sessions continue to add significant value, for example, a student-led panel discussion on feedback practice was delivered in 2021, reaffirming the benefits of concise, targeted feedback.

2.2.3 Engaging students in industry-informing research

Hartpury has strategically committed to, and invested significantly in, subject relevant research and knowledge exchange. Indeed, investment in staff time, funded student research projects and budgets to support research and dissemination currently exceeds £1m per year. All research has an applied focus and engages students throughout. This contributes to an outstanding academic experience by being industry driven, with outcomes informing both practice and curriculum.

A good example is our work with female athletes. Sport science has a recognised gender bias in its research base (male dominated) and Hartpury wanted to redress this. A programme of research focusing on performance and wellbeing for female athletes was launched and prioritised within the RKE strategy ^U(including menstrual cycle education and athlete sleep quality). Students are fully involved as participants and researchers (e.g., through applied dissertation projects), supporting staff and industry partners as part of wider studies. Results directly inform the sports science curriculum and are used to support athlete wellbeing. For example, outcomes from one project examining sleep quality are being used to support dual career student athletes¹³ in their athletic development and in their ability to study and achieve academically.

Research successes have been achieved whilst keeping student experience and opportunity at the forefront of our research activity. We recognise that RKE activity presents another mechanism to stimulate and inspire students in their learning and build their academic currency. Key internal structures supporting the development of research (such as our Communities of Practice and our Annual Research Conference) are available for students to attend. Alongside this, we run Research Centre focused seminar series, open to students, as well as establishing research clubs where students can develop their research skills alongside staff contributing to ongoing research projects. We have continued to increase the quality of our research outputs. This is evidenced by year on year increases in Citescores (increased from 2.11 in 2018-19 to 5.43 in 2021-22)^V and we have developed a profile of high-quality research, as evidenced by REF2021 where 60% of outputs and 50% of impacts scored in the highest (world leading or internationally excellent) categories.

2.3 Resources, support and student engagement

2.3.1 A focus on teaching excellence

¹² Student owned data collected for the TEF student submission (n=176) suggests that 95% of students rated the quality of feedback they receive in assessments and in learning experiences as good or excellent.

¹³ Dual career athletes is a term referring to students who are supported by our sports academy to compete in national / international elite sport alongside their academic programme (see section 3.2.3).

Hartpury has an established institutional culture that facilitates, recognises and rewards excellent teaching through staff recruitment processes and commitment to, and monitoring of participation in, staff development activities.

Attracting staff with a breadth of backgrounds: Over the last 4 years we have evolved our approach to staff recruitment, developing a staffing structure which recognises the value of industry / professionally active staff as well as those with teaching and research backgrounds. At Hartpury it is possible to become a professor through teaching and learning and industry professional standing, as well as through the more traditional RKE activities. Recognising and rewarding this breadth supports engagement and retention of specialists, which is critical to support the effective delivery of our applied curriculum, especially in highly vocational areas such as Veterinary Nursing and Animal Training. Currently, 88% of all academic staff have professional qualifications¹⁴, and we continue to support them gaining more via staff development budgets.

In addition, we have developed the ability to appoint staff in dual roles, supporting commercial / professional activities alongside academic work. While workload planning and timetabling must be managed carefully, the value of students being taught and assessed by someone so current and well established within a profession related to their programme of study is significant. We have also found academic staff retention has increased, with the current 10 dual role staff having a longer average length of service¹⁵.

Setting clear expectations of our staff and providing support to help them achieve: Within the HE Staff Development Policy, Hartpury has committed to five principles, monitored annually by Academic Board. These include appointing staff qualified to the level above which they teach, a minimum engagement expectation with the in-house staff development programme, monitoring of staff development attendance and research and scholarly activity through the annual performance review system. The policy also states that within one year of starting at Hartpury all contracted HE academic staff must obtain an appropriate teaching qualification and/or apply for accreditation by Advance HE. This is enabled by providing full financial support or associated fees, a time allowance built into workloads, and a mentoring programme designed to support progress. This approach has been successful, with 90% of staff achieving an appropriate teaching qualification and/or accreditation (compared to a 68% national average¹⁶). The mentoring programme has been a particularly successful element of the support provided, with 100% success rate of Associate/Fellowship/Senior Fellowship applications submitted between 2018 and 2022

Targeting support for new staff. As we have recruited a wider breadth of staff in terms of academic backgrounds and teaching experience, we have invested in a new staff induction programme. Beginning with three days in advance of the start of teaching, key topics are covered relating to quality and standards, pedagogical expectations as module leaders and Academic Personal Tutors, alongside introducing the staff to relevant support services. Additionally, any staff new to teaching or HE are enrolled on the Advance HE 6-week programme “New to Teaching” in their first semester to ensure a fundamental knowledge base from the start. Building on from this, a weekly drop in is scheduled and further sessions scheduled at relevant points in the academic year (e.g. feedback briefing prior to marking). New staff are overwhelmingly positive^w about the content and an end of year focus group annually evaluates their thoughts and reflections to inform the format and content moving forwards.

¹⁴ Hartpury PURE repository data, extracted Jan 2023 (qualification related to teaching subject area)

¹⁵ Hartpury HR data, extracted Jan 2023, mean duration continuation service, dual role=8 yrs, others=6 yrs

¹⁶ The HESA national statistic for staff having a teaching qualification in 2020-21 was 68%

Investing in staff development and continual professional development is a priority:

Obtaining a teaching qualification is not an end point – Hartpury is committed to supporting staff to develop in line with strategic, departmental and individual priorities, through a mix of compulsory, optional and individualised staff development opportunities.

Additionally, support for Level 8 qualifications is a strategic goal, supported by funding of fees, remission from other activities and designated consumable budgets. While this is a long-term investment (in combination with recruiting more Level 8 qualified academic staff), in the last 5 years the proportion of staff with Level 8 qualifications has increased by 15%, with an additional 8 staff in progress¹⁷. This is complemented by a sabbatical scheme, providing an annual opportunity for staff to apply for remission in order to complete an agreed project, which can focus on teaching or research.

Staff development themes respond to both internal and external inclusivity agendas, providing opportunities for staff to develop their practice and enable outstanding support for all our students. For example, in response to growing numbers of students with a declared disability (21% of our student population in 2020-21) the Inclusive Teaching and Learning Group (Section 3.1.2) identified and enabled staff to engage with National Autistic society modules (of which 71% of staff completed), Mental Health First Aid Lite workshop (in 2020 and 2021) and a specific ADHD positive practice workshop. The value of this investment is illustrated by the positive outcomes achieved by our disability students (Section 3.1.2).

