The University of Liverpool's **Education vision** is to integrate teaching and research in ways that derive the maximum benefit from our rich environment of intellectual enquiry and challenge, supporting our students to become creative and culturally rich graduates with the capacity to find employment and be agents for change in a connected world. We aim to deliver a consistently outstanding intellectual, social and physical environment for research, teaching and learning at the cutting edge of disciplines, with award-winning, world-class facilities and a curriculum that stimulates, challenges and inspires.

The Liverpool Curriculum Framework[1] is at the heart of realising this vision. It establishes inclusivity as the core value that underpins our curriculum, while embedding our three pedagogical Hallmarks of *Research-Connected Teaching*, *Active Learning* and *Authentic Assessment*, and the three graduate attributes that all students are supported to develop; *Confidence*, *Digital Fluency* and *Global Citizenship*. We define students' **educational gain** by the extent to which students are able to develop these attributes and succeed in all aspects of their experience with us, be that through academic, personal or future success as monitored through our Student Success Framework[2]. The graduate attributes will be discussed in detail throughout this document and referenced as **(SO4)**.

Background

1.   Excellent outcomes, a person-centred approach and the opportunity for all students to become confident, digitally fluent, global citizens. These elements are at the heart of our University, reflecting our commitment to transforming lives through the power of education and our mission for the 'advancement of learning and ennoblement of life' **(SO1, SO2, SO3)**.

2.   Established in 1881, we are founding members of the Russell Group and forge strong connections between our research and teaching, with students on our diverse range of programmes benefitting from the input of our internationally renowned researchers **(SE3)**. Ranked 176th in the *THE* World University Rankings and 88th in the *THE* Impact Rankings, we are a significant university globally and 91% of our research was rated as world leading or internationally excellent in REF2021.

3.   With more students drawn from our local communities and more from low-participation neighbourhoods than Russell Group norms, we are proud of our strong track record in outreach and widening participation (WP) both nationally and within Liverpool City Region **(SE1, SE5)**. This is complemented by our considerable global reach, as we are also among the most popular UK universities for international students, including many who arrive here as a result of our ground-breaking partnership with Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University (XJTLU) in China **(SE3)**. Our vibrant campuses in Liverpool, the Wirral and online are home to 27,775 students, including 22,006 undergraduates, studying a stimulating, innovative portfolio of programmes that blend the best study and work opportunities **(SE3)**. Our student body is a unique blend of nationalities, communities, life experiences and aspirations, which is why our Student Success Framework[2] is designed to support every individual's personal measures of success in terms of wellbeing, academic performance and life after graduation **(SE1, SE5, SO1)**.

4.   We know that students value our city's many diverse and distinctive qualities, and the University's connections with Liverpool and the wider region run deep. We have been influential in shaping plans for economic growth sparked by innovation, with Liverpool City Region (LCR) Combined Authority establishing priorities around some of the University's greatest research strengths: Infection Prevention and Control; Materials Chemistry; and Artificial Intelligence & Emerging Technologies **(SE3)**. Together with initiatives such as those included in our student enterprise offer, which offers all students and recent graduates experience around creating or growing a business, and direct support and advice to SMEs, we are delivering the research power to help attract more highly-skilled, graduate jobs while encouraging entrepreneurial mindsets that will help the city region to grow **(SE2, SE3)**. We do so as an anchor institution in a place with multiple challenges to social mobility. For example, 25.6% of children in LCR live in poverty (18.6% nationally) and attainment at school, while improving, is well below national averages.

5.   As a civic university, we share the city's determination in the face of adversity, and this was exemplified by our involvement in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our students and staff were instrumental in the city's response, with medical and nursing students taking on frontline roles while, among many other examples, staff and PhD students in our School of Engineering used 3D printing and laser cutting technologies to produce thousands of protective visors for local healthcare staff **(SE2, SE3)**. We provided academic leadership to two highly successful, national pilot programmes: a mass testing initiative, working closely with Liverpool City Council and the local NHS; and a project around the safe reintroduction of large-scale public events. The contribution of our students was recognised by Professor Christopher Cutts, Regional Director of HEE North West, who wrote to praise them for their "magnificent efforts". Nursing student Sophie said of her experience: "When I think about the pandemic and the part I've had to play in it, I come to understand the importance of my role. This experience has been unlike any other, something nurses have never experienced in their entire careers. I understand the profound effect this will have, moving forward in my professional and personal development."

6.   We are equally proud to be a truly global institution. Our partnership with XJTLU, formed in 2006, sees around 3,000 students in Liverpool on 2+2 programmes at any one time and, although disrupted by the pandemic, we offer life-changing opportunities for undergraduates to spend a year in China studying at XJTLU. We also have a longstanding partnership with Kaplan International Pathways, operating the University of Liverpool International College. Now housed in a new building, opened on campus in 2020, we work closely with the college to help students feel integrated into the wider university and guarantee entry to a degree programme for all who succeed in their pathway course. Together with direct student recruitment around the world, our partnerships contribute to our diverse student population, and we offer every student a range of opportunities to spend time studying, working or volunteering overseas **(SE2, SE3)**.

7.   Our programmes are designed to inspire, educate and connect our students, and provide a foundation for their success regardless of background, mode or discipline of study. **The Liverpool Curriculum Framework (LCF)**[1] supports students to become 'creative and culturally rich graduates with the capacity to find employment that will enable them to be agents for change in a connected world'. Helping our students to apply knowledge in real-world settings in partnership with employers, create knowledge in partnership with researchers, and consider knowledge in a global context in partnership with our international community, we enable them to thrive today

while providing a launchpad for future success **(SE1, SE2, SE3, SO1, SO4)**. Recognising the relevance of our curricula to professional practice, our provision is accredited by 129 Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Bodies spanning 83 (49%) of our programmes **(SE1, SO1)**.

8.   The alignment of our curricula and student experience with our broader Education Strategy enables students to become curious, creative, proactive and resilient; they are engaged with the world beyond the University and can adapt and apply their knowledge in new contexts. Students have their own view of what success means to them, so we aim to provide a holistic experience that supports them to achieve academic, personal and future success through the ambitions set out in our **Student Success Framework[2] (SE1, SE5, SO1, SO4)**. Our approach is underpinned by access to outstanding resources, a stimulating and cutting-edge learning environment, a commitment to listening to our students and supporting staff in all career pathways.

9.   Our TEF data for student outcomes demonstrate evidence of outstanding quality of provision, including Continuation and Completion rates performing above very high benchmarks **(SO2, SO3)**. At subject level, indicators for Progression demonstrate predominantly outstanding or very high-quality levels of graduate level employment and further study, consistently among the strongest for North West universities **(SO3)**. Data over the first three years of the assessment period offers encouraging evidence that our strategy for enhancing student experience is proving effective and, although there were disappointing results in our National Student Survey (NSS) results for 2021/22, we are confident that our latest plans developed in response to students' feedback will lead to further improvement.

10.   The University is shaped by our students through a wide range of forums, formal governance and feedback mechanisms, including the NSS, as articulated in our **Student Engagement Framework** and our **Code of Practice on Student Representation (SE7)**. These recognise and articulate students' central role in the development and delivery of our Education Strategy for excellent teaching and student outcomes across the University. Particularly important is our close partnership with the Liverpool Guild of Students ('the Guild'), which offers student representation and social, cultural and volunteering opportunities that complement University provision. Together we seek to ensure our students form a relationship with the University that they will maintain when they join our alumni community of 270,000 across 171 countries, throughout their lives. In preparing this submission, the Guild President joined weekly meetings, had access to shared data, gave feedback on document drafts and produced their own submission.

11.   The President and a further three Student Representative Officers are elected annually to represent students and lead the Guild. These Officers make significant contributions through the University's governance processes, bringing the student voice to various groups and committees including the Education Committee, Senate and Council, and through the Guild Liaison Committee, which is jointly chaired by the Guild President and PVC for Education **(SE7)**. They also sit on Periodic Review Panels, Collaborative Annual Monitoring and Institutional Review events, chairing some of the sessions including those involving students, along with various other groups where they input into curriculum design, University strategy, operation and action.

12.   Student representation is also embedded locally in each Faculty, where dedicated Student Voice Coordinators appointed by the Guild work with Faculty staff and Guild representatives to ensure students' perspectives are heard. Student forums were introduced by the Guild during the

pandemic to ensure that student representatives had additional ways of feeding back and quickly signalling where help and support were needed. The forums have continued and enable students to feedback on important issues such as the cost of living, academic and non-academic misconduct, fitness to study, attendance monitoring, the module selection process, and a policy of recording and use of student names, gender identifiers and pronouns **(SE7)**.

Student Experience

13.　　Our five TEF indicators are broadly in line with benchmarks at institutional level **(SE1)**. The split indicators for 2018/19 to 2020/21 show that our strategy for improving the student experience made a significant, positive impact **(SE5)**. We are disappointed that results were lower in 2021/22 however, when we experienced protracted industrial action including a marking and assessment boycott relating to a local dispute. The weaker year 4 results were principally around Assessment and Feedback, and students' written comments cited dissatisfaction associated with industrial action.

