



# **Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023**

## **Summary TEF 2023 panel statement**

**University Academy 92 Limited**

# Summary of outcomes

## Overall: Silver

Typically, the experience students have at University Academy 92 Limited and the outcomes it leads to are very high quality.

### Student experience: Silver

The student academic experience is typically very high quality.

Very high quality features include:

- effective teaching, assessment and feedback practices, supporting students' learning and progression
- effective course content and delivery, encouraging students to engage in learning and stretch to develop their potential and skills
- the student learning experience, informed by employer and professional practice engagement
- a supportive learning environment, with access to a readily available range of very high quality academic support
- effective student engagement, leading to improvements to the experiences and outcomes of its students.

### Student outcomes: Bronze

Student outcomes are typically high quality, and there are some very high quality features.

Very high quality features include:

- effective support for students to succeed in and progress beyond their studies
- very high rates of continuation and completion for courses
- good articulation of the educational gains students are intended to achieve, and why these gains are relevant to them
- effective support for students to achieve intended educational gains.

# About the assessment

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

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

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

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

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

The panel reviewed the following evidence:

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

The panel applied its expert judgement to:

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

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

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

# Summary of panel assessment

## Information about this provider

University Academy 92 Limited ('the provider') is a relatively small university, co-founded by Lancaster University and a group of former footballers, which opened in 2019. Its strategic focus is stated as 'a commitment to making higher education accessible to all, through founding principles of accessibility, social mobility and inclusivity'.

Based on data from 2020-21, the provider has approximately 200 full-time undergraduate students. Three-quarters of students study in two faculties: Sport and Exercise Sciences, and Business and Management.

A large proportion of students are under 21 years on entry, and most are white males.

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

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

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

## **Student experience: Silver**

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

The panel found the quality of the student academic experience is typically very high quality. Across this aspect, the panel found:

- five features are very high quality
- two features are not very high quality.

In interpreting the indicators, the panel noted the small number of students in certain groups. The panel therefore placed less weight on the indicators for these groups and more weight on the evidence in the provider and student submissions.

After applying the criteria, the panel considered 'Silver' to be the best fit rating. This is because the very high quality features apply to all the provider's groups of students (including students from underrepresented groups) and courses.

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

### **Teaching, assessment, and feedback**

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

The 'teaching on my course' indicator provides initial evidence that this is very high to outstanding quality.

The 'assessment and feedback' indicator provides initial evidence that this is either very high quality or below very high quality.

The provider submission includes further evidence of a very high quality feature:

- a 'one block at a time' learning structure, allowing for structured and tailored feedback, with assessment in each block designed to inform learning in the next block
- career-orientated programmes, embedded into learning, teaching and assessment
- a minimum of two industry engagements per module, supported by 50 guest lectures across all blocks.

The student submission provides positive evidence of the benefits of these and other teaching and assessment strategies.

Overall, the panel concluded that the provider has embedded very high quality teaching, feedback and assessment practices that are effective in supporting its students' learning, progression and attainment.

## **Course content and delivery; student engagement in learning and stretch**

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

The panel considered that the provider and student submissions provide evidence of curriculum content which achieves high levels of student engagement and is delivered with flexibility in mind, successfully meeting the provider's social mobility agenda.

Evidence within the provider and student submissions shows:

- a curriculum informed and reviewed by industry, giving students multiple opportunities to learn from, and network with, experienced and credible professionals
- tailored curriculum delivery, designed to inspire students' commitment to their learning journey
- skills development aligned to individual sector requirements
- a continual professional development module, supporting general skills in preparation for work.

Overall, the panel concluded that the submissions evidenced course content and delivery which effectively encourage the provider's students to engage in learning and stretch them to develop their knowledge and skills (but with limited evidence that students are stretched to their fullest potential). Considering the evidence in the round, the panel found there to be sufficient evidence to demonstrate very high quality for this feature.

## **Research, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and employer engagement**

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

The provider and student submissions provide evidence of very high quality in innovation, professional practice and employer engagement, including:

- a curriculum designed and supported by industry experts, stakeholder engagement and employer review
- teaching by industry practitioners
- a coaching model aligned to industry models
- digital skills innovation, developed in conjunction with digital employer partners.

The evidence in the submissions led the panel to conclude that the provider uses innovation, professional practice and employer engagement to contribute to a very high quality academic experience for its students.

