

TEF 2023: The University of Bradford

Introduction

The University of Bradford's delivery of teaching excellence is founded on the following interrelated commitments and associated track record of achievement:

- Engaging diverse groups of students in Higher Education (HE), often from historically underrepresented groups, and delivering a genuinely transformative educational experience that enables academic achievement and exceptional employability outcomes.
- Being a sector, systems, and regional leader for social mobility through a whole-institution approach to inclusion as a means of accelerating equality for all, making our 'diversity count', and enabling everyone to achieve their full potential.
- Delivering 'more than a degree' through authentic educational gains that build social and cultural capital and give all students the skills and confidence to pursue their personal and professional aspirations.

These commitments are rooted in our heritage, manifest in our accomplishments, and are visible in our delivery of meaningful outcomes for students, the City of Bradford, its local communities, and regional economies.

"we are equipping our students to change and improve our world, and this underscores our philosophy of teaching and learning."

Bradford is the 40th university to be created in Britain. Established in 1966 as a successor to the Bradford Mechanics Institute and, latterly, the Bradford Institute of Technology, The University of Bradford has a proud history of enriching lives and benefitting society by combining knowledge creation and educational opportunities, ensuring the outcomes of our endeavours are effective for economic development and the common good. Indeed, in this respect Bradford is very much a post-Robbins university, not only in the sense that the Robbins Report inaugurated the "elevation of the Colleges of Advanced Technology to the status of universities", but also insofar as it foreshadowed debates about widening participation and fair access in assuming as axiomatic that "courses of higher education should be available for all those who are qualified by ability and attainment to pursue them and who wish to do so". At Bradford, the principle of equality of opportunity is foundational to who we are, what we do, and how we do it. It not only informs our pledge to build an anti-racist and deeply democratic university that creates fair outcomes for all, but also acts as a catalyst for our delivery of an outstanding teaching, learning, and student experience based on the principle of transformational inclusion.

We strive to simultaneously serve the individual needs of our students and the broader needs of Bradford through a combination of social renewal and social mobility. By unashamedly linking university study to the worlds of work and employment through authentic teaching and assessment, real world experiences, and applied research, we create the conditions for people to thrive and succeed while also responding to the national need for a high-skilled graduate workforce. Moreover, our commitment to high-level learning in all its dimensions links research to teaching, and the endeavours of our staff with the student experience. In this way, the common effort to create new knowledge and 'make knowledge work' for the benefit of individuals and general economic growth is woven into the fabric of Bradford's academic culture. To deliver on our commitments and ensure an excellent academic experience for all students, we deliberately design our strategies, policies, and processes in ways that recognise and respect diversity and provide support tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of each student. Indeed, personalised

learning is a cornerstone of the University's approach to teaching excellence. Integral to this approach is working in partnership with our Student Union and the wider student body. Indeed, one of the core intentions of our Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy is to knit together our strategic approach to the academic curriculum with the broader factors that, together, define the modern student experience. It is clear to us that excellence in the classroom is underpinned by excellence in student support outside the classroom. It is this holistic model of higher education, one which seamlessly understands and values students in their individuality, which is delivered by the University of Bradford.

Provider Context

Place – the City and the University

We are proud to be the University *of* and *for* Bradford; to place the communities and people of the City, and the wider region, at the heart of our mission and values. This is not only because we are a civic university and predominately a local recruiter, but also because we intentionally serve the needs of the region, strive to disrupt economic and social inequalities, and, in so doing, contribute to place-based transformation.

The Bradford Metropolitan District is located within West Yorkshire and, with a population of 546,400, it is the fifth largest local authority in England. Bradford is the UK's youngest city, with 22.8% of the District's population aged 15 and under. The City is known for being an ethnically and culturally diverse place, with 43.3% of the population being from non-White British ethnic groups and, of this, 74% from Asian or Asian-British backgrounds.

Bradford is also the 6th most employment-deprived local authority, with employment rates of 70%, six percentage points lower than the national average. According to official ONS data, 24% of working age residents in Bradford have no qualifications and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's 'State of the Region' report informs us that only 73% achieve a Level 2 qualification by

It is within this context that delivering excellent educational outcomes, and creating an academically supportive yet stimulating environment, is fundamental to the student experience at Bradford. In working closely with key regional organisations to support and champion mutual ambitions for improvement and growth, our institutional strategies shape our endeavour to *"be a university city that shares knowledge in order to strengthen health, wealth and confidence across the many communities in which our students, staff and alumni participate"*. These ambitions are underpinned by the University's values of 'excellence', 'trust', 'innovation' and 'inclusion' and shaped around our core strategic themes of 'people', 'place', and 'performance'.

People – our Students and Staff

At The University of Bradford, people are our greatest asset, and we recognise that everyone in our community – our students, staff, alumni, and stakeholder groups – are central to achieving our mission and vision. Our unwavering commitment to equality of opportunity and social inclusion is about putting people at the heart of the University and it is why they are promoted, embedded, and celebrated in everything that we do.

The student population of Bradford currently totals over 14,500 learners, of which approximately 8,300 are studying at undergraduate level with the remainder split between our postgraduate taught (5,400), postgraduate research (500) and professional development/short course (400) provision. While the University attracts and welcomes students from across the globe, of the 8,300+ undergraduate student population, 84% are 'home fee-paying' and, within this, over 80% are from the Bradford and wider Yorkshire region. Given this predominantly local catchment area, our undergraduate student body shares many of the characteristics of the general regional population.

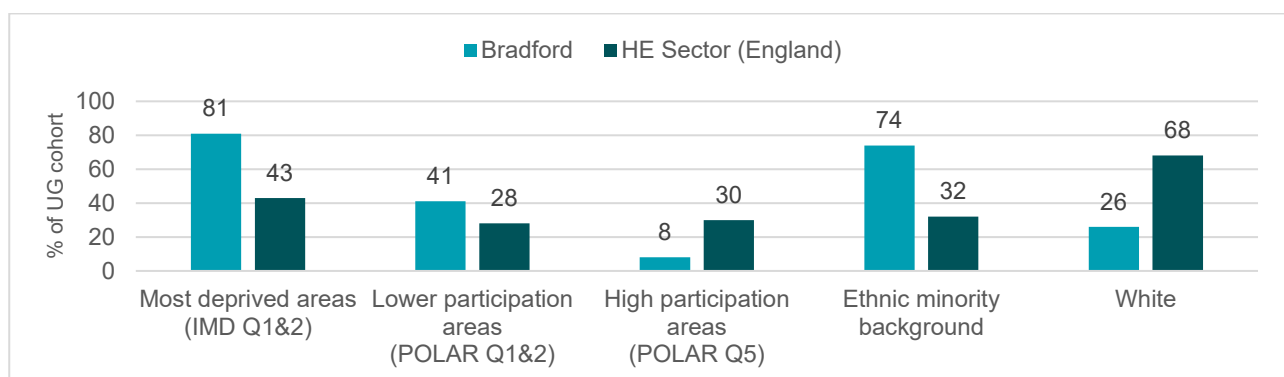


Figure 1: Characteristics of full-time undergraduate students over last five years - UoB versus English HE providers.

We have outstanding performance in supporting access for local students from deprived areas into undergraduate study,

The proportion of our students from areas with low HE participation rates (POLAR quintiles 1 and 2) is 13 percentage points above that of the sector and the ratio of entrants from high HE participation areas (POLAR quintile 5) is significantly different, at less than a third of the sector average.