14.　　Each year we make a concerted, institution-wide effort to share and reflect upon NSS results. We require all departments to prepare action plans in time for the next academic year to respond to issues highlighted through the NSS, and we are confident these are effective. Our responsiveness to NSS feedback is exemplified in our School of Medicine, where the 2017 NSS results directed various enhancements necessary to the student experience. We launched 'Project Live' to tackle the physical environment of the medical school, communication and engagement with students, a curriculum redesign, and a review of teaching, assessment and feedback. As a result of the changes made, overall satisfaction in the NSS for Medicine improved drastically in 2018 from 39% to 60%, then to 70% in 2019 and 92% by 2020 **(SE3, SE7)**.

15.　　Our policy is for marking criteria for all assessments to be made clear and available, and for feedback to always be provided within 15 working days **(SE1)**. To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of assessment and feedback, we have also embedded electronic management of assessment across all courses **(SE6)**. This approach was first initiated in response to a campaign by the Guild in 2015 and has continued to evolve since. For example, the department of Philosophy took part in an assessment and feedback calibration exercise in October 2021, which led to further enhancements in their approach to achieving consistency in marking, moderation and feedback. Responses to the statement "The criteria used in marking have been clear in advance" in the department rose by 4.6% from 2021 to 2022. Additionally, responses to the statement "Marking and assessment has been fair", rose by 4.8% to 70.8% from 2021 to 2022. As a result of this successful intervention, the marking calibration exercise has taken place in Sociology, Social Policy and Criminology, English Language, English Literature and Communications and Media, resulting in revised principles underpinning marking allocation and practice. Several departments have introduced a "Your Say" student forum with events throughout the year to enable staff to better understand if their improvement interventions are working and provide students with extra opportunities outside of Staff Student Liaison Committees to have their voices heard **(SE7)**. Biosciences introduced a 'Feedback Week', three weeks after each main assessment point, when students are encouraged to explore feedback in more depth with their Academic Advisers. This helps students to fully understand their feedback and gives staff an opportunity to review how feedback is delivered **(SE1, SE7)**.

16.   All modules are assessed annually via module evaluations, and student feedback is integrated into the process to inform changes and improvements for subsequent years **(SE7)**. The data from module evaluations consistently shows a higher level of student satisfaction with assessment and feedback than that indicated by NSS. For example, for 2021/22 our module evaluation data shows satisfaction with "The module assessments were a fair test of my knowledge and ability" at 75% (44,926 responses) and "The feedback I have received was useful" at 75% (41,077 responses) compared to the NSS Assessment and Feedback section response at 58.8% (3,980 responses). We are therefore confident that our students' experience of assessment and feedback is generally much better than the most recent NSS would suggest. Our NSS action plans are focusing on improvements to assessment and feedback processes (particularly timeliness of feedback and the provision of clear marking criteria for all assessments), better communication with students, greater support for students declaring a disability (including a new support network of peer Disability Coaches and better communication of support plan adjustments), and more events and activities to promote belonging and inclusion **(SE2, SE5, SE6)**. This is in addition to cross-university work to decolonise curricula and reading lists and develop new approaches to assessment which support our equality, diversity and inclusion commitments aimed at eliminating award gaps **(SE1, SE5, SO1, SO2)**. Our award gap for good honours (class 1 and 2.1) between white and racially minoritised UK first degree students reduced from 11% in 2018/19 to 6% in 2020/21 **(SE1, SE5, SO1, SO2)**. Through these initiatives we are confident that the NSS results for mixed ethnicity students (the teaching on my course, assessment and feedback and academic support) and students declaring a disability (assessment and feedback, academic support and student voice) will be successfully addressed.

The Liverpool Hallmarks
17.   All students study programmes designed in line with the Liverpool Curriculum Framework (LCF)[1] and experience the three Liverpool Hallmarks of **Research-connected teaching**, **Active Learning** and **Authentic Assessment (SE2, SE3)**. This pedagogical approach is student-centred and tailored to deliver a distinctive and fulfilling University of Liverpool experience that encourages students to remain engaged in and committed to successfully completing their studies.

18.   **Research-connected teaching** is intrinsic to our mission and ensures a direct link between our curriculum and the ground-breaking research that takes place here. Our approach feeds current research into the syllabus, develops students' understanding of research processes and engages them in enquiry-based projects as producers of knowledge **(SE3)**. All programmes are required to link strongly to our research activity within a framework of enquiry-based learning **(SE1)**. Programmes take an integrated approach to research skills development, and students develop deeper insights into critical thinking skills, and scientific writing. In Life Sciences, for example, we develop student research skills and confidence through an open access online and print journal called 'Insider Imprint'. Facilitated by an academic lead and supported by a team of PhD students, all students are invited to submit articles to showcase their skills, aid the development of academic writing, and offer insights into academic research careers **(SE2, SE3, SO1)**. In Law and Social Justice, students engage directly with the research activities of Law staff through their choice of 'research pathway', exploring live issues and methods. They undertake research into contemporary issues, with recent examples including the dark web, organ trafficking and freedom, security and justice in the European Union. They can also engage in collaborative, real-world learning through client work supervised by practitioners in our Liverpool Law Clinic.

Students research the law from primary sources and draft letters of advice, explaining complex law in terms that vulnerable clients can understand. They are also required to research not only the law, but also the political and social context of access to justice and legal aid in order to put their experience in context **(SE1, SE2, SE3, SO1)**. For Financial Maths students, there are opportunities to work on challenges posed by industry partners, supervised by graduate students and mentored by academics. Projects have included looking at the assumptions for pensions in higher education; developing the first mortality tables for Ghana; social security provisions for orphans in China; and the implications of the end of the ban on women drivers in Saudi Arabia **(SE1, SE2, SE3, SO1)**.

19. All undergraduate students are expected to engage with departmental research culture to encourage stretch **(SE2)**, for example through research seminars, and in all programmes in level-6 option and dissertation modules they directly engage with academics' specialist research interests. Further research opportunities are provided through vacation studentships (1,326 students over the TEF period), employer-based projects and intercalated Master's Research programmes (MRes). Quotes from students undertaking studentships included: "The studentship opened my eyes into the working environment of a research group. As a student you tend to focus on your next exam or essay, whereas through the studentship I could see how all the skills I was taught on my course could be applied to clinical research and real world problems" and "[It]…showed me how my degree could be applied in research and whether I would enjoy this as a career option." Our optional question in the NSS, *"*My learning has benefited from modules that are informed by current research" has a satisfaction rate of 82% over the TEF period.

20. All our students undertake a capstone research or enquiry-based project **(SE1)** and our approach leads many students to create knowledge in partnership with researchers - for example, more than 200 undergraduate students were co-authors on published papers between 2018 and 2022 **(SE2, SE3)**. Stretch is further encouraged by our rigorous marking rubric for assessments in all subjects and by our flexible and diverse portfolio, which offers considerable module choice and a range of final-year specialisms taught by highly-qualified, research-active staff. Before the pandemic we met our target of giving 15% of our first degree Home UG students an international global mobility experience. We now have a target to reach 25% by 2025.

21. Our academic staff are key to developing our engaging and innovative curricula, and making connections between research and real-world practice to develop stretching programmes **(SE3)**. We have both Teaching and Scholarship (accounting for 29% of academic staff) and Teaching and Research career pathways, and offer substantial development opportunities to all staff to support the delivery of excellent teaching alongside excellent research **(SE3)**.

22. **Active learning** engages, enthuses and challenges students in the learning process through collaborative and reflective activities, inside and outside the classroom, supporting them to construct knowledge and build independence **(SE2)**. We use a growing range of digital tools, including polling software that students can access on their phones, VR headsets that simulate a placement setting and a range of digital technologies to aid group work. Knowledge that emerges from these activities is often more memorable, and can allow staff to evaluate understanding more quickly and informally. New tools are usually rolled out following successful pilot projects, which are enabled by our commitment to providing continuous opportunities for innovation in learning and teaching. We know our students engage well in their learning. From the start of Semester One in

2018 until the summer of 2022, we had 695,227 responses to our module evaluation surveys **(SE7)**. 78% of students agreed/strongly agreed that "the module was well taught", and 75.7% agreed that they had "received the academic support I needed for the module". Over the most recent four-year period, this has also been reflected in data relating to question 12 of the NSS, "I have been able to contact staff when I need to", which scored 78% in the 2022 survey and this area consistently records the highest positive response rates and is reflective of the academic support available to students when they need it.

