

Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023 provider submission

1. Provider context

- 1.1. BPP University ('BPP', 'the University') is a mature, reflective teaching-led institution that is part of the BPP Education Group ('the Group'), which offers education, professional development, and apprenticeships in: Accountancy and Financial services, Actuarial Education, Business, Law, Nursing and Technology. The Group's educational mission is to 'build careers through education', and BPP defines itself as the 'University of and for the professions'. BPP works in partnership with employers to design, deliver, and review programmes to ensure graduates develop cutting edge skills for the professions they are seeking to enter. This also ensures they are not only successful academically, but have a solid foundation from which to build, and launch, a career in one of the disciplinary areas our programmes align to. This was explicitly highlighted as an area of 'good practice' in the QAA's Higher Education Review of the University, where it was noted that *"the extensive and proactive engagement with employers in the design and delivery of programmes [...] ensures that programmes and graduates are fit for purpose and business ready."*¹
- 1.2. With a proven institutional commitment to delivering academically rigorous professional education of the highest quality, BPP's programmes are grounded in the practical, professional application of knowledge and skills, which are highly relevant to students and employers. Programmes are informed by the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), relevant subject benchmark statements, and the needs of professional practice.
- 1.3. BPP is predominately a provider which delivers post-graduate education and holds accreditation, approval, and positive regulatory outcomes from a wide number of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs), including: the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA), Bar Standards Board (BSB), Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), Institute of Chartered Accountants of England & Wales (ICAEW), General Chiropractic Council (GCC), Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), Ofsted and the QAA. Staff within the University also undertake inspection and review work for key regulatory bodies, including the QAA and Ofsted.
- 1.4. The University has campuses in Abingdon, Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Leeds, London, Manchester, and Southampton. Staying true to its educational mission, BPP has established close ties to local, professional industries in these locations so it can work in collaboration to proactively support the local economy in meeting its workforce needs. For example, the School of Nursing has established unique partnerships with specific NHS trusts in the delivery of nursing programmes directly out of NHS premises in Doncaster, Hampshire, Kettering, Peterborough, and Southampton. In the Law School, regional Heads of Law have strong ties to local employers, enabling them to understand the local workforce needs and bring employers into contact with students through a cycle of outreach and event activities.

University Strategy

- 1.5. BPP's strategic aim is to become the leading provider in global post-secondary education. Its educational mission emphasises the focus on improving the employability prospects of all students and support the talent pipelines of the employers that it works with. BPP

¹ QAA. (2017). *Higher Education Review Report – BPP University Ltd.*, p.2.

differentiates itself from others in the sector based on excellent teaching, simulations of practice and the work environment, and a strong student and employment centric focus.

- 1.6. The University's culture, programme design, pedagogical approach, and facilities are inclusive and engaging for everyone, promoting a culture of respect and dignity for all. BPP sets clear expectations and provides focused leadership and support for all staff, ensuring equality, diversity, and inclusion are embedded in everyday practice. Curriculum development is considerate of diversity and inclusion, especially in relation to race, age, cultural and religious diversity, disability, gender, and sexual orientation, which feature as specific areas of foci in the programme approval process.
- 1.7. The University actively encourages applications from aspirant students from all backgrounds, providing enhanced support services and flexibility in the delivery of our programmes. This ensures that those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds have every chance to be successful. BPP consults and collaborates with its students to develop a deep understanding of the key barriers to success, implementing outreach projects with partners, schools, and colleges to further explore these. This ensures that BPP can establish and share solutions to support each potential applicant who wishes to pursue a programme, qualification, or career in a disciplinary area the University operates in.
- 1.8. BPP's strategic aims are supported by its Academic Development Plan (ADP) for 2022-25, which provides a three-year focus for the University on developing career ready graduates, delivering accessible student and business focused programmes, and attracting a diverse international student body in support of the aims of the UK Government's International Education Strategy². Supporting the ADP are three key strategies related to Learning, Teaching and Assessment, Employability, and Scholarship. These strategies are developed through close collaboration between the University's Senior Leadership Team, Schools, and professional services, with Advance-HE commending the alignment of key strategies to support learning and teaching at the University³. BPP's International Higher Education Strategy⁴ sets out its aims in ensuring international students are appropriately supported in their studies, with programmes that meet the needs of an international audience, and ensure that practice is aligned to sector policy and compliant with regulatory requirements.

Size and shape of provision

- 1.9. The University currently has approximately 22,000 students studying across its undergraduate and post graduate provision (FHEQ Level 4 – 7). The four academic Schools – Business, Law, Nursing and Technology – all embrace the educational mission to build careers through education and to be the University of and for the professions. Students currently studying on undergraduate programmes represent 17% of the University's total student population, with provision focused on a specific mix of full time and apprenticeship programmes. Students at BPP can study full-time programmes in Accounting and Finance, and Nursing, with apprenticeships in Law, Technology and Nursing.
- 1.10. The University is currently teaching out (or has already taught out) undergraduate programmes in Business Management, Banking and Finance, Health and Social Care, Law, Psychology, Chiropractic (which is now delivered by *McTimoney College of Chiropractic* – formerly part of BPP), and a Level 6 chartered management degree apprenticeship

² DfE (2022). *International Education Strategy: 2022 progress update*. Available from <https://tinyurl.com/ykbr3c4s>

³ Advance-HE Accreditation Panel Outcome and Feedback – BPP University, June 2022.

⁴ BPP University International Higher Education Strategy, 2022-2025

programme. The University's decision to teach-out these programmes is in alignment with the ADP, and the University is committed to engaging with partners and students on teach-out to ensure they always receive a high-quality educational experience.

- 1.11. With respect to the University's current undergraduate population, full-time students account for 54% of the overall population and are predominantly in the disciplines of Business and Management (89%) and Nursing and Midwifery (10%), are domiciled outside of the UK (92%), typically under the age of 30 (90%), with a small proportion declaring a disability or additional learning need. For the University's apprenticeship provision, students mainly study Law (42%), Nursing and Midwifery (37%) and Technology (20%). 68% of apprentices are under the age of 30, with 12% declaring a disability or additional learning need.
- 1.12. Full-time undergraduate programmes blend traditional face-to-face teaching with digital platforms where students are encouraged to use their own devices to collaborate with their peers, supported by a full range of online resources, including The Hub (BPP's virtual learning environment), study materials, library, and BPP's Virtual Campus. Nursing students complete practice placements within NHS trusts, and have access to specialist simulation resources at BPP's London Waterloo campus.
- 1.13. Apprentices are taught wholly online through BPP's Online Classroom Live (OCRL) platform – an online study mode comprising of a synchronous virtual classroom with interactive features that replicate pedagogical approaches often utilised in taught sessions in a physical classroom. This is supplemented by BPP's range of online resources, regular coaching calls and workplace development activities, enabling students to build relevant knowledge, skills, and behaviours to successfully complete their degree and apprenticeship.

Contextual information relating to the TEF Indicators

- 1.14. BPP University identifies all apprenticeship programmes in its annual returns, ensuring that the course title reflects the nature of the programme. Following the outcome of the OfS consultation on 'student outcomes and experience indicators', BPP now includes a specific flag to identify apprenticeship programmes in annual returns. For the purposes of this TEF exercise, data relating to apprenticeship programmes is included within the data for full and part-time provision. With respect to Continuations data presented in the TEF dashboard, apprentices account for 2% of the full-time provision and 73% of the part-time provision.
- 1.15. Achieving representative response rates in the National Student Survey (NSS) has been a challenge for BPP, and the number of students providing feedback on their experiences via the NSS continues to be a relatively small proportion of the overall undergraduate student population. The University undertakes a review of the NSS data with individual Schools annually, developing detailed action plans to address student concerns. BPP has a strategic approach to action plans which ensures they work in unison and support of each other, minimising duplication and maintaining focus and clarity. This submission evidences robust internal mechanisms that are utilised and embedded across the institution which attract much higher student engagement in evaluative processes, and work already undertaken within Schools to demonstrate a more positive student experience for all students.
- 1.16. The number of students deferring or completing with an early exit award is a trend that the University continuously monitors, and the metrics available do not fully capture the activity and enhancement work that BPP has undertaken in this area. The flexible nature of BPP's provision also supported students to transfer between modes, locations, and programmes,

resulting in students completing programmes outside of their original cohort tracking period. Additionally – in common with students across the sector – students at BPP have been significantly impacted by the global pandemic, with the University working in collaboration with its student body to support their studies during an unprecedented time of uncertainty. The enhancement work undertaken is discussed in the relevant section of this submission.

