



Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023

Summary TEF 2023 panel statement

The University of Huddersfield

Summary of outcomes

Overall: Gold

Typically, the experience students have at The University of Huddersfield and the outcomes it leads to are outstanding.

Student experience: Gold

The student academic experience is typically outstanding.

Outstanding quality features include:

- highly effective teaching, feedback and assessment practices, tailored to supporting students' learning, progression, and attainment
- course content and delivery inspires students to engage in and commit to their learning, and stretches them to develop knowledge and skills to their fullest potential
- the use of research in relevant disciplines, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and employer engagement to contribute to an outstanding academic experience
- physical and virtual learning resources are tailored and used effectively to support outstanding quality teaching and learning
- engagement with students is embedded, leading to continuous improvements to their experience and outcomes.

There are also some very high quality features including:

- very high quality support for staff professional development, and excellent academic practice is promoted across the provider
- a supportive learning environment is fostered, with students having access to a readily available range of very high quality academic support.

Student outcomes: Gold

Student outcomes are typically outstanding.

Outstanding quality features include:

- tailored approaches that are highly effective in ensuring the provider's students succeed in and progress beyond their studies
- the clear articulation of the range of educational gains the provider intends its students to achieve, and why these are highly relevant to its students and their future ambitions
- evidence-based, highly-effective approaches to supporting students to achieve educational gains which are tailored to students and their different starting points.

There are also some very high quality features including:

- very high rates of continuation and completion for the provider's students and courses
- very high rates of successful progression for the provider's students and courses
- the evaluation of the educational gains made by students.

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

The University of Huddersfield states that its strategic approach is heavily informed by its geographical and socio-economic context, in an area of high deprivation with few high-level graduate jobs available locally.

In 2020-21, it had 11,870 full-time undergraduate students, 3,880 part-time undergraduate students and 320 apprenticeship students. During the four year TEF period, apprenticeship and part-time student numbers steadily increased, while undergraduate numbers steadily decreased.

The largest subject areas for full-time students are Business and Management (16.1 per cent of students), Creative Arts and Design (11.0 per cent), Engineering (7.8 per cent), Nursing and Midwifery (7.0 per cent), Computing (6.9 per cent), Allied Health (5.2 per cent), and Law (5.0 per cent). All part-time students study Business or Education, while apprentices study Nursing or Midwifery.

The undergraduate student body is 52.2 per cent white, with 16.7 per cent of students being non-UK and 13.9 per cent reporting a disability. A third (31.2 per cent) of students are in Q1 of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, indicating the highest level of deprivation. A further 17 per cent are in Q2 and the remainder, excluding the 17.6 per cent of students for whom data is unavailable, are distributed across Q3-Q5.

The panel noted that the demographics of part-time and apprenticeship students broadly mirror the undergraduate population.

The assessment considered information about the provider's undergraduate courses and students on those courses. This includes apprenticeships at undergraduate level, as the provider included reference to these in its submission.

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

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

Student experience: Gold

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 experience to be typically outstanding quality for the provider's mix of students and courses.

Across the student experience aspect, the panel found five features that are outstanding, and two features that are very high quality overall, but with elements of outstanding quality.

The panel considered that the features of excellence apply to all the provider's groups of students and its range of courses and subjects. In particular, the panel noted:

- the provider's data-driven approach to ensuring that all teaching and learning is effective for all students, including those from underrepresented groups, with demonstrable impact
- the provider's academic support and learning resources being tailored to subject areas and student demographics
- the provider listening to the views of all students, including those from underrepresented groups, and using feedback to address issues and create new policies and practices.

The panel placed less weight on certain sources of evidence which indicated lower quality provision in some areas relating to part-time and apprenticeship courses, given that these represent a small proportion of the provider's students.

On the basis that most features of the aspect are outstanding quality for all groups of students, the panel agreed on a best fit rating category of 'Gold'.

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

Teaching, assessment, and feedback

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The overall 'teaching on my course' indicator suggests very high quality provision for full-time students, at least very high quality for part-time students, and not very high quality provision for apprenticeship students.

There is evidence of lower quality for full-time students studying some subjects. However, the provider submission says that some of these may have been impacted by the coronavirus pandemic, and the panel noted that indicator performance for 2022 shows early signs of improvement.

The overall 'assessment and feedback' indicator suggests outstanding quality provision for full-time students, and some evidence of very high quality provision for part-time and apprenticeship students although there is limited certainty in the data.

For both indicators, the panel placed less weight on part-time and apprenticeship provision, given that they make up a small proportion of students.

The provider submission describes a range of external recognition and awards for individual staff's teaching excellence; the use of peer observation schemes; and that it has a team responsible for delivering institutional projects to foster teaching excellence and the sharing of good practice.

