

TEACHING EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK (TEF) SUBMISSION 2023

1 PROVIDER CONTEXT

1.1 Harper Adams University is a **World-leading specialist provider based on an evaluation by the Office for Students during 2022ⁱ** with a reputation for: teaching; independent and peer-reviewed indicators of esteem; the economic, professional, societal and cultural benefits we bring through the work of our students and graduates; demand and dependency of specialist employers on our graduates; our course portfolio, and our impact-focused approach to educational delivery. We are regarded as the UK's leading and an internationally recognised small and specialist university for education and research in and across the connections between sustainable food production, animal health and wellbeing, land use and sustainable living environments for two reasons. Firstly, according to latest UK higher education sector data published by HESA, we have the highest number of students in the subject area of CAH 06 Agriculture, food and related studies (23.5%)ⁱⁱ. Secondly, we are the highest ranked small-specialist provider in UK league tables: 29th in the Complete University Guide 2023ⁱⁱⁱ; 47th in the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2023^{iv}; placed within the 201-250 group in Agriculture and Forestry in the 2022 QS World Rankings^v and ranked first in the employer survey in this subject table published in 2022 (having been second every year between 2017 and 2021).

(President of the National Farmers' Union),

described Harper Adams as:

“a unique institution and the foremost agricultural university in the UK, contributing to the essential upskilling of almost every area of farming and food production... Harper is regarded exceptionally highly for its teaching. Farming and agriculture is not the easiest of sectors in the UK. It's very tough whether you are a food producer or an educator. We are all operating within a very competitive market where only world class businesses and organisations will survive. Harper continues to thrive and that is its shining light. It never stops developing its offer or its facilities which I think puts it in a very strong position moving forward. Harper has focused on remaining relevant to an evolving agricultural sector and that's probably its greatest significance.”^{vi}

1.2 The University's aim is to prepare highly motivated, problem-solving graduates with day one competencies and career-focused motivation, who make a positive and tangible impact on creating innovative, affordable and practical solutions to address the worldwide challenges of food security and climate change. This aligns with our mission in our existing strategic plan which is the “delivery of sustainable food chains and the protection of rural resources for future generations”^{vii}. We do this by providing an **applied education which is rich in professional experiences, underpinned by strong industry links including a mandatory placement year for all undergraduates**. The high esteem in which we are held by employers is as a direct result of the relevance of our industry-aligned curricula that have been co-developed and are co-delivered with industry. Evidence of this is embedded throughout this submission. Broadly, our sustained relationships with the sector and over 1000 employers^{viii} are a defining characteristic of Harper Adams and reflected in all aspects of our educational work, including how we perceive and measure education gain (see section 3.8). We are confident that the industry orientation of our educational experience leads to students having a long-term impact on the sectors that they go on to serve;

1.3 Based on these **close industry links and our outstanding reputation and track record**, we have been able to diversify and grow our talent pool of students, **providing funding and other enrichment opportunities**. Through our alumni and employers' networks, working with the Harper Adams Development Trust (HAUDT)^x, we can provide unique funding opportunities for students, including over £2M of financial support (over the last 5 years) in employer scholarships, bursaries and prizes. The HAUDT works with several

global organisations who support the University and its students by offering financial support through scholarships, in some cases coupled with a placement period, as well as donations towards capital projects. Examples include: the prestigious Helmut CLAAS scholarship enabling undergraduate engineering students to undertake their placement at CLAAS in Germany^{xi}; Aviagen, has awarded a British Poultry Council scholarship with placement to Harper Adams students since 2010; Hubbard Breeders awards a scholarship with placement in France; and SPAL Automotive UK awards a philanthropic scholarship, exclusively to Harper Adams University students. The SPAL scholarship inspires young engineers to solve the environmental challenges of the future, whilst raising the profile of its thermal management systems within the agricultural sector for existing and emerging applications, such as battery cooling for hybrid and electric vehicles. Our international reputation also provides opportunities for student mobility through international placement years with partners such as Cornell University^{xii} (US), Nichols Poultry (Australia), One Harvest (Australia), South Australia Potato Company (Australia), John Deere (Germany & France), Maragno Feeds (Italy, CLAAS^{xiii} (Germany), Alliance Group (NZ), KUHN (France), Kerry Group (Ireland), Brimar Farming (Canada), International Flavours & Fragrances (Netherlands) and Tierarztliche Klinik (Germany)^{xiv}. See sections 1.14, 1.18 and 3.8 for the impact of these on students and industry.

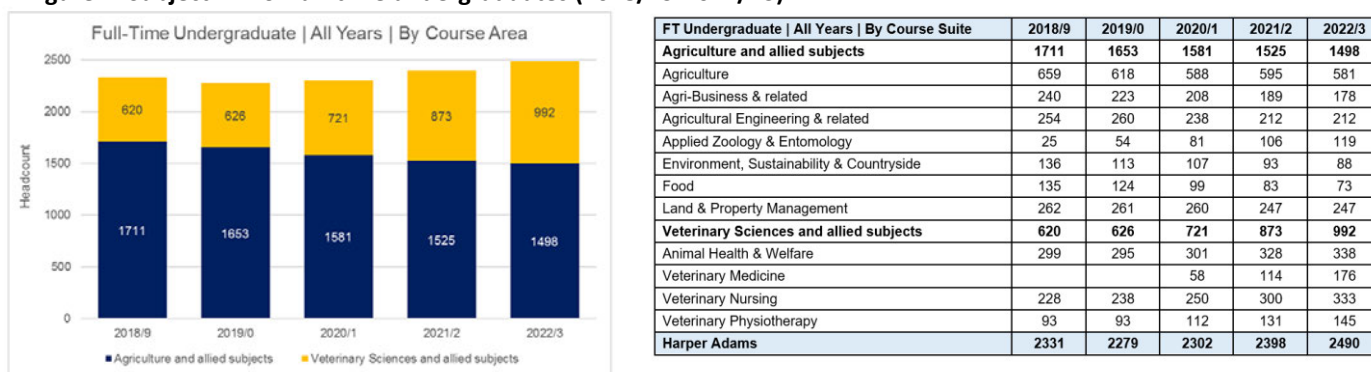
1.4 Our **undergraduate education** is focused on Agriculture and allied subjects (including Agricultural Engineering, Land and Property Management, Environment, Sustainability and Wildlife, Animal and Crop Production, Applied Zoology, Agribusiness, Economics and Food) and Veterinary Sciences and allied subjects (Veterinary Medicine, Veterinary Nursing, Veterinary Physiotherapy). We have a long-standing relationship with Askham Bryan College, a specialist land-based college offering Foundation Degrees, Bachelor's Degrees and Master's degrees in Agriculture, Animal Science and Equine Science, and until 2020, we validated the land-based HE provision at Reaseheath College. Historically these partner college arrangements benefitted those students who wished to attain a Harper Adams validated award while preferring to study closer to home. The profile and outcomes of these students were different than other student groups (see Section 3.3). We have successfully supported Askham Bryan to gain Foundation Degree Awarding Powers (realised in June 2022). We also offer two four-year undergraduate courses in Food and Business with Beijing University of Agriculture. We are involved in teaching levels 4 and 5 and we welcome circa 30-35 students per course to undertake the final year of study on our campus. We are currently in teach-out for another degree delivered in conjunction with Huazhong Agricultural University, whereby circa 12-15 students study the final two years of their degree at Harper Adams.

1.5 Modest planned growth in student numbers over the timeframe of our TEF submission is largely because of our collaborative partnership with Keele University to establish the [Harper and Keele Veterinary School \(HKVS\)](#), which welcomed its inaugural intake in 2020/21. HKVS offers distinctive value to its students through its [focus on widening participation](#); embedding of personal performance and well-being skills, work experience and practical teaching across all years of the course; integrating clinical education via strategic innovative partnerships which focus on primary veterinary care; learning alongside Veterinary Nursing, Veterinary Physiotherapy, Agriculture, Animal Science and Agri-Engineering students at Harper Adams; and offering pioneering inclusive and innovative routes to a career as a veterinary professional. It seeks to address current major challenges to the UK's veterinary community: a lack of diversity, the low number of UK national graduates represented in food production and state veterinary medicine; and a growing retention problem of vets and veterinary nurses. The HKVS is developing autonomous and independent graduates who possess the capabilities and attributes to address these challenges thanks to their high-quality, creative, practically oriented and innovative education and training. The establishment of Veterinary Medicine alongside all other Veterinary Science subjects has enabled broader enrichment opportunities for interprofessional education (IPE) opportunities. For example, two days of IPE is offered for Veterinary Nursing students in their final year to work with second year HKVS Veterinary Medicine students. This includes practical sessions where both groups work together to plan care for an exotic animal patient. This provides valuable opportunities to enhance clinical skills, build professional relationships, enhance understanding of the contributions of other professionals and break down preconceived barriers or stereotypes. This approach was showcased at the VetEd 2022.^{xv} All students benefit from the clinical, practical and other teaching spaces in the purpose-built Veterinary Education Centre, partially funded by farming charities, demonstrating the value of this new development to partner industries. These spaces

simulate the real-world environment of veterinary professionals so that any transition barriers between student and professional experience are minimised. The library of the former [Animal Health Trust](#) has also been donated to the HKVS, given the embedding of animal and human wellbeing in the curriculum, and demonstrating the University's established reputation in these areas.

1.6 Based on the HKVS collaboration and the enhanced facilities and learning opportunities, we have attracted a growing number of students to our Veterinary Sciences and allied subject courses (see table and graph, below right); with significant increases in 2022/23 due to increased student demand for these subjects nationally^{xvi} and our growing reputation for teaching these subjects^{xvii}. This has resulted in an increase in the number of female students from more diverse social and geographical (non-rural) backgrounds.^{xviii} We have invested in staff and facilities to accommodate this growth in Veterinary Sciences (see section 1.19). Our strategy is focused on sustaining viable student cohorts on our courses and we aspire to continuously enhance the quality of our full-time undergraduate provision, as well as attracting an increasing proportion of students from under-represented groups, as set out in our [Access and Participation Plan 2020-25](#). For context, Figure 1 shows the mix and number of students over the past four years and during this current academic year.

