



Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023

Summary TEF 2023 panel statement

Lincoln College

Summary of outcomes

Overall: Silver

Typically, the experience students have at Lincoln College and the outcomes it leads to are very high quality.

Student experience: Silver

The student academic experience is typically very high quality.

Very high quality features include:

- embedded teaching, feedback and assessment practices that are effective in supporting students' learning, progression, and attainment
- the use of research in relevant disciplines and employer engagement that contribute to a very high quality student academic experience
- very high quality support for staff professional development and excellent academic practice is promoted
- a supportive learning environment in which students have access to a readily available range of very high quality academic support
- physical and virtual learning resources used effectively to support very high quality teaching and learning
- evidence that the provider effectively engages with its students, leading to improvements to the experiences and outcomes of its students.

Student outcomes: Silver

Student outcomes are typically very high quality.

Very high quality features include:

- effective support for students to succeed in and progress beyond their studies
- very high rates of continuation and completion for students and courses
- very high rates of successful progression for students and courses.

About the assessment

The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) is a national scheme run by the Office for Students (OfS) that aims to encourage universities and colleges (providers) to improve and deliver excellent teaching, learning and student outcomes.

The TEF does this by assessing and rating providers for excellence above the high quality baseline that we expect from all providers. It covers undergraduate courses.

Throughout this document, we use the terms 'outstanding' and 'very high quality', which are defined in terms of the TEF 2023 assessment as follows:

- 'outstanding': the quality of the student experience or outcomes are among the very best in the sector, for the mix of students and courses taught by a provider
- 'very high quality': the quality of the student experience or outcomes are materially above the relevant high quality minimum requirements, for the mix of students and courses taught by a provider.

The assessment was carried out in 2022-23 by the TEF Panel, a panel of academics and students who are experts in learning and teaching. This document sets out a summary of the panel's findings and judgements.

The panel reviewed the following evidence:

- numerical indicators produced by the OfS, using national datasets
- a submission made by the provider, setting out its own evidence
- a submission made by the provider's students, setting out students' views.

The panel applied its expert judgement to:

- identify particular features of the student experience and student outcomes that are excellent (above the high quality baseline requirements)
- decide a rating for the 'student experience' and for 'student outcomes'
- decide an overall rating for the provider.

Throughout the assessment the panel took account of the context of the provider and judged how well it delivers teaching, learning and student outcomes for its mix of students and courses.

In making its decisions the panel took account of the OfS general duties and the public sector equalities duty.

Summary of panel assessment

Information about this provider

Lincoln College has a mission 'to be an extraordinary employer-led organisation; producing a highly skilled productive local workforce'. Because it does not have degree awarding powers, the provider works with several partners to develop and deliver its higher education.

Its expressed aim is 'to support progression for further education students to meet the needs of the local economy', which aligns the provider strategy with the strategy of the Local Enterprise Partnership.

The provider delivers a suite of higher education programmes, comprising honours degrees, foundation degrees, higher national certificates and diplomas. These are validated by a range of partners. In the 2020-2021 academic year there were 370 full-time and 230 part-time undergraduate students. 70 students were studying on higher or degree apprenticeships.

67.3 per cent of full-time and 70.7 per cent of part-time students are 21 years and over, and around a third of undergraduate students are from the most deprived areas of the country.

The assessment considered information about the provider's undergraduate courses and students on those courses, including apprenticeships.

Full details about the provider's student demographics used in the TEF 2023 assessment are available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/data-used-in-tef-2023/

More information about this provider can be found on the OfS Register at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/the-register/the-ofs-register/.

Student experience: Silver

Throughout this section, we refer to indicators. These indicators are based on students' responses to the National Student Survey. The indicators are 'benchmarked' to show how well the provider performs for its particular mix of students and courses.

The panel weighed up all the evidence in the indicators and the submissions relating to the student experience aspect as a whole and determined the student experience aspect rating to be 'Silver'.

The panel found:

- six features of the aspect to be of very high quality
- one feature with insufficient evidence of very high quality.

The panel's assessment of the student experience features is set out below.

Teaching, assessment, and feedback

The panel considered this to be a very high quality feature.

The indicator for 'teaching on my course' provides evidence of outstanding quality, with a decline in performance over the time period. The panel noted that there was little mitigation given for this in the provider submission and put some weight on this data in its decision making but assessed across the whole of the four-year period.

The indicator for 'feedback and assessment' provides evidence of not very high quality.

The panel noted examples from the provider submission of how it embeds very high quality teaching, feedback and assessment practices, through:

- of a wide variety of teaching and delivery models, such as academic lectures, specialist clinics, workshops and seminars
- a learning and teaching strategy described as 'a vision for exceptional learning for all'. The panel placed weight on the strategy being mapped to a range of external higher education reference points.