We are proud of our successes in this area and passionate about our sustained commitment to raising aspirations, widening access to HE, and ensuring high quality education is available to all individuals who have the potential to succeed.

Fundamental to supporting our student body to excel is the collective power of our staff. Since 2019, the University's workforce has increased in line with our growth in student recruitment.

Our staff fully recognise and embrace the wider context of Bradford, the

regional environs which shapes the University community, actively championing the delivery of transformative education. Their professional endeavours are supported by the University's People Strategy. Underpinned by 'whole career' staff development frameworks, this sets out a vision to develop and empower our staff to achieve excellence as academics and educators through the continual enhancement their practice. We provide a variety of staff training opportunities, evidenced by the delivery of over 85 internal training courses in 2021-22. These

covered a variety of themes from teaching innovation, research excellence, through to personal and professional skills development, including a range of leadership and management development opportunities. We value all our employees and recognise those staff who demonstrate excellence in their professional practice or go 'above and beyond' for the University via such schemes as the Outstanding Achiever Award, the Long Service Award, as well as a Performance Recognition Scheme. We are also committed to encouraging and celebrating the fantastic work of staff who consistently provide students with exceptional learning experiences.

Our staff and students unite as a community under the shared banner of 'Team Bradford'. This ethos helps to build a sense of belonging and create a vibrant and inclusive culture in which staff and students work co-operatively with shared purpose. Underpinning this is our commitment to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion which permeates through all of our key initiatives.

Through participation in several 'experience exchange' meetings and learning circles, these partnerships seek to promote mutual learning, enable 'received wisdom' to be challenged, and foster an understanding of the 'lived experience' of others.

The value placed on 'people' by the University's is nowhere more apparent than in the commitments set out in our Access and Participation Plan (APP) and, most notably, our work to improve social mobility. Indeed, this is a key place where our values translate into impact. Our work to realise our strategic vision of 'a world of inclusion and equality of opportunity, where people want to, and can, make a difference' has been recognised via multiple prestigious awards. In March 2022, the University was named the leading university in the English Social Mobility Index for the second consecutive. The Index, published by the Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI), measures and compares the impact universities have on people's social mobility, and how this improves life chances, through statistical analysis of student continuation and graduate outcomes metrics mapped against Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) data. In 2019/20, the University was named 'University of the Year for Social Inclusion' by The Times and Sunday Times. We were an early signatory of the Common Purpose Social Mobility Pledge and have been named an "opportunity anchor" in recognition of our pivotal role in transforming lives. The University has won two 'Levelling Up' Awards in as many years and was named Institution of the Year at the 2021 Aimhigher Awards. This deep commitment to social mobility is enacted through the prioritisation of 'inclusion' as the driving force in the design and development of our academic portfolio and wider student experience.

Student Experience

Academic Provision

Our portfolio of 190+ taught academic courses has been developed and shaped by three key academic themes: Sustainable Societies, The Engineered Environment, and Health & Care. These themes span our four Faculties and help to frame our varied and interdisciplinary academic offer.

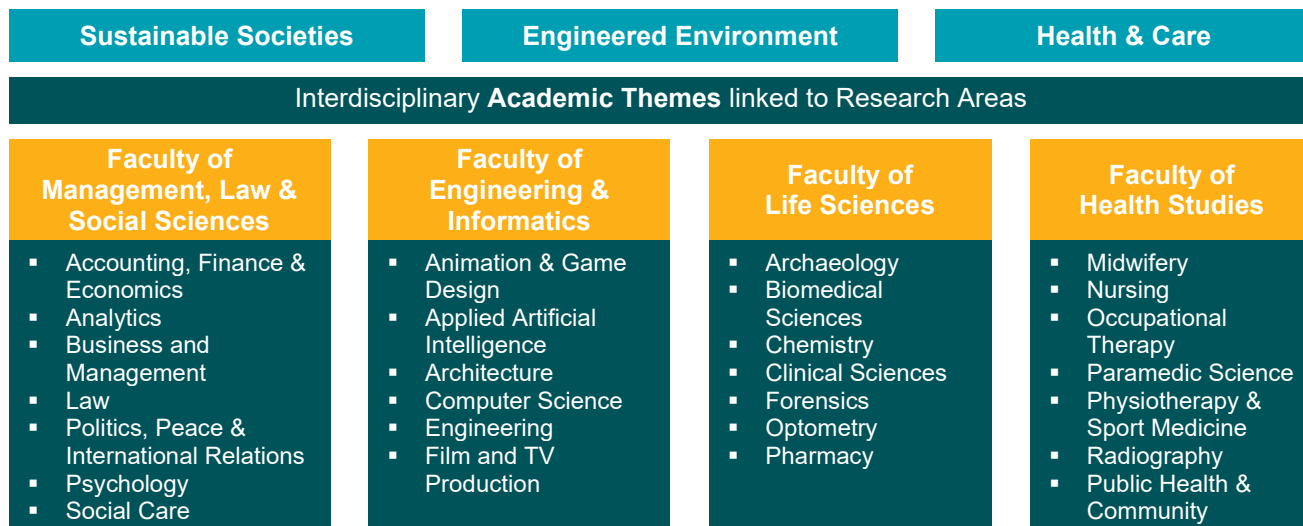


Figure 2: Relationship between UoB Academic Themes, Faculties, and academic disciplines

The University's strategic ambition to 'Make a Difference' is realised in the strong and explicit link between our taught academic courses and professional bodies, community organisations, and industry. Bradford places great importance in maintaining and growing its professional accreditations and, as of 2022-23, over 80% of our undergraduate awards are accredited by at least one professional, statutory, and regulatory body (PSRB), an increase of 10% over the past five years. We currently engage with 23 accrediting organisations across our undergraduate portfolio and, alongside active involvement from practitioners and employers in the design of our courses, such PSRB accreditation is fundamental to ensuring our academic offer is current, aligned to sector and industry standards, and continues to deliver relevant teaching and a dynamic student experience. The impact of this is evident not only in our strong graduate attributes and outcomes, but also in our approaches to authentic and experiential learning and assessment. In addition to equipping our students with the essential knowledge, skills, and qualities to be successful beyond graduation – be that in employment or further study – students on many of our accredited courses graduate already having gained professional registration, membership, and/or additional qualifications/credentials.

The Bradford Curriculum

The University places great importance on the necessity to continually enhance its teaching practice and the wider learning environment. Until recently, our strategic approach has been underpinned by the objectives set out in the Learning and Teaching Strategy (2016-2020), the supporting Curriculum Framework, and allied Employability Strategy: to offer academic provision that is student-centred, technology-enhanced, research-informed, employment-supporting, and professionally assured. As part of the implementation of the Curriculum Framework, many the University's undergraduate courses underwent significant transformation during 2014/15 and 2015/16, with the first graduates of the revised curricula completing their studies in 2017/18. One example of the success of the Curriculum Framework is the transformation to our Engineering portfolio. This suite of courses was redesigned to explicitly embed the Conceive-Design-

Implement-and Operate (CDIO) educational model and provide a learning experience that stresses engineering fundamentals set within the context of real-world systems and products. As part of this approach, students develop the skills to work with complex value-added engineering systems; becoming confident with experimentation, systems thinking, complemented by a solid understanding of business and enterprise contexts and issues of sustainability. The redesign of undergraduate Engineering also recognised that the future for engineers is one where they will work collaboratively across traditional disciplinary boundaries with experts from other specialist fields. To this end, all our engineering courses now share an interdisciplinary first year which provides students with fundamental skills and knowledge as well as opportunities to work on specific projects with peers within and across disciplines. These projects are inquiry-based and informed by the Faculty's research areas, with an emphasis on application, experiential learning, and real-world engagement. The success of the Curriculum Framework's implementation across the Engineering provision can be seen in the above benchmark rates of continuation (+4.3%), completion (+2.1%), and overall satisfaction (+4.7%).

