

## 1 Context and mission

1. Durham is a research-intensive, collegiate university. Our education is engaging and challenging, and underpinned throughout by research. Our students are active researchers, working side-by-side with world-leading academics and educators in small-group classroom, laboratory and real-world settings. Our collegiate wider student experience delivers tailored student support and an unparalleled range of leadership and development opportunities.
2. From the outset, we take a long-term view. Our mission is to prepare today's students for tomorrow's challenges and opportunities. We want to empower all students to learn and develop to their full potential, producing graduates who are prepared for immediate employment and further study, but also for a meaningful life and full career. The achievements of all our students – including their outstanding rates of degree completion and progression to professional employment and further study – demonstrate our continued success in meeting this objective.
3. In the implementation of our University Strategy 2017-2027 we have increased, and are increasing, the diversity of students we enrol. We are investing in learning resources and student support, ensuring all students are offered an outstanding academic experience leading to outstanding student outcomes. Since 2018, we have built an innovative and RIBA award-winning £40M Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC), brought academic and student support staff together in our integrated Durham Centre for Academic Development (DCAD), invested significantly in additional teaching staff, and are delivering an ambitious plan for improving access.
4. These investments in our staff and our estate left us well placed to tackle the wide-reaching challenges raised by Covid, strike action, and the cost-of-living crisis, and to continue to implement our Strategy and deliver our educational mission throughout.

### 1.1 Institutional strategy and student partnership

5. In implementing our education strategy, and delivering our mission, we engage in overlapping cycles of reflection, innovation and analysis at every level. This pattern runs through the teaching of every module, and informs planning and delivery in every department and faculty. It means partnering with all of our students and student groups – working closely with our Students' Union sabbatical officers, our joint student-staff committees and elected representatives for every course, our college common rooms, and with our students as individuals.
6. Our student partnerships are central to the development and implementation of educational strategy. Student feedback informed the drive to embed research, employability, multi-disciplinarity and languages in every course, leading to the incorporation of Principles for the Development of the Taught Curriculum (*Principles*) in 2015. In 2018, as part of our 2017-27 Strategy (*Strategy*), Durham began work on Objectives for Curriculum Reform (*Curriculum Reform*), working in partnership with our students to address the needs of an increasingly diverse student body, and to fully engage pedagogical developments enabled by digital technology. This work was particularly significant as we responded to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, protecting and supporting our students during an incredibly challenging time. In 2021, as we returned to delivering a fully residential and face-to-face experience, we have refreshed our education strategy with the development of new Principles for Learning, Teaching and Assessment (*LTA*), focused on how we teach, assess, and engage students in their learning, building on the innovations of the last three years.

## 1.2 Size and shape

7. Durham is a collegiate university, and all of our students are members of both an academic department and a college. Our Faculties of Arts & Humanities, Business, Science, and Social Sciences & Health, contain 27 academic departments, each of which designs, organises and delivers our courses, and provides academic support to students. Our 17 colleges are mixed communities of staff and students from all subject areas, each of which offers an active and welcoming community to students, opportunities for cross-disciplinary discussion in an intellectually fertile environment, as well as welfare and wellbeing support, and a wide-range of co- and extra-curricular educational activities.
8. We are committed to widening access and participation, and to creating an inclusive and inspiring environment where all students, from all backgrounds, can achieve the extraordinary. We have significantly diversified our undergraduate student body in recent years, in proportional as well as absolute terms. Our undergraduate students have increased from 13,668 in 2017-18 to 17,245 in 2021-22, initially as part of our planned growth strategy, and latterly in the light of the increase in A-level grades. As outlined in our Access & Participation Plans, our focus has been on facilitating access to higher education for students from Low Participation Neighbourhoods: we have doubled the proportion of UK entrants from Polar 1 postcodes from 5% in 2016 to 7% in 2019 and 10% in 2022. In the same period, the ratio of Polar 5 to Polar 1 entrants has more than halved, from 9.8 (2016) to 3.9 (2022), and the proportion of entrants with a declared disability has risen more than 70% from 11% to 18%. In the past four years, we have seen a 70% growth in UK Black undergraduate entrants, from 1.3% to 2.1%, and we have recruited almost a quarter of our UK undergraduate entrants through our widening access schemes (including our Foundation Programme, Supported Progression, the Sutton Trust, and our guaranteed contextual offers, see paragraph 52).<sup>1</sup> To support incoming students, we have increased our UG studentship and bursary offering (including our Durham Inspired bursaries targeting applicants based in the north east) to £20m over the last four years, with £7.25m committed in 2022. As we look to diversify the student body more broadly, we have also increased the proportion of international (non-EU) undergraduate entrants from 16% to 27% between 2016 and 2022.
9. We are committed to ensuring all our students have an outstanding academic experience leading to outstanding outcomes. This written submission, drafted with input from and shared with representatives from Durham Students' Union, provides additional evidence demonstrating how we deliver this. In particular, we explain:
  - a. how our cycles of reflection and engagement with students and subject experts leads to outstanding teaching, learning and assessment for all student groups, within a learning environment that is supportive and inspiring. Our students progressively develop as independent and confident learners, culminating in a capstone research project in their final year, seen by students as a high point of their studies (Sections 3-4);
  - b. how a Durham educational experience, delivered across the University, prepares all our students to succeed in, and progress from, their studies, with tailored support to help all students successfully make the transition to university study and onwards to achieve their ambitions (Sections 4-5). Outcomes for all of our student groups are outstanding, and we address the small number of areas where this has not been fully captured in the TEF metrics (Section 2).

## 2 Consistently outstanding student outcomes

10. The impact of a Durham education is recognised in national and international league tables and rankings. Nationally, we are currently ranked 6th in the *Complete University Guide* 2023, the *Times Good University Guide* 2023, the *Guardian University Guide* 2023 and the THE's 2022 Table of Tables. Globally, we are rated as the 26<sup>th</sup> most international university in the world (*Times Higher Education* 2022), and rank 92<sup>nd</sup> in the *QS World University Rankings* 2023, placing 54<sup>th</sup> internationally for employability, with 19 of our subject areas ranked in the QS World Top 100. In the National Student Survey 2022, our overall student satisfaction was 80.4%, 23<sup>rd</sup> highest in the sector,<sup>2</sup> and we have ranked consistently in the top fifth of providers over the last 3 years, despite the impacts of both Covid (including the additional regional restrictions placed on the North East from September 2020-January 2021) and strike action.
11. Durham's student outcomes, captured by continuation, completion and progression rates, are consistently outstanding:
  - a. Our full-time continuation rate is **96.8%**, putting us amongst the top 10 English universities, and we outperform even our **very high benchmark**. For the 55 reportable split metrics, our high benchmark values are flagged in the split metrics a further 40 times, with 3 more areas highlighted as being significantly and materially above benchmark, including mature students over 31, and those with an integrated foundation year. While student numbers are small for part-time continuation (140), we are 14.9 percentage points (pp) above the benchmark, and materially above benchmark (78-100% statistical likelihood) for every reportable disadvantaged and under-represented student group.
  - b. Our overall, full-time completion rate is **97.5%**, putting us amongst the top 5 English universities, and we outperform our **extremely high, flagged benchmark**. For the 53 reportable split metrics, our high benchmark values are highlighted a further 35 times, with 2 areas highlighted as being significantly and materially above benchmark (including international students). Part-time completion rates appear lower; however, this is a statistical artefact caused by changes in the reporting of students on a specific partnership arrangement, and we are well above benchmark when this is taken into account (see paragraph 16).
  - c. Our overall indicator for full-time progression is **83.1%**, putting us amongst the top 10 English universities, and materially above our benchmark of 80.3%. Of the 50 reportable split metrics, 33 have a more than 50% likelihood of being materially above benchmark. Part-time progression rates appear lower; however, this is due to a systematic issue in the coding of one graduate-level accountancy role. We are significantly above our benchmark when this is taken into account (see 20).
12. The benchmarked metrics show a consistent pattern of success for Durham students from under-represented and disadvantaged groups, who have comparable, and frequently higher, relative rates of completion and progression. We actively monitor the progress of students from other specific groups who similarly show consistently outstanding outcomes (see 53). We have reviewed the small number of splits where our TEF outcomes metrics appear weaker than we would expect, and have established that in most cases this is due to anomalies in the calculation of data for specific groups of students. Findings from our analysis, and the action we have taken, are summarised below.

### 2.1 Pharmacology, toxicology and pharmacy: continuation and completion

13. The first data anomaly relates to students on our former Pharmacy course. In 2017, we repurposed our Stockton-based Queen's Campus to consolidate teaching and support services in one location and enhance the student experience and student outcomes. Most Stockton-based courses were relocated to our main Durham City campus; however, for the MPharm Pharmacy, we worked with Newcastle University and the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC), as the accrediting body, to transfer all provision (students, resources and staff) to Newcastle, providing continuation of study. In TEF, these students have all been identified as 'transfers' and excluded from the continuation and completion indicators entirely, meaning the denominator is very small, including only those students who moved to cognate courses at Durham or withdrew, with financial compensation. This is unrepresentative, because the vast majority of those who transferred to Newcastle went on to graduate. Through our internal records, we've traced 200 of the 'transfer' students in the completion metric, at least 172 (86%) of whom left with a higher education award.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, for continuation: of the 72 Pharmacy starters in 2016/17 (the final intake of the course and only year of data in this TEF metric), 65% had transferred on their year 1 census date, according to the individualised files, with 15 inactive. Of these 15, a further are recorded as transferred by year 2, and by year 4 of these 2016 entrants had qualified or successfully transferred. We are therefore assured that students on our former Pharmacy course had very successful outcomes, in line with our other programmes.