Teaching Development Scheme (TDS) – supporting continuous improvement: Utilising peer observation, the TDS has proven to be an extremely effective method of supporting staff to develop in line with strategic priorities and is a valuable tool in identifying and sharing good practice. The TDS is designed around a coaching, collaborative model aiming to develop and inspire staff in their teaching, developing a culture where staff can connect, collaborate and co-create, seeking to explore a variety of pedagogical approaches, tools and ideals. New / less experienced staff are prioritised early in the academic year, with all academic staff engaging biennially. Conversations are based on criteria which link to institutional priorities such as inclusive teaching and research informed delivery. For example, following the release of the Inclusive Teaching and Learning Guide (Section 3.1.2) TDS added inclusive practice criteria and subsequently recorded a 96% increase in inclusive practice in 2020-21 (25/47 to 49/62)^W. Feedback from observations informs our Positive Practice workshops, the Teaching Excellence directory and Open Classroom list. The value of this approach was shared at the QAA Quality Insights Conference 2020 and 2022 Landex Teaching and Learning Conference.

2.3.2 Knowing our students – Personalised student support

Hartpury delivers an outstanding supportive learning environment, through the provision of accessible academic support services which are tailored to meet the requirements of students as individuals¹⁸. In 2019 we identified the need to review and embed practice to ensure we continued to know our students, in response to the strategic decision to grow student numbers^E. The effectiveness of our academic and pastoral teams to support students as individuals was a fundamental strength for Hartpury (identified as good practice in TEF 2017), but with growth, there was a risk the approaches would not continue to be as effective or sustainable. The review identified:

¹⁷ Hartpury HR data on all academic staff, extracted Jan 2023, a comparison of 2018 to current.

¹⁸ EE annual report (2021-22) confirmed all EEs had complete confidence (n=11) or broad confidence (n=1) in the quality and accessibility of academic and learning resources.

- The Academic Personal Tutor (APT) would be the primary role which knows the individual student, and that the APT role should be reviewed in the context of increased student numbers and evolving expectations;
- The need to provide more information about student characteristics and behaviours to those who need it, when they need it, informing student support decisions (see re-engaging students in Section 3.1.1);
- The opportunity to build on the success of the Achievement and Success Centre (ASC) and Innovation, Careers and Enterprise (ICE) through additional investment.

Academic Personal Tutors (APT): We are confident the APT role is, and will continue to be, an outstanding aspect of every student's experience at Hartpury. The APT scheme is guided by four principles; to know, support, signpost and prepare our students, achieved via a combination of formal weekly timetabled group sessions and individual 1:1s. APTs are usually a module leader on their programme, with relevant subject / industry knowledge, enabling content to be contextualised to the programme and group. APTs frequently invite relevant wider support services such as ASC and ICE to co-deliver content when relevant.

Following the strategic decision that APTs would be the primary point of contact for students, the APT role received a 50% increase in workload allocation in 2019-20, ensuring they had capacity to provide the increased level of individualised support. In 2020-21 an updated APT framework and improved APT access to centrally held student information were introduced. Additional staff development covered challenging topics relevant to APT, including handling challenging conversations, wellbeing and mental health, ensuring they are equipped to support their students. Table 2 illustrates how highly students rate the support they receive at Hartpury. The APTs are integral to providing this support, and Hartpury was proud to achieve top five placings for students' support in the last three WhatUni Awards (2019-2022).

Table 2: Student satisfaction (%) relating to academic support for continuing students (UKES) and final year students (NSS) (brackets contain sector / benchmark data)

| Question | Survey | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|---|--------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| I have received sufficient advice and guidance in relation to my course. | UKES | 85.0 (77.0) | 88.0 (75.0) | 80.8 (74.0) | 83.0 (78.0) |
| | NSS | 85.6 (81.2) | 88.7 (78.1/80.8) | 76.2 (71.5/73.6) | 82.5 (76.2/75.0) |
| Good advice was available when I needed to make study choices on my course. | UKES | 84.0 (74.0) | 84.0 (72.0) | 77.1 (72.0) | 77.0 (76.0) |
| | NSS | 84.7 (77.0) | 87.13 (74.5/76.8) | 77.5 (67.8/71.4) | 82.8 (77.5/75.6) |

Grey = above sector / benchmark; Gold = significantly above benchmark / Upper quartile

Achievement and Success Centre (ASC): ASC is the gateway for academic support, incorporating academic skills, disability services and wellness development staff teams, housed in one central location on campus. Originally developed as part of a Higher Education Academy Strategic Excellence Initiative, the services have advanced in line with evolving student needs. For example, more options exist beyond physical attendance for academic skills provision (online workshops and pre-recorded learning resources) following changes to student behaviour during and post-pandemic. Additional sessions included how to learn effectively online, enhancing your digital skills and keeping safe in an online environment. Student engagement has dramatically

increased, with attendance of sessions rising from 1,649 in 2018-19 to 6,519 in 2020-21. In 2021-22, 69% of all undergraduates engaged with ASC, with 100% of students attending rating the service as very good or excellent^W. In 2022, the ASC coordinator was an invited panellist for the QAA College HE Policy and Practice network, sharing our experience regarding academic skill development.

Sustained integration and collaboration of ASC staff with academic departments ensures ASC provision is contextualised to the student body. All staff delivering academic skills within ASC also deliver subject content within modules, are part of departmental teams and are on academic contracts. This approach facilitates subject contextualisation of ASC delivery and ensures the staff understand the needs of different learners further emphasising how we “know” our students.

2.3.3 Pedagogical Covid-19 legacy:

In February 2019 we published our University Strategic Plan 2020-25, directing our ambition and resources towards further development of our physical campus. Then everything changed. In response to Covid-19 restrictions, we worked closely with the HSU and our wider student body alongside technical consultants and staff to transfer all delivery and assessment online. In November 2020, we launched the ‘Covid pedagogical legacy’ project to identify aspects we should continue to develop and utilise to complement our campus-based provision post Covid-19.

The project, which evaluated our experiences during the pandemic, resulted in three significant additions to our virtual learning resources:

1. Commitment to recording all theory sessions which are made available via an on-demand service (supported by investment in a campus wide lecture capture system);
2. Providing up to 2 hours online teaching per week;
3. Embedding elements of online assessment in a student's assessment journey.

We worked closely with industry experts, alumni and our Innovation Careers Enterprise (ICE) team, aligning developments to skills needed in the post pandemic graduate. Even in practical land-based subjects, being able to engage in online training, communicate and collaborate with clients, fellow professionals and potential employers online were identified as being positive attributes. Our students, particularly those with a learning difference or mental health challenges, report that the 2 hours of online learning and lecture capture systems provide more flexibility and inclusive learning opportunities¹⁹. Over 92% of our students engaged with the recorded lectures in 2021-22. 100% of students in a Level 5 cross-institutional module found lecture capture positively enhanced their learning²⁰. Findings were presented at the AdvanceHE Teaching and Learning Conference (July 2021) by staff and students, reflecting their collaboration.

2.3.4 Industry-leading resources, providing real world experiences:

Hartpury has, and continues to invest heavily in, industry-leading physical resources which are actively and routinely used by students to enhance their learning, achievement and progression. Over the last 5 years our 360-hectare campus has benefited from over £45m of investment, expanding both pedagogical environments (including additional teaching and social study spaces) and subject relevant specialist facilities. The decision making for investment in resources is driven by industry, curriculum and the value to students. Our students are genuinely engaged in high quality facilities throughout their academic journey – every facility, from the canine water treadmill

¹⁹ Qualitative thematic analysis was conducted on focus groups, programme committees and SU Forums revealing both staff and students identified employability, guest lecturers and inclusivity as positives (2022)

²⁰ Internal module survey (2020-21) 100% of respondents said that lecture recording should continue post pandemic and that it was a positive for their learning experience.