23.   In 2020 we upgraded our virtual learning environment (VLE) with the introduction of Canvas, as the result of a pedagogically-led exercise to enhance the delivery of our programmes and reflect the evolving needs of our students. The change was delivered through collaboration between academic and professional services staff, with students as partners **(SE6, SE7)**. The roll-out included opportunities for students to work as Canvas Coaches, integral to training both fellow students and staff in using the new system and helping staff to repurpose their learning resources on a large scale, while helping embed the graduate attribute of digital fluency. Over 1,400 students surveyed in 2021 scored the new system 8/10 overall in being "effective in helping you engage with your studies". The VLE also supports staff to share best practice around learning and teaching through an internal community of more than 500 colleagues **(SE4, SE5, SE6)**.

24.   Like every university, we had to switch rapidly to online delivery for teaching and training during the pandemic. Our Centre for Innovation in Education (CIE)[4] developed an on-demand Hybrid Active Learning resource to help staff quickly adapt to teaching and supporting their students in new ways. Still in use and regularly updated, it includes advice and how-to guides about teaching, learning and assessment in online and hybrid environments. Since its launch in June 2020 until January 2023, it has had more than 85,000 views **(SE3, SE4)**. 163 new digital resources were produced and new formats for online assessments were developed, many in line with the Transforming the Experience of Students through Assessment approach to improve the quality of student learning through addressing programme-level assessment **(SE1, SE7)**.

25.   While our systems enabled effective learning during the most severe pandemic lockdown periods, a close collaboration with the Guild to listen to contemporary student feedback was key to determining how we reintroduced teaching when restrictions eased **(SE7)**. 4,300 students (84% of them undergraduates) responded to a Guild survey which found that most students identified benefits to hybrid learning, including the opportunities for engagement, collaboration and increased understanding they felt came from in-person teaching and learning. Overall, 85% of respondents told us that they wanted 50% or more of their teaching to be in person when national guidance relaxed and over half wanted 70% or more, but with a clear preference for maintaining some online-mediated content and delivery. The survey results led to a decision that a minimum of initially 70% of teaching would be in-person, and the University followed up on a range of other recommendations including launching a consultation about optimal learning models and accessibility issues for buildings on campus **(SE2, SE7)**.

26.   In support of the Future Success theme set out in our Student Success Framework[2], **authentic assessment** assesses students using tasks that mirror those they might undertake as professionals or citizens through choice of purpose, format, audience, resources, and collaborative or student-designed elements **(SE1, SO1)**. As well as helping students to see the relevance of assessment activity, this also helps students to develop the skills employers are looking for in our graduates **(SE3, SO3)**. It is made possible partly by the involvement of a wide range of employers

in programme design, working alongside academics across 52 different modules to place students' learning in the context of future employment and global challenges **(SE3)**. This ensures that learning and assessment is responsive to changing market demands, attuned to workforce needs, attractive to a diverse range of applicants and able to deliver excellent outcomes.

27.   Through the Liverpool Hallmarks, we develop graduates who are capable of effectively applying their knowledge to real-world settings **(SO1).** Support for their future success includes the guidance of a large number of practitioner staff who contribute to our many professionally-focused programmes, including all clinical disciplines and subjects such as Music, Law and Architecture **(SE3)**. We provide a range of activities and opportunities including work placements, enterprise modules, authentic digital assessments, study abroad and civic engagement activity to ensure variety in the learning experience, keeping students actively engaged with their studies **(SE2)**.

Our graduate attributes

28.   As well as the three Liverpool Hallmarks, the Liverpool Curriculum Framework[1] embeds the graduate attributes of **Confidence**, **Digital Fluency** and **Global Citizenship (SO1, SO4)**, which are key educational gains we seek to instil in all our students. **Confident graduates** are curious, creative, proactive and resilient; they are engaged with the world beyond the University and able to adapt and apply their knowledge in new contexts. We develop confidence in our students through curriculum design and co-curricula activity that stretches and supports their development **(SE2, SO4)**. This includes many activities we recognise on the Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) each student receives on the completion of their studies, listing their achievements and supporting applications for employment and further study **(SE2, SE5, SO3)**. Some of these activities offer paid opportunities for students, such as working as a Student Open Day Ambassador or summer assistant on a research project. 1,037 activities are currently recognised for inclusion (with 1,444 eligible over the whole of the TEF period) and, between 2018 and 2022, 9,818 graduates had a total of 13,343 activities listed on their HEAR.

29.   **Digitally fluent** graduates think critically about information they find, use and generate, developing their ability to use digital platforms to problem-solve, create, collaborate, and communicate. Students develop their generic digital skills (such as information searching and use of digital platforms and tools), and discipline-specific digital competencies through learning, teaching and assessment activity in their programme of study **(SE1, SE2, SO1, SO4)**. Authentic digital assessments such as creating short videos, posters, web pages or blogs feature widely in our programme provision **(SE1, SO1)**. Students are also expected to use university-supported digital tools such as the Canvas VLE, My Liverpool (an app with features including a personalised itinerary, events listings and campus maps), Poll Everywhere and e-portfolio systems **(SE6)**.

Case Study: Developing Life Sciences students' digital fluency and employability at scale through authentic assessment (SE1, SE2, SE3, SE6, SO1, SO4)

A new assessment utilising integrated technology was developed for an Essential Skills module, delivered to all second year Life Sciences students during the COVID-19 pandemic. The approach switched from writing job applications and undertaking mock interviews with Academic Advisors to an online approach involving over 430 students in personalised digital assessments with direct input from employers.

Students chose from a range of employers who were involved in the design of personalised digital interviews, replicating those now used in many assessment processes and enabling self-

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review as well as providing personalised feedback using Artificial Intelligence. Interview questions were designed by the employer partners to include an emphasis on commercial awareness, and they recorded each interview question to give a more authentic interview experience. Students also submitted a tailored job application to their chosen employer, including links to their profiles on LinkedIn and Handshake, the University's online careers platform, reflecting the importance of professional online identity in the graduate labour market.

The initiative saw 329 students connect with an employer during live panels, a 60% increase, and 92% of students completed the video interview and self-review task. Student confidence in completing a video interview increased from 17.9% to 61.5%, and commercial awareness increased from 46.2% to 76.9% following the task.

30.   **Global citizens** are active members of their community from the local to the global, the personal to the professional, committing to principles of equality, fairness and sustainability.   We prioritise three dimensions within the graduate attribute of global citizenship – the development of multi- and inter- cultural awareness, education for sustainable development, and a commitment toward social justice and tackling inequalities **(SE3, SE2, SO4)**.

31.   We promote multi- and inter- cultural awareness through opportunities to collaborate and study with a variety of people from different geographical, cultural and social environments **(SE2, SO4)**. All students are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to study abroad, either for a semester, a summer placement or a year. Our unique offering of a Year in China at our partner institution XJTLU sees students develop a knowledge of Chinese culture and history whilst also learning language skills **(SE2, SE3, SO1, SO4)**. The travel restrictions related to COVID-19 have understandably impacted the number of students involved in these activities and numbers fell during 2020/21 but have been steadily rising since. In addition to the many subject-based opportunities for mobility, such as international field trips, our central Global Opportunities team supports a typical annual international mobility of 400-500 students per year, working with over 100 partners worldwide. We ensure travel opportunities are open to all students through a variety of grants including Erasmus+ (592 awarded between 2018 and 2022), Liverpool Go Abroad for students from widening participation backgrounds (733 awarded between 2018 and 2022), scholarships (66 awarded between 2018 and 2022) and Turing funding (2021/22 only, 167 awarded) **(SE1, SE6)**.

32.   Our Open Languages provision provides all students, staff and members of the public the opportunity to study a language. Language options include: Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), French, German, Italian, Japanese, Russian, Spanish and Irish **(SE1, SE5, SO1)**.

Case Study: Research-connected teaching, global citizenship, sustainability and the climate crisis

A core element of **Global Citizenship** for all students is our focus on the climate crisis, reflected in our commitment to Education for Sustainable Development **(SE2, SE3, SO4)** and our institutional research theme Climate Futures. As well as contributing to conversations globally, our researchers are also supporting the delivery of clean growth ambitions locally. Liverpool City Council aim to reach net zero by 2040, and our Digital Innovation Facility - through the deployment of European Regional Development funds - has facilitated 500 exciting

collaborations across the University of Liverpool and SMEs in the North West and in the Maritime Sector, developed over 300 jobs and saved 40,000 tonnes of carbon. We have been rated No.1 in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings for SDG17: Partnerships for the Goals.

To further enhance our students' engagement in this critical global issue, we set a target as part of the University Sustainability Strategy to ensure that every student had the opportunity to undertake a sustainability-related module, extra-curricular activity, or other relevant learning by 2022 **(SE2)**. This was recently achieved through the development of the 'Student Sustainability Hub' which has been developed in partnership with students (**SE7)** and as of October 2022, 30,000 students had engaged with at least one area of the 'Sustainability in Action' online resource. Out of 679 students sampled for feedback in 2020/21, 93% said that they had enjoyed the course with comments such as *"I learned so much from this course…I will be sharing my learned experiences with many friends and family!"* and *"It made me look at the world from a different point of view."*

The Sustainability in Action module won the AGCAS Sustainability Impact Award in 2021 and was a finalist in the 2021 Green Gown Awards. The Sustainability Hub also provides students access to a broad range of other sustainability-related online content spanning topics from sustainable supply chain management to modern slavery, and a directory of campus events and opportunities for internships, placements and projects **(SE1, SO1)**.