### 2.2 UK Black students: continuation

14. Ensuring UK Black students are welcomed to Durham in greater numbers and thrive on our courses is core to our successful 2022 Advance HE Bronze Race Equality Charter (REC) submission (described as "outstanding" and "one of the best they had seen" by the panel).<sup>4</sup> At present, our internal analysis, which is also echoed in the TEF metric, indicates that UK Black student continuation is lower than that of other groups. We are reassured that the longer-term completion and progression metrics for Black students are well above our benchmarks (by +1.9pp and +4.7pp respectively), and that median salaries for our Black graduates are higher than the national and Durham averages.<sup>5</sup> We also know that our rates of completion are higher than those for continuation (+4.8pp) because we continue to support students who are 'inactive' at the start of year 2 but want, and are able, to return to their studies later (e.g. where students resit or retake part of a year for medical or personal reasons). In this case, of the 16 Black students who were initially inactive were either continuing at Durham or elsewhere, or had left with an HE qualification, one year later, and from the 2016 entry cohort had a positive or neutral outcome by their Y4 census, which would give a longer-term continuation rate (if the known Y2 and Y4 outcomes for the same students are taken into account) of 95.5%.
15. While longer-term outcomes of our Black students are therefore very strong, we are taking additional action in the shorter term. The REC action plan, guided by our new PVC for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, includes specific measures for improving UK Black student recruitment, retention and attainment. We have seen some positive short-term outcomes already. In the TEF measures, continuation for Black students increased to 93.3% for 2019 entrants (+2.8pp on 2018), and the continuation gap (compared with White students) dropped to 5.2pp (-1.7pp on 2018), our highest rate and lowest gap over the last three years. Our internal analysis indicates that the continuation rates for Black students remained consistent for 2020 entrants (at 93%).<sup>6</sup> As with previous years, the true figure for student success is slightly higher, as who were inactive in October 2021 were retaking part of their studies, and are continuing with us in 2022-23 (pushing the continuation rate to 95.8%). We are therefore confident that our ongoing and

targeted support is working, and will continue to result in higher continuation and lower continuation gaps for Black students.

### *2.3 Part-time students: completion*

16. With relatively few dedicated part-time courses, our part-time completion measure is heavily skewed by the inclusion of around 60 students from one former partnership. The TEF indicator does not accurately reflect the true completion rate for these students, who transferred from a franchise ('sub-contracted out') course with the Lindisfarne Regional Training Partnership (which was reported to HESA) to a Durham-validated course (which was not), when Lindisfarne joined Durham's wider Common Awards partnership in 2013. As they were not submitted to HESA, these students appear in the TEF data as 'inactive' for completion, even though the majority left with successful awards. The completion figure is therefore inaccurate: matching the individualised files with our internal records for validated Common Awards student outcomes allows us to reclassify 30 students who successfully qualified, bringing the indicator for part-time completion to 89.8% (22pp above benchmark), and pulling all the part-time split metrics significantly above their benchmarks. Completion for disabled students rises to 78.3% (+11.6pp above benchmark), for 31+ students to 70.5% (+12.9pp), for IMD1-2 students to 82.8% (+15.3pp), for OUG students to 66.7% (+16.3pp) and for 'subcontracted' students to 72.9% (+11pp).<sup>7</sup>
17. This correction shows that completion rates for all our part-time students are consistently outstanding. Our remaining registered students who are 'subcontracted' all study at St John's College, an independent College of the University located in Durham. These students have full access to all of Durham's support structures and resources outlined in this submission, and have consistently outstanding experience and outcomes, which is reflected in the TEF metrics. All of the TEF student outcomes splits for FT 'subcontracted' are above their benchmarks, with continuation and progression likely to be materially so, as are four of the five student experience splits, with satisfaction with teaching and resources likely to be materially so.

### *2.4 Mature Students 31+: completion*

18. The completion metric covers students entering Durham between 2013 and 2016, and does not take account of recent changes to support structures within the University, which have improved the retention and employability of our mature students significantly. Around half of our mature students enter through our Foundation Programme (48.7% of UK entrants aged 21-30 and 48.2% for 31+), which offers non-traditional students an alternative route to university. Between 2014 and 2018, we introduced a more sophisticated admissions process, allowing us to better assess the varied support needs of students who typically have not taken A-levels, and to adopt an integrated and tailored pre-arrival and early intervention programme to provide additional support where it's needed. We have reviewed the Foundation Programme content and structure, revising routes to ensure that they prepare students for study at higher levels at Durham. All Foundation courses are now delivered at Durham's main campus, rather than across two sites. Alongside this, as part of the wider work of our new Durham Centre for Academic Development (DCAD), we launched an Academic Skills Programme designed for students with less prior experience of academic study (see 57), and introduced tailored support for career planning from Level 1 onwards through our Careers & Enterprise Centre.
19. These initiatives have had a measurable impact on the most recent retention and success data for mature students: for 31+ students' continuation and progression, we are above benchmark (materially so for continuation by +5.7pp). We were also materially above our benchmark by 6.4 and 4.3pp for 21-30 and 31+ students, respectively, in the more up-to-date compound completion

indicator piloted by the OfS earlier in the year. In the lagged cohort-tracking measure, we can see an improvement of more than 16pp between 2013 entrants (72.5%, n=51) and 2016 entrants (88.9%, n=45), i.e. the first and last years of the aggregate TEF metric. Similarly, the attainment gap for mature students (21+), which was over 16pp in 2018, has more than halved to 8pp in 2022, as our interventions have come into effect.<sup>8</sup>

### *2.5 Part-time students: progression*

20. Our part-time progression indicator, at 84.8%, is affected by a systematic coding issue for one job title. Nearly all students included in part-time progression are graduates of Durham's BSc Accounting, a bespoke course developed with KPMG and the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) in 2011, and shortlisted for a THE Employer Engagement Award in 2013. All students are employed by and work at KPMG during the course. The fact that students are already employed at a top firm in their chosen field means that the course has had consistently outstanding graduate employability – indeed, in January 2019 KPMG reported that a recent BSc Accounting graduate had just been appointed as the youngest Senior Manager at KPMG.<sup>9</sup>
21. Analysis of GO data shows that a small number of these graduates (11 from 70) have been coded in SOC group 4, with the remainder in group 2. This appears to be because they have given their job title as 'Audit Assistant'. However, the supplied job descriptions are at graduate level and they earn graduate-level salaries: the median for the Audit Assistants (coded as non-professional) was £29,750 (n=10), above both the median for Audit Associates (coded as professional; similar job description) of £29,000 (n=9), and the national GO median salary for highly skilled graduates of £27,000. In the reflective questions, all the students coded as non-professional felt their current activities fitted their future plans (100%, n=11) compared with 90% of those coded as professional, and a larger proportion of the non-professionals than professionals agreed the skills developed in their course were being used in their work (90%, n=10, vs 80%, n=51).<sup>10</sup>
22. We therefore believe that our Audit Assistant graduates, who worked for the same employer with a similar job description and salary as others coded as professional, have been wrongly coded as non-professional. If they were all recoded, the recalculated progression figure would be 95% (76/80), significantly above the benchmark of 87.9%, which would follow through to the other part-time split metrics (because Accounting is our largest part-time course by far). In practice, this correction to the data shows that our progression rates for all part-time students are consistently outstanding.

### *2.6 The impact of extended strike action on NSS*

23. We study the results of the National Student Survey very closely as part of our ongoing reflection on the quality of the student experience at all levels, and the NSS is a key source of information on student views about their course. It is, however, defined by narrow parameters (of a defined 'course'; finalists only), and needs to be understood alongside other evidence. We therefore triangulate our NSS results with other sources of student perceptions (e.g. the International Student Barometer, which surveys international students in all years of study, student focus groups, and our Module Evaluation Questionnaires), as well as the views of independent, external subject experts (e.g. the annual quantitative and qualitative analysis we undertake on the reports of our undergraduate external examiners).
24. We conducted a full review of NSS satisfaction following lower than expected performances in 2018 and 2019. After wide student consultation (with the Students' Union, and in a series of in-depth focus groups in selected departments), we agreed a set of Senate resolutions implemented across the University. Our performance against benchmark shows significant improvement

between 2019 and 2021, despite the challenges of Covid and student NSS boycotts.<sup>11</sup> Further improvement in 2022 was held back by the national strike during the NSS survey period (which particularly affected Assessment & Feedback and Student Voice).

25. In the TEF measures, we are in line with our benchmarks for Teaching, Assessment & Feedback and Academic Support; and, while reported satisfaction is lower for Learning Resources and Student Voice, our Learning Resources weaknesses are specific to 2019, and our Student Voice score is pulled down by lower performance in 2019 and strike-affected 2022. There were three waves of strike action in 2021/22: in December, just before the NSS opened, during the survey window in February and March, and with a further March ballot on an assessment boycott, with the implied threat of delayed graduation. As with the pandemic, strike action was a national-level issue over which universities had limited direct control. We mitigated the impact of action on students and reached a local agreement in May (avoiding an assessment boycott), as soon as it became possible to do so.
26. The strike affected a defined subset of universities (principally, but not only, pre-92s in the USS pension scheme): there were 60 non-specialist HEIs who returned NSS results where there was a strike mandate following a ballot at some point in 2021/22, and a smaller group of 25 HEIs which, like Durham, had strikes in both 2019/20 and 21/22, and had a mandate for further action after Easter 2022 (i.e., the threat of an assessment boycott, which the free-text comments revealed was commonly upwards in students' minds when completing the NSS). As part of our internal analysis of NSS2022, we conducted a difference-in-differences analysis, which showed that universities affected by strike action in 2019/20 and 21/22 fell by around 2.5pp in Overall Satisfaction, Assessment & Feedback, Organisation and Student Voice, in comparison with non-striking universities.<sup>12</sup> In this context, our analysis indicates there was a substantial strike impact in 2021/22, and that Durham performed relatively well when compared to other striking institutions.
27. Similarly, when compared directly against other members of the Russell Group (mostly affected by the strike action) our lowest rank for NSS areas is 12<sup>th</sup> (for Student Voice), and we are ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> for Teaching. In 2021-22, the extended strike, and particularly its timing during the NSS survey period, depressed our satisfaction scores. Without the spring strike we would likely have seen further increases in our levels of student satisfaction (of between +1 and +4.5pp), mirroring comparable improvements in the ISB (which is run in the autumn, and was unaffected by strike action), which saw improvements in most areas of the survey, in particular assessment and support (see 47, 57).