Student contribution to TEF submission

- 1.17. The University is extremely proud and committed to its working with ‘Students as Partners’ in the design, delivery, and evaluation of all aspects of the student journey. As a teaching-led university, the importance of the student taught experience is a defining characteristic of BPP, and the University places great emphasis on getting to know and understand its students as individuals, with a strong sense of collaboration and partnership in all interactions. In keeping with the University’s embedded practice of enabling the collective student voice to be heard, BPP has sought the support of its students in providing a separate student TEF submission.
- 1.18. The student submission was coordinated by the Student President and Head of the Students’ Association. Key information regarding the purpose of the TEF was shared by the University with student leads, along with TEF dashboard data and a narrative enabling the student leads to interpret benchmarks and indicator values. Students sought feedback on their submission from the University, and feedback on it was also obtained from a former member of the BPP University Students’ Association. Drafts of the University’s submission were shared with student leads to support the development of the student submission.
- 1.19. The University affirms that the student submission was completed independently, and it has taken steps to ensure it has not influenced what its student body wishes to include, exclude, raise, or comment upon.

2. Student experience

Academic Experience and Assessment (SE1, SE2, SE3)

- 2.1. The University’s strategic approach to learning, teaching and assessment ensures it is professionally focused; underpinned by scholarship drawn from contemporary thought leaders and knowledge within the professions; delivered by staff who actively engage in disciplinary and pedagogical professional development; accessed through innovative and inclusive physical and virtual learning environments; uses assessment which mirrors the real world of the professions; and, ensures graduates are equipped to deal with current and future business needs.
- 2.2. At the core of this approach is BPP’s commitment to providing opportunities for all students to contribute individually, and collectively, in the co-construction of their academic learning experience. BPP utilises a range of robust mechanisms to effectively monitor the educational experience of all students across its programmes, ensuring that all students achieve positive outcomes. These mechanisms are driven and monitored strategically across the University, and they are operationalised at the individual session level. They embrace and encourage the student voice and facilitate external representation to ensure continued quality. Collectively these mechanisms provide assurance of the high-quality educational experience and ensure that the University maintains its currency as a highly-quality provider within the professions it serves, and across the higher education sector.

- 2.3. BPP's robust mechanisms for setting and maintaining academic standards are underpinned by the programme approval process, with the Designated Quality Body (DQB) observing that the *"University has robust and coherent procedures for programme approval, monitoring and review which require that programmes align with external reference points, including the FHEQ and, where appropriate, PSRB requirements."*⁵ Programmes are developed in line with the University's ADP, drawing on key University strategies, and utilising BPP's innovative delivery methodology which centres around all students achieving success. This is achieved by supporting students as they progress through their programme of studies by utilising five sequential stages to develop knowledge and understanding: Prepare, Apply, Collaborate, Consolidate and Assess. Programmes are enhanced through collaborative development with employers, focusing on the development of skills and knowledge aligned to industry standards, and at a level commensurate with the academic qualification they are studying. Accounting programmes, for example, draw on the importance of sustainable businesses and ethical practices⁶ alongside core and contemporary issues within the discipline. For those studying apprenticeship programmes, the development of skills and student progression is further validated during tri-partite reviews between the University, employer, and student.
- 2.4. The University's Digital Device for Learning policy⁷ provides clear guidance and advice to students, guiding them to make informed choices regarding the devices they can use in different educational settings to ensure a positive learning experience. Student learning is supported by a range of high-quality, bespoke, synchronous and asynchronous materials during these stages. Learning material is provided through The Hub, specialist online platforms, and through printed content, with The Group serving as an approved content provider for ACCA and holder of an exclusive publishing contract for ICAEW textbooks.
- 2.5. Programmes that include PSRB accreditation enable students to achieve the concurrent award of a professional qualification in recognition that they have demonstrated the relevant skills to achieve professional accreditation alongside their academic qualification. Students on Accounting programmes, for example, demonstrate expertise in applying academic theory to practical applications within the sector by successfully completing assessments which are aligned to internationally recognised professional qualifications. Students who successfully complete such programmes are awarded exemptions when applying for professional body accreditation. For programmes not directly leading to PSRB accreditation or an additional professional qualification, a comprehensive mapping exercise to relevant PSRB standards ensures that students develop, and become proficient in, a range of professionally recognised skills contributing to professional recognition. For example, Nursing programmes and assessments are closely mapped to the requirements of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC 2018 Standards), ensuring that students can demonstrate the required skills whilst on programme, and when they progress into the workplace and on to the NMC Register.
- 2.6. Educational challenge is developed across all levels of a programme, with students required to demonstrate higher level thinking skills, competency, and mastery as requirements increase in complexity as students' progress through each programme level. Students are required to synthesise and combine theoretical knowledge from their studies with real-world issues facing the businesses and sectors aligned to the disciplines they are studying, allowing them to demonstrate their ability to critically evaluate contemporary and current scenarios, and make

⁵ DQB. (2020). *Assessment for Variation of Degree Awarding Powers – BPP University Limited.*, p.21.

⁶ ACCA (2022) *Professional Insights*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/4e6h6s3t>

⁷ BPP University Digital Device for Learning Policy, 2022

recommendations. This rigorous process adopted in the design of programmes was recognised at a recent validation event, with the panel noting that⁸: *“[the programme is] clearly focused on distinctive and potentially highly sought subjects [...] and aligned to the ACCA qualification programme. The programme contains a broad, yet well linked scheme of modules all fit for purpose in achieving the programme outcomes.”*

- 2.7. Independent and external expertise is integral to the development of all programmes, and the process is streamlined by the appointment of an external reviewer who plays an essential role as a full member of the University Approval Panel (UAP). UAPs are chaired by an independent member of the University's Academic Council (a senior professional with cognate expertise to the programme being considered), with other panellists including, where applicable, representation from; students, employers, and PSRBs. Comparability and currency with the sector are then further assured through the University's *“scrupulous use of external examiners”*⁹, with BPP benefitting from the scrutiny and guidance of 66 external examiners from 52 institutions. External examiner reports often commend the thoroughness and accuracy of the marking process¹⁰ and the ‘exceptional’¹¹ internal moderation processes illustrated by comments such as, *“[the provision] often exceeds the levels I am used to at other institutes of similar standing, including some Russell group providers.”*¹²
- 2.8. As a teaching-led University, BPP has a strong culture in championing outstanding teaching, and this forms the core of the student experience. Materials are developed by subject matter experts in collaboration with curriculum design teams, ensuring that content is high-quality, varied, current and supports students of all abilities to link theory to practice. Teaching staff are drawn from a variety of backgrounds and are actively engaged in scholarly activity relevant to their role. Where modules are delivered at multiple locations and times, Module Leads evaluate all aspects of content and delivery to establish best practice and identify areas that can be improved so all students get to experience the best possible learning opportunities. At the start of each academic year, module teams review and update teaching materials to ensure currency and embrace developments in academic and subject discipline thinking.
- 2.9. The University engages Visiting Lecturers, many of whom are current practitioners, hold teaching positions at other higher education institutions, and/or are active in professional practice within their discipline. The utilisation of practitioner-academics is a conscious decision by the University to enhance and enrich its curriculum, ensuring it remains current and aligned with the very best practices across the sector and workplace. A comprehensive induction programme for Visiting Lecturers manages expectations and ensures consistency in approach, maintaining a high-quality educational experience for all students.
- 2.10. The University's Annual Scholarship Census¹³ identifies that permanent/fixed term teaching staff have an average of 10 years' industry/postgraduate experience, 10 years' higher education/professional education experience, and 63% hold HEA Fellowship and/or a tertiary teaching qualification (including those currently studying). Those involved in the design and delivery of programmes undertake a variety of cognate activities which they can draw upon to ensure programmes are current and up to date, with 96% of teaching staff actively engaged in

⁸ BPP University Approval Panel Commentary, BSc Accounting and Finance Revalidation, 2021.

⁹ DQB. (2020). *Assessment for Variation of Degree Awarding Powers – BPP University Limited.*, p.35.

¹⁰ BPP University External Examiner Report, Law Degree, August 2022.

¹¹ BPP University External Examiner Report, UG Technology Apprenticeship, November 2021.

¹² BPP University External Examiner Report, Business and Management Programmes, March 2022

¹³ BPP University Annual Scholarship Census, 2021-22.

opportunities to enhance their practice and scholarship, and 63% demonstrating engagement with the activities of professional bodies and external providers (e.g. ACCA, AAT, BSB, CIM, NMC, SRA). These combine to ensure students benefit from academically rigorous education that is continually underpinned by current, and professional relevance.