Evidence in the submissions regarding assessment and feedback includes:

- compelling evidence in the provider submission of embedding outstanding assessment practices tailored towards student demographics and subject areas
- a description of its data-driven approach, using the Huddersfield Differential Attainment Project insights tool
- the provision of staff to support students in subject areas where there is lower performance
- measures to prevent academic misconduct, including an academic integrity module
- praise from the students' union and external examiners.

The panel noted that there was limited evidence around the provider's teaching practices, and inconsistent indicators in this area.

Nonetheless, the panel considered the evidence for this feature as a whole, and concluded that overall the provider's teaching, feedback and assessment practices are highly effective and tailored to supporting students' learning, progression, and attainment.

Course content and delivery; student engagement in learning and stretch

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The provider submission includes 11 subject-specific examples of how course content stretches students' skills, demonstrating impact with external data and recognition.

The provider also involves alumni in the design of course content or as guest lecturers, mentors, or as providers of placement or graduate employment opportunities.

The student submission noted that the students' union worked with the provider on an inclusive design checklist for course validation, and that ambassadors from minority ethnic backgrounds informed a university review in this area.

In summary, the panel found sufficient evidence that the provider ensures course content and delivery inspire students to actively engage in and commit to their learning, and that students are stretched to develop knowledge and skills to their fullest potential.

Research, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and employer engagement

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The provider says that it has a research-informed teaching approach, with teaching teams including industry practitioners. All permanent academic staff are active in research and are expected to either hold or be working towards doctoral qualifications.

The panel noted an example of research and innovation in the use of patient simulations for Nursing and Allied Health students, exposing them to situations which they may not encounter in placements. This was particularly useful during the pandemic, has been commended by students and employers, and was seen by the panel as reflective of outstanding quality.

The provider submission also detailed the provider's rapid pivot to online teaching during the pandemic, which drew upon the provider's research into teaching and learning methods. A training programme, which was developed to help staff to move teaching online, continues to be used. Research also informs the work of the provider's careers service. The submission also highlighted that most courses have final projects which encourage innovation, and gave several examples of research opportunities being embedded into courses.

Employer engagement is achieved through employers being members of course committees and joining validation events, and with each subject area offering programmes accredited by relevant professional bodies. The provider also indirectly engages employers through using data on the labour market to inform the design of courses and co-curricular activities. The provider offers placement opportunities on most courses, and work experience opportunities in all of them.

The panel found that the provider has an embedded research and innovation approach that can be seen across multiple modes of study, courses and professional services that are also externally recognised; and high levels of employer engagement through various means.

The panel concluded that the provider uses research in relevant disciplines, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and employer engagement to contribute to an outstanding academic experience for its students.

Staff professional development and academic practice

The panel considered this to be a very high quality feature, with elements of outstanding quality.

In addition to all teaching staff having, or being expected to work towards, doctoral qualifications, staff in leadership roles hold chartered manager status with the Chartered Management Institute. The panel considered this to be particularly outstanding. The provider states it is the first university led entirely by chartered managers.

The panel considered there were elements of both very high quality and outstanding levels of embedded academic practice across the provider through its annual teaching and learning conference and the work of learning technology advisers.

The provider demonstrates a number of professional development opportunities that lead to research-active staff, and gives examples of how research informs teaching, but in both cases the panel considered there to be insufficient evidence of impact to consider this feature outstanding. The panel also noted that the 'teaching on my course' indicators, discussed above, did not provide corroboration that professional qualifications were leading to a better student experience.

The panel questioned the focus and therefore effectiveness of practice sharing, and considered that evidence from the indicators meant it could not consider this feature to be outstanding.

Nonetheless, the panel considered that there is very high quality support for staff professional development and excellent academic practice is promoted across the institution through the provider's teaching and learning conference, amongst other methods.

Learning environment and academic support

The panel found this to be a very high quality feature, with elements of outstanding quality.

The overall 'academic support' indicator for full-time students provides initial evidence of a very high quality feature. While the panel noted some courses falling below this level, it appears that the coronavirus pandemic may have had an impact, and that the final year of the TEF period shows improvement.

While the indicator suggests performance that is not very high quality for both part-time and apprenticeship provision, less weight was applied to this by the panel, given the relatively small size of this provision.

Examples from the provider submission include:

- several transition initiatives tailored to students at different starting points
- learning technology advisers and academic skills tutors (ASTs) based in schools, with an internal survey showing that 100 per cent of students had found ASTs to be helpful
- the incorporation of peer-assisted learning in social science and music programmes to build community and further support transitions
- student guidance and support officers, some of whom are specialists working with international students. While their role is centred around student wellbeing, the panel recognised the part they play in supporting students to excel academically.