### **3 Academic experience and assessment**

#### *3.1 Our courses actively inspire, engage and stretch our students (SE2)*

28. A Durham degree is challenging by design. We stretch our students, who leave the University with the skills and abilities they will need to thrive in the future. Our internal qualification descriptors strongly emphasise the development of advanced knowledge and skills through small-group learning, independent study and research. The high quality of our courses is recognised by the 28 Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) who accredit Durham's provision, covering courses in all faculties taken by just under half of Durham's undergraduate students.<sup>13</sup> Our high standards are confirmed every year by our external examiners, who are independent subject experts giving scrutiny to our courses and awards (see 45). Durham's outstanding rates of continuation and completion demonstrate how well our students respond to and engage with their studies; our outstanding rates of progression to further study and employment show they benefit from their gain.

29. The principles and practices which underpin a Durham degree have developed over time. Our transformative *Principles for the Taught Curriculum* sought to “empower all to learn and develop to their full potential.”<sup>14</sup> With effect from 2015, all courses were revised in line with four key goals: research-informed education, inter- and multi-disciplinarity, internationalisation and employability. The *Principles* conceive of a Durham degree as a course with a strong discipline-specific spine, from which radiates a wide and flexible range of curricular and co-curricular educational opportunities. In turn, this provides students with a critical underpinning in core research skills, while ensuring they are actively engaged in their own development, and can tailor their studies to their own interests.
30. At the disciplinary level, we emphasise the power of progressive challenges, with a focus on independent and active learning, supported and encouraged by our research-active academic staff. This begins pre-arrival: 9 in 10 of our incoming students engage with our online *Transitions* programme, designed to introduce new students to education at Durham.<sup>15</sup> *Transitions* starts Durham students’ journey as disciplinary researchers. Each level of the undergraduate curriculum places incrementally greater emphasis on small-group learning and one-to-one interaction with research-active staff, culminating in a capstone research project undertaken by every student in their final year (see 36).
31. We enable our students to tailor their courses to their own academic interests. We continue to enhance the role of optionality within and beyond the curriculum, in partnership with students who stress the importance of course flexibility and the ability to manage their own learning. All students have the opportunity to take modules outside their main department during their course: in 2021-22 just under 10% of students (1623) were studying on one of our highly flexible, student-driven multi-disciplinary courses in Liberal Arts, Combined Honours, Natural Sciences or PPE. In the same year, just under half of students (6700) were studying a combination of modules that was unique to them, reflecting their strengths and interests, rising to almost 70% for undergraduate finalists.
32. The breadth and quality of our curricula is consistently recognised by our students and external subject experts as a significant strength. Over the last three years, students have praised course content in 37% of all positive NSS comments;<sup>16</sup> over the same period, as we have embedded *Curriculum Reform*, the design, quality and breadth of the curriculum has been positively cited in 47%, 59% and, most recently, 73% of all undergraduate external examiner reports:
- Quality of student intake is high, but course design and effectiveness of teaching both contribute towards the achieved outcomes. Overall, this programme is a credit to the University.* Economics, 2020
- The examples of good practice are too numerous to note. The department is exemplary in terms of the breadth of courses taught, the depth of treatment offered in the courses, and in terms of the rigorous, transparent, and helpful assessment procedures employed.* Philosophy & Religious Studies, 2021<sup>17</sup>
33. This is echoed in NSS: we are ranked 17<sup>th</sup> in the Teaching (84%) scale in NSS2022, and on the key questions that measure academic engagement – Q3. The course is intellectually stimulating (90%) and Q5. My course has provided me with opportunities to explore ideas or concepts in depth (84.8%) – we are 9<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> respectively (having ranked in the top 15 for each of the last 4 years).
- 3.2 Active participation in research significantly enhances our students’ outstanding academic experience, while developing skills that are critical for future success (SE3)*
34. All Durham students are engaged in a research-led education, used broadly to encompass research-based, research-oriented and research-informed learning. Our students work in departments where 90% of research and 97% of the research environment is internationally excellent or world leading (REF2021).<sup>18</sup> Our students are taught by outstanding researchers, and exposed to cutting-edge ideas and methodologies, from the outset of their studies.



35. Drawing on an extensive body of literature, we conceptualise research-led education as a partnership between staff and students. Both are active participants in an academic community of practice, and both are committed to supporting the development of students as active and engaged researchers, as they move from guided to independent learning over the course of their studies. This vision sets the student at the centre of the learning experience, and directly links the skills of independent learning with the core attributes and skills that the University expects its graduates to be able to demonstrate to prospective employers (see 79).
36. This conception of research-led education was rolled out to all courses and all students through course development, approval and review, following the adoption of the *Principles*. All Durham courses articulate an approach to research-led education which reflects their own discipline and communities of academic practice. Research is therefore a coherent, progressive and explicit strand at all stages of each undergraduate course, beginning at Level 4 (and, where taken, during the preceding foundation year); we offer an academic curriculum which engages students with developments and activities at the forefront of research from their first day. Every Durham course:
- begins with the four-week, pre-arrival Transitions to HE course (with recorded staff and student content, interactive exercises and supporting resources) which helps students to bridge the gap between secondary education and research-led learning and independent study, and which is followed by an extended academic induction which introduces students into their relevant academic community of practice;
  - has a clearly articulated and progressive approach to academic contact, with an emphasis on smaller group teaching as students progress through each academic year, and one-to-one support in the final year in particular;
  - ensures that students make use of our outstanding specialised resources during their studies (research laboratories, specialist software, specialist equipment, and/or the primary sources contained within the University's extensive library, archive and museum collections), as individuals and/or as partners in mini-research projects; and
  - culminates in a major 'capstone' research project (typically 40 credits), undertaken by all undergraduate students.
37. In practice, research-led education means our undergraduate students participating in the cooking of medieval recipes at the historic, monastic Blackfriars restaurant in Newcastle; undertaking an 'inside out' Criminology module delivered within a prison setting; working on ground-breaking biological research which could have further uses for mapping changes in human DNA; or completing a capstone Behavioural Science management project, working with sector leaders (such as Aldi, L'Oreal, Channel Five and the NHS) and presenting their findings to an industry panel.<sup>19</sup>
38. When the Covid pandemic changed the dynamic of university life, we worked with our student representatives at all levels to ensure we could maintain their research-led education. We undertook full teaching audits and reviews of practical classes ahead of 2020-21, and again in January 2021 ahead of the national lockdown, revising modules and courses to ensure that core outcomes and opportunities could still be delivered. Every discipline had its own innovations: virtual and online fieldtrips and placements (see 69); DIY experimental kits posted to students as part of our 'at home laboratories' development which has continued post-pandemic;<sup>20</sup> and extensive digitisation of Library resources ensuring access to a wide range of specialist content was retained (see 75).

39. Between 2017 and 2021, our planned investment in academic staff saw numbers rise by almost 30%. We deliberately increased staff in advance of our planned student number growth (escalating our recruitment in light of the pandemic). This ensured that, as we grew our student body, two-thirds of our subjects saw student-staff ratios fall between 2017 and 2021 (more than half also fell between 2013 and 2017), and our 2021 institutional ratio of 13.7 puts us in the top 10 non-specialist UK universities.<sup>21</sup> This has facilitated our continued focus on small-group teaching for a specialised, research-led education.
40. Our approach ensures that every undergraduate student is directly engaged in research, and that they undertake substantive research themselves. The consistently high engagement with research also contributes to our high levels of overall student satisfaction: in NSS2022 more than 1 in 10 students who left a free text comment (121/1139) praised their research-led education or research-education links.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, our internal Module Evaluation Questionnaires demonstrate a high-level of student engagement and satisfaction in their capstone research modules: 94% of students in 2022 found them intellectually stimulating, and 92% felt that these modules challenged them to achieve their best work (vs 87% and 84% for other final year modules), with many using the free-text comments to praise their freedom to explore their own research interests, as well as their supervisor's expertise and dedication.<sup>23</sup> A majority of external examiners in recent years have praised our emphasis on research-led education and research/teaching links, with more than a third similarly praising the range and quality of student research projects,<sup>24</sup> with comments such as:

*This is clearly a sector-leading Department with a curriculum informed by the research and perspectives of its nationally and internationally regarded teaching staff. Particularly outstanding features include ... the way that cutting-edge research is integrated into modules at all levels (from the way seminars are structured to the material provided to the questions/concepts that are developed). Languages, 2021*

41. We see the benefits of this focus during student's courses – in the positive feedback from STEM Team Projects where students solve real-world challenges set by employers, or when our external examiners cite the 'frequently publishable' (and frequently published, with, for example, over 75 student publications over the last four years from undergraduate project work in the Sciences)<sup>25</sup> quality of Durham graduate work – and in their future successes, in our very high rates of progression to further study (30% in GO, the third highest non-specialist university in England, see 94), and our outstanding long-term salary data in LEO (see 96).