The panel considered the support offered by the higher education academic writing officer detailed in the student submission as an example of very high quality provision, but that its impact on the panel's decision was limited.

In considering all the evidence, the panel concluded that the provider has embedded very high quality teaching, feedback and assessment practices that are effective in supporting its students' learning, progression, and attainment. This resulted in a very high quality rating overall for this feature.

Course content and delivery; student engagement in learning and stretch

The panel found insufficient evidence to confirm very high quality for this feature.

While there was some evidence of the provider meeting baseline expectations for this feature, which was supported by the student submission, the panel could not find evidence on how course content and delivery effectively encourage students to engage in their learning, and stretches them to develop their knowledge

and skills. Therefore, overall, there was insufficient evidence for the panel to judge this feature to be very high quality.

Research, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and employer engagement

The panel considered this feature to be of very high quality.

The panel noted that the provider demonstrates the use of research and scholarly activity to facilitate a high-quality teaching and learning experience. Effective employer engagement is also evident in the submission.

The provider's evidence includes:

- a research and scholarly activity policy that complements the professional development policy
- relationships with Lincolnshire Institute of Technology, Lincolnshire Police and University of Derby
- external academics assisting and supplementing curriculum delivery
- details of journals and publications to which staff have contributed, which enhances the teaching and learning experiences of students.

The student submission added weight to the panel's assessment, as it demonstrates employer engagement opportunities and other enrichment activities that support a very high quality experience for students. The panel therefore concluded that the provider uses research in relevant disciplines, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and/or employer engagement to contribute to a very high quality academic experience for its students.

Staff professional development and academic practice

The panel found this to be a very high quality feature.

The panel found evidence in the provider submission that staff development is taken seriously and there is pride in the range of activities, from teaching practices to enhancing subject specialisms, such as:

- continuous professional learning and observation of learning practices, which enhance teaching practice
- support for staff to achieve an appropriate fellowship status and plans to expand this in 2022-2023
- awards for outstanding performance.

Additionally, the panel noted that teachers are supported and encouraged to spend time in vocational settings, enhancing their dual status as educators and industry professionals.

The panel noted that the provider shows action of evidence-based intervention, such as meetings to consider the effectiveness of the support arrangements in place for each student, demonstrating a culture of continuous improvement in relation to staff development and academic practice.

Taking all of this evidence into account, the panel concluded that there is very high quality support for staff professional development and that excellent academic practice is promoted.

Learning environment and academic support

The panel considered this to be very high quality.

The indicator for 'academic support' provides evidence of very high quality, with some variation across subjects.

The provider's consistent evidence of a supportive learning environment included:

- access for students to additional funding for 'bolt-on qualifications'
- sessions with library advisers to support learners to develop academic research and study skills
- a personal support tutor programme, including a programme specifically for students with a declared disability
- a wellbeing and support co-ordinator providing mental health support and counselling, financial support and advice, and careers and guidance services.

The panel, however, found that the submission did not make it clear whether these services are tailored for higher education, although the student submission indicates that they have an impact. The student submission also says academic support is easy to access, that online chat has enabled quick access to library staff, and that small class sizes offered opportunities for direct support.

The panel considered that there was enough evidence to conclude that the provider fosters a supportive learning environment, and its students have access to a readily available range of very high quality academic support.

Learning resources

The panel found this to be a very high quality feature.

The indicator for 'learning resources' provides evidence of not very high quality.

However, the panel noted that there is a clear investment plan regarding resources, and that:

- the Institute of Technology and other capital investments give a sense of ambition and indicate that the metrics are being addressed
- there is financial investment in refurbishment of technology
- the development and funding of Aeronautical Engineering programmes are significant.

The provider acknowledged where student satisfaction is low and how it is addressing this, such as the development of library services. The student submission also discusses the introduction of significant resources in communal study areas.

The panel concluded that physical and virtual learning resources are used effectively to support very high quality teaching and learning.

Student engagement in improvement

The panel found this feature to be of very high quality.

The indicator for 'student voice' provides evidence of not very high quality.

However, the panel found evidence from both the provider and student submissions that student voice is taken seriously and used consistently throughout courses through a range of surveys and evaluation mechanisms.

The panel found evidence of improvement in the students' experiences as a result of engagement with students, such as buying additional copies of books and providing additional group library sessions to improve confidence. There are regular student engagement opportunities including student representation at deliberative boards and monthly forum meetings.

Overall the panel judged this feature to be of very high quality because the evidence indicates that the provider effectively engages with its students, leading to improvements to the experiences and outcomes of its students.