33.   We also encourage our students to develop a commitment toward social justice and tackling inequalities through involvement in our local community **(SO4)**. Liverpool is one of the most deprived local authority areas in the UK and many of our students help to raise the aspirations of young people in parts of the city where participation in higher education is low. Outreach activity takes place in several ways, with a variety of programmes using this as an authentic assessment within the curriculum and others using co-curricular activity such as the Life Sciences Civic Award module. Various extra-curricular opportunities are also offered to act as a mentor or academic tutor to a disadvantaged young person in the community **(SE2, SO1)**.

Ensuring an outstanding learning experience

34.   Academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience are assured through the Framework for Quality and Standards within our Education Strategy. We focus on assuring and enhancing the quality of the learning experience so that students have appropriate and effective forms of learning, teaching, assessment and support and are provided with opportunities that enable them to attain appropriate academic standards **(SE1, SE2, SE3, SO1, SO2)**. This underpins the definition of academic success in our Student Success Framework[2], in that all students have an educational experience which enables them to achieve their full potential **(SE2)**. Our approach also fully complies with the Office for Students' Quality and Standards Conditions of registration.

35.   Our programme approval processes and revalidation through our Institutional Periodic Review require all curricula to align with the LCF and embed the three Hallmarks **(SE1)**. Programme development is guided by our 'Plan, Design, Approve' process, which includes a range of support mechanisms from bespoke consultancy to on-demand courses, guides and other resources **(SE3)**.

36.   We appoint external examiners for taught provision to ensure that undergraduate programmes are nationally and internationally comparable in standard and quality. Our PVC Education chaired Advance HE's Degree Standards Board, a project to design, pilot and deliver different approaches to the professional development of external examiners, and staff in our Academy now deliver training to existing and aspiring external examiners **(SE4)**. As part of the project, Liverpool has hosted and participated in subject level marking calibration events in Law and Psychology **(SE3)**.

37.   Student involvement in quality assurance and enhancement activity is compulsory and academic departments work closely with students to enhance and continually improve the student experience **(SE7)**. The University's Policy on Engaging and Consulting Students in Curriculum Development and Approval[5] outlines the ways in which students are expected to be involved in feedback and input to the learning experience **(SE2)**. Feedback from students on our provision is collected annually for all modules **(SE7)** and is a key part of the evidence base for annual academic staff PDRs. We were also early adopters of the Evasys module evaluation tool and have worked in close partnership with Achievability to enhance the tool for the benefit of the sector. Feedback on teaching includes peer observation at least every two years, and more frequently for staff on probation or where module evaluation feedback identifies specific issues. Staff discuss peer observation in their PDR meetings and reflect on their role as peer observer or observee.

38.   Students act as Course Representatives at Department, School, Faculty and Senate level and they are trained in their role by the Guild. Currently we have 699 Course Representatives for the 22/23 academic year. Course Representatives are selected by students from their cohort on every taught programme at each level of that programme. They are members of Staff Student Liaison Committees (SSLCs) which are a formal contact point between the student representatives and the academic department. Every SSLC provides a formal opportunity for Course Representatives to give evaluative comments to their department/school, and for students and staff to raise issues and comment on any concerns or changes related to their academic programmes and activities **(SE7)**. This embedded approach to student engagement has shaped many policy initiatives, for example in Psychology where feedback from students said that they felt stressed and anxious about giving presentations and taking exams. Stress busting and resilience workshops were set up, a dedicated Learning, Teaching and Support officer was appointed, and additional mental health support was provided to students **(SE5)**.

39.   Annual Subject Action Planning facilitates constructive reflection and self-appraisal and celebrates good practice. Periodic reviews take place every 5-6 years, with student involvement, to revalidate programmes and ensure curricula are aligned to the LCF. This ensures they continue to be informed by the latest research and pedagogy and are responsive to employers' needs, while identifying areas for development, areas of good practice for dissemination and opportunities to develop and reinforce skills **(SE3, SE4, SE5, SE7, SO1)**. Action plans from Annual and Periodic Reviews are monitored at both faculty and institutional level, with a six-month progress review on identified actions. Other data are considered on a rolling basis throughout the academic year; for example NSS results are received and considered in July, whereas classification data are reviewed after the completion of the academic year in September **(SE7)**.

40.   The Centre for Innovation in Education (CIE)[4] supports innovation in learning, teaching and assessment through enhanced curriculum development, so that all students benefit from a core range of opportunities and experiences regardless of which programme they choose **(SE1, SO1)**. Curriculum design is focused on supporting staff to embed the LCF at course level **(SE4)**, underpinned by a Constructive Alignment model through which we link learning activities, formative and summative assessments, learning outcomes and feedback processes **(SE1)**. Student involvement in programme design workshops is a compulsory part of the overall process **(SE7)**.

Developing our staff

41.   We are committed to facilitating, recognising and rewarding excellent teaching **(SE4)** and our Education Strategy identifies effective recruitment, peer observation, supportive Professional Development Reviews and Continuing Professional Development as the means to improve the performance of teaching staff. Our recognition of the importance of teaching is reflected in the level of resource we dedicate to it. We have a generous student: staff ratio of 13.8, ranked =15th overall and =10th in the Russell Group according to the *Complete University Guide 2023* **(SE5)**.

42.   The CIE[4] provides support for academic staff and teams on pedagogical queries relating to digital education, bespoke workshops, implementing new approaches to learning and teaching, developmental events, development and provision of guides and resources, and preparing for periodic reviews and programme approval/validation **(SE4)**. Since 2018 the CIE has been engaged in 1,711 activities across the University to enhance curricula and student experience **(SE3)**.

43.   We have set a specific target in our Education Strategy for all academic staff to hold Higher Education Academy fellowship or equivalent recognition **(SE4)**. Together with 414 colleagues working towards qualifications, 52% of staff currently have Higher Education Academy (HEA) fellowship compared to the sector average of 46.1% and the Russell Group average of 36.2% (2021/22 figures). HEA-accredited programmes for staff new to HE, including those at XJTLU, are delivered by our Leadership, Organisational, Professional and Academic Development Academy (known as the Academy), and successful completion of one of these programmes is a requirement for academic staff as part of their probation. Over the TEF period, 819 Liverpool staff have achieved recognition through the staff development programmes that we offer, including 82 Senior Fellows and 8 Principal Fellows.

44.   The Academy offers a stepped pathway of taught, accredited and credit-bearing provision that provides the cornerstone to the University's promotion of teaching excellence. Staff without teaching experience who will be taking a role in supporting student learning, including researchers, PGRs and professional staff, are expected to engage with the blended Introduction to Supporting Learning, which was completed by 622 staff in 2020-22. Those that assume sufficient teaching responsibilities can progress to the Foundations of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education programme, which is flexible enough to meet the needs of clinician-educators. By drawing together diverse cohorts of staff, from different backgrounds and disciplines, these early programmes cement the expectations, values and ways of working that the University expects of all who support teaching, right at the start of their professional practice **(SE4)**.

45.   This approach is further promoted through the Academy's online Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) programme, which is accredited by Advance HE and the first and only fully online route to professional recognition via fellowship for UK-based and international academics **(SE3, SE4)**. Colleagues who wish to continue the formal development of their teaching

practice can progress from the PGCAP to the Diploma and full MA in Academic Practice. The later stages of this pathway provide structured learning on academic leadership and scholarship, presenting an opportunity for participants to develop the skills needed to publish educational research. Over the TEF period 184 colleagues have completed the PGCAP, PGDip or MA. The University of Liverpool Teaching Recognition and Accreditation Scheme provides a flexible route for colleagues to gain professional recognition against the UK Professional Standards Framework, through reflection on practice and peer-supported learning **(SE4)**. The scheme is supported by 85 mentors, drawn from Fellows across the University. Such innovations have seen an ongoing increase in the number of staff achieving professional recognition and further promote our culture in which colleagues are continually encouraged to reflect on their impact on student learning.

46.   Beyond the formal teaching and recognition routes above, the Academy and CIE facilitate a range of internal mechanisms for celebrating staff success in supporting student learning **(SE4, SE5)**. Each year, Learning, Teaching and Student Experience (LTSE) Awards are awarded by our three faculties, providing a powerful forum for the recognition and sharing of best practice in learning and teaching, with 61 awards made over the last three years **(SE3, SE4)**. We also hold various events to support the continuous development of staff to learn about and discuss relevant themes from within the University and the wider sector, including an annual Pedagogic Research Conference and an annual Learning and Teaching Conference. Our integrated approach to developing teaching and scholarship was recognised when the Academic Development team were named as finalists in the 2021 Global Academic Development Good Practice Awards.