### *3.3 Outstanding teaching, assessment and feedback drives our students' exceptional learning, attainment and progression (SE1)*

42. Education at Durham is a long-standing strength, and the creation of DCAD and our adoption of *Curriculum Reform* in 2018 provided an opportunity to review *how* we teach and assess, acknowledging that the pace of innovation in teaching and learning, and especially the increasing use of digital technologies, profoundly challenges established practices. These considerations have underpinned our roll-out of lecture capture, adoption of guidelines for an inclusive curriculum, work on decolonisation (see 61-62), revisions to promotion and probation processes to reinforce educational excellence and pedagogical development through the benchmark criteria used in annual evaluations (see 67), and our institutional review of assessment and feedback.
43. In 2019-20, in response to a drop in NSS student satisfaction with assessment and feedback, we reviewed assessment as a priority, and departments were provided with DCAD workshop training and support, with an emphasis on authentic assessment and effective feedback/feedforward. This work allowed us to respond rapidly and effectively to the challenges posed to assessment by remote learning. DCAD delivered training and resources for all staff and students between March and July 2020, including learning online, online lecture and seminar tools, and taking online

assessments. We worked in partnership with the SU to implement a suite of mitigation policies and support initiatives to ensure students would be assessed appropriately, and not be disadvantaged collectively or individually.<sup>26</sup> Working with the Students' Union, we targeted specific initiatives at students from disadvantaged or under-represented groups and undertook detailed modelling of potential 'no detriment' variations.

44. As a result, we adopted an approach which ensured our students were appropriately supported while academic standards were maintained. An initial review of our approach began in October 2020, with comparable reviews each year since. Reviews are informed by close monitoring of attainment and of attainment and awarding gaps (in real-time at exam boards and retrospectively), staff and external feedback, and wide-ranging student consultation (with bespoke, institution-wide student surveys feeding into our Senate reviews, and departmental student consultations to consider individual assessments).
45. Our reviews confirmed that attainment gaps closed for all measured groups (mature, international, disability, UK minority ethnic and IMD), in some cases significantly, with exam performance for underrepresented groups improving in both absolute and relative terms.<sup>27</sup> Rates of continuation similarly rose overall (to 97.7%, 2.1pp above benchmark, in 2019), and for under-represented student groups. Evidence of successful learning and attainment was supported by consistently positive feedback from external examiners. Every undergraduate examiner (107 in 2019/20) confirmed that the standards of courses were consistent with the FHEQ, and were comparable with similar courses offered elsewhere. Qualitative analysis showed that 92% of externals praised the high quality of work produced by Durham students, 85% the operation of assessment and assurance processes, and 64% Durham's response to the pandemic. Typical comments included:

*I would like to commend Durham University as a whole for being rapid and decisive on how to run exams during the pandemic and lockdown. Many students in other institutions were left hanging for weeks while waiting for decisions to be made on institutional and departmental levels, while Durham was able to confirm the arrangements to its students almost immediately. Foundation, 2020*

46. We remain committed to assessing learning outcomes in the most appropriate and inclusive ways, and have taken advantage of the opportunity which the pandemic presented to consider alternative assessments. Take-home or 24/48-hour assessment tasks have proved an effective and inclusive alternative to invigilated exams in many subjects. We have, similarly, seen an increase in the use of group oral assessments and dialogues, and the maintenance of shorter timed online or physical assessments where pedagogically appropriate. Alongside this, our departments are implementing student-specific feedback timetables to ensure all students are aware of when they can expect feedback, and can plan around it. Deadlines are set in the context of the learning, teaching and assessment strategy for the individual course, and are therefore dictated by how the feedback will be used and what it will feed forward into, thus maximising the benefit to students. This individual assessment feedback is supplemented by holistic feedback provided by our academic advisors.
47. We have seen relative NSS satisfaction for teaching and assessment improve consistently over the last four years, with satisfaction with Teaching rising from -0.6pp below benchmark in 2019, to +0.3pp in 2020, +2.4pp in 2021 and +1.9 in 2022. For Assessment & Feedback, we have moved from -1.9pp below benchmark in 2019 to 0.3-1.2pp above benchmark in 2020 and 2021. While we dropped just under our benchmark in 2022, this was in a year where strike action had a significant negative impact on student satisfaction; comparing us directly to the Russell Group (where most institutions were affected by strike action in 2022), we were ranked in the first quartile for both Teaching and Assessment & Feedback, and ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> for Q11 (helpful comments on my work) and Q9 (marking and assessment has been fair). This is reinforced by our most recent (Autumn 2021, i.e. pre-strike and assessment boycott) results in the ISB survey (773 UG

respondents in total, RR 25%), which show high satisfaction with assessment (93%, +5pp above our global and Russell Group plus benchmarks), feedback (87%, +5pp) and learning overall (92%, +9pp and +14pp respectively).<sup>28</sup>

48. Provision of feedback was formerly a concern raised by our external examiners, flagged by 10-15% each year up until 2015. Since 2016 this figure has fallen and, over the last three years, this issue has been raised by fewer than 3%. In contrast, over the same period, 43%, 60% and 61% of examiners used their free text comments to explicitly praise the quality of feedback provided to students. Similarly, 63%, 43% and 61% praised the consistency of assessment, with over a third praising innovative or high-quality teaching and assessment, and over a quarter the range or diversity of assessment offered. Typical comments include:

*It is clear that students are benefiting from the more varied types of assessment in use and the move away from exams ... I am confident that this strong, rigorous degree will continue to thrive and develop. It demonstrates the excellence that can be achieved when universities build strong partnerships with schools, allowing students to develop, flourish and link theory and practice.* Education, 2021

*Much of the students' work is exceptional, and is a testament to the excellent education they have received at Durham.* Psychology, 2021

*I was very impressed with the wide range of innovative assessments ... [which] ... provided ample opportunity for students to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they had acquired on the course. I felt there was plenty of evidence of how teaching staff had gone above and beyond in ensuring a smooth delivery of teaching under the most trying of circumstances.* Politics, 2021

## 4 Resources, support and engagement

49. The learning environment plays a crucial role in all aspects of our education and supports the development of our graduates as life-long learners with outstanding long-term career prospects. In partnership with our students, we are continually enhancing our learning environment with strategic investments: upgrading specialist discipline-specific equipment, expanding library collections and digital facilities, and enhancing our spaces for teaching and independent study.
50. Alongside this, we offer an integrated student support service, drawing on dedicated academic advisers and learning and teaching teams in our departments, welfare and pastoral support teams in colleges, and central services such as Disability Support and Counselling. These long-standing support structures have frequently been commended – e.g. by the QAA in 2016 in our final HER with reference to our “comprehensive and high-quality pastoral support for students' personal development and learning”; in 2017-18 when we were Highly Commended for providing Outstanding Support for Students in the Times Higher Awards – and continue to be enhanced. In 2019, we developed and launched a three-year Student Support Project, which focuses on the intersection of our academic and wider student support, in recognition of the varied needs of an increasingly diverse student body. As a result, we have introduced new department-based support staff who will work with students to ensure they access the support they need. With a £6.2m investment in new staff and a student relationship management IT system over the next 4 years, this project demonstrates our commitment to continuous improvement of this tailored support.

### 4.1 Integrated, tailored academic support underpins outstanding student experiences and outcomes (SE5)

51. Ensuring positive experiences and outcomes for all begins with outreach. We work with over 4,000 school-aged students per year, offering summer schools and programmes of targeted pre-University events, supported by peer mentoring. This includes our flagship Supported Progression (SP) compact scheme, through which we work closely with the most able, but least likely to apply, students from the North East throughout Year 12 and 13; our partnership with the Sutton Trust

Summer School (ST) scheme; our new Levelling Up (LU) STEM programme, launched in 2021; and our collaboration with the Reach Society (in consultation with our Durham People of Colour Association and the African and Caribbean Society) to create opportunities for young Black-heritage students, for which we were awarded a Corporate Fellowship Award (2018) and Corporate Champion Award (2022), and which has led to our new Space to Explore Potential (STEP) programme, similarly launched in 2021.

52. We have drawn on the academic expertise of our School of Education (ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the REF), and in particular in our Durham University Evidence Centre for Evaluation, to enhance policy and practice relating to widening access. This includes our development of guaranteed contextualised offers (GCO)<sup>29</sup> – through which we have recruited almost a quarter of our UK undergraduates since 2019 – enabling us to attract students who we know have the ability to succeed. This is accompanied by targeted financial support – including our Durham Inspired bursaries and our Durham Grant scheme – with over £7.25m committed for undergraduate studentships and bursaries in 2022. Student success is monitored closely from admission to graduation.
53. For our SP and ST students, our internally measured rates of continuation are 94.7% for the four years of the aggregate TEF metric (compared with 94.5% for all students), and they go on to succeed: 93.7% of degrees awarded to SP and ST-entry graduates between 2019 and 2022 were firsts or 2:1s, compared with the university average of 93.7%.<sup>30</sup> Their progression to employment and further study, at 78.1%, is slightly lower than the University average, but above our benchmarks for comparable groups of students. While it is too early for data on completion or progression, our rates of continuation for GCO students in the TEF dataset are extremely high – 96.8% for 2018 and 2019. Our evidence-based, targeted and coordinated approach to widening access is delivering outstanding experience and outcomes for our students. As one recent SP graduate (now a postgraduate and peer mentor themselves) commented with reference to their mentoring support: “[I] hope that I could give others the confidence and excitement that he managed to give me ... I can’t believe how far I’ve come”.<sup>31</sup>
54. We mirror this approach for students from other underrepresented groups. For example, having identified challenges with lower mature student completion and employment in 2017, we adopted a suite of targeted interventions for mature students (see 18-20). More recently – in response to a significant increase in the number of students with a known disability (20% of the undergraduate student body) – we have introduced measures to enhance the transition to university study. Initially intended for autistic students (whose numbers have more than doubled since 2017-18), we developed a pre-induction toolkit, supported by a tailored induction programme (at a quieter and less busy time) with bespoke workshops on study skills, accessing systems and support, notetaking etc. Having received positive feedback (e.g. “Thank you for all the help you provided ... It really helped me to orientate myself and provided me with much more peace of mind.”), we recruited students who had completed the programme to act as paid ambassadors, and launched our ‘Employ Autism’ project in 2020-21, providing an initial 60 students with employer workshops, one-to-one support in Careers & Enterprise, and access to funded internships. In 2021-22, we provided additional funding to extend the scheme for students with a wider range of disabilities.
55. We have fair, supportive and transparent processes for working with any students who face challenging or disruptive circumstances during their studies. We view our academic support policies as a continuum, with students being able to access support as needed at any point. Students inform us about their disabilities prior to arrival (or subsequently at any point during their studies), and we put in place reasonable adjustments for teaching and assessment, as necessary. Students whose learning is disrupted during the year can use our flexible self-certification, grace

period, suspension and extension policies, and are fully supported our department and college welfare staff. Students whose assessment is disrupted at short notice, or by issues which only become apparent retrospectively, can make use of our serious adverse circumstances policies, so that their situation can be taken into account in progression or classification decisions.

