



Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023

Summary TEF 2023 panel statement

Coventry University

Summary of outcomes

Overall: Gold

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

Student experience: Gold

The student academic experience is typically outstanding.

Outstanding quality features include:

- teaching, feedback and assessment practices that are highly effective and tailored to supporting students' learning, progression and attainment
- support for staff professional development, with excellent academic practice embedded across the provider
- a supportive learning environment, with outstanding quality academic support tailored to student needs
- physical and virtual learning resources that support outstanding teaching and learning
- provider-student engagement, leading to continuous improvement to the experiences and outcomes of students.

There are also some very high quality features including:

- course content and delivery encouraging students in their learning, and stretching them to develop their knowledge and skills
- the use of research, professional practice and employer engagement.

Student outcomes: Silver

Student outcomes are typically