Provider name: Hartpury University
UKPRN: 10080811

to the milking parlours, is integrated in student timetables and actively used for placements (over 260 onsite student placements in 2021-22), live briefs, research projects and assessment.

One of many examples which evidences the success of this approach is the Equine Therapy Centre (ETC). The ETC is a commercial facility supporting the treatment and rehabilitation of musculoskeletal conditions, incorporating specialist facilities such as equine high speed and water treadmills, treating over 1,500 horses in the last 5 years. While initially the first of its kind in an educational setting globally, ETCs are relatively common today, with many equine education establishments adopting Hartpury's sector leading model as best practice.

The holistic integration of students within the ETC continues to be unique to Hartpury. There are 11 programmes which embed the ETC within credit bearing modules, engaging students in the facility annually. Volunteer programmes enable students to benefit from the facilities outside of formal studies, exposing them to a range of horses competing up to Olympic level. Student placements in the ETC have supported equine clients on their journey to achieving 9 medals in the last 3 Olympics (including 3 gold medals).

Over the last 5 years, the level of RKE activity within the ETC has expanded greatly, also involving students. For example, our own therapy centre, curriculum and industry now utilise water treadmill protocols which combine evidenced based practice and research conducted at Hartpury. The protocols have been adopted throughout the world, supporting veterinary clinicians and water treadmill users. The value of this work was illustrated by REF2021 where the ETC activity formed an impact case study, confirming the research and associated impact to be internationally excellent.

Every day, students are also engaging in the following world-class facilities in similar ways.

On-site 500-acre farm estate: A rare occurrence within HE agriculture providers today, the farm is commercially viable demonstrating real-world best practice to support students to be career ready. This is attractive to students and the over 700 industry partners using the farm. Our new £2m Agri-Tech Centre allows industry partners and students to gain experience of the latest smart farming technologies and provides opportunities to collaborate on real-world projects to improve productivity and profitability across the county.

Animal Collection: Provides a dedicated animal environment for students to gain practical skills, qualifications and experience working with over 80 species of domestic and non-domestic animals covering a range from meerkats to tarantulas to llamas.

Canine Hydrotherapy facility: Run as an external business by Hartpury graduates in return for an agreed number of student placements, practical delivery to students and research projects. We are aware of only one other institution in the UK which is able to offer such an opportunity.

Rider Performance Centre: Home to the first Eventing Simulator and first MK 10 Racing Simulator in an educational establishment in the world, this facility uniquely applies latest sports science approaches to the horse rider. The facility is directly integrated into nine programmes at Hartpury, providing a unique environment for students to put theory into practice.

International standard equestrian facilities: The level of equine competition held at Hartpury (including European and World championships) is not seen at any other educational establishment in the world. Students are fully integrated into the running of facilities and events, including placement, live briefs and RKE activity.

Sporting facility: The sports academy facility benefited from a £10m investment in 2018, including the addition of biomechanics and human performance laboratories, featuring an altitude chamber,

high-speed anti-gravity treadmill and motion capture technology, specialist facilities chosen to directly underpin the evolving curriculum.

Elite sport training environment: The Sports Academy is designed as an elite professional training environment supporting Gloucester-Hartpury Women's RFC, Hartpury University FC, Hartpury University & College Boat Club, Gloucester Rugby Club, Forest Green Rovers FC, Cheltenham Town FC, Team Bath Netball and all 10 of Hartpury's Sports Academies. Hartpury is the only UK HEI with a semi-professional rugby team (Hartpury University RFC), which is in the second tier of English rugby (Championship). Not only do our dual career students / athletes benefit from the ability to combine academic study and high-level performance, but our wider student body benefits from unique access to players, coaches, therapists and other professionals, supporting teaching, learning and RKE outcomes (see Section 3.2.3).

3. Student Outcomes

Hartpury is proud of the success of its students in and beyond their studies, and the educational gains our non-traditional student body have, and continue to achieve. Embedding a culture of continuous monitoring and evaluation throughout is an important principle. This is achieved via the Hartpury Quality Enhancement Framework 'Planning and Monitoring for Enhancement' (including in-year, annual and periodic activities) and the Annual Quality Report (developed by ASEC, scrutinised by Academic Board and approved by QuEST). The Quality and Data Cycle operationalises activities through a combination of data monitoring, reporting and enhancement activities in-year.

3.1 Positive Outcomes

The OfS are aware of inaccurate data spanning the time series for both continuation and completion, relating to ILR data (pre-2018-19), student qualification at the point of exit (pre-2020-21) and subject coding. Historically we have spoken to the OfS regarding data amendment, but the request was not supported due to the complexities and retrospective nature of the request, spanning both FE and HE data bodies. Recently the OfS has agreed to amend data regarding subject splits, although the outcome was not in time to inform the TEF data dashboard.

To understand the impact of the inaccurate data, we have recalculated both continuation and completion, revisiting our previous data submissions, and making corrections in line with the relevant OfS guidance. Recalculation revealed the original inaccuracies had a significant impact on indicators due to the number of years affected and the complexity of the inaccuracies.

On the basis that the recalculated data more accurately reflects the true behaviour of our students, the OfS guidance and therefore is more comparable to the sector, we refer to recalculated data for both continuation and completion alongside the OfS TEF data dashboard (see Figures 1 and 2 and Table 3). The recalculated data are available upon request.

In 2019-20 the reliability and quality of student data was confirmed (PWC student record audit rated data as low risk). We do not believe the accuracy issues affect the student experience indicators or progression, other than in subject level splits²¹.

²¹ Since 2016-17 we have focused on the implementation of a Hartpury specific student record system, allowing us to evolve the student record in line with our own academic regulatory approach and the HE sector. Future investment is targeted at the ability to extract and manipulate student data in line with sector and institutional priorities, which is both accessible and sustainable. Currently, data manipulation continues to be largely manual and modelling new data methodologies is challenging.

Review of the overall indicators reveals a strong performance, with data illustrating the outstanding outcomes for our students regarding continuation, completion and progression, which are consistently above benchmark.

3.1.1 Continuation

While the OfS produced overall indicator places us broadly in line with benchmark (88.3%, compared to a benchmark of 88.5%), recalculated data illustrates our continuation is (largely) materially above benchmark with an overall value of 90.1% which is 1.6 percentage points higher than our benchmark (Figure 1).