56. Under our Fitness to Study procedures, department and college support teams operate as a first point of contact, coordinating with Disability Support and our dedicated Mental Health practitioners to identify and proactively work with students who are struggling. The positive impacts of this approach can be seen in the TEF data. Within the sector, rates of completion are lower than rates of continuation – this is true overall (88.6 vs 90.7), for individual cohorts specifically (88.4 vs 90.8 for 2016/17 entrants), and for the vast majority of individual providers – indicating that more students progress from the first to the second year of their studies than complete them. At Durham, our integrated approach to student support means that this situation is reversed (97.5 vs 96.8; 97.6 vs 96.9 for 2016/17); we consistently work with students to suspend and/or repeat part of their studies, and make sure they are able to return, where this is beneficial to them in the longer term.
57. Our Academic Skills Programme is an accessible study support service offering dedicated support in the core academic skills and strategies needed to succeed at Durham. Aimed at international students and those from under-represented groups, it is available to any student needing support (on an open access basis, or following a referral if students are struggling or falling behind in their studies). Initially introduced in 2014, it was significantly revised in 2018 when it moved to DCAD, drawing on staff expertise and experience in delivering pre- and in-session English language courses, academic study skills support, and our Foundation Programme. Expanded again in 2020 in response to the pandemic, the programme now provides broad-based academic skills development, including more general support in mathematics and statistics, literacy, communication skills (for native and non-native English speakers), IT, and personal effectiveness. With online and face-to-face sessions delivered weekly, student engagement is high. Figures for 2021 indicate that we had 2,400 undergraduate student attendees at 174 centrally-run study skills workshops and courses (up from 1,000 in 2018), with a further 675 1:1 academic writing consultations and approximately 200 Maths and Statistics consultations; over the last four years, there were over 12,000 individual undergraduate student attendances at central sessions. DCAD also worked directly with academic staff in departments to enhance departmental academic skills provision, leading to a further 273 short study skills courses (each between 1 and 6 sessions) provided in collaboration with academic departments. Feedback is very positive, with over 80% rating their learning from courses as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ (137 respondents) in 2021, and quotes such as “Just so impressed with this support...The course material has been superb but the facilitators are just so inspiring. Lots of encouragement and validation and this helps build my confidence.”<sup>32</sup> In the most recent ISB 2021-22, 91% of international undergraduates expressed satisfaction with learner support (+5pp and +4pp above our global and Russell Group+ benchmarks).<sup>33</sup>

#### *4.2 Engagement drives continuous improvement of student experiences and outcomes (SE7)*

58. Our focus on small group teaching and active participation ensures our students are highly engaged with their academic studies (see 28-41), and we have outstanding rates of participation with our wide range of student-led co- and extra-curricular activities delivered through our colleges (see 81-86), and the disciplinary societies in every academic department. Our Student Consultation Framework, developed by the Students’ Union and adopted by Durham in 2018-19, ensures that we work directly with students on any decision which affects their learning or experience.<sup>34</sup>

59. This approach underpins routine developments in the curriculum, use of student focus groups in new projects and proposals, and our response to student surveys, annual monitoring and periodic reviews. It supports our extensive deliberative structures in academic departments (with elected course representatives and co-chaired student-staff consultative committees), colleges (with our undergraduate common rooms and their elected student leaders), and committees (with student representatives on all major governance and management bodies). It is also integral to our work to engage students directly with teaching enhancement, particularly in major projects which have been led, or co-led, by the Students' Union, mentioned throughout this submission, and including the development and deployment of our Enhancing Accessibility grants (see 68), our work on Decolonising the Curriculum, and our response to Covid.
60. Our Students' Union officers were core members of our Covid planning groups, including as part of the Teaching Recovery Group which operationalised our management of learning and teaching throughout the pandemic. With the SU, we co-developed our successful No Detriment and Academic Safety Net policies and communications (see 43). We engaged directly with students on their experience of online learning and assessment, using surveys, focus groups and deliberative structures, with dialogue and discussion guiding institutional and departmental approaches, and underpinning our decision to continue with a more diverse range of assessments in 2022-23 (see 46). We have continued this approach in response to strike action, and via our working group on the cost-of-living crisis (where we agreed to extend eligibility and increase all bursaries for new and continuing students by 10%).
61. Students are central to our work on decolonising the curriculum, which is a Durham-wide project launched jointly with the SU in 2020-21. The project work is driven by paid student interns in each faculty and department, who collaborate with academic staff in departments and coordinate activities at the faculty level. Each year, projects have been tailored to their discipline, and have stimulated a wide range of academic activity, from reading groups and working groups of staff and students, to pilot modules covering issues raised by decolonisation, and student-led internal and external workshops, conferences and training events.
62. Our departments have been comprehensively engaged in these projects and report multiple benefits in working with students as partners in curriculum co-development and as co-researchers; interns reported the value of co-developing long-standing changes in the curriculum, raising awareness within their departments and initiating projects upon which future interns can build.<sup>35</sup> A further round of projects are being taken forward in 2022-23, and staff-student partnership and co-development, on this and other projects, will continue into the future.

*4.3 Our staff consistently engage with and benefit from outstanding support for excellent academic practice and professional development (SE4)*

63. All teaching staff are engaged in the same cycle of reflection, innovation and analysis that we use in formulating and delivering educational excellence at all levels. We expect all our teaching staff to actively engage with pedagogical enhancement, including training in teaching and learning, as part of our criteria for progression and promotion. As a research-intensive university, most academic staff are employed on teaching and research contracts, but we recognise and reward specific expertise in teaching and learning. The number of specialist staff on our dedicated Education-track (introduced in 2017 and benchmarked against the UK Professional Standards Framework, UKPSF) continues to grow (by 57% between 2017 and 2022, from 184 to 288fte), and we have seen a significant increase in the number and proportion of staff promoted to the highest levels as Education-track professors (from 1fte to 19, 0.6% of our Education-track staff to 6.6%).

64. The creation of DCAD was a strategic decision designed to enhance student skills support (see 57) and staff academic development, with a focus on excellent academic practice, evaluation and innovation. It has been accompanied by significant investment in both learning resources (e.g. the £40m TLC, in which DCAD is based, and our new £1m VLE) and staff (with e.g. our Education Development Team of digital and learning designers, working directly with academic departments on enhancing the curriculum, increasing from 4 to 20 staff between 2018 and 2022). Over the last four years, we have seen very high engagement with our tailored staff development programme, a renewed focus on reflective evaluation and enhancement of academic practice, and an increasing number of small-scale innovative projects leading to wider enhancements in the curriculum.
65. As part of its remit, DCAD has established three courses aligned with the UKPSF, developing teachers at all career stages from postgraduate research students to staff in positions of educational leadership. Advance HE's annual reports indicated that, by 2020, 79% of eligible academic staff at Durham had achieved at least Fellowship FHEA status (vs sector and Russell Group averages of 42% and 32%).<sup>36</sup> Our postgraduates who teach are also exceptionally committed to training in teaching and learning. Our two most recent Postgraduate Research Experience Surveys (PRES, in 2019 and 2021) show that over 80% of students who teach had engaged with training for teaching and assessment, comfortably (by at least 9pp) within the 1<sup>st</sup> quartile for the sector in each year. For staff in faculty or departmental leadership positions, our leadership course (which receives exceptional feedback from participants: "an absolute MUST for anyone who is in charge of curriculum (re)design and programme development") offers a 6-month programme exploring the latest issues and advances in curriculum design and delivery and enhancing educational leadership skills.<sup>37</sup>
66. In March 2020, we paused our UKSPF-aligned programmes to focus on supporting staff and students with the transition to online teaching and assessment during the pandemic. A core two-week course 'Teaching & Learning Online' was launched immediately, and ran on a fortnightly basis throughout the year. It was initially completed by 900 teaching staff, with a further 500 participating by Autumn 2020 (equivalent to 99% of all non-atypical academic teaching staff, or 83% of all staff timetabled to teach in 2020-21). The courses were accompanied by a suite of open-access asynchronous resources in online teaching and learning, accessed over 15,000 times.<sup>38</sup> Following positive feedback, the course and guidance are currently being re-developed to form part of a Master's degree.
67. We believe that continuous evidence-based reflection on academic practice is key to educational excellence. Our *Evaluating for Excellence* project, from 2018 and 2020, led to the adoption of an expanded approach to our annual evaluation of learning and teaching practice, which is embedded in promotion and reward processes. This includes a standardised system for module evaluations (with comparable scales, questions and timings for all questionnaires) forming part of a robust and evidence-based evaluation toolkit comprising 10 distinct self-led, peer-led and student-led qualitative and quantitative tools.<sup>39</sup> All our staff are required to use the toolkit to reflect on their academic practice, with responses considered at the departmental level as part of the University's annual all-staff processes for considering academic progression. DCAD provides a series of annual Evaluation for Excellence workshops (10 in 2021-22), guidance on interpretation of results, and developmental support for staff in response to their evaluations. Feedback from the process has informed DCAD's weekly workshop programme, facilitated by teaching experts, showcasing and evaluating innovative and exploratory practice. With over 1500 attendees in 2021-22, the programme is being expanded for 2022-23. It is complemented by our week-long, annual Teaching & Learning Conference held every September.