The development of the University's current Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy (LTSES) built on the strengths of the previous Curriculum Framework and Employability Strategy in explicitly and comprehensively aligning our focus on graduate attributes and outcomes with our ambitions to provide an excellent academic and broader student experience. The central vision of the LTSES is to create an inclusive learning culture and transformative university experience by offering genuinely innovative educational courses and delivering excellence in teaching and learning. These aims are being delivered, in part, through the alignment of all our existing courses to the principles of the newly established Bradford Curriculum. The Bradford Curriculum – which defines our educational expectations and design principles for all courses, regardless of size, discipline, or mix of students – is founded on the premise that all students are welcomed, valued, and have the potential to thrive in and benefit from higher education. It is centred around four core dimensions: 1) Programme-centric learning, 2) Research-engaged learning, 3) Liberated learning and 4) Future-focused learning. Through the imbrication of in-, co- and extra-curricular activity, all aligned to the Bradford Curriculum, we want to instil a passion in our students for making a difference as subject experts, highly effective employees/entrepreneurs, and enterprising citizens; and to support them to develop 'Bradford Qualities' so that they leave us as individuals who are 'confident', 'critical', 'connected' and 'creative'.

While there is a need for improvement in the consistency our student experience metrics, this is already a key priority of the new Bradford Curriculum: to design-in consistency of experience across the portfolio, from year-to-year, and from cohort-to-cohort. We are confident in our plans to ensure an excellent experience for all, and in our work so far to address variability of practice. It is through this Strategy that we have committed to continually enhancing our academic provision, ensuring we evolve our courses and practices to meet the needs of our students, our stakeholders, and the communities in which they participate.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Excellence

While acknowledging opportunities for enhancement, the University of Bradford has a wealth of outstanding teaching, learning, and assessment practice. Indeed, the impact of our educational excellence can be seen not only in our student outcomes and feedback, but also in the recognition and adoption of such practice across the institution, within the HE sector, and beyond. One exceptional example of this is our pioneering work in active and collaborative learning, and in particular, Team-Based Learning (TBL). TBL is a specialist form of active and collaborative learning that provides a structured approach to the flipped classroom. Drawing on constructivist

theories of 'deep' learning, it motivates and rewards students for their preparation *before* class and their engagement *in* class, ensuring that time in the classroom is spent on application and problem-solving rather than simply knowledge transmission/digestion. The School of Pharmacy and Medical Sciences, who were the initiators of TBL within the University, transformed their MPharm curriculum from a traditional didactic and lab-based delivery to the active, student-centred, TBL pedagogy, with the aim of developing graduates who are motivated and effective problem-solvers and who have the inter-personal, team-working, and critical thinking skills required to be future-ready healthcare professionals. The adoption of TBL has had a significant impact on student engagement and satisfaction on the undergraduate Pharmacy courses, as can be seen in the student experience metrics; +5.6% above benchmark overall, with +12.3% above benchmark for 'Assessment and Feedback'. NSS comments year-on-year confirm the explicit link between its adoption and the satisfaction of students. For example, students commented

that, *"Team Based Learning has been extremely helpful in building confidence and working well with others"* and *"TBL on the course is definitely one of [the] biggest positives."*

The institutional impact of TBL now extends far beyond the MPharm course. In the last 5 years, TBL has been adopted within Management, Psychology, Physiotherapy, Paramedic Science, and, most recently, in the curriculum redesign of undergraduate Nursing. It has also resulted in the development of three specialist TBL teaching spaces across the University's campus. Now recognised as international experts in TBL, the Pharmacy team have made a significant impact externally. TBL conferences and other professional development initiatives coordinated by the team have led to the methodology being used in over 30 institutions across Europe. Moreover, in 2017, the team received national recognition for their work in TBL with an Advance HE Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence (CATE) and, in 2020, the team were lead partner for the €400,000 TALENT project. This was funded under the European Commission's Erasmus+ programme and, in collaboration with associates in Spain, the Netherlands, and Ireland, supported the training of secondary school teachers to apply TBL in their classrooms. In the UK, this project saw the University team up with New College Bradford, a sixth form college based in the city, along with three schools in the North-West run by the Northern Schools Trust. In this way, the excellence we have cultivated in active and collaborative learning is not only improving the experience of students at the University, but is also affecting educational policy and practice in the local communities and regions.

Elsewhere in the University, problem-based learning and simulation are similarly effective in encouraging active and collaborative practice. For example, in 2019 the curriculum for Developing Skills for Business Leadership was transformed into a simulation-oriented model in which students act as a management team for a small business over a two-(virtual)-year cycle. In the Faculty of Health Studies, high-quality clinical skills teaching is supported by a suite of purpose-built practice simulation suites which allow students to learn and practise core professional skills, from moving patients and taking blood pressure, to giving injections, conducting ward rounds, and dispensing medication. Similarly, the Diagnostic Radiography team have also brought service users into simulation activities to help students gain experience of dealing with challenging patient behaviours and understand how their own behaviours affect patients' emotional responses. Feedback shows students' appreciation of this kind of authentic learning: *"It showed that every patient is unique and they can present their own challenges so you have to be prepared for anything really and make sure you don't forget your role and duties and responsibilities"* and *"I liked being challenged in a safe environment where I knew if I messed up it wasn't a problem. And also, that if I did mess up it provided me with an opportunity to change what I do being faced with a real patient in similar circumstances."*

Similarly, in the School of Archaeological and Forensic Sciences, students are given opportunities for real-world, authentic experiences by using a variety of excavation locations, supported by cutting-edge and world-leading virtual 3D simulations from high-resolution scans. These simulation activities provide recurrent touch points for participative, experiential, and reflective learning, as well as true longitudinal self-insight: *"Over the course of my degree, putting what I've learned in lectures into practice out in excavations or in lab-work has really solidified my understanding of my course. Experiential learning means that I have confidence in my field before I graduate, and puts me in a better standing for my future career."*

Such excellence in teaching, learning, and assessment across our diverse portfolio of courses is supported by our excellence in research, input from discipline experts, and the provision of outstanding partnerships and placements. Courses in the Faculty of Health Studies collaborate with industry partners and researchers at the University's Digital Health Enterprise Zone (DHEZ), and work in partnership with Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust at the Wolfson Centre for Applied Health Research, including the work of the internationally recognised Born in Bradford project. The partnership with a range of NHS Trust and other healthcare organisations (e.g., West Yorkshire Ambulance Service) in the provision of on-course placements and other professional development opportunities for students is another strength of our health-related courses, as is evidenced by the feedback from our students:

"The course has provided me with the best opportunities to reach full potential in my career choice. The placement year has been the biggest positive as I was able to build on my clinical skills and having a level of autonomy whilst still being supervised"

"Placements have been where I have learnt most effectively. Face-to-face interactions in lectures diverse, cultural acceptance and inclusive of mature students. Excellent teaching from lecturers' practical, clinical skills sessions, guest speakers."