Figure 1: Subject mix of full-time undergraduates (2018/19-2022/23)



1.7 We are currently finalising our new Strategic Plan (for 2023-2030), which will be published in Spring 2023. In this Strategy we have plans to enhance still further the **close connection between our education and research and to invest further in our on-campus 'Future Farm' as a living laboratory**. We will continue to develop, test and teach solutions to the challenges associated with agriculture, land management, food production, animal health and welfare, and sustainability; all themes that run throughout our educational provision. Drawing on our track record of innovative education using technology (see section 2.5), we will be creating datasets, creating digital twins and testing operating models, co-creating reusable learning objects through the work of our staff and students in running the future farm and related on-campus facilities and services. We will also link with other educationally driven research farms through our membership of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) recognised [Global Farm Network](#) platform network. This will enable us to address the global challenges associated with [One Health: Animal Health, Human Health and Planetary Health](#). We will continue to widen access to our education and strengthen pipelines to graduate roles in the industries we support, addressing the needs they have articulated in terms of technical and personal skills derived from significant relevant work experience^{xix}. We expect that increased numbers to the professions will be achieved predominantly through developing our flexible, hybrid, part-time courses (at undergraduate and postgraduate level), with a continued work-based and applied learning focus, working with a select number of industrial and educational partners in the UK and overseas.

1.8 Delivering our strategic ambitions and meeting the needs of our industry partners and collaborators requires inter-professional collaboration and this context is reflected in our **system-based approach to staff recruitment and development**, which has two specific features to enable our model of teaching and learning:

- Dual professionals: Teaching staff are appointed based on academic and/or significant professional experience. Some staff launched their careers via a traditional academic route and others through having significant relevant commercial and professional experience. Our students value the richness of

experience and real-world knowledge shared by staff.^{xx} A case study detailing the value of dual professionals was included in the Guild HE publication on practice-informed learning.^{xxi} This approach ensures our courses reflect cutting-edge practices and challenges in environments in which our students will study (during their placement year) and work.

- Close working between academic and professional services in a one-team approach: Collaborative approaches to supporting students and to sharing practice across the staff community, involve and value both teaching and professional services staff. Teams include, but are not limited to, Academic Guidance, the English Language Unit, Learner and Disability Support, Careers and Placement Service, Student and Wellbeing Services, technical support staff, and the University Library. Together we provide targeted and broad wellbeing and learner support for transitions points (into and through courses) and for vulnerable student groups to enrich the wider student experience and promote a sense of belonging, thereby enhancing student outcomes. The impact of this approach was best evidenced during the pandemic by significant improvements in academic attainment by students with disabilities (see section 1.22). This collaborative culture is hard-wired into the organisational structures of the University, with all services directly supporting students and all educational matters under the leadership of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education and Students. This culture is also fostered through the staff recruitment, induction and staff development arrangements.

1.9 To ensure that staff are equipped and supported in developing excellent practice we have an **established approach to staff development which attends to different career stages**, and specifically includes:

- An annual programme of development for Researchers (PhDs) who support undergraduate learning; completion of this course is a pre-requisite to work in teaching roles.
- An in-house PgCert. in Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education, accredited by Advance HE for Fellowship, which is undertaken by all new teaching colleagues who do not hold an equivalent qualification as well as professional services staff each year.
- A well-established Professional Standards Framework Scheme^{xxii}, linked Descriptors 1-3 inclusive, through which colleagues can achieve a category of Fellowship relevant to their role.
- An annual Learning and Teaching conference^{xxiii} opened by the Vice-Chancellor and attracting high profile speakers, external experts and internal sharing; this event attracts over 120 colleagues and is a celebration of learning and teaching.
- Quarterly Learning and Teaching Forums: these are CPD days in the academic calendar to allow the community to come together to share and learn; topics include assessment and feedback, digital accessibility, ePortfolio, and active teaching methods.
- A range of practitioner-led initiatives including: a journal club, web-sharing sessions known as Bite-sized Learning and Teaching sessions, and Communities of Practice to support sharing of specific areas of practice e.g., the use of exemplars, active learning techniques.
- A weekly update of external professional development distributed to staff, with listed funded opportunities for ease of access to different opportunities.

This menu of opportunities is linked to a structured set of expectations for staff engagement: a written condition of appointment is for new staff to achieve Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA); our Learning and Teaching pathway is linked to Fellowship; we have reporting expectations of peer observation; staff CPD is reported to Learning and Teaching and Student Experience Committee. Across the four-year period from 2019-2022 our average Fellowship rate was 82.5%. In the current academic year, 75.2% of academic staff have Fellowship compared to the sector Average of 46.1%^{xxiv}. Critically, the culture of our staff development around learning and teaching is incredibly positive; feedback on our conference and events shows that it is valued; the number of practitioner-led events shows an appetite for learning and sharing; and Fellowship is deeply valued. A survey of 59 staff who gained Fellowship between 2018-2021, conducted in 2022, valued the activity's contribution to building professional support networks (75%); increasing confidence in teaching (70%) and changes to practice (70%) including the use of technology, improved reflection on practice, increased empathy with students, and the development of action research skills to support the evidence-based development of practice.^{xxv}

1.10 Our **academic and corporate governance** arrangements reflect this collegiate working culture and our integrated approach to education and delivering excellent student outcomes. Following prior consideration and approval by Academic Board, the Board of Governors receives a detailed and wide-ranging Annual Report of Academic Quality, Standards and Student Access and Achievement^{xxvi}. Several Governors undertake "lead" roles relating to learning, access and participation and student experience, engaging with relevant staff and providing feedback to Board meetings. This covers all parts of our students' lifecycle, including our outreach and access work and how we are supporting learners from diverse backgrounds and with special characteristics from entry through to employment. This review of performance comprises the evidence base for our Annual Quality Enhancement Plan; with implementation overseen by the Quality and Standards Committee. The Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee (LTSEC) has responsibility for identifying and overseeing the delivery of key enhancement themes and in-year evaluation of student trends and feedback to identify and enhance immediate and longer-term interventions. Whilst Academic Board and its committees (except for assessment boards) have students in their membership, LTSEC has the highest proportion of student members:

In addition, the Students' Union also hosts a termly meeting for student representatives (Educational Champions). The Student Academic Group gathers feedback on proposed University enhancement plans and to canvas students for suggestions to further improve the student experience. It is attended by staff with academic and service leadership responsibilities, to ensure ideas and feedback are reflected in the work of relevant academic committees. Feedback from this forum and from intelligence from the Students' Union Student Voice Survey has helped to inform the University's assessment arrangements (the adoption of Timed Open Book Assessments), a review of photocopying charges for students and training and development of academic staff during the pandemic (see section 2.6).

1.11 Our **education is defined by the following hallmarks of distinction** that are articulated in detail in our Learning and Teaching and Student Experience Strategy 2021-26^{xxvii}, with the core focus of practical and applied learning. Our teaching is informed by our [world-leading research](#) and practical application of current cutting-edge industry applications, with theory taught in lectures and seminars applied to the real world at every opportunity to realise solutions for global issues/themes aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which are embedded within our curriculum. This includes practical sessions and small group tutorials using our specialist facilities (see section 1.19), that typically make up 50% of the experience we offer to our students. We offer additional professionally accredited skills training programmes and extra-curricular activities that support students to develop digital, cultural, and specialist practical skills (see section 1.14). We also provide student with paid work opportunities on our on-site Future Farm.

1.12 We offer **industry-ready accredited courses designed and delivered in collaboration with employers**. Our courses are designed in partnership with leading employers to ensure that they remain relevant and prepare our graduates with the relevant skills and expertise needed by land-based and related industries, now and in the future. The engagement of course teams with industry, to inform course development, comes through a variety of channels. By example:

- One-off events: In 2022, our Agriculture team held a curriculum consultation event with forty employers to gain feedback to inform continual updating; similarly, our countryside, environment and wildlife team hosted an employer workshop to inform curricula.^{xxviii}
 - Placement: Our academic staff routinely visit placement students and employers facilitating information exchange and updates from the forefront of practice and feedback from employers on the preparedness of our students for future careers within the sector. A number of members of the Vice-Chancellor's Group have served as Placement Tutors to experience first-hand the experience that students have in their engagement with employers. Themes arising from placement visits are gathered and shared.
 - Scrutiny: We routinely include industry panel members in new programme approvals processes.^{xxix}
- Our students are engaged with employers at all stages, including prior to arrival at the university (where work experience is required to gain admission), during the undergraduate placement year and during vacations.

1.13 Our programmes have professional accreditation by the Engineering Council under the auspices of the Institution of Agricultural Engineers (for all Engineering courses), the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (Land Property and Management), The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (Veterinary Nursing). We are currently working towards accreditation of courses in Veterinary Medicine and Veterinary Physiotherapy. Accreditation information is available on the course information pages of our website.

