University of Bath, TEF 2023 Submission

1. INTRODUCTION & PROVIDER CONTEXT

1.1 Education – Our Strategic Aims

The University of Bath is committed to excellence in education and the student experience. Our Strategy 2021-2026 [1] outlines our ambition for '*Driving excellence in education*', including how we are developing internationally leading courses to stay at the forefront of high-quality education [2].

Our Vision for Education [3] guides our aspirations, building on our strengths to date. In summary, we aim to deliver a distinctive educational offer and to develop our exceptional students holistically, so they leave Bath with the cutting-edge knowledge, skillset, and experience to think, work and contribute as outstanding global citizens and future leaders.

The second pillar of our strategy, '*Fostering an outstanding and inclusive community*', articulates our strong sense of community, 'culture of care', and opportunities in the wider student experience to gain valuable knowledge, transferable skills, and intercultural competencies so our students leave us well rounded and with a competitive edge [1].

Working in partnership with business, public and voluntary sectors and the professions (part of our founding principles) remains core to our educational provision and assures its relevance. The combined Bath experience, from our education (which focuses on problem-solving, research-led teaching, projects addressing real-world issues) to work-experience opportunities with particular emphasis on placements, and extra-curricular and sporting activities, provides our students with the opportunity to develop five distinctive and special attributes. We aim for our graduating students to be well taught, well qualified, well experienced, grounded and rounded – attributes we believe give the best foundation for future career success and fulfilment.

1.2 Our Students and Courses

1.2.1 Our Students: We support 14,319 first-degree students. Over three-quarters of our students are UK domiciled (11,352) and of our 2,967 non-UK domiciled students, 1,128 are from the EU and 1,839 are non-EU. Our December 2022 snapshot from which these figures are taken is the most up-to-date record of our UG population incorporating Autumn 2022 registrations[1].

We have a selective admissions policy and our internal estimate of our 2022 UG intake is 180 tariff points. We believe that this is indicative of the exceptional individuals we attract.

Of our UK domiciled students from which we draw our Access and Participation Plan (APP) data [4], we have a significant proportion of young, White students from Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and Participation Of Local Areas (POLAR4) quintiles 3 to 5 with a greater proportion of male students than female (58% to 42%). Mature students account for 2% of the population, IMD quintile 1 and 2 students for 16%, and POLAR 4 quintile 1 and 2 students for 15%. Other APP target groups at Bath are students with declared disabilities   students who hold bursaries   and students who fall into the groups of care experienced, young adult carer, estranged, refugee/asylum seeker or

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[1] See also OfS Size and shape dashboard for TEF period data

student parents (<1%). Students from White backgrounds are overrepresented (81%) when compared to students from Asian (10%), Mixed (6%), Black   and Other   backgrounds [4]. Given our commitment to diversity, the University has launched a series of major initiatives since the last TEF; attendance at engagement programmes (such as Pathway to Bath) grew from 283 to 813 students and our Gold Scholarship bursary schemes[2] successfully supported widening participation students so that in 21/22 90% received First or 2:1 degrees.

"Pathway to Bath helped me access higher education and apply to a university ranked in the top 5 for my course … the program changed my life and helped me escape a cycle of deprivation."(University of Bath Final year Management student September 2022)

1.2.2 Our Courses: We have a strong STEM and Business subject mix which accounts for approximately 80% of our students (based in our Faculty of Science, Faculty of Engineering & Design, and School of Management), with the remainder in our Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences, including health and psychology, being configured to be relevant for employability. Our TEF data cover 20 subject groups. Our courses are designed and updated in terms of content and approach so our students have the key knowledge, skills, and attributes to place them in the best position to succeed. Emphasis is placed on key interdisciplinary Global Challenges faced by people, organisations, and societies including for example in our priority institutional research areas of health, digital, and sustainability. Our graduates have the cutting-edge knowledge, skills, and experience to think, work, and contribute as global citizens[3], and future leaders [5] with benefits for wider society. Our Curriculum Transformation project is building on our strong foundations to redesign our courses will launch in AY23/24 (see Section 2.2.2).

1.2.3 Graduate Outcomes and Employability: Through our provision we see outstanding graduate outcomes. Over the TEF period 30.9% of our aggregate UG graduates gained an UG Masters degree. HESA Graduate Outcomes Survey data (2019/20) showed that 92.9% of our full-time UK domiciled first-degree graduates working in the UK are in high-skilled employment after 15 months compared to 70.3% for similar graduates (from Universities UK [UUK] members). In an alumni survey conducted in 2019 [6], 77%   and 73%   indicated that their education and their placement had been highly relevant (ranking 7+ out of 10) respectively.

"At Zurich we are very proud and excited about the partnership we have with Bath Uni and have had great success at being able to offer successful students an opportunity to come back onto our Graduate programme - bright, enthusiastic and confident individuals who go over and beyond expectations." (Zurich Group,   November 2021)

1.3 Educational Leadership and Governance

As part of our drive to enhance education since the last Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) exercise, major advances have been made in terms of leadership. We have created the role of Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) and enhanced the role of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education). In 2019 a new role, Vice-President (Student Experience), was established and evolved in 2021 to join our Pro-Vice-Chancellor posts (Education and Research). This strengthened the visibility and representation of student experience at the most senior level. The Pro-Vice Chancellor (Student

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[2] The Gold Scholarship Programme supports 50 home, WP students *pa*, providing a bursary with skills development, networking and support to build social capital and confidence by volunteering and mentoring.
[3] Our Alumni data shows that about a third of our graduates are living outside of the UK.

Experience) has strengthened our relationship with the Students' Union (SU) and the student body. For example, partnering with leadership on our response to the annual SU Top Ten allowed consideration of the improvements that matter most to students. We also developed an innovative Student Living Department within our Campus Services, resulting in national recognition through the 2022 CUBO award for *Campus Experience of the Year* for our pandemic support of students.

The role of Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) has also been extended to better support students from admissions to graduation and beyond, and to drive enhancements of education provision and policy. A major innovation is our Curriculum Transformation (CT) programme co-created with our students – the most substantial advance of our educational provision in 20 years.

Applying learning from the pandemic, we have enhanced our Education and Student Experience governance and oversight. These are now provided through the Education Advisory Board (chaired by the PVC Education) and the Student Experience Advisory Board (chaired by the PVC Student Experience). Both committees report to the University Executive Board (chaired by the Vice-Chancellor). These committees have delivered enhanced mechanisms for including our students' voices and taking action. For example, the Education Advisory Board, as learnt from the pandemic, considers pedagogical matters alongside operational ones, crucial to enhancing our provision.

1.4 Summary Comments

Our success is built on a foundation of institution-wide academic quality, effective pedagogy and partnering with our students. Our focus on research-led teaching includes a particular emphasis on practical 'real world' experiential learning supported by our placements and study abroad, team and individual projects, competitions and applied collaborative project work with external organisations.

Since the 2017 TEF submission, we have established ourselves in the top ten of the main institutional tables of the Complete, Guardian, and Times and Sunday Times Good University Guides. We were named *'University of the Year 2023'* by The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2023. Our students continue to be among the most satisfied, according to the 2022 NSS, in which our students recorded overall satisfaction of 86.3%, more than 10pp greater than the median score of UUK members (75.6%). We are 1st place in England (for the second consecutive year) and 3rd in the UK for overall satisfaction in NSS 2022 when comparing institutions in The Times & Sunday Times Good University Guide.

"This year's award-winner is an academic powerhouse that ticks a lot more boxes for its highly satisfied students…there is no fluke to Bath's high rates of student satisfaction and high-performing culture." (The Times & Sunday Times on naming us 'University of the Year 2023', September 2022)

This submission was created in partnership with officers and staff from our Students' Union. Julia Kildyushova, Students' Union Education Officer and Ryan Lucas, Students' Union Education Manager have been members of the group that prepared this submission and this is indicative of the long-standing, collegial relationship that exists between us.

Students' Union statement on preparation of the TEF submission

" I am pleased to say that the SU has a very productive working relationship with the University. From the moment I started my role, I have seen University staff members from all areas actively engaging with the SU and putting in real effort into maintaining our strong relationship. Our opinions do not always match, but I consider this a strength rather than a

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weakness. From my experience, the University encourages and supports the SU to be a critical voice when it needs to be and works with us to find a solution. To me, this shows just how powerful the connection between the students and staff is at Bath and the incredible potential that we have together in the future." (University of Bath Students' Union, December 2022)

2. STUDENT EXPERIENCE

"At the University of Bath, we are fortunate to have a passionate community of staff and students working across the university. For our undergraduate community, the impact of this means we have some outstanding NSS results. Through regular engagement with our various student communities, we regularly gather qualitative data that demonstrates that the positive messages mentioned through the NSS data are mirrored into the lived experiences for our students.