47.   Our Learning & Teaching Fellowship Scheme is open to applications from all areas of the University and recognises, celebrates and rewards genuine innovations in learning and teaching practice **(SE4)**. Assessed by a panel of senior academic and professional leaders led by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education, 15 Fellowships have been awarded since 2018, recognising innovations including the use of virtual technologies, support for employability, addressing inclusion in education and adaptations in the face of the COVID pandemic to ensure continued student success.

48.   Further opportunities for staff to share and disseminate their best practices in learning and teaching include publication of case studies from staff deemed to be implementing excellent educational practice, aligned to the LCF hallmarks and attributes **(SE4)**. A resource of 78 case studies is freely available in a searchable database and has been used to support learning and development not only within our University but by others around the world **(SE6)**. In addition, the Academy and CIE have both developed successful podcast series to share good practice. The Academy's Developing Academic Practice Journal, a 'gold' open access journal published in partnership with Liverpool University Press, provides University staff a further high-profile, high-quality means of disseminating their scholarship of learning and teaching **(SE3, SE6)**.

49.   Teaching forms part of the workload allocation for academics on both Teaching & Research and Teaching & Scholarship pathways and therefore features as part of the promotion requirements for both. High-quality teaching is fundamental to the success of our students, so our promotions process, and annual PDR, encourages colleagues to reflect on the reach and impact of their practice and identify areas of strength and further development, supporting effective career

planning and applications for promotion. Over the TEF period 12% of successful Professorial promotion cases have come from colleagues on the T&S pathway **(SE3)**.

Supporting student wellbeing

50.   Our commitment to inclusivity, set out in the LCF, means we recognise potential barriers to learning and seek to ensure students can access and complete their studies regardless of their circumstances. Given the importance we place on students' wellbeing, since 2018/19 we have increased our investment in support for students by over £4.75 million. We offer a comprehensive range of services to promote wellbeing and resilience, with our central Student Services and supported by Faculty-based Learning and Teaching Support Officers working together to provide seamless support **(SE5)**. Offering multiple access routes offers choice for students, who may want to access help locally or alternatively prefer not to speak to their academic department. Our Wellbeing team acts as first point of contact for students and triages queries, providing advice, support and intervention and, if appropriate, referral to specialist services. They also follow up incident reports and provide a quick response to students who experience difficulty on campus. Our counselling service offers single session therapy with a quick response time, offering students help to manage any difficulties they experience. Where students are referred on for longer term therapy, we provide access to a range of evidence-based interventions. The Mental Health Advisory Service works with students with complex mental health needs, providing support and case management to help them continue their programme **(SE5, SO2)**.

51.   From 2019-2022 we successfully led the Improving Student Mental Health through Partnership Working Project[6], funded by the Office for Students and delivered with NHS partners. The project focused on provision for students who were experiencing significant mental health difficulties and distress **(SE5)**. Two new services were established as a result: UCOPE provides therapeutic interventions for students who self-harm, and the Student Liaison Service ensures effective information sharing in relation to students presenting to NHS urgent care services and universities. Evaluation showed that the 172 students who engaged with the therapy service from the two participating universities showed significant clinical improvement, while the initiative also improved communication between organisations, improved safety, enhanced the student experience and increased students' likelihood of success during and beyond their studies **(SE5, SO2, SO3, SO5)**. The service has been recognised as an example of good practice by the Office for Students and Department for Education and subsequently been expanded to all higher education institutions in Liverpool.

52.   We host regular wellbeing activities such as 'Feel Good February' to help students and staff explore academic and extra-curricular interests, make connections and friendships, and access any help they need, particularly through our Student Support services. In consultation with students, we continue to evaluate the benefits of these activities and how they support the educational experience **(SE1, SO1)**. Feeding back on Feel Good February in 2022 and whether it was a good way to address wellbeing, one student commented "Yes ... think it is a good informal way to start a conversation. Feels like the uni cares."

53.   As the number and complexity of mental-health issues presented by students has grown, we have increased our capacity to provide a consistent response **(SE5)**. We run mental-health first-aid training for staff and worked with Mental Health First Aid England to develop bespoke training for higher education **(SE4)**. Between September 2020 and July 2022, 198 staff received this training and a further 90 in frontline roles have received mental health awareness training. The

training is supplemented by staff workshops, and we have developed a student-specific Zero Suicide module to equip students and staff with key information and skills for suicide prevention. We also recognise that any member of staff may meet a student in distress and our 'When to Refer Guide' sets out the steps they should take to help students access appropriate support.

54.   The impact of the pandemic on student confidence has been widely acknowledged and, through embedding a focus throughout our curriculum on achieving our three graduate attributes, we aim to create graduates whose confidence levels have increased during their time with us. This work begins before studies commence and, to help our students cope with the transition to university-level study and foster a sense of connection and belonging, we make numerous online tutorials available to students ahead of their arrival **(SE1, SE5)**.

Outstanding learning resources
55.   Our institution-wide study skills programmes, KnowHow, offers a range of workshops, webinars and online tutorials to enhance students' academic, personal and future success in line with the Student Success Framework[2] **(SE1, SE2, SE5, SE6, SO1)**. All students can access a comprehensive portfolio of support reflecting changing student needs within the academic cycle, spanning issues such as dissertation planning, critical reading and exam preparation. Delivered in partnership with various departments and third-party specialists, KnowHow also features online tutorials around resilience and various mental health topics. Additionally, we recognise that embedding skills throughout the curricula, and collaborating to deliver skills as 'standard', can result in a more inclusive approach and benefit all students, so we deliver bespoke tutorials and sessions within curricula. We have also ensured that the student voice is embedded within KnowHow and students from each faculty work with staff to shape content and promote the benefits of the service, including through student-led blogs, social media and other content **(SE7)**.

56.   Our team of subject librarians and colleagues in Special Collections and Archives deliver sessions on primary source literacy, archive research skills and digital literacy, to support academic success, confidence, and inspire future career choices **(SE6, SO1)**. Students can access a varied programme of tailored sessions relating to individual modules, learning outcomes and the wider student learning experience. In 2021/22 this included 360 sessions, including a mixture of in-person and online lectures, seminars, webinars, workshops and bespoke one-to-one sessions, reaching 6,230 students. Feedback from 296 participants showed that 96% had a greater confidence in using library, archival, or information resources as a result. Feedback included how archival sessions "really supported learning in this module", and that sessions around digital fluency increased their confidence to effectively search for and evaluate sources, and use information ethically **(SO1, SO4)**.

57.   Our libraries hold an extensive collection of around 2 million print materials and nearly 1 million e-texts to support teaching, learning and research, while our growing digital collections reflect our commitment to the enhanced accessibility and availability of learning materials and respond directly to student and user feedback **(SE6)**. Our relative spend on collections is above that of many of our peers and reflects a firm commitment to the provision of high quality and diverse materials to support students' success. In 2020/21, 54% of our Library budget was spent on physical and digital information resources; 5% above the Russell Group average and 9% above that for Research Libraries UK institutions. We invest heavily in growing and diversifying content in response to student and user needs, with an annual information spend of over £6.3million. Our

NSS scores around library provision are consistently among the highest in the Russell Group; in the 2022 NSS for question 19: "The Library Resources (e.g. books, online journals and learning spaces) have supported my learning well" we scored 86% agreement, which placed us 6th in the Russell Group **(SE7)**.

58. More broadly, our two libraries provide high-quality, 24/7 facilities with over 3,000 study spaces to support a range of learning styles and pedagogical needs **(SE6)**. Spaces are bookable to help students plan their studies alongside other commitments. Reflecting our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, we have a variety of single and group spaces assigned as 'quiet', 'silent' or 'social', and accessibility rooms containing specialist equipment, furniture and assistive software dedicated to our students with additional study requirements **(SE5)**. We are now focusing on sensory spaces which enable users with different cognitive needs to control their learning environment in terms of light, sound, texture, pressure stimulation, and scent **(SE5)**. We offer collections that go beyond academic interests to support students' wellbeing, including books from the Diverse Awards and others relating to transgender and non-binary communities, neurodiversity and disability. This collection has had strong engagement among students, having already been accessed over 4,600 times by January 2023 since its launch in 2022 **(SE5)**.

59. We run the 'Get it For Me' service, created in response to student feedback about the availability of texts. Students and staff can easily request a title that we do not hold in stock and we will source it for them, which led to over 4,000 book purchases in 2021-22 **(SE6, SE7)**. We were also the first UK library to implement Rapid Inter Library Loans, which enables us to source and deliver content significantly faster than was previously possible. Annually, student feedback through the NSS informs priorities for library spend, with budget targeted at subjects with lower NSS scores for Learning Resources. Recently this has improved feedback for both English and Politics, both achieving around 20% points higher satisfaction from 2021 to 2022.