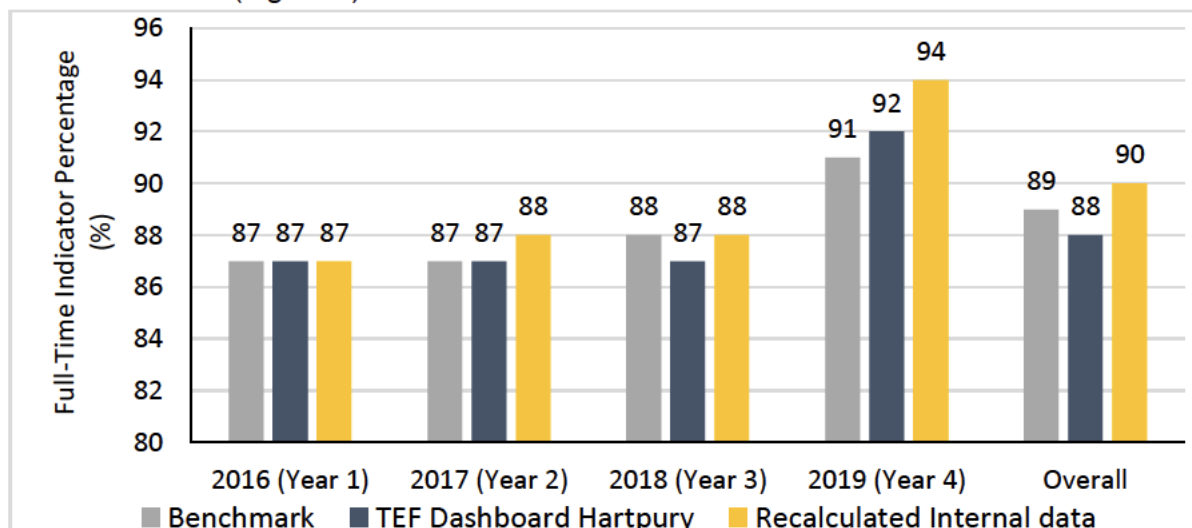


Figure 1: Continuation data comparing benchmark, TEF data for Hartpury and recalculated data

The time series data in Figure 1 illustrates a positive trajectory, resulting from initiatives designed to encourage all students to continue their studies, with a particular focus on new first year students. These included:

- Additional staff resource provided to maintain 15 hours per week minimum contact for first year students, and 12 hours per week for second and third years, as we grew in student numbers and throughout the Covid-19 disruption;
- Enhanced approaches to the timely monitoring of student engagement including:
 - Investment in additional weekly monitoring of student withdrawal and suspension, including data by student characteristics, reviewed as standard agenda items in both formal committee and management meetings;
 - Further investment in APTs (see Section 2.3.2);
 - Review of progression concerns of individual students at programme examination boards (3-4 pa);
 - Targeted interventions for groups identified at higher risk of withdrawal, including first years, males and students from a non-A-level background, as well as the general population.

Examples of a particular focus on new first year students include:

Re-engaging first years ^H: Data revealed new first year students were more likely to withdraw compared to returning students

Detailed analysis revealed specific patterns of disengaging behaviour prior to withdrawal including reduced attendance, reduced submission of assessment (without approved extenuating circumstances) and lack of contact with the APT. As student numbers were growing, it was becoming increasingly challenging for staff to monitor and act on such behaviours.

In response, we clarified that the APT was responsible for such monitoring and invested in mechanisms enabling access to information regarding student engagement. Primarily this focused on an enhanced staff facing portal (Staff Advantage, 2018-19) enabling relevant staff (including APTs, professional service teams etc.) to access individual student information such as attendance, assessment engagement, access and participation data and additional learning needs. This greatly enhanced the accessibility of our knowledge of individual students and raised awareness with academic staff about 'who' is in their classroom. Staff Advantage was supplemented by additional information regarding attendance, including a weekly report highlighting individual students whose attendance had dropped below 80% (a target agreed in partnership with the HSU).

We are very clear that the individual and personalised approach is what makes Hartpury stand apart from other institutions. We have resisted the opportunity to automate correspondence to students when it relates to engagement. For example, if a student is flagged as having low attendance the APT would review the data and, using wider student information including their own knowledge and contact with the student, then make an informed decision on how best to proceed. The withdrawal of all first-year students has reduced

demonstrating the efficacy of this approach which has subsequently been rolled-out for all undergraduate students.

Addressing curriculum to engage males: Recalculated continuation indicators demonstrate a lower continuation for male students (87% compared to 91% for female students)²². Time series analysis reveals that the gap has reduced from Year 1 to Year 4 indicating a positive trajectory. We attribute this improvement in male continuation to targeted action in the predominantly male department of sport (288 males and 53 females in 2018). In 2018, the sport department entered a periodic curriculum review (PCR), engaging in a full evaluation of its entire provision. Data from the year prior (2016-17) identified that withdrawal rates were a concern (for example, the department withdrawal rate was 13% of 554)^x. Further analysis revealed that higher withdrawal rates were linked with male students across Hartpury, but primarily these students were studying sport, so the issue was exacerbated. As such, withdrawal and retention became a key focus for the resultant action plan and curriculum development that followed the sport PCR.

We removed the generic, cross-institutional modules that had existed on programme maps and replaced these with bespoke sport study skill and research methods modules. This allowed all programme content to become contextualised to the areas that sports students are most passionate about. The latest data shows the department withdrawal rate has decreased by 9 percentage points from 13% in 2016-17 to 4% in 2021-22^{z,y}. The internal data aligns with institutional improvements in male continuation.

BTEC entrants: BTEC entrants made up 35.9% of our entrants in 2020-21. National data illustrates they are at higher risk of failing their first year of study. Internal data shows that Hartpury BTEC students perform better, with a continuation rate from first year 8% higher than national figures. In addition, Hartpury BTEC students are only 1.1 times more likely to repeat the first year than an A-level student, compared to 1.7 times nationally. We believe a combination of our applied curriculum and personalised approach support these students to continue.

²² Where individualised data was available to support calculations.

3.1.2 Completion:

Whilst 72.1% of the statistical uncertainty distribution for the published overall completion indicator value is broadly in line with our benchmark, recalculation results in our overall continuation indicator increasing from 81.8% to 88.8% which is 4.9 percentage points above our benchmark as shown in Figure 2. It can also be seen from Figure 2 that the recalculated data is above benchmark for all years.

