

## **Section 1: Provider Context**

1. The University of Law (ULaw) is a **leading provider of legal education and training** with a highly distinctive model of applied learning and teaching <sup>1</sup> enabling us to take our degree programmes and professional education to our students wherever they are based. Our purpose is to educate the next generation of professionals. The core values that define ULaw are professional, student-focused, inclusive, high quality and supportive. These are aligned to our mission:  
“...to serve our students and their future employers through pioneering professional education and world-leading teaching” (University of Law, Strategic plan 2022-2027) <sup>2</sup>
2. In 2006, ULaw was the first private provider to be granted taught degree awarding powers. We launched our LLB in 2012 (LLB is a Bachelor of Law undergraduate programme). Although ULaw’s registered address is in Moorgate, London, our programmes are delivered from a network of campuses and satellite centres across England and Wales. Our degrees and programmes are available full-time and part-time, face-to-face and online. This unique multi-campus and multi-mode provision allows students to access our courses at a location, time and frequency to suit their lifestyle and socio-economic circumstances.
3. ULaws’ **Academic Board** is the ultimate academic authority of the University. The Academic Board and its committees are responsible for monitoring compliance with Office for Students (OfS) conditions covering Access & Participation (Condition A), Quality and Standards (Conditions B1-5), Participation in the Teaching Excellence Framework (Condition B6) and Consumer Protection Law and Complaints (Condition C).
4. Academic Board committees include an Apprenticeship Committee and Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC) which itself has established three sub-committees: Academic Monitoring, Student Experience, and Academic Regulation and Policy.
5. The **University Strategy** was reviewed in 2022 and articulates our purpose, values and key themes. We will continue to focus on courses that support professional development, both academic and vocational, with selective diversification into areas aligned to our current portfolio. Our new five-year strategy has four themes underpinning our values: responsible education, outstanding education, professional education, and growing education <sup>2</sup>.
6. We are very proud to have achieved an overall **Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) five star** rating <sup>3</sup> in June 2021 and, in particular, five stars in each of the five categories most closely aligned to our values for Teaching, Employability, Online Learning, Academic Development and Inclusiveness.
7. Following a review in 2018, ULaw decided to diversify the programme portfolio to disciplines that naturally align with Law and the professional focus of the University. This led to the development of the Business School and, more recently, a Science School. The Science School now delivers Criminology, Policing, Education and Psychology programmes. All our new undergraduate programmes draw from our learning and experience in delivering Law programmes in that they are practice-facing with an explicit vocational focus. Our courses have been specially designed to deliver an exciting and practical academic experience, teaching real-world skills to students so they can achieve their ambitions.

## **Our Students and Staff**

8. As a result of our nationwide campus network and considered programme diversification, ULaw has seen growth in undergraduate student numbers over the last five years.

<b>Full-time undergraduate</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
Law	1090	1370	1710	2350
Business	30	60	120	180
Other		20	60	120

Table 1: Extracted from Office for Students: Size and shape of provision 2017-2021

9. ULaw attracts a diverse range of students and particularly groups underrepresented in higher education. 84% of our undergraduate students have at least one Widening Participation (WP) characteristic and 54% are from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) background. We offer every student an outstanding learning pathway. Our explicit focus is to facilitate access to the professions and employability for all, enabling students from underrepresented groups to access

high-quality education, thereby driving diversification and social impact. The following table shows the profile of our undergraduate students 2020/21:

Student profile 2020/21		Full-time undergraduate	Part-time undergraduate
Age on entry	Under 21 years	2,190 (82.4%)	70 (40.6%)
	21 to 30 years	360 (13.6%)	60 (36.3%)
	31 years and over	110 (4%)	40 (23.1%)
Ethnicity	Asian	810 (30.6%)	20 (11.9%)
	Black	310 (11.6%)	20 (10%)
	Mixed	150 (5.7%)	10 (6.9%)
	Other	130 (4.7%)	-
	White	1,060 (39.8%)	100 (65%)
	Unknown	200 (7.6%)	10 (6.3%)
Sex	Female	1,860 (69.9%)	110 (69.4%)
	Male	800 (30.1%)	50 (30.6%)
	Other sex	-	-
Deprivation quintile	IMD 1 or 2	1,400 (57.6%)	60 (40.0%)
	IMD 3, 4, 5	1,030 (42.4%)	90 (60.0%)
Disability	Yes	580 (21.8%)	30 (18.8%)
	Not reported	2,080 (78.2%)	130 (81.3%)

Table 2: Extracted from Office for Students: Size and shape of provision 2020-21

10. Reflecting the applied nature of our programmes, suitably qualified professionals and experienced academic staff teach all undergraduate programmes. For example, around 75% of the 390 academic staff teaching on the undergraduate law programmes are qualified solicitors or barristers, often with many years of post-qualification experience in practice. This allows students to learn from practice contexts and lived experiences enabling them to assimilate and apply concepts to problem-based scenarios. To enhance this further, ULaw has close working relationships with employers who contribute their expert knowledge and practice to our programmes.
11. While developing new programmes to address the requirements of the Solicitors Regulation Authority's (SRA) new Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE), ULaw consulted with approximately 100 UK and international law firms including Pinsent Masons, DLA Piper and Clifford Chance. Programme Advisory Groups, including practitioners, to ensure the learning experience meets both the students' needs and the changing needs of employers. With the launch of new disciplines, ULaw is actively forging relationships with employers beyond law. ULaw's Business School links students, industry practitioners and academic colleagues through its Advisory Board and wider activities including careers fairs. This includes organisations such as Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Grant Thornton and Samsung. In the Science School strong links exist with many of the police forces across the UK including City of London Police, British Transport Police, London Metropolitan Police, West Midlands Police, Greater Manchester Police, West Mercia Police, South Yorkshire Police, North Yorkshire Police, West Yorkshire Police, Northamptonshire Police, as well as the College of Policing.

## Employability

12. All of the ULaw campuses have an **Employability Service**. This service brings together the expertise of the careers and pro bono teams, who are focused on helping students to achieve their career and work experience goals. The careers team focuses on providing students with tailored information, advice and guidance to support their career decisions making and improve their success in the recruitment process. The pro bono team provides a range of opportunities for students to get a practical insight into the legal profession through hands-on experience, shadowing, observation and practice-focused talks, allowing students to develop the skills needed and see how these apply in a real-world context. Students also have access to our global community of over 90,000 alumni across 123 countries <sup>4</sup>.
13. The Business School and Science School also focus on employability as the core of their ethos. In response to the urgent demand for a workforce that is equipped with the skills most required in a changing professional landscape, The University of Law Business School (ULBS) leadership team, in conjunction with the Employability Service, carried out research and discussions on the future of

work with varied sources. This included business leaders, academics, the World Economic Forum, the OECD, the United Nations, McKinsey Global Institute, the Financial Times, the Wall Street Journal, The Economist, governmental bodies and NGOs, the ULBS Advisory Board members, colleagues and students. The result of this research and these discussions is the embedding of skills in every module (see paragraph 101). This approach has been adopted for our **Educational Gains framework**<sup>5</sup> (see figure 1).

14. Our QS rating mentioned in paragraph 6, has been made possible by our strong relationship with our employer and student partners, who have assisted in numerous activities at ULaw. They contribute to approving new programmes, reviewing existing programmes and regularly providing feedback about academic standards through various committees. In preparing this submission, we have invited the TEF student submission lead and other student representatives to attend our provider submission meetings. We have also shared the OfS Student data for ULaw<sup>6</sup>. Their role was mainly advisory to ensure we accurately articulated the student experience within our narrative.

## **Section 2: Student Experience**

15. ULaw has high quality **teaching, feedback and assessment practices** embedded in the design of our programmes, enabling students to learn both in practical and academic contexts, focusing on applying theory, knowledge and skills to real life scenarios. Students develop their confidence in transferring these newly acquired skills to different problems or scenarios.
16. To fully understand the student experience, as well as the National Student Survey (NSS) ULaw runs a First Impressions Survey<sup>7</sup> and End of Year Survey<sup>8</sup>. The First Impressions Survey is conducted at the beginning of each intake to measure student satisfaction with the processes from applying to the university, induction and the initial few weeks in class, with a particular focus on administration and support. The End of Year Survey is our internal survey, mirroring NSS questions, which is sent to all undergraduate students in all but the final year. This survey measures a range of areas related to student satisfaction and experience including teaching on the course, organisation and management, student voice, community, assessments and pastoral care. The outputs and outcomes from these surveys are reviewed in various committees across ULaw including the NSS Working Group, ASQC Student Experience Committee, Academic Board and Executive Board to prioritise actions to support student experience and outcomes.
17. ULaw is committed to providing an exceptional and high-quality teaching and learning experience for all our students. The NSS data for the teaching on my course between 2018/19 to 2021/22 shows this commitment and achievement with results that are 6.6% percentage points (pp) above the benchmark (indicator 86.7%; benchmark 80%) with 100% of the distribution materially above the benchmark.

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
The teaching on my course	NSS ULaw	95	91	97	85.06	87.70	91.60	89.96	86.44	82.48
	NSS Institutions in England	87	87	87	84.58	84.14	83.97	83.66	79.62	79.85

Table 3: NSS data 2014 to 2022 'The teaching on my course'.

18. The split indicators show ULaw never falls outside the lower materiality threshold for any indicator and is over 6pp above benchmark for 18 of them. So, the **quality of our teaching** is recognised across all years and splits. For example, across the ethnicity split indicator, responses from students from Asian backgrounds scored the quality of teaching 5.7pp above the benchmark (indicator 83.0%; benchmark 77.3%), students from Black backgrounds 5.0pp above the benchmark.
19. Whilst the Business undergraduate programmes are relatively new within ULaw's undergraduate portfolio, students on Business and Management courses scored 5.4pp above the benchmark (indicator 81.2%, benchmark 75.8%) for 'Teaching on my course'.
20. The metrics show a slight drop in years 2021/22 although materially above benchmark. The only groups below benchmark are First degree with integrated Foundation Year (-0.7pp) and 31 years and over (-2.6pp). ULaw has a set of NSS action plans in place to target these groups and to improve the quality of their experience.
21. In summer 2022 a **NSS working group** was set up and chaired by the Provost. Based on the results of NSS 2022<sup>9</sup> and the End of Year Surveys, four action plans were created to cover campuses. These plans fed into the creation of an overall ULaw NSS Action Plan<sup>10</sup>. The working

group meets every 4-6 weeks to review the status of the plans, prioritise actions and support the roll out of the NSS and End of Year Surveys for 2023. The outcomes feed into the ASQC Student Experience sub-committee. Students are members of both the NSS working group and ASQC Student Experience Committee.