60. Our museum and gallery collections are of genuine significance and allow us to offer students inspiring opportunities for object-based learning and career-enhancing placements and volunteering **(SE3, SE6)**. As a key pedagogical and learning resource, our wider heritage collections are significant strengths, informing and illustrating our curriculum, and providing students with the opportunity to work with curatorial and specialist staff. For example, collections from the Garstang Museum have been utilised by the Liverpool Photogrammetry Team, a student-centred research group based within the department of Archaeology, Classics and Egyptology. Formed of undergraduates, master's and PhD students and staff, the team has worked to reconstruct virtual 3D objects from multiple 2D photographs, leading to innovations in virtual learning and supporting our graduate attribute of digital fluency **(SE1, SE2, SE7)**.

Inclusive culture
61. In 2022 we updated the LCF to place **Inclusivity** as its core value **(SE1, SE5)**. We define an inclusive curriculum as one which recognises potential barriers to learning and seeks to ensure all students can access their curriculum regardless of their circumstances. Over the last 5 years, our CIE has supported the growth of inclusive practice and culture. Equality-focused workshops and communities of practice have shared evidence-based inclusive strategies and sparked ongoing conversations, helping to nurture an ecosystem in which discipline-focused inclusive work thrives. Our range of inclusive practice resources and case studies have been accessed over 13,300 times over the TEF period, aiding staff to understand and implement an inclusive curriculum, for example by supporting the design of accessible materials and assessments

(SE4). Over the TEF period the attainment of Class 1 and 2:1 degrees obtained by students with a registered disability increased from 83% to 89% **(SO1, SO2)**.

62.   Services are tailored to provide targeted support to students who identify as disabled, with support from our Disability Advice and Guidance team beginning before they arrive and continuing throughout their studies **(SE1, SO1)**. Approximately 5,300 of our students have declared a disability, around 1,500 of whom have a support plan (not all want or need a support plan). Our Policy on Reasonable Adjustments and Support for Disabled Students clearly articulates the support disabled students can expect. We use accessibility checkers within our VLE, provide materials used in synchronous teaching sessions in advance, design practical assessments to include additional time and supplement these with a list of anticipatory adjustments appropriate to the discipline **(SE5, SE6)**. We have an established network of trained Departmental Disability Contacts who share good practice in supporting disabled students **(SE4)**. Although our support is wide-ranging, students' feedback tells us there is more we need to do. Building on our very successful Career Coach model, we have recently introduced student Disability Coaches who offer first line information to disabled students and assist them in accessing support and assistive technology **(SE5, SE7)**.

63.   All CIE[4] resources are digitally accessible **(SE6)** and licensed under Creative Commons, supporting Sustainable Development Goal 4: Inclusive Education, and we continuously monitor and update our curriculum design and enhancement approaches in response to guidance, legislation and best practice **(SE1, SE3)**. As well as an audit tool supporting decolonised curricula, our Inclusive Curriculum Tool forms part of our work towards the Advance HE Race Equality Charter. It is a reflective tool with the capacity to offer a programme-level end-to-end overview of inclusivity **(SE1)**. Staff and students from diverse backgrounds have co-created these tools, and a 2022 pilot involved 18 student reviewers/testers including students from Widening Participation backgrounds, who provided excellent insights on their experience of equality in the curriculum **(SE7)**. We have since continued to involve students in inclusive curriculum design and review, including employing a team of students to review and develop the tool through our Student Advisors Programme **(SE7)**.

64.   Students who need additional help with English Language participate in our in-sessional programme offered by our English Language Centre **(SE1, SE2, SE5, SO1, SO2)**, which engaged 3,817 students from 2018-2022. It offers discipline-specific academic literacy support classes, study skills sessions, one-to-one academic writing consultations and, for inbound study abroad students, an academic literacy module. We encourage all students who feel they would benefit from this support to engage with it, regardless of what their first language is, and in 2021/22 17% of users were classified as 'Home' students **(SE5)**.

High calibre learning environment
65.   Our students benefit from a stimulating physical environment with a range of award-winning, world-class facilities supporting our strategies for active learning and effective teaching **(SE6)**. For example, our new Digital Innovation Facility links our exceptional digital research with cutting-edge applications in teaching and resource digitisation. We are already using virtual environments in Medicine, Health and Veterinary Science, digital curation in Archaeology, immersive virtual reality design in Engineering, and much more. This embeds our active learning hallmark along with supporting our graduate attribute of digital fluency. We have been careful to ensure our £1billion Estate Masterplan is being shaped with the input of staff and students to

deliver a greater sense of place, belonging and home (**SE5**). We have specialist teaching spaces to suit different programme needs, with digital media studios, laboratories, workshops and galleries. In addition to the main Liverpool campus, our veterinary school encompasses two clinical practices, two working farms and specialist referral hospitals on our Wirral campus. Investments in this TEF period include the Yoko Ono Lennon Centre, a £24m arts and humanities building; a new £24m building for the School of Law and Social Justice, and £22m in other innovative teaching spaces including a £10m learning and teaching hub. These developments offer significant enhancements to teaching environments, from computer suites and collaborative learning spaces to a world-class auditorium for musical rehearsal, performances and other events **(SE6)**.

Case Study: Investment in Music Facilities (SE6, SE7, SO1, SO3)

Music students have benefitted from major enhancements to their learning environment over the TEF period, along with investment in staffing to deliver a diverse curriculum with strong connections to research and industry. The Yoko Ono Lennon Centre and the Tung Auditorium within it opened in 2021, offering world-class facilities for a wide range of Music-related activities—from teaching and student performances to professional concerts and university events. It houses a suite of percussion, two Steinway D pianos and a double-manual harpsichord, and students on all courses use the space as part of their studies and enrichment activities.

The Music department also expanded into the Gordon-Stephenson building in 2019, with new recording and production studios, the Music Hub (a multipurpose space with a full stage and teaching capabilities), and a range of other upgraded spaces for learning including a 25-seat Mac Suite equipped with new workstations and electronic MIDI keyboards. In response to NSS feedback, two additional specialist, fully equipped pop rehearsal rooms have also been opened.

These investments have helped achieve an increase in student registrations of around 50% annually since 2016 and NSS results have generally improved over this period, including a +27% improvement on the learning resources question (20) in the 2022 survey compared with the previous year, 15% above the sector mean. Meanwhile the Tung Auditorium offers top-quality facilities for practical music-making and opportunities for professional-level work experience and internship opportunities for students, who now work on their placements alongside the team there in a wholly professional environment.

Student Outcomes

66.   Our data demonstrate that our three TEF indicators for student outcomes are evidence of outstanding quality of provision **(SO1)**. Our Continuation and Completion indicators are both above very high benchmarks at 95.8% and 95.7%, respectively **(SO2)**. Also, our Progression indicator at 76.0% is above our benchmark of 75.6% **(SO3)**.

67.   Our split metrics show that this outstanding performance is continued at individual group and subject level. We have no subjects materially below benchmark for Continuation, and only one for Completion (Pharmacology, 110 students over the TEF period, and still with an indicator value of over 90%). Moreover, our Completion data show exceptional outcomes for students who are 21-30 years (4.1% above benchmark), 31 years and over (3.8% above benchmark), Black (3.7% above benchmark), nationality defined as Other (4.5% above benchmark), ABCS Quintile 1 (4.8%

above benchmark), Male (3.0% above benchmark) and non-UK (5.3% above benchmark). We are proud that all our ethnicity groups – Asian, Black, Mixed, Other and White – are well above benchmark. The same is true for Continuation, indicating that the work we are undertaking in the context of our Student Success Framework² is having a positive effect on student outcomes **(SO5, SO6)**.

68.	Subject level indicators for Progression demonstrate mostly outstanding or very high-quality level of graduate level employment and further study. Of the 27 subjects included in the TEF for the University, 15 are above their benchmark with seven of these exceeding their benchmark by more than 2.5% **(SO3)**. We have five subjects (Languages, Philosophy, Politics, Architecture and Pharmacology) where we are actively targeting better progression outcomes, although it should be noted that we have no subjects with 'first degree' progression outcomes below the B3 indicator minimum of 60% and no subjects with 'undergraduate with postgraduate components' progression outcomes below the B3 indicator minimum of 75%.

69.	Our determination to secure positive outcomes for all students shapes our policy and practice in support of under-represented groups, plus those on programmes in disciplines/professions known to be associated with poor wellbeing **(SE5, SE6)**. Our overall approach is highly effective **(SO1)**: our Continuation and Completion split indicators demonstrate high/outstanding quality outcomes for all cohorts in traditionally vulnerable groups, including those reporting a disability, mature students, those from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority backgrounds, and ABCS Quintile 1 **(SO2)**.