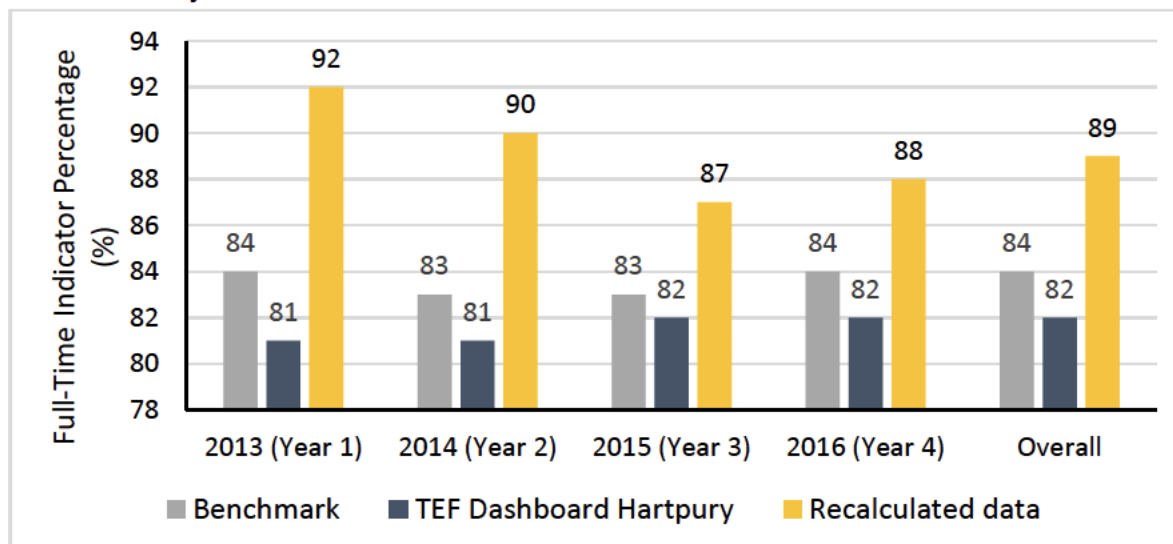


Figure 2: Completion data comparing benchmark, OfS data for Hartpury and recalculated data

Re-calculated split-level data presented in Table 3 illustrates the majority of split indicators are above benchmark. While the split data for students aged 31 and over is below benchmark, it relates to only 46 students spread over the 4 years giving low statistical reliability. Within subject splits, allied health is not above benchmark.

Again, the number is small giving low statistical reliability and the reasons for non-completion were varied and very much related to individual circumstances. Overall, these data illustrate Hartpury has an outstanding ability to support students to complete.

Table 3: Recalculated split-level completion data (Gold=materially above benchmark)

| | Sex | | Age | | | Disability | | Course subject | | |
|-------------------|--------|------|------|-------|-----------|------------|------|----------------|------------|------------------|
| | Female | Male | U21 | 21-30 | 31 & over | No | Yes | Allied Health | Bioscience | Sport & Exercise |
| Recalculated data | 92 | 87 | 90 | 89 | 73 | 89 | 89 | 85 | 87 | 85 |
| Benchmark | 85.6 | 80.4 | 84.7 | 81.4 | 75.6 | 84 | 82.9 | 88 | 84.7 | 80 |

Hartpury's targeted approach to supporting positive completion has built on initiatives described in student experience and continuation (Sections 2 and 3.1.1) which, together with the following, has resulted in the completion indicator values being materially above benchmark (Figure 3): These included:

- Recognising students' achievement through exit awards if they have a study break to improve student wellbeing and enable external recognition of skills;²

- Targeted support and communication plan for re-engaging students on study breaks, resulting in an increase of 3% in students returning to academic study (between 2018-19 and 2019-20)^{AA}, and a return rate 9% above the sector average.²³

Further initiatives which enhance completion include:

Inclusive Teaching and Learning (ITL) group: The ITL group was first launched in 2019-20 and includes academic staff, professional service staff (e.g. members of ASC including disability staff) and student representation from Hartpury Students' Union. The ITL has proven to be a critical driving force in a number of initiatives including:

Construction, launch and embedding of the Inclusive Teaching and Learning Guidance^{BB}, supporting staff to recognise and constructively address the various needs of all students during teaching and learning by adopting inclusive practices that enabled students to fully engage. The guide was co-created with students, academic staff and inclusivity practitioners, and raised staff awareness of the processes and practices available.

Inclusivity and wellbeing embedded within the Hartpury Academic Framework (Section 3.2).

Raising the profile of inclusivity with staff through a number of positive practice workshops and Hartpury Teaching and Learning conference sessions to further enhance staff exposure to effective inclusive practices, (see also staff development in Section 2.3.1 and TDS in Section 2.3.2).

Redesign of the Scheme of Work template used across all modules, developed in partnership with the student body. Clear signposting of pre and post session activities, materials and trigger warning information received positive student feedback and EE commentary. This approach also allows staff to signpost additional learning resources clearly both internally (ICE, ASC etc.) and externally for students to explore in advance of sessions, often linking to collaborative online resources to share ideas and discussion, continuing the positive pandemic legacy of the anonymous voice in the classroom.

Given these (and the other interventions), it is pleasing that recalculated student completion indicators are consistently above benchmark (Figure 2). Internal student retention data for all undergraduate full-time students further endorses the success, with this figure improving from 93.8% in 2017-18 to 96% in 2020-21^Z. The positive operational impact was also evidenced through increased frequency of observed teaching 'recognising the needs of a diverse population' increasing from 18 of 47 observations in 2020-21 to 61 of 73 observations in 2021-22 as part of the Teaching Development Scheme (TDS)^W.

Positive performance of disability students: With a larger proportion of disability students than sector (5% higher in 2020-21), we are pleased to report positive completion rates. Making up 21% of the undergraduate full-time student body in 2020-21 the number of disability students continues to grow Hartpury's recalculated data demonstrates that disability student completion is materially above benchmark and equal to completion for those students without a recorded disability (both returning 89% completion). A similar trend is also demonstrated for continuation, where recalculated data reports those students with a reported disability as above benchmark (91% compared to our benchmark of 88.5%). Our success in supporting disability students to continue and complete is based around a well-established holistic and integrated approach (Section 3.2.3), which essentially centres on knowing who our students are.

²³ Based on the most recently available HESA data (2018-19)

3.1.3 Progression:

The overall OfS indicator data (65.3%) for Progression is 2.3 percentage points above benchmark with 46.6% of the statistical uncertainty distribution materially above benchmark. While limitations in split sample sizes (e.g. 20 students eligible for free school meals over the 4-year period) and the accuracy of subject splits reduce the robustness of some split analysis, we are pleased to see the strong performance of Q1 and Q2 IMD, reporting 2.3 percentage points above benchmark.

Progression in the way it is measured presents challenges for us, resulting from our niche industries and the ONS classification of roles as managerial or highly skilled / professional employment. For example, while human nursing is classed as Level 2 (highly skilled), Veterinary Nursing is Level 6 on the Standard Occupational Classification, and therefore the OfS progression indicator does not judge this to be a highly skilled employment positive outcome. 100% of our veterinary nursing graduates for the 3 years (2017-2020) of HESA Graduate Outcomes

achieved employment as a registered veterinary nurse, an exceptionally positive outcome which is not recognised by the progression indicator. There are other examples in our sport and land-based provision which we consider to be successful outcomes, despite not recognised nationally as professionally employed.

Our graduates gain meaningful and skilled employment²⁴ and they recognise the value of their experiences at Hartpury in supporting them to do so²⁵. For example, the response of non-final year students to the question 'How much has your overall student experience contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in acquiring employability skills' placed Hartpury in the upper quartile in 2018, and as the best institution nationally in both 2019 and 2020 (UKES)^{CC}. Additionally, our graduates recognise the value of entering a career which is important to them, with 91% of respondents in the 2019-20 HESA Graduate Outcomes survey confirming this (comparing favourably to 86% nationally). In fact, Hartpury is in the top 20% of UK Universities for graduate employability (Graduate Outcomes, 2022). These data are particularly impressive considering the nature of our student body.