22. As part of programme monitoring and the **annual review process** <sup>11</sup>, ULaw constantly reviews and enhances the quality of our teaching to ensure we continue to meet the needs of all our students. In response to the review of student outcomes, the LLB programme review <sup>12</sup> in 2019/2022 and the periodic review in 2021 reflected on the inclusivity of both the design process <sup>13</sup> and teaching within our undergraduate programmes. This initiative was supported by the Head of Access and Participation. The outcomes led to improvements in both teaching delivery and the student learning experience. For example, materials were checked for appropriate BAME representation and training was delivered to teaching staff, particularly on teaching at levels three and four.
23. Following the periodic review of the LLB in 2021, further integration of a broader variety of learning activities was adopted both to enhance student engagement and encourage students to explore and develop their skill sets to support employability (see paragraph 100).
24. ULaw has initiated enhancements to improve the student experience and assessment outcomes including individual **feedback and feedforward** which was introduced for each undergraduate student on all summative assessments in 2018/19. The feedback indicates how the student performed against each assessment criterion and overall but crucially focuses on future areas for development. Recently, ULaw has been trialling the use of voice feedback. Student feedback <sup>14</sup> in the NSS from 2019 onwards demonstrated the positive impact of this enhancement on the student experience. In the published data dashboard Assessment and Feedback category, the overall indicator for ULaw is 11pp above benchmark with 100% materially above benchmark. On the split indicators, ULaw never falls outside the lower materiality threshold for any indicator and is over 10pp above benchmark in 16 of the split indicators. For example, within the split indicator 'Eligibility for free school meals' the difference from benchmark is 10.6pp (indicator 72.3%; benchmark 61.8%).

## Learning and Teaching

25. ULaw adopts a student-centred approach to learning, teaching and delivery by way of a flipped classroom model. Students' learning is structured into three distinct stages of **Prepare, Engage, Consolidate (PEC)**. The prepare and consolidate stages of learning are available on Blackboard, our virtual learning environment. Depending on the mode of study the 'engage' stage is either delivered in a workshop in the classroom or alternatively online if the student is enrolled on an online programme.
26. Adopting PEC as a signature pedagogy has created familiarity and supported students in their studies, with our NSS results for the last four academic years showing that 'Teaching on my Course' is above the benchmark. This strength is further reflected in the split indicator type: subject of study. Within the Law undergraduate programme, our teaching quality was 86.9% compared to the benchmark 80.3% (difference 6.6pp). Similarly, the Social Science related programmes were 9.1pp above the benchmark and Business related programmes were 5.4pp above the benchmark.
27. Articulation of those **learning opportunities** within PEC originates during the programme approval stage, where panel members, which include students, look for evidence that the model is utilised in the curriculum. In particular, the panel look for examples of stretch and challenge where students can excel in their chosen subject.
28. All undergraduate programmes contain **vocational learning and teaching** activities. For example, Policing undergraduate students handle criminal investigations through virtual reality and role-play interactions. Business undergraduates explore commercial case studies in different countries. In addition, ULaw academics facilitate applied student learning through storytelling of their expertise in practice. Solicitor apprentices have a balance between on-the-job and off-the-job learning. Specific emphasis on their stretch and challenge or how they apply what they have learnt is supported by skills advisors (for apprentices) and both employability advisors and academics (for business students) who assist in developing higher-order thinking and skills in the workplace.
29. Students sit a **formative assessment** part way through each module on the LLB, BSc Professional Policing and BA Criminology programmes and summative in-module assessment in Business. These formative assessments are in the same format as the summative final assessment and typically half the length to enable the students to both self-assess and be assessed against module learning outcomes. Students receive individual feedback and feedforward on their formative assessments.

30. The individual feedback identifies areas for stretch and challenge and guides the student on how they can improve in their next assessment. As a result, the support is tailored to meet the individual student needs and complements the workshop engagement. As with the formative and in-module summative assessments, the personalised feedback encourages students to seek out areas where they could enhance or excel, in readiness for the remainder of their assessments.
31. ULaw specialises in programmes that educate the next generation of professionals; our focus is developing innovative, highly effective teaching and learning methods that equip students for their **professional** career. ULaw faculty and business professionals includes in excess of 500 qualified and experienced solicitors, barristers, judges and policing officers, facilitating the development of professional skills that enable our students to successfully progress into employment (see paragraph 143).
32. In the NSS, for the overall learning opportunities group, ULaw scored 84% in 2021 and 79% in 2022. This reflects our focus on professional practice and how we encourage volunteering opportunities such as our Pro Bono Clinics and students to become Special Constables in police forces.
33. Due to the vocational nature of our learning, the Law School regularly consults with external stakeholders, in particular employers, when developing and updating the programme portfolio. Consultations with employers, through the **Apprenticeship Advisory Board**, supported the successful integration of the Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) as the end point assessment for solicitor apprentices in November 2021. As employers have increasingly made use of the apprenticeship levy, this ongoing dialogue has led to the development of further apprenticeship routes for paralegal and graduate solicitor apprentices.
34. Cognisant of the Office for Students poll involving 38,000 students, of which 87% stated they struggled with anxiety (The Guardian, 2019) <sup>15</sup>, and, as a result of **employer engagement**, a resilience programme was developed to support our undergraduates whilst studying and working at the same time. Themed drop-in sessions discussed welfare and mental health at work. Confidence building and reframing limiting beliefs were among the themes important to students.
35. The Business School offers several undergraduate programmes which equally align with the **professional practice** ethos of ULaw. The Business School uses its Advisory Board to seek advice from external members and employers to inform module content on areas such as corporate structures and industry regulators. The benefit of including a year's placement is also considered of merit to employers as students can demonstrate work experience and know how the workplace operates.

## Assessment

36. Assessment practices were reviewed in 2019. The grade descriptors for the LLB were revised and grade-based assessment was introduced in September 2019. Module Review Reports <sup>16</sup> were introduced which included an analysis of student outcomes in summative assessment and student feedback for the module. The benchmark data shows increased student satisfaction scores in 2019 and 2020. The decline in the 2021 and 2022 scores is disappointing and likely due to the impact of covid (and its aftermath) on summative assessment, as significant changes had to be made and communicated very quickly. It is anticipated that following the periodic review of the LLB in 2021 these scores will increase, largely due to changes in programme and module outcomes (to emphasise skill development), assessment methodology and improvements in communication with the students on assessment related matters. For example, the introduction of group academic coach meetings, assessment technique sessions and a more flexible deferral, extension and mitigating circumstances policy.
37. The LLB periodic review in 2021 <sup>17</sup> included a full change in assessment methodology following staff and student input. The new methodology is broader in assessment type and therefore more inclusive, allowing students to better demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes.
38. ULaw is tailoring assessment support for particular groups of students namely, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic, mature (31 years and over), first degree with integrated foundation year and, those on a Business degree. Various initiatives have been put in place to support these groups. One key initiative is the formation of a **BAME Advocates** scheme (see paragraph 109). Started in spring 2020, this group of 25 student advocates report to the Widening Participation team and supports the work of the Awarding Gaps working group. An example of change supported by this group was the development of a phrase bank to explain to students what is meant by certain academic phrases/criteria to assist students in understanding what is required from an assessment. Whilst the initiative is focused on BAME students, the phrase bank is highly applicable across all programmes for all students.



39. Although the End of Year Survey for 2020/21 evidences a decrease in areas of the survey, students did recognise the lengths to which academic staff had gone to maintain the student experience, leading to an increase in some scores. For example, following specific intervention, 100% of LLB Online Year 2 students felt that the marking criteria were made clear in advance and assessment methods employed required an in-depth understanding of the course content.
40. The continued enhancements to both **teaching quality** and **support** for learning including pro bono opportunities, simulation and welfare support targeted to the diversity of the student intake has influenced degree classification results. The trends in LLB degree classifications awarded by ULaw between 2017/18 and 2021/22 have been significant and both sustained and correlated to changes made to the course together with strong teaching. The impact of the No Detriment Policy (NDP) <sup>18</sup> introduced in response to covid may have influenced, particularly in 2020/21, increases in the number of first class and 2:1 degrees awarded (see table 4). However, we note that the numbers seen 2021/22 have fallen slightly from this peak. This is discussed in detail in our Degree Outcomes Statement <sup>19</sup>.

Academic Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22**
<b>Total awards</b>	279	325	360	507	536
<b>1st</b>	12%	18%	34%	41%	37%
<b>2:1</b>	41%	39%	46%	41%	47%
<b>2:2</b>	36%	38%	17%	16%	14%
<b>3</b>	11%	5%	3%	2%	1.3%

Table 4: Distribution of LLB degree classifications as % of total awards

\*\*2021/22 data from internal analysis of HESA return data.

41. The ULaw undergraduate intake has grown considerably during the 5-year period and a review of cohort profiles and student attainment is undertaken at each Award and Progression Board where External Examiners provide invaluable commentary and necessary quality checks that uphold the rigour of each award.
42. Students have positively responded to the NSS question 'The course is intellectually stimulating' for the last five years (see table 5 below).

NSS	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>The course is intellectually stimulating</b>	91%	92%	92%	89%	86%

Table 5: ULaw NSS results

### Staff Professional Development

43. ULaw operates an **annual Performance Development Review (PDR)** process. All staff are encouraged to explore their professional development with their line manager. Staff are regularly released into legal practice to maintain their subject knowledge and vocational expertise. This is facilitated through our employer-partner relationships. Staff development opportunities are evaluated through the observation scheme. Self-reflection and experiential learning are discussed in the peer reviews with colleagues observing the teaching practice.
44. We have a robust infrastructure for supporting academic enhancement and professional development, which is systematically accessed by staff throughout the University. This is delivered through the **Academic Enhancement Unit**, led by a Professor of Education (who is a Principal Fellow (PFHEA) and National Teaching Fellow (NTF)), the Head of Learning and Development, a network of Programme Directors, and eleven Teaching Fellows. Pedagogic practice is disseminated by way of initiatives and events including centralised staff development, bespoke and discipline-based support, mentoring for applications for Advance HE fellowships, the annual ULaw Learning and Teaching Conference, support for NTF and Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence (CATE) applications and coaching for promotion and career progression.