1.14 **Planning puts the quality of students' education front and centre.** Our approach to admissions and student cohort number plans are based on both accreditation requirements and our distinctive approach to education, which is evident in five ways:

- **Tailored admissions requirements:** based on prior work experience and suitability to the type of work and working environments in which applicants will study and work as a graduate, as well as the necessary academic qualifications expected for entry into Higher Education. Applicants without the required 10 weeks of work experience to meet entry requirements for our Agriculture courses are considered for our [Access to Agriculture](#) programme, where they are given mentoring and work experience during their first year to prepare them for applying for a placement during the second year.
- **Managed Class sizes:** to meet both professional and accreditation requirements and our pedagogical approach. In the Animal and Veterinary Sciences, for example, we operate small tutorial group sizes to ensure professional practical skills are appropriately developed and animal welfare is maintained. Small group teaching is also vital for: the health and safety of students (and staff) and biosecurity.
- **Co-/extra-curricular opportunities:** practical technical qualifications offered alongside, or embedded in, programmes of study.^{xxx} Teaching and assessment is designed to develop learners' confidence, independence and self-reflection so that they feel confident utilising skills and explaining them to employers. For example, the Agriculture Rural Skills module is focused on the development of practical skills; students acquire industry-relevant certificates to show competence and reflect on their learning and develop professional self-awareness. Students in Agriculture and Engineering are offered LANTRA qualifications for safely driving and operating off-road vehicles (tractors/machinery/quad bikes). Food and Agribusiness students can gain Food Safety and HACCP qualifications (via Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and in future through the OFQUAL accredited Royal Society for Public Health). The Business Communication Technology module embeds digital micro-credentials into a module as students locate and select ways to develop their own skills after undertaking a self-assessment using a nationally benchmarked tool (the Jisc Discovery Tool).
- **Placement needs:** when determining the number of students, we assure ourselves that there are enough places to accommodate all students in a meaningful placement job role. Whilst students are given personal responsibility to secure their own placement (building confidence and skills early for when they later apply for graduate jobs), we actively facilitate and support students through this process via specialist staff (placement coordinator, placement managers and the Careers and Placement Service) providing recruitment and employability support for students (see section 1.21). We also engage with employers to identify, scrutinise and approve placement job opportunities before we promote them to students on our digital bulletin board and through our Careers and Placement Fair.
- **Research undertaken as part of all degree courses:** our undergraduate and postgraduate students undertake original applied research, evaluating and developing new techniques and solving industry-related problems, as part of their Honours Research (HRP) Project module (undertaken in the final year of our bachelor degrees) or their Masters Research Project module. For example, our students have undertaken research on precision farming, sustainable agriculture, the food industry, agribusiness and food chain management, sustainable, electric and autonomous vehicles, agroecology, entomology, plant pathology. In some cases this draws upon fieldwork undertaken on placement and/or uses resources provided by placement providers, or working with other businesses to solve live challenges. Student research projects also support the wider research work undertaken by academic staff and their work has contributed to published academic research.

Given the links to industry and/or academic researchers and the specialist nature of these projects, we ensure that there is appropriate academic time and skills available to support this work through our Academic Workload Planning arrangements.^{xxxii} Through research projects, students offer new and innovative ways to address genuine current challenges faced by partner industries. These projects lead to changes in business practice, new applications for established technologies and advances in approaches and scientific understanding.

The impact of this work is demonstrated through the number and range of student prizes from industry bodies awarded for the quality of their research, for example: [2021 international prize-winning](#) projects on health and safety on farm buildings based on placement experience, and on how to improve the machinery effectiveness, working with a farm machinery company;

1.15 Our **network of employers routinely and directly supports our learning and teaching** through offering placement and through a range of other activities:

- Hosting field trips and visits at their venues: e.g. Ludlow Farm Shop, Halfpenny Green Vineyards and Winery, Severn Trent Water, Enginuity, PDM Produce, ME Furniss Farms Knighton Foods, Edwards Transport, Twemlows Stud Farm, Renishaw, Protolabs^{xxxiii}
- Acting as external speakers to contribute to our teaching; over 100 annually from national and international businesses. For example, we have recently hosted speakers from: SAI Global, National Grid, Co-Op, Sainsburys, Aldi, HS2, Aarhus University, and Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul^{xxxiii}. Students are also invited to webinars, workshops and other events held by the [School of Sustainable Food and Farming \(SSFF\)](#), which we lead with McDonalds UK and Ireland, Morrisons and the NFU. Its purpose is to build a national and international network to educate, inspire and empower current and future agri-food practitioners to achieve net zero within a sustainable farming and food system.
- Acting as virtual guest speakers adding specific case studies and experiences to the curricula; for example, senior staff at Waitrose and Aldi contributing to our Food and Agribusiness courses.
- Loaning specialist (and often cutting-edge) equipment such as all-terrain vehicles, methane-powered tractors, GPS and related technologies, which support leading projects such as our Hands-Free-Farm^{xxxiv} (key industry sponsors: CLAAS, Precision Decisions and ISEKI).
- Providing relevance to student assessment by, for example, setting design briefs for students so that their assessment tasks are authentic. Examples include: Food students being asked by The Village Bakery to create a new product for market, culminating in a student exhibition; Shropshire Wildlife Trust identifying a challenge for students to address through public information briefings.
- Joining events which showcase student work to give authentic feedback and industry perspectives, for example, Agribusiness students undertaking mini-pitches for their business plans, Vet/Animal Science students presenting at national conferences and summarising their Honours Research Projects via [Blogs](#).
- Sponsoring final year student major projects, including providing access to their resources to enable students to solve business problems. For example, all Level 6 students studying Agricultural Engineering and other Engineering courses work with real industrial clients as part of their General Engineering Project module, negotiating their own deliverables and then working in a group to deliver these. Current clients this year: Atkinson Vos, Avara, Big Bale, Claas (Germany), DSTL, JCB, Moss Bikes, Peregrine, Railability, RBSL, Small Robot Company, TAFE (India) and TRL. These relationships and this approach builds on the Level 5 Engineering Design group project module, for which students specify, design, make and test a product. Alumni and industry guests directly support the assessment and feedback for these tasks and have a small but direct influence on a student's mark at the end of the year, by purchasing (or otherwise) their product at a trade show / demonstration day.

1.16 Every undergraduate student (except for those studying Veterinary Medicine) has a mandatory **placement year** during the third year of study for those on first degree courses and the second year of study for those on Foundation Degrees. This is a fully integrated and assessed year of study, which offers the following benefits for students: to learn and apply their knowledge and skills in a different way within a work environment, to clarify their career goals and to gain valuable experience within a professional setting. Preparation for placement in year one through personal development and professional skills sessions within core modules. Bespoke sessions are delivered to support students in their preparation for their placement year including CV writing, interview techniques, project planning (for the work-based project they will undertake during the placement year) and researching different employment opportunities. Additional support is provided for students on professionally accredited courses. For example, students studying Veterinary Sciences or Engineering undertake a pilot assessment for placement, designed to support their preparation for registration with their professional bodies.

1.17 We have **long-established and commended placement arrangements, to manage the student educational experience prior to and during the placement year**. Individual work programmes for students are scoped, monitored and evaluated by our Placement Managers (one per subject area), working closely with employers, and the outcomes of the year are formally assessed as part of the degree award. All students are allocated a staff member in the role of placement tutor who will pro-actively engage with them and their employer during the placement year through in person and/or on-line meetings and visits to the workplace. This is not unusual in the sector but what is less usual is that the tutor is a member of academic staff whose job it is to support achievement of learning outcomes as well as health, safety and wellbeing. A structured review and feedback system is used to help students and employers review a student's performance during placement and to identify and address development needs. A placement project linked to the business needs of the employer and agreed with the placement tutor is also required to be completed by the student. This work is assessed as part of the outcomes for the placement year along with reflective assignments written by the student on personal and skills development. The University's Placement Co-Ordinator oversees the whole operation to ensure consistency in terms of quality, standards and support for placement students and their professional/industrial hosts. Our employer partners provide us with consistently positive feedback on the work-readiness of our students, their knowledge of current and emerging industry context and practice, as well as the significant contributions they make to their businesses through the projects they undertake. This feedback is gathered through progress meetings with placement tutors, informal feedback and structured feedback, for example, that gathered at our Annual Careers and Placement Fair (where between 120 and 150 employers come to the campus to recruit our students for placements and/or graduate roles). We use this evidence to assess educational gain and impact (see section 3.8) as well as promoting [entrepreneurship](#) and/or '[personal brand' in the employment market](#).

1.18 **These arrangements ensure good educational and employability outcomes**, which is evident in TEF metrics relating to student outcomes, particularly progression (see sections 3.4 and 3.5) and in our Educational Gain indicator for professional esteem (section 3.1). They are also commended by our external examiners:

"The placement period is an integral part of the student's experience. The feedback from the final year students spoken to echo this year on year, their placement having had a significant impact on both their personal and academic development and having led directly or indirectly, through networking etc, to employment opportunities following graduation"

"Harper Adams is unique in the sense it offers the placement period. This is the reason many students are drawn to be a student within the organisation. Based on experience, employers look for candidates who have experience, and many employers look for students from particular institutions. Due to the uniqueness, Harper Adams ticks both boxes where the reputation of the calibre of students is directly related to the experiential learning which takes place during the third-year placement. Student testimony backs that up with every one of the interviewed students agreeing on the strength and relevancy of this component"

In the annual placement survey conducted at the beginning of the final year, when students return from placement, overall student satisfaction is strong, with a 4-year average of 77.9% of students rating their experience as 'excellent' or 'very good', rising to 92.7% of students rating their experience as satisfactory or better. Placement also leads to job offers for some of our students, and a good proportion accept these: 14.3% of the 2017/18 cohort, 15% of the 2018/19 cohort and 11.6% of the 2019/20 cohort. We track this by using Graduate Outcomes and our own internal placement data. In total, over the three years of Graduate Outcomes datasets, we have matched 990 records, of which 137 (13.8%) were employed with their placement employer 15 months after graduation:

The lower numbers for food, Veterinary Nursing and Veterinary Physiotherapy reflect the higher proportion of SMEs in these sectors and the greater propensity of our graduates to create and run their own businesses in these areas. Our industry-relevance and development of entrepreneurship within curricula also mean that our students establish/run their own businesses: circa 40 in each year of Graduate Outcomes. Recent examples include a [potato packing company](#) using robotic techniques developed as part of an honours research project; [autonomous agri-solutions](#) (being the first UK distributor of Robotti), an [award-winning \(by the Farmers' Weekly\) fresh produce](#) firm, a [farm business tenancy](#), [gluten-free food producer](#).