 However, when we encounter negative or critical feedback, we are fortunate to have strong working relations with staff from across the university, which means we can actively pursue change to ensure that the university are listening to their students and willing to make to adjustments where necessary. Following student consultation, this year (22/23) our SU President and our SU Education Officer put forward a top 10 point to 'Review and improve the quality, quantity and consistency of assessment feedback across all departments'.

Working directly with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education), they're able to work in partnership to ensure meaningful improvements are made. Furthermore, we are pleased that the University has proposed adding the NSS Assessment and Feedback results as one of its KPIs for governance monitoring and our membership on Senate and Council will help us scrutinise progress on this KPI and well as contributing feedback from the student body." (
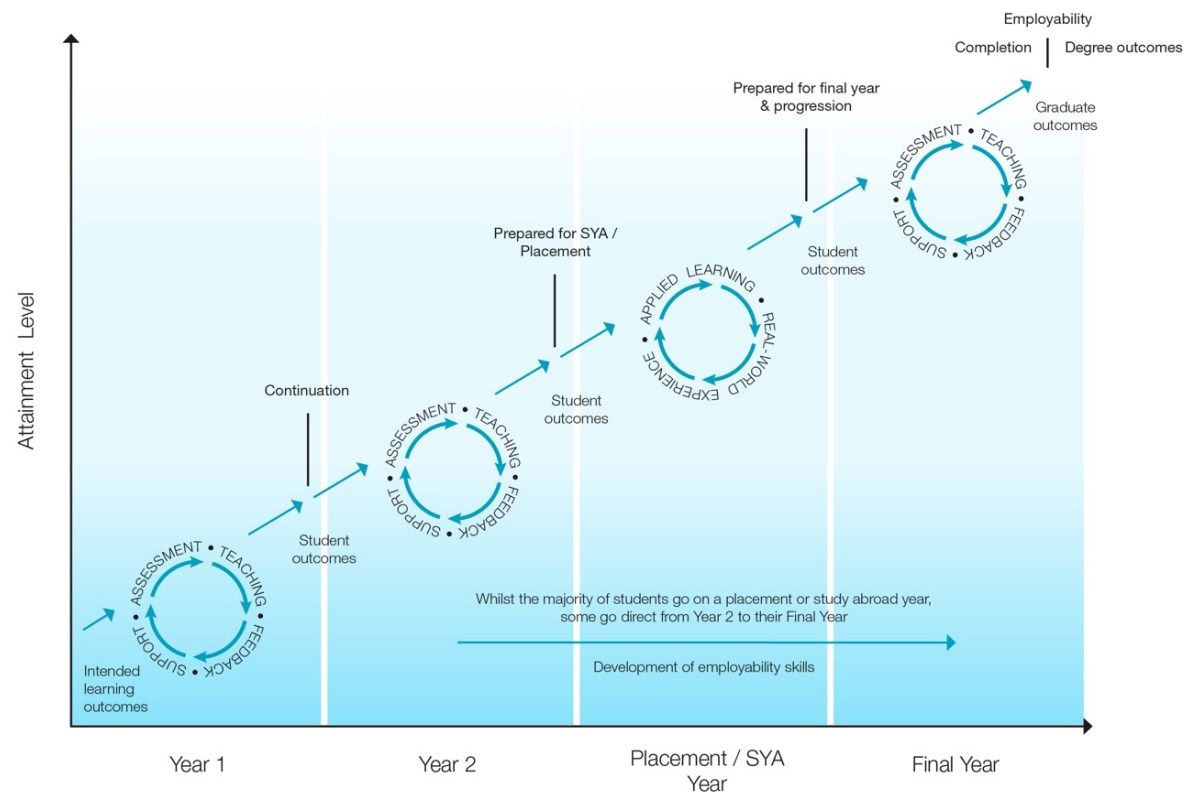University of Bath Students' Union, December 2022)

At Bath we place great emphasis on student achievement throughout the student journey, as evidenced by our data. Our holistic approach integrates teaching, support, feedback, and assessment in a progressive and cyclical fashion that supports all students (Fig 1). This approach delivers our continuation data, the excellent performance of all students in their courses, academic-related competitions and awards, our support for and achievements of students on placements and study abroad, excellent completion rates, good degree outcomes and outstanding employability.

2.1 Teaching, Feedback and Assessment Practices (SE1)

2.1.1 Teaching Practice: Our students clearly recognise and value the outstanding quality of teaching practice embedded in our provision, as evidenced by our overall score for 'Teaching on my course' (85.4%) which exceeds benchmark (82.5%) by 2.9 pp and 88.3% of the score is materially above benchmark. We score above benchmark for the majority of split indicators, and materially so in most cases. We have very few split indicators that score below benchmark, none materially so. We credit this to the dedication of our staff in developing excellent courses for our students and delivering them before and through the pandemic. At institutional level, our strong pedagogical awareness and agility has protected and enhanced the education of our students (see Section 2.2.4).

Figure 1. The University of Bath student journey relating to teaching, assessment, and feedback and key student outcomes.

Our teaching practice excellence is predicated on the strong institutional value ascribed to teaching set out in our educational vision and strategic leadership. This comprises consistent and up-to-date course design principles [7]; strong respect for individuals and pastoral support [8]; professional development of academic staff and professional service colleagues who teach and support teaching (Section 2.4); expert development and support of our students (Section 2.5); and our outstanding physical and virtual resources (Section 2.6). This distinctive community approach is key to continuing excellence in our teaching practice, working with our student body as active partners in their education (see also Section 2.7).

2.1.2 Assessment and Feedback: Our approach to very high quality, rigorous assessment and feedback is underpinned by our adoption of the principles and process of Assessment for Learning (AfL) [9] as evidence-based principles in our curricula. AfL places a strong focus on embedding assessment design and practice alongside effective feedback that inspires and empowers our students to improve their learning and future performance. Our assessment approach is also informed by employers who regard it as important in building trust with the University.

Our approach enables students to demonstrate deep learning and apply their knowledge and skills in ways that help them progress towards the practice and standards needed in their careers. We support this through the strength of our external partnerships (Sections 2.2, 2.3). In the NSS[4], our students are highly positive about this purposeful approach, with 72.8%   of final years in

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[4] NSS 2022 optional question bank.

2022 agreeing that (a) 'teaching staff test what I have understood rather than what I have memorised', and 84.9% agreeing that (b) 'assessment methods on my course require an in-depth understanding of course content'. We ask these optional questions every other year and have seen an improving trajectory (2018: (a) 57.0%, (b) 76.9%; 2020: (a) 58.5%, (b) 77.5%; 2022: (a) 72.8%, (b) 84.8% respectively).

We are confident that our feedback supports students' development and progress. We can evidence this from a 7-year study on entry tariffs and improved performance that ended in the 2018/19 AY [10]. Over this period, irrespective of entry tariff, all our students' final year averages were improved over their first year. The greatest improvements were observed for students with the lowest relative entry grades (+5.3pp improvement in year average). The improvement gap declined with entry tariff, indicating clear improvements in performance for lower entry tariff students (some of whom may not have had equal educational opportunities compared to their peers).

We clearly recognise that our overall indicator (64.4%) for Assessment and Feedback is below benchmark (67.7%) by 3.4 pp suggesting satisfaction with features of practice measured by the NSS, particularly regarding feedback, has not been consistent with students' expectations on the basis of their otherwise excellent educational experience. Granular analysis of our institutional NSS data also shows that scores for the two assessment-focussed questions – which address the clarity of marking criteria and fairness of marking and assessment – are just below the sector average (-3.1pp).

We continue actively to work with students and our SU (Section 2.7) to understand these issues and create solutions, including through the SU's Top Ten for 2022/23. In Biology for instance, a range of initiatives introduced over the TEF period, including more timely, accessible written feedback on exam questions, has led to significant increases in satisfaction for both timely feedback (+6.1pp) and helpful feedback (+17.4pp). In Architecture, Building and Planning (+7.2pp above benchmark) students have praised the strong studio culture and tutorial-based approach which provides regular, high quality individual feedback. Sport and Exercise Sciences (a Curriculum Transformation Vanguard Course, see also 2.2.2) scored 81.2% for overall satisfaction in Assessment and Feedback (NSS 2022). An external examiner noted the "'genuinely excellent' feedback provision" (2021) that was embedded through the use of marking rubrics and comprehensive feedback on coursework.