68. In our Strategy, we commit to increasing the use of innovation in education across all our departments, building on our experience of identifying aspects of departmental provision which can be rolled out widely to benefit students across the University (such as our Transitions project, which began in Foundation, and our 'Science into Schools' placement and project modules, which originated in Earth Sciences). Our new Education Laboratory – based in the TLC and making use of its state-of-the-art facilities – allows DCAD to work closely with staff and students on pedagogical research projects linked to the University Strategy, operating as the catalyst to realising a translational approach to education, where new ideas can be trialled and evaluated. We provide fellowships for staff to spend up to a week working in the Lab, and also run two £300k schemes, our Collaborative Innovation and Enhancing Accessibility Grants. Developed jointly with the Students' Union, they enable staff and students to develop innovative, accessible and inclusive learning and teaching approaches to enhance student learning and success. In both schemes, joint student and staff teams work with DCAD on their projects, and then to disseminate good practice across the institution. Though still in its infancy, the Lab has enabled us to develop and expand a number of innovative initial projects with more widely applicable approaches to teaching.
69. Our First Generation Scholars Network, initially led and now coordinated by our Politics department, has representatives from every department working in partnership with their first generation students, engaging in a dialogue about their expectations and needs.<sup>40</sup> The award-winning Project RENU, a digital field-trip experience making environmental learning accessible to all students in a fundamentally sustainable way, was developed during the pandemic as an engaging, interactive resource – with high quality video, 360° camera footage, associated reading, and in-built assessments – which allows the user to experience a field trip as if they were there.<sup>41</sup> The Project launched our new Virtual and Augmented Reality in Higher Education conference, which in turn generated new AR projects in Physics (leading to a partnership with the NHS to run staff training on the use of Microsoft HoloLens systems in teaching science) and in Computer Science, where students are developing resources for pedagogic use in other disciplines and departments. Our 2021-22 project on "Imposter Syndrome in the Classroom" is producing new tools for use in our academic development training to help staff supporting students with particular needs.

#### *4.4 Physical, virtual and specialist learning resources facilitate our students' outstanding educational experiences (SE6)*

70. In every discipline, our students have direct access to, and make ready use of, research laboratories, collaborative workspaces, museum collections, historical archives or specialist equipment, supporting the effective delivery of an outstanding, research-led education. Between 2018 and 2021, we invested over £100m in the physical learning and teaching environment, with educational innovation at the heart of new investments, such as the experimental Education Laboratory, and a facility in the new TLC for teaching staff to borrow from our 200-item catalogue of the latest learning technologies (e.g. VR Headsets, Podcasting equipment, 360 degree camera). A further £400k was invested in our museums and special collections, including our four archive collections of national or international significance, which support over 1400 hours of teaching per year. In response to the pandemic, we also invested over £800k in hardware and software to facilitate remote learning (on top of the £1.8m invested in lecture capture between 2018 and 2019), supported by training for staff and students (see 43, 66). Alongside this, we digitised reading lists for all modules, created virtual field trips, and introduced online and 'at home' laboratory classes, as part of our £1m commitment to adapt academic courses in response to the pandemic.

71. This has yielded positive results and been recognised by students. In NSS, our performance against benchmark for Q20. *I have been able to access course-specific resources when I needed to*, relative satisfaction levels have risen each year since 2019. Results in the ISB survey 2021-22 show increasingly high levels of undergraduate satisfaction with Laboratories and Learning Spaces at 97% and 95% respectively (+4pp above both the global average and our Russell Group Plus benchmark), an increase on the comparative figures for 2017-18 (95% and 91%). Students were also highly satisfied in the new on-campus learning facilities category (96%, +8pp and +11pp above our benchmarks).<sup>42</sup>
72. Our continued investments in digital infrastructure ensure our students can access the tools they need for their research-led education, when and where they need them. Following analysis of 2019 qualitative NSS comments, we simplified connection to our wireless internet, enabled students to create secure personal networks for their devices in their own rooms, and increased student storage to 1TB. At the same time, as part of the 'Apps Anywhere' service, then a UK University first, we enabled students to freely access the Microsoft Office software from their own devices, alongside over 400 other academic applications. With the onset of the pandemic in 2020, we moved assessment and then learning online, adopting a range of new technologies, each accompanied by well-used student guidance. Alongside this, we introduced a scheme to provide computers to low-income household students who need them for online learning or assessment, with 249 laptops purchased for or loaned to students during the pandemic.<sup>43</sup> In 2021, we launched our new £1m cloud-based VLE – Blackboard Learn Ultra – with a root and branch review of online teaching material to improve accessibility.
73. The 2021-22 ISB saw undergraduate student satisfaction continue to improve in relation to our virtual learning environment (91%, +12 and +4 above the global average and RG+ benchmarks; up from 90% in 2017-18), and we performed similarly well in the new online study materials category (93%; +5pp and +7pp),<sup>44</sup> alongside increases in satisfaction with IT resources in NSS2021 and 2022. Similarly, Durham students were more likely to rate the quality of their online learning as being 'good', 'excellent', or the 'best imaginable' in the JISC Digital Insights Survey in 2021-22 (78%, compared to 74% nationally; 872 respondents or 5% of student body).
74. We know that access to good study spaces when they need them is very important to students: analysis of free text comments in NSS2018 and 2019, confirmed by student voice panels in departments and the Library, showed that the difficulty students had in finding free study space drove the fall in satisfaction in relation to the Library (Q19) in those years. In 2019-20, we added over 550 individual and group study spaces, 200 computer laboratory spaces, and extended 24/7 Library opening to all terms plus the Easter vacation. A study space booking system was introduced in 2020 to enable students to pre-book a study space in the Library, alongside the Library's Take a Break initiative (to encourage sensible study practice), a laptop loan scheme, enhancements to study space web pages, and the mapping of all study space in departments and in our 40 college libraries and study rooms.
75. To support our research-led education, tailored to our academics' expertise and students' interests, we have increased our regular investments in print and electronic resources (£5.5 million in 2021/22, a 31.5% increase on 2017/18). We launched our 'MoreBooks' campaign in 2020 to encourage students to identify any resources they needed, which led to 8520 student-led purchases in 2021. To ensure all students have full access to the resources they need, we have removed fines for overdue books and charges for interlibrary loan requests. We have also continued a number of initiatives that were introduced during the pandemic, including ensuring all essential items on our reading lists are available digitally; a 'scan-and-deliver' service, to provide

on request a digital copy of any chapter or article available in print in the main Library; and a free postal library loans service for all UK-based students either self-isolating, or away from Durham.

76. We know that our resources are well used by our students, with nearly 7.5m e-journal and e-book downloads in 2021-22 alone, a 34% increase in three years; in the most recent benchmarked data (2020-21), we had the 13<sup>th</sup> highest number of downloads per FTE in the UK.<sup>45</sup> To ensure that students gain maximum benefit from their resources, Library staff provide training and online self-guided tutorials. From 2019-20, we invested time and resources in developing our digital training offer; producing resources, webinars and subject guides that give students access to online training at the point where they need it, giving them the freedom to choose how and where they learn. This has been hugely successful, with positive feedback from our students, and the majority of tutorials rated 4.4 - 4.5 out of 5.
77. NSS results show significant continuous improvement in relation to library provision over time, with satisfaction rising for Q19 (library resources (e.g. books, online services and learning spaces) have supported my learning well) from 80.2% in 2019, to 85.3% in 2022, and our performance relative to benchmark has improved in each of the four years of the Learning Resources metric. Globally, we have similarly improved satisfaction levels in the 2021-22 ISB for both the online (92%, up from 90% in 2017-18, and now +2pp and +1pp above benchmark) and physical libraries (97%, up from 90%, +7pp and +4pp), with very high satisfaction for Library support (98%, +3pp and +2pp).

## 5 Educational gain and long-term success

78. Successful graduate outcomes go far beyond the ability to acquire a job; they mean the capacity of a graduate to determine and shape their future, and to continue to grow and learn as they do so (whether studying for a higher degree, in employment, or another path). Long-term development is a focus at every stage of our student journey. Our institutional philosophy posits that academic engagement and wider engagement (with volunteering, entrepreneurship, leadership and other co- or extra-curricular opportunities) positively reinforce each other. The Wider Student Experience is, along with Research and Education, one of the three pillars of the University, and our wider student experience is overseen by Senate, with all College Principals sitting as members alongside our Heads of Department.