1.19 Access to **world-leading specialist facilities** is an integral part of our teaching and learning experience. At the heart of our campus and our teaching is our Future Farm – a living lab progressing towards net zero within wider sustainability boundaries (optimising financial return, biodiversity and animal welfare). Through ongoing investment, we have expanded our dairy and pig units, and created a food research centre and on-farm teaching hub. Our £2 million, leading-edge smart dairy uses advanced technologies to enhance animal welfare, productivity and sustainability in UK agriculture. Future Farm also incorporates the Crop and Environment Research Centre (CERC) to allow the upscaling of trials to field and farm scale trials for easier industry adoption. Many students partner with CERC to conduct live field trials for their research projects. We have invested substantially in our facilities to underpin our work across teaching, research and knowledge exchange. Other key facilities include: [Elizabeth Creak Laboratories](#) (anatomy, microbiology, and applied sciences teaching); [Jean Jackson Entomology Building](#), (arguably the largest insectary (by species) and preserved insect specimen collections in UK Higher Education, used for teaching and student research projects); a soil hall for testing off-road vehicles, [Saputo Dairy Innovation Centre](#) (state-of-the-art development of kitchens, laboratories and a pilot plant for Food and Agribusiness teaching); the [Veterinary Services Centre](#) (includes a state-of-the-art hydrotherapy suite, for teaching and research); the [Companion Animal House](#) (teaching facility using a wide range of resident small mammals and exotics); and the [Veterinary Education Centre](#) (specifically developed for the Harper & Keele Veterinary School). Student feedback in NSS open question ("Looking back on the experience, are there any particularly positive or negative aspects you would like to highlight?") and in our annual course survey shows that students value these facilities highly, with the University Future Farm most mentioned.^{xxxvi}

1.20 One of our strategic priorities is to **attract, support and develop students from diverse backgrounds** through changes in our undergraduate portfolio and widening participation work set out in our [Access and Participation Plan 2020-25](#). We continue to be a leading higher education provider for Agriculture and allied subjects, Land and Property Management, Agribusiness and Agricultural Engineering. We aim to be agents of change by diversifying the profile of those studying these courses, to include those from non-rural backgrounds, mature on entry and to reflect a broader ethnic background. By growing the number and proportion of students studying Animal/Veterinary Sciences courses (c.40% of the 2022/23 cohort) has enabled us to increase the proportion of new entrants from neighbourhoods with low Higher Education participation rates (POLAR 4, quintile 1), those from low-income households (IMD 2019, quintiles 1 & 2) and Ethnic groups other than white. This success is reflected on the OfS' Access and Participation Plan dashboards. Our internal reports on new entrant profiles for 2022/23 entry (which will be in the public domain in Spring/Summer 2023) show that for the first time we achieved both of our access targets for full-time undergraduate new entrants: 20% of new entrants to come from neighbourhoods with fewer entering Higher Education (POLAR4 Quintiles 1 & 2) and 3.5% of new entrants from ethnic groups other than white

(BAME). In addition, nearly a quarter of all our students have a declared disability. Whilst in the past, most of these students had a Specific Learning Differences (SpLD), during and after the pandemic a growing number of new entrants have complex mental health and physical needs. A significant proportion of our undergraduate students continue to have non-traditional – wholly or partially-based vocational - entry qualifications: 39.8% of those on Bachelor's Degrees and 73.1% on Foundation Degrees.

1.21 We tailor support to recognise and address the differential starting points and learners' backgrounds:

- Developing core academic competencies and confidence through the Professional Scholarship Programme which is embedded across each undergraduate course. Core academic skills and competencies are developed at each level of study: a level 4 module on Academic Skills, Research Skills and problem-solving modules is offered by each course team in a way that is relevant to the specific discipline; the placement project at level 5; and through supervision of the major project at level 6. Individual learner progress is supported and monitored by both module tutors and course tutors. For details of our course tutoring arrangements see section 2.11.
- Targeting under-represented and/or vulnerable groups through: pre-entry communications providing pre-entry guidance; discussing needs for those with disabilities prior to/directly after confirmation; facilitating social mixing prior to arrival; encouraging attendance at our Transitions Conference in early September; and offering 1-to-1 sessions with our Academic Guidance Team.
- Providing employability skills support for students planning and applying for both their placement and their first graduate job. This is supported within the curricula, for example, through placement preparation sessions (all courses) and in specialist modules covering, for example, negotiation skills for Agribusiness students, practical clinical skills for Veterinary Physiotherapy, communications and client engagement skills for Engineers.^{xxxvii}
- The Careers and Placement Service, with support from the course team, offer in-class workshops and 1-to-1 support. This is particularly important for those students without the social capital and/or personal links to employers. Our students value this service, which is evidenced by us winning, for the last six years, the Whatuni Student Choice Awards (WUSCAs) for Careers Prospects and Support.^{xxxviii}

1.22 We have seen the impact of our work through good continuation and completion rates (in section 3) and outstanding student satisfaction rates for academic support in the NSS (in section 2.11). Our completion rates (+2.5% compared to benchmark) and progression rates (+5.4% ahead of benchmark) of students with a declared disability are excellent. In addition to these measures, the Access and Participation Group monitors closely awarding gaps, reporting to LTSEC, Academic Board and the Board of Governors. We are making progress on closing awarding gaps for different student groups, particularly for mature students, those from low participation neighbourhoods and low-income households:

Figure 2: Academic Attainment and Awarding Gaps of Special Student Groups 2018/19-22

	% First/2:1s				Variance from University Average %				Number of students			
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Male	68.1	78.4	72.1	71.4	-7.8	-3.2	-4.9	-5.8	204	185	172	168
Mature	73.1	80.8	83.3	82.4	-2.8	-0.8	6.3	5.2	67	73	66	51
Disabled	69.1	78.6	79.1	74.1	-6.8	-3.0	2.1	-3.1	110	112	115	116
POLAR4 Q1&2	80.7	72.0	75.0	79.7	4.8	-9.6	-2.0	2.5	57	50	56	69
EIMD Q1&2	78.3	78.3	79.2	77.3	2.4	-3.3	2.2	0.1	69	46	48	66
BAME	66.7	55.6	25.0	83.3	-9.2	26	52.0	6.1	3	9	4	6

We also remain committed to diversifying our student body by attracting more BAME students; through internationalisation work and connecting the university more purposefully and strategically with local and regional communities, which are key themes in our forthcoming Strategic Plan (see 1.7). The small numbers currently make an analysis on awarding gaps for BAME students problematic with single digit sample sizes causing significant swings in percentage terms, as can be seen in the table below. Whilst over the last four years we have closed awarding gaps for disabled students (who benefitted from changes to the assessments

types and assessment regulations during the pandemic), we recognised more support was needed due to the rising numbers and a growing proportion with complex needs. Therefore, during summer/autumn 2022 we invested in additional staff in the disability and learner support team (to support needs assessment work and 1-2-1 support and enhance our maths support) and in the Wellbeing team (to address the growing number of students and the rising trend, seen nationally, of students needing mental health support).

2. STUDENT EXPERIENCE

2.1 We operate a **quality-enhancement led approach to the design, approval and review of our courses and our teaching and learning**. For example, the periodic review of each undergraduate course is undertaken across the whole university to ensure that we fully and consistently embed our hallmarks of distinction and promote in a meaningful way inter-professional and inter-disciplinary learning across our subject base. We are part-way through the 'Harper Forward' review of our undergraduate courses, which seeks to ensure Harper graduates remain at the forefront of their fields addressing significant social, economic, cultural and climate challenges in wider society that are addressed throughout our new Strategic Plan (see 1.7). The Harper Forward Framework includes six graduate attributes which are based on our research concerning future needs, feedback from employers, and the nature and needs of our community of staff and students. The attributes focus on students developing: applied knowledge and skills; digital capabilities and confidence; social and environmental responsibility; global perspectives and inter-cultural competencies; confidence to become an independent, lifelong learner with enterprising and innovative perspectives; and research skills to enable them to create, communicate and use knowledge and information in a changing world. To help these attributes to be readily recognised, discussed and developed, the University has developed six core strands through all our new courses, these are known simply as: Harper Applied; Harper Digital; Harper Care; Harper Global; Harper Growth; Harper Inspire. These represent an extension of the key features of our current undergraduate courses, but with a sharper focus on a changing environment for graduates and graduate employment with a greater focus on sustainability, innovation and inter-disciplinary solutions to global challenges as well as building personal skills to be ready for different work environments and careers characterised by uncertainty and change.

2.2 The strength of our pedagogic methods is reflected in our contributions to the development of the wider Higher Education sector, borne out of **university-wide approach to embed Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)**. Pedagogical research is a key theme in our Learning and Teaching and Student Experience Strategy 2021-26. For early career staff, this is focused on the independent action research project as part of the Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education. Some of these projects directly affect local practice – for example, leading to the adoption of technology in teaching, or the use of specific techniques thoughtfully implemented (e.g., case-based learning and flipped classroom methods). Others have had wider university impact, demonstrating how scholarship feeds into the student experience. For example, a study recommended policy changes regarding student experience and campus culture, which have been adopted through our Respect Policy work. This is focused on ensuring our community is free of harassment, violence, exploitation and intimidation, building on the research of some staff. Within our curricula we are challenging students to consider different perspectives and world views not fitting with their own, and to ensure that staff draw upon a range of counter views in their teaching. The Respect policy also addresses recruitment and development of staff and students and how we operate as a community, including the Students' Union that co-owns the Policy. Recently, key decision makers and stakeholders were invited to commission research through the PgCert. so that scholarship informs our wider work; by example a live project is based on a student-centred evaluation of specific common spaces to see how they can be further enhanced to meet the needs of students. The action research undertaken at Harper Adams is shared widely to inspire other institutions looking at early career scholarship by example keynote presentations and workshops at University of Sussex (2020), Edinburgh Napier (2021), Keele University (2021), and Teesside University (2022), and to the National Association of Teaching Fellows Conference (2021). Our emphasis on this approach to pedagogic research is deliberate in that it brings together research and practice for research that has an impact on student learning and experience by direct intervention.

2.3 We regularly evaluate and share our learning processes, pedagogy, and curricula through recognised and authoritative internationally esteemed peer reviewed Higher Education publications including Studies in Higher Education (see for example Huang et al, 2020^{xxxix}); Educational Action Research (Arnold & Norton, 2021^{xl}), and International Higher Education (Raimo, Huang & West, 2021^{xli}). Our staff publish on teaching and learning related matters in publications which seek to serve specific international discipline communities (see Hart, Leather & Sharma, 2020^{xlii}) and professional communities (Arnold & Barnett, 2018). We have published through the Higher Education Academy and the Staff and Educational Development Association^{xliii} which has an amplifying impact of pedagogic practice across the higher education sector. Advance HE Partnership Manager Karen Hustler described our work in this area as ‘very influential’ in the sector, highlighting that we have shared “excellent resources which are practical and accessible” and that we have particularly “promoted best practice in educational action research”. We have a distinctive culture of scholarship embedded in to teaching and student support.