- 2.11. Programmes are subject to an annual academic monitoring and review process, ensuring Schools continue to effectively address student feedback and regulatory requirements within programmes of study. Schools undertake a continuous review of programme monitoring data (e.g., student performance and feedback, external examiner feedback), reviewing data points monthly to identify and address risk. The University's Curriculum Review Group (CRG) has simplified the programme modification process, making it more responsive and dynamic to support in-programme changes. Modules are also reviewed annually, ensuring currency and appropriateness of content. Lecturers are supported to discuss additional scholarly material(s) which come to their attention during programme delivery, or indeed something which becomes "topical" within the sector or the discipline itself. These processes ensure a consistent review of programmes and content, assuring they remain current and fit for purpose.
- 2.12. Formative and summative assessments are completed using a range of sector recognised digital assessment tools, which are embedded in the BPP Digital Assessment Framework¹⁴. These compliment traditional face to face assessment methods, with purposeful decisions taken on the type of assessment used, and the mode of delivery/submission depending on the level assessed. Assessment strategies adopted within programmes are highlighted by external examiners as academically rigorous and relevant¹⁵, providing flexibility in enabling more able students to demonstrate a higher level of competency^{16,17}. The University's online digital exam platform has been cited as an example of this flexibility by the student body and highlighted as an area of good practice¹⁸: *"[The online exam platform] allowed me to include more detailed evidence in my exam due to the digital, typing format which gave me the opportunity to increase my overall grade and showcase my full range of knowledge."*
- 2.13. Students shape and refine their understanding through discussion, formative assessment, and extension activities. They also have access to extensive support within the University from teaching staff, coaches, personal tutors, and programme and central support teams who provide bespoke support and personalised interventions to help students at the right time. Schools pay particular attention to assessment and feedback literacy, promoting discussion and a shared understanding of assessment tasks, the basis on which academic judgements are made, and providing opportunities for students to contribute and receive feedback on their work. This is developed further through revision sessions, which utilise marking criteria made available to students through programme handbooks as a central pillar for discussion.
- 2.14. The refinement of feedback practices and delivery within the University has been a key area of activity, in response to recommendations made by students. BPP provides feedback to students following summative assessment irrespective of their outcome, identifying misconceptions and developmental areas. Schools are committed to making changes to the timeliness of feedback being released to students for both formative and summative

¹⁴ BPP University Digital Assessment Framework, 2022.

¹⁵ BPP University External Examiner Report, Nursing Degree, May 2022

¹⁶ BPP University External Examiner Report, Law Degree, August 2022.

¹⁷ BPP University Approval Panel Commentary, BSc Accounting and Finance Revalidation, 2021.

¹⁸ BPP Students Association. (2022). *Student Written Submission 2021-2022*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/5336pzk4>, p.44.

assessments, and the creation of holistic marking rubrics to continually ensure transparency and consistency in marking and feedback processes.

- 2.15. Marking rubrics draw on the University's Generic Marking Criteria which provide a standardised framework underpinning marking across all levels of provision, ensuring that assessment is carried out at the appropriate academic level. Training and support are provided by the Learning and Teaching team, enabling specific criterion to be contextualised for individual assessments and ensuring correct domains of learning are included. Examples include, adapting specific language used in the criterion for the assessment being completed, and where required, ensuring alignment with PSRBs. The University's practice in delivering effective feedback is recognised by the DQB – who observed that *“students benefit from explicit feedback and feedforward comments”*¹⁹ and through external examiner reports, which state that teaching staff should be *“commended for excellent feedback and feedforward”*, with detailed rubrics providing an excellent aide for students to self-identify areas of strength and development, enhancing the transparency by which students are assessed against the intended learning outcomes²⁰²¹.
- 2.16. Student perceptions of their educational experience are gathered through a range of feedback mechanisms. At the core of these is the annual Student Written Submission (SWS). Now in its twelfth year, the SWS is a comprehensive report that is led by the Student Voice Representatives (SVR), triangulating thousands of data points, including: feedback from SVRs and the peer groups, programmes, and centres they represent; direct face to face student feedback; student surveys; Staff Student Liaison Committees (SSLCs); thematic focus groups, open meetings, and a comprehensive review of the previous SWS and associated action plan. The SWS highlights areas of good practice, affirmations, and key recommendations across the University and is a key report received by the University's Academic Council. This ensures that the collective Student Voice feeds into the deliberative structure of the University.
- 2.17. The QAA highlight the SWS as best practice in the sector, observing that the SWS *“informs the University's strategic planning processes [and] The University considers this open partnership approach with their students as fundamental to the improvement and enhancement of their provision and the student experience.”*²²
- 2.18. The University's module evaluation process enables students to provide feedback on their educational experiences, focusing on identification of good practice and areas for development. In comparison with NSS data, BPP's own module evaluation data for the period 2020/21 and 2021/22 draws on in-excess of 2200 student responses²³, and demonstrates that students have a very positive perspective about aspects of their educational experience, with students agreeing that:
- Module content is engaging (20/21: 87.0%; 21/22: 87.5%)
 - Assessment used is a fair test of knowledge and ability (20/21: 84.3%; 21/22: 85.9%)
 - They received helpful feedback during the module (20/21: 80.1%; 21/22: 82.8%)
 - They had the opportunity to interact with tutors and peers (20/21: 88.8%; 21/22: 89.1%)
 - Overall, satisfied with the module (20/21: 84.7%; 21/22: 86.4%)

¹⁹ DQB. (2020). *Assessment for Variation of Degree Awarding Powers – BPP University Limited.*, p.29.

²⁰ BPP University External Examiner Report, Business and Management Programmes, March 2022 .

²¹ BPP University External Examiner Report, Nursing Degree, November 2022.

²² QAA. (2018). *Report of the monitoring visit of BPP University Ltd.*, p.2-3.

²³ BPP University Module Evaluation Data, 2020-21 to 2021-22.

2.19. Programme level evaluation data seeking to examine coherency between modules which combine to form a programme of study for the same period also presents a positive perspective. Responses from over 750 students²⁴ show that:

- Programmes are intellectually stimulating and have challenged students to achieve their best work (20/21: 90.4%; 21/22: 83%)
- Programmes are well organised, changes are communicated clearly and effectively, and staff have been contactable (20/21: 91.1%; 21/22: 77.0%)
- Assessment criteria is clear and available in advance, and students have received helpful and timely feedback on their work (20/21: 82.6%; 21/22: 72.3%)

2.20. The University's Student Experience Survey (SES) – relaunched in May 2022, with questions more aligned to core themes from the NSS – enables BPP to gain a broader insight into the experience of its students. Running twice per year, the May and November 2022 surveys attracted over 1300 responses, with students responding positively to:

- Course content and structure (81.4%)
- Timely feedback on my work (83.1%)
- Useful feedback on my work (83.5%)
- The subject expertise of staff (83.3%)
- Helpfulness of personal tutor/coach (81.4%)
- IT resources/facilities and the VLE (77.3%)
- Library Services (74.5%)
- Overall BPP experience (81.4%)

2.21. At an individual taught session level, the Daily Pulse Survey (DPS) was introduced in March 2020, to quality assure the University's move to fully online delivery in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The DPS provides students with an opportunity to formally provide quantitative and qualitative feedback for every individual taught session that they participate in, providing a dynamic, almost real-time view of the educational experience of students. The DPS continues to be used as a key indicator of student satisfaction and is considered alongside other metrics to provide a 360 view of teaching quality with respect to excellence and areas for improvement. The DPS was further refined (February 2021), enabling students to also comment on the perceived quality of technology used in taught sessions.

2.22. Between February 2021 and December 2022²⁵, the University's DPS has received over 109k responses, resulting in an average teaching satisfaction rating of 95.2%, and a technology satisfaction rating of 88.6%. Students have been overwhelmingly positive regarding the introduction of the DPS, their ability to provide feedback, and the way their feedback is acted upon²⁶: *"[The DPS] has been well received by students. It is viewed daily under the guidance of the Pro Vice-Chancellor to make clear improvements and is recognised as being innovative in the sector and a feature of good practice."* Reviewing the data centrally enables the identification of trends, and evaluation of the impact from changes made to delivery, which in-turn supports targeted interventions ensuring a continued high-quality educational experience.

2.23. The University has robust process in place with respect to the formal Observation of Learning, Teaching and Assessment (OTLA), providing an additional viewpoint to triangulate the delivery of the educational experience. All staff contributing to the delivery of programmes are required to engage annually with the OTLA process, which has a focus on identifying best

²⁴ BPP University Programme Evaluation Data, 2020-21 to 2021-22.

²⁵ BPP University Daily Satisfaction Report Dashboard.

²⁶ BPP Students' Association. (2021). *Student Written Submission 2020-2021*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/5336pzk4>, p.54.

practice, and enhancing the quality of learning and teaching and impacting positively on the student educational experience. Promoting 'reflection on practice', the process actively supports the initial and continuing professional development of those engaged in teaching and supporting learning and empowers individuals to gain formal recognition for their expertise. All observation data is collected centrally and is available through a data dashboard, enabling detailed analysis of practice by Schools and the University.