We support staff to engage with sector-leading practice in this area. For instance, in 2020 Professor Naomi Winstone (Surrey) was invited to share her work on feedback literacy. This informed a cross-disciplinary project supported through our Teaching Development Fund (Section 2.4) in 2021, with outcomes subsequently shared and embedded in guidance and staff training. Further engagement with Professor Winstone in 2022 is consolidating this approach.

We have sought to reduce over-assessment and minimising deadline-bunching, removing barriers to engagement with assessment as a learning process. Through our Curriculum Transformation project (Section 2.2.2) we have addressed this by fundamentally reviewing and redesigning formative and summative assessment opportunities across all courses, employing a course-wide approach to bring greater clarity and consistency to the learning experience and share best practice. In our vanguard Curriculum Transformation courses, reductions of up to 34% in final assessments have created space for students and staff to embed enhanced formative and feedback activity.

The impact of concerted strategic effort across all levels of provision has not yet been fully reflected through NSS results. Nevertheless we are pleased that our 2022 NSS results indicate improvement in

the variance from our benchmark, now statistically significant in only one of the underlying questions. This gives us confidence of strengthening this upward trend as the scope of activity takes effect and new course and assessment designs are rolled out in 2023.

"All the assessments are robust with high standards. The Department is taking actions to balance assessment workload. This will lead to better student learning experience and I look forward to see the full implementation." (External Examiner,   AY 2020/21).

2.2 Course Content and Delivery (SE2)

2.2.1 Course Design and Structure: Our education focuses on our students gaining the high-level skills needed to apply advanced subject knowledge and its sophisticated understanding, leading to strong and prestigious employment opportunities. Our education is underpinned by our curricula that address key challenges faced by people, organisations, and societies around the world. To that end, the Bath education experience includes a focus on experiential learning, problem-solving and projects that address real-world issues, to placement or study opportunities giving hands-on experience and practice contributing to a culture of employability.

Our education is designed to be relevant to a subject's theory and practice, by embedding the learning in a real-world context; is experientially-taught to support practical and professional skills acquisition; and is practice-based to be employment-focused. Half of our courses (49.6%,   are accredited by a Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Body (PSRB) bringing professional recognition alongside an degree award, and this translates into 50.9% of our students graduating from an accredited course in 2022   an increase from 40% in the last TEF. In addition, our School of Management received 5-year EQUIS reaccreditation in 2021, so in 2022 66.8% of our students   graduated from either an accredited course or School.

We develop, assess and improve courses based on our long-standing principles and processes so students acquire discipline-specific knowledge at a pace appropriate for their student journey, and for many students, for placement or study abroad. Our course design, delivery and assessment are based on frameworks that assure the standards and quality of our qualifications [11].

Our teaching is delivered on a modular basis across two semesters, which enables more student choice of units, and innovative designs for new courses (Section 2.2.2). Core units ensure a strong foundation of understanding, and optional units are available so that students can specialise for maximum success in their chosen careers. We have common assessment regulations for our all degrees, adapting the best practice from modular examples elsewhere in sector and modified as required with our PSRBs. Course delivery employs a range of methods including: lectures and tutorials, laboratory sessions, online learning resources and activities, problem-solving scenarios, collaborative group assignments, and project work.

Our online resources include recordings of lectures, in accordance with our Lecture Capture Policy, approved by Senate (April 2021) following discussions with SU officers. This opt-in policy sets out the University expectation of recording, and supports students with Disability Access Plans.

The vast majority of our students engage in a mandatory final year project, that acts as a capstone to their studies. This project further enables them to develop a critical perspective, a problem solving mindset and transferable skills, all of which support their employability. (NB Projects are only optional in about half of the courses in our CAH2 Mathematics subject group). A variety of project

types (research, design, practice) are on offer. Some types are stipulated by the PSRB and others have more flexibility. We are further developing our project offering further through our innovative Virtually Integrated Project Scheme (Section 2.3).

All our subjects offer a placement (sometimes called an internship) or study year abroad (SYA) option (Section 2.2.3). Nearly two-thirds of our students undertake a placement (56%, 21/22 graduates) or other study experience abroad (6%, 21/22 graduates) – this proportion has stayed consistent across the TEF period. In addition to our strong educational baseline described above, placement and SYA students are stretched by being immersed in another organisation, applying and developing their subject knowledge, gaining wider work and cultural experience in a new environment and/or country. They return to Bath to complete their final year (or penultimate year for some M-level courses), undertake their capstone project whilst benefitting from their subject and personal growth from their year away. It is also important to note that all returning placement or SYA students bring their new experiences into the cohort for the final year. All final year students learn from their peers, who may have been on placement/study abroad, particularly in group projects and collaborative assignments.

We know that our courses, their content, and delivery are highly valued by students and are central to our distinctive educational offering. Our 2022 admissions survey of accepters [15] indicates that course content and structure was an "extremely" or "very" important factor in deciding whether to accept a place, and equally important to WP (70%) and non-WP accepters (73%).

"I've learnt a lot about innovative teaching methods used at Bath and remain amazed at the aesthetic quality of some of the coursework produced by Bath students. I think that the Bath courses are special in the panoply of UK civil engineering courses, and you are lucky in some ways to have such a close crossover with architecture – I am not sure there are many civils courses that can claim this now and it is a USP you need to cling on to." (External Examiner   , Architecture and Civil Engineering, AY 2021/22)

2.2.2 Curriculum Transformation: Our 2017 TEF submission referenced the Transforming Curriculum & Assessment programme to build on our strong foundations and set the course of education for the next generations of our students. This has developed into the Curriculum Transformation (CT) project throughout the current TEF period [12]. Vanguard courses have launched in two subjects and the remainder of our UG courses will launch in their transformed state in AY 2023/24.

CT is an institution-wide initiative to embed key principles agreed by Senate in 2018 [13, 14] through the redesign and relaunch of our curricula. It began in 2018 and restarted in 2021 after a Covid-enforced pause. The transformed courses are designed to create strong foundations for continuous improvement and provide the opportunity for more embedded innovation and high quality content, delivery and assessment approaches.

Throughout this CT work we have ensured that students were involved from initial course design to final approvals. Student Ambassadors were employed to lead engagement activity between students and staff around key themes, including citizenship and sustainability, employability, research-led teaching, and supporting the needs of all learners.

Although it will be TEF 2027 where the fruition of this work can be properly assessed, the ripples of this transformation are already influencing our current provision, and early indications for our vanguard CT courses suggest the changes have benefitted course delivery, with student feedback

through unit evaluations and SSLCs overwhelmingly positive with significantly enhanced student learning experiences and satisfaction [22].

2.2.3 Placement Opportunities for Learning and Work Experience[5]: As noted above, the majority of our students undertake a placement or study year abroad. Our placement scheme is often seen by students and employers as one of the key differentiators of our undergraduate programmes. For example, in our Autumn 2022 acceptance survey [15] of those accepting offers, 49% of WP accepters and 53% of non-WP accepters cited placement year opportunities/links with industry as a reason for accepting their offer at Bath.

"I spent 32 years at the Bank of England, I had a steady stream of fantastic placement students from Bath through the Bank, so I know how rich Bath is and how rich those placement schemes are to such a point that we hired loads of Bath students for just that reason." (Chief Executive   RSA   November 2022)

Amongst the 2021/22 graduating cohort, the proportion of students going on placement was greatest within our Faculty of Engineering & Design (72% take-up,   In particular, 86%
        of our Architecture & Civil Engineering graduates undertook a placement, including 100%
        of BSc (hons) Architecture graduates. Similarly, a very high proportion of graduates from our School of Management (70%,   undertook a placement, i

Out of the 188 2021/22 graduates that undertook a year abroad (which involved study and/or work), the majority   graduated from courses in our department of Politics, Languages and International Studies. 100%   of our International Management & Modern Languages graduates undertook a year abroad, as did 100%   of graduates of courses involving Languages combined with Politics or European Studies. In addition, 100%   of our BSc International Management graduates undertook a year abroad.

Our placements/study years are inclusive in their take up. For example, considering POLAR4 data for 2022, the gap between Quintile 3-5 students who take a placement/study year abroad has narrowed to 5% (66% placement,   ) compared to Quintile 1-2 students (61% placement,   ) [16].