2.4 We have practitioner-led communities of practice which actively seek to develop and share pedagogic approaches through discussion and evaluation. At the COP26 Conference, with the Smithsonian Institute (the world’s largest museum, education and research organisation) we shared effective methods of teaching entomology and sustainable integrated pest management.^{xliiv} Our most established community of practice is focused on assessment support, and this has been shared through publication (e.g., Arnold & Headley, 2019; Headley & Pittson, 2020)^{xliv} and through conference presentations (e.g. Assessment in Higher Education). We are actively involved in the UK Universities Climate Change Network (our Deputy Vice-Chancellor co-chairs the Net Zero group) and as part of our COP26 activity contributed to a briefing paper on ‘Mainstreaming climate education in UK higher education Institutes’ (Thew et al., 2021)^{xlvi}. We have communities that meet regularly on the topics of inclusivity and active learning. We have a staff led journal club, which embeds research into our everyday reflections. Our learning and teaching conference is a vibrant space for scholarly discourse. Individual practitioners also develop research and development specialisms associated with their teaching – for example winning funding to support research in case-based learning^{xlvii}. More broadly, through the QAA Funded research project^{xlviii} we have partnered with Staffordshire University to work with our students and theirs to explore the topic of Phenomenon Based Learning to strengthen Education for Sustainable Development.

2.5 The pandemic changed radically our learning and teaching and the impact of public health restrictions was felt particularly deeply by our students owing to our applied and experiential learning and teaching approaches. At the same time the lockdowns were also a period where our pedagogic confidence, built over many years, provided a strong foundation for considering and utilising alternative pedagogies. During each COVID-related lockdown where students were unable to attend both lectures and practical sessions we shifted teaching on-line, creating reusable learning objects and finding innovative ways to continue some practically focused work. Our response included:

- Videos of crop walks, laboratory demonstrations and animal handling (for students studying Agriculture and allied subjects and Animal and Veterinary Sciences).
- Development of 3D virtual/augmented reality environments to support student learning in simulations we had been creating before the pandemic^{xlix} such as a virtual 3D farm platform, virtual crop dissections, and a virtual veterinary pharmacy, or virtual mechatronics rigs set up on campus (for Engineering students to access remotely).
- Sending resources for students and/or suggesting the use of household items or gardens to undertake practical work at home (e.g., those studying Food, Engineering, Wildlife and Conservation).
- The development of a documentary style of teaching for field-based subjects.
- Employer-linked student assessment tasks moved online to create virtual partnership projects, including team-based challenges.^l
- Asynchronous lectures, as student feedback highlighted the differing circumstances in which students were studying due to family needs, work, health and technology.
- Changed our requirements concerning the normal duration of placements (44 to 29 weeks) and provided additional support for students seeking or moving placement provider due to disruptions.

2.6 **The Students' Union (SU)** partnered with the University in our emergency response planning group to ensure students were central to our response. In Summer 2020, the SU undertook a comprehensive survey and published the first Student Voice Report: Online Educational Experienceⁱⁱ. Based on the report, we made the following changes to our arrangements:

- Moved lectures online in 2020/21 academic year until it was safe to resume full face-to-face teaching.
- Used Microsoft Teams for live small group seminar and tutorial sessions.
- Developed mandatory training for all staff on delivery of on-line lectures (co-created with our SU).
- Delivered asynchronous lectures.
- Made changes to the library service to promote enhanced access to e-resources.
- Delivered multiple small group socially distanced practical sessions using indoor and outdoor specialist facilities and only stopped doing so for a short period of time when government guidance prevented this work continuing.

The implementation of recommendations was confirmed in the second Student Voice report at the end of term 1, 2020/21. LTSEC agreed priority actions based on this and its successor reports and monitored implementation work.

2.7 Due to the practical nature of our subject base, and despite much **innovation and creativity by our staff**, some sessions could simply not be offered, and key classes were postponed until in-person sessions could resume, to ensure we were able to assure ourselves that learning outcomes had been achieved. Students missed personal contact with teaching staff and were affected by unavoidable clustering of teaching and assessments around Easter and summer 2021. Whilst we moved from closed-book examinations and Vivas to Timed-Open-Book Assessments (TOBAs), these alternative assessment forms could not be offered to all students, due to professional accreditation requirements. Likewise, for our courses in the Veterinary Sciences, Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OCSEs) were delayed until it was safe for students to prepare and undertake them. Whilst these restrictions remained in place, we continued to innovate our approaches to assessment, introducing new inclusive and authentic types of assessment including: podcasts; digital field guides where students use technology to create online resources about specific environmental sites; field Vivas; journal articles; student-led videos; and pre-recorded presentationsⁱⁱⁱ. Student feedback in the Student Voice Report 2.1 at the end of term 1, 2021/22 highlighted dissatisfaction among

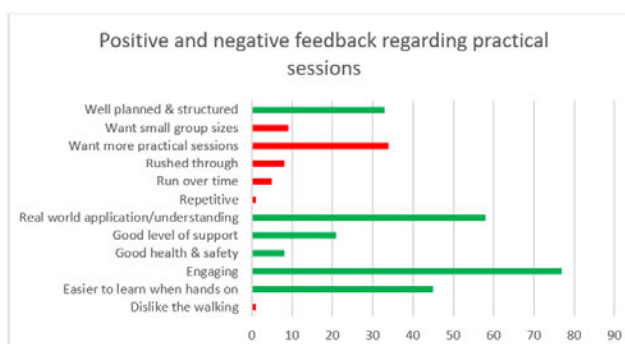
students due to COVID-related disruptions. Students explicitly highlighted the value they placed on practical learning and their desire for more (see Figure 3). The Students' Union worked with us to explain the public health restrictions and to develop videos and other resources to assist students using recorded lectures and prepare for assessment. Despite focused collaborative effort, we believe this disruption associated with COVID directly affected our NSS (National Student Survey) results relating to Assessment and Feedback since 2020. See sections 2.18 and 2.19.

2.8 Since the Pandemic we have retained the following arrangements on a permanent basis.

Sustaining these changes to assessment practices ensures we are more inclusive and authentic for our specialist disciplines. This decision was based on positive student and external examiner feedback and achieving improved outcomes for students with disabilities. Academic Board agreed formally in July 2022 that:

- We should not return to the Viva for projects associated with taught (FdSc, BSc/BSc (Hons), BEng/BEng (Hons), MEng, MSc, MSci, MProf) awards.
- As a default position we use timed open book assessment examinations (TOBAs) or e-assessment (take-away) rather than in-person closed book examinations.
- Recorded lectures are prepared and made available as a study aid.

Figure 3: Student Feedback provided in the Student Voice Report 2.1



- The use of more diverse communications channels for students: digital and video recordings, text messages and use of social media groups.

Likewise, the Students' Union has continued with its student voice reports, which have enabled us to evaluate and therefore enhance our education and support arrangements. Response rates have grown from c500 to over 700 because of a growing confidence that the reports acted as a catalyst for enhancement and change. Since the pandemic the reports have focused more on other priorities such as our joint Respect work (see section 2.2) and the Union's own development of a broader range of social activities, development of support for clubs and societies and enhance student representation work. We attribute our excellent and outstanding result in the following student experience measures to this partnership approach of open communication and shared evaluation.

2.9 We have **robust and wide-ranging quality enhancement arrangements to promote excellence in teaching quality**. This is reflected in our performance in the TEF metrics where we are above the OfS and the sector average based on a four-year average, dipping just below the benchmark in 2021/22 because just 3 fewer students expressed satisfaction. During the Pandemic we continued to operate our quality enhancement activities relating to learning and teaching albeit in modified forms and addressing directly the scale of challenge and change we were experiencing, including but not limited to:

- Bite-Sized Learning & Teaching sessions – staff development sessions delivered via MS Teams and recorded to permit all staff to access (or re-access) the material later.
- Harper Online Teaching (HOT) Space – A dedicated Teams channels for sharing of good practice and a forum to seek advice and guidance from across our staff community.
- Cross-team teaching to support interdisciplinary undergraduate research projects and to provide staff cover where appropriate.
- Learning and Teaching development events, peer observations of teaching and weekly briefings of sector developments.
- Student Academic Group meetings (see section 1.10).
- Development work such as the Inclusive Guide to Learning and Teaching and the creation of the Feedback on Assessment Briefs (FAB) service to provide peer feedback to improve the accessibility and scope of assignment/assessment briefs (highlighted as an issue via student feedback).
- Student Voice Awards led by the Students' Union to celebrate and acknowledge academic staff contributions.
- A practical guide for staff on learning and teaching arrangements during the pandemic, which was reviewed regularly considering changing public health advice.
- Video guides prepared for staff and students on how to teach and study within the new COVID-secure environments. These were supported by the Students' Union team, which developed new approaches to student communications and highlighted key challenges facing students to ensure these were addressed in a timely manner. For example, guidance on how to use recorded lectures as a study skill, student and learner support resources and services, preparing for assessment.

External examiner feedback confirmed the quality of our teaching and learning:

"The high standard of teaching, resources and support that I have seen in previous years continues to be demonstrated. Students often have an impressive grasp of the "bigger picture" and seem to understand how concepts link together"

"The quality of the learning demonstrated by the student – both during my conversations with them and as I looked over their work – appeared to be of a high standard, reflecting the quality of the teaching that the students have received"

2.10 As a result of the well-established and strong cross-university arrangements, our students have continued to provide high satisfaction rates for the quality in our teaching in the NSS. Whilst rates were higher at the beginning of the four-year period, we have remained above the sector average and above the OfS benchmarks.