A vital service which supports us in achieving this is Innovation, Careers and Enterprise unit (ICE). In a similar way as ASC (Section 2.3.2), ICE provides a gateway for students and alumni to access support relating to placement, careers and enterprise, focussing on enhancing the managerial and professional progression opportunities for students. Uniquely, this team supports both FE and HE students, utilising common industry relevant knowledge and contacts. The Placement Team works with over 4,000 businesses, which students can access via a multi-career repository of business friends of Hartpury. The quantity, breadth and quality of placement contacts has underpinned Hartpury's approach to offer all undergraduate students the opportunity to engage in credit-based placement activity. These real-world learning experiences are fundamental in enabling students to link theoretical concepts to applied practice, critical for our students to become work ready.

The success of the careers support within ICE was recognised recently (2023) in the matrix accreditation (a quality standard for information advice and guidance services), reflecting positively on the value of the dedicated KASE (Knowledge, Attributes, Skills, Experience) related content embedded into curriculum. We have found that providing careers support from a professionally trained Careers Consultant, aligned to each department, successfully supports meaningful contextualisation to the subject area of study and subsequently, student engagement. In 2021-22,

²⁴ HESA Graduate Outcomes survey found the Hartpury Unemployment rate was less than the national average at 4% for 2019-20 (Year 3) and 5% for 18-19 and equalled the national average at 5% for 17-18(G)

²⁵ Students reported above sector and above benchmark satisfaction with 'My course has provided me with the opportunity to apply what I have learnt' in NSS 2018, 2019 and 2020

careers workshop engagement increased by 84% and 1:1s by 32% (from 2020-21). Over 325 individual, personalised support sessions for careers and enterprise development were delivered in addition to 1,600 submissions to CV development software and to sessions embedded in taught modules^{DD}.

ICE is fully integrated within the student academic journey. The integration is department specific, acknowledging the unique challenges and opportunities of the relevant student body and industry. Annually, ICE and the academic departments review student and industry feedback and make inferences based on current industry employment data and student characteristics. This integration ensures embedded curriculum content and extra-curricular workshops are current and connected.

We are proud of our student employment destinations which evidence our effectiveness in deploying and tailoring bespoke approaches to career development that meet the needs of our students. More of our students report that they talk about their career plans with staff before their final year than the sector average²⁶ and this supports their progression. This has been further endorsed by achieving 3rd for career prospects (2022) and 2nd for job prospects (2019, WUSCA). We believe that the work of ICE, coupled with all the other teaching, learning and curriculum facing aspects have led to our overall outstanding performance in offering learning opportunities that support our students to achieve the graduate outcomes they are aiming for.

3.2 Educational Gains

We are proud of the range of educational gains made by our students, which we define as:

Creating life-changing educational experiences that empower students to transform their passions into measurable, career focused outcomes, valuing their different starting points and associated educational and personal distances travelled.

Hartpury is confident the desired educational gains are relevant to our students and their future ambitions, and are underpinned by well-planned and resourced approaches, tailored to our students.

3.2.1 Considerate of students with different starting points.

Our approach to educational gain begins by considering the different starting points of our students. Marketing materials (e.g. website, prospectus and open day presentations) clearly articulate that passion for their subject is an attribute that we see as essential to the success of a Hartpury student. This is encapsulated in our strapline 'Do what you love. Love what you do.' We see it as our role to support and evolve this via academic and personal development, into an academic qualification and professional experience that means our graduates are sought after by society and employers alike. We facilitate this by offering applied programmes underpinned by a variety of routes into HE, including Foundation degrees, integrated foundation years alongside 3-year honours degrees. While our students are not necessarily traditional A-level entrants (in 2020-21, 66% were from a non-A-level background), we believe from enrolment onwards, they have a shared belief in the value of engaging in an applied, supportive and enriching learning experience that nurtures their passion.

3.2.2 Hartpury's Educational Gains

We articulate our carefully identified and relevant educational gains as:

1. Students connect subject specific theory to practice and industry standards;
2. Students develop and demonstrate transferable, employment ready skills;

²⁶ Non-final year students reported they 'Talked about your career plans with teaching staff or advisors' 2% above mean sector in UKES 2020 and 2019 and 3% in 2018.

3. Students have the personal awareness to influence their own achievements, as well as wider society.

These gains ensure students are well prepared with the relevant skills to enter, and progress through, our vocational industries or other graduate professions. Educational Gain 1 is particularly valuable in actively engaging students in their academic journey. Educational Gain 2 is about connecting students with industry standards and requirements and Educational Gain 3 recognises the need for students to develop both academically and personally, in addition to being employment ready. Collectively we feel these are appropriate for our students and their future ambitions and offer a vehicle to not only realising potential, but possibly going beyond that expected of their starting point.

We are clear that our focus on creating an inclusive, applied curriculum, strategically imprinted with industry opportunities (e.g. through placements, internships, industry-linked assessment) offers a fantastic catalyst to contextualise learning to the very real demands of the sectors we serve and achieve the desired educational gains. Hartpury's Quality Enhancement Framework (HQEF) clearly articulates the role that industry must play in both the design phase and validation of any curriculum and as a result of this (and the 2020-2025 strategy), we have carefully considered our approach to developing the psychosocial and cognitive skills (soft skills) that have been linked to career readiness in the industries we serve.

We are also very confident that our own internal learning environment is a significant strength for us in being able to provide a 'safe' place for us to nurture these skills, which clearly demonstrate achievement of educational gain. Indeed, the campus creates opportunities for learning through doing across all our subjects (for example, in the sports academy, on the equine yard, on the working farm, or with the animal collection). The principle remains the same – students sit at the interface between theory and practice by having access to this environment. Whilst the campus provides this 'safe' space for learning, we equally recognise that it is hugely important for students to gain exposure to multiple contexts and work environments to develop different types of understandings about the world of work. Our students benefit from being able to build confidence and competence in the internal learning environment before testing these skills externally, all as part of their academic journey with us. We see this as a relatively unique prospect for students in HE and one that adds tremendous value to their own professional and personal development.

In order to provide a platform from which to develop educational gain, in 2019 Hartpury identified the need to review, expand and embed the desired attributes we wish students to develop. The aim was to create clarity and consistency in the skills, competencies and attributes experienced and demonstrated by all Hartpury graduates. Following extensive consultation and collaboration with employers, industry, educational experts, students, graduates and staff, the Hartpury Academic Framework (HAF) was created in 2021 (Figure 3) ^{EE}. Ahead of the 2022-23 academic year, the entire Hartpury curriculum underwent revalidation, mapping every programme against the HAF. The articulation of defined principles has offered clarity and by mapping these into our curriculum offer, we feel that we are able to deliver distinctive and transformative opportunities that go further than a focus on traditional academic achievement. Through HAF we ensure every student engages with, and is assessed against, academically and industry relevant, co-created principles and themes during their academic journey ensuring students achieve educational gains 2 and 3.