"My placements have been outstanding and [the staff] has worked so hard to make them accessible and I've had the most perfect range of experiences. I cannot say how much I have enjoyed this course because there are no words for it. It changed my life to give me the career I've always wanted and I feel so lucky to have done it."

Institutionally, students complete over 7000 placements every year, with numbers planned to significantly increase as The Bradford Curriculum becomes embedded across the entire portfolio. This is a core strength of our in- and co-curricular approaches to teaching and learning and is fundamental to our ambition to provide students with the opportunity to achieve 'more than a degree'.

For Instance, in Civil and Structural Engineering, partnership/industry-led initiatives have been successful in facilitating excellence. the course team gained funding from the Royal Academy of Engineering who then worked with the team to enhance learning materials and assessment design, embed visits to construction sites and input from visiting professionals, and offer personal mentorship to students from ethnic minority backgrounds, all with a view to transforming students' understanding of how their learning could translate into the professional world. Such research and industry involvement has resulted in positive student experience metrics (+4.7% above benchmark) and is also highlighted in comments for the course: *"Best university 1 it challenged me to gain an in-*

depth knowledge of the industry and technical knowledge which allowed me to secure multiple job offers related to my course.”

Similarly, the Faculty of Management, Law and Social Sciences, work closely with business/community organisations to develop in-curricular projects, case study scenarios, career presentations, and sector-related experiential skills sessions.

These inform the direction of key modules, mentor students, deliver inspirational talks, and participate in product pitch events with students. They also support our Innovation Hub which provides both an on campus and virtual fulcrum for enterprise and entrepreneurial activity. This strong focus on experiential learning is also evident in the embedding of live business projects into the curriculum.

these demonstrate the symbiotic relationship between the University and the City, and the ways in which partnership-working shapes and drives the Bradford Curriculum and its commitment to authentic learning. The success of such approaches to course design and delivery can also be seen in the external leagues tables and accolades we have recently achieved: not only the Queen’s Anniversary Prize (2021), but also Complete University Guide (2023) rankings of 5th for Forensic Science, 7th for Civil Engineering and 8th for Physiotherapy, alongside the Times Higher Education Business School of the Year award for the School of Management (2021).

Digitally-enhanced pedagogies support excellence in teaching, learning, and assessment across the University, an aspect of our practice that was particularly accelerated during the Covid-19 period and the move from primarily face-to-face to almost exclusively online curriculum delivery. Examples of digital enhancement over the past five years include work to redesign Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) module templates to improve accessibility and useability, enhance engagement, and provide coherent/intuitive structures for course content. These templates have since been rolled out for all staff to use in designing the VLE-assisted elements of students’ learning. Another example of excellent digital pedagogy, outside the formal curriculum, is the Media, Design and Technology team who created social environments in both physical and digital forms where students at all levels of study can interact and work collaboratively to gain confidence and enhance their skills.

The Faculty of Health Studies has invested in a range of state-of-the-art high-fidelity mannequins (for example, a birthing mannequin used by student midwives and paramedics) enabling students to observe, rehearse, and practice clinical skills, make decisions, and practise teamworking in a realistic, low risk, immersive setting. The Faculty also uses Virtual Reality headsets to help Radiography students visualise anatomy/physiology prior to capturing the final image. As these examples evidence, the use of digital spaces in innovative and creative ways is a growing element of enhancing teaching, learning and the academic experience at Bradford.

Central to our high-quality student experience is a longstanding commitment to, and championing of, peer support within our courses as a means of nurturing a sense of belonging, fostering

meaningful student connections, and promoting learning. There is now a well-established delivery of peer support across the University with current peer-assisted learning (PAL) and peer support schemes

In 2021-22, 82% of all our undergraduate courses had a peer-supported learning scheme embedded within the curriculum. Our approach to peer support enhances the curriculum offer and provides wider opportunities for supporting student transition and helping students to develop as individuals and as part of a collaborative learning community. Our peer support schemes also make a telling contribution to the employability of the student leaders who are noticeably gaining higher-level skills (such as leadership), key university capabilities, and graduate attributes. This is evidenced through student feedback on the peer-assisted learning (PAL) schemes with the 2021-22 cohort results showing that: 89.8% of recipients found it beneficial; 88.1% said it supported their learning; and 91.5% enjoyed the experience of engaging with the scheme. Additionally, qualitative feedback highlighted the value of having student perspectives and guidance, support with understanding course material and expectations, improving study techniques, developing employability skills and interacting with others: *“The PAL scheme is amazing [...] it's a brilliant resource for skills development and a great experience helping people.”*

To drive improvements in the student experience, especially as it relates to educational practice, the University's Advance-HE accredited Bradford:Fellowships Scheme is a whole-career framework that supports the professional development of academics and others involved in teaching and/or supporting learning. Aligned to the UK Professional Standards Framework (HEA Fellowship) and comprising both taught and experiential pathways, the scheme promotes engagement with professional bodies, the continued enhancement of professional practice, and professional recognition from induction and early-career through to national teaching awards.

Feedback identified *“the fact that the scheme caters for a range of ‘non-traditional’ staff including careers staff, librarians, academic skills and learning support staff”* as a particular element of good practice.

Complementing this formal scheme, we promote excellence by creating a culture of learning that values the importance of sharing good practice. This often occurs organically at Course- or School-level, but more broadly via a Pedagogical Research Group (PedR), a Show and TEL forum (focused on the enhancement of practice through technology-enhanced learning), and a lively Programme Leader's Forum (a powerful community of practice for a key constituency of educational leaders). We also operate a Peer-Review of Teaching scheme which not only helps us to quality assure our teaching standards, but equally importantly, discover talented educators who we can support to both share their approach and seek recognition for their achievements. Indeed, all these staff development initiatives articulate to the University's overarching Bradford Academic: Career Journey framework which sets out our institutional commitment to recognising and valuing excellence in teaching and research, as well as other contributions to the academic life of the University.

Academic Support

We place a high value on knowing and understanding our students and supporting them to succeed. We do this through the delivery of on-course support as well as through outstanding

wider student support provision. In delivering on our commitment to offer 'more than a degree', and in recognising the importance of a contextualised, person-centred approach to education, the student support provision at Bradford is pivotal to the delivery of a successful academic experience. Support for students to engage with their studies comes in various forms and we track this support through the whole student lifecycle. With a £4M annual investment into the Access Agreement, the University offers a range of financial help to assist students on their journey through a range of means, including bursaries and scholarships. Every year non-repayable scholarships are awarded to UK, EU, and international students on the basis of academic excellence, personal circumstances, or economic hardship. Some scholarships are funded by alumni and other donors, and some of these are linked to studies in a specific subject area. These scholarships enable students, who otherwise may be unable to afford it, to access and participate in higher education.