### *5.1 We clearly articulate, support and evaluate our students' educational gains (SO4-6)*

79. Durham students' educational gain stems from their high level of engagement with a wide range of disciplinary, and wider co- and extra-curricular, opportunities. These fall under the framework of 'Graduate Attributes', which we developed alongside students, alumni and employers to help our students get the most out of their studies at Durham, and graduate with skills that will be valuable throughout their careers. Graduate Attributes cover six broad areas (understanding research, study skills & independent learning, interpersonal skills & leadership, and entrepreneurial behaviours), providing a framework for students to reflect on their development of wider skills and abilities. From the beginning of their studies, using our Transitions (see 36) as a starting point, students work together with a dedicated departmental academic adviser to develop a tailored educational experience, taking account of their identified strengths, preferences and goals.
80. Since 2015, all Durham courses have permitted students to study modules outside their main discipline – in another discipline, in entrepreneurship or in a foreign language. Since 2018, our courses have also enabled students to incorporate study overseas or an integrated placement year. The impact of these changes has been significant, with students making much greater use of the flexibility afforded within their studies. Between 2014-2017 and 2018-2021, we saw a continued

increase in the number of undergraduate students undertaking study overseas (we have over 300 placement agreements with partner institutions in 40 countries), and a doubling of students undertaking integrated year-long placements. Over the last four years, over 2,100 undergraduate students have chosen one of these two options. A further 4,000 undergraduate students have taken a placement, Science into Schools, foreign language or entrepreneurship module; with 2275 students completing an extra-curricular language option. In 2021-22 (despite the impact of the pandemic), by their final year, 10% of our undergraduates had spent more than three months living in a foreign country, and 36% had undertaken formal work experience with a graduate employer, during their studies.<sup>46</sup>

81. Durham students access a wealth of wider educational opportunities through our colleges, which are multi-disciplinary, multi-generational and multi-dimensional communities, designed to ensure a balanced mix of subjects, study levels, backgrounds and nationalities. Colleges offer a programme of skills development, volunteering and employer-related opportunities, and support and facilitate participation in wide-ranging co-curricular activities, from interdisciplinary seminar series to arts and music societies, and from alumni mentorship schemes to community volunteering. Every college has an undergraduate representative body with a President and Executive Committee, and structures to support the running of societies, events and activities.
82. Engagement is supported by funding, and training. The vision for our 2018 financial aid programme, "Durham for all", is that "all admitted students should be able to attend, participate in and excel at the full range of opportunities available at Durham University regardless of background or financial means". We provide funding at both a central and college level, with scholarships and bursaries which support participation in arts, music, sport and drama, international travel and study, extra-curricular fieldwork and placements, volunteering and community engagement, as well as equipment hire and purchase. In total, we have spent over £20m on our targeted undergraduate studentships and bursaries over the last 4 years, with over £7.25m committed in 2022.
83. For the last ten years, our Durham University Leadership Framework has provided personal development opportunities, resources and mentoring support for students to identify and develop the skills necessary to lead their peers in student groups and societies. In 2021-22, over 1750 training places were provided for our Emerging Leadership, Leadership Academy, and our Research & Leadership in Action Scholarship programmes (the latter including a £6,000 stipend to support students to undertake extra-curricular research projects). In 2022-23, we have added a Presidents Leadership Programme (for Club and Society presidents and sabbatical officers).
84. We know that participation in these aspects of extra-curricular development is extremely high. In the UK Engagement Survey (UKES) in 2019 (9.5% response rate; 30 other HEIs took part), undergraduate students at Durham reported much higher levels of participation in activities: 87% of all students (and 88% of international students) reported spending at least 1 hour per week engaged in extra- or co-curricular activities (34pp higher than the sector average of 53%), with 40% spending 6 hours or more. While number vary for students by under-represented or disadvantaged groups (broken down by Mature, minority ethnic, Disability and POLAR) and year of study, in every instance Durham's rates of participation are statistically significantly higher than the sector (and by at least 24pp). Evidence suggests that participation in co-curricular activities enhances, rather than reduces, time spent on academic studies; in the same survey, 62% of Durham students reported spending more than 10 hours per week undertaking independent study, compared to a sector average of 44% (again, with a statistically significant difference for every

disadvantaged or under-represented group, and a difference of at least 14pp); with 41% spending 16 hours or more.<sup>47</sup>

85. In 2021-22, we collected additional graduate survey data on comparative student experience of extra- and co-curricular activities (having previously collected similar data in 2016-17).<sup>48</sup> This survey of our undergraduate finalists (450 respondents, or around 10% of graduating students), indicates that our graduates are significantly more likely to have been active members of at least one society (over three quarters of respondents, a slight increase on 2016-17), to have held a senior leadership role (59%, vs 51% in 2016-17) or to have run a student event/activity (40% vs 35% in 2016-17) when compared to students at other institutions with very high levels of graduate employability (the comparable Russell Group averages are 59%, 39% and 32%).
86. Alongside this, we have also developed our own engagement survey, which we ran in 2021-22. While the two surveys are not directly comparable, our Wider Student Experience Survey supports the earlier findings, and enables us to measure the benefits of co-curricular participation more explicitly, by adopting additional questions on creative skills gain (e.g. working effectively with others; developing personal values). The survey was completed by a small (2.2%) but broadly representative (in terms of faculty, level, domicile, ethnicity, and Polar) sample of the student body. Participation rates were comparable with UKES in 2019 (with 89% of undergraduates spending at least one hour per week on extra- or co-curricular activities), but there was also a clear and significant correlation identified between time spent on those activities and average skills gain score, providing initial quantitative evidence that extra-curricular activities contribute to perceptions of skills gain, which was present regardless of background (and was stronger for students in Polar quintiles 1-3).<sup>49</sup> these findings will feed into the scheduled 2022-23 review of our Graduate Attributes, and the ongoing development of our Durham Inspired Award.
87. The Durham Inspired Award launched in 2019 with 1,000 participants. It provides an optional co-curricular graduate skill development framework, derived from our graduate attributes. It is designed to support the personal growth of our undergraduate students, and to help them understand themselves more effectively through holistic learning and evaluation. Over 18 months, participants attend bespoke Graduate Skill development sessions (workshops and seminars), and undertake regular self-assessment, self-guided reflective practice and facilitated reflection as part of a skills audit, leading to a formal assessment (production of a portfolio and an exit interview) to determine their end-point Award. Paused during the pandemic, the Award is open again and will run with 1300 students in 2023, providing a key tool for evaluating the continued success of our approach to educational gain.
88. The range of educational opportunities within and alongside the curriculum at Durham was praised by the QAA at the conclusion of our last Higher Education Review (2016), which identified as good practice “the systematic commitment to providing a wide range of extracurricular activities that enriches the student experience”, and we continue to develop and enhance this approach. Our students take full advantage of the opportunities which we provide to develop their leadership, team-working and communication skills, which are so valuable to employers and society. We know that, during their time at Durham, our students develop the skills that will enable them to make the best possible contribution to society, the economy and their communities in the future. This makes a key contribution, complementing research-led education, to our students’ outstanding short- and long-term employment outcomes.

5.2 We deploy and tailor approaches that ensure all of our students succeed in and progress beyond their studies (SO3)

89. Our outstanding levels of continuation, completion and academic achievement – as outlined throughout this submission – as testament to our students' success within their studies. Our commitment to ensuring our students succeed beyond their studies, is explicit in our Strategy: "We will ensure that Durham graduates are properly equipped to enter labour markets around the globe, where they are already seen as some of the most employable students produced by the world's leading universities."
90. Within the curriculum, the integration of cutting-edge practice from industry with our research-led education in many courses in building relevant knowledge and skills. We have Professors in Practice working in each of our faculties – senior professionals from a wide variety of disciplines who share their skills directly with students, bringing public distinction and practical insights to the classroom. We have industry-sponsored modules and group research projects in a number of departments, such as Earth Sciences into Industry, film-making with the Tyneside Cinema, and courses taught by staff who work with our museums and special collections (such as *Museum Representation* in Archaeology, or *Objects of Desire: Making Sense of the Collections at the Oriental Museum* in Visual Culture). Our *Lemonade Principle* podcasts, developed by the Business School, consist of interviews with Durham Alumni who talk about their own life and experiences, providing students with an understanding of different careers and how to succeed in them. Courses such as our BSc Accounting, BA Theology & Ministry, and BA Sport, Exercise and Physical Activity have been developed in partnership with employers, accrediting bodies and industry leaders. Others build on optional modules, such as CEFR-benchmarked language training or our extensive departmental placement modules, and we run a DU Internship scheme which enables our students to undertake graduate-level research projects within our academic and professional service departments.
91. Employability and entrepreneurship are embedded across the University, through employer events and entrepreneurship societies in our colleges, and a comprehensive programme of career and entrepreneurial skills workshops and activities from our Careers & Enterprise Centre. The Centre works with almost 8,000 employers per year, offering 1500 employer events, and almost 300 positive action schemes targeted at under-represented student groups. Used by 88% of undergraduate students during their studies,<sup>50</sup> Careers & Enterprise has a particular emphasis on developing entrepreneurial skills and mindsets, offering a menu of practical workshops, coaching sessions, networking events and mentoring opportunities, delivered by employers and our enterprise start-up support service. Alongside this is an enterprise education fund which supports departmental projects with up to £10,000 to embed enterprise in the curriculum. Over the last 4 years, the number of start-ups launched by students has more than doubled compared to the previous 4-year period; the total investment raised was £15.1 million, creating 106 jobs (129% and 47% increases respectively).<sup>51</sup>
92. Successful student initiatives launched over the last 4 years include our Durham Venture School, a 6-month, fully funded accelerator programme for graduates to explore significant problems and develop innovative solutions while engaging with successful entrepreneurs and industry leaders. Running for the first time in 2020-21, the Venture School produced 11 start-ups, two finalists for the Blueprint Startup Challenge, and was shortlisted for an Enterprise Educators UK award. The School now runs from our Hazan Venture Lab, a dedicated co-working space for students and graduates to work on enterprise projects, which opened in September 2021. The 34 start-ups it launched in 2021-22 won major national and international awards (e.g., Global Student Prize;