The framework is heavily based on established excellent practice identified across the Hartpury academic provision (inclusivity, research and evidence informed curriculum, and graduate attributes) and draws upon the latest sector guidance and external frameworks (wellbeing and

sustainability), ensuring future relevance. We integrated elements of the “Embedding mental health” collaborative project with Advance HE and were one of the first HEIs to adopt and embed the QAA Education for Sustainable Development guidelines in credit bearing curriculum. Additionally, the HAF ensures that students are supported to transition to, and through university, and stretched to achieve their full potential. For example, embedding wellbeing enabled curriculum designers to incorporate elements of self-awareness and consideration of others, both in academic and professional settings, into the learning environment. Developing good habits and/or an awareness of wellbeing is crucial to later life, helping students achieve educational gains 2 & 3. As part of quality assurance processes, EEs were asked to reflect on the values of the HAF. Their feedback confirmed integration had been successful²⁷, with the following quote further evidencing its value:

‘It is an exceptional example of how the skills and attributes required by a ‘global graduate’ can be embedded across the whole portfolio of programmes at an Institution. (HE Curriculum Consultant).

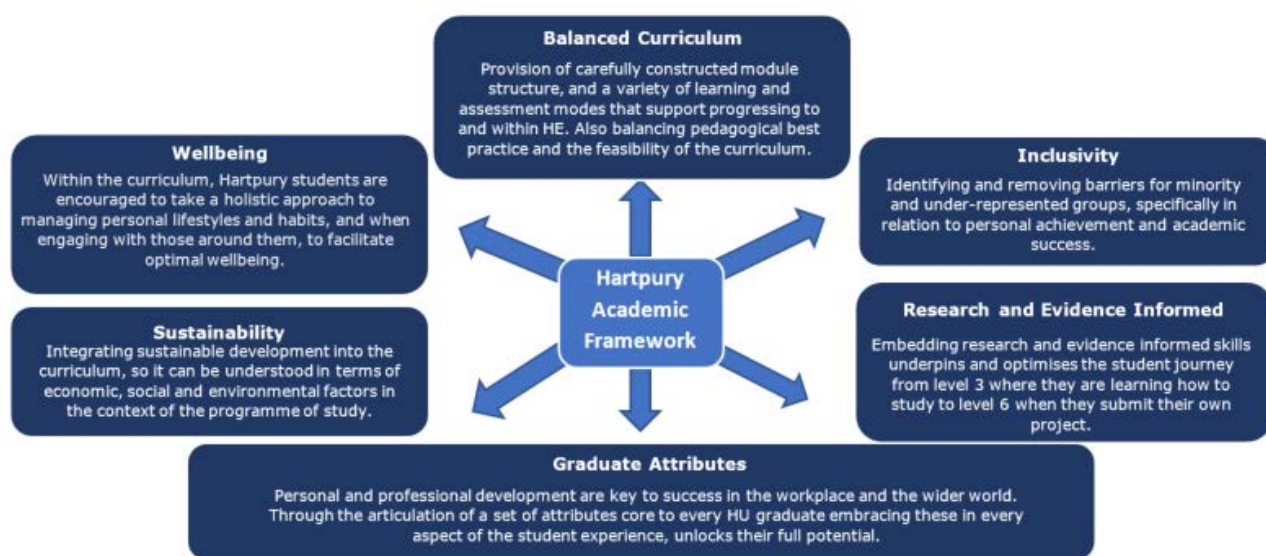


Figure 3: Hartpury Academic Framework and associated principles and themes

The HAF was further recognised as part of our successful engagement with the Student Minds University Mental Health Charter when Hartpury became one of the first five universities to gain the charter. Longer term, mechanisms are in place to measure student confidence and gain in HAF related areas.

3.2.3 Supporting students to achieve these gains academically and pastorally

Personalised academic and pastoral support considers and responds to the needs of all our students, providing the scaffolding needed to facilitate students to achieve the outlined educational gains and ultimately, fulfil and maybe even exceed their potential.

Knowing our students: As highlighted in Section 2.3.2, Hartpury places great importance on knowing our students, and supporting them as individuals. We understand that for students to feel confident and ready to engage, learn and thrive it is essential that they feel their individual needs are catered for and that they experience seamless processes that put them at the forefront of their own learning. We commit to this through a number of approaches, including our APT system and inclusive teaching and learning practice. An example to evidence the success of these approaches

²⁷EE annual report (2021-22) confirms modules' designs (content, delivery and assessment) stretch students (provide learning opportunities and/or support) to develop knowledge and skills to their fullest potential with 11 out of 12 ranking complete, 1 broad confidence

is our students with a reported disability. We prioritise partnership between the disability team and academic staff and collaboration has led to the production of online resources, delivery of CPD sessions and positive practice workshops to help staff recognise how they can adjust practice to meet the needs of each student in their classroom. This integrated approach of support, coupled with the design of curricula that balances theory and application equally, creates an environment where there is holistic consideration of individual need explaining why the outcomes of our disabled students are higher than benchmark (Section 3.1.2).

Assessment practices that move beyond knowledge: The desire to support and ensure students make gains in transferable and employment related skills resulted in the need to assess beyond subject specific knowledge, triggering assessment practices to in order to enable wider skills to be nurtured and assessed. We have regularly been commended by EEs for the varied and novel approaches to assessment we use. The strength of this approach is evidenced by an internal survey (2020-21) which showed significant improvements in transferable skills from level 4 to level 6 learners (resilience improved from 2.3 to 1.8, adaptability from 2.3 to 1.8, managing own wellbeing, 2.7 to 2.2 (1 -5 Likert scale where 1 - highly confident, 5 - not confident at all,)).

Enriching learning experiences: We provide an annual educational enrichment budget, supporting additional experiences which facilitate academic and professional development. This includes, but is not limited to:

- the integration of visiting lecturers, providing exposure to specialist external speakers;
- funding DBS checks so that students are better set up to gain valuable placement experiences throughout their studies;
- coordinating and funding added value industry qualifications to support CV building;
- providing opportunity for field courses and student trips (including additional financial support for individual students);
- offering industry networking events where students can develop communication and influencing skills.

We recognise that students need to take ownership for their own learning – this is part of their personal development - so these enrichment opportunities require students to make informed and active choices (guided by their APT or subject specific Careers Consultant, for example) about their development needs and the experiences that will best support their career ambitions.

Exploiting our internal learning environment: We strive to maximise the opportunity that our campus presents, creating experiences that support the development of knowledge, skills and competencies. A distinct example of this is through the exposure of our students to an elite performance environment. Hartpury is internationally renowned for its dual career pathway which supports the development of elite athletes alongside their academic studies. We commit to adapting our approaches to learning to enable students to be successful, both academically and as athletes (linked to knowing our students). Our dual career athletes have gone on to achieve incredible sporting successes, resulting in over 150 international athletes in the last 15 years, all with the security of an academic qualification,

We are proud of our performance sport pathways, and have maximised the additional value the sports academy provides. We integrate the wider student body into the professional environment through curriculum design, teaching, learning and assessment practices that use this world-class resource. Through this structure our students engage with live assessment briefs, case study

learning, guest lecturers, placement experiences (112 placements in 2021-22) and action research projects (for example), providing a unique access to elite level practice, enquiry and problem solving all within our safe and supportive learning environment, all highly valued by our students (as recognised in the Student TEF submission).

