



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

## **Summary TEF 2023 panel statement**

**The University of Hull**

# Summary of outcomes

## Overall: Gold

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

### Student experience: Gold

The student academic experience is typically outstanding.

Outstanding quality features include:

- outstanding teaching, feedback and assessment practices that are highly effective and tailored to supporting students' learning, progression, and attainment
- course content and delivery that inspires students to actively engage in and commit to their learning
- outstanding support for staff professional development, and excellent academic practice is embedded across the provider
- physical and virtual learning resources that are tailored and used effectively to support outstanding teaching and learning
- embedded student engagement that leads to continuous improvement to the experiences and outcomes of students.

There are also some very high quality features including:

- the use of research, employer engagement and professional practice to contribute to a very high quality academic experience
- a supportive learning environment, where students have access to a readily available range of very high quality academic support.

### Student outcomes: Silver

Student outcomes are typically very high quality.

Very high quality features include:

- effective support for students to succeed in and progress beyond their studies
- very high rates of continuation and completion for the provider's students and courses
- very high rates of successful progression for the provider's students and courses.

There are also some outstanding quality features including:

- a clear articulation of the range of educational gains the provider intends its students to achieve, and why these are highly relevant to its students and their future ambitions
- an evidence based, highly effective and tailored approach to supporting students to achieve the intended educational gains
- a considered approach to evaluating educational gains which demonstrates that students are succeeding in achieving the intended gains.

# About the assessment

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

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

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

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

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

The panel reviewed the following evidence:

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

The panel applied its expert judgement to:

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

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

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

# Summary of panel assessment

## Information about this provider

The University of Hull is a medium sized, research led university. Its purpose and mission is to 'advance education, scholarship, knowledge and understanding by teaching and research, for the benefit of individuals and society at large'.

The provider's strategy 2030 articulates the provider's values as being inclusive, empowering and progressive. Its education strategy 2020-2025 aspires 'to provide high-quality, relevant and attractive courses to help graduates thrive in a global community, equipping them with the skills and competencies to contribute to shaping a fairer, brighter and carbon neutral future'.

The provider states that it takes pride in providing opportunities for individuals from the most disadvantaged backgrounds to participate and succeed in higher education. According to the provider, 59 per cent of full-time students and 90 per cent of part-time students are recruited locally, two-thirds of which are from low participation neighbourhoods, and 40 per cent of students are from low socio-economic backgrounds.

The regional context of the provider, its mission and values and the diversity of the student body have been considered as material factors for this assessment.

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

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

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

## **Student experience: Gold**

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

The panel found that the student experience is typically outstanding for the provider's mix of students and courses. Across the student experience aspect, the panel found:

- five features are outstanding
- two features are very high quality
- that the very high quality and outstanding features apply to all the provider's groups of students, including students from underrepresented groups.

The panel applied the ratings criteria and considered the best fit rating to be 'Gold'. This is because most features of 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; and Course content and delivery, student engagement in learning and stretch**

The panel considered these two features to be of outstanding quality.

The overall indicators provided initial evidence of very high quality 'teaching in my course' and outstanding quality 'assessment and feedback' for full-time students. There was evidence of not very high quality 'teaching on my course' and 'assessment and feedback' for Forensic Sciences.

The panel noted that the provider's values of being 'inclusive, empowering and progressive' and its desire to create equity and excellence has informed the introduction of a 'transforming education programme' focusing on a distinctive new educational model of competencies, alongside an 'inclusive education framework'. This is in recognition of the profile of the student body including a growing proportion of students identifying with cognitive or learning difficulties.

The frameworks drive curriculum design, pedagogy, and assessment. For example, the education strategy, 'shifts the focus from what the student knows to what the student can do to develop the whole student.' Programmes are based on disciplinary competencies so that they are 'academically coherent, inclusive by design, digitally enhanced and authentically assessed.' The approach helps students to demonstrate competence in:

- knowledge management, including sourcing, understanding, creating and communicating knowledge
- disciplinary and professional experience, using dialectic action and critical thought to address a real-world task or practice in context, working independently or as part of a team
- self-awareness, which encompasses self-assessment and self-regulation in public and private domains, independently or through team working.

The inclusive education framework focuses on the needs of a diverse student body and how life can impact student success. The student submission also comments on the positive impact of the reforms and commends the quality of teaching.

The inclusive education framework has also informed the approach to assessment which is inclusive by design and based on competencies, moving away from tests of knowledge recall to opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding. Exams have been replaced with coursework assessment tasks and marking criteria have been reformed to align with the competencies, so they are clear and transparent. According to the student submission, 'this strategy has helped to restructure teaching and assessment rubrics as inclusive programmes have given students autonomy in how they demonstrate their learning. This has been done by allowing students to choose a range of modules and essay topics that suit their interests.'

The panel considered the evidence across the indicators and the provider and student submissions to show that the provider has embedded outstanding teaching, feedback and assessment practices that are highly effective and tailored to supporting its students' learning, progression, and attainment. The panel also found 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. Considering the evidence overall, the panel concluded these are both outstanding quality features.