- 2.24. Staff contributing to full-time programmes are assessed against the dimensions of practice in the Professional Standards Framework (PSF, formerly UKPSF), whilst those contributing to apprenticeship programmes are assessed against key areas of Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework (EIF)²⁷. Practice is rated across four areas and for those who achieve a rating below the minimum standard, an action plan is devised to support further development and a re-observation is scheduled to consider the impact on practice completing the actions has had. Staff delivering in successive academic years are observed across different levels/programmes, to ensure that the educational experience is of the highest standard, irrespective of level or programme. Developmental observations (peer) are also encouraged and conducted in an informal manner between colleagues, enabling any member of staff to get detailed feedback at any time on any or all aspects of their delivery.
- 2.25. In 2021/22, 86% of faculty²⁸ observed teaching (n=208) on full-time programmes achieving an overall rating demonstrating a strong or exceptionally high-quality example of good practice. For those contributing to apprenticeships, 91% of faculty (n=53) and 78% of coaches (n=36) achieved the same level of outcome related to learning and teaching.
- 2.26. To ensure the highest standards of teaching are maintained, the University monitors student feedback via the DPS, and if a faculty member delivers a session which has rating below 70% (based on 50+ responses), the respective manager triangulates data from the DPS, observations and surveys to identify where development and support can be used to raise standards. Monthly meetings are held between individual faculty/coaches and managers, enabling the discussion of ratings/feedback and recent observations to be reviewed in a formal manner, to analyse performance, identify trends over a longer period, and where necessary, trigger an additional formal observation as part of a wider enhancement action plan. The University's approach to triangulating DPS and observation data has been commended by Advance-HE in recognition of the increase in quality of learning and teaching that is aligned with the PSF and quality assurance and enhancement.²⁹ In recent months, the DPS has been refined further to implement 'MyDPS'; a mechanism for individual staff to access DPS feedback related to the sessions they have delivered in the previous 30 days. This prompts critical self-reflection on the impact their own practice has on the students they teach, and provides an additional evidence base for staff for career progression through Advance-HE Fellowship or promotion.
- 2.27. Building on the success of the DPS and the OTLA process, the University has established a 'Learning and Teaching Pulse Check' which runs concurrently with existing evaluative mechanisms used in the assurance of Learning and Teaching. Undertaken by an experienced member of staff to make threshold judgments, the Pulse Check is designed to operate in the

²⁷ Ofsted. (2022). *Guidance: Education inspection framework (EIF)*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/36bwrc25>

²⁸ BPP University Learning, Teaching, Assessment and Resources Report, 2021-22.

²⁹ Advance-HE Accreditation Panel Outcome and Feedback – BPP University, June 2022.

space between the DPS and the formal OTLA process, providing a more frequent overview of the educational experience through a snapshot of taught sessions.

- 2.28. The high-quality learning and teaching available at BPP is regularly praised by the student body as an area of good practice, particularly with respect to the wealth of professional expertise that lecturers bring into sessions and the support they also provide to ensure students succeed: *“It is indeed an amazing accomplishment for any educational institution to consistently achieve high scores from its students for its quality of teaching. BPP University has been making this accomplishment year on year as students continue to rate this aspect of their student journey extremely high [...] Tutors are highly qualified, from Professional Practice and no matter what course a student is on, they are taught by the absolute best.”*³⁰ This high-quality educational experience provided a solid foundation in the University’s coordinated move to online teaching during the pandemic, which gave *“students the confidence to trust and embrace the new online experience.”*³¹ Indeed, the coordinated approach to move the delivery of education and services online during the pandemic was recognised nationally at the 2021 Learning Technologies Awards³², with the panel noting that the approach *“included a strong focus on wellbeing, accessibility, learner experience, support and lasting impact.”*
- 2.29. In recognition of the high-quality educational experience at BPP, its Independent Students’ Association launched a range of Student-Led Excellence Awards in 2018/19. Here, students nominate staff who have had a significant positive impact on their student experience, with nominations invited to recognise personal tutors, inclusive practice, excellent feedback, tutor/coach of the year, and a ‘Students as Partners’ award recognising those who have empowered and worked in partnership with students. Nearly 2400 nominations have been received since its inception, with winners determined by the Students’ Association annually.
- 2.30. The salient outcomes from student evaluations can be reviewed against the University’s growing undergraduate and international population, and the increasing demand for personalised academic and pastoral support. Informal feedback from student support teams reveals a level of assessment anxiety evident amongst the student body. The University continuously reviews assessments, both to ensure standards, and to adopt innovations in assessment practice, rigorous moderation, promoting timely and ‘feed forward’ feedback, and it is regularly scrutinised by the University’s extensive external examiner provision. BPP continues to invest in mechanisms and resources to enrich and refine its provision in the interest of supporting students in their studies to achieve positive outcomes.

Resources, support, and student engagement (SE4, SE5, SE6, SE7)

- 2.31. The University actively promotes the professional development of all staff through a range of mechanisms. As a member of Advance-HE and GuildHE, staff have access to a range of sector wide events, policy briefings, and networks providing opportunities to input into key policy decisions and consultations. Professional membership fees of individual staff are paid for by BPP to support and encourage currency within their discipline. This experience is then cascaded to students through taught sessions, coaching calls, and personal tutor interactions. All staff are encouraged to attend conferences, trailblazer groups and other networking events

³⁰ BPP Students Association. (2022). *Student Written Submission 2021-2022*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/5336pzk4>, p.30. & p.50.

³¹ BPP Students Association. (2021). *Student Written Submission 2020-2021*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/5336pzk4>, p.54.

³² Learning Technologies Awards. (2021). *Panel Commentary*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/35543v5b>

to support their own CPD, and they can apply for Scholarship and Training development days to undertake activities aligned to their role.

- 2.32. All new teaching staff (including Visiting Lecturers) without a teaching qualification are required to enrol on the University's Advance-HE accredited Post Graduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching (PGCLT) programme. The programme – commended by Advance-HE for the opportunity it provides to reflect on their practice³³ – provides staff with an enhanced understanding of learning and teaching theory, curriculum design and delivery, classroom management, assessment principles, using technology to support learning, and inclusive learning and teaching. The programme design ensures that all BPP staff, irrespective of location or working pattern, can access the qualification. Staff are also funded to study any of the short course, apprenticeship, degree programmes and/or professional qualifications available through the BPP Education Group.
- 2.33. In 2021/22, 66 members of staff were successful in achieving HEA Fellowship (at the levels of AFHEA, FHEA, SFHEA) in recognition of the achievements of their professional practice, through a combination of the University's PGCLT programme and Advance-HE accredited CPD scheme (Headway), with the number of Senior Fellow awards (9) exceeding that of the Benchmark Group average (5). As of January 2023, the University has almost 340 staff who hold Fellowship of the HEA, with 39 Principal and Senior Fellows of Advance HE. Structured support for staff to make direct entry claims for PFHEA will be launching in February 2023.
- 2.34. Staff contributing to the delivery of apprenticeships benefit from the internally developed 'Enhancing Teaching Excellence' series, and 'Enhancing Coaching Excellence' series. These asynchronous short courses provide bespoke training on a range of topics aligned to Ofsted's EIF including 'checking of understanding', 'stretch and challenge' and use of the 'GROW model'. Tutors and coaches across Schools are further supported through an Apprenticeship Delivery Community of Practice, which also serves as a central platform for training, sharing of best practice, and relevant information relating to British Values, Prevent, and Safeguarding. Indeed, BPP's work relating to Prevent has been cited as an example of effective practice by the OfS³⁴, noting the consistent offering across campuses.
- 2.35. The University's CPD framework³⁵ supports all staff who facilitate teaching, learning and assessment activity from 'entry to expert', enabling them to gain experience, develop expertise, disseminate their practice, and develop as leaders. The framework (Core and Essential; Enhance and Innovate; Influence and Lead) provides a menu of development opportunities for staff to develop their pedagogic knowledge and academic leadership skills, and is aligned to categories of HEA Fellowship, BPP's Scholarship strategy and academic promotion requirements (including a clear progression route for appointment to Associate and full Professor for those active in scholarship related to pedagogy and/or their subject discipline). Schools also supplement staff CPD through disciplinary initiatives and needs.
- 2.36. The University's Learning and Teaching Community of Practice (CoP) supports activity relating to the CPD framework and is a systematic part of how BPP maintains its currency of excellent academic practice. With over 260 registered users, over 40 CPD sessions (featuring internal and external speakers) have been delivered through the CoP since September 2021 with an overall staff satisfaction rating of 98%. A regular fortnightly meeting between School

³³ Advance-HE Accreditation Panel Outcome and Feedback – BPP University, June 2022.

³⁴ OfS. (2022). *Counter-terrorism – the Prevent duty*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/nhafu4fz>

³⁵ BPP University Continuing Professional Development Framework for Teaching Staff, June 2021.

education leads – facilitated by the Head of Learning and Teaching – further supports the identification, analysis and response to queries raised through student feedback mechanisms, and disseminate enhancements and best practice from across the University and wider sector. Schools also have nominated training and development leads, who support contextualisation of key University strategies and policies and have oversight of data relating to learning, teaching, and assessment activity (e.g., DPS, Observations, Module/Programme Evaluations) to implement tailored interventions and development opportunities where necessary.