3.2.4 The effectiveness of our approach to educational gain

Here we offer a commentary about the distance travelled by a Hartpury University student and how we evaluate the effectiveness of our offer outside of the metric driven student outcome indices. With no unified sector measure, to-date our stance has been to work closely with our industry partners (including placement providers) to garner feedback on current practices and review how our students and graduates perform. For example, we can substantiate the effectiveness of the development of students' transferable skills in placements between 2019-2022^{FF}. Employers fed back that 96% of students were performing at Good or Excellent capability levels in the following 12 skill areas: Punctuality, Attendance, Initiative, Willingness to Learn, Willingness to Participate, Confidence, Communication with Staff, Confidence, Appearance, Teamwork, Following Policies and Professional Attitude. This demonstrates the impact of embedding these skills within modular content and demonstrates the work-based learning gains of our students. This is also further corroborated by responses to the optional question banks in the NSS2022 where 74.9% were in positive agreement around the questions linked to the professional development criteria (1% above the average for England) and more specifically 81.5% agreed that their communication skills had improved as a result of their studies (3% above the average for England).

Hartpury's ability to support students to make educational gains beyond those that they may achieve elsewhere further demonstrates the effectiveness of our approaches. We have already highlighted our ability to support foundation year students to achieve more upper awards compared to national data (by 8%). Additionally, BTEC students at Hartpury are more likely to continue, less likely to repeat their first year and have a lower achievement gap for upper awards than A-level students (12%), compared to the sector (18%). Students with a declared disability at Hartpury demonstrate continuation and completion rates which are materially above benchmark (Section 3.1.2). This is particularly impressive considering the higher proportion of BTEC (1.7 times more BTEC students than A-level and disability students studying at Hartpury (21% compared to the sector average of 16.2%).

As we evolve as a university we have more ambitious plans on how we may evaluate the value of our educational gain in years to come. This will in part centre on measuring the impact of the Hartpury Academic Framework including harvesting student and employer feedback.

4. Conclusion

Since becoming a university in 2018, Hartpury has continued to be a dynamic and ambitious organisation amplifying our strengths as a small and specialist institution. We have strategically committed to being a university that provides excellence in teaching and learning and over the past few years we have been delighted that our endeavours have been recognised through our achievements in national awards and sector endorsements. Most importantly for us, however, is receiving the positive affirmations from our students regarding their outstanding experiences with us and the pride we feel at the outcomes they achieve as evidenced, for example, in our NSS results.

We have used our size as a strength, carefully developing strategies that enable us to be agile and responsive to the external environment and the evolving needs of our students, putting them at the heart of our offer. Our work is underpinned by effective policies and initiatives, which are well supported by significant investment. These strategies drive the focus on excellent teaching and

ensure that all staff share the organisation's core value of providing an outstanding student experience. While our students may not always enter with a traditional academic background, or with a high tariff profile, we are able to support and stretch them as individuals to help them realise their full potential, resulting in impressive rates of employment. We hope that the submission provided by HSU further reinforces our success in this area.

We are proud of the opportunities that our teaching, learning and student outcomes afford our students, and in turn the Hartpury community, of both staff and students, live by the strapline '*Do what you love. Love what you do.*'

5. References

Annual EE report summaries and EE reports are held in internal TEF folder to support data.

^A Hartpury 2025 Our Strategy for Our Future, 2019, p.2. Available

www.hartpury.ac.uk/media/5577/2025-strategy-document.pdf

^B Student Achievement 2022, submitted QuESt Nov 2022, p.9. Held in internal TEF folder

^C Graduate Outcomes 2020-22, submitted AB annually. Held in internal TEF folder

^D WUSCA, 2022. Available www.whatuni.com/student-awards-winners/university-of-the-year/

^E Hartpury University Academic Strategy 2025, 2019, pp.3 & 5. Available

www.hartpury.ac.uk/media/7588/hartpury-university-strategic-plan-2025-2020-version.pdf

^F Open Letter to staff from HSU regarding Covid-19, Feb 2021. Held in internal TEF folder

^G AQR 2019-20, submitted AB Oct 2020, p.46. Held in internal TEF folder

^H AQR 2020-21, submitted AB Oct 2021, p.15. Held in internal TEF folder

^I RCVS, 2020; SST Confirmation, 2020. Held in internal TEF folder

^J AQR 2021-22, submitted AB Oct 2022, p.18. Held in internal TEF folder

^K Open Letter to staff from HSU regarding Covid-19, Feb 2021. Held in internal TEF folder

^L AdvanceHE UKES2022 HU Tables, Aug 2022, Sheet 8. Held in internal TEF folder.

^M Hartpury QAA Higher Education Review, 2014, p.3. Available

www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/reports/hartpury-college-her-14.pdf?sfvrsn=3bd7f481_4

^N Hartpury TEF outcome, 2017, p.1. Available www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/teaching/tef-outcomes/#/tefoutcomes/provider/10080811

^O HQEF, 2019, p.3. Available www.hartpury.ac.uk/media/5963/hqef-curriculum-development-section-description.pdf

^P Equine PSR Outcomes and Enhancement plan, Jun 2021. Held in internal TEF folder

^Q Horse Welfare Advisory Board Terms of Reference, 2021. Held in internal TEF folder

^R Early Careers, 2018, p.1. Available <https://luminate.prospects.ac.uk/early-careers-survey>

^S Hartpury University Academic Framework (HAF), 2021. Held in internal TEF folder

^T HU Academic Regulations Assessment Cycle, 2022, p.39. Available

www.hartpury.ac.uk/media/11190/hartpury-university-academic-regulations-2022-23-v1.pdf

^U RKE Sport Strategy 2022, submitted AB Oct 2022, p.17. Held in Internal TEF folder

^V RKE Report 2021-22, submitted AB Oct 2022, p.7. Held in Internal TEF folder

^W Teaching Report 2022, submitted ASEC Jun 2022, pp.6 and 26. Held in Internal TEF folder

^X Sport - Periodic Critical Evaluation Document, Mar 2018, p.3. Held in internal TEF folder.

^Y Sport Enhancement Plan 2022, submitted ASEC Nov 2022, p.15. Held in internal TEF folder.

^Z Changes to HU Academic Regulations, submitted AB Aug 2019. Held in internal TEF folder

^{AA} 2018 and 2019 Suspended studies data, Dec 2022. Held in internal TEF folder

^{BB} Inclusive T&L Guidance Document, submitted ASEC Mar 2020. Held in internal TEF folder

^{CC} AdvanceHE UKES 2019, 2020 HU Tables, Aug 2019, 2020, Sheet 8. Held in internal TEF folder

^{DD} Annual ICE Report 2022, submitted AB Oct 2022, p.2. Held in internal TEF folder

^{EE} Hartpury University Academic Framework (HAF), 2021. Held in internal TEF folder