Student induction commences with our pre-arrival processes. This involves all students completing their online enrolment, including a Career Readiness, Disability Screening, and a Wellbeing survey, as well as completing their ID checks, and accessing their teaching timetable. At this point, all students can access Canvas, our VLE, alongside our online Step Up to HE resource. This consists of nine modules designed to support students to successfully transition into Higher Education and develop key skills and behaviours that will enable success (e.g., academic writing, collaborative learning, career planning, personal wellbeing). Additionally, first-year students are also able to attend an on-campus Step Up to HE event which provides an introduction to each of their modules, opportunities to meet staff from Student Support Services and fellow new students, while also hearing from current students through Student Ambassador led activities. Welcome Week provides a range of induction opportunities for students to meet with their course team and wider faculty staff, to find out about campus facilities, and to familiarise themselves with the range of Student Support Services available. There are opportunities for students to attend a Freshers' Fair and Part-Time Jobs Fair, and to learn about the breadth of extra-curricular activities available. For example, societies, sports groups, the Student's Union (UBU) Kickstart programme, volunteering, work on campus, mentoring, and our Bradford Employability Awards all feature in the welcome experience. During Welcome Week all students will engage with MyBradford, our initial information and advice team, who are an on-going point of contact throughout a student's time with us. Importantly, induction and transition continue through the whole student lifecycle and are built into the fabric of our course design as well as being delivered through co- and extra-curricular activities.

Throughout their studies at the University, all students are assigned a Personal Academic Tutor (PAT), a member of the academic staff from their course or wider department. Generally, a student will be scheduled to meet with their PAT at least three times per year, either individually or as part of a small group. Details of meetings are recorded by the PAT in the student record system (e-vision) and are accessible to the student and PAT to enable shared ownership and collaborative recordkeeping of student progress. If a student requests further support via additional meetings, these will be arranged by the PAT as appropriate. All PATs receive training to enable them to support a student through their university life and help them to get the most from their studies and the services and opportunities available across the University. It is also the role of the PAT to support students to focus on their personal and professional development goals, including career aspirations, to be a point of contact to raise personal welfare issues, and to provide a reference for the student on completion of their studies. Students are encouraged to discuss any issues that are impacting on their engagement with their course with their PAT to identify how these might be overcome. This may, at times, involve the PAT signposting, or with the consent of the student, referring, the student to one or more of the specialist student support services or UBU. The impact of this support for students is evident in student feedback: *“My tutor has been crucial to the positive changes in my academic life”* and *“My PAT has been excellent and guided me through my university experience and always ensured to help and support me when needed.”*

As part of our whole-person approach to student support and success, we place great importance on holistic provision that recognises the role that wellbeing plays as an enabler to a positive student experience, academic achievement, and longer-term graduate outcomes. In recognition of this, our student support services offer tailored, specialist advice and support and provide support that often makes a life-changing difference to individuals.

Academic support is available to all students via the Academic Skills Advice team, Library Services, and the Language Centre, all of whom champion the development of information, academic, and language skills through a diverse, yet contextualised, offer of 1:1 appointments, workshops, online resources, and in-curriculum sessions. These teams work directly with students, and in partnership with course teams, focusing on skills development designed to facilitate student engagement with learning. In 2021-22, the Library delivered 386 information skills sessions and held 1292 appointments with students

. Working in partnership with course teams and embedding skills development in the curriculum is one of the ways in which we promote an inclusive curriculum and experience for all students. An example of this is the work of the Academic Skills Advice team within the Faculty of Health Studies. By contextualising skills within the subject discipline and delivering a series of workshops and interventions as part of taught modules (e.g., sessions on notetaking, utilising formative feedback, critical analysis), students are supported to develop in a structured and guided way as they progress through their studies. Combined with self-reflection and further digital learning resources, these embedded interventions ensure academic support is co- and extra-curricular, and is strategically aligned to support the course-based teaching, learning, and assessment.

Our Counselling and Mental Health Service, accredited by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy,

The service user feedback demonstrates the positive impact this provision had on the overall student experience with 81% stating that the Service helped them do better in their academic work/work, 88% stating the Service improved their overall experience, 81% stating the Service helped them to develop skills that might be useful for future employment

(e.g. building resilience, increased confidence etc) and 61% stating that engagement with the Service was the most significant / important factor in helping them stay at University. From 2021, the scope of the provision was further enhanced by the extension of the Service to a 6-day model (to include Saturdays) and through a partnership with Health Assured to provide a 24/7 Student Helpline, all measures implemented to further enhance the support available to students and increase inclusivity and accessibility by recognising the need for support beyond a traditional weekday 9-5 model.

The Disability Service supports all students who have a long-term condition or disability and offers advice and guidance to support students to engage successfully with all aspects of their academic experience. Through the Disability Service, the University of Bradford offers every student the opportunity to access the SpLD Screening Process, a four-stage fully funded diagnostic assessment process.

the service was nominated for an Outstanding Achiever Award, recognising the demonstrable positive impact the delivery of this support has on the educational engagement and achievement of students with a disability or long-term health condition.

Our Student Life Team works with students on a broad range of financial and welfare support matters, building financial capability, supporting with budgeting and life skills as well as providing a vital emergency crisis response provision. In recognition of the impact that 'digital poverty' can have in preventing access to learning, in 2020-21 the University launched a Long-term Laptop Loan Scheme.

. In addition, the Student Support Fund, which is designed to provide short-term and emergency financial assistance, disbursed a total of £173,600 in hardship spending . When surveyed, 86.3% of successful applicants to the Student Support Fund agreed or strongly agreed that the financial support they received helped them to continue with their studies and 50% of respondents reported that they would have been likely or very likely to have withdrawn from their course if they had not received the additional financial support.

The above range of specialist services available at the University are designed to support an excellent overall experience for students and a clear pathway through to strong graduate outcomes. Accreditation of services drives quality enhancement and ensures we deliver the highest standard experience for students. For example, the University Library achieved Customer Service Excellence Accreditation in 2021-22, a national quality mark that seeks to recognise organisations that have a truly customer-focused culture, and the Careers and Employability Service holds the AGCAS Membership Quality Standard and Matrix Quality Standard.

the former of these, *"demonstrate a strong focus on delivering the needs of internal and external customers. There is a clear collaboration between the different departments to ensure a smooth customer journey, and all staff are passionate about providing a high level of customer service."*

Educational Environment and Learning Resources

To support student learning and achievement, and deliver an excellent education environment, just under £14 million has been invested in the University's campus estate since 2017, including consolidation into a single city centre campus designed to improve the student experience. Our

campus has been designed to provide enhanced facilities to support the development of graduate attributes and specific employment-related knowledge and skills. It provides physical spaces which encourage students to engage in both independent, peer-to-peer, and simulated learning. Examples include our Engineering laboratories, our motion capture suite, Archaeological Sciences teaching spaces (which house a world-renowned collection of bones), and our Life Sciences Learning Centre.

Following a significant investment scheme developed and delivered between 2019-21, the first floor of our Student Central building, at the heart of the campus, has been remodelled and developed to house all student-facing support services in a single location, along with the Student Union. Bringing together teams that were previously dispersed across the campus, the ability to offer access to all specialist student services from a single physical location has streamlined access and strengthened student engagement with support provision. With a MyBradford frontline support service available to answer student queries in the moment, as well as signpost/support students to access all specialist services and core administrative functions, the Student Central space has been reimagined and become a focal point for on-campus student engagement activity (for example, hosting the Fresher's Fair, our programme of Career and Recruitment Fairs, Employers on Campus, Student Award evenings, and so forth).