## **Staff professional development and academic practice**

The panel considered there is insufficient evidence that this is a very high quality feature.

The provider submission describes an academic support development programme, but the panel noted there was not enough evidence of how this programme promoted excellent staff development.

The provider submission describes, but provides limited or no evidence of either numbers, impact or effectiveness, the following:

- a 'significant' proportion of staff holding teaching qualifications and higher education fellowship
- staff undertaking research and/or working towards fellowship
- a staff member dedicated to professional learning and development.

As the student submission provided no evidence of research, the panel placed less weight on this.

Overall, the panel concluded there was insufficient evidence of very high quality support for staff professional development or the promotion of excellent academic practice. Considering the evidence in the round, the panel considered there to be insufficient evidence to demonstrate very high quality for this feature.

## **Learning environment and academic support**

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

The overall indicator provides initial evidence of outstanding 'academic support'.

However, the provider and student submissions provide evidence of a very high quality, rather than outstanding, approach to the learning environment and academic support. This includes:

- a student life team overseeing the student experience from pre-entry, but the panel noted limited evidence of how this approach is tailored to student groups
- character and personal development professional coaches for Level 4 and 5 students. While the benefits of this model were corroborated in the student submission, the panel noted the evidence was for some courses, rather than all, with a strong focus on sports
- reasonable adjustment and support plans. The panel noted there was limited detail and no quantitative evidence.

The provider submission describes a 'deep personalised' experience, underpinned by a supportive and social learning environment, with academic and coaching support. However, while the student submission provided evidence of this experience, the panel noted there was limited evidence of how it is tailored to students or across all subjects.

Overall, the panel concluded the provider fosters a supportive learning environment and its students have access to a readily available range of very high quality support. Considering all the indicator and submission evidence, the panel concluded this is a 'very high quality' feature.

## **Learning resources**

The panel considered there is not enough evidence that this is a very high quality feature.

The 'learning resources' indicator provides initial evidence of a feature that is below very high quality.

The provider submission sets out its approach to learning resources, including:

- access to university physical library resources. The panel noted this lacked detail and quantitative evidence
- a digital academy designed to accelerate innovation and industry-relevant learning and development, endorsed by Microsoft, although the panel noted this lacked evidence of impact and effectiveness on all courses
- digital and blended learning during lockdown that enabled practical work to take place
- a new Student Sports Performance Centre, which the panel noted was opened in the last year of the TEF period, and therefore impact on the student experience could not be measured.

The student submission describes 'high end state-of-the-art equipment' and the development of digital skills with Microsoft, but evidence of effectiveness was lacking.

Together, the provider and student submissions include evidence of investment and facilities but limited evidence on student engagement with resources and impact on student experience. Therefore, the panel concluded there was not enough evidence to show that physical and virtual learning resources are used effectively to support very high quality teaching and learning.

## **Student engagement in improvement**

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

The overall indicator provides initial evidence that 'student voice' is very high quality.

The provider submission sets out its approach to student engagement in improvement, including:

- evidence of structures in place which enable student voice through module evaluation, committees and other regular opportunities. This was corroborated in the student submission
- a student feedback summary for each module, shared with student representatives before the provider's academic experience forums.



The student submission describes how student opinions are listened to, and states there are questionnaires in place for student feedback. There is a positive reference to how things can 'always be changed' if students request it.

However, while the panel noted there was evidence of changes based on student feedback, there was limited evidence of how engagement is embedded with students. In spite of this, the panel concluded that, overall, the provider effectively engages with its students, leading to improvements to the experiences and outcomes of its students.

## **Student outcomes: Bronze**

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

The panel found student outcomes are typically high quality for the provider's mix of students and courses, and there are some very high quality features.

Across the student outcomes aspect, the panel found:

- four very high quality features
- one feature for which there was insufficient evidence of 'very high quality'
- one feature for which there was insufficient evidence for the panel to reach a view
- no features of concern.

After applying the criteria, the panel considered 'Bronze' to be the best fit rating. This is because most features are very high quality for some groups of students and courses.

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

## **Approaches to supporting student success**

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

The provider submission describes its approaches to supporting students to succeed in and progress beyond their studies. The panel placed weight on evidence which showed interventions embedded across the provider relating to its strategy of inclusivity, social mobility and accessibility. In addition, the panel noted that the evidence was heavily weighted to Sport and some Business subjects, which the panel placed more weight on.