45. Staff development sessions are thematically driven and informed by student feedback, observations of practice and developments in educational research. There are approximately one hundred live events delivered per year, all recorded for further use within a central repository. Where appropriate, staff attend external development events and conferences, both subject-based conferences and pedagogically-focused seminars and symposia. Staff and students can also access resources by external developmental organisations such as the Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA) and the Association for Learning Development in Higher Education (ALDinHE) for which ULaw has institutional memberships.
46. The linked Staff Development Committee, which meets monthly, is made up of key stakeholders who manage and support staff who teach or support learning, and includes representation from HR, EDI and IT support, as well as student representation.
47. All ULaw staff with teaching responsibilities are required to hold a postgraduate teaching qualification. ULaw also offers routes to support academic staff achieve a teaching qualification and gain Advance HE Fellowship by undertaking our distinctive **Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education** programme, which is run by colleagues through the Education Department. The programme provides a key offering for research-informed teaching and learning development and is mapped against the UKPSF (UK Professional Standards Framework), designed to develop fundamental skills in teaching and learning in higher education and providing learners with the opportunity to enhance their knowledge and skills in teaching, learning, assessment, feedback and educational research methodologies. It fits within our institutional drive to deliver an outstanding 'best in class' educational experience for students and models excellent teaching practice, which participants can then apply to their own pedagogical contexts. Once staff have completed the programme, they can apply for Advance HE Fellowship through the University's accredited experiential route.
48. ULaw actively supports all staff to undertake further qualifications and participate in improving their practice. In the last three years, ULaw has witnessed significant growth in fellowship numbers. At the time of writing across all staff including Business Professional and Visiting Lecturers the profile of Advance HE fellowships <sup>20</sup> comprises; 9 Associate fellows, 315 Fellows, 16 Senior Fellows and 1 Principal Fellow. 82% of academic staff hold a teaching qualification, fellowship, or both.
49. All teaching staff, including visiting lecturers, participate in periodic, peer-led teaching development activities including learning walks, peer reviews of teaching, and manager observations. Whilst learning walks are intended to observe the 'lived' student experience, the quality of teaching is triangulated against manager observations. Collectively, this innovative set of teaching development activities has demonstrably contributed to the development of an inclusive, student-informed community of teaching practitioners.
50. ULaw organises and hosts an annual **Learning and Teaching Conference** which is attended by an average of 250 staff and students both online and in-person. The conferences are themed to address key pedagogic priorities and are facilitated by both internal and external educational practitioners. In a further example of a co-creation activity, students are also invited to contribute to the conference. Innovative pedagogic themes addressed so far include *Resilience* (2018), *Getting in – Getting on – Moving on: Access, Success, and Progression* (2019), *Using learning analytics to enrich the student experience* (2020), *The Future of Learning and Assessment* (2021) and *Building on Success: New Faces, New Spaces, New Learning* (2022). Many of the sessions are recorded so they can be accessed for professional development at a later date.
51. The **Teacher of the Year Award** is organised by the Students' Union and all students are invited to put forward nominations. The award is given to a teaching staff member or Academic Coach who makes an innovative or significant contribution to the academic experience of students - for example, by inspiring students with a passion for the subject, or going 'above and beyond' to make classes especially engaging.
52. ULaw has robust and rigorous approaches to designing authentic, learning-based assessments, which are benchmarked against appropriate quality indicators. For example, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) Subject Benchmark Statements and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) are covered in staff development sessions and the scrutiny and approval process of assessments. Assessments are considered through a Design and Scrutiny Panel and approved by external examiners to ensure that they measure student achievement against learning outcomes. Consistency in marking is upheld through calibration and standardisation exercises. External Examiners' reports feed directly into the Academic Quality and Standards Committee of the Academic Board (ASQC).

## Supportive academic and learning environment

53. ULaw places priority on the application of sound and consistent **equality, diversity and inclusivity (EDI) principles** in all aspects of our learning, teaching, assessment and feedback processes. For example, ULaw sets out common expectations for creating inclusive and authentic assessments which are informed by quality principles, expected sector practice and research on EDI in pedagogy. Good practice is shared by way of development work and sessions undertaken by staff at the Academic Enhancement Unit. Further, ULaw have set up a Monitoring of Inclusive Learning panel that regularly meets to review materials from a single programme, and to provide feedback regarding representation, media, flexibility, language use, accessibility and opportunities for including diverse content. A feedback report is produced and circulated to all the Programme Directors to ensure and build sustainability by developing understanding of the key issues.
54. ULaw ensures that potential students are supported from the outset and can make informed decisions before joining. We have dedicated **Programme Consultants** allocated to every student to answer any course-related questions and we also assist offer holders in navigating the application process. This support can benefit students with limited prior knowledge or experience in higher education. We also offer, where appropriate, contextual admission for underrepresented groups, for example, care experienced and estranged students.
55. Since 2020 ULaw has significantly increased resourcing and expanded its **Student Support Services**. The resource has nearly doubled for the services with an additional 12 FTE brought into the Welfare Service (now the Wellbeing Advice Service), the Mental Health Service, the Disability and Inclusion Service and Study Skills Service. A Money and Housing Advice Service has been launched together with a Sexual Violence Liaison Service. The Wellbeing Advice Service and Disability and Inclusion Service have introduced regular check-in calls with vulnerable students. Student Support Services make very good use of digital resources such as TogetherAll, StudentPad and Blackbullion and launched its UniWellbeing App in 2020 with ULaw having one of the highest engagement levels of universities using this application. The app is particularly popular with online students. During the pandemic, the University enhanced its financial hardship schemes and moved applications onto Blackbullion to speed up the application process. Counselling during the pandemic immediately switched to online delivery which saw referrals increase by 43% and missed appointments decrease by 3.5% compared to previous years. Having reviewed its counselling offering in early 2022, the University has engaged Spectrum Life to provide a Student Assistance Programme which offers a 24/7/365 in the moment helpline and counselling within 5 days of referral, amongst other benefits such as online CBT. The University's Ofsted monitoring visit took place in September 2022 for which it received a significant progress rating for safeguarding for the apprenticeship programmes.
56. 'My ULaw' is an app which provides a **one stop shop for University Services** across a variety of channels. Students can access My ULaw and view a customisable and personalised dashboard of ULaw learning management systems, timetables, student information systems and other services. The dashboards and tools within CampusM provide operational and teaching teams with analytics and insights which will enable us to more efficiently and accurately monitor student engagement, allowing follow up on any issues in a timely manner and thereby improve student continuation, completion, progression and success. In December 2022 *My ULaw* had 15,032 active users.
57. ULaw is committed to providing high-quality **academic support**. For Academic Support ULaw is 8.1pp above the benchmark (indicator 78.2%; benchmark 70.1%) and 100% of the distribution materially above benchmark. Despite the challenges faced during covid-19, actions were taken to continuously evaluate, adjust and re-affirm our commitment to improving academic support at ULaw. For example, further steps have been taken in response to student feedback generally regarding tutor support. Since 2021/22 Live Subject Support Sessions were introduced by the online campus. These sessions are student led in the sense of subject academics responding to student questions on current work by signposting or steering i.e. providing clarity on a particular task.
58. An important example of the above is the redesign of ULaw's personal tutoring system into a new model incorporating two distinct roles: **Academic Coach (AC)** and **Student Journey Advisor (SJA)**<sup>21</sup>. This dual model was created as a result of student feedback collected early in the pandemic, with the aim of providing a more refined approach to student learning and support. ACs focus on academic support to help students progress in all aspects of their studies. SJAs support with non-academic related matters and assist the students to access specialist services (see paragraph 61).



59. In 2020, ULaw NSS scores were 91% for Overall Satisfaction ('Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the course') but there had been a downward turn in 'staff have made the subject interesting' (83% in 2020, compared with 91% in 2019) and 'learning community' (75% in 2020, compared with 80% in 2019). These results, together with the pandemic, contributed to the development and roll-out of the new initiative of Academic Coaches (AC) and Student Journey Advisors (SJAs). Development of the approach included students in the project team with the implementation through a pilot from August 2021 then fully from 2022/23 so that now, all students are allocated both a Student Journey Advisor (SJA) and Academic Coach (AC).
60. The Academic Coach (AC) draws on a coaching approach focused on support, development, progression and the development of student autonomy over the length of the student journey. AC activities are also aligned to OfS completion, continuation and progression requirements. Students use a self-booking system to arrange appointments to see their AC and take the lead on the conversations. Extensive compulsory training for ACs took place between June and September 2022. Students are supported in setting their own goals and progress is captured in learner analytics software called StREAM which tracks student activities and provides valuable data to the student and AC.
61. **StREAM, the learning analytic tool** improves the effectiveness of the student-AC conversation and the SJA support. To date, the software has been integrated across ULaw and tracks student interaction with different services. Discussions between the student and their AC are recorded in the system; developmental action plans are written; additional services, such as study skills, are signposted or emailed and the student updates the system with their progress. This provides a transparent record for the student and their AC to enable an ongoing effective relationship and to help the learner achieve their potential. At the same time, the system is also used to identify quickly students exhibiting poor engagement characteristics. The system alerts the student and the student's SJA, after which support will be provided, including escalating to academic and non-academic services. The benefit of using the same system for the academic and non-academic support scenarios is that it gives a holistic picture of the individual student's learning journey. Since the full rollout of the scheme in September 2022, SJAs have reached out to 2,012 at-risk students (both UG and PG) with no/very low engagement, making over 5,600 pro-active interventions.
62. During the 2021/22 academic year the Student Journey Team was responsible for administering the attendance monitoring process. The procedure is designed to support students at risk of non-completion and provide a holistic view of student progress for personal tutors and other support services. SJAs made 14,390 pro-active interventions to UG students last year, including phone calls, voicemails and emails on a bi-weekly basis to follow up and support students who had lower than 80% attendance on their programme. Students with continued low attendance were asked to meet with their ACs to ensure academic progress and successful completion of their course.
63. Student learning is also supported by National Programme Directors who oversee the programme delivery and learning experience in each campus. There is also a Programme and Student Lead (PSL) at each campus who also teaches on the programme to ensure a close connection with the students. In addition, the PSLs hold regular feedback sessions with students, including charring Staff / Student Liaison Committee meetings <sup>22</sup>.
64. Related to **learning resources**, ULaw is 3.5pp above the benchmark and 83.1% of the distribution materially above the benchmark for this factor. Notably year three was the best year, where we were 11pp above the benchmark and 100% materially above compared to year four, which was - 2.6pp below the benchmark. In 2021 ULaw created a new Director role to centralise what had previously been campus-based libraries. Following the creation of a Five Year Plan, 2022-27, roles within the team have been reshaped, and strengthened mechanisms for working with campuses, programmes and students are underway, which we anticipate will return scores to the year three level.
65. Learning resources and information are available in online formats. For example, the curriculum-related activities are visible within the Blackboard **Virtual Learning Environment**, while administration correspondence and well-being are channelled through the My ULaw app.
66. ULaw adopts the **Universal Design for Inclusive Learning principles** <sup>23</sup> to ensure access to learning materials in different formats. These principles aim to avoid gender-binary language, include better representation of student demography in the materials and positively encourage the use of inclusive personal pronouns within teaching.
67. ULaw is committed to making the curriculum more inclusive and accessible ensuring students create a sense of belonging within their subject and cohort. For example, some modules enable students to choose their submission method: In the Critical Approaches in Current Legal Issues module students have the choice whether to submit their assessment in written, audio or video