Our Library, located alongside Student Central, enables a mix of independent, collaborative, and social learning in a single physical space. The University Library has an annual resources budget of approximately £2M for books, journals, and databases to support learning, teaching, and research, and works continually to improve access to specialist resources for students and staff. In 2021-22, £430k was invested in relocating the Library's Special Collections and Archives, creating a new reading room and specialist space that meets archival standards. The quality of this specialist resource is recognised by the Library's successful renewal of its Archive Service Accreditation by The National Archives – something only 6% of archives across the UK have obtained. In support of the University's Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy, the Library is also working closely with students on diversifying our collections to support decolonisation through the 'Broaden Bradford's Books' scheme which has already seen over 200 books purchased. Library staff regularly work with students to improve their service and the resources available, both physical and digital and the strength of the Library's provision is evident in our student experience metrics in this area, with continuous NSS performance for 'Learning Resources' above benchmark. During 2021/22, the team worked with Student Union Sabbatical Officers and the Postgraduate Student Representative to change the Library's purchasing guidelines, increase the number of core texts acquired and highlight ways (online and in person) for students to flag any difficulties in accessing books. In autumn 2022, a new extended access scheme for eBooks was introduced which automatically upgrades licenses to the next level in response to student demand, ensuring instant and seamless access to e-resources and supporting a digitally inclusive learning experience for students. The Library also offers a short-term laptop loan scheme and our newly-developed 'IT Bar', located in the Library space, provides an immediate point of help and guidance to ensure ease of access to digital support for students.

In recent years we have continued to enhance the digital learning provision and support active engagement – directed and self-directed – through a plethora of tools and resources, including the adoption of Canvas. Through Canvas, students are supported to access learning materials related to their course and resources to support their personal development in interactive ways. Echo 360 Active Learning and Capture platforms enable the recording of educational activity and interactive

lecture presentations while supporting the inclusivity of learning experiences. Our electronic portfolio and assessment tool, PebblePad, provides a space for students to record skills and capabilities, undertake individual reflective practice, participate in collaborative assessment, or engage with their personal tutors. Our commitment to continual digital enhancement is also recognised through the work of our Digital Health Enterprise Zone (DHEZ), housed in a purpose-designed building with four floors of research, learning, business incubation and public clinics and featuring a full-size two-bedroom Tech House/Living Lab.

. By creating relationships between students, researchers, businesses, and health professionals, we are able to develop projects that change how health and health care is delivered in the future. These projects offer opportunities for real-world engagement, contribute to meaningful research, knowledge exchange and regional and national partnerships, and have a positive impact on the educational experiences of our students.

Student Engagement and Voice

We recognise the importance of working in partnership with students to develop our academic experience, environment, and community, and we demonstrate this commitment through clear and robust student-led representation at all levels and across all areas of the student experience, both academic and pastoral/social. The partnership between the University and the Students Union is strong and ensures that the student voice is threaded through both the formal governance structures of the institution and the more informal 'business-as-usual' activities.

At course level, the student voice is garnered through evaluation surveys – both internal and external –

These play a key role in highlighting any areas of good practice and/or areas in need of enhancement at module and course level. They continue to attract a large number of applications each year and are roles which are truly valued by peers and staff alike.

The relaunch of the Student Charter (renamed the Team Bradford Charter) in 2016 is one key example of the collaborative working and ongoing commitment of the University, UBU, and the wider student body to work together to deliver the best possible academic and wider student experience.

Outside the formal student representation system, Bradford students have many opportunities to engage with, and contribute to, the development of the academic experience within and outside their own course. Beyond module evaluation questionnaires, each course has a dedicated space on the University's virtual learning environment where staff and students can communicate, share information and resources, and feedback on their experience (for example, the Faculty of Health Studies use 'Your Voice Matters' questionnaires). Students also drive engagement with their course and broader academic experience via student-led academic societies, both those relating directly to subject disciplines and those contributing the University's ethos of 'making a difference' and earning 'more than a degree'

At institutional level, there are also recognised roles (accredited through the Bradford Employability Award scheme) that enable students to work as co-producers on a range of projects and initiatives.

Students also participate in enhancement processes across the University, for example, in course and module review, (re)design, and approval processes as members of course development teams, stakeholder feedback panels, and/or academic approval panels. The overarching aim of the University's approach to student engagement is to establish a culture of asking, listening, and heeding the student voice as it relates to strategic direction, enhancement initiatives, and business-as-usual processes. Opportunities for students to engage with, and enhance, their own experience and that of their peers are broad and deeply embedded into the culture of the institution. They are also flexible enough to allow individual Faculties and/or subject disciplines to design and adapt their approach to best suit their students and courses. One compelling example of this is our Social Work provision, for which co-production is central to the pedagogical philosophy underpinning the course's design and delivery.

At a cross-institutional level, a team work
by supporting the planning and provision of student engagement
and promotional activities (e.g., organising and participating in focus groups, running campaigns,
event delivery – career fairs, employers on campus – and producing peer to peer videos, blogs,
case studies, and podcasts on career related themes).

Student Outcomes

Attainment and Success

At Bradford, we enable students to succeed in their studies by creating an inclusive environment, that supports everyone to engage with their studies, and delivers an excellent academic experience. We are exceptionally successful in closing differential outcomes and degree awarding gaps and delivering a truly transformational experience. Our sustained achievements in this area are demonstrated via the core metrics with performance above benchmark for full-time student continuation (+2.4%), completion (+2.2%) and progression (+1.0%) and, equally, for part-time students with continuation +15.6% and completion +12.3% above benchmark. While our Access and Participation Plan (APP) sets out our commitment to reduce or eradicate attainment gaps and improve other important student success measures, we articulate this ambition from an starting position of strength.

Graduate Outcomes

At Bradford we are deeply proud of our outstanding track record of supporting students to progress into high-skilled employment and further study. We excel in delivering meaningful outcomes for all students, an achievement represented in our long-standing above-sector performance in this area. This sustained success is not only achieved at institutional level, but, most importantly, is equally evident from an intersectional perspective when viewed through the lens of student characteristics.

When placed in a broader context, Bradford's most recent institutional performance in graduate outcomes is especially notable. The effect of the social and economic measures imposed to address the Covid pandemic produced a downward data trend nationally so the fact that we are able to deliver outcomes +2.5% above benchmark further evidences our sector-leading work in this space. This is reflected in the University ranking of 49th (out of 132 institutions) for graduate prospects in The Times Good University Guide 2022 insofar as it both contextualises the significance of the

University's impact and acknowledges the 'distance travelled' from entry to graduation for Bradford students.

Our graduate outcomes stand out because of the strategically focused and 'designed-in' approach the University takes to student employability. Moreover, it reflects the significant work of the Careers and Employability Service (CES) in supporting students throughout their journey. For example, this includes access to personalised career guidance and job search support from the point of entry to graduation and for up to 5 years thereafter. Additionally, the University completes a detailed analysis of graduate outcomes on an ongoing basis,

This data-informed analysis informs

curriculum and service enhancement planning to ensure the best outcomes for all. For example, our analysis has informed our understanding of the importance of 'place' to graduate outcomes inasmuch as we now know that annually circa 70% of students progressing to employment do so within West Yorkshire, and, within this group, circa 35% progress to employment directly within the Bradford District.

