



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

## **Summary TEF 2023 panel statement**

**University of Greenwich**

# Summary of outcomes

## Overall: Gold

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

### Student experience: Gold

The student academic experience is typically outstanding.

Outstanding quality features include:

- course content and delivery that inspire students to actively engage in and commit to their learning, and stretches them to full potential
- research in relevant disciplines, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and/or employer engagement contributing to an outstanding experience
- staff professional development and excellent academic practice that is embedded across the provider
- a supportive learning environment, where students have access to a wide and readily available range of outstanding quality, tailored academic support
- student engagement is embedded, leading to continuous improvement.

Very high quality features include:

- teaching, feedback and assessment practice that is embedded and effective in supporting students' learning, progression, and attainment
- physical and virtual learning resources that are used effectively to support very high quality teaching and learning.

### Student outcomes: Silver

Student outcomes are typically very high quality.

Very high quality features include:

- rates of continuation and completion for the provider's students and courses
- rates of progression for the provider's students and courses
- the provider defines the educational gains it intends its students to achieve and why these are relevant to its students
- the provider is evaluating the gains made by its students.

There are also some outstanding quality features including:

- tailored approaches that are highly effective in ensuring students succeed in and progress beyond their studies
- approaches to supporting students to achieve educational gains that are evidence-based, highly effective and tailored to students and their different starting points.

# 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 Greenwich is a large London-based university with campuses in Avery Hill, Eltham and Medway, Kent. There were 19,910 full-time students and 2,580 part-time students in 2020-21.

The provider's guiding principle is 'Education without Boundaries' and its values are inclusivity, collaboration and impact. The provider's educational approach responds to the lived experiences and prior education of its students. A focus on an 'equitable experience' for students is at the heart of both the student and provider submissions. The submissions report that over 38 per cent of students work over 20 hours a week and 19 per cent work over 40 hours a week. Students' union research states that '30 per cent of students' incomes do not cover their essential living costs and 44 per cent have less than £50 disposable income per month'.

The provider discusses the common barriers to higher education and has designed an inclusive curriculum. There are four faculties: Liberal Arts and Sciences, Education, Health and Human Sciences, Engineering and Science, and Greenwich Business School. Business and management courses serve the largest group of students, making up over 25 per cent of the student body.

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

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

Considering the outstanding and high quality features holistically, the panel judged there to be evidence of typically outstanding quality across all groups of students and for most courses and subjects, including underrepresented groups, which comprise a high proportion of the student population. Therefore the student experience aspect rating is 'Gold'.

Across the student experience aspect, the panel found:

- five features that are outstanding quality
- two features that are very high quality.

The panel concluded that 'Gold' was the best fit because most features for the aspect are outstanding quality for all groups of students.

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

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

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

The 'teaching on my course' indicator for full-time students shows initial evidence of a very high quality feature.

The 'assessment and feedback' indicator for full-time students shows initial evidence of a very high quality feature. For part-time students, the indicator shows limited evidence of very high quality, however the panel placed limited weight on this evidence because of the small number of part-time students.

The panel noted there is some variation in indicator evidence for some groups of students and courses.

The provider and student submissions showed further evidence of a very high quality feature, including:

- a clear articulation of the provider's five stage teaching methodology
- details of experiential learning that deploys specialist facilities, and has led to awards such as the Zenith Global Health Awards in 2022
- a cross-university systematic approach to improving National Student Survey (NSS) data requiring all courses below 90 per cent overall satisfaction to implement an improvement plan. The provider asserts that this is improving NSS data over time, including for 'academic support' and 'student voice' indicators
- how the provider has responded to student feedback in relation to assessment.

Whilst the panel noted that the assessment enhancement activity and the 'assessment and feedback' indicator for Business and Management are evidence of an outstanding quality feature, the panel also noted that there was insufficient evidence that the provider was actively addressing the below very high quality performance of some subjects for 'teaching on my course'.

Overall, the panel noted the variation in performance, but balanced holistically, judged the feature to be very high quality. The panel concluded that the provider has embedded very high quality teaching, feedback and assessment practice that are effective in supporting its 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 offers evidence that content and delivery inspire and stretch learning, including:

- a focus on 'authentic assessment' that appears to be an embedded part of the curriculum design approaches
- a practice-based teaching methodology and employer advisory boards in all faculties
- course content that responds to local employer needs and priorities
- 190 programmes that are regulated by professional bodies.

Overall, the panel noted compelling evidence that there is a strategic approach to curriculum, content and delivery that ensures the courses meet employer need and is designed to meet its diverse student body. This dual focus on employability and inclusion provides evidence that the course content actively inspires students to develop relevant knowledge and skills. The panel considered the characteristics of the student body and the high numbers of students from underrepresented groups to be relevant when considering this evidence.

Taking all the evidence into account, the panel concluded that course content and delivery inspire the provider's students to actively engage in and commit to their learning, and stretch students to develop knowledge and skills to their fullest potential, and that this is an outstanding quality feature.