Our students undertake placements at organisations including multinational corporations, FTSE100 companies, small to medium sized businesses and start-ups across the UK and worldwide. The sector types include Banking and Finance, Charity and NGO's, Public sector and governmental organisations, and Fast Moving Consumer Goods. These placement relationships are carefully managed and sustainably grown by our discipline-specific, professional placements teams to ensure high-quality placement experiences that offer the appropriate level of challenge and responsibility, and that students are comprehensively prepared for before they arrive.

In addition to the placement teams, students are supported before, during and after the placement by our Students' Union, personal tutors and academic staff. Continuous improvement in supporting placements ensures that we prioritise student and employer experiences and, as a result, many of our employers return to recruit Bath students year after year for placement and employment

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[5] In addition to SE2, this description of our placement provision impacts upon the following Features of Excellence SE1, SE3, SO1, SO2, SO3 & SO4

opportunities. For example, of the 2538 completed placements in AY 2021/22, 19% were exclusively offered to Bath students and 20% were Bath-preferred placements[7].

Over the past four years, student satisfaction with our placement scheme has remained consistently high with an average of 82% (see Footnote 4, p5). This is especially noteworthy as there is no difference in student satisfaction in the years impacted by the pandemic and those that were not. This reflects careful collaboration with placement providers to ensure these opportunities could remain open while maintaining health and safety standards. On average, 92% of placement students agree that '*My placement was valuable in helping my learning'* and 97% agree that '*My placement has helped me develop my general life skills'*

To ensure that financial circumstances are not a barrier to access opportunities, the University tailors financial support to students, for example, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences provides access to funding as placements in this faculty are more likely to be unpaid.

"We are very proud to have such a strong partnership with University of Bath. For years, we have taken on Bath Placement students, who never fail to impress us with their drive, enthusiasm and proactiveness. .. As such, we offer many of our Bath placement students permanent positions after their degree, onto our International Management Trainee Program, helping them build a career with us to become future leaders of our business." (The Kraft Heinz Company, placement provider, November 2021)

2.2.4 Education Delivery During the Pandemic: During the pandemic we pivoted our delivery online to maintain quality and standards and give students the best education experience possible, the impact of which was reflected in our NSS results for 2021.

Along with most of the sector in March 2020 our teaching and support went online. For the following year, we launched the Bath Blend, where we mixed online delivery and support with some in-person teaching under socially distanced conditions. Where possible, laboratory and skills training were run; all students came onto campus for 4 hours per week for in-person teaching and support.

For our placement activity we embraced virtual placements where projects were undertaken remotely but still with the company to fulfil the skills and experience that we would expect. We saw a reduction in placements offered with some corporate bodies and some institutions, and in order to fill as many gaps as possible we moved swiftly to organise new agreements to enable placements.

The agility and quality of our response arose through the creation of the Resilient Curriculum Project Team (RCPT). RCPT brought together decision makers, academics and professional services staff, and were empowered to make fast changes, recommend major expenditure and respond to student feedback and need to support our pandemic education. They enabled support for our out-of-country international students through online mechanisms and implemented approaches to bring student groups together online. A voluntary Students' Advisory Group ran through summer 2020 to shape our delivery, and our regular 'Ask Me Anything' sessions enabled regular two-way staff engagement. Overall, our high-quality holistic approach to education and support through the pandemic correlates with our high NSS scores for 2020/21 when we improved our results.

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[7] Completed placements and numbers of exclusive or preferred placement partnerships, 2021-22, Bath internal data.

2.3 Outstanding Academic Experience (SE3)

Our University Strategy and Education Vision ensure our commitment to research-led and research-informed teaching is supported by our strong research reputation: we are a research intensive university. In the 2021 REF exercise, 100% of our core academic staff were submitted, and 92% of our research was classified as being 'world leading' or 'internationally excellent'. Our academic staff are leaders in their subject, its development and practice. Their extensive connections to organisations and research mean that course content and particularly project work are at the forefront of their subject.

As noted in Section 2.2 nearly all our students undertake a final year project, and all of these are linked to current subject research, or development of solutions to real-world problems being investigated by our research-active academics (see Sect 2.2.1), and in many cases with external industry or organisation input. Our students are exposed to the boundaries of knowledge as part of their education.

2.3.1 Access to Facilities: Research-led teaching is further supported by enabling UG student access to cutting-edge tools and expertise in our Core Research Facilities for lab-based practicals and research projects. To give one example, these include infrastructures such as the Material and Chemical Characterisation Facility (MC2), where 25% of the user base is represented by students spanning the Faculties of H&SS, Engineering & Design and Science, and which has seen >£5M in new instrumentation over the TEF period.

Other Core Research Facilities accessed by our students include the Nanofabrication Facility, CAMERA and others. Additionally many of the associated Research Technical Professionals working in these Core Facilities contribute to lecture content and are involved in lecture delivery to ensure that students gain both practical and theoretical skills on techniques which will be key to their future careers and create a talent pipeline for UK Plc.

2.3.2 Innovative Opportunities: We encourage students to work with stakeholders outside the University, for instance entering national and international competitions and awards schemes, often in collaboration with industry. Bath has established great success in the Team Racing Competitions, including for internal combustion, electric and autonomous cars, and motorbikes and drones. Partnerships are key and our students are attracted to leading motorsport teams. Kieran Shopland, now Programme Manager at Mercedes AMG High Performance Powertrains, led our electric team in 2019 before being recruited directly into a leadership position with Mercedes. He credits this success to the unique support provided by Bath for these teams.

A newer example is our Virtually Integrated Project (VIP) Scheme which started in 2019/20. VIPs are multidisciplinary student teams from all years of study and disciplines collaborating with academics on ambitious projects to identify real world solutions. VIPs are unique and we are the only university in England to adopt them. They have a very strong sustainability theme linked to the UN Sustainability Development Goals. In three years VIPs have grown from an initial pilot of four projects to 14 current projects, with 423 students now having participated. Such has been their success we have approved our first credit bearing VIP in Natural Sciences and aim to further develop these in the coming years. Related to sustainability, and typified by our sustainability commitment we were the first university to introduce central climate literacy induction training for all students in 2021, and opportunities for individuals to gain full carbon literacy accreditation.

Students also engage in projects supported by local companies, charities or authorities to address issues of importance, for example the Architecture annual exhibition and year book that features work from all years of the course, and is attended by local and national architecture studios.

2.3.3 Engagement with Partners: Our close partnerships with organisations, stakeholders and employers who help shape our curriculum, our delivery and directly contribute as lecturers or project supervisors to students. Every subject at Bath has active engagement with external advisors and/or an external advisory body at department or Faculty level. Thus, our course content, design and relevance remain at the forefront of knowledge and practice and are aligned to the needs of employers.

In recent years we have sought to strengthen our existing success and meaningful partnerships with external organisations through Curriculum Transformation. For example, when designing the transformed curriculum, we sought input from employers and a range of stakeholders including professional practitioners and Industry Liaison Partnerships/Panels. We consulted with our PSRBs, and ensured that employers were engaged with the design and development of our courses, recognising the role that accreditation and professional status plays in preparing students for high-quality placement experience and professional employment.

"Teaching tends to follow staffs' research expertise so that students receive in-depth, expert, and up to date knowledge; I support the approach whereby students have the opportunity to be taught topics by the experts in the field. I firmly believe that this aids the motivation of both the lecturer and learner. "(External Examiner, Health and Exercise Science,   2020/21)

2.4 Staff Professional Development (SE4)

The University of Bath is committed to supporting excellence in teaching and learning and supporting staff to continuously develop their teaching practice. A major development two years ago was the phasing out of Teaching Fellowships so that all teaching-only academic staff could be recognised as lecturers, senior lecturers and Professors. Staff development begins with new lecturers through our 'Pathways to Higher Education Fellowship' (PHEAF) Scheme (Advance HE accredited). In AY2021/22 we had a higher percentage of staff with Fellowships (47.8%) compared to the sector average (46.1%) [17].