- 2.37. All staff at BPP benefit from termly meetings with their line managers to discuss their personal performance and career development. The Performance and Career Development (PCD) process embodies a competency framework which focusses on core skills, leadership skills and digital literacy. This not only enables staff to reflect on what they have achieved but also what they wish to develop. This also provides protected time to discuss future career options and the process has a real focus on supporting skills development for individuals which permeates into all areas of learning and teaching.
- 2.38. The physical and virtual learning and teaching environments at BPP enable students to engage in a high-quality educational experience, through purposeful curriculum design and the incorporation of digital technologies. Where possible, these reflect and emulate workplaces cognate with the programme being studied. With campuses based in some of the UK's key business locations, BPP's approach to investment is strategic, ensuring a high-quality student educational experience. Investment in learning and teaching space is complemented with a range of shared social spaces, designed to promote engagement amongst students and supporting the development of cohort identities. The most recent of these investments included a new Student Support Hub at one of the University's London campuses, providing a central point of access to a range of support services for a large cohort of undergraduate international students. The University has also responded to requests from its international student population to assist them in their search to secure affordable accommodation, by partnering with established housing services in London and Manchester.
- 2.39. Students have access to comprehensive, technology enhanced programmes that replicate processes and systems used in practice, enabling students to build knowledge that underpins their studies, and then gain real-world experience in applying it. For example, Nursing students engage in clinical exercises and simulations to mirror real-world practices within specialist teaching classrooms to support injection techniques, intravenous infusion and taking blood pressure. They also complete placements within NHS trusts across the country to further support and contextualise their learning. Technology apprentices have access to virtual machines and environments that replicate those used within the workplace, ensuring alignment with real-world practice.
- 2.40. In Law, students engage with the University's innovative adaptive learning platform to which combines the learning of content with periodic testing of knowledge and instant feedback. The AI driven platform learns from students as they progress and helps to focus their individual studies on the areas needing additional support or explanation. Law students then apply this knowledge to real-world case studies using BPP's Virtual Practice Environment (VPE), which simulates the workings and professional practice of a real law firm. Business and Technology students undertake real-world entrepreneurial activities, undertaking case studies that require use of the latest industry standard tools and techniques. External examiner reports³⁶ have

³⁶ BPP University External Examiner Report, Technology Apprenticeships, March 2022.

praised how programmes are carefully designed to ensure a careful balance between theory and practice: *“a high standard continues to be evident using the current techniques/software/practical approaches in the industry emphasised by the module tutors being practitioners in their field. An appropriate balance of academic study and practical scholarship is reached for undergraduate level.”*

- 2.41. Students (and staff) have access to a range of high-quality print and digital resources through the BPP Library Service, including a vast collection of e-books, journals, and specialist databases to support their studies. BPP Libraries available at campuses across the country, have dedicated print collections relative to the programmes that are predominately delivered at that location. Students benefit from the inter-library loan scheme, which enables them to gain access to journal articles, books and other resources that are not held within BPP's current offering. Students also have access to a range of professional individual and group study spaces at any of BPP's campuses, each of which has relevant computer facilities and WiFi ensuring they can access relevant course materials and successfully engage with their studies. Students can book on to 'Ask a Librarian' and dedicated Research and Referencing workshops to support the development of their academic writing, recordings of sessions delivered online available on the Library website for future reference. The Library team also offer an online chat and email facility, available to answer queries on demand regarding accessing materials, research and referencing seven days a week.
- 2.42. Students regularly praise the range and availability of learning resources, commenting how effective they are in supporting their learning. Programme evaluation data indicates that students agree that the Library & IT resources have supported their learning, and that they have been able to access course specific resources (20/21: 87.6%; 21/22: 82.6%). In addition, the Library service receives *“tremendous high praise”*³⁷ year on year, and the ability to have access to physical library facilities during the pandemic was welcomed. Students also regularly praise the Library team for their professionalism, and the support they offer: *“Many student representatives stated that the quality of a university is only as good as its library; fortunately BPP excels in this regard [...] The consensus of feedback has been that there are lots of online books, resources and articles readily available and accessible, and that all resources are easy to find and download online.”*³⁸
- 2.43. In response to the national lockdown in March 2020, the University's Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education Services) initiated the development of BPP's Virtual Campus. The BPP Virtual Campus is an innovative, sector-leading, engaging, and welcoming online space that brings together students, staff, and alumni in a safe space to socialise, interact, attend events and benefit from the University experience. Students commented positively on the introduction of the BPP Virtual Campus, identifying it as an area of good practice and a *“great initiative that has brought together the students of BPP in a time when we are physically apart.”*³⁹ The student perspective is also reflected in the level of engagement with the platform, with over 17.5k registered users and an 87% return rate (users returning to use the platform). Since April 2020, the Virtual Campus user population has grown by 77%, and has had over 300k pages views, supported 1400+ events, facilitated 4000+ feed posts and enabled in-excess of

³⁷ BPP Students Association. (2022). *Student Written Submission 2021-2022*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/5336pzk4>, p.33.

³⁸ BPP Students Association. (2022). *Student Written Submission 2020-2021*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/5336pzk4>, p.27.

³⁹ BPP Students Association. (2022). *Student Written Submission 2021-2022*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/5336pzk4>, p.42.

11k interactions (e.g., likes, posts, comments). For many students who were unable to access University social media channels due to cultural barriers, the BPP Virtual Campus provided a 'lifeline' to students and alumni since it operates as a closed system.⁴⁰

- 2.44. The University's Personal Tutoring model is an integral part of the support mechanism which ensures students maintain a competitive edge throughout their studies. Taking a student centric approach, the support provided helps students understand what it means to study a degree, how to study effectively, provides support in tackling specific challenges, and supports them in developing their employability prospects through the promotion of professional behaviours. Students studying on apprenticeship programmes benefit from regular, high-quality coaching calls delivered by industry professionals. With their coaches, apprentices have regular opportunities for personalised feedback, discussions regarding the development of numeracy and literacy, developing further understanding of 'The Prevent Duty' and 'British Values', and the setting of individualised, challenging targets. The University's personalised support is recognised by graduates, particularly with respect to preparing them for the workplace: *"My personal tutor did an amazing job in helping me develop much needed time management skills and how to think objectively. All skills I have had to call upon in the workplace, which has given me high praises from my managers [sic]."*⁴¹
- 2.45. Students have access to dedicated Programme Support Officers (PSO), who are the first point of contact for academic programme queries, who in turn benefit from a structured training programme delivered by the central Customer Experience team to ensure consistency of message and support offered to all students, irrespective of their individual programme of study. The University's online Case Management System (CMS) for student enquiries is being implemented across Schools, providing a central point of contact to ensure students can access support they need from any location, including making applications for mitigating circumstances, appeals and complaints.
- 2.46. Students following programmes in the Business School also complete a mandatory, non-credit bearing module, which has proven impact in maximising student success. Available to students ahead of commencing formal taught sessions, 'Professional and Academic Skills for Success (PASS)' is a four-week online module that enables students to develop their knowledge and understanding of the University's academic framework, report writing, critical thinking, and exam/revision techniques. It also provides information regarding registration, a skills audit to support conversations with their Personal Tutor, develops their data analysis techniques using MS Excel and Python, and delivers information regarding School specific support mechanisms. In the most recent SWS, the PASS module received high praise from students: *"Exceptional experience, learnt, explored and observed many things in the PASS classes which is a lifetime of learning [sic]."*⁴²
- 2.47. The central Inclusion and Learning Support team works closely with Schools to provide support and recommendations for reasonable adjustments enabling all students to be successful in their studies. Where applicable, students are assigned an individual Disability Advisor and are supported on a personal basis either through face-to-face meetings or online calls. Students who require additional learning support are directed to the team during

⁴⁰ BPP Students Association. (2021). *Student Written Submission 2020-2021*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/5336pzk4>

⁴¹ BSc Management with Finance Alumnus, Graduated 2020.

⁴² BPP Students Association. (2022). *Student Written Submission 2021-2022*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/5336pzk4>, p.48.

inductions, and during fortnightly sessions delivered by the Learning Support team. Complementing the University's existing Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) provision – with over 90 accredited MHFA staff trained in house – students also have access to 'Togetherall', an online community that is supported 24/7, 365 days per year. Togetherall is clinically moderated by mental health professionals and offers students a safe and anonymous platform to express their thoughts, concerns, and triumphs, with interventions taking place where necessary to manage risk. Students praised the University for the availability of its support services during the pandemic, in supporting them during their studies⁴³.

2.48. International students at BPP benefit from advice and support on matters such as living and studying in the UK, overcoming culture shock, advice, and guidance in setting up bank accounts, through a dedicated website to support them before arriving at BPP, and continued support available through the BPP Students Association. Where applicable, students who require additional English language support have access to a range of resources to develop confidence, gain a firm understanding of plagiarism and malpractice, develop referencing and digital literacy skills, and attend drop-in finance clinics. The support provided by BPP for international students studying in the Business School was commended in the most recent SWS, with students identifying this as an area of good practice: *"The support provided for international students in the Business School at BPP has been chosen by students as an area of good practice [...] The students are enrolled onto the PASS module which teaches them academic skills, modern UK values and about life in the UK, and professional development planning [...] International students feel very well supported by these initiatives and have provided positive feedback about their experience."*⁴⁴

2.49. Students are also valued partners in University academic governance and sit on all the major committees exercising control and oversight of the University's provision. Students also attend UAPs as panel members, enabling the student voice to be heard from those who studied on pre-cursor/cognate programmes. Student Voice Representatives (SVR) are recruited at the beginning of each academic year and are trained by the Students' Association with support from senior university leaders.