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

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

Evidence provided primarily relates to the strength of employer engagement, which is referenced throughout the submission, including strong examples of how the provider uses employer engagement to contribute to a very high quality experience for its students, for example 190 courses are accredited by Professional Statutory Regulatory Bodies.

The panel judged this evidence to be directly relevant to the provider's mix of students and courses.

Whilst the panel found limited direct evidence in relation to this feature, when reading the evidence across the provider submission as a whole it identified that the focus on authentic assessment, applied experiential learning and the depth of engagement with employers indicates outstanding quality.

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

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

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

Reviewing the submission the panel considered that the evidence supplied offers compelling evidence that there is outstanding support for staff professional development. This includes:

- 75 per cent of staff having a teaching qualification, which is above the sector average of 59 per cent
- career pathways that recognise the expertise of practitioners, teachers, researchers and entrepreneurs
- the diversity of the staff community which is linked to the provider's commitment to support diversity
- embedded mentoring support for staff, supporting engagement with the 'Professional Standards Framework' (PSF). The provider ensures that its National Teaching Fellow expertise supports CPD.

The high levels of PSF engagement was weighted by the panel and led to its conclusion that there is outstanding support for staff professional development and excellent academic practice is embedded across the provider.

## **Learning environment and academic support**

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The 'academic support' indicator for full-time students provides initial evidence of a very high quality feature and is improving across the time series. For Nursing and Midwifery, the 'academic support' indicator shows evidence of an outstanding quality feature.

For disabled students, the indicator shows some evidence of a very high quality feature and some of an outstanding quality feature. The provider submission details reasons for this, describing outstanding support initiatives for disabled students.

The provider and student submissions provide further evidence of a very high quality feature, including:

- transition and skills development support for students. GreFest is a three-week induction offer which reports high levels of engagement running at 4,500 students per year

- 4,000 unique users of a writing feedback service which is supplemented by face-to-face support from librarians and tutors. This panel found this to be evidence that the provider is meeting its student needs and preferences
- opportunities to gain advising and tutoring accreditation with UK Advising and Tutoring, although numbers of take-up are not offered so this evidence was not weighted because the wider impact of this work was unclear.

In summary, the panel considered that the provider offers compelling evidence in relation to its support for disabled students and offers outstanding examples of academic support that meets students' needs. The panel concluded that the provider ensures that there is a supportive learning environment and that students have access to a wide and readily available range of outstanding quality academic support tailored to their needs.

## **Learning resources**

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

The 'learning resources' indicator for full-time and part-time students provides initial evidence of a very high quality feature.

For full-time Nursing and Midwifery students, the indicator shows evidence of at least a very high quality feature. This is supported by evidence that the needs of different students are recognised and met, including:

- an £8 million investment in Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedic Science, including the development of an inclusive curriculum
- Student Hubs catering for commuter students
- addressing of digital poverty, first introduced in the coronavirus pandemic when 200 laptops were posted to students, and since sustained and developed
- a virtual trading room
- outstanding tailored support for international students in response to external emergencies.

In summary, the evidence provided indicates that the physical and digital spaces are 'live venues for learning and experimentation' that are used effectively to support very high quality teaching and learning. The panel concluded that physical and virtual learning resources are used effectively to support very high quality teaching and learning.

## **Student engagement in improvement**

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The 'student voice' indicator for full-time students provides initial evidence of a very high quality feature and there is also evidence of improvement over time.

The 'student voice' indicator for part-time students offers initial evidence of an outstanding quality feature.

There is some evidence of variability in performance across courses. This includes Nursing and Midwifery, where there is evidence of an outstanding quality feature, and Creative Art and Design and Performing Arts where there is evidence of not very high quality, which the panel noted is not addressed in the provider submission.

The provider and student submissions offer further evidence of an outstanding quality feature, including:

- a joined-up approach to student engagement that supports students' academic, employment and wellbeing needs
- recognition of students' lived experience where engagement therefore supports the diverse student community
- a strong partnership between the students' union and the provider's senior management where issues that are raised are responded to effectively.

The provider has also worked with the students' union to create student 'Inclusivity Consultants' who carry out evaluative audits on modules, but the lack of numbers or evaluation means the panel did not give this evidence much weight.

Overall the panel noted the range of tailored approaches that support engagement and enhancement and the panel concluded that this evidence indicates that the provider embeds engagement with its students leading to continuous improvement to the experiences and outcomes of its students, which is indicative of an outstanding feature.

## **Student outcomes: Silver**

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

The panel found the student outcomes are typically very high quality for the provider's mix of students and courses. Across the student outcomes aspect, the panel found:

- two features are outstanding quality
- four features are very high quality.

The panel applied the ratings criteria and considered the best fit rating to be 'Silver'. This is because most features are very high quality for all groups of students and courses. The panel did not consider that 'Gold' would be the best fit because the evidence demonstrates that 'some' rather than 'most' of the student outcomes features are of outstanding quality.