We also offer staff opportunities to to develop, innovate and share their practice through a range of mechanisms and networks:

- Our annual EduFest conference allows staff to share their successes. Student collaboration is a key driver for us, so student involvement is always a core part of EduFest and our professional development activities and celebrations.
- The University funds an annual Teaching Development Fund. Student involvement is a requirement for all TDF bids and Student Union representatives sit on the decision panel.
- Our institutional 'PedR Network' [18] promotes good scholarly practice and research. This year we gained QAA funding to develop the PedR model across the sector.
- We celebrate successes through two teaching excellence award schemes; the University Teaching Awards recognise the contributions made by staff to enhance the academic and pastoral support of students and colleagues.
- All staff have access to: a 'Development Toolkit', an online tool with over 2,000 resources including top tips, key guides and self-assessments;

- We have created an Education Good Practice Guide [19], aligned to the UK Professional Standards Framework (AdvanceHE). The Guide is designed to demonstrate the range and distinctiveness of educational practice at Bath and is drawn from across the institution.
- We support colleagues to apply to the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS). We have had good recognition since the start of NTFS, our first award was in 2001.

We benefit from highly qualified Technical Services colleagues, particularly across STEM subjects, who are integral to our practical laboratory-based education. To enhance our technicians' careers and skills sets, we have signed up to the Technician Commitment and have made key improvements within the four areas of Visibility, Recognition, Career Development and Sustainability. We further enhance technical staff development by our involvement in, and promotion of GW4WARD and MI TALENT programmes, and development of female technical leaders through our involvement in the Herschel Programme, Aurora and Elevate.

Faculties and departments make extensive use of PG demonstrators and teaching assistants which is evidenced through the number engaging with our resources and Fellowship scheme. Last year we created a self-directed Moodle resource called 'First Steps into Teaching' which over 300 PG students completed. Departments are increasingly using this resource as a training activity for their PG students who teach. Anecdotally we may have upwards of 900   students who support teaching activities and some of these go on to apply for Associate Fellowship – we have a small but steady stream of these students who submit Associate Fellowship applications each year.

We are fully committed to equality and inclusivity at all levels within our community, and we hold hold a Silver Athena Swan award at institutional level. At departmental level, we hold ten Bronze and six Silver awards. We have also sought to strengthen our EDI programme creating the posts of Vice-President (Community & Inclusion), Equality Charters Manager, Deputy Director Culture and Inclusion,

2.5 Quality Academic Support (SE5)

We provide strong support to our students to help them adjust to university and help them make the most of their time and opportunities whilst at Bath. Academic support is very strongly indicated, our overall indicator score (80.2%) exceeds benchmark by 3.0 pp Our overall indicator score has exceeded benchmark in all four years of the TEF period, and, relative to benchmark, there was a big improvement between year two and year three, which was consolidated in year four.

When split by student characteristics the data show a consistent performance with most split indicators materially above benchmark. For our subject groups 13 score materially above benchmark. There are very few split indicators that score below benchmark, two split indicators do score materially below benchmark, level of study: Other undergraduate (-4.4 pp vs benchmark) and Subject: General, applied, and forensic sciences (-2.7 pp vs benchmark), however, both have relatively small populations   so this is not reflective of the excellent support experienced by most of our undergraduate population.

2.5.1 Personal Tutor System: We emphasise a Culture of Care for students and the embedded Personal Tutor system [8] provides a mechanism for the delivery of formal and informal support. The personal tutor system has two core purposes: (i) to support taught students' academic and personal

development through a personalised point of contact with the University and (ii) to facilitate the transition of students into the academic community and their academic studies, helping them to develop an understanding of learning and living in the University environment. On entry to the University, all taught students are assigned a Personal Tutor who is a member of academic staff. Our personal tutoring requirements are reviewed on a regular basis (last reviewed in September 2021), and we have recently strengthened training for personal tutors.

2.5.2 International Students: Our international students are supported throughout their student journey. Pre-arrival we offer international students online 'Living in a New Culture' events to build their knowledge and sense of community: these are delivered in person during welcome week. Our support continues with regular 'Chat with us' events to provide advice about UK culture and practicalities We run community-building events through Semester 1 to ensure that those staying on campus over Christmas support to engage in our vacation offer. Our Student Immigration Service provides free specialist advice and guidance for our international students: from pre-arrival (advising ~3,000 offer holders with visa queries), to document checks during arrivals during their time at Bath (in-person, email or online advice), and through to graduation (post-study work visas).

2.5.3 Skills Centre: This comprises an in-person Skills Zone and virtual Digital Hub and provides embedded, flexible, and personalised skills development and enrichment for all students. All undergraduates benefit from subject-specific academic and professional skills development embedded into their studies. Over the last four years the Skills Centre has expanded the delivery of Skills Enrichment provision, supporting academic literacy, mathematical and statistical needs and a focus on digital, employability and self-management themes. There has been a steady increase in access to skills enrichment, with over 800 session attendances in 2021/22, an increase of 20% compared to 2019/20.

Support for academic literacy, maths and statistics is delivered in-person through the Skills Zone. In 2021/22, 2340 uses were recorded (increase of 22% since 2019/20). This support is highly rated, a survey of attendees in the physical Skills Zone being highly satisfied (4.7/5.0) and highly confident of their next action (4.8/5.0), on average. The Skills Centre also provides personalised skills support for students with learning differences, disabilities and other underrepresented groups [20].

The Digital Hub, established in 2019/20, enables students to explore opportunities, book into sessions and access digital resources. MySkills resources are popular, seeing a 490% increase in use since 2019/20, to over 8000 resource uses in 2021/22. Our skills blog, co-created with students, has seen a 400% increase in use over the last three years, rising to 39,000 article views in 2021/22. Subject-specific skills provision of interactive mathematical and statistical content for all students, has seen a 40% increase to 12,300 uses in 2021/22.

For new students whose course relies on A level Maths, transition and development starts pre-arrival with access to our Training Spaces to enable practice, reflection and learning through a maths skills training model. In 2021/22, 1600 Training Space activities were completed by first years: those who engage being measurably more likely to access further maths enhancement.

2.5.4 Disability Service: This service provides advice and support to disabled students before entry and throughout the student lifecycle.

The Disability Service and the Centre for Learning & Teaching collaborate to provide expertise that informs improvements to accessible and inclusive teaching and learning. For example, in 21/22, the teams created guidance and resources for inclusive assessments (see CT principles section SO5 and SE1) and their design to remove barriers to disabled student success.

2.6 Physical and Virtual Learning Resources (SE6)

We invested significantly in the resources available to students, including the online architecture for teaching and learning, as part of our effective response to the pandemic. Technology Enhanced Learning has been an important component of our education since before the pandemic although mandated online teaching accelerated our approach. Off-campus we provide city-based social and learning spaces for our students in our Virgil Building and our Dartmouth Avenue outpost, which is adjacent to a significant student private housing area in Bath.

Our overall indicator score for Learning Resources (85.8%) exceeds the benchmark (83.5%) by 2.3 pp which is on the boundary of being a material difference. From the time series, the improvement in performance against benchmark in TEF year 3 coincides with pandemic initiatives being implemented and then bedding in as this indicator remained above benchmark in TEF year 4. Most split indicators score above benchmark, most are materially above benchmark, or close to being so, and 11 subjects score materially above benchmark. There are very few split indicators that score below benchmark, only one is materially below benchmark, Age on entry: 31 years and over (-7.8 pp versus benchmark). However, this split indicator has a small population (30 students) and is not representative of our overall score.

2.6.1 The Library: Our Library is at the heart of our campus. In 1996 we were the first UK HE Library to open 24/7 and our physical and digital services and collections support our students through their whole HE experience. Access to our expertise, services, resources and information skills begins early and stays with our community as they move on into employment. Our reach extends from local school and college students studying for their Extended Project Qualifications and those engaged with our Access and Participations teams, to our own students pre-arrival, through induction and throughout their courses, to our alumni as they move into their future careers. Our survey results reflect the strength of our work, showing a steady increase since 2017 and jointly gaining the highest score in the UK for the NSS Library question in 2021 post-Covid, increasing to 88.54 % for 2022 (ranking 3rd nationally).

2.6.2 Laboratory Facilities: Because of the experiential nature of many of our courses all our students experience state-of-the-art practical, laboratory and workshop facilities, including:

- Bloomberg Terminals, accessible at all times in the new School of Management building
- A Collaboration Lab for computer science students to use (including experimental lab, group space, seminar, mixed usage)
- Maker Lab in Physics
- Specialist user facilities in our dedicated Pharmacy Practice and Simulation Suites, including SimMan 3G and an advanced robotic patient simulator.
- Engine test labs in Mechanical Engineering, with remote camera viewing and recording

- Earthquake Simulator in Civil Engineering, which is a fully enabled room on a movable platform
- Interpreting laboratories containing conference interpreting system, and a speech repository
- Separate TV and audio studios

2.6.3 Information Technology and Audio-Visual Provision: Over the past six years we have upgraded the IT and AV in our 125 General Teaching Area learning spaces to a high specification. Each teaching space has a minimum AV function (which includes Teaching PC, visualiser, inputs for Bring Your Own Device, audio systems and high quality displays) and Teaching recording technology (Panopto) for self-selected or automated session capture. In the last two years all central teaching spaces have had new high specification PCs provided and equipped with additional cameras and microphones to enable hybrid teaching for students both on and off campus.