- Forbes 30 Under 30; Women in Innovation Award), presented at COP26 and to All-Party Parliamentary Groups, and were selected for some of the world's most high-profile accelerators (e.g., TechStars; Tech Nation's Net Zero 2.0). We also launched our Game Changer Innovation Programme, where student teams tackle a challenge themed on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). 902 students have participated since October 2019, and the programme was selected as one of the top 21 projects globally (from over 700 nominations) to feature in the United Nations' SDG Best Practices publication.<sup>52</sup> A pilot to embed the programme into core curricular activity was trialled in Engineering, with sessions delivered to 200 Engineering students as part of the IMechE Design Challenge in 2022. A toolkit providing resources for other institutions to run the programme has been sent to over 50 universities worldwide.
93. Careers & Enterprise work to promote employability for all Durham students and graduates, with targeted measures for specific demographic groups. This includes our tailored interventions for mature students (see 18-19), and the Employ Autism work experience programme (see 54). Our support for international students includes the Durham International Student Employability Programme (interactive sessions covering the key elements of the job selection process plus guidance on the cultural expectations of employers) and specialist job platform Student Circus; in the 2021-22 ISB, 78% of international student finalists who responded to the survey felt their experience had prepared them well or very well for their future career (+15pp higher than the RG benchmark).<sup>53</sup> Enabling Opportunities is a bespoke work experience programme, designed to specifically support under-represented groups (e.g. students from areas of lower higher education participation (LPN), lower household income and/lower socioeconomic status groups, as well as students from the North-East). This programme of tailored workshops, one to one support and guidance, culminates in a period of work experience. It is offered alongside the Student Employability Fund, which provides work experience and professional skills development bursaries to students who meet low household income thresholds.
94. A high proportion of Durham students go on to further study, and we are committed to improving further study opportunities for students from under-represented groups: 30% of Durham graduates in the three years of GO went on to further study, against the national average of 21%; for minority ethnic students, our figure is 33%, compared with 22% nationally.<sup>54</sup> In January 2022, we launched Pro:NE, a £2.5m five-university project led by Durham, to widen access for minority ethnic postgraduate students and staff; this follows our 2021/22 NINE (Northern Ireland and North East) Doctoral Training Partnership minority ethnic studentships offered as part of our "Action for Equality" programme.<sup>55</sup>
95. We are one of the top 30 universities targeted by blue chip graduate recruiters, consistently appearing in the top 15 of that group, and in 2021-22 over a third of our graduates had undertaken formal work experience with a graduate employer during their studies.<sup>56</sup> In the QS World University Rankings 2023, our strongest metric is Employer Reputation, where we are ranked 54<sup>th</sup> globally. The QS analysed responses from over 75,000 employers worldwide, showing how highly qualifications from Durham are valued by top employers, signifying the pathway towards successful and fulfilling careers for our graduates.
96. The outcomes achieved by Durham graduates are unequivocally outstanding. We are materially above our benchmarks for progression for full- and part-time students, in the top 10 English universities, and are consistently above benchmark for under-represented student groups. Looking beyond the TEF metrics, at institutional level we rank in the first quartile for both median and upper quartile earnings 1, 3 and 5 years after graduation in the most recent dataset for LEO (at the 7th percentile for both measures after 5 years). This is repeated for 95% and 100% of our subjects for

the same two measures. In the single subject (Computing) where we are ranked in the 2nd quartile for Median Earnings, we are ranked first in the sector for sustained employment after 5 years.<sup>57</sup>

97. Through this submission, we have sought to demonstrate how the quality of our academic experience leads to outstanding outcomes for our students, producing graduates who are prepared for a meaningful life and career, and to have a positive social impact on the world around them. The achievements of all our students demonstrate our continued success in meeting this objective.

## 6 References

- <sup>1</sup> Extracts from Student Record system, December 2022; held in Census Reporting and Academic Planning reports, with additional analysis by the Academic Office.
- <sup>2</sup> Defined throughout this submission as non-specialist HEIs, of which there were 124 in 2021-22.
- <sup>3</sup> Analysis of Student Record data linked to individualised files, November 2022; held in Academic Office.
- <sup>4</sup> Feedback from REC Bronze submission, July 2022; held on file in the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Unit.
- <sup>5</sup> Analysis of institutional GO data linked to individualised files, December 2022; held in Careers & Enterprise. Data on national salary bands is from <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/16-06-2022/sb263-higher-education-graduate-outcomes-statistics/salary>
- <sup>6</sup> Internal analysis of continuation rates, December 2022; held in Academic Office.
- <sup>7</sup> Extracts from Student Record system linked with the individualised data file, December 2022; analysed and held in Academic Office.
- <sup>8</sup> Extract from internal student outcomes records, October 2022; held in Academic Office.
- <sup>9</sup> BSc Accounting Management Committee Minutes Extract, January 2019; held in Business Faculty.
- <sup>10</sup> Analysis of institutional GO data linked to individualised files, December 2022; held in Careers & Enterprise. Data on national median salary from <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/graduates/releases>
- <sup>11</sup> Letters from Durham NSS Student Boycott Group, February 2020; held in Academic Office.
- <sup>12</sup> NSS2022: Analysis and Response Senate Paper Extract, October 2022; held in Academic Office.
- <sup>13</sup> Extracts from Student Record System, November 2022; held in Academic Office.
- <sup>14</sup> Principles for the Development of the Taught Curriculum, September 2015; available at: <https://www.dur.ac.uk/learningandteaching.handbook/3/principles/>
- <sup>15</sup> Extract from Learn Ultra VLE, November 2022; held on file in DCAD.
- <sup>16</sup> Extract from Power BI NSS Comment Analysis, August 2022; held in Academic Office.
- <sup>17</sup> QSC Overview of External Examiner reports 2021-22, January 2023; held in Academic Office.
- <sup>18</sup> REF2021, May 2022; available: <https://www.durham.ac.uk/research/research-excellence-framework/>
- <sup>19</sup> Selected examples, November 2022; held in Academic Office.
- <sup>20</sup> Creative Thinking in Physics Education (2022), <https://iopscience.iop.org/book/mono/978-0-7503-4028-1> (pp, 9-4; or held in DCAD)
- <sup>21</sup> Summary of HESA SSRs by cost centre and provider (through Heidi+); held in Academic Office.
- <sup>22</sup> Extract from NSS Comment Analysis, August 2022; held in Academic Office.
- <sup>23</sup> MEQ extracts from January and April 2022 for capstone research modules at Level 3 and 4 (module count=31, respondent count=679), vs all other L3-L4 modules (module count=525, respondent count=2125), overall response rate 40%; held in Academic Office. More than 20% of students (70/305) who left a positive free-text comment for their capstone modules started the comment with 'my supervisor...'
- <sup>24</sup> QSC: Overview of External Examiner reports 2021-22, January 2023; held in Academic Office.
- <sup>25</sup> Examples of recently published student work, 2018-2022; held in Academic Office.
- <sup>26</sup> Senate: Contingency Plans for Examinations & Assessment, March & May 2020; held in Academic Office.
- <sup>27</sup> Senate: Academic Standards & Student Attainment, January 2020; held in Academic Office
- <sup>28</sup> ISB 2021-22 Summary of Learning and Support Questions, August 2022; held in Academic Office
- <sup>29</sup> Using contextual data to widen access to higher education, 2021; [ContextualisedHEadmissions.pdf](#)



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- <sup>30</sup> Internal Analysis of Continuation and Attainment, November 2022; held in Academic Office. Nb our internal measure is typically lower than the OfS metrics because it does not account for transfers.
- <sup>32</sup> Internal records of ASP participation and satisfaction, 2018-2022; held in DCAD.
- <sup>33</sup> ISB 2021-22 Summary of Learning and Support Questions, August 2022; held in Academic Office
- <sup>34</sup> Student Consultation Framework, July 2018; <https://www.durhamsu.com/student-consultation-framework>
- <sup>35</sup> EC: Decolonising the Curriculum: 2021-22 Update, May 2022; held in Academic Office.
- <sup>36</sup> Extract from Advance HE Annual Review of Accredited CPD Schemes Durham, 2021-22; held in DCAD.
- <sup>37</sup> DELTA Framework intranet summary, October 2022; held in DCAD.
- <sup>38</sup> Online Learning & Teaching Guides, updated March 2022; <https://dcad-resourcebank.webspace.durham.ac.uk/2022/03/17/online-teaching-and-learning-guides/>
- <sup>39</sup> Evaluation for Excellence, updated September 2021; <https://dcad-resourcebank.webspace.durham.ac.uk/category/evaluation/>
- <sup>40</sup> First Generation Scholars Network, October 2021; <https://www.durham.ac.uk/colleges-and-student-experience/student-support-and-wellbeing/scholars-network>
- <sup>41</sup> Project RENU Summary, December 2021; <https://dcad.webspace.durham.ac.uk/2021/12/16/durham-university-and-earth-minutes-win-prestigious-green-gown-award-with-funding-from-the-enhancing-accessibility-grant/>
- <sup>42</sup> ISB 2021-22 Summary of Learning and Support Questions, August 2022; held in Academic Office
- <sup>43</sup> Loan records, May 2020+; held by CIS, current scheme: <https://www.durham.ac.uk/about-us/professional-services/computing-information-services/support/your-digital-equipment-/>
- <sup>44</sup> ISB 2021-22 Summary of Learning and Support Questions, August 2022; held in Academic Office
- <sup>45</sup> Extract from 2020-21 SCONUL submission, held in the Library.
- <sup>46</sup> Internal student records of module registrations, 2018-2022; held in the Academic Office,
- <sup>47</sup> UKES Participation Rates extract, 2019; held in the Wider Student Experience Division.
- <sup>48</sup> Measures of Student Participation in 2021-22; held in Careers & Enterprise.
- <sup>49</sup> WSEC: Extract from WSE Survey 2022, October 2022; held in the WSE Division.
- <sup>50</sup> Measures of Student Participation in 2021-22; held in Careers & Enterprise
- <sup>51</sup> Enterprise start-up support services internal report, September 2022; held in Careers & Enterprise.
- <sup>52</sup> SDGs Good Practices second edition, February 2022; [SDG Good Practices, second edition.pdf](#) (pp 44-45)
- <sup>53</sup> ISB 2021-22 Summary of Learning and Support Questions, August 2022; held in Academic Office
- <sup>54</sup> Analysis of HESA Graduate Outcomes FPE, via Heidi+.
- <sup>55</sup> Inspiring the extraordinary with project pro:NE, January 2022; <https://www.durham.ac.uk/news-events/latest-news/2022/01/inspiring-the-extraordinary-with-project-prone-/>
- <sup>56</sup> Measures of Student Participation in 2021-22; held in Careers & Enterprise.
- <sup>57</sup> Calculations on published LEO data, December 2022: held in the Academic Office.