



Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023

Summary TEF 2023 panel statement

Canterbury Christ Church University

Summary of outcomes

Overall: Silver

Typically, the experience students have at Canterbury Christ Church University and the outcomes it leads to are very high quality.

Student experience: Silver

The student academic experience is typically very high quality.

Very high quality features include:

- teaching, assessment and feedback practices that are effective in supporting students' learning, progression and attainment
- course content and delivery that effectively encourage students to engage with their learning and equipping them with success
- research, innovation and scholarship, including compassionate and industry-informed curriculums that encourage students to develop as future researchers
- learning resources, demonstrating significant investment in available resources for students
- professional pathways and development for staff resulting in excellent academic practice that is promoted across the provider
- student engagement in improvement, with student voices leading to improvement to experiences and outcomes.

Student outcomes: Silver

Student outcomes are typically very high quality.

Very high quality features include:

- approaches that effectively support students to succeed in and progress beyond their studies
- very high rates of continuation and completion for all groups of students and most courses
- very high rates of progression for students
- a clearly articulated range of educational gains the provider expects its students to achieve, including why these are relevant to students and their future ambitions.

There are also two outstanding quality features:

- highly effective and tailored approaches to support students' to achieve educational gains
- how the provider sets out its approach to evaluating educational gains and demonstrates that students are succeeding.

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

Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) is a large faculty-based university delivering full-time and part-time postgraduate and undergraduate programmes, as well as apprenticeships, with over 18,500 students in total and 1,700 staff.

The provider describes itself as focused on inclusive learning opportunities with a sense of belonging and wellbeing supported through a distinctive Compassionate Curriculum. The provider's mission is to 'to pursue excellence in education and research; passionate about transforming individuals, creating knowledge, and enriching communities to build sustainable futures.'

The provider submission discussed that half of the undergraduate students have challenging socio-economic backgrounds, coming from areas of rural coastal deprivation in the Southeast or areas of inner-city deprivation in London.

Just over 50 per cent of students choose to commute to campus. The provider describes that many of the mature student population with parental responsibilities, and therefore commuting is a more affordable option.

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/.

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

Student experience: Silver

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 determined the student experience to be typically very high quality. Across the student experience aspect, the panel found:

- six features that are very high quality
- one feature with insufficient evidence of being very high quality
- compelling evidence in the provider and student submissions and the indicators that the very high quality features apply to all groups of students, all courses and subjects.

The panel applied the criteria and considered the best fit rating to be 'Silver'.

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

Teaching, assessment, and feedback

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

For part-time students, the indicators provide evidence of either a very high quality feature or performance below the level of very high quality, with limited certainty in the data.

For full-time teaching, the indicators provide compelling evidence of a very high quality feature.

The panel reviewed and accepted that the provider was taking positive steps to address its poorer performance in the areas where their indicators gave initial evidence of student experience which was below the level of very high quality. Taking this into account, the panel considered the evidence to demonstrate a very high quality feature.

Overall, the panel concluded that the submissions and indicators evidence that very high quality teaching, assessment, and feedback practices that are effective in supporting students' learning, progression, and attainment are embedded across the provider.

Course content and delivery; student engagement in learning and stretch

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

The provider and student submissions give evidence of the university's approach to this feature, including:

- a thread of course content and delivery that inspires students to engage in their learning, which is echoed in the student submission
- demonstration that course content and delivery effectively encourages the provider's students to engage in their learning
- commitment to providing all students with an outstanding higher education experience, equipping them for success in their personal aspirations and wider contribution to society beyond graduation.

Overall, the panel concluded that course content and delivery effectively encourage the provider's students to engage in their learning, and stretch students to develop their knowledge and skills.

Research, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and employer engagement

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

Students are encouraged to develop as future researchers, working alongside academic staff in their applied research. The student submission includes evidence of this, as well as innovation and employer engagement, which contributes to a very high quality academic experience.

The panel noted that the provider was assessed as having more than doubled its proportion of world leading research and overall considered the evidence to demonstrate this as a very high quality feature.

The panel concluded that the provider uses research in relevant disciplines, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and/or 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 a very high quality feature.

The provider submission sets out its expectations for staff engagement, professional development and excellent academic practice. Formal processes are supported by teaching conferences, a peer observation scheme and opportunities to bid for small grants to enhance teaching activities. The provider expects that all staff deliver and support quality learning.

The panel considered that there is very high quality support for staff professional development and excellent academic practice is promoted.

Learning environment and academic support

The panel considered there to be insufficient evidence of a very high quality feature.

For full-time students, there was not enough statistical certainty to say for sure whether the 'academic support' indicators could provide initial evidence of very high quality and the split indicators show a wide variance in quality for academic support, especially in subject groups.

For part-time students, the indicator gave evidence of performance below the level of very high quality, with little variation in the split indicators.

The provider submission describes a variety of approaches to address poorer performance, including a personal academic tutor support system, a skills hub and student support advisors. The provider describes targeted actions to address where its performance is below benchmark. The panel accepted these positive steps, which are evidenced.

Considering the evidence in the round, overall the panel concluded that there is not enough evidence that the provider fosters a support learning environment and that students have access to a readily available range of very high quality academic support.

Learning resources

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

The provider submission demonstrated significant investment in learning resources, including:

- over £100 million invested in the redevelopment of the campus with two new buildings: the Verena Holmes Building for STEM subjects and the Daphne Oram Building for the Creative Arts
- development of a 40-seat Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality (AR/VR) teaching lab and a high-fidelity room with high spec AR/VR equipment including full body haptic suits
- a full cadaveric anatomy learning centre using pioneering Thiel embalming, a Hydra suite, engineering labs and maker space, a policing suite including a simulation custody suite and a suite of health simulation facilities including hospital wards, an operating theatre and X-ray facilities.