Over the past five years our nine General Teaching Area PC labs holding 400 PCs have been upgraded with high specification PCs. In the last 2 years we have created additional remote virtual PC facility, enabling global student access to course-specific software. We have further supported students with laptops provision to eligible undergraduates via hardship loans, early advancements on bursaries and direct laptop loans;

2.6.4 New Building for Management: Over the TEF period, to develop our teaching and learning infrastructure, we have completed the construction of a new build for the School of Management (completed August 2022, £75M). The 10 East building provides state of the art teaching facilities, including: nine lecture theatres and a 250-seat auditorium; a student entrepreneurship lab, Incepta, to work on business creation and innovation; an Employability Hub for industry partners to help prepare students for the workplace; and the Pavilion café, for students, staff and employers to meet, study and work

2.7 Student Engagement (SE7)

We value our strong partnership working with our students and the SU to ensure an excellent teaching and learning experience and have further enhanced our Student Voice activity. Our overall indicator score (73.8%) exceeds benchmark by 2.5 pp Over this TEF period this indicator has always been above benchmark, and for Years 3 and 4 is has been materially so. Most of our split indicators score above benchmark, and most are materially above including 11 Subjects. Three split indicators score materially below benchmark: Language and area studies

Physics and Astronomy

and Age on entry: 31 years and over

Our NSS score for Learning Community increased 4.1 pp in 2022 alone and has been on an upward directory throughout the TEF period. Our students are represented on all our education committees and student champions regularly work with us to develop policy and practice, eg Student Digital Skills Co-Creators developed resources to support student study; Assessment and Feedback Champions have conducted focus groups to better understand the needs of students with non-traditional accessibility, and enhancing staff understanding of the student assessment experience.

2.7.1 Governance and Student Engagement: The SU and students hold us to account in a variety of ways and at all levels of the institution. Elected SU Officers have full membership of our governance bodies, including Council and Senate. They are members of the following University committees: Education, Quality and Standards (EQSC), Education Advisory Board, and the Student Experience

Advisory Board. Through the academic representation framework, students are elected by their peers to work with the course teams, Faculty/School leadership, Staff Student Liaison Committees (SSLC), and the SU structures.

For over twelve years we have been asking all students to complete online unit evaluations [21]. Thus, students provide anonymous feedback about curricula, teaching, and assessment, which is collated and discussed at SSLCs, with key teaching staff and at EQSC, to continually develop and enhance our education experience including feedback to students [22]. The annual NSS also provides data and feedback across the University to support our continual improvements. In NSS 2022 our response rate of 80% was the highest ever and was 11 pp above the sector average [23].

In 2019/20 the University undertook an internal audit of Student Engagement, and as an outcome, in October 2020 a new set of principles for our Student Voice work were developed by the University-SU Student Voice Working Group and subsequently approved by EQSC.

2.7.2 Student Voice During the Pandemic: During the pandemic, students were represented on the Resilient Curriculum Project Team (RCPT), that co-ordinated the education response to the pandemic and lockdowns. Regular two-way communication occurred between teaching and professional services staff with students and the SU. RCPT sought feedback from students regularly via surveys, and these data informed how we tailored and adjusted our approach. In a similar way, the Student Experience Project Team (including SU representatives) was created to respond to wider student experience issues which arose during the pandemic. As a result, we transitioned from the 'Bath Blend' in 20/21 (mix of in-person, live online learning and online delivery) to a campus-based blend in 21/22 (mainly campus-based delivery with some online content).

"The University and Department are to be commended in their continued response to the Covid-19 pandemic. In conversations with students, it was evident that they felt very strongly supported both in terms of academic and pastoral matters." (External Examiner   , Architecture and Civil Engineering,   2021/22)

3. Student Outcomes

3.1 Student Success and Progression (SO1)

As noted below, our student outcomes are very strong. The key themes of our provision that we have described are course design and quality, opportunities for learning and work experience outside the University such as in placements, skills development, graduate outcomes, and employability. Supporting and extending our taught education, these themes form our approach to ensuring that our students succeed in, and progress beyond, their studies.

3.1.1 Skills Development for Success and Progression: As described in Section 2.2.3 the majority of our students undertake a placement or study year abroad. Not every student chooses to follow this route, and of the one third of students who not undertake a placement or study year abroad, one third will be on a course leading to an undergraduate Masters degree. For all students we offer options tailored their needs, skill mix and preferences to enhance their success and progression.

The Careers Service also work with employers to promote work-based internships to all our students that replicate some benefits of placements. In addition the SU promotes a large number of volunteer

opportunities, and offers student leadership, representation & trainer roles, part-time work, and training opportunities to build skills. The combination of these opportunities enables students to build their skills, experience and professional networks, and with guidance from our Careers Service ensure they know how to utilise these attributes when applying for graduate jobs.

3.1.2 Graduate Employability and Success Post-Graduation: Ninety-three per cent (93%) of Bath's full-time UK domiciled first degree graduates working in the UK, are in high skilled employment 15 months after leaving, compared to 73% of similar graduates in the sector (UUK members) [24]. The strength of our Graduate Outcomes is evident from the fact that the top ten universities for this metric (in The Times & Sunday Times Good University Guide) are Bath, seven members of the Russell Group, and two specialist medical/veterinary institutions.

Bath ranks 5th for Graduate Prospects overall in the Times/Sunday Times Good University Guide and 5th for Career in the Guardian University Guide 2023. Fifty-three per cent (53%) of Bath graduates had a salary of £30K or above compared to 23% for the sector, 15 months after leaving [24]. Additionally, in the 2023 Complete University Guide, Bath was 5th in a ranking of students on the "graduates on track" marker, which rates the proportion of graduates who agree that the activity they are engaged in is on track with their future plans.

Some of the factors driving this success include:

- Employability is a whole-institution activity: joining up employability staff in the Faculties/School and the Careers Service; the Students' Union; the Skills Centre; and Student Support and Alumni to provide a registration to 'graduation and beyond' employability service. Employability co-leadership sits with the PVCs for Education and Student Experience.
- There are strong links between employability and our curricula. For instance newly-transformed curricula are intended to be more relevant and to embed real world skills that are transferrable to employment.
- Two-thirds of our students graduated from an accredited course or School in 2022, and about 50% of our courses are accredited (Section 2.2.1). Accreditation brings a wealth of benefits including valuable external feedback and endorsement of our provision, and in many cases accreditation is vital to enabling our students to follow their chosen career path.
- We support student entrepreneurs: recent examples include students and graduates winning Innovation Awards to develop businesses such as Epowar (wearable technology linked to personal safety), Testmyteeth (dental technology combating preventable dental diseases) and Labcycle (combating laboratory plastic waste). Initial support is provided from our campus-based Enterprise Lab and fledgling businesses move on to the programmes at our city-centre Innovation Centre.
- We are rated particularly strongly in terms of our partnerships and reputation among employers, placing 93rd in the recent QS international employability rankings [25]. This marks us as one of the best places to study globally relating to onward prospects [25]. We are consistently in the top 20 universities most visited by employers: 11th in 2021-22 [26].

Students also rate us highly for employability; in 2022, Bath was in the top 10 for the WhatUni Student Choice award for career prospects.

"In my experience of serving as an external examiner in various Russell Group institutions, yours is among the best – in terms of rigour and relevance. You prepare students the best way possible,

which shows why the graduate employability is higher... especially where the students land their dream jobs and quickly adapt to the ever-growing challenges of the real world. There is robust evidence of rigour – partly because of the nature of the program (needs evidence-driven teaching and assessment – real life approximation) and partly by module leaders' superb dedication. I am sure, students across programs are well-prepared to face challenges in the job market." (External Examiner, Management,   2021/22)

3.2 Continuation, Completion and Progression (SO2, SO3)

Our data is indicative of 'outstanding quality' for the indicators, Continuation, Completion, and Progression. We are particularly proud of the Graduate Outcomes for our APP students and how far many of them outperform other students with the same APP characteristics at other high tariff intake institutions (TEF benchmark data). This demonstrates the difference we make when we attract highly achieving students from diverse backgrounds, enhanced by high value placement and extra curricula opportunities to help students to take their ideas and passions to the next level.