There is also evidence that the provider seeks to continuously improve the level of support for its students, and works to ensure parity across its provision.

The submission also shows tailoring to support students from all demographics, such as:

- ensuring accessibility of the virtual learning environment
- personal learning support plans for students with a disability, which are co-produced by the disability services team
- support for international students to develop English language skills, and support in navigating assessments. A 21 percentage point increase in good degree outcomes for international students was provided as evidence of these measures' success.

The panel also noted the implementation and wide uptake of an 'academic integrity' module as particularly outstanding, as it demonstrates this is a provider that acknowledges and tailors its approaches to its student demographics.

The panel noted that while the provider submission reflects outstanding practice, indicator data suggests that performance is of very high quality, with inconsistent performance across courses and modes of study.

Overall, the panel concluded that the provider fosters a supportive learning environment, and its students have access to a readily available range of very high quality academic support.

Learning resources

The panel considered there to be sufficient evidence of an outstanding quality feature.

The overall 'learning resources' indicator for full-time students provides evidence of very high quality. The panel acknowledges that the coronavirus pandemic had an impact on performance, as suggested by changes in the indicators over the TEF period.

For part-time and apprenticeship students, performance is of a lower quality, albeit with limited confidence in the data for apprenticeships. In both cases, the low student numbers meant the panel placed less weight on this evidence. The panel also noted that these students specialise in subject areas, such as Education and Healthcare, which were more affected by coronavirus restrictions than others.

The provider demonstrates sufficient evidence of physical learning resources to support outstanding teaching and learning through continued investment in physical spaces and equipment. Its submission gives an example of tailored resources in an arts and design studio which encourages interdisciplinary working via workshops and exhibitions, resulting in high levels of student satisfaction; and also investment in innovative simulated learning environments for healthcare students.

The provider also mentions 24/7 library opening hours, and subject-specific librarians. It offers laptop bursaries for those coming from low-income households, and the chance to borrow laptops to use off-site, which particularly benefits the provider's high levels of commuter students.

The panel considered the provider's virtual learning resources to be of outstanding quality, noting that staff are trained to use these resources, and that rates of engagement with it have increased. The students' union commends their co-created virtual learning schemes.

Notwithstanding challenges and lower performance during the coronavirus pandemic, the panel concluded that the evidence overall demonstrates that the provider's physical and virtual learning resources are tailored and used effectively to support outstanding quality teaching and learning.

Student engagement in improvement

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The overall 'student voice' indicator for full-time students suggests a very high quality feature. The indicator suggests at least a very high quality feature for part-time students, and less strong performance for apprenticeship students although there is limited certainty in the data.

For full-time and part-time students, indicator performance for the third year of the TEF period suggests a significant impact due to the coronavirus pandemic, and the panel noted more recent

data suggesting higher quality. Given this, and the compelling evidence in the provider submission, the panel decided to place less weight on the indicators.

The panel considered the provider to demonstrate a culture that values student partnership, as the provider and student submissions describe:

- an internal survey which evaluates the experience of non-final year students, with the aim of enabling students to benefit from improvements during their time at university
- sharing course and module evaluation plans with students
- a mandatory session on working in partnership with students within the training programme for course leaders
- co-design of some policies and modules
- the creation of a BAME ambassador scheme, with these ambassadors and other sabbatical officers being members of university committees
- tailored social spaces and storage areas for commuter students, which are the result of the provider's work to understand the experience of these students.

On balance, the panel concluded that the provider clearly embeds engagement with its students, across multiple student demographics, and demonstrates continuous improvement to the experiences and outcomes of its students.

Student outcomes: Gold

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 to be typically outstanding quality for the provider's mix of students and courses.

Across the student outcomes aspect, the panel found three features that are outstanding, and three features that are very high quality overall.

The panel considered that the context of the provider – its high proportion of students from deprived areas, and regional employment landscape – made it more difficult for the provider to achieve outstanding quality in relation to continuation, completion, and progression rates. The panel reached a judgement of very high quality for the two corresponding features, but in both cases noted that there were also outstanding elements. The panel placed less weight on these features in reaching its overall rating for this aspect.

The panel considered that the features of excellence apply to all of the provider's groups of students and courses, including students from underrepresented groups, commending in particular

the provider's data-driven approach, its tailoring of approaches to subject areas and career goals, and various indicators showing strong outcomes for minority ethnic groups.

On the basis that most features of the aspect are outstanding quality for all groups of students, the panel agreed on a best fit rating category of 'Gold'.