2.11 **Academic support** is provided by an inter-professional team of:

- Disability and learner support advisors: providing the full service from initial screening to formal testing, needs assessment and one-to-one learner support.
- Academic Guidance tutors: details of their work is in section 1.21.
- Course Tutors: a key member of the course teaching team with responsibility to provide individual and group support for each year group. Course Tutor sessions cover core study and academic skills, questions or challenges students have about the course, revision and assessment preparation, as well as student welfare. This model was designed to achieve the following benefits over a personal tutoring model: to ensure consistency, manage handovers from one tutor to the next, and a small team of trained course tutors to work closely with relevant support professionals, identifying themes and in-year interventions and enhancements.
- Wellbeing Team: specialist staff providing counselling, mental health, occupational health and general wellbeing support (including social prescribing, bite-sized workshops and spotlight sessions). The team handle a daily caseload of referrals or self-referrals, developing and delivering resources and training for both staff and students. Their work is complemented by a 24/7 student assistance service provided by Health Assure to deal with urgent requests and to provide a broader, complementary range of therapeutic and general services.

2.12 Staff have won **national awards** for their work: Specials Needs Co-ordinator and Educator of the Year at the Dyslexia Awards (2018); Recognised Senior Advisor Award from the United Kingdom Advising and Tutoring Association (2020) and the WUSCAs Student Support Award for five consecutive years (2015-2019).

^{iv} The academic support team has managed nearly 100 support to study cases per annum over the last two years, providing individualised support to learners so they can overcome medical and other barriers to learning. During the pandemic, these support services moved to fully on-line during lockdowns and a hybrid model when public health restrictions allowed. This integrated team of qualified specialist and teaching staff is responsible for our high continuation and completion rates (see section 3). The NSS satisfaction rates for these services (well above the sector average and our benchmark) clearly show that our students value our approach and the services we provide.

2.13 Our approach to investment in the digital infrastructure and **learner resources** has been a strategically driven and sustained institutional priority, underpinned by evidence from student feedback, our staff engagement with pedagogical developments and using evaluation tools/resources provided by JISC. This is evidenced by the sustained high satisfaction rates for students in the NSS questions related to this theme across the four-year period, above the sector average and above the OfS benchmark.

2.14 The impact of **the pivot to online delivery at the beginning of the pandemic** was supported by a rapid investment in e-books and e-journals. E-book investment has increased by 50% between 2020/21 and 2021/22, growing our e-book collection, from fewer than 1,000 items (prior to the pandemic) to over 180,000 e-books by 2022. The Library team enhanced document supply, including the posting of books and other hard-copy materials to students' homes. Training was also provided to staff and students on the use of Harper's Online Library and digital assets. The Learning Hub (Moodle) remained the key repository of learning materials and related resources, such as video and other guidance cited above.

2.15 **Recent enhancements to our library services^{iv} reflect the changing needs of service users** during and after the pandemic and wider university changes, including:

- Enhancement of document supply services, including additional supply service through WHELF (Welsh Higher Education Library Forum); document supply services has been opened to all library users (previously restricted to Final Year Undergraduates and Postgraduates). Between January 2021 and January 2022, 439 document supply requests were fulfilled by partner institutions; we have continued this scale of support after the pandemic: between January 2022-January 2023, 446 were fulfilled. Chargeable document supply requests are fully subsidised by the Library; there is no cost to the user.
- Ongoing investment in new key resources in 2022: VetLexicon, CoStar, NexisUni and Box of Broadcasts, offering a wider resource provision for all library users and enhancing subject coverage for Veterinary Medicine, Real Estate, and Law.

- Creation of three new Library collections in 2022: 'Wellbeing', 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' and 'Reading for Pleasure', reflecting the increased mental health and wellbeing needs of students/staff and the Harper Care theme in the Harper Forward Framework. Since their creation, there are 212 recorded unique loans from these collections.
- Further promotion and expansion of live chat services resulted in 389 chats being handled during term 1 of 2022/23 academic year (compared to 224 from the same period the year
- Investment in new flexible, environmentally sustainable library furniture, creating an inspiring and inclusive new informal peer-learning space. This has attracted positive feedback via our anonymous Festive Feedback Tree introduced in December 2022.

2.16 **Assessment and Feedback** is a key strategic priority for us, which continues to underpin our curriculum renewal work. Our aim is to ensure assessments are inclusive, authentic and manageable. By the nature of our mission, the skills of our staff, and the aspirations of our students, our assessment has evolved to be highly authentic (real world, linked to personal aspiration and future employability or personal development goals). Examples have already been offered through this account – but additionally – personalised portfolios underpinned by our investment in technologies, business reports, case studies and project work, alongside specialist design and build projects and reflections on practice, are all commonplace. Our work in this area has been shared by invited presentations to different universities including University of Cardiff, Edinburgh Napier University, Liverpool Hope University, University of Reading, University of Salford, and later this year, the University of Bath. Staff have externally showcased individual examples^{lv} of authentic assessment and external examiners have consistently praised our assessment innovation and quality:

“I really have nothing but praise for the breadth and variety of assessments you offer the students across the board. The coursework briefs are carefully designed and very often well-aligned with skills and knowledge required in the real world”

“Feedback is generally very good, sometimes excellent (e.g. Experimental Design and Ins Physiol Behav)[sic], and is consistent within modules and between FT and PT students.

2.17 We work to **ensure assessment is inclusive**; we have a well-established Guide to Inclusive Learning and Teaching^{lviii} which sets out expectations of practice. Individual tutors also pro-actively ensure that assessment tasks are understood. Our community of practice on exemplars encourages students to explore standards in assessment to inspire their performance. We provide opportunities for peer feedback on assessments as part of the core Academic Skills module and in subject-specific modules^{lix}. One staff member's action research project on the language of assessment has enriched our work across the university through workshops on the subject^{lx}. We seek to ensure assessment is manageable for students and staff: we have introduced a university wide moderation day, where each course pulls together contributing staff and reviews the assessment journey in light of feedback (80% of surveyed staff at this event in 2021 indicated that they had refined their assessment following these reflective events); course managers have oversight of each student's assessment requirements to manage the spread of assessment; and in partnership with our student body (through Student Academic Group) we have introduced wordcount guidance to encourage parity across course areas.

2.18 Given the extensive work we have undertaken, we were understandably disappointed with the recent downturn in **our results in the NSS in this area**, resulting in our four-year average for this being 0.6% below the benchmark, because of poorer performance in the last two years. The performance below benchmark is based on a limited number of students: 11 additional positive respondents in the four-year dataset would have meant we would have achieved the four-year average benchmark. The assessment methods we use align to the disciplines we teach, but also prepare students for how feedback and assessment is provided in a professional setting, which includes verbal feedback in tutorials, practical classes and clinical or animal-handling sessions, and a diversity of other feed-forward types of feedback, such as exemplars and rubrics. Recent internal research, conducted to inform both staff development and enhancement work, shows that whilst students value this diversity, they may not always recognise all of these as feedback and, therefore, the wording of the NSS question (and the associated data) does not capture the rich and varied feedback

ecosystem we provide. 93% of respondents received this type of feedback within their course and found it effective. 76% of students found feedback between cohorts of students effective for their learning, where one group receives the feedback given to previous students. We are committed to developing our practice; we support staff to engage in professional development in relation to assessment and feedback through workshops and communities of practice (linked to scholarly activity). We encourage innovation in relation to feedback, for example providing video and screencast feedback (70% of respondents indicated that they received this); developing feedback and reflection on level 5 work within the context of level 4 performance; and/or submitting earlier versions of their assessments/portfolios prior for developmental feedback prior to formal deadlines.^{lxi} Based on positive student feedback, for example, we have offered more audio feedback across: Agriculture, Food, International Business and Veterinary Physiotherapy. When asked overall to rate how helpful their feedback was overall, 91% of respondents gave a positive response (on a five-point scale); feedback helpfulness was given an overall mean score of 4.1 out of 5 in our survey.^{lxii} Based on internal student surveys and their contributions in course-related meetings, we know also that the pandemic has also affected our NSS results in this area, because students did not have the in-person interactions where formerly they discussed their academic progress and individual assessment, for example, with course tutors and other teaching staff.

2.19 Public health restrictions during the pandemic affected the timing of timetabled practical learning and, despite the innovation of staff, there were some teaching and assessment activities that could not be moved on-line for practical and/or professional accreditation reasons. The resulting delay and bunching of these until public health restrictions were lifted were felt negatively by some of our students, affecting disproportionately, due to the applied nature of our courses and teaching, our performance in the relevant NSS questions since 2020. These related to:

- Restricted in-person access to tutors due to COVID, which represented a considerable change for a small campus community, where all students know the teaching and support staff and, prior to COVID, they enjoyed informal regular feedback through these everyday interactions. Personalised and accessible individual support was challenging due to social distancing, lockdowns and staff sickness (HAU Student Survey 2.0, p.13).
- Concerns about the timeliness of feedback particularly related to written assessments, in part due to staff sickness caused by COVID among small course teams.
- Students suffering from COVID could not access practical sessions, limiting their access to in-class feedback on learning and causing general dissatisfaction. 31% of students surveyed for the Student Voice Report 2.0 said they had missed practical classes because of COVID.
- A lack of understanding among some students of public health restrictions was also noted in the same Student Voice Report: "Alongside this however, is frustration at the uncertainty of the situation and annoyance that university life cannot be like 'normal'. This is important to consider when analysing the survey results with some feedback suggesting that only 'normality' will be good enough, failing to recognise restrictions imposed by law."^{lxiii}

These challenges have not affected negatively award rates of 1sts and 2:1s: 77% and 77.2% in 2020/21 and 2021/22, compared to 76.4% and 75.9% 2017/18 and 2018/19 respectively. 2019/20 had higher rates (81.6%) because of the introduction of our safety net assessment regulations and a more inclusive assessment diet, a pattern seen across other higher education providers.^{lxiv}

2.20 **Student Voice** and the involvement of students in our evaluation and planning work reflects the community ethos of our university. Throughout this submission we have evidenced the benefits this achieves. We are above the OfS benchmark, and the sector average based on a four-year average against this measure, dipping just below benchmark in 2018/19 and in 2021/22 because 3 and 9 fewer students, respectively, expressed satisfaction. In addition to the student representation on university committees (see section 1.10), we proactively gather and co-create solutions with our students through:

- Our network of 91 Educational Champions (ECs - formerly called Course Representatives): are members of course committees, university committees and/or support university-wide projects (such as our current Phenomenon-Based Learning project with Staffordshire University and the QAA). In the past students were recruited by course teams, but in response to feedback received in 2021/22 we have made

changes to strengthen their reach and influence: we ask students to self-nominate, whilst also proactively encouraging student groups to participate. We chose this approach to ensure we extend our reach into formerly under-represented groups whose satisfaction rates are lower in Student Voice questions in the NSS (e.g. those from low income household and mature students). The training is provided jointly by University and Students' Union staff. The Course Committee meetings are now chaired by a member of staff from elsewhere in the department to prevent a conflict of interest or any barriers to free expression due to the positional power of the former chairs (the Course Manager).