format. Also, between 2021 and 2022, the delivery of large group sessions synchronously (live) to online students has been introduced in all modules to enable students to have greater contact time with their subject tutors. Inevitably students studying online may not be able to attend for a wide variety of reasons, so these sessions are also recorded and provide a useful tool for consolidation and reflection. In addition to the large groups, each module also has two live tutor sessions per module.

68. Regular focus groups are conducted with the **BAME Advocates** to measure the impact of the approach to inclusive learning. An example of this is when they reviewed and suggested amendments to the Access to Justice module on the LLB during its development in 2020. Following the adoption of these suggestions the module has had the highest pass and 1<sup>st</sup>/2:1 rate in 2021, and 3<sup>rd</sup> highest pass rate and highest 1<sup>st</sup>/2.1 rate in 2022, when compared to other Level 5 optional modules with more than 100 students sitting.

### Student voice and engagement

69. For **Student Voice** the overall rating is high; we are 10.6pp above the benchmark (indicator 74%; benchmark 63.4%) and 100% of the distribution materially above benchmark. Across many split indicators, the NSS results are 2.5pp or more above the benchmark value.
70. The following details of extra-curricular activities that contribute to educational gains, are examples of how the Student Voice works in practice, using student feedback to enhance experience. More examples are discussed in the Student Outcomes section.
- *'Students as Co-creators'*: Focus groups where students are invited to brainstorm ideas, thoughts and suggestions with staff and other students on their course on various aspects of the student experience. Sessions have covered areas such as defining the learning community, employability, effective teaching practices, constructive assessment feedback and the importance of pastoral care and academic support. One outcome of these sessions was the appointment of a Head of Pastoral Care and Academic Experience at the London Bloomsbury campus.
  - *'Students as Experts'*: a series of student-led talks on current awareness issues. This initiative brings together students sharing their knowledge and experience from their professional backgrounds through presentations and Q&A sessions. Examples of topics covered are: the impact of the covid-19 pandemic on epidemiology, capital markets and the global geopolitical landscape; education technology, data privacy rights, cryptocurrencies and data literacy and human rights, environmental protection and criminal justice.
  - *'Share challenge'*: a competition which takes place over several weeks where students work in teams to make decisions for a fictional business to increase the share price.
71. Active **student engagement** is fundamental to the ULaw educational experience. Our strategy is to co-create teaching and learning experiences with students for students. There are many mechanisms in place for formal and informal feedback to be provided and be consistently valuable.
72. During 2021/22 the **Student Charter** <sup>24</sup> was reviewed and updated by the Student Union. The aim is for the Charter to be reviewed annually as a collaboration between the Students' Union and the University. It outlines the mutual responsibilities and aspirations.
73. In 2021/22, ULaw created a **Student Pool** to facilitate student representation and engagement for specific committees and projects that matter to the student experience. The scheme is a partnership between the Employability Service and Students' Union. Students can apply to be members of the Pool. If successful they have a programme of training and support to supplement their activities on committees and projects.
74. To date, members of the Student Pool have been members of committees such as ASQC Student Experience, Student Success and Academic Board. They have also provided feedback on projects that concern priorities within the sector including the current cost of living crisis, concessions and disciplinary policies, academic conduct and assessment and teaching policy frameworks. Students are also involved in programme approval and use their experience to assist in the development/enhancement of new programmes.
75. The Students' Union's objectives to advance education and the student experience are evident in their contribution across different committees within ULaw.
76. Campus Vice-Presidents represent the Students' Union in their respective locations and report critical points to the Student Parliament. They also campaign on issues outlined by the Students' Union Co-Presidents, Student Engagement Coordinator and Liberation Officers. Their

feedback is shared at different ULaw committees which assist with the enhancement of curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

77. Other Students' Union representatives include a Disabled Student Officer, International Student Reps, LGBTQ+ Officer and Programme Representatives. Those roles are essential communication channels between the Students' Union and ULaw.
78. The Students' Union engages in a **Skills Development Programme (SDP)** containing a series of workshops and courses to provide additional skills and qualifications within our Educational Gains model. Workshops include Consent Matters, Online Safety, Public Speaking, Starting Your Own Business and more. These have been popular with students and saw students registering with over 3000 booking in the first week of opening in January 2022.
79. ULaw's partnership with the Students' Union is reflected in the reward and recognition of staff for the Teacher of the Year award. This is an event in our academic calendar alongside other Students' Union led awards. Students nominate who they wish to be considered for Teacher of the Year. Those nominations recognise the educational effort and high-quality teaching in their programme.
80. In collaboration with the Students' Union, ULaw also ensures student views are captured through National Student Surveys, the University's Module Evaluation Surveys and Student/Staff Liaison Committees and Focus Groups. Student surveys are monitored across different sub-committees of the University's Academic Board. Programme Directors are asked to comment on performance against the student data from the First Impression, NSS, and End of Year surveys.
81. Recently the Students' Union and ULaw have reviewed the effectiveness of **Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs)**. These are forums where students and staff meet to raise matters relating to the cohort's programme of study and wider student experience, and from which feedback is gathered to maintain best practice and make improvements to the quality of the student experience for current and future cohorts. The aim is that SSLCs will be run by every school (Law, Business and Science) each semester on every campus. This collaborative review of SSLCs has led to a new Code of Conduct <sup>25</sup>.
82. We are particularly proud of our students and their co-creator voice in developing educational experiences. This is a testament to the staff who create a safe and inclusive environment where learners can build their knowledge and understanding alongside their social and cognitive gains. The strength of our provision has been recognised by, for example, the QS five stars for Teaching, Employability, Academic Development, Online Learning and Inclusiveness. Secondly, the awarding of an Advance HE Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence (CATE) in 2022 recognised our contribution to a cross-institutional activity driven by the Creativity for Learning community.

### **Section 3: Student Outcomes**

83. Unless stated otherwise, continuation, completion and progression metrics are taken from the OfS TEF dashboard, and related to first degree, full-time students. Our continuation rates are above the sector average with 2.7pp above the benchmark overall, improving to 3.7pp in the most recent data. In previous years our completion rates were 3.3pp below the benchmark and we have developed strategies to narrow the gap. In the most recent year of data (2020/21) our completion rates were 1.7pp below the benchmark, and we anticipate we will be above the benchmark by the year 2023/24 through interventions including the changes in the LLB programme from the periodic review and activities in our Access and Participation Plan <sup>26</sup>. We acknowledge the pandemic had a detrimental impact on our student progression rates, 3.5pp below benchmark. Therefore, we are implementing new approaches to improve both completion and progression data which are outlined below.