2.50. Students are also partners in the management of programmes through SSLCs, the findings of which are captured in Schools' continuous monitoring process and scrutinised at the relevant School Education and Standard Boards (SESBs) and associated actions are tracked and updated through a central data dashboard. Students are informed of how their feedback is acted upon through communication at SSLCs and through the Students' Association's monthly 'You Said, We Did' campaign. Students have noted that they are excited by the opportunity to contribute to a positive learning experience⁴⁵ and that BPP *"listens to its students in order to bring out the very best in decision-making."*⁴⁶

2.51. The Student President – who sits on the University's Academic Council and sub-committees – meets fortnightly with the Vice-Chancellor to discuss matters relating to the student experience, whilst monthly meetings between the Student President, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Schools drive collaboration between the Students' Association and the

⁴³ BPP Students Association. (2021). *Student Written Submission 2020-2021*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/5336pzk4>

⁴⁴ BPP Students Association. (2022). *Student Written Submission 2021-2022*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/5336pzk4>

⁴⁵ Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship (Child) Student, October 2020 cohort.

⁴⁶ BPP Students Association. (2022). *Student Written Submission 2021-2022*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/5336pzk4>, p.24.

Schools in addressing student matters more swiftly, highlight good practice which is reported by the Student Voice, and ensure any outstanding actions arising from SSLCs are addressed in a timely manner. The meetings have forged greater collaboration and healthy working relationships between the Students' Association and the Schools, ensuring open and timely communication takes place with regards to the student educational experience.

2.52. Specific examples of improvements and enhancements made to the educational experience based on student feedback include:

- Students provided with better guidance regarding feedback on formative assessments, including the use of exemplars and a range of informative resources as part of the Assessment Hub on the Students' Association website.
- A new Self-Service portal for students to address recommendations arising from the 2021/22 SWS, including the ability to view assessment results online.
- Students' Association promoting the use of the BPP Virtual Campus and increasing the number of activities delivered to students.
- The development of an online Safeguarding training module for staff and students.
- Standardisation of the release of results across programmes.

2.53. Outcomes from student surveys illustrate the University's growing undergraduate and international student population, and the increasing need for personalised academic and pastoral support to ensure students are successful. Informal feedback from student support teams reveals that in this post COVID-19 pandemic era, there is a level of assessment anxiety evident amongst the student body attributed to the unprecedented changes to education brought about due to the global response to the pandemic. The University routinely evaluates its assessment strategies and practices, to assure standards, moderation, and standardisation practices are effective, enable the adoption and integration of innovative assessment practices, monitor feedback to make sure it is timely and supports students in the process known as 'feedback to feed forward'⁴⁷. This is triangulated by expert external feedback provided by the network of external examiners that the University employs.

2.54. The University receives consistently high praise from students on the quality of teaching, the relevance of programmes to employment, the extracurricular career-targeted support, and the approachability, responsiveness, and expertise of their tutors. Indeed, the University's investment in effective mechanisms and resources to enrich and refine its provision in the interest of students was recognised by the DQB, as the University supports all students "*to achieve their fullest academic, personal and professional potential*."⁴⁸ Notwithstanding, the University remains committed to further enhancing and improving institutional performance in the areas highlighted by students and external data sets, ensuring students are well supported to engage and succeed in undergraduate study.

3. Student Outcomes

Positive Outcomes (SO1)

3.1. As the University of and for the professions, BPP's educational mission to 'build careers through education' permeates through everything the University does to ensure students achieve positive outcomes. BPP has a unique approach to employability, ensuring students

⁴⁷ Murtagh, L., & Baker, N. (2009). Feedback to feed forward: Student response to tutors' written comments on assignments. *Practitioner research in higher education*, 3(1), 20-28.

⁴⁸ DQB. (2020). *Assessment for Variation of Degree Awarding Powers – BPP University Limited.*, p.50.

have access to a range of skills-based resources and learning to support their professional development.

- 3.2. Underpinned by the experience of practitioner-academics who operate as dual professionals in the delivery of programmes, and BPP's extensive experience in the sectors in which it operates, the University has identified key career skills that graduate recruiters, employers and professional organisations are seeking in successful employees, and these are incorporated in the design and delivery of programmes. Crucially, this enables students studying at BPP to achieve both their academic goals and become the best career ready version of themselves they possibly can. The University's Employability Strategy⁴⁹ ensures that employability is at the heart of the student journey and embedded in learning, teaching, and assessment activities across all programmes. BPP utilises innovative, and inclusive, employability environments and platforms, providing a level of flexibility for students that enables the development of graduate attributes and skills. Students access a range of opportunities, enabling them to fulfil their potential for employment, enterprise creation and continuing professional development.
- 3.3. For those studying on an apprenticeship programme, there is also an emphasis on career progression and development, enabling students to succeed further in their professional workplace. Ofsted⁵⁰ note that students at BPP have access to a 'good' range of extra activities in addition to their programmes of study, for example, Law students have access to 'smart tech' events which increase their awareness of new technology, and a recent graduate of the BPP Solicitor Apprenticeship programme noted that their studies placed them "*at a considerable advantage*"⁵¹ in relation to their peers, due to the extensive legal training they received, resulting in them passing the newly formed Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE).
- 3.4. The Employability Service at BPP consists of two interrelated accredited areas, the matrix Standard accredited⁵² Careers Team and the award winning⁵³, accredited⁵⁴ Pro Bono Team. Students have access to the Employability Service from the moment they accept the offer of a place, and up to 18 months after they have completed their studies. Students access a range of core services from the BPP Employability Service through the University's dedicated online platform. Students use this to access: careers specialist workshops; networking events and careers fairs with opportunities enabling them to interact with employers; benefit from guest speakers who are experts in their disciplines and fields; book one to one support appointments to take advantage of impartial /confidential careers guidance; gain advice and support in developing their Curriculum Vitae; and access pro bono and volunteering opportunities. Students can also engage in psychometric testing, mock online assessments with feedback, interactive online courses to further develop their professional skills for the workplace, access a range of live job opportunities both nationally and internationally, and access a toolkit of resources to support them in making informed career decisions.
- 3.5. The Pro Bono team supports the delivery of professional work on a voluntary basis and enables students to contribute to their local community, by developing student knowledge, expertise, and skills. Pro Bono Centre projects at BPP are available to all students across the

⁴⁹ BPP University Employability Strategy, 2022-25.

⁵⁰ Ofsted. (2019). *BPP University Ltd*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/yed5ytkk>

⁵¹ Solicitor Apprentice, 2016 cohort.

⁵² Supported by the Department for Education, The matrix Standard is an international quality standard for organisations that deliver information, advice, and/or guidance (IAG)

⁵³ Law Works. (2022). *Law Works and Attorney General Student Pro Bono Awards*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/bd663vuc>

⁵⁴ The Pro-Bono Team holds the Advice Quality Standard (quality mark awarded to independent advice organisations).

university, ensuring that student volunteers not only deliver valuable services to the community, but also boost their own employability prospects. Projects align with BPP's 'Career Skills', re-enforcing the requirement for, and importance of, key career skills, providing students with an opportunity to hone and refine the skills needed to succeed in the workplace.

- 3.6. The University also promotes student engagement within the local communities in which it is situated through the 'BPP Experience Project'. Here, the University's network of undergraduates and professionals' partner to provide Year 9-11 secondary school students from lower socio-economic backgrounds with of informative and interactive sessions, subject taster sessions, and a "Routes into Practice" talk highlighting the varying accessible routes which can be pursued to qualify in different fields. This enables BPP students to prepare, practice and refine their communication and professional skills to enhance progression in the workplace, and make a positive contribution to social mobility in the communities they serve.
- 3.7. Schools across BPP are active in supporting students to develop academic, employment and future career management skills. The Law School delivers a careers week which has an annual theme, as well as addressing general employability issues including adaptability, flexibility and resilience, personal branding, and networking skills. BPP's 'Access to Practice' schemes facilitate connections between Law students and qualified legal professionals who can provide coaching and mentoring opportunities, invaluable advice, support on pursuing a career, and placement opportunities. Students in Technology benefit from termly events that feature guest speakers (including current students) on a range of current topics, whilst a prominent social media campaign in 2022 to promote 'International Women's Day' highlighted the journey, experience, and expertise of female colleagues within the School. Nursing students engage with specific preparation for practice sessions prior to placement, which embed and support student employability and career progression.
- 3.8. For students studying in Business, access to specialist preparatory modules (e.g., PASS), Entrepreneurship Masterclasses featuring external speakers, and attending job fairs enable them to reflect on broader employability skills in the context of their programme. Additionally, students achieving the best possible outcomes on their programme of study can make the most of the 'BPP Talent Pool'; an initiative which identifies high achieving students with a view to offering them an opportunity to apply for a role within BPP upon completion of their programme. The 'Talent Pool' initiative has seen the successful appointment of current students as 'Student Ambassadors', supporting new students through enrolment and inductions, contributing to events and campus orientations, and developing a stronger relationship between the University and its student body. Such opportunities enable students and graduates to draw on their own experiences at BPP and provide valuable advice, guidance, and support, whilst continuing to develop and refine transferable skills relevant to careers in the professions they have trained to enter.
- 3.9. Students, alumni, and external reviews have commented positively on the way in which the University's approach to programme design and employability has helped them to prepare for the world of work. In the annual SES⁵⁵, 77% of students agreed they have developed career skills and improved their professional career prospects, and 70% identified they received advice enabling them to identify further study opportunities whilst on their programmes. In the most recent SWS⁵⁶, students noted that *"BPP is the best place to build and nurture a career,*

⁵⁵ BPP University Student Experience Survey, 2022

⁵⁶ BPP Students Association. (2022). *Student Written Submission 2021-2022*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/5336pzk4>, p.30.