70.	Over the TEF Period, 84% of students have achieved good honours awards (Class 1 and 2:1 **(SO1, SO2)**. The overall position and the distribution across classes remained largely stable until 2020-21 when there was a rise in the number of students awarded Class 1 and the proportion of good honours awards rose to 88%, due to the changes to assessment instituted by the university in the Major Disruption Policy. This proportion dropped in 2021-22 to 86% with the number of Class 1 awards closer to pre-pandemic norms.

Student Success

71.	Many of the achievements outlined above can be attributed to our **Student Success Framework (SSF)²**, which is embedded into all our activities to give students the outstanding experience they expect and deserve **(SE1, SE5)**. This framework consists of three pillars:

Personal Success	**Academic Success**	**Future Success**
ensuring a welcoming and supportive environment which prioritises well-being and belonging	delivered via our curriculum – research connected teaching, active learning, authentic assessment	delivering opportunities to build intellectual, social and cultural capital for the future

72.	**Personal Success:** We believe that student success develops on a continuum, starting before a student begins a programme of study with us; and continuing until they embark on their future career. We support our students to achieve their potential by providing transitional support, study skills and effective digital ways of working **(SE1, SO1)**. Our students come to us from a diverse range of starting points, with different learning approaches, qualifications and identities as people. Before arrival all students are provided with our 'Get a Head Start' online course **(SO1, SO5)** which provides a constant touchpoint for incoming students between results day and our formal Welcome/Induction activities. The module provides an insight into what to expect from

university in terms of approaches to learning, teaching and assessment, student support and student life, with student-produced videos, case studies and other content. In 2022, 5,500 students engaged with the course, engaging with 140,594 pages of content. A survey of participants showed that 74% found the module useful, 68% felt more knowledgeable, 67% felt more excited, 45% felt less uncertain and 56% felt more reassured in their decision to choose the University of Liverpool **(SE1, SE5, SO1, SO6)**.

73.   Welcome and induction has become a major University activity, involving thousands of students and staff. The 'Liverpool Welcome' focuses on building a sense of belonging and inclusivity; creating opportunities to make friends and meet people; celebrating students' choice to come to the University; equipping students with the skills, information and knowledge to succeed; bringing the city of Liverpool onto campus; and creating a safe and welcoming activity for all **(SE1, SE5).** Our Liverpool Welcome podcast - created in collaboration with and hosted by our students - won best podcast at the Manchester Publicity Awards in 2022 and a Silver Heist Award for 'Best Use of Content'. Launched in 2021, it received over 6,500 downloads in its first 6 months **(SE7)**.

74.   Each year, we undertake a '100 Days Survey' to understand the initial experience of new students. The 2022 Welcome programme was refreshed based on the previous year's survey results, including streamlining of communications, updating the Canvas Welcome module, and reorganising both the Welcome website and the My Liverpool app to make information more accessible and easier to find **(SE5)**. Following the 2022 Welcome, based on 379 responses, 78% of students surveyed reported that they had been well informed by the University of the Welcome arrangements; 74% said they had made new friends and had met new people; 76% had been able to join clubs and societies and 84% were hopeful and excited for the future **(SE5, SE7)**.

75.   We provide tailored approaches for under-represented student groups to enhance their opportunity to succeed with and beyond their studies **(SE5)**. For example, we offer specific support for care leavers including contextual offers, a dedicated bursary, year-round accommodation and a named contact within Student Services who initiates contact at key points during the year. Following the Liverpool Welcome, we provide a Discovery Week before term begins for groups of students with known barriers to engagement, including commuter students, disabled students and mature students, offering extra opportunities to get to know fellow students, the campus and student services **(SO1, SO5, SO6)**. Discovery Week has been instrumental in student retention **(SO2)**, contributing to high completion rates among these groups and reflected in feedback from students, who say they would have otherwise been unlikely to participate in the opportunities offered.

76.   Reflecting our strategic commitment to being a civic university, we are one of the most successful Russell Group universities for widening participation, with 24% of home first degree entrants in 2022 coming from POLAR quintiles 1 and 2, and our programme of support for the transition to university also has elements tailored for these students **(SE1, SE5)**. Additionally, we offer a generous package of bursaries and scholarships totalling over £10m per annum as part of our Access and Participation Plan[3], to support widening access to higher education and student retention (SE5, SO2). This includes targeted funding for asylum seekers, care leavers, mature students, Black African and Caribbean heritage applicants **(SE5, SO5, SO6)**.

Case Study: Liverpool Scholars (SE1, SE5, SO1, SO2, SO3)

Each year the University works with 180 Year 12-13 students (typically 16-18 years of age) from Lower Participation Neighbourhoods for a period of 18 months before their entry to the University, to aid their transition, build a sense of belonging and equip them with academic skills. Participants take part in activities including application guidance masterclasses, lectures and academic skills workshops, delivered in partnership with academics and current undergraduates. The compulsory elements of the project run from January to September in Year 12 of a student's studies, before students are offered optional activities throughout Year 13, including homework mentoring, UCAS support, subject-specific summer schools and interview preparation. As a result:

- First year undergraduates who have come to the University via the Scholars programme are just as likely to continue from Year 1 to Year 2 as other students.

- Scholars students are just as likely to attain a 2.1 or a 1st degree classification and to progress into a good job or further study as any other student from the Liverpool region.

- 89% of Scholars say they "had the academic skills that they needed to succeed on their course", 83% "felt able to cope with the pressures of student life academically" and 82% "had realistic expectations of the demands that they would face."

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77.   Our support for student transition and success includes Peer-Assisted Learning (PAL), which matches higher-year students with lower-year students on the same course **(SE5, SE7)**. This develops advanced skills in higher-year students and builds a close learning community across year groups while supporting lower-year students with transition, pastoral issues and advanced insight into their subjects. PAL has been shown to have a range of social and academic benefits for all students involved and acts as an alternative form of academic support. Several subjects where PAL is well embedded are working with others, particularly those with lower NSS scores, to share good practice and establish new schemes. PAL mentors develop important employability skills and the activity is eligible for inclusion on their HEAR **(SE2, SE3, SO1)**. The evaluation of the scheme has been presented at several conferences and published by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) as an example of best practice.

78.   **Academic Success:** All of our students are encouraged to achieve their full potential in terms of degree outcomes and are supported to do so in alignment with the SSF **(SE2, SO1, SO2)**. We seek to ensure that students are aware of the support available to them and how to access it, while also emphasising their own role in their personal success. Students are supported by the University in several ways: through our Academic Advisor System, the Student Experience Teams, Learning and Teaching Support Officers, and Peer Mentors **(SE5)**. Our support demonstrably reduces barriers to learning and promotes high rates of academic success, continuation and completion. It consists of a range of proactive and reactive provision to ensure all students can access effective support when they need it. An introduction to our support services is given to all students at Welcome and arrivals-related activities and events take place across the University at the start of the academic year.

79.   Academic Advisors provide one-to-one support every semester to help students with academic queries; module selection; understanding and acting on feedback on assessment; career planning; discipline-specific study skills; academic integrity; and challenge them to achieve their best work **(SE2, SE5, SO1)**. This system operates in line with the guidance set out in our Academic Advisors Handbook, supported by an online training module and a peer community of practice. We have a university-wide digital system for monitoring attendance, and these data are reviewed together with other indicators of engagement such as coursework submission and extenuating circumstances requests to trigger follow-up as required by Student Experience Teams. Academic Advisors also have access to a dashboard of data for their advisees so that they can provide appropriate support **(SE5, SE6)**. The attendance dashboards enable academic and professional services staff to use attendance data to support and enhance student welfare, engagement and success.

80.   We have introduced a learner data dashboard and scorecard at discipline level, which prompts programme and department teams to analyse attainment by their student cohort by main characteristics (such as domicile, ethnicity, age and gender). This dashboard also enables detailed consideration of combinations of characteristics and features such as entry qualifications, partner entry route and specific disability types. Action planning at subject level based on these data then addresses priorities in relation to the performance of our student groups.

81.   **Future Success:** We seek to make employability an unmissable part of the university experience for our students and we have an outstanding careers offer **(SE3, SO1)**. This starts with encouraging students to consider their future careers as soon as possible after they join us. Over 95% of undergraduate students complete a career readiness survey as part of their online enrolment each academic year, which positions students in one of three stages: Explore (early thinking), Connect (active engagement with their career) and Apply (specific attempts to secure a graduate role). From 2018/19 to the current 2022/23 year, we have increased the number of students in the Connect area by 3.2%, which shows the impact of our initiatives to increase the number of students engaging with career planning and decision making **(SE2, SO1)**. Students commencing their final year in 2020/21 recorded lower levels of work experience in the previous 12 months (44.2% of students) due to the impact of COVID-19. However, because of the number of virtual internships and placement opportunities that we created and promoted, 49.8% (+5.6%) of students commencing their final year in 2021/22 had gained some level of work experience. This has sustained at 49.9% in 2022/23 due to our ongoing efforts to promote hybrid and online opportunities **(SE3, SE6, SO1)**. Students responding to the NSS view support for employability and skills as highly positive, with 84.1% across the four-year TEF period agreeing that "The skills I have developed during my time in Higher Education will be useful for my future career" **(SO1, SO3, SO5, SO6)**. In addition, 84.4% of student respondents agreed with the statement that "As a result of studying at the University of Liverpool, I believe that I have improved my future prospects."