A notable example of our data-informed approach to providing personalised support is the 'Graduate Workforce Bradford' (GWB) project, part of the OfS Local Graduates Challenge Fund in 2019. GWB is an EDI focused project which, through partnering with 13 Bradford-based organisations, has implemented both structural and individual approaches to address both the unemployment and underemployment of graduates from ethnic minority backgrounds. The project also addresses the recruitment, skills gap, and diversity challenges of the workforces of Bradford-based businesses. Therefore, this project positively contributes to the successful outcomes of students from ethnic minority backgrounds while also making a major contribution to the development of the regional labour market. With a dedicated research workstream, the project has also enabled wider learning, including a recognition of the importance of place, the value of 'staying local', as well as the influence of parents, wider family, and the community in career decisions of graduates. These invaluable insights are now informing the University's approach to working with local employers to enable their capability and capacity to attract, recruit, deploy, and retain our students/graduates. New and innovative practice that has emerged from GWB partnership activities includes the establishment of:

- Bradford Inclusive Employer Network, with around 100 business members;
- SkillsHouse Integrated Career and Employer Services which have enabled 1:1 proactive outreach activities with recent graduates and access to vacancies;
- Bradford Graduate Programme, delivering career coaching and job search support for graduates;
- Bradford Graduate Internship programme, delivering 3-month internship opportunities for unemployed recent graduates;
- Positive Action Internship models, developed with Morrisons and Lloyds and currently in development with the Yorkshire Building Society;
- South Asian Discussion Forum, involving community ambassadors and leaders in shaping our community-based activities.

The remarkable impact of GWB has been felt not only at the University, but also reflected in the incredibly positive feedback received from our students and other project stakeholders:

‘ I think projects like GWB are a great way to engage and encourage us in our ability to succeed. The project itself inspired me and so I applied to be a part of it’

“The need for interventions to address local graduate employment was made more acute by the Covid pandemic and I would like to commend the project team and project partners on the commitment they have made to address the issue during this unprecedented time. We have already seen some great outputs from the project and [...] we look forward to hearing about the impact it is having on their graduates and the local area”

Career and Employability Support

Embedding career, employability, enterprise, and entrepreneurship education is fundamental to the academic experience at Bradford. Indeed, the growth in and development of this area has been a key objective of both past and present University strategies. Our model for delivering high quality, data- and evidence-informed career education and employability support involves four main elements: 1) in- and co-curricular support; 2) extra-curricular opportunities; 3) graduate services; and 4) external partnership liaison. The dual-accredited Careers and Employability Service plays a key role in informing strategic developments and leading delivery across the institution through collaboration with faculties, professional services, and with external partners. A model of continual review and enhancement underpins our approach in this area and ensures that provision is current, responsive to student and professional/disciplinary needs, and contributes to positive outcomes.

Due to our purposefully proactive and intelligence-led approach, we swiftly identify positive trends and areas for improvement and then respond dynamically, with cognisance of contextual issues at play. For example, for students studying courses in Business and Management, Psychology, and Public Health and Community Wellbeing, we know the outcomes are currently below sector benchmark. Our analysis shows that the majority of students studying these subjects are from ethnic minority backgrounds, attended secondary school in Bradford, and are from low socio-economic areas. Targeted activities and bespoke initiatives have recently been introduced in all these subject areas and we are already seeing the positive impact of this work.

In Psychology, the curriculum has been comprehensively reviewed to embed discipline-specific, high-quality careers and employability support. One particularly successful intervention is the introduction of a 'Psychological Life Skills and Employability' module during which students complete a mandatory placement with a local organisation, with the option of taking up further volunteering or work opportunities with the provider following the completion of the study placement. Evidence of the success of this kind of data-informed and subject-focused work is now apparent in the metrics. Over the last 3 years we have seen a 24 percentage point increase in

high-skilled employment and a 10 percentage point increase in further study outcomes. Similarly, in 2019/20 CES worked with academic teams to embed career and employability focused modules into each year of the Public Health and Community Wellbeing course. These include a 'Preparation for Professional Practice' module, followed by a placement module in year 2, and a 'Surviving and Thriving in Organisations' module in year 3. This careers curriculum is reinforced through an extra-curricular offer that provides tailored career guidance with a Career Consultant and engagement from employers, community and alumni speakers. Together, this bespoke programme of activity helps students to develop skills in resilience and resourcefulness to support effective organisational working. Again, the impact is visible in the data: 14 percentage point increase in high-skilled employment and a 4 percentage point increase in further study outcomes. These examples demonstrate how targeted in- and co-curricular initiatives and partnership working have a demonstrable impact on graduate outcomes.

Complementing this curriculum-focused provision, the Careers and Employability Service provide an extensive range of open access services and opportunities. These include one-to-one appointments for career guidance, bespoke preparation for interview/assessment centre recruitment processes; placement and job search support; a weekly programme of employability workshops; and an annual programme of in-person and virtual careers fairs. The service also manages a vacancy portal promoting part-time, placement, internship, entry level, and graduate jobs, as well as offering a broad range of additional resources via the external website and intranet. In addition, the service delivers several custom programmes to support recent graduates who require additional support. Identified through our graduate follow-up activities, these graduates have access to such programmes as the Bradford Mentoring Programme, the Bradford Internship Programme, and the Bradford Graduate Programme. These schemes not only provide an important kind of 'after-care' for our students, but also play an indispensable role for the regional economy in addressing skills needs and talent gaps.

To support and extend the reach of this fantastic work, in 2021 the University partnered with Handshake and invested in their career CRM platform. Handshake's mission is to tear down structural barriers in the UK jobs market and help recruiters proactively engage with candidates based on their potential and aptitude rather than their background or existing connections. This mission closely accords with our own university values and aspirations, and within our first year of operation, Handshake has proven to be a true asset in enabling our ongoing efforts to improve social mobility and boost outcomes for our students. As well as helping us to build connections with more employers, the platform delivers a more personalised service for students, making a real difference to their futures. For example, between September 2021 and July 2022, 2,761 employers chose to directly work with CES to promote opportunities to Bradford students; 6,077 students/graduates activated their Handshake accounts; 88% of those made their profile public to employers; 229 employers proactively emailed 3,438 students/graduates; and students/graduates made 7,069 applications. Handshake has greatly extended CES's ability to identify patterns of engagement and non-engagement with its services and career opportunities. As we continue our mission of ensuring positive outcomes for all, access to this enhanced data intelligence is informing and renewing our approach to curriculum development, individual consultations, communications, and the focus of employer engagement.

The significance of this work for individuals is evident in the feedback and testimonials of our students: *"The careers service has been a huge help to me throughout my time at university. I became aware of job opportunities due to the emails and social media posts that were sent out for*

students. They also set up mock interviews for the School of Management which allowed me to network and after gain a placement because of it.” and “I would encourage other students to apply for a Summer Experience internship, the process was easy and the skills I am gaining are priceless.”

External Partnerships and Student Opportunities

With 70% of our students progressing into employment within the West Yorkshire area, the interdependent success of the University and its graduates is inextricably linked to the development and performance of Bradford and the Leeds City Region. Our Executive Team are represented on 85 boards,

The University also sponsors several significant events in Bradford, including the Bradford Literature Festival, the Unify Festival, and the Bradford Manufacturing Weeks. Such proactive engagement and partnership-working with key strategic and operational organisations clearly demonstrates our responsibility as an anchor institution, commitment to be a civic university, and contribution to ‘placemaking’ for the region and the communities in which our students live, study, and work.

With an alumni community of over 150,000 in 175 countries, along with strong connections with an extensive range of local, regional, national, and international businesses, we are a university that leverages these relationships to provide opportunities which enrich the learning experiences and outcomes of our students. For example, in 2021/22 we worked with over 3000 employers to design and deliver a variety of student and graduate activities (such as employment and placement opportunities, curriculum sessions, mentoring schemes, employability workshops and career fairs). As part of this partnership approach, we have also grown an extensive range of international academic contacts and network memberships, including 367 partnership agreements with other universities which, over the last 4 years, have enabled student study and staff development international exchanges. Moreover, in 2021/2022 we were successful in our bid to the Turing programme, enabling 170 opportunities for students from under-represented backgrounds.