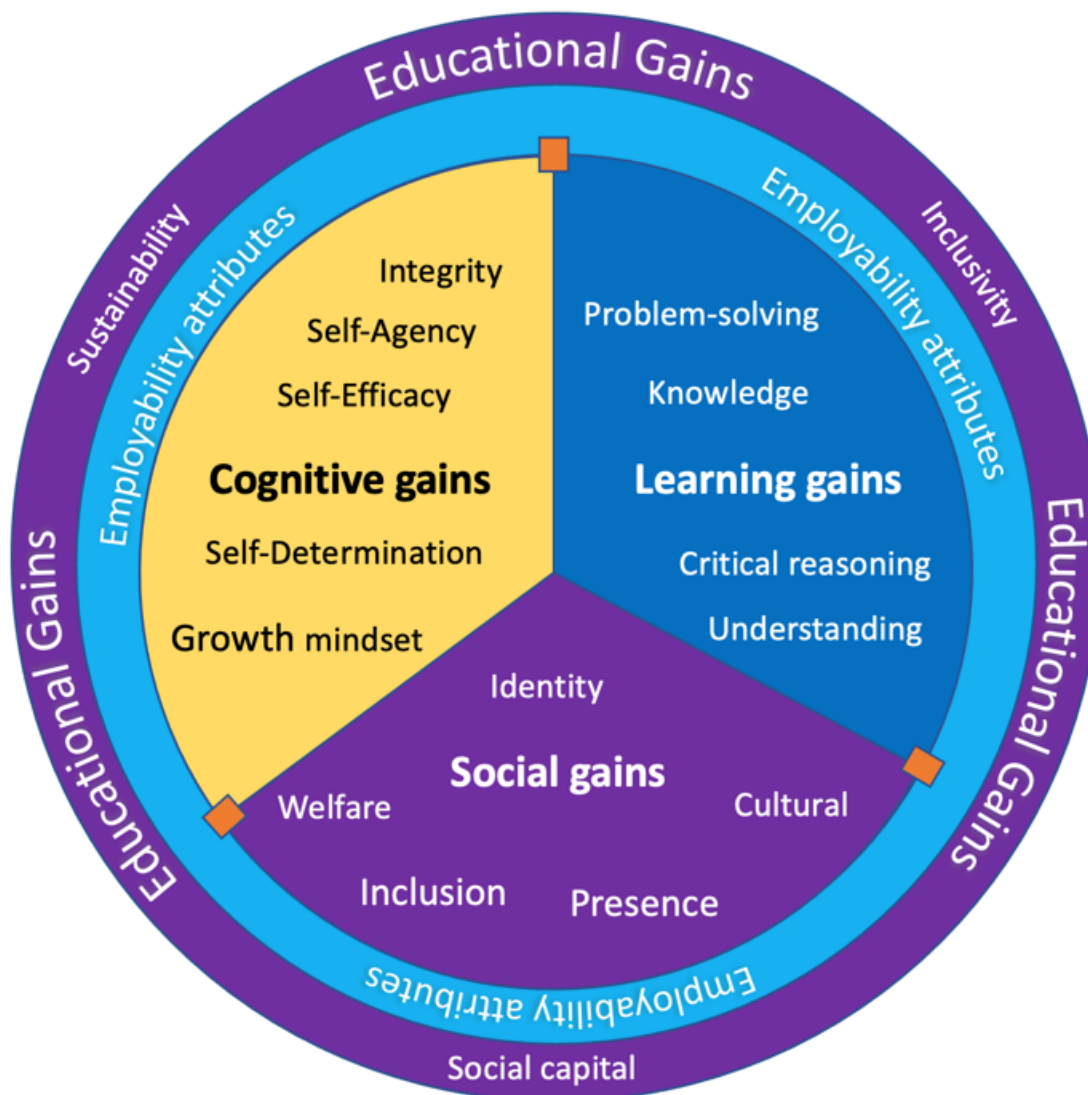


Figure 1: Educational Gains

84. Although ULaw is at an early stage in evaluating overall Educational gains<sup>5</sup> an initial framework has been developed through review of the literature and consultation with ULaw staff and students. Educational gain is defined as three discrete areas: cognitive, learning and social and is illustrated in figure 1.
85. ULaw's Educational Gains model focuses on the holistic experience; the accumulation of elements that impact graduate outcomes. At the centre of the model are three expandable and contractable elements that reflect what each student 'gains' from their ULaw experience. Those are defined as Learning, Social and Cognitive Gains:
- **Learning Gains** – the distance travelled in knowledge and understanding of the student/discipline together with students' reflective and critical thinking skills.
  - **Social Gains** – this is the development of identity, presence, social inclusion and personal welfare in safe learning communities and cultural capital.
  - **Cognitive Gains** – development of self-efficacy where transferrable competencies are learnt outside the direct learning experience; such competencies help the individual build confidence to tackle real-world tasks.
86. Qualified professionals and experienced academic staff teach ULaw undergraduate programmes. This affords students to learn from practice context and lived experience, enabling students to assimilate and apply concepts more easily (**Learning Gains**).
87. Students have access to pre-entry study skills materials and workshops to help them prepare to succeed in their university studies. We received positive feedback from students who started in 2019, contributing to further development of our materials and workshops. In 2020, we moved all

materials and workshops into the Virtual Learning Environment to ensure that all students could continue accessing support and materials when needed.

88. In 2020 the Library Service launched the Digital Academy, providing asynchronous digital skills training for our students using the **Prepare, Engage, Consolidate (PEC)** approach (see paragraph 25). This was relaunched in summer 2022 as the broader **Skills Academy** platform, an online learning platform, containing e-learning content from Study Skills and English Language Support, as well as library skills. Courses cover the required academic and digital skills students need, as well as those targeted by graduate frameworks provided by the QAA. This content enhances the student experience and ensures that our students are supported throughout their learning journey, from onboarding to graduation. At the time of submission, the Skills Academy has over 15,000 active users<sup>27</sup>. Students can access the courses anytime and return if unsure at any point in their journey.
89. Using the PEC approach (see paragraph 25) to learning and teaching, programme materials are designed and produced centrally, together with tutor guidance notes, so the learning and teaching experience is consistent on each campus enabling all ULaw students to take the same assessment. The PEC model supports students to continue and complete their studies by providing a structured approach to their learning. Within the module materials, it is very clear to students what they need to do:
- **Prepare** stage; students are provided with materials and directions on how to apply the information incrementally during their learning.
  - **Engage** stage of the model is tailored to whether students are studying in a face-to-face mode of study or online. In both respects students work through tasks which are constructively aligned to the assessment in that module and receive feedback and feedforward on their performance in those tasks.
  - **Consolidation** is a crucial part of students ensuring they have met the learning outcomes for the units and, therefore, the overall learning outcomes for the module. Students are given guidance on how to consolidate and one or more tasks to complete so they can check their understanding.
90. The structured nature of the PEC model also facilitates a clear discussion for students to have with their academic coach when reflecting on their approach to studying and receiving guidance and support on improving their performance.
91. The effectiveness of the PEC model is clear from the NSS scores which in the main are above benchmark.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2022 Benchmark
<b>Learning opportunities</b>	86	90.0	85.4	83.6	78.6	75.7
My course has provided me with opportunities to explore ideas or concepts in depth.	81	89.8	84.1	80.3	76.2	76.8
My course has provided me with opportunities to bring information and ideas together from different topics.	86	89.4	86.0	85.6	77.7	76.0
My course has provided me with opportunities to apply what I have learnt.	89	90.7	86.5	84.7	82.1	74.6

Table 6: NSS Results Summary - Learning opportunities

92. Our overriding aim is to assist students in various ways to continuously develop their knowledge, understanding, cognitive, practical, transferable skills and professional competencies through Educational Gains. We acknowledge the fluctuation in the scores from 2020 to 2022<sup>28</sup> and have taken strategic steps to enrich the learning throughout the pandemic and post-pandemic period through setting out NSS Action plans monitored through the NSS Working Group (see paragraph 21). Interventions include dedicated Programme Student Leads (PSLs) for year groups, changes in the extension and mitigating circumstances policy and community platforms for online students.
93. Programmes incorporate opportunities for students to understand their learning by reflecting on their learning strategies and developing their range of learning skills. All deliverables for each mode of learning and programme comply with our Universal Design for Inclusive Learning Policy<sup>23</sup>. The

variety of learning and assessment methods adopted allows learners to use diverse learning assets to support their development (see paragraph 0). All deliverables are designed with the assessment for that module in mind to ensure constructive alignment. Inclusive learning is regularly monitored by the Academic Enhancement Committee through a dedicated Monitoring of Inclusive Learning panel.

94. In the last two years, we have implemented strategies to enhance student engagement and outcomes, evidenced in our continuation results. Despite our efforts to increase our student continuation, completion and progression rates the pandemic and the dislocation from the campus community associated with that has caused student motivation to decline, prompting a disconnectedness from their studies. Notwithstanding, ULaw increased our support for students during the pandemic by introducing the Student Journey Advisors (SJAs) and Academic Coaches (AC) (see paragraph 58) as well as increasing Student Support (see paragraph 55).
95. Preparing students for the world of professional practice has always been at the heart of ULaw, but it was not until 2015 that ULaw had our first insight into Employability Outcomes of our undergraduate students (with DLHE for 2014 Leavers). Since then, ongoing evaluation of outcomes data along with reviews of more immediate/contemporaneous student feedback and professional assessment of student need, has allowed the services supporting student outcomes – in particular, the Employability Service – to develop our provision and how this is accessed. In 2019, for example, the **Employability Portal** was launched, allowing online booking of careers appointments and bringing sign-ups for careers events and pro bono alongside a comprehensive database of ULaw specific vacancies, under one ‘roof’. Since its launch, over 28,000 users have registered on the portal <sup>29</sup>.
96. This was an evolution of the service that has always utilised available media/platforms to deliver student support. The 2013 The Association of Graduate Recruiters (now Institute of Student Employers) award for our Student Employability Programme was an early example – a comprehensive guide to careers in law, freely available to anyone via the web. The Professional employability programme later accompanied this. ULaw’s Business School (ULBS) has also created a “Work-Ready Award”, launched in January 2023. The Work Ready Award (WRA) gives students the opportunity to earn points to a bronze, silver, or gold award based upon a wide range of activities such as volunteering, attending extracurricular talks and conferences, taking free eligible online courses and participating in student events and activities. The WRA is designed to work using Pebblepad technology and has been successfully trialled before launching to the student body during 2023.
97. While support in person is highly valued, ease of access and flexibility offered by the online support provided new opportunities to engage. Recognising the challenges of the pandemic on those graduating into it, the Employability Service launched the ‘**Graduate Club**’ to support those graduating into the first year of the pandemic in the summer of 2020. It helped to raise the profile of ongoing engagement with recent leavers. This has been accompanied by a move to ongoing support from the students’ home campus, and an extension of support to ‘employability for life’ for 2022 leavers <sup>30</sup>.
98. While support for recent alumni is important, so too is engagement on the course, and early engagement where possible. From the outset, our LLB degree had employability built into the curriculum, and this has been adapted over the years. Since 2016, there has been a focus on engagement in the first few weeks of the course, with a half or full-day timetabled employability workshop in campus. This emphasis on engagement in the curriculum is reflected in the development and design of the ULBS undergraduate courses, which have significant Employability input into modules.
99. Importantly, this early engagement sits alongside tailored, targeted and ‘student-centred’ support available when needed, through the extensive provision of one-to-one careers advice, workshops, employer talks and events. This careers information, advice and guidance alongside the insight from first-hand accounts of practitioners and professional employers, is supported by the opportunities to see law in practice via our pro bono team. In the last academic year undergraduate students arranged or were allocated to 1,137 careers advice sessions, signed up to 1,257 employer talks and careers events and took up 1,164 opportunities to engage with the pro bono teams. In ULaw’s Quality Questionnaire 2021-2022 to undergraduate and postgraduate students, 80% (n=80) students agreed the employability activities addressed “my needs specifically”. 81% (n=81) students agreed or strongly agreed careers advice sessions, workshops and pro-bono opportunities met their needs <sup>31</sup>.
100. A new **Graduate and Employability Skills** option module for the LLB programme started in September 2022. The FHEQ Level 6 module with 200 Notional Learning Hours is an enhancement



to our curriculum based on the lessons learned from past activities. The curriculum extends further into developing community awareness, outreach work and the importance of resilience in the workplace. With the demonstrable improvement in graduate outcomes for 2019/20 leavers (4 pp higher than the 'pre-pandemic' outcomes of 2017/18 leavers, and 2 pp above benchmark), the support – and the evolution of this support – is having a measurable and improving impact on student outcomes.