- 'Student Life Reps' (formerly called Student Wardens): work within the Student Services team providing social and pastoral support to students living on campus and in the locality. Their role is to promote a sense of belonging and community, informal peer mentoring and to highlight any issues and opportunities to enhance our support services and other areas of the university.
- Students' Union team: expanded with recent additional university funding from 2022/23 onwards to include the Student Voice Co-Ordinator (as noted above this is a new University funded post), new Executive Reps post: BAME, International Students, Women's, LGBTQ+, RAG, Sports & Societies, Academic, Postgraduate Rep.

2.21 Intelligence from our NSS in 2022 and consultation with the Educational Champions has highlighted the need to undertake a 'noticing campaign' relating to assessment and feedback, to ensure that our students fully recognise and utilise more consciously feedback on learning in all its forms (see 2.18 above), at in-person and in practical settings. This has been followed up with a short pulse survey to assist with the delivery of the campaign (see section 2.18). Through module evaluation and the work of our course committees, our course teams working closely with their students are addressing local issues and identifying opportunities to innovate learning and teaching. Recent examples highlight the particular focus supporting the return to in-person teaching and changes to assessment and feedback. For example, in the Food Business Management and Agribusiness courses, feedback from students gathered via a focus group in term one 2022/23 has resulted in changes to the way learning will be organised over weeks 12-25: including longer sessions for the 'Strategy Club', introduction of peer-to-peer formative assessment and new forms of assessment. Likewise, changes have been made to final OSCE assessments for Veterinary Physiotherapy students to enhance their accessibility, designed for, and with the help of, students with disabilities. The Students' Union has responded to feedback in the recent NSS around the need to communicate better how student feedback about the course has been acted upon, by rebranding course representatives as Educational Champions, providing enhanced training and developing tools to share ideas and decisions generated from their work in Course Committees. We are currently working jointly on a campaign to be launched in January 2023 called #WeHerdYou which playfully references our agricultural and animals' focus.

3 STUDENT OUTCOMES

3.1 With the exception of a single cohort of part-time students in the first year of the TEF dataset studying with a previous Further Education partner (see section 3.3), our student outcomes are exceptional and are all above the OfS benchmark across the four-year period. Our employers commend us on the quality of our graduates and their work-readiness (as evidenced below in our internal educational gain measures, in section 3.8) and external examiners advise us that our students' performance is equivalent to other highly reputable larger universities:

"Students are being prepared to be competitive in the workplace when comparing other institutions. This is evidenced by the quality of work and the many nationally recognised students coming out of Harper Adams University. It is often heard in industry how well-prepared students are and how well they perform in their chosen workplace over graduates from other institutions."

"The levels of student achievement compare favourably with my experience of the wider HE sector in the UK, with some students clearly excelling within their discipline regardless of institution (particularly your entomologists). The stronger HAU students would not be out of place at any Russell Group university, while the weaker of the students may be a little bit below the standard of the weaker students at top tier UK HEIs".

3.2 Our **continuation rates** overall are excellent across all four years of the OfS TEF dataset; we are above the sector average and above the OfS benchmark for our full-time provision. For reasons detailed in paragraph 3.3 our part-time continuation rates are marginally below the benchmark based on the four-year average and just 1 additional student continuing would have meant we exceeded the benchmark. These generally excellent outcomes are because of our strict admissions policy and our academic support arrangements (see sections 1.14 and 2.11 respectively). Continuation data is closely monitored by the Quality and Standards Committee (QSC) to identify and inform actions that will help to support student progression. This included the development of a 'safety net' variant of the assessment regulations during COVID restrictions on face-to-face delivery, which modestly relaxed the reassessment limits and repeat study requirements.^{lxvi} Due to the structure of our provision, the University determined that this approach was more appropriate than the implementation of a 'no-detriment' policy. At the beginning of 2022/23 we established a retention forum where course managers and tutors meet regularly to identify and discuss the challenges students are facing to ensure we maintain strong retention and continuation rates within the context of mental health challenges facing the higher sector generally and other pressures such as the cost-of-living crisis. This national situation is affecting our students from the viewpoint of their own finances and for some from family farms are reconsidering their study choices given their family need their labour to keep business afloat. This is based on qualitative data and informal insights from course teams and support services teams.^{lxvii} The Retention Group has focused on ensuring we signpost students to financial support and promote wellbeing support services, including support to study packages (under our [Student Health and Wellbeing Policy](#)) if some students' situations change rapidly.

3.3 Our **completion rates** for full-time students are outstanding given the number of our students with job offers before they complete their degree (see section 1.18). They are above both the sector average for the four-year period and the OfS benchmark. Our part-time completion rates have been affected negatively by a single cohort in the first year of the data series: 2011/12: 32.8% (-15.9% compared to benchmark). In successive years, the part-time completion rates were positive or not reported due to small sample sizes. These included 270 students beginning their studies at Askham Bryan College and Reaseheath College in 2011/12, which account for 8.8% of the sample population for the completion measure across full-time and part-time provision. Both providers had completion rates lower than those for other Harper students at the time, in part because of different entry requirements. Significantly, students, particularly at Reaseheath, withdrew early for employment-related reasons such as: employers withdrew the funding, students leaving their employer to take up another job and others struggled to balance their work and studies. These trends were noted at the time and no concerns about the quality of the education nor the support for learners were raised by external examiners, with one external examiner noting that "student achievement continues to be particularly high."^{lxviii}

3.4 Our **graduate employment rates (Progression)** are exceptionally high. In the latest Graduate Outcomes dataset, only 1.8% of our graduates were unemployed, compared to 4.3% for the sector, and 9.7% for 18-24-year-olds in the general population at the time of the survey. We were ranked 5th nationally:

Figure 4: Graduate Outcomes 2022 Results for the graduating class of 2019/20



3.5 We successfully prepare graduates for roles throughout the land-based and related sector, including areas where there are [known shortages of qualified staff](#) and [skills gaps](#) (such as agri-tech, sustainability and climate change) and to address the recognised challenges of diversifying the graduate pool for those entering graduate jobs in agriculture and related roles. These high employment rates, however, do affect the proportion of our graduates in the category of highly skilled employment or further study, because so few of our students choose to undertake further study immediately after they graduate. Our rates in relation to the highly skilled and further study are below the sector average: 64.8% of our employed graduates go into 'highly-skilled' employment (69.7% of BSc/BEng graduates, excluding those studying Foundation Degrees), compared to 71.4% for the sector. This is because we have exceptionally high employment rates and low numbers of students choosing further study within 15 months of graduation: across three years of Graduate Outcomes data an average of 9.5% (2% exclusively) of our graduates chose further study at that stage in their career. This compares to 28% (9.1%) nationally and 21.5% (4.8% exclusively) for other land-based Higher Education Providers. Notwithstanding this distinctive feature, we are above the OfS benchmark for all three years.

3.6 The adjustments made by OfS to the benchmark based on our subject mix is critically important for two reasons associated with our subject mix. Firstly, the current **Office for National Statistics (ONS) occupational coding structures has an out-dated view of farming and allied professions**, which are classified as low-skilled. The [ONS descriptor describes a farmer](#) as a person who is looking after animals and operating machinery. It fails to recognise that [contemporary farming](#) is focused on: entrepreneurial business skills required to run one's own business successfully, climate management, soil erosion, biodiversity, delivering net zero, providing safe nutritionally rich and affordable food to promote human health, which requires a strong scientific underpinning and sophisticated understanding of legal, regulatory and political pressures. Likewise, it describes [agricultural engineers](#) as fitting and assembling parts and examining machinery, rather than focusing on professionally qualified and recognised highly skilled problem-solving engineers who are delivering real-world creative solutions for sustainable food production systems drawing on precision agriculture using cutting-edge technologies (e.g., GPS, digital twinning, autonomous vehicles). These definitions simply fail to reflect the complex and challenging roles undertaken by employees and self-employed entrepreneurs working in these sectors, needing graduate level skills and expertise, reflected in current professional practice and related research. The economic and social importance of those working in agriculture, food and related sectors was highlighted in the most recent evidence pack produced by DEFRA and the Government Statistical Service. They noted the importance of the sector we serve: "In 2021, agriculture contributed c.0.5% to GDP (a net contribution of £11.2Bn to the UK economy), provided half of the food we eat, employed almost half a million people, with farmers managing 71% of the UK's land safeguarding our natural environment and ensuring the highest standards of animal and plant health.^{lxix} We have and shall continue to lobby nationally on the ONS classification of agriculture related roles with the NUS and other key partners. Recognising the nuanced and changing professional and industrial contexts of graduate employment, we deploy internal metrics to measure the impact of our education on the work readiness and employability of our graduates (section 3.8).

3.7 The **timing of the Graduate Outcomes interviews (15 months after graduation) is incompatible with the professional registration arrangements for graduates** from our BSc (Hons) Animal Behaviour and Welfare course. This clinical course provides students who achieve at least a 2:1, with the academic recognition for the role of a clinical animal behaviourist. To become a Certified Clinical Animal Behaviourist, graduates are required to gain significant experience working in a clinical setting, which will take at least two years to attain. Clearly at the point of Graduate Outcomes interview they will not have reached this important stage in their chosen career path.