Student outcomes: Silver

Throughout this section, we refer to indicators. The indicators for continuation, completion and progression rates are based on national data about higher education students. The indicators are 'benchmarked' to show how well the provider performs for its particular mix of students and courses.

The panel determined the student outcomes aspect rating to be 'Silver'.

The panel found:

- three features to be very high quality for all students most of the time
- three features to have insufficient evidence of very high quality

The panel considered the best fit rating to be 'Silver' because although only half of the features are of very high quality, one of the features (evaluation and demonstration of educational gains) has insufficient evidence of very high quality and the guidelines allow for a rating without evidence in relation to this feature. There is evidence of educational gains within the submission.

The panel's assessment of the student outcomes features is set out below.

Approaches to supporting student success

The panel found this to be very high quality.

The provider submission describes the 'career degree' programme, its engagement with local and regional employers, and how it focuses on both the recruitment needs of the region and developing the employability skills of students. It also details how programmes focus on the delivery of qualifications and skills that make students attractive to employers.

The panel found evidence that the provider demonstrates the development of each student's personal career progression, including:

- personal careers guidance from professional advisers
- the MyCareer platform to provide tailored approaches to students' access to resources.

The student submission provided further evidence of industry-specific training, describing the student experience as feeling 'fully supported to succeed in and beyond their studies'.

Considering all the evidence, the panel concluded that the provider effectively supports its students to succeed in and progress beyond their studies, and therefore support for student success is of very high quality.

Continuation and completion rates

The panel found this to be a very high quality feature.

The indicator for 'continuation' provides evidence of outstanding quality for full-time and part-time students, although there is some variation across some subjects for full-time students. The indicator for 'completion' also provides evidence of outstanding quality for full-time and part-time students, although for apprentices it is not very high quality.

The panel found little evidence in the provider submission to detail the variations in indicator evidence. However, the panel agreed that overall there are very high rates of continuation and completion for the provider's students and courses and therefore this feature is judged to be of very high quality.

Progression rates

The panel considered this to be a very high quality feature.

The indicator for 'progression' provides evidence of outstanding quality for full-time students, but not very high quality for part-time students, although data for part-time students in years 2 and 3 of the TEF period shows improvement, which the panel found to be compelling evidence.

The student submission provides evidence of how the provider supports progression. In the provider submission, external examiner comments demonstrate there is a commitment to good progression. The panel agreed, however, that neither the evidence of the impact of these interventions nor the details in the metrics are fully explained by the provider. In spite of this, the panel concluded that the evidence is indicative of a very high quality feature, and that there are very high progression rates overall for the provider's students and courses.

Intended educational gains

The panel found insufficient evidence of very high quality for this feature.

The provider's understanding of educational gains can be inferred directly through its description of the 'career degrees' programme, which looks to add value to graduates with relevant vocational skills and industry experience. The submission sets out how, alongside their main academic qualification, all students can access additional funding to spend on 'bolt on' qualifications aligned with their career development. However the panel noted that there was no detail on what these wider skills are.

The panel therefore concluded that the lack of detail in the articulation of intended educational gains meant there was insufficient evidence of very high quality for this feature, or that the provider articulates the educational gains it intends its students to achieve, and why these are relevant to its students.

Approaches to supporting educational gains

The panel found insufficient evidence of very high quality for this feature.

The panel concluded that the provider submission indicated some elements of very high quality provision, but the evidence did not provide information about how many students are affected or how it enabled 'all or most students' to achieve education gains.

The provider submission describes how students are encouraged and supported to complete work placements and how impartial careers guidance is implemented. However, the impact of this was not explored and nor were the frequency of activities and number of students involved fully detailed.

Therefore, overall, the panel could not determine how the provider effectively supports its students to achieve these gains and concluded that there is insufficient evidence of very high quality for this feature.

Evaluation and demonstration of educational gains

The panel found insufficient evidence of very high quality for this feature.

The panel noted some evidence of activity in relation to the evaluation of educational gains, but found the evidence to be more descriptive than evaluative and that there was a gap in the evidence with respect to how gains are measured or of systematic evaluation.

The panel did note that the provider demonstrates a clear understanding of why career-related gains were relevant to its students.

The panel, therefore, found insufficient evidence of how the provider evaluates the gains made by its students, but noted that this did not affect the overall rating of the aspect.

Overall: Silver

The panel considered the overall 'best fit' rating to be 'Silver'. The panel considered the student experience aspect rating to be 'Silver' and the student outcomes aspect rating to be 'Silver'. The panel weighted these two aspects equally and considered all the evidence across all features and across all the provider's student groups, subjects and courses to come to a 'best fit' decision regarding the overall rating for the provider.