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

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

The provider and student submissions showed evidence of how the provider uses innovation, scholarship, professional practice and employer engagement to contribute to a very high quality academic experience for its students. For example:

- the competency framework embeds professional and disciplinary experience into the curricula, providing students with opportunities to develop professional networks and undertake professional placements
- the partnership with Team GB since 2019 provides students with volunteering, business challenges and personal success plans
- the student submission highlights courses with placements in industry
- the development of an educational model that is inclusive, adopting the 'supporting disabled students' good practice framework of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator
- entrepreneurs and small businesses support modules in the Business School. Field trips are organised by Environmental Sciences to develop industry standard skills.

Overall, the panel considered that the provider is supporting and enriching the student experience by drawing on professional networks and employer engagement which includes targeted initiatives for specific courses and groups of students. However, it was not clear from the submission whether all students benefit, for example, from professional practice opportunities. Considering the evidence in the round, the panel concluded that the provider uses in relevant disciplines,

innovation, scholarship, professional practice and employer engagement to contribute to a very high quality academic experience for its students.

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

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The provider submission provided evidence of a wide range of support for staff professional development and academic practice, including:

- support with programme design from the Teaching Excellence Academy along with academic professional development for all teaching staff
- guidance for staff on the steps that can be taken to ensure learning materials are accessible from the onset
- webinars to support the shift to online delivery during the coronavirus pandemic
- the Teaching Excelling Academy tuition primer, which is a concise, scholarship informed, digital resource to support colleagues in the use of the principles of competence based education to develop effective online, blended and digitally enhanced on-campus curricula
- newly appointed academic staff who do not have a teaching qualification are required to complete a 60 credit Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice that leads to Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy
- the Teaching Excellence Academy supports established academic staff to secure Associate Fellowship, Fellowship, Senior Fellowship and Principal Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy.

The panel considered the evidence in the provider submission to show that there is a strategic and embedded approach to staff development and academic practice with alignment between key strategic programmes and staff development, including a focus on developing inclusive practice and supporting staff with accreditation. Considering the evidence overall, the panel concluded that there is outstanding support for staff professional development and that excellent academic practice is embedded across the provider.

### **Learning environment and academic support**

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

The overall 'academic support' indicator provided initial evidence of very high quality for full-time students. There was evidence of not very high quality for Forensic Sciences.

The evidence in the provider submission included:

- an online platform hosting several modules that provide key timely information across the student journey

- a module designed to support students with specific learning differences to navigate the journey from screening and diagnosis through to disabled students' allowance support and assessment of needs
- a learning programme which centres around compassion focused therapy to help students to navigate the natural challenges that occur whilst studying
- tailored taster days to support transition for many underrepresented student groups, including students with autism spectrum conditions, care leavers, estranged students, young adult carers, first generation students and mature learners
- access to dedicated tutors supporting academic writing, data, and maths for foundation year students
- personal supervision that provides students each trimester with themed, constructive conversations around educational goals, achievements, and additional support needs.

The panel considered the indicator evidence and the provider submission to show that the provider fosters a supportive learning environment, and its students have access to a readily available range of very high quality academic support. Given the specific mix of students, the targeted interventions for specific groups are relevant and appropriate. The panel concluded that this is a very high quality feature.

## **Learning resources**

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The overall indicator provided compelling initial evidence of very high quality 'learning resources' for full-time students. There was evidence of not very high quality for Creative Arts and Design.

The provider submission offered evidence to highlight the breadth of learning resources for students which includes:

- academic study skills support provided by the library skills team in partnership with the Teaching Excellence Academy
- numerous industry-ready spaces including the 400 seat Middleton Hall auditorium and associated music and performance studio spaces; an experimental flume used by Environmental Sciences students; a virtual control room used by Chemical Engineering students; a digital manufacturing suite used by Mechanical Engineering students; an advanced biology training lab; mock law courts; and a robotics lab
- social learning spaces that support social learning in a dynamic way by including acoustic meeting pods, plectrum tables with large digital screens, video and writing surface image capture, charging facilities for student devices and a mix of flexible and movable furniture
- a digital access grant for struggling students during the pandemic
- laptop loans on a short term and long term basis to support students in digital poverty which is particularly popular with international students.



The panel considered the evidence from the indicator and provider submission to show that physical and virtual learning resources are tailored and used effectively to support outstanding teaching and learning. Considering the evidence overall, the panel concluded that this is an outstanding quality feature.

### **Student engagement in improvement**

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The overall indicator provided initial evidence that 'student voice' is outstanding for full-time students, although there was evidence of not very high quality for Medicine and Dentistry and Forensic Sciences.