82.   All programmes have one or more embedded employability modules available to students, and currently 50% of undergraduate students choose to take at least one. We have developed an Embedded Employability Model which provides the strategic framework for academic departments to develop their own approach to integrating employability into the curriculum. The Careers and Employability team is involved in module design, often identifying specific learning outcomes and delivering formative and summative assessment activity. Employers are utilised at every stage; from supplying real life data to contextualise learning content to providing authentic project briefs for collaborative group tasks **(SE3)**. By analysing the data we capture about our students (via

Careers Registration, Graduate Outcomes and internal engagement), we are better able to ensure their individual employability needs are addressed through their curriculum **(SE5, SO5)**.

83.   We provide students with the chance to immerse themselves in new environments, enhance and hone their skills, connect with employers and understand the huge range of options they have **(SE2, SE3)**. As graduates, we intend them to be confident, self-aware and knowledgeable and be ready to seize opportunity with both hands **(SO1, SO4)**. As well as encouraging students to engage in thinking about their future career, we provide practical opportunities to gain work experience, including offering every student the opportunity to undertake a Year in Industry. According to the Graduate Outcomes Survey, a significant proportion of UK-based students who graduated from a programme including a Year in Industry are consistently in high skilled employment 15 months after graduation. In 2020, for example, 100% of students from BA (Hons) International Business with a Year in Industry; 88% from BA (Hons) Accounting and Finance with a Year in Industry; and 93% from BA (Hons) Business Management with a Year in Industry were in high skilled employment. Interest in these programmes has also grown significantly with registrations on Year in Industry programmes within the Management School for example increasing from 25 in 2016, to 100 in 2018 and 291 in 2022/23 **(SO1, SO3)**. One student commented, "If I didn't do my placement year, I would have been really nervous about the thought of leaving university, so the biggest thing I got is that I'm really prepared for the working world."

84.   We offer three large-scale extra-curricular work experience programmes **(SO1, SO3)**: During the pandemic, we developed a virtual 3-day internship experience programme with the Bright Network, with around 500 students taking part in 2021 and 2022, while our Forage programme has seen some 900 students take up virtual micro-internships with innovative global employers since 2019/20 **(SE6)**. In the TEF period, our Liverpool Interns programme placed 225 students into some of the UK's best Small and Medium Enterprises, 63 of whom completed more than one internship and five of whom subsequently started their own business **(SE3, SO1, SO3)**.

85.   In 2018/19 we reviewed and fully transformed our Careers and Employability offer, leading to a 7.6% increase over the subsequent three years in the numbers of graduates in positive destinations – working, continuing their education or volunteering – at the point of graduation, indicating that our provision during the pandemic was effective despite the challenging circumstances **(SO3)**. Key to our approach is to make employability development equitable and accessible to all students, regardless of their background, aspiration or degree programme. To achieve this, we focus our central delivery on three core areas; the Career Studio, Embedded Employability and Extracurricular **(SO1, SO3)**. Our inclusive programme of extra-curricular activities and events for all students and recent graduates includes six large-scale campus events each academic year **(SE2, SO1, SO3)**. In the current year the first three events engaged 4,733 students in employability activities, including over 3,000 students at the LivUni Careers Fair which attracted over 80 employers to campus.

86.   Created in 2018, our Career Studio is the physical and virtual front-of-house for any student or graduate seeking careers support. Run by a team of 20 student Career Coaches, it is the personification of a peer-to-peer philosophy **(SE7)**. Open Monday to Friday, with a virtual version for when the physical space is closed, it is the first and ongoing port of call for any student to get the information, advice and resources that they need to advance, discover or explore their career aims. Any student or graduate can visit without an appointment, and a steering group run by the Coaches and Graduate Interns enables the flow of the student voice into our wider work

(SE7). The Career Studio received 11,889 physical visits from students and graduates over the TEF period, despite a dip in the 2020/21 year due to the pandemic. Its impact is assessed via a feedback survey sent to all students following their visit, with 84% of respondents scoring 9 or 10 for the question "How likely are you to recommend the Career Studio to a friend?", and 96% saying they strongly agree/agree that they will take the career-related actions discussed during their visit **(SE2, SE3)**.

87.   Our careers platform Handshake offers students support to find jobs both during and after their studies, and helps employers to recruit them. The platform includes exclusive opportunities for employers seeking to hire our students, virtual and on-campus events, chats with employers and connections into the Career Studio **(SE6, SO1)**. We also have a graduate opportunities team, formed in 2022, who support students after graduation with finding employment or further study.

88.   We recognise that additional activity can be necessary to ensure that under-represented student groups have the same opportunities to access opportunities to develop their employability skills as their peers **(SE5**, **SO1, SO5)**. Our Employability Support Allowance (ESA) provides bursaries of up to £500 for eligible students to help them to engage in career related activity, ranging from funding travel to interviews and assessment centres to memberships of professional bodies. During the TEF period 256 successful applications were made to the ESA with £73,000 being awarded to students to support their career journey and progression. Our strategic partnership with UpReach, a charitable company, has supported 228 students from less advantaged backgrounds since 2018, seeking to address socio-economic barriers to securing highly skilled jobs. 30 final year students were enrolled onto the programme in its first year, with all in graduate-level employment or further study 15 months after leaving university **(SO3, SO5, SO6)**, growing to 50 students and a 93% rate by 2020.

89.   To further support students in developing our graduate attributes, we also offer tailored opportunities for specific groups of students. One example is our Career Confidence for Women programme **(SE5, SO1, SO5)** which supports female students from under-represented groups from their penultimate year of study to the end of their university career. Programme initiatives include employer-led masterclasses, speaker sessions by inspirational women and mentoring support. 50 students benefitted from the programme in 2019-21, with 80% now in highly skilled jobs.

90.   Our enterprise offer provides all students and recent graduates with the opportunity to contribute to the creation, survival and/or growth of a business **(SE3, SO1, SO3)** and we have increased the range of real-world challenges and interdisciplinary enterprise opportunities we offer in line with our authentic assessment hallmark. We now have a dedicated Enterprise Educator and a dynamic community of entrepreneurs with an ecosystem of support across Liverpool City Region, the North West and nationally, and the University has recently been recognised for achievements within the area of start-up, growth and scale up at the International Enterprise Educators Conference. We are delivering a new partnership project called LCR Founders, designed to increase the volume and range of new business start-ups in the local city region, while our work with HE Business and Community Interaction in 2022/23 suggested we had 132 potential new start-up businesses within the student community **(SO3)**. In the most recent Graduate Outcomes survey (2020 leavers), 285 graduates stated 'started own business' or 'self-employed' as their main activity **(SO6)**.

91.   We work hard to maintain lifelong connections with alumni, many of whom support our educational endeavours by acting as advocates, mentors, guest speakers, a source of placements and advisors in programme design **(SE2, SE3)**. During the TEF period, 7,998 individual alumni volunteered to be involved in University activities, with over 44,000 hours dedicated collectively. One example included a talk by Dr Amir Khan, GP and television personality, whose talk to School of Medicine students about his time at the University and subsequent career path received feedback from students including that he "Inspired me with [his] open honest attitude, 'just do it' mentality and resilience…I will remember the impression [he] made on me from this point going forwards." Another student successfully gained a graduate role in audit   after attending the Management School's (ULMS) Extra 'Big Four Bootcamp' session, having sought advice from four alumni before entering a competitive recruitment process.

92.   Our English Language Centre works closely with the Careers and Employability team to support undergraduate students in accessing further study opportunities, and we have an online training module focused on writing personal statements in support of higher degree applications **(SO1)**. In the most recent Graduate Outcomes data, 30.7% of our graduates were in further study 15 months after graduation or have had significant further study prior to that date **(SO3, SO6)**. This ranks us 18th out of 132 providers included in the dataset and 7th in the Russell Group.

Conclusion

93.   We are proud of the learning environment we provide for our students, which we have continued to develop and improve based on student feedback and best practice throughout the four-year assessment period. Our metrics provide clear evidence of the outstanding quality of provision students receive here and, where our most recent NSS results demonstrate areas for improvement, we understand students' feedback and have robust plans in place to address them. We are committed to delivering an inspirational portfolio of programmes, enabled by high calibre academic staff, professional services and campus facilities that enrich students' time with us. And, most of all, we are proud of the successes of our students, whose positive outcomes and contribution to university life now and in the future are the key to our impact in Liverpool and around the world.

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