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 examined the provider and student submissions and found evidence to support this, including:

- all new undergraduates receive a phone call from a trained student staff member at the start of the year to establish if there are any support needs. This initiative was short listed for Times Higher Award in 2022
- ‘GreFEST’, a three-week induction package that secures high levels of student engagement impacting 4,500 students
- effective support offered to international students in response to major tragedies and war in their home countries
- curriculum designed at the Greenwich Business School to support employability. The module ‘Future Paths’ is co-designed with students and has supported employability for approximately 800 students
- a peer-to-peer employability support in response to students’ union feedback and a ‘Career Mentoring Scheme’ offered in partnership with JP Morgan and local alumni that has supported 920 mentees. Of this group, 60 per cent are students are from black, Asian or mixed ethnic backgrounds
- clear alignment between teaching, curriculum and employability support that is coherent and works to support successful outcomes.

The focus of the provider’s evidence for this feature is on approaches that are targeted to meet the needs of different student groups. While this is identified as an outstanding feature the panel noted that some of the wider impacts of these approaches are yet to impact on ‘continuation and completion’ and ‘progression’ rates. Nevertheless, the panel concluded that the provider deploys and tailors approaches that are highly effective in ensuring students succeed in and progress beyond their studies, and that this is an outstanding feature.

## **Continuation and completion rates**

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

The ‘continuation’ indicator for full-time students offers initial evidence of very high quality. For part-time students, there is initial evidence of outstanding quality. There is broad consistency in performance across student groups and courses with some variation for larger student groups and courses.

The provider explains its lower continuation data for London by referencing to credible research that non-continuation is reported to be 1.4 per cent higher in London than the rest of the country. The panel accepted the reasoning of this evidence.

The ‘completion’ indicator for full-time students offers initial evidence of very high quality. For part-time students, there is initial evidence of outstanding quality.

The panel noted that for subjects including History and Archaeology, Media, Journalism and Communications and Architecture, Building and Planning the 'completion' indicators provide evidence of a not very high quality feature, with varying degrees of statistical certainty.

Overall the panel noted that there was some variation in performance across subjects, however, none were significant enough in terms of statistical certainty to be material to its assessment and on balance, for most groups - the panel judged the feature to be very high quality. The panel concluded that there are 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 for full-time students offers initial evidence of a very high quality feature and, for part-time students, initial evidence of an outstanding quality feature.

The provider offers evidence from the Social Market Foundation that 'Londoners who study in London and remain there for work face substantial difficulties gaining graduate level employment', which may in part explain why the indicators do not show evidence of an outstanding quality feature. As location is not part of the assessment for graduate outcomes the panel considers this as credible context.

The panel noted that the 'progression' indicator for part-time students gives initial evidence of an outstanding feature, but that it is a much smaller proportion of the provider's students so the panel concluded that 'typically' there are very high rates of successful progression for the provider's students and courses, leading the panel to assess this feature as very high quality overall.

### **Intended educational gains**

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

The provider articulates the educational gains it intends its students to achieve and why these are relevant to its students. The UNs Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) are part of the provider's educational gain definition and framing and the submission points to the emphasis it places on developing and supporting learning so that graduates can contribute ethically to communities locally, nationally and globally.

The provider also emphasises the importance of students' lived experience and how it seeks to harness students' individual experiences and identities as part of its articulation of gains. The panel weighted the provider's social mobility data that are evidence based and tailored to students and their different starting points.

Based on the evidence provided, the panel concluded that the provider articulates the educational gains it intends its students to achieve and why these are relevant to its students. The panel considered that this is a very high quality feature.

### **Approaches to supporting educational gains**

The panel considered this to be an outstanding feature.

The panel reviewed evidence across the entire submission and noted the well-developed bespoke learning, teaching and support that meets the learning needs of students at different starting points.

The panel noted evidence-based initiatives including 'Wellbeing and Retention Project', 'GreFEST', 'Future Paths', and 'LevelUp' as offering evidence of approaches that support educational gains

The panel also weighted the provider's social mobility data that points to high quality educational gains.

Overall, the panel concluded that the provider's approaches to supporting its students to achieve these gains are evidence-based, highly effective and tailored to its students and their different starting points, and that this is an outstanding feature.

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

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

The panel noted an internal report for 2020-21 that suggests that the provider's students from deprived areas have strong outcomes that are 'better than average in the sector', which suggests positive educational gains measures.

The social mobility data cited in the submission points to very positive value that is added from when students enter to when they become employed. Taking the evidence into consideration, the panel concluded that the provider is evaluating the gains made by its students and this is a very high quality feature.

### **Overall: Gold**

The panel considered the student experience aspect to be 'Gold' and student outcomes aspect to be 'Silver'. The panel weighted the two aspects equally and considered the evidence across all features and across all the provider's student groups, subjects and courses to reach a best fit 'Gold' overall rating. This is because across all the available evidence the student experience and student outcomes are typically of outstanding quality, with outstanding features across both aspects.