The provider submission showed that it works in genuine partnership and collaboration with students to co-construct an outstanding university experience. The student submission confirms that the provider has made efforts to listen to the voice of students to improve the student experience including in relation to teaching, assessment practices and course content, and that students sit on different working groups and committees to ensure that improvements are being made, for example:

- the provider has developed a number of key initiatives in partnership with students and the students' union such as the education strategy and inclusive marking and feedback practice
- all programme teams engage in an ongoing process of continual monitoring, evaluation and enhancement, capturing the student voice in working journals

The panel considered all three sources of evidence to show that the provider embeds engagement with its students, leading to continuous improvements to the experiences and outcomes of its students. Overall, the panel concluded that this is an outstanding quality 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 that student outcomes are typically very high quality for the provider's mix of students and courses. Across the student outcomes aspect, the panel found:

- three features are very high quality
- three outstanding quality features
- that the very high quality and outstanding features apply to most of the provider's groups of students, including students from underrepresented groups.

The panel applied the ratings criteria and considered the best fit rating to be 'Silver'. The panel did not think that 'Gold' would be the best fit because the evidence demonstrated 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 a very high quality feature.

The panel noted that the provider has a strategic and evidence based approach to helping students succeed both whilst at university and beyond. The provider's focus on inclusivity, personalisation, authentic assessment, and the targeted initiatives to remove barriers to learning is relevant and helps students to continue and complete.

The evidence in the provider and student submissions included:

- increased investment in paid internship opportunities which align with the provider's graduate attributes
- the involvement of entrepreneurs and SMEs in module delivery in Hull University Business School
- the Health Professionals Network which connects current students with alumni working in the health sector, enabling students to build their professional networks
- rich and varied placement and work experience opportunities for Medical, Environmental Science, Sports, Politics and International Studies, Criminology, Sociology and Policing students.

The student submission confirms that the provider has many degrees that include either a year or at least a trimester in industry, giving students the opportunity to apply the knowledge they are studying in real life. However, it was not clear from either the provider or student submission if all students benefit from this.

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

### **Continuation and completion rates**

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

The indicators provided initial evidence of very high quality 'continuation' for full-time and part-time students, apart from Allied Health where there was evidence of not very high quality for full-time students.

The indicators provided compelling initial evidence that 'completion' is very high quality for full-time students and outstanding for part-time students. However, there were several groups where there was evidence of not very high quality for full-time students, including the subject areas of Nursing and Midwifery, Mathematical Sciences, and Creative Arts and Design. The panel noted that there

was limited evidence in the provider submission to explain the indicator performance for these groups or the actions that are being planned.

Considering the evidence overall, and noting that there are very high rates of continuation and completion for the majority of the provider's students and courses, the panel concluded that there was sufficient evidence to demonstrate a very high quality feature.

### **Progression rates**

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

The indicators provided evidence of very high quality 'progression' for full-time students, and either very high or outstanding quality 'progression' for part-time students.

Overall, the panel considered that there are very high rates of successful progression for the provider's students and courses, and concluded that this is a very high quality feature.

### **Intended educational gains**

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The panel noted that the provider offers a coherent and strategic approach to educational gains focusing on the development of the whole student through the adoption of a competency-based approach where students are required to demonstrate competence in:

- knowledge management, including sourcing, understanding, creating and communicating knowledge
- disciplinary and professional experience, using dialectic action and critical thought to address a real-world task or practice in context, working independently or as part of a team
- self-awareness, which encompasses self-assessment and self-regulation in public and private domains, independently or through team working.

Educational gains are also seen as acquiring disciplinary and professional experience which includes developing professional networks, gaining real-world experiences and undertaking professional placements.

Overall, the panel considered the evidence to show a clearly articulated approach to the educational gains the provider intends its students to achieve, and why these are highly relevant to its students and their future ambitions. The panel therefore concluded that this is an outstanding quality feature.

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

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The provider submission described how its approach to educational gains is threaded through course design via the competency framework and the 'transforming programmes' initiative. The focus on inclusion and personalisation through various aspects of the student experience, through the transition and skills programmes and the curricula which provides placement opportunities and

internships to engage with professional networks all support the different dimensions of educational gains.

The evidence suggests the approach is successful from the very high quality progression rates of students, including those from underrepresented groups, and also the many endorsements from external examiners.

Overall, the panel concluded that the provider's approach to supporting educational gains is evidence based, highly effective and tailored to its students and their different starting points, and that this is therefore an outstanding quality feature.

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

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The provider submission demonstrated the use of a range of internal surveys, alongside external data, and the continual monitoring, evaluation and enhancement process to capture feedback, evaluate and monitor educational gains.

Overall, the panel found there is a considered approach to evaluating educational gains which demonstrates that students are succeeding in achieving the intended gains. The panel concluded that this is an outstanding quality feature.

### **Overall: Gold**

Applying the guidance and the panel members' expert judgment, the panel considered the overall 'best fit' rating to be 'Gold'.

The panel considered the student experience aspect rating to be 'Gold' and the student outcomes aspect rating to be 'Silver.'

When determining whether the overall rating should be 'Gold' or 'Silver', the panel considered all the evidence across all the features and judged the evidence to show, on the whole, there to be typically outstanding quality provision for most groups of students and courses rather than typically very high quality provision.