3.2.1 Continuation: Our overall indicator score of 97.3% exceeds benchmark (96.0%) by 1.3 pp which is particularly noteworthy given the high benchmark (> 95.0%) Bath have the fourth highest continuation rate in the sector (excluding alternative providers) – only Oxford, Cambridge, and LSE score higher. The vast majority of split indicators score at least 2.5 pp above benchmark, or are not materially below a benchmark of at least 95.0% including 17 subject groups. There is just one split indicator for which the score is materially below benchmark, Age on entry: 31 years and over, with an indicator score of 82.0% versus benchmark of 87.6%, but for a low number of students

Continuation rates are higher against their benchmark for the under-represented groups IMD Q1&2, Free School Meals, and all minority ethnic groups. The OfS APP dashboard shows no gaps in continuation for under-represented students and the 98% continuation rate continues to be one of the strengths of the University. Our scholarship bursaries packages support for students won the Highest Impact University Initiative Award at the upReach Student Social Mobility Awards in 2021.

Since 2021, we have been monitoring our continuation rate as an internal KPI, using this data as a proxy indicator for a supportive environment for first-year students.

3.2.2 Completion: The overall score for <u>full-time students</u> (97.5%) exceeds the benchmark by 2.1pp which is positive given the high benchmark (> 95.0%). We have the third highest full-time completion rate in the sector, only Oxford and Cambridge have a higher rate. The majority of split indicators score at least 2.5 pp above benchmark, or are not materially below a benchmark of at least 95.0%; including 16 subjects and no single split indicator score is below benchmark.

Most split indicator scores are materially above benchmark with only one split indicator which is materially below benchmark, age on entry: under 21 years   This has an indicator score of 70.8% versus benchmark of 79.8% and a high degree of statistical uncertainty.

We can triangulate our TEF data for Completion with our in-depth analysis of our Degree Outcomes [27], and this shows that we have met our APP 2022 targets[28] for closing degree outcome gaps for both BAME (target of 5pp) and disability (target of 2pp).

The OfS annual analysis of degree classifications [29] identifies increases in the degree outcomes of undergraduate UK domiciled students since 2010-11: the analysis shows our position relative to the sector, and for both firsts and upper second awards our position is good compared to the sector.

3.2.3 Progression: The overall indicator score (87.2%) exceeds the benchmark by 4.5 pp and we have the seventh highest progression rate in the sector (excluding alternative providers). The vast majority of split indicators are materially above benchmark including 13 subjects. Progression rates for under-represented students are high with all under-represented groups outperforming or broadly inline with benchmark

One subject is materially below benchmark, Architecture, building and planning
Here the proportion of statistical uncertainty in line with, or above benchmark is at least 50%. We know that this subject is affected by some of our Architecture graduates entering the profession as "architectural assistants" which does meet the ONS SOC criteria as 'highly skilled'. As seen in the recent Graduate Outcomes 2019/20 data [20], employability outcomes are improved in Architecture so this is likely to be cohort-or market-related rather than indicative of a sustained quality issue.

3.3 Educational Gain

"To define the essence of Educational Gain, it was essential that we worked in partnership to really teased out the benefits to our students from studying at the University of Bath. Our students are ambitious, creative and determined and it's important that their learning environment is setup in a way that allows them to fulfil their potential. It was therefore important that the definition of Education Gains captured how the university strives to create an educational experience that prioritises the future ambitions of our students. Whilst our students will choose to study at Bath for an array of reasons, the quality and innovation that our degrees offer puts all our students in a strong position post-university. Whilst the University of Bath is now firmly a top 10 university, as an SU we wish to see the university strive to continue to be a leading university, whilst ensuring that each new intake of students have an educational experience that helps them to develop the necessary skills to stand out in a very competitive market." (

University of Bath Students' Union, December 2022)

3.3.1 Our Students' Future Ambitions (SO4): As a high tariff intake university, we are interested in the Educational Gain that our students achieve by studying at Bath rather than other high tariff institutions. The TEF institutional benchmark of similar universities provides that comparison.

Our statement of Educational Gain is, *Given the high quality and levels of ambition of our students, our courses are designed so as to be intellectually bold and academically stimulating with a strong emphasis on preparing our students for the leadership opportunities they will later encounter in their careers. We believe that what makes our educational offer distinctive is our strong emphasis on gaining the high-level skills needed to be able to apply advanced knowledge and sophisticated understanding, leading to strong prestigious employment opportunities. Our students are engaged with education that is high quality, empowering and innovative, and our curricula addresses key challenges faced by people, organisations, and societies around the world.*

This definition of Educational Gain has been co-created with our Students' Union as a shared understanding and common goal between students and staff and allows the University to assess itself and the students to hold us to account as to the excellence of their education.

As we have noted in Section 1 our students have a high entry tariff, and they come to Bath because of our subject mix that is taught with a real-world focus, and for our employability outcomes. Our students have a strong ambition for employment instead of further study. They enter Bath highly-career motivated, with "good" graduate jobs in mind, and to "make a difference". A low number continue with further study; employability data from 2017 to 20 shows on average 13.3% of our students are in formal study at the census point, and we rank 59th in the sector for this [24]. From a national careers survey [30] the characteristics of our students include that they are more likely to apply for graduate schemes with prestigious employers; they are less likely to apply for PG study (14% vs 17% nationally); their salary expectations are higher than the national average; and their most important career factors (and at a higher rate than the national average) are good career prospects and interesting work. Our educational gain definition reflects our students' ambitions, and our core education equips those who wish to undertake further study for their future careers.

3.3.2 Supporting Students (SO5): Above we have described key features of our student experience; academic experience and assessment, and our resources, support and student engagement that combine to produce our outstanding student outcomes. Key components of this experience that underpin our approach to educational gain include:

- In Section 2.2.2 we have described how our course design and structure are focused on a real-world context to the subject and its practice, with elements of problem-solving.
- Key skills (Sections 2.5, 3.1.1) are embedded in our courses and are accessible to all students. In the careers review above [30] our students' confidence with problem solving was 8pp higher than the average (for all respondents).
- The placement or study year abroad activities (Section 2.2.3) have been well documented to support strongly subject practice, skills development and future employability.
- With respect to our student outcomes we have described our high continuation rates (Section 3.2.1) and excellent completion data (Section 3.2.2), which is the third highest in the sector. Over the TEF period, on average 91% of our students were awarded first class or upper second class degrees [27]. Ultimately, the value of our degrees rests on trust that we have accurately represented our students' achievements and we have respected certification of degree attainment. We have described in Section 2.1.2 that our approach levels the field for students supporting those who join with lower entry grades.
- We have outstanding employability and progression results (Sect 3.1.2 and 3.2.3), which position our students as some of the most sought after by employers. Progression rates for under-represented students are high, with all groups outperforming benchmark: our Educational Gain is tailored to our students and their different starting points.
- We triangulate our progression data with analysis of our LEO data. Our LEO data can be viewed as a proxy for leadership as it tracks students' careers through their salaries. In respect of graduate median earnings for all subjects and sexes, we rank in the top ten amongst all HEIs, at one, three, and five years after graduation [5].