3.8 In addition to the metrics used by the OfS and other Higher Education Providers, **we measure education gain in other ways**, based on the following indicators, which reflect our applied industry-focused curriculum, designed for day-one competencies and graduates who are able to solve real-world problems, with capabilities for longer-term personal career development and the potential to transform the future of the industries with which we partner. These relate to professional esteem for our students. Esteem can be judged in different ways, drawing on other sources. We have chosen the three measures (EG1.1, EG1.2 and

EG 1.3) in the table below because they address our focus on solving real-world problems and the longer-term impact and enduring relationship, we have with employers and our alumni who inspire our students and enrich their learning. Our regular liaison with employers across our subject areas supports the impact and esteem in which our students are held.

“The impact of Harper on CLAAS UK and Ireland is particularly marked, where we take up to 12 third year students on placement each year, offering graduate jobs to around five of these with typically 2-3 accepting positions at CLASS. Around 80% of placement students in the UK are students from Harper. With just 400 employees in the UK, alumni from Harper are spread right across the business, with 15-20 middle and senior managers at CLAAS having been recruited from the pool of Harper placement students. Of the staff we hire with university degrees, the vast majority of these are from Harper, including in our management team. The quality of Harper Adams’ students speaks for itself”^{1xx}

Figure 5: Summary of Educational Gain Indicators relating to professional esteem

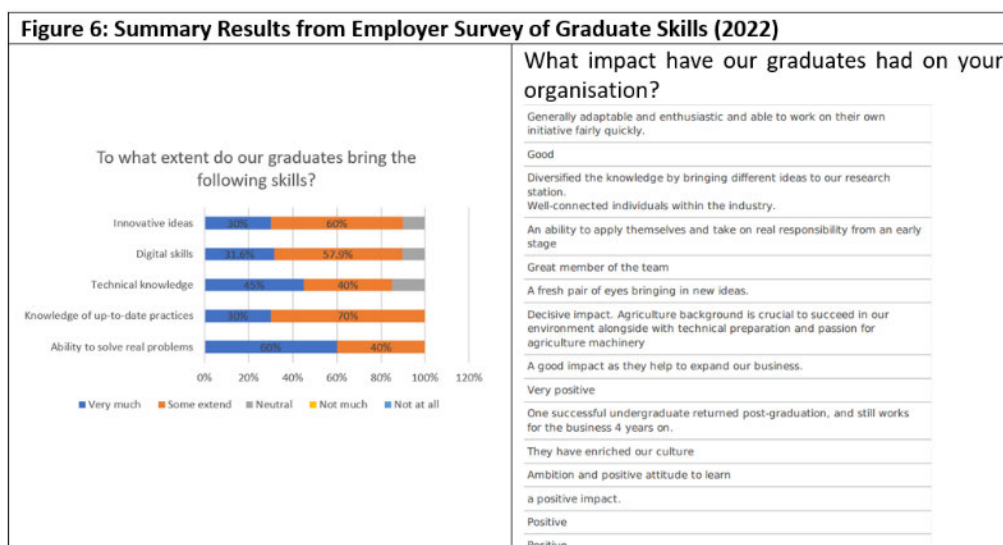
Measure	Relevance	What we do to achieve these.	Performance Profile								
EG1.1 Student Prizes for Industry-relevant research projects	Test of research skills, critical thinking and practical applications of new ideas/ techniques by students to support the development of the industry. Secondary benefits include more companies offering placements and continued value placed on our graduates enhancing our progression rates.	Mandatory placements: robust support arrangements to prepare students and employers, and during the placement. (Sections 1.17 and 1.18) Skills training and co/extra curricula development opportunities to promote life-wide learning and additional skills. (Sections 1.11 and 1.18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> British Farming Awards, Agriculture Student Category Farmers’ Weekly Agricultural Student of the Year Royal Agricultural Society of England (RASE), National Agricultural Student Speaker Institute of Agricultural Management, Farmer Planner Competition Royal Association of Dairy Farmers Farmers’ Club Pinnacle Awards Guild of Agricultural Journalists Awards British Society of Animal Science Academia Association Prize Royal Entomological Society Student Awards Young Poultry Person of the Year Texel Sheep Society Educational Award Hutchinson & Velcourt Cereals Challenge Farmers’ Guardian Awards – New Auctioneer Category Institution of Agricultural Engineers 								
EG1.2 Senior Leadership role of graduates	Longer-term career success based on graduate-level skills but also the industry knowledge and connections we provide students. Our monitoring work enables us to maximise the benefits for our current students of contact with relevant alumni through our educational enrichment work.	Professionally accredited courses (section 1.13) Staff with relevant professional experience and established professional networks (section 1.8) Good understanding of/ confidence in our education due to role of employers in course development and direct support for learning and teaching (sections	<p>Examples chosen to reflect range of roles and organisations:</p> <p>CEO Valuation Office (government appointment)</p> <p>CEO Wynnstay Group PLC</p> <p>Director General National Farmers Union of Wales</p> <p>CEO Soil Association</p> <p>Chairman and Founder Faccenda Group (now Avara)</p> <p>Chairman, Mercer Farming Ltd- a multi-national farming business</p> <p>Founder of Warner Distillery</p> <p>Managing Director of Velcourt Ltd-</p> <p>Director Capital Markets JLL</p> <p>Managing Director WHM Pet Group Ltd</p> <p>Managing Director, Frontier Crops Agriculture</p> <p>Product Director JCB Ltd</p> <p>Member of Scottish Parliament</p> <p>Member of UK Government</p> <p>Fund Manager and Head of Strategy Jupiter Asset Management</p> <p>Head of Rural Research, Energy and Projects, Savills</p> <p>Director, Oxford Farming Conference 2020-23</p> <p>Technical and Commercial Manager (UK and Scandinavia), Aviagen</p>								
EG1.3 Numbers of Placement and Graduate places offered by large	Demonstrates the value to the businesses by our students and graduates. See below, a testimony from a global employer.	Good understanding of/ confidence in our education due to role of employers in course development and direct support for learning and teaching (sections	<p>Examples below based on a minimum of 25 student/graduate places provided during the last 5 year:</p> <table> <tr> <th>Employer</th><th>Placement Students</th><th>Graduate roles</th><th>Total</th></tr> <tr> <td>Fisher German</td><td>28</td><td>49</td><td>77</td></tr> </table>	Employer	Placement Students	Graduate roles	Total	Fisher German	28	49	77
Employer	Placement Students	Graduate roles	Total								
Fisher German	28	49	77								

employers over the last 5 year.	1.12 and 1.15 respectively). Virtuous circle of influential and success alumni supporting current students. (Sections 1.2 and 1.12) Teaching using relevant Industry standard facilities (Sections 1.7 and 1.19 above.	Savills		43	48
		Dalcour Maclaren	20	25	45
		National Trust	12	31	43
		Claas	27	15	42
		BQP/Pilgrim'sPride/Tulip/Dalehead	13	23	36
		Carter Jonas	15	21	36
		JCB	12	17	29
		Hutchinsons		28	28
		NFU		22	27
		Velcourt	16	10	26
		Buccleuch Estates Ltd	12	13	25

EG2: Students' assessment of their own personal and professional development

We recognise the diverse aspirations and learning needs across our student body. In their first year of study, undergraduate students undertake a professional skills module in the context of their own discipline, and in this they are encouraged to reflect on their developmental needs and aspirations – which may relate to personal confidence, communication skills, technical skills and experience, research skills and more. Within programmes of study, students continually assess their own learning and have space to personalise aspects of their education to meet specific needs; students track their own progress toward professional competencies. We have invested in an ePortfolio platform which is used predominantly for reflection and personal development. Measuring personal growth across different disciplines is undoubtedly challenging, but all our undergraduates undertake a placement year and an associated reflective assignment about their individual experiences of development. These individual assignments are discussed with Placement Managers or another member of the course team within the context of their academic progression and career plans when they begin their final year. Insights from 462 assignments have been systematically analysed using NVivo autocode to ensure we are able to identify cross-university trends and themes. In the latest dataset for 2021/22, four key thematic areas were highlighted where personal growth is evident: practical, communication, technical and professional skills - providing evidence that our preparation work and the scoping and oversight of our placement is developing our students appropriately. This accords with other quantitative feedback. For example in 2022, 92.4% of students in response to NSS question B5.5 agreed with the statement: 'My placements have helped me to develop my general life skills' (NSS 2022), +2.9% above the top quartile score.

EG3: Work readiness, employability skills and impact of our students as measured by employer feedback through internal surveys of employers. An example of findings from our survey of attendees of the most recent Careers and Placement Fair, is provided in Figure 6. 62 attendees responded. They confirmed that the core skills we are developing through all our undergraduate courses are demonstrated through the work of our graduates. The themes in this survey were exemplified and contextualised at a round table convened by the Vice Chancellor and some larger employers at the same event. Some footage involving alumni present is included in the Student Submission. Employer feedback is also considered alongside



employment patterns of graduates using intelligence from the Graduate Outcomes Survey and through our informal contact with our alumni, who routinely work with us when attending events with their employers in our network, supporting the range of activities summarised in sections 1.12 and 1.15 above.

Conclusion

We have a sustained track-record of teaching excellence as evidenced by two previous TEF Gold awards and recognition on two consecutive rounds as being a World-leading specialist provider (most recently in 2022 by the OfS). Our past performance gives us no complacency for the future. Every cohort is different and the needs of our industry partners and graduate recruiters are changing rapidly. We are a community focused, student co-developed, professionally oriented and data/insight informed institution. Our systematic approach to this has delivered outstanding results over the period under review. Where further progress is needed we explore the causes and implement deliberate and purposeful approaches to addressing them. Our students past, present and future and their employers are ultimately the best advocates, demonstrating the excellence of our work in delivering real world impact. We are grateful for all staff and students who contributed to this submission and owe special thanks to the Students' Union for preparing the student submission.

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