101. The ULBS focus on employability is illustrated in our **Employability Pyramid** (Figure 2 below), which visually represents the skills that are and will be most in demand in the coming years as assessed through analysis of a wide range of sources (see paragraph 13). These are the skills that we have committed to helping our students develop in concert with their academic knowledge in the time that they spend with us and that are now embedded in every module at ULBS.
102. Although special emphasis is placed on the development of cognitive and learning skills in their Professional Development classes, which focus specifically upon employability and leadership, the pyramid is intended to increase awareness of the key transferrable skills needed in the 21st century workplace and is relevant across all academic subjects. The Pyramid also demonstrates our commitment to helping students develop these skills not only through their academic courses, but through their other experiences and activities during their time at ULBS.
103. The ULBS Employability Pyramid, which is now integrated into the slides for every course and introduced in every module at ULBS, is a visual representation and a reminder for students and all ULBS faculty and administrators of our commitment to help our students achieve their educational gains.



Figure 2: Employability Pyramid

104. By embedding awareness of these skills in our classes and interactions with students, students are encouraged to move from simply receiving knowledge to actively participating in their development and, as a consequence, their employability and leadership. Our focus on the combined impact of cognitive, social and learning gains is purposeful to show how students achieve their educational gains.

105. Those initiatives have been instrumental in ULaw's outlook on the value added to the student experience. The educational gains model (Figure 1) is the institutional framework that has emerged to capture the interplay and act as a conduit between numerous enhancements to support the development of student employability skills <sup>30</sup>.
106. Adopting the educational gains model, built on our reflective thoughts from past interventions for employability, we can now demonstrate how individual students have developed due to our teaching, learning, extra-curricular, and support activities. Examples of how ULaw is developing an understanding of value-added for individual students include:
- A self-efficacy questionnaire which creates data to enable students and their ACs to track how they are advancing cognitively, as compared to their position at the start of their studies.
  - The introduction of the Leadership and Development Programme, supported by a reflective log, will also afford the student and their AC critical insight into their social gains and their association with employment.

### Widening Participation (WP)

107. ULaw is always cognisant of the differences in success and progression outcomes of certain underrepresented groups through our Access and Participation Plan (APP) work. Our broad aim within our 2020/21 – 2024/25 Access and Participation Plan <sup>26</sup> is to focus on improving outcomes for BAME students and students from IMD Q1-2, as well as additional specific targets for mature students. These objectives align with the key split indicators for underrepresented groups within our continuation, completion and progression data where we are below benchmark.
108. Through our **Widening Participation and Access Committee** and EDI Executive we have the structures in place to undertake a wide range of work to meet these objectives:
- Access and Participation leads on ULaw's access and participation planning and coordination of project delivery.
  - The Widening Participation and Access Committee devolves WP initiatives across ULaw under four workstreams: (a) Access (b) Success (with a sub-working group on Mature Students) (c) Progression and (d) Data, Research, and Evaluation.
  - Executive Board member, leads the EDI Executive Team with four key workstreams: (a) Staff Representation (b) Monitoring Inclusive Learning (c) Awarding Gaps (d) Accessibility and Wellbeing.
109. Key initiatives delivered in these areas are:
- The **BAME Advocates** scheme which runs across campuses and cohorts, and which has the purpose of improving the outcomes and experiences of BAME students. Their work encompasses a wide range of activity such as working to improve assessment practices (see paragraph 38), reviewing academic modules and materials (see paragraph 68) as well as delivering events and activities around cultural events and producing regular podcasts and newsletters for staff and students.
  - Our campus **Widening Participation Champions** who are members of academic staff from across the University who have dedicated time as part of their roles for them to work to address the university's awarding gaps. The champions' experience and expertise as tutors is crucial for this work in understanding our students and how best to achieve equitable outcomes and experiences.

### Continuation

110. Student **continuation** data for full-time study across all years is on or above the benchmark but varies from year to year. Year 1 is on benchmark (indicator 91.4%; benchmark 91.4%) compared to Year 4, where we are 3.7pp above the benchmark (indicator 95.6%; benchmark 91.9%). In the most recent year, we have reduced the gap in **completion** rates from 4.8pp below benchmark (three-year course entrants in 2015/16 (year 3 TEF data, completing in 2018)) to 1.7pp below benchmark (three year course entrants in 2016/17, completing in 2018/19)). Based on our internal data, we anticipate that our completion data will move closer to benchmark. The information below (paragraphs 0-129) shows that ULaw has a proactive approach to improving our completion data.
111. As mentioned in paragraph 107 ULaw's main target groups for the APP are BAME, IMD Q1&2 and Mature students to address gaps in our continuation and completion data for these groups.
112. Students aged 31+ are materially below the benchmark for continuation at 4.4pp. We have initiated several projects to help improve the engagement levels of mature students which we hope will improve this figure. Notably, we have a specific **Mature Students Working Group** which is

developing a range of activities to improve the engagement levels of mature students, including information pre-entry, the ULaw Academic Writing Level 1 Course which is designed to improve or give our students' academic skills a boost before starting their course and an investigation as to how we can encourage mature students across campuses to connect with each other. Furthermore, as many mature students study online, the Online Campus runs *Return to Study* drop-in sessions for students to support those who have been away from study for some time. The campus is also running 'Masterclass' sessions where members of support services teams highlight to students the wide range of support available to them.

113. Black student, mixed-race student and disabled student continuation rates are above benchmark. This suggests that the provisions ULaw is putting in place to support disabled students as outlined in paragraph 114 and the work of the BAME Advocates scheme are having an impact.
114. As set out in paragraph 55 above, the Student Support and Wellbeing teams provide high quality, student-centred services that aim to remove barriers to learning and enhance the student experience in addition to continuation and completion. The Wellbeing Services (wellbeing advice, mental health) support students to overcome concerns and difficulties and aid mental wellbeing so they can achieve their full potential. The Disability and Inclusion Service identifies the learning needs and offers guidance on adjustments through individual inclusion plans, to ensure equal opportunity, access and attainment for all. Throughout the year, the above services facilitate workshops and provide staff training delivered through themed days and an annual Disability and Inclusion conference.
115. ULaw provides students with access to a wide range of **financial support packages** designed to ease financial strain and enable students to focus on, continue and complete their studies. Some of these packages are targeted to vulnerable groups such as care experienced and estranged students or those in digital poverty (particularly important during the pandemic). When we surveyed 125 students in receipt of financial support (UG and PG) in 2019/20, 88% of respondents agreed that the financial support was either somewhat or very important for their ability to continue their studies.
116. In ULaw's First Impressions Survey in 2021 <sup>32</sup>, student satisfaction with the **Student Handbook** <sup>33</sup> improved, with 66% of face-to-face students stating that the Student Handbook contains all the information required (up from 63% in 2020) and 65% able to find the required information in the Student Handbook (up from 58% in 2020). Responses from the online students improved significantly, with 86% stating that the Student Handbook contained all the required information (29% increase). Further work has since been undertaken, particularly in support services, by providing information through videos to enable students to feel part of the ULaw community and reach out for help. As a result of the Handbook's development, all students can access information about their programme more easily, which is also visible in our materially above benchmark data in most indicators. The Handbook provides students with a solid reference point from which they can answer critical queries about their course.
117. The Library team are actively involved in work around continuation, working closely with WP and EDI. In developing the Five year Library plan <sup>34</sup>, 2022-27, a student survey (April 2022) generated some helpful insights into what working spaces and facilities are needed. Each campus and programme have their own requirements and Estates, IT and Library continue to review this. A key outcome approved by the Senior Executive was the creation of a Space Committee who will be looking at how we take a cross-team approach to facilities development
118. From the JISC Digital Skills Survey 2020/21 <sup>35</sup>, we noted our students were proficient in digital communication. In contrast, their information, data, and media literacy were behind the sector average. In collaboration with the Students' Union, focus groups were conducted to understand where and how to enhance student skills acquisition. ULaw recognised that the development of such skills would support student continuation.
119. In this regard, a cross-university working group developed the **University of Law Digital Characteristics Framework** <sup>36</sup> for Undergraduate and Postgraduate students. From the Library and Digital Academy Services Analytics Report (February 2022) <sup>37</sup> we note 1428 students accessed (what was then) the Digital Academy (now Skills Academy) in 2021/22. At the time of writing the Skills Academy has over 15,000 active users. In April 2022, the Library Service carried out a student survey to inform their Five Year Plan (including the intention to reshape the Digital Academy as a broader skills platform). 350 students responded, slightly over half of whom were studying online, rather than face-to-face. 60% of students agreed they could find information, support and training via the website and 1-2-1 appointments.
120. The **Library Survey** also found that students place a significant value on a broader range of physical and virtual resources to develop their skills alongside their subject knowledge. Most

respondents preferred a one-stop shop for all their training and resources and there was substantial interest in skills and literacy workshops. These results fed into the Library Strategy working group, which has student representation, and has led to wider leisure reading material and the rebranded Digital Academy to the Skills Academy placed on the VLE platform to which students already have access, so they can use Library and wider services.

121. The Library's Skills Academy further endeavours to support students' continuing studies through a novel concept – TWRL Model. The **Try It, Watch It, Read It, and Listen (TWRL)** model (adapted from Drago and Wagner (2004))<sup>38</sup>, creates a stepped approach for students to explore content confidently. Bite-sized 'YouTube' style podcasts provide additional methods for learning. Although intended to meet the commuter student's needs, the podcasts were also promoting collaborative engagement in the social spaces within the campus locations.