[as] students become great professionals at the end of their studies because we are taught by professionals.” This is supported by the view from Alumni members of the University, for example: “My experience at BPP University has contributed significantly to the individual I am today. Upon completion of my BSc, as I ventured out on my employment journey, I was able to put to use the skills learnt over my 4 year tenure, towards my career development. From my participation in a 3 month accounting work placement, to participating in various extracurricular activities, BPP offered a balanced network for me.”⁵⁷

Continuation and Completion (SO2)

- 3.10. BPP’s continuation is broadly in line with benchmark, with strong evidence that full-time provision is very high-quality, and part-time provision is outstanding. BPP has maintained a continuing upwards trend in performance against benchmark for full-time study, with Year 4 data indicating evidence of outstanding quality (3.2% above benchmark). This excellent performance extends across a significant majority of split indicators, with Allied Health, and Nursing and Midwifery provision demonstrating performance of outstanding quality (4.2% and 4.6% above benchmark respectively), and Business and Management performance of very high quality (within 0.6% of benchmark).
- 3.11. For those students aligned to Health and Social Care, continuation data in the TEF dashboard relates to a specific Level 4 CertHE programme, which served as a ‘stepping stone’ to a full degree programme of study. Students on this programme experienced a range of personal circumstances (e.g., work, health) that impacted their ability to continue their programme as originally planned. The University no longer actively delivers this programme, with students transferring to the full time Level 6 programme, or on to the apprenticeship equivalent, to enable them to achieve a positive outcome from their studies.
- 3.12. With respect to completions, as anticipated, the University’s TEF metrics are identified as being materially below benchmark. Building on its extensive experience and successful delivery of post-graduate and professional programmes, earlier iterations of the University’s approach to undergraduate programmes mirrored its provision to ensure high-performing professionally focused students achieved positive outcomes. Students deferring or graduating with an early exit award during this period have impacted on completion data, and this is a trend that BPP has paid close attention to and continually monitors.
- 3.13. Whilst valued by students and a strong feature of the University’s strategy to support students, the innovative, flexible nature of BPP’s programmes that enabled students to transfer between modes, locations and programmes has led to students completing programmes outside of the cohort tracking period. BPP’s vision of enabling students from disadvantaged backgrounds to access the professions that BPP serves saw the University initially adopt a lower tariff for entry to undergraduate programmes. Whilst anticipating that students from such backgrounds would need additional support to be successful in their studies, the impact of this was to extend the time on programme. In combination, these approaches ensure students from a range of backgrounds can successfully engage in university study and achieve positive outcomes, but they negatively impact on the University’s metrics. This has resulted in lower than benchmark completion rates, putting the University at a disadvantage in the way that completion data is analysed and presented.

⁵⁷ BSc (Hons) Accounting and Finance Alumnus,

- 3.14. BPP has undertaken extensive activity and enhancement work to support students through to successful completion and in achieving positive outcomes. This included reviewing programme and assessment design, establishing an early engagement project to assist students in transition to university study and providing personalised pastoral and learning support for all students – much of which continues to be embedded in policy and practice across the University. In 2016, the University conducted a review of its admissions policy and entry tariffs, with resulting actions including greater engagement with Schools in the recruitment of prospective students through school support of open events, campus visits, conversations with Careers Consultants regarding prospective careers, and regular meetings and training with the Learning Support Team to promote early disability disclosure during the applications process ensuring that the needs of all individuals are understood and met. The Admissions Team undertakes additional training to increase their awareness of the academic rigour of BPP's programmes as they change and evolve, and the risks associated with student non-completion. These initiatives have impacted positively on the quality of the recruitment and admissions processes, and the resulting student educational experience.
- 3.15. Along with the rest of the sector, the University was also significantly impacted by the global COVID-19 pandemic and its use of a 'no-detriment' statement, to support all students as they negotiated the challenges in completing their studies during a time of exceptional uncertainty. The no-detriment approach adopted by the University during the initial onset of the pandemic has been attributed with increasing the number of students deferring completion of their studies in response to the unprecedented extenuating circumstances they were facing. Consequently, Schools have been focused on supporting students in the successful completion of their studies and continue to progress this work. The support put in place by the University during the pandemic was highlighted by students as an area of good practice, with students noting that the no-detriment statement demonstrated that *"the University had their students' interests at the forefront of their decision making."* Nursing students highly praised the support the University provided to them during the pandemic: *"The support the University provided to our nursing apprentices, whilst being on placement on the front line during COVID-19, has been exemplary and highlighted by their feedback throughout the COVID-19 crisis. This additional support has been highly commended as a feature of good practice."*⁵⁸
- 3.16. As part of the University's approach to enhanced monitoring in this area, significant work has been undertaken on the deployment of a revised approach to examination boards to ensure key oversight of continuation, completion, and progression metrics at individual programme level. Detailed reporting, including a breakdown and statistical analysis of cohort performance, supports leaders and managers across the University in identifying emergent risks to enable better proactive deployment of solutions to support individual cohorts. The University has also initiated a key project with respect to the deployment of effective academic adjustments that addresses extenuating circumstances that emerge across the course of the student journey. Commencing in February 2023, the aim of this project is to develop and orientate students towards effective solutions to support them as they undertake their studies, rather than trying to address issues retrospectively once their studies are complete. This project also serves to support those who are required to take time out of their studies, enabling them to successfully complete their programme in a timely fashion.

⁵⁸ BPP Students Association. (2021). *Student Written Submission 2020-2021*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/5336pzk4>, p.54.

- 3.17. BPP engages in a range of targeted initiatives to support students in the timely completion of their studies. The University utilises several equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) initiatives including: running an innovative 'Reverse Mentoring' scheme in the Law School that aims to facilitate understanding and collaboration between students, staff, and partner firms; a dedicated survey designed to assess students' experience and feelings in relation to race, diversity, and inclusion; and analysis of key attainment and achievement metrics to monitor attainment of students with protected characteristics. The latter is supported by the Learning and Teaching Team, who undertook a detailed analysis of the University's completion data, with analysis of both achievement and attainment data obtained from School annual monitoring reports to derive school-level key performance indicators (KPIs) to address and enhance cohort performance by ethnicity type. This led to the development of action plans to address gaps in attainment and achievement amongst different ethnic groups.
- 3.18. The University's decision to teach out its undergraduate Law programme in 2018 was underpinned by a robust plan to seamlessly support student engagement and ensure students (including those who passed their expected end date) successfully complete their programme of study and achieve the highest possible outcome. All students on programmes subject to teach-out benefited from personalised action plans which included learning support and /or fitness to practice assessments where appropriate. Students also engaged in regular meetings with Programme Leaders and /or Personal Tutors to ensure individual needs were met and planning for the future beyond course completion was effective. Additional taught sessions were also put in place for a defined period, ensuring students always had the very best level of support available to enable them to succeed. The pandemic slowed the progress of this project, but, nevertheless, the impact has been positive, and has resulted in a continuing increasing trend in the proportion of students successfully completing their programme of study, with over 96% having now completed their programme (Feb 2019 - Oct 2022) and the remaining students anticipated to successfully complete by September 2023.
- 3.19. The University's part-time Law provision demonstrates outstanding apprenticeship continuation performance (10.5% above benchmark). Continuation and completion for those on apprenticeships programmes are closely monitored through School Quality Improvement Plans (QIP) providing robust monitoring and oversight to ensure students are successful. The University's Ofsted inspection, highlighted A similar view is presented in relation to students on the Business apprenticeship programme, with Ofsted reporting that a high proportion of business learners achieve their qualifications in a timely manner⁵⁹.
- 3.20. Business students outside of the timely completion period have personalised support plans to support successful completion. This ensures that students have access to dedicated support during the resit period, targeted revision workshops and one-to-one staff support. These plans support early identification of students who are not making progress as expected, allowing early intervention to support students in their studies. Once all possible steps have been taken to support students, they may ultimately be withdrawn if they continue to fall behind and there is no likelihood of successful completion. This includes international students who returned to their home country during the pandemic, and who have remained uncontactable since. Where this has persisted, they have been withdrawn due to non-engagement, and where applicable, granted an early exit award from their programme where they have achieved the prerequisite credits. An evolving student demographic in line with changes to entry requirements and

⁵⁹ Ofsted. (2019). *BPP University Ltd*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/yed5ytkk>

strategic priorities has impacted on programmes aligned to professional qualifications, with students now often required to have exemptions in place (evidence of passing PSRB examinations) prior to joining the programme. This demonstrates alignment with professional values commensurate with the discipline they are studying, and a level of commitment required to successfully complete academic study.