This commitment also manifests at subject level where we draw on our extensive network of relationships with business and community organisations to access a range of discipline/sector-specific career, employability, and employment opportunities for our students and, more generally, develop our academic provision. For example, each Faculty has several Industry Advisory Boards aligned to their academic provision. These bodies provide indispensable advice on curriculum design and sector trends, as well as insightful contributions to the teaching programme and the vital promotion of student talent. Central to our approach is an acknowledgment of the essential role business and community organisations can make to enriching the educational, professional, and personal development of our students. The examples above demonstrate our strategic commitment to workplace experience and employability skills development throughout a student’s journey. This work ensures our curriculum is inclusive, future-focused, and delivers innovative and sector-leading provision. Our approach is one that enhances the academic and learning experience in a meaningful way, delivers strong graduate outcomes, and offers students the opportunity to graduate from the University with far ‘more than a degree’.

Educational Gains: 'More than a degree'

The University's approach to educational gain is encapsulated in, and measured through, our pledge to support our students to achieve 'more than a degree'. This is grounded in our belief that higher education should not only confer a qualification but foster opportunities for personal growth that carry over beyond a student's life at university. This is especially vital for Bradford not simply because the starting points of our students are as diverse as the student body itself, but also because of the complex socio-economic inequalities that both accompany our widening participation agenda and influence access to the graduate labour market. As such, our success as an engine of social mobility rests on a model of educational gain that can close academic attainment gaps *and* address other, less tangible, gaps in social and cultural capital that often act as barriers to certain sectors of the graduate labour market and longer-term success outcomes. In this model, educational gain manifests in a set of attributes developed by students through their engagement with the totality of their university experience. Furthermore, the exceptionally high proportion of our courses that deliver professional accreditation as part of the curriculum helps students to understand their chosen field, gain the skills, and build the confidence to successfully transition to the workplace.

This view of educational gain is driven by our fundamental belief in an inclusive education as a driving force for personal and place-based transformation. In the Bradford Curriculum, this is expressed as 'liberated learning', valuing difference as a positive place from which to commence individual learning journeys. In connecting with our commitment to deliver 'future-focused' educational experiences, it ensures our courses enable students to explore and develop the qualities, behaviours, and actions of enterprising people and organisations through authentic and experiential learning and assessment methods. In this respect, 'The Bradford Curriculum' defines 'gain' as a distinct dimension of our curriculum and a core principle of the educational experience we offer to students. This 'systems' approach to gain deliberately interleaves the curriculum not only with the co- and extra-curricular, but also with aspects of student support, wellbeing, and careers education.

It is precisely because our students join us with a complex range of life experiences, many informed by complicated patterns of disadvantage, that *academic gain* remains an essential variable in quantifying the 'distance travelled' by University of Bradford students. Figure 5 below, which tabulates the entry profile of our students against qualification profile, clearly demonstrates not only our success in supporting students to achieve academically, but also the distance travelled during that journey. Alongside this more traditional measure of 'academic gain', the 'value added' score used by the 'Guardian University Guide' – a probability-based metric used to predict the likelihood of a student graduating with a 1st or 2:1 degree classification based on the qualifications that they enter with – also captures our success in this area. Since 2019, Bradford has ranked 12th, 19th, 4th, and 5th nationally.

UoB Tariff Band	Undergraduate Population	Achievement of 'Upper Awards'
Low	36%	74%
Medium	36%	80%
High	28%	79%

Figure 5: Achievement of first-degree/integrated masters 'upper awards' by young (<21 yrs.) undergraduate population based on tariff band on entry. Low, Medium, and High groupings based on mean tariff and split equally into three groups. Non-tariff qualifications are excluded.

Beyond academic attainment, the development of *extra-academic capital*, and our delivery of our 'more than a degree' can be seen in the wide range of excellent student opportunities we use to recognise achievement. For instance, the Bradford Employability Award (BEA) programme provides a range of experiential learning opportunities through which students develop their employability skills and have those skills confirmed by the University and recorded on their Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR). There are currently 30 BEA opportunities available, involving activities delivered on campus, in community and business organisations, in the UK and overseas.

Through engaging in these activities, students benefit from additional support, which includes sessions such as developing a CV, career coaching, employability workshops, and mentorship, and the activity culminates in the completion of a reflective career plan.

As feedback from one student participant summarises: *"Another key critical point that's very commendable and noticeable in comparison to other universities would be the level of career support and potential opportunities the university & course offers to its students. There are vast ranges of choices available to us as students; the continuous and progressive partnerships the university has been able to establish with both international and local firms have been laudable."*

In 2021-22, the University held its first annual Enterprise Festival which brought students and staff from across the institution together with a diverse range of entrepreneurs for a week-long programme which explored themes of idea creation, innovation, business start-up, business support, skills development, and confidence building. One immediate outcome of the Festival has been an increase in applications to our Accelerated Student Entrepreneurship programme which supports students to create successful commercial and social enterprises. The programme enables students to form entrepreneurial teams, encouraging links between home students, international students, and students from universities overseas. During a four-month, extracurricular programme, students meet counterparts, develop ideas for joint businesses, and receive start-up support, whilst developing their personal entrepreneurial, internationalisation, and inter-cultural communication skills. Students receive extensive mentoring from experienced entrepreneurs and attend two four-day training workshops, culminating in a presentation pitch to real investors, for real funding to seed a real start-up.

From our perspective, it is these kinds of opportunities that add real value to the student experience insofar as they directly translate into meaningful outcomes and produce a level of 'professional gain' that exceeds the traditional student outcomes model.

The point of the initiatives discussed above, however, is not to simply focus on positive graduate outcomes, though of course, this is a key part of such activities. Rather it is to focus on the development of a set of attributes and qualities which are pan-disciplinary, and valuable within and beyond academic study, and which we believe are fundamental to our mission at Bradford. These include supporting individual reflection, self-awareness, personal resilience, intercultural agility, and work-readiness. For these are not only crucial for personal and professional success, but also are often the ones that serve to bolster barriers to opportunity, reinforce patterns of disadvantage, and justify ongoing structural inequality. In sum, educational gain for us is about allowing students to be their full selves in all aspects of academic and cultural life of the University so that they can maximise their knowledge, skills, and talent in realising their full potential.

Conclusion

As a sector leader for inclusion and a pioneer of place-based transformation, we live and breathe our values and remain uncompromising in our commitment to equality of opportunity and social mobility.

References

	Source	Published	Access
1.	<u>University Strategies</u>	2020	External
2.	<u>Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy (LTSES)</u>	2020	External
3.	<u>Bradford Curriculum</u>	2022	External
4.	<u>Committee on Higher Education Report (Robbins Report)</u>	1963	External
5.	<u>City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council Population Data</u>	2022	External
6.	<u>West Yorkshire State of the Region Report 2021</u>	2021	External
7.	<u>Children's Services in the city of Bradford</u>	2022	External
8.	<u>University Social Mobility Pledge</u>	2020	External
9.	<u>HEPI - English Social Mobility Index</u>	2022	External
10.	<u>University News Archive</u>	2012-2023	External
11.	<u>Office for Students – Official Statistics</u>	2018-2022	External
12.	<u>Graduate Outcomes Survey Reports, University Data Centre</u>	2017-2021	Internal