## Completion

122. We are also aware of the differences in completion rates for our underrepresented groups which interestingly differ from those for continuation. For completion, the groups of concern are mature students, those aged 21-30 are 3.9pp below benchmark, while older mature students (31+) are 1.4 pp above. This may partially be explained by the lower continuation rates for students aged 31+ as those who continue into their second year of studies are more likely then to finish the course. The interventions mentioned above (paragraph 112) to improve levels of engagement for mature students will in turn improve these completion rates.
123. Students of all ethnicities have lower than benchmark completion rates with Black and Mixed-Race students being materially below benchmark at 3.7pp and 7.4pp respectively. ULaw is aware of this issue and has a dedicated group looking at Awarding Gaps (which encompasses completion) and the BAME Advocates Scheme. Through the adoption of **Universal Design for Inclusive Learning principles**, and staff training such as racial literacy training for academic staff and culturally sensitive training for business professional staff, we will ensure that all our materials and means of delivery of teaching and support are inclusive and culturally appropriate. We have participated in a collaborative Culturally Sensitive Curriculum Scales research project with other higher education providers who are members of NERUPI (Network Evaluating and Researching University Participation Interventions). Overall, BAME students from ULaw found their curriculum more sensitive (4.28/6) than BAME students at all institutions surveyed (4.12/6).
124. To support our continuation and completion rates, we have provided additional support for students during and after the pandemic period. Our student demographic has a high percentage of WP characteristics and we know that students with at least one WP characteristic were more likely to be absent from assessment during the pandemic, impacting their ability to complete studies during their course. We saw the impact operate on two levels; (a) students at home studying in less than conducive environments, in some cases noisy, overcrowded with distractions and increased burden of caring responsibilities and (b) reduced access to our resources i.e., in person teaching, fellow students, library facilities etc. We ensured that our campuses were open for students, who could book study places, we provided laptops and Wi-fi dongles and a specific covid hardship bursary.
125. To mitigate the impact of the disruption caused by the pandemic on student assessment, ULaw introduced a No Detriment policy<sup>18</sup> in April 2020, which remained in place until 31st July 2021. As part of the No Detriment policy, we also reviewed our rules regarding concessions for absence which meant that students were not penalised if they could not sit an assessment during the pandemic and were automatically given an additional attempt to sit that assessment later.
126. Training for the Student Journey Advisor (SJA) team included racial literacy/cultural awareness training, as this had been identified as a particular need by the BAME Advocates Group/ Director of EDI. We anticipate that the introduction of the SJAs and Academic Coaches will support student continuation and completion strategies, provide careers advice, and encourage confidence building. Motivation levels have increased, contributing to student engagement. Students' self-efficacy and confidence are notably changing through the AC interventions, as seen in the pilot schemes run in the Bloomsbury and Birmingham campuses. Notably, the SJA and AC also signpost students to bespoke services and opportunities around the University.
127. Mock exams are one of many formative assessment opportunities where we encourage student continuation and completion of the programme. For example, a set of questions that candidates can expect in the summative assessment. Although the mock is shorter, it provides opportunities for reflection and assistance to develop knowledge and understanding. While the mocks and other formative assessments are not compulsory, students are strongly advised to undertake them. Past evidence shows student participation in formative assessments is an indicator of likely success in

summative assessments. We attribute this, in part, to the extensive feedback we give students during the mock examinations.

128. As outlined in paragraph 67, ULaw is trialling opportunities for students to choose their mode of assessment. In addition, for each programme there are recorded **catch-up sessions**. These sessions prepared by academic staff cover key points from up to four sessions. They are not designed to replace face to face learning but as a guide to support students identify the keys areas of learning and assessment.
129. Along with the **Academic and Digital Skills module** within the LLB programme, created in collaboration with the Library Service, revision sessions are available that help stretch and challenge student understanding and support completion. This is further supported through cognitive toolkits and modules that develop greater cognitive skills. For example, the LLB Critical approaches module and Graduate and Employability skills module supports the students in applying legal concepts they learn into practice.

## Progression

130. In relation to our **progression** data, overall, for the last 3 years, we are slightly below benchmark at -3.5pp (64.2% against a benchmark of 67.7%), which is disappointing. However, we feel this should be understood in the context of ULaw and our students' progression post-course. Our key target underrepresented groups for progression are mature students, BAME students and IMD Q1&2 students.
131. For BAME students, the progression rates for Asian students at 5.6pp below benchmark and black students at 3.8pp below benchmark are of particular concern. We have implemented several measures to improve student progression against these metrics such as the BAME Advocates scheme and the Race and Ethnicity Alliance with key law firms and chambers where we work collaboratively to address EDI issues in the legal and education sectors. Furthermore, our inaugural Widening Participation conference *Belong and Succeed* at Manchester in November 2022 addressed specific concerns that students from backgrounds non-traditional to law might have about going into the legal sector, providing students with the opportunity to engage with role models from their own background. Pre-conference, 75% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I am aware of the career opportunities available to me'. This rose to 95.8% in the post-conference survey.
132. A high proportion of our law students continue onto our professional postgraduate courses, specifically the Legal Practice Course (LPC). This is a positive outcome but is not shown clearly in the progression measure as captured by the Graduate Outcome survey. This is because the census date (15 months) falls just after (around 3 months) after interim study (LPC) has completed meaning the student has only been in the labour market for a short period. Interestingly, when surveyed 15 months after their postgraduate/ interim courses has completed, our students show very strong positive graduate outcomes (88% in graduate level employment for full-time taught postgraduates which is 18 points higher than the 70% threshold for B3 outcomes) which is important given the professional focus of our law degree.
133. Despite this, ULaw's most recent graduate data shows a strong upward trend at 68.5% which is 2pp above the benchmark (66.5%). This is an improvement from Year 1 of the data at 64.6%, which was 6.1pp below benchmark. This suggests that that our key measures designed to improve student progression rates such as student participation in an extensive range of pro bono opportunities, the Commercial Awareness Challenge, availability of individual employability appointments for students, a wide range of employability workshops, the ULaw mentoring scheme and the availability of ongoing employability team support once studies have ended (as variously detailed in paragraphs 95-105) are all having a positive impact.
134. Progression rates of students eligible for free school meals, at 5.9pp below benchmark are a concern. Because we do not have access to reliable free school meal data, we target our support for students from low household income backgrounds by using other measures such as Student Finance service verified household income or IMD Q1&2. In the summer of 2020, The Employability Service and Widening Participation team introduced the **Volunteer Bursary Programme** targeted at students with a low household income and those from vulnerable groups such as care experienced and estranged students to give them the opportunity to volunteer which they may not have been able to do so for financial reasons (and to replace a planned summer internship scheme that could not take place due to lockdowns). As part of the programme participants are asked to complete a self-evaluation of their skills pre- and post-volunteering, rating their 'ability' between 1 and 10 across 18 common employability skills. The expectation is that, as students participate in

their volunteering experience, their skill level will increase. This is what happens in most cases. However, a drop in skill level is not a negative outcome – it reflects increasing self-awareness on behalf of the participant. Therefore, it would be expected, particularly in skills which are less commonly utilised (and therefore harder to self-assess) that there would be some drops. Taking an average of averages, across all 18 skills, there was a small increase (to be expected in a short placement) for each year of the programme. In 2020/21 this was a positive overall change of 0.7, on a scale of 1-10.

135. Positively, students with a disability have a slightly higher progression rate at 3.7pp below benchmark than those without at 4pp, which indicates that our disability support services interventions such as the availability of individual appointments with disability support staff, disability support workshops for students, assessment assistance workshops, and study skills workshops are having a positive impact.
136. ULaw takes an evidence-based approach to supporting educational gains development. Students are made aware of the various opportunities available to them at ULaw via various means such as by email, ELITE or campus-specific notifications and signage.
137. The Employability team appoint **Employability Ambassadors** each year from Year 2 undergraduate cohorts to assist in the development of learning, cognitive and social gains that underpin a student's employability attributes. In particular, the ambassadors facilitate student insight into their identity formation and navigate how they integrate with their social community, both within higher education and in the public sector. Ambassadors are accessible to their student peers at ULaw employability events. As such, they help demonstrate to other students that employability is something that students in their peer group should be actively considering. The Ambassadors, who are paid for their work, also gain valuable employability experience through participating in these events
138. As outlined in paragraph 11 above, ULaw has close relationships with **employers** from various sectors, particularly those whose work is directly relevant to the disciplines offered by the University, such as the legal profession and police forces. Employers input into course design in several ways. Undergraduate programmes are designed with regulators who represent employers in particular professions. For example, the BSc (Hons) Professional Policing is regulated by the College of Policing, which is responsible for setting standards, providing training and sharing good practice among everyone in the policing profession. The collaborative partnership with the regulator, students, and academic staff ensures educational gains are identified, measurable and achievable within the curriculum to become a Police Officer.

## Educational Gains

139. A recent collaborative activity that successfully approved a programme included educational gains in the pre-programme approval documentation. This was the four year online LLB developed in conjunction with the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEX), the regulators of the Legal Executives profession. This programme supports students to attain Paralegal or Advanced Paralegal status under the CILEX Professional Qualification Framework.
140. As mentioned, ULaw as a professional focused university supports our students to achieve their educational gains through authentic learning opportunities and assessments that **mirror real-life situations**. Examples of this include:
  - The virtual reality learning experience within the BSc (Hons) Professional Policing degree allows students to explore major road traffic accidents in a safe and controlled manner. Whilst their cognitive skills, particularly analytical and problem-solving, are developed, so is their well-being and resilience acuity when dealing with job role challenges. Their engagement in the problem-solving situation permits them to form their professional identity (**Social Gain**).
  - A crime scene suite is also used within the BSc (Hons) Professional Policing programme so that students can act as the first responders to a crime scene and handle witnesses. This sensory scene immerses students in developing skills across the Educational gains model.
141. **Authentic assessments** are chosen to ensure that, across an entire programme, students demonstrate the skills they will need in the workplace. For example, assessment methods include problem questions and case study scenarios; written work in a style relevant to the workplace such as a project report; oral presentations; group presentations; commenting on draft documents such as a witness statement or legal defence; and role-playing giving evidence in court, interviewing a suspect, and the initial stages of a police investigation.