The approaches include:

- a 'deliberately different' learning model to support student choice and flexibility. This was mirrored favourably in the student submission
- a character and personal development programme (see 'Learning environment and academic support' for more details)

- a ‘make it real’ support package, which the panel noted aimed to remove barriers for students from deprived backgrounds, aligning with the provider’s social mobility aims
- reasonable adjustments made via the provider’s ‘inclusive curriculum’, although the panel noted there was limited evidence of how this was embedded across the provider.

The student submission describes how support is provided when needed and highlights the benefits of the flexibility and support put in place by the provider. However, the provider and student submissions provide limited evidence of how student support is tailored to the mix of students.

Overall, the panel concluded that this is a very high quality feature as the provider effectively supports its students to succeed in and progress beyond their studies.

### **Continuation and completion rates**

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

The panel noted that there was only a small amount of continuation rate data and no completion rate data and therefore placed more weight on the provider submission.

The provider submission includes internal continuation and completion rate data and the provider’s own analysis of this which the panel considered and placed weight on in assessing this feature. The panel noted the provider submission was not able to provide data split by different student groups so the panel was unable to take a specific view on the data in relation to the provider’s mix of students, including students from underrepresented groups.

The provider also referenced the ‘deliberately different’ and ‘make it real’ initiatives as detailed under ‘Approaches to supporting student success’ above; as well as a character and personal development programme which aims to support ‘a journey which is “continually evolving”’.

Overall, despite the limitations of the data the panel placed weight on the continuation and completion rates in the provider submission and recognised that the student support in place is provider-wide. While the panel found insufficient evidence of outstanding rates of continuation and completion for the provider’s students and courses, it concluded there is evidence of very high rates.

### **Progression rates**

The panel considered there is insufficient evidence that this is a very high quality feature.

There was a lack of indicator evidence, as student outcomes for those who graduated in July 2022 have yet to be confirmed. Therefore the panel placed more weight on the provider submission, which showed:

- 60 per cent of students go onto further study, professional work, or positive outcomes within 15 months of graduating
- graduates’ areas of work and job titles, although the panel noted this lacked detail

- professional role models/links and guest speakers as role models were favourably discussed in the student submission
- digital and industry informed curriculum and assessments align to graduate areas of progression.

Overall, the panel noted that progression rates had yet to be externally verified and therefore, it concluded that there is not enough evidence of very high rates of successful progression for the provider's students and courses.

### **Intended educational gains and approaches to supporting educational gains**

The panel found these to be very high quality features.

The provider submission sets out the educational gains it intends its students to achieve and its approaches to supporting students to achieve them, including:

- regular time spent on character and personal development, evidenced with case studies, and corroborated in the student submission
- the framing of employability and industry-aligned skills within an industry-focused curriculum, with evidence of potential outcomes given via case studies.

The student submission describes how undergraduates can 'come here with nothing, and leave with something massive,' and how industry skills are developed in learning, teaching, assessment and coaching.

Both the provider and student submissions include evidence that students are aware of educational gains and why these are relevant to them.

Overall, the panel concluded the provider explains the educational gains it intends its students to achieve, and why these are relevant to its students. The provider also effectively supports its students to achieve educational gains.

### **Evaluation and demonstration of educational gains**

The panel considered there is insufficient evidence to reach a view on this feature.

While the provider submission includes evidence of intended educational gains and approaches to supporting students to achieve them, there was not enough evidence to judge how the provider evaluates those gains.

Overall, the panel concluded that there is not enough evidence to reach a view on whether the provider evaluates the gains made by its students.

### **Overall: Silver**

The panel rated the student experience aspect 'Silver' and the student outcome aspect 'Bronze'.

The panel weighted these two aspects equally and considered all the evidence across all features and across all the provider's student groups, subjects and courses to come to a 'best fit' overall rating for the provider. The panel noted the guidance that the overall rating should not be higher than the highest aspect rating and should be no more than one rating higher than the lowest aspect rating.

The panel found most of the student experience features to be 'very high quality' typically for the provider's groups of students and courses. The panel found most student outcome features to be 'very high quality' for some of the provider's groups of students, including students from underrepresented groups, and courses.

The panel found, across the available evidence, features are typically 'very high quality' for the provider's groups of students. For this reason, the overall rating is 'Silver'.