Figure 2 shows the profile of the TEF Progression against entry tariff for UUK members which demonstrates the "gain" for our undergraduate population. As the vast majority of our split indicators for Progression are materially above benchmark, this gain can be extrapolated with confidence.
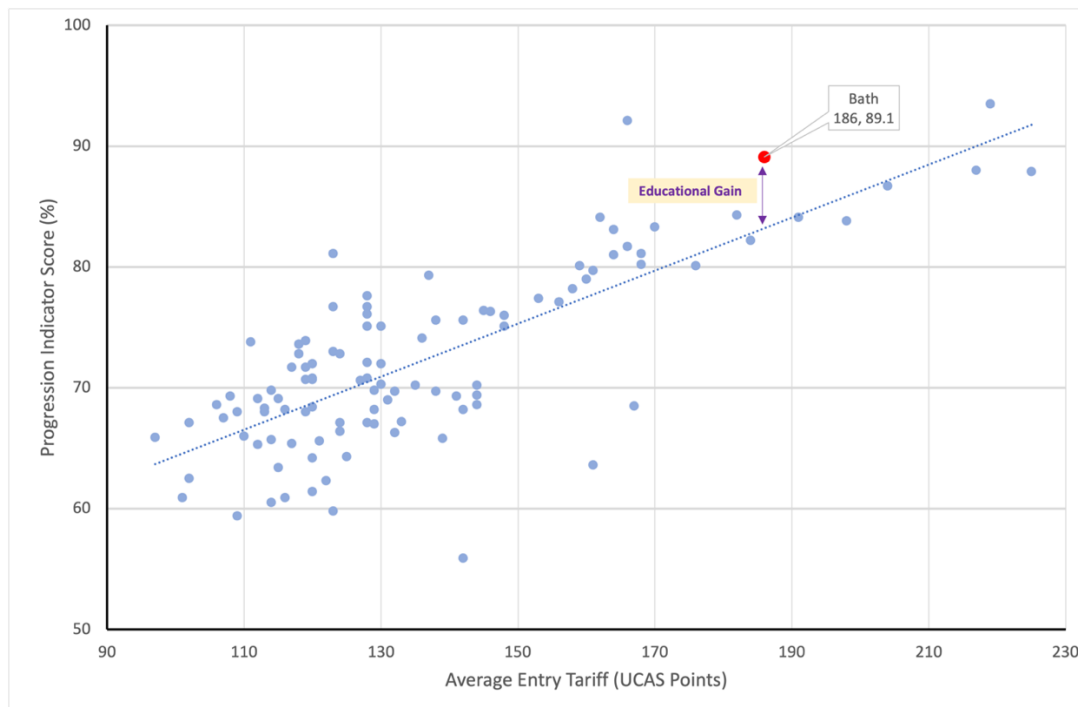
Figure 2. Sector profile of progression (2019/20 graduates) vs entry tariff (2016/17 entrants) for UUK members (Bath in red). Bath's educational gain is indicated by the distance from the line of best fit (dotted line). (Plot based on full-time undergraduate populations.)

The principles of Curriculum Transformation [14] support our definition of Educational Gain including the relationship between academics, industry and employers. Design of the curriculum will continue to be based on contemporary subject knowledge, practical learning and transferable skills which will reinforce and further improve educational gain.

3.3.3 Evaluating Educational Gains (SO6): In addition to the outcomes cited above, we take an institutional approach to monitoring students' results to meet with our education strategy. We work closely with our main committees who oversee institutional performance, and with our Students Union representatives. This openness and scrutiny facilitate our shared understanding and this allows the University to assess itself, and the students to hold us to account as to the excellence of their education and their outcomes.

We evaluate our students' gains which demonstrate that our students are achieving the intended Educational Gains through our interrogation of Key Performance Indicators (KPI). To underpin the our Strategy 2021 – 2026 [1], a suite of KPIs were adopted by Council in May 2021 which align with Senate KPIs. The SU President and the SU Education Officer are members of Council, and the SU President, the SU Education Officer and the SU Postgraduate Officer are members of Senate.

We track the following KPIs at Senate and Council, which were selected as a measure of progress toward the achievement of our goals within the strategic pillar of *Driving excellence in education* [2]:

- Overall satisfaction in NSS - dual target has been set for this KPI: i) to rank in the top 15% of the sector; and ii) to score better than benchmark.
- Average Entry tariffs - target for this KPI is to maintain performance relative to the sector.

- Graduate outcomes (% in professional employment) - target for this KPI is to rank in the top 10% of the sector in terms of the percentage of graduates in highly skilled employment.
- Non-continuation rate – target is to perform better than HESA benchmark or <3.0%

These KPIs are annually monitored with reporting to governance and executive committees, are devolved to Faculties and School, and all targets to date have been met. Through our University Executive Board, we are in the process of revising our KPIs, as some will no longer be valid or aligned with how we are assessed by sector bodies such as OfS. Such changes include but are not limited to:

- The new specification for the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)
- Changes to the National Student Survey (NSS)
- Changes to Access and Participation Plans

At the time of writing these changes have not yet been ratified by the University Council but the intention is that this will be considered in early 2023.

Our students are our most important critics and feedback on their experience is paramount when forming our academic policy and educational development. On many points students are best placed to assess their own Educational Gain and we interrogate our NSS data more closely in other sections of this submission. We are extremely proud to have topped the table for NSS Overall Satisfaction in English mainstream universities for two years in a row, 2021 and 2022 [23].

4. Concluding Comments

In summary, our Student Experience is outstanding because our holistic approach to education delivers sector-leading Student Outcomes and Overall Student Satisfaction (See Fig 3).
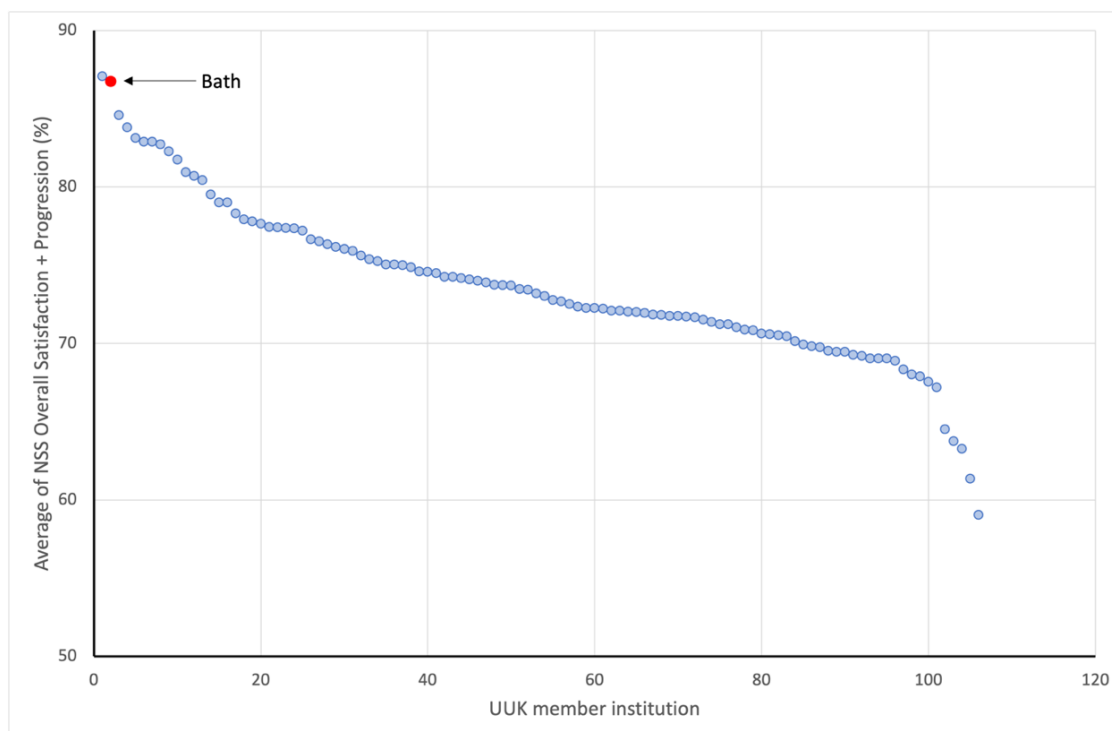
Figure 3. UUK institutions ranked by average of Overall Satisfaction (NSS 2022) plus progression data (Graduate Outcomes survey 2019/20). (Plot based on full-time undergraduate populations.)

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When we triangulate our Continuation, Completion and Progression data against our key NSS indicators, Degree Outcomes [31] and LEO data [5] we are able to demonstrate that our curriculum design and content, teaching, support of students and preparation for their careers underpin these results.

"It is clear how much student feedback is valued by Bath as an institution, while the implementation of this can vary by department, there are some exemplar examples of students being heard and involved in shaping their course. On an institutional level staff stop and listen to feedback from students and truly want the best for them. The education at Bath is also enhanced by the sense of community created on every level from departments, faculties, societies, sports and across the whole university, vastly helped by its campus open to all. This also allows students to spend valuable time outside of class relaxing, helping to digest content and maintain sound mental health. The value and focus on placements is also a clear benefit of a course at Bath, with the infinite opportunities to enhance your career potential." (Students' Union Education Officer 2021/2022)

5. References

[1] 'University of Bath Strategy 2021-26' approved by University Council, May 2021. Available at www.bath.ac.uk/topics/the-university-of-bath-strategy-2021-to-2026/

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