142. Realistic social contexts are used to ensure that scenarios reflect society. In keeping with ULaw's inclusive design policy, case studies and problems will reflect our student body and the wider society and involve a diverse range of characters.
143. Educational gains are continuously occurring throughout the student university experience. They are intended to go beyond graduates' typical skills and attributes. Some examples of those gains and how we measure them are listed below:
- *Your Day in Court* This event is delivered at all campuses to all Year 1 students. It takes place during the first Semester, often in Freshers Week, and involves the students taking part in a scripted court trial. Students play the role of lawyers, and witnesses and the police and practitioners are often involved to act as judges. Students who do not have parts will observe as an audience. The event develops new students' knowledge and understanding of law and enables them to build their confidence (links to **Cognitive gains**) to make new friends and speak in front of members of their cohort. It also links to identity and social inclusion (**Social gains**) as practitioners involved are typically from backgrounds representative of the student body.
  - *Mooting and Mock Trials* Campuses run mooting competitions and mock trials which enable students to develop their knowledge and understanding of the law and think critically and reflect on their performance. Local practitioners are also involved in these events as judges. This also links to identity and social inclusion (**Social Gains**) as practitioners involved are typically from backgrounds which are representative of the student body and builds students confidence in public speaking (**Cognitive Gains**).
  - *Crown Court Sentencing Workshop* Guildford campus students attend a Crown Court Sentencing Workshop at Guildford Crown Court. The Workshop is delivered by a Crown Court judge and helps put into action students' knowledge and understanding of sentencing from their studies. This also develops students' cultural capital as they may not have attended court before (**Cognitive Gains**). The students who attended provided positive feedback on how their confidence improved when speaking legal professionals.
  - *Birmingham Law Society Student Membership* ULaw pays for students on the LLB in Birmingham to have student membership of Birmingham Law Society. Birmingham campus also works closely with Birmingham Black Lawyers (BBL) sponsoring students each year to attend their annual networking dinner and all students can join BBL. These memberships enable students to attend a variety of events run by Birmingham Law Society and Birmingham Black Lawyers Society which can develop their knowledge and understanding of Law outside of the context of their programmes. Attending these events, particularly those with the Birmingham Black Lawyers Society, also develops students' sense of identity in meeting legal professionals from a range of backgrounds and their cultural capital (**Social Gains**). Attendance can also improve student confidence and self-efficacy (**Cognitive Gains**). For example, a recent speed networking event had over 40 student attendees with overwhelmingly positive feedback from students about the benefit of being able to interact with role models from a similar background.
  - The *BSc Professional Policing Response Policing and Police Investigations* module creates additional elements in the curriculum where students use a Crime Scene Suite. Role-playing at an authentic crime scene affords students a deeper understanding of conducting investigations without contaminating the evidence or placing themselves at risk. The learning from the curricular content is enhanced further through the opportunity to make mistakes in a safe environment that encourages reflection-in-action. The role play deepens the learner's understanding of handling an investigation and refining their behaviour to act effectively and professionally as police officers. We measure this effectiveness and the development of cognitive gains through controlled debriefing sessions. Students reflect on their lived experience and describe it through the different stages of Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (1988)<sup>39</sup>. To date, students describe the impact of the role-play as a critical element to preparing them for policing duties.
  - *Communicating with Impact* The Birmingham campus runs a session for Year 3 undergraduates which is led by an external consultant to develop students' confidence and networking skills. The day involves students learning techniques for engaging in small talk at networking events as well as a 'forum theatre' piece where students critique a role play of an interview for a work experience placement (**Cognitive Gains**).
  - *Investment Business Game* The Birmingham campus runs an investment business game which all undergraduates are invited to participate in. The game develops students understanding of how businesses operate (**Learning Gains**) and also builds their confidence in making decisions, leadership and teamwork (**Social Gains**).

- *Debating and Negotiation Competitions* Campuses offer debating and negotiation competitions to students which enable them confidence in public speaking and develop skills required in the workplaces. The competition was open to all undergraduate cohorts and feedback was positive.
  - *GRIT Workshop* London Bloomsbury are piloting this Semester a workshop ran by GRIT which aims to help students who are new to studying at University make new connections and form new friendships, get motivated and find their focus, develop the confidence and resilience to succeed, take charge and control of their University experience and discover how to get the support they may need (**Social Gains**). 92% (n=23) of students report that their sense of self efficacy has improved as a result of the participating in the programme. 93% (n=24) report that their sense of belonging and community has increased. 97% (n=25) report that they have a better understanding of, and increased likelihood of requesting support. 88% (n=23) report that they have a better understanding of the relationship between expectations and reality and how that impacts the choices they make.
  - Finally, a sense of identity and social inclusion through **Social Gains** is measured in student surveys and conversations with SJAs and Academic Coaches.
144. Historically we have gathered feedback on the impact of these activities in an informal way such as student feedback at the events, after the events and at SSLCs. However, we intend to start to measure impact in more formal ways going forward including the Leadership and Development Award referred to in paragraphs 107 and 149.
145. The Academic Enhancement Team offer one-to-one coaching to students who wish to author a manuscript based on the knowledge and research undertaken during the course. This type of educational gain spans learning, cognitive and social gains where students broaden their transferable skills in articulating a compelling narrative for a global audience (Gurung, 2021) <sup>40</sup>. Through the coaching process, students explore how to write for publication, publishing etiquette, peer review and copyright contracting.
146. Other extra-curricular activities that support educational enhancement through social events include:
- *Peer mentoring* The Manchester campus is trialling a peer mentoring scheme in which second year LLB students mentor Year 1. For the students taking part as mentors, the scheme helps to develop their leadership and interpersonal skills and provide an opportunity to self-reflect on their own studies and career aspirations. For those who are mentored, the scheme helps with their transition to University and provides an opportunity to develop confidence and good working relationships (**Cognitive Gains**).
  - *Social Events to Mark Key Cultural Events* Campuses (particularly Birmingham) stage social events throughout the year which specifically focus on celebrating and marking key cultural holidays. For example, there was recently a Diwali celebration and last year Ramadan was marked with an Iftar event that was open to all. These events can develop students' sense of social belonging and also, for those not familiar with the cultures celebrated, cultural capital (**Social Gains**), numbers of students attending range from 40 to 100.
147. In 2023 ULaw will pilot a scheme at the Bloomsbury Campus to ensure all students including undergraduates are aware of all of the events, sessions and opportunities available to them from different departments such as Employability, Pro Bono, Placements, the Digital Academy, specific clubs and societies via a monthly newsletter. Importantly, Academic Coaches will also be provided with a copy of this monthly newsletter so that they can use it as a reference point from which to encourage students to participate in and focus upon the various opportunities made available to them at ULaw which would help them achieve their individual goals and progress their professional practice.
148. Running concurrently, as a pilot scheme at the Bloomsbury Campus, Academic Coaches (ACs) will also encourage students to complete a reflective log which will articulate their individual goals both in a broader sense of employment and further education ambitions, but also at a more itemised level, broken down to individual learning, cognitive and social gains. The AC meets with students regularly to guide them towards setting their goals and selecting activities and opportunities (as highlighted in the monthly newsletter, for example) to help them achieve these goals. This iterative process of goal setting, activity selection and activity review will be captured via each student's reflective log, the completion of which will help them to appreciate and articulate the distance that they have travelled whilst at ULaw in terms of their cumulative educational gains. For example, within the coaching sessions, self-agency will be discussed, and students will be empowered to take action for their learning. This cognitive skill will develop student drive for learning, and application of their knowledge and skills through authentic learning and assessment.
149. As mentioned in paragraph 106, from October 2022 the Birmingham Campus is piloting a Leadership and Development Programme which encourages students to track their extra-curricular

activities via a reflective log. Completing this reflective log will help capture how students have developed socially and cognitively, including in terms of their identity, presence, social inclusion, personal welfare in communities and cultural capital through participation in extra-curricular and volunteering activities. Completion of the reflective log will help students to focus upon their own self-development, accelerating their own learning and reflective skills, whilst underlining the wealth of opportunities that are available at ULaw. The rationale for this programme is that we understand that many of our students have part-time jobs, caring responsibilities and/or financial restraints on their time and as such there are sometimes barriers in the way of participation in extra-curricular activities. The programme aims to make it easier to access extra-curricular activities and for the award to give them an incentive to participate and to demonstrate the activities' value. Research also suggests (for example Abruzzo et al, 2016) <sup>41</sup> that participation in extra-curricular activities can also lead to learning gains and improved academic outcomes. We have gathered positive anecdotal feedback from students and are now looking to develop our approach to evaluating the educational gains within this initiative.

150. We gather student feedback and comments from Student Staff Liaison Committee members on the value added to the learning experience or knowledge acquisition. For example, students who evaluated the Crown Court Sentencing Workshop found the experience rewarding by providing authentic learning opportunities within a court room. Their observation of the court proceedings provided greater clarity on how they can develop their advocacy skills and skills for employment.
151. Within the BSc Professional Policing Degree, Response Policing and Police Investigations is the module that makes the most use of the crime scene suites, role plays in other locations, and virtual reality. We have noted from student feedback and their median assessment results that the use of virtual reality contributes to strong module outcomes. The median mark on the module is 69.5% (Bloomsbury) and 74.0% (Leeds), with 88.9% of the students at Bloomsbury achieving a 2:1 or 1st and 100% at Leeds achieving a 2:1 or 1st.
152. ULaw's approach to educational gains aims to be evidence-based and to ensure every student can develop their learning from different starting points. We acknowledge our educational gains model is evolving and growing, and we will utilise individual student data through our learning analytics system to support each student. In time, the system will grow to allow ACs to measure educational gains, support the student to reflect on the educational gains identified in the programme specifications and use those skills for fulfilling their career ambitions.
153. The learning analytics data will enable a basis for conversations between the AC and their student to support and guide them in succeeding in their intended gains and beyond. Adopting the Educational Gains model, built on our reflective thoughts from past interventions for employability, we will be able to demonstrate how individual students have developed due to our teaching, learning, extra-curricular and support activities.

## Conclusion

154. We have read the student submission with keen interest and look forward to continuing to work with our students through the Students' Union. We will reflect upon, invest in, and seek to consistently address all the issues identified.
155. We are the leading provider of legal education and training in England and Wales with a highly distinctive model of applied learning and teaching which is focused unambiguously on access to the professions and employability. Through our unique relationships and engagement with employers we have developed an individualised and flexible learning experience enabling our students to develop additional skills and knowledge beyond the curriculum. NSS results were consistently high during the pre- and intra-covid period, exceeding 90% satisfaction for 'Staff are good at explaining things' in all years other than 2022. ULaw was ranked the best University in England for Teaching in the NSS 2021. We do of course recognise that there are areas in which we need to enhance our performance in 2023 and 2024 and have detailed initiatives to deliver this.
156. Throughout this narrative we have demonstrated ULaw's singular commitment to the consistent enhancement of the student experience and student outcomes. Utilising data particularly from the APP, the NSS and End of Year Surveys together with the student voice we will continue to improve the student experience from first interaction to graduation and beyond as working professionals. As a result of our approach to WP and the accessibility of our city centre campuses, ULaw is privileged to have a diverse undergraduate student body. We are proud of our student outcomes and of our alumni who are breaking barriers, particularly in Law thereby driving and increasing the diversity of the profession. We will continue to break new ground and seek greater achievements in the future through focused impact assessment and consistent innovation in our Educational Gains framework.

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