Students commented favourably on the use of the online learning environment to support flexible, accessible, and personalised learning. While the part-time indicator displayed initial evidence of performance below the level of very high quality, the panel considered that the full-time indicator gave a broader representation of student body alongside the evidence provided in the provider and student submission.

The panel concluded that physical and virtual learning resources are used effectively to support very high quality teaching and learning.

Student engagement in improvement

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

The 'student voice' indicator for full-time students gave evidence of performance below the level of very high quality, though the panel noted that the Year 4 split indicator shows an improvement. Performance for part-time students was at least very high quality.

The provider and student submissions give several examples of partnership working, resulting in changes including new assessment practices, reinvigorating approaches to student representation following a decrease in engagement during coronavirus, and implementation of a personal academic tutor framework.

The panel found sufficient evidence regarding the approach of the provider to effectively engage with its students, leading to improvements to the experiences and outcomes of its students.

Overall the panel concluded that the provider effectively engages with its students, leading to improvements to the experiences and outcomes of its students.

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 considered all the evidence available in the submissions and the indicators and found that student outcomes are typically very high quality.

Across the student outcomes aspect, the panel found:

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

The panel applied the criteria and considered the best fit rating to be 'Silver'. This is because most features are very high quality for all groups of students and courses.

The panel'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 provider submission describes approaches that effectively support its students to succeed in and progress beyond their studies. Evidence for this includes:-

- retention and withdrawals task force across the whole university, including task-based improvements
- student engagement dashboard enabling effective communication amongst Personal academic tutors, students and tutors, with appropriate support for signposting and communications
- subject led specific interventions tailored to the mix of students, following measures of impact.

Overall the panel considered that the provider demonstrates awareness of its mix of students and the demographic challenges that they could face, with regard to progression.

The panel concluded that the provider deploys and tailors approaches that are highly effective in ensuring its students succeed in and progress beyond their studies.

Continuation and completion rates

The panel examined the evidence in the provider and student submissions and in the indicators. and considered this to be a very high quality feature.

The indicators provide initial evidence of very high quality 'completion' and 'continuation' for full-time students and outstanding 'completion' and 'continuation' for part-time students.

The provider submission recognises that, for some split indicators, performance on continuation and completion is less consistent. These subjects are identified, and actions to address the gaps are highlighted, for example developing a 'Closing the Gap' framework.

Overall, the panel concluded that there are very high rates of continuation and completion for the provider's students and courses.

Progression rates

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

The indicators provide initial evidence of very high quality 'progression' for full-time students and outstanding 'progression' for part-time students.

The provider submission gave further evidence, including use of GradForce, an intensive employability programme, with high participation from under-represented groups, an active careers and enterprise team, and a support fund for students to take on extra work experience.

The panel took particular note of the provider's achievement in this area, and took in consideration the challenging context of the provider's location and students' demographic.

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

Intended educational gains

The panel examined the evidence in the provider and student submissions and considered this to be a very high quality feature.

Examples of evidence include:

- the provider submission includes evidence engagement with employability materials with measured impact evaluation
- the student submission describes GradForce as an opportunity for students to look at their gains relating to development of employability. Furthermore, the student submission describes the university as doing a lot of impactful work in this area
- the student submission provides quotes from individual students, from a range of studies, regarding the impact of the GradForce intervention.

The panel considered the evidence to demonstrate that the provider articulates the educational gains it intends its students to achieve and why these are relevant to its students.

Approaches to supporting educational gains

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The panel found that it is clear from the evidence that the provider is successful at supporting students to achieve educational gains based on its definition.

Examples of this include:

- improvement between level 4 and level 6, as students develop their knowledge and their skills in critical thinking and analysis
- the Career Pulse tool showing a clear improvement in employability skills and learning for students using the careers and enterprise online hub
- most students (82 per cent) reporting a clear improvement in their employability skills and attributes, and a similar pattern of improvement is evident for students with different age, gender, disability, domicile and ethnicity characteristic
- module mark averages increasing from 41 per cent at level 4 to 58 per cent at level 6.

The panel considered that the provider's approach to supporting its students to achieve the educational gains are evidence-based, high effective and tailored to its students and their different starting points.

Evaluation and demonstration of educational gains

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The provider submission sets out its approach to evaluations of students' educational gains.

The Provider uses two key measures of educational gain: academic achievement through average module marks and the change in scores between level 4 and the final level of study and employability, measured through the Career Pulse self-assessment survey and how an individual's ratings develop over time.

The provider demonstrates its approach in measurement of educational gains for all its mix of students and evidence clear improvements in employability skills and attributes, evident for all students, including those underrepresented.

The panel concluded that the provider evaluates the gains made by its students, and demonstrates its students are succeeding in achieving the intended gains.

Overall: Silver

The panel rated both the student experience and student outcomes aspects 'Silver'.

The panel weighted these two aspects equally and considered all the evidence across all features and across all the provider's student groups, subjects and courses to come to a 'best fit' decision regarding the overall rating for the provider.

The panel found most student experience features to be of very high quality for all groups of students and courses and most student outcomes features to be of very high quality for all the provider's groups of students, including students from underrepresented groups, and courses. The panel also found there to be some outstanding quality student outcomes features.

Weighing the two aspects equally and considering all the evidence across all features, the panel considered the overall rating to be 'Silver'.