- 3.21. In the Business School, support mechanisms are aligned to the School's approach of "Connect First, Educate Second"; a personalised support process ensuring all students are engaged ahead of joining their programme, a tailored induction once they start on programme, and a pre teaching activity they complete. The latter is accomplished through the 'Business Pitch Perfect' initiative, where students engage in a 'Dragons Den' style activity, working in groups to prepare a mission statement, form a business plan, illustrate key financials, and prepare and present their 'pitch' to the judges. The simulation exercise promotes key skills required for their studies and the professional workplace, including team building, innovation, research, analysis, synthesis, and the ability to communicate ideas clearly.

Progression (SO3)

- 3.22. The University has an excellent record in relation to progression, with students achieving positive outcomes after they have completed their studies at BPP. The full-time indicator is almost 2.5% above benchmark, indicating that BPP's mix of students achieve positive outcomes, with the University's performance close to outstanding quality. With respect to the subject split indicator, the University's predominant subjects of Business and Management (64.7%) and Law (72.6%) performed considerably higher than benchmark (59.7% and 68.3% respectively), with evidence indicating performance close to outstanding quality.
- 3.23. For those undertaking a programme of study aligned to Allied Health (which falls below benchmark), this relates to the University's integrated Masters programme in Chiropractic. The University's internal data regarding its graduate population indicates that for the 2018/19 and 2019/20 Graduate Outcomes Survey, 90.6% of UK domiciled graduates were in highly skilled employment, in roles aligned to therapy professions, managerial roles, officers in the armed forces, and teaching within secondary education. This compares very favourably with the GCC national statistic of 95% of chiropractic students being employed within 6 months of graduating⁶⁰, demonstrating the positive outcomes achieved by BPP students.
- 3.24. BPP's mission of 'building careers through education' is also evidenced through Graduate Outcomes data⁶¹, which indicates that 94.1% of BPP graduates are engaged in work, further study, or other recognised activities⁶² 15 months after graduation, 3.1% more than the previous year, and 0.5% higher than the national average. Of those undergraduates in employment, 91.1% were in highly skilled work, 1.0% more than the previous year, and 19.8% higher than the national average. Ofsted noted in their inspection of the University that some students had been active in identifying suitable progression routes, with a *"high proportion of learners within Law [having] mapped out their journey to move on to higher levels of study, in particular their journey to study law at the postgraduate level."*⁶³ In September 2022, 100% of solicitor apprentices who sat the SQE2 exams passed (compared to the national average of 77%), enabling successful apprentices to take up newly-qualified solicitor roles.

⁶⁰ GCC (2022). *Guidance for students*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/48undvtx>

⁶¹ Graduate Outcomes, 2019/20 – UG students (UK & non-UK domiciles).

⁶² Employment; employment and further study, further study, and other (including travel, caring for someone, or retired).

⁶³ Ofsted. (2019). *BPP University Ltd*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/yed5ytkk>, p.5.

Educational Gains (SO4, SO5, SO6)

- 3.25. Students at BPP benefit from opportunities to contribute individually, and collectively, in the co-construction of their own academic learning experience. All programmes contain a range of Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) which include, knowledge and understanding, cognitive skills, professional skills and attitudes, and general transferable skills. Module handbooks map PLOs to module outcomes and assessments, whilst the inclusion of outcomes related to Professional Skills and Attitudes and BPP's 'Career Skills' shows linkage to roles students might undertake in the workplace. Students also benefit by learning from tutors who, in addition to being employed by BPP, also have current experience of the practice environment that they will ultimately enter as graduates. This enables BPP's teaching staff to connect theory to practice, supporting the development of the current professional skills required by employers, and to use their real-world experience to bring learning to life.
- 3.26. BPP's approach to employability is recognised externally by external examiners, who often commend it and the *"use of reflective learning around students' personal and professional experience"*⁶⁴ which supports students to consider how their learning can be used to enhance their professional practice and ongoing development. Additionally, external examiners have commented that learning at BPP is *"characterised by a strong orientation towards real world contexts"*, and that a *"strength of the programmes is that they are in line with statutory /and or professional bodies, and as such remain relevant and responsive to the industry"*.⁶⁵
- 3.27. GuildHE's 2018 report⁶⁶ focusing on the rise of the dual professional notes, *"practice-informed learning can be more accessible and stimulating to students than traditional classroom learning, giving students a greater sense of ownership. It is clear that practice-informed learning can play a big role in improving student subject, career and personal development, which must ultimately be the goal of education."* This was observed by the DQB, who highlighted that BPP staff are *"well qualified academically and professionally and are able to draw on their experience to create real-life learning opportunities for students which will stand students in good stead when they graduate."*⁶⁷
- 3.28. BPP's unique collaborative approach to working with employers and PSRBs ensures that all programmes remain future-facing and relevant. Even where they are not explicitly designed through industry collaboration, the University uses its insight into what employers want, and value, to ensure that learners graduate from their programmes having gained relevant skills, knowledge and behaviours that make them sought out from their peers, and highly employable across a range of sectors. In 2021, The Group surveyed 1,500 professionals to contribute to the Skills Revolution Report⁶⁸, asking them to identify the skills they thought were most important for those in their organisation to develop over the next five years. Outcomes from this were embedded across programmes of study, providing BPP students with both the absolute best learning experience, and excellent preparation for their roles as future professionals and their careers beyond.
- 3.29. Commencing at the start of 2022/23, all students complete a 'Career Readiness Survey' as part of the student onboarding process, enabling BPP to better understand the intentions, needs and aspirations of its student population. Establishing a baseline at the point of entry to

⁶⁴ BPP University Summary Report on the Analysis of External Examiners, 2019-20.

⁶⁵ BPP University Summary Report on the Analysis of External Examiners, 2019-20.

⁶⁶ GuildHE. (2018). *Practice-Informed Learning: The Rise of the Dual Professional*. p.13.

⁶⁷ DQB. (2020). *Assessment for Variation of Degree Awarding Powers – BPP University Limited.*, p.50.

⁶⁸ BPP. (2021). *Skills Revolution Report*. Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/282jx9cp>

BPP, enables BPP to measure career self-efficacy and development of employability skills up to the point of completion. This data compliments the University's existing SES, which asks students to rate the information and guidance they have received relating to further study, and asks them to reflect, and rate themselves regarding whether they have developed career skills and improved confidence in their professional career prospects.

- 3.30. Launching in February 2023, students can identify key skills they wish to develop aimed at the profession they plan to enter, or they can take advantage of BPP's pre-built skills sets to support learning at their own pace and individual progress. Staff will be able to review individual student engagement in real time. This allows staff to develop bespoke, targeted support for individual students, enabling them to succeed in their studies and professions. As students continue to engage with these activities at key points throughout their studies, this data is used strategically by BPP to ensure resource is effectively allocated, providing tailored careers support that prepares students for the transition to the professional workplace.
- 3.31. Drawing on HEFCE's original learning gains projects, the University's ADP, and BPP's demonstrable success in utilising the student voice to drive enhancement across all of its provision, BPP defined educational gain as: the additional value learners gain by being students at BPP, measured by their enhanced employability and the range of knowledge, skills, behaviours and attributes they develop whilst on a professional programme of study, which actively puts students at an advantage in succeeding in the professional workplace.
- 3.32. In measuring educational gain, BPP draws on a range of mechanisms and data, including university entry data, responses to its Career Readiness Survey, student outcomes, student self-reflections whilst on programme, and student development of BPP's 'Career Skills'. This is triangulated alongside graduate feedback, where Alumni reflect on how they use the knowledge and skills they developed as part of their academic programme of study, within their workplace. BPP undertakes additional triangulation as students' progress through their studies, evaluating data at key points with student self-assessment, to determine the educational gained by students during their programme, to ensure their programme of study is bringing 'value added' beyond their studies to enhance their career prospects. Using this data, BPP plans to identify the characteristics of high performing students and build profiles of activity which demonstrate the successful educational gains that students are making.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1. BPP prides itself in its teaching-led approach which ensures graduates from its programmes are equipped to achieve success in their chosen professions. Student feedback highlights the industry expertise that is brought to their taught sessions and/or professional teaching qualifications, and BPP's strong links to the professions provides a halo effect for many of our graduates once they enter the world of work. The University's *"comprehensive and strategic approach to enabling the academic and personal and professional development and achievements of its diverse body of students"*⁶⁹ and passion to provide high-quality teaching and support experience is valued by students and are regularly praised through the annual SWS. BPP's links to employers and professions is a valuable (and perhaps unique) mechanism for the University to ensure its programmes are current and meet the needs of its students for their future career paths.

⁶⁹ DQB. (2020). *Assessment for Variation of Degree Awarding Powers – BPP University Limited.*, p.44.