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

Approaches to supporting student success

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The panel saw that mechanisms that aid in student progression are clearly embedded throughout the provider. They include:

- ensuring employers are consulted through course validation processes
- analysing government labour market data to inform the design of course content and co-curricular activities
- providing work experience opportunities in all courses
- a careers service which is accredited by several sector bodies

The panel noted that tailored approaches, including virtual internships and employability education, have high levels of engagement and demonstrable evidence. The panel considered a tailored approach for Computing and Engineering students to be of outstanding quality in particular; the provider identified issues with securing placements in the games industry, and developed a commercial games studio allowing students to pursue 12-month placements.

The provider shows its wider commitment to ensuring students are able to secure work placements through research into the barriers to placements, and its commitment to tailoring to student demographics is evident in an initiative focusing on employability for international students.

Other initiatives include publishing a journal providing students the opportunity to showcase their final year projects, involvement of alumni in student progression, and partnerships with a range of local authorities and employment agencies.

In summary, the panel considered the provider to deploy outstanding tailored approaches that are highly effective in ensuring its students succeed in and progress beyond their studies.

Continuation and completion rates

The panel considered this to be a very high quality feature, with outstanding elements.

The overall 'continuation' indicator provided evidence of very high quality for full-time students, outstanding quality for part-time students, and at least very high quality for apprenticeship students.

The overall 'completion' indicator suggests very high quality for full time-students, although indicators show some inconsistent performance across subject disciplines, and higher performance

for minority ethnic groups. The indicator suggests outstanding quality for part-time students. There is no data for apprenticeships for this indicator.

Overall, the panel considered there to be very high rates of continuation and completion for the provider's students and courses.

Progression rates

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

The 'progression' indicator suggests a very high quality feature for full-time students, consistent across subject disciplines and student demographics. There were very few subjects with lower quality, and the panel noted that these subjects represent very small student cohorts.

There is a similar level of quality for part-time students, and no data for apprenticeships.

Given the regional context, the panel acknowledged the provider's achievements in its student progression outcomes but found there to be insufficient evidence of a wholly outstanding quality feature.

The panel concluded that there are very high rates of successful progression for the provider's students and courses.

Intended educational gains

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The provider's definition of educational gain, in consultation with students, is: "The experiences we provide that make a difference to our students' lives, enriching and accelerating learning and personal development beyond what otherwise might be achieved."

The provider clearly articulates how the aims of its various projects and initiatives are relevant in helping students achieve their ambition, and the metrics used to measure its effectiveness.

In summary, the panel concluded that the provider clearly articulates the range of educational gains it intends its students to achieve, and why these are highly relevant to its students and their future ambitions.

Approaches to supporting educational gains

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

Having initially run a pilot scheme in 2019, the provider now offers a Global Professional Award, accredited by the Chartered Management Institute, through all of its courses, tailored to students' different starting points. Of the more than 10,000 students to have attended one of the workshops for the initiative, 94 per cent reported that they found it useful. The panel considered this scheme to be evidence-based and highly effective.

Another initiative supporting educational gain is a hackathon, in which organisations pose a challenge to student teams to develop enterprising skills. More than 12 challenges have been delivered to nearly 400 participants over two years, with 44 students from winning teams moving

on to undertake paid work placements with partner organisations. The provider also runs a pitch club, an interactive session for anyone interested in developing confidence in pitching, presentation and communication. It has hosted more than 270 students in 34 sessions since 2020.

Overall, the panel considered there to be sufficient evidence of outstanding approaches to supporting students to achieve educational gains, both inside and outside of the curriculum, that are evidence-based, highly effective with demonstrable impact, and tailored to students and their different starting points.

Evaluation and demonstration of educational gains

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

The provider submission describes that it evaluates educational gains to create an 'Educational Gain Index' which can be tailored to subject or course level. The provider states the index can also provide a checklist for individual students, allowing for targeted interventions by staff.

The provider states that there are some areas still to be enhanced and developed in line with its definition of educational gains over the next few years.

While the panel considered that there is insufficient evidence of outstanding quality as outputs are not yet available that would be able to demonstrate how the provider's students are succeeding in and achieving the intended gains, the panel concluded there to be sufficient evidence of a very high quality feature as the provider is beginning to evaluate the educational gains it intends for its students.

Overall: Gold

The panel considered a best fit rating of 'Gold' for both the student experience aspect and the student outcomes aspect, on the basis that most features of each aspect were outstanding quality for all groups of students.

Having considered all the evidence across all features, and across all the provider's student groups, subjects and courses, the panel judged the best fit for the overall rating is 'Gold', given that this was the rating for both aspects. The panel therefore considered the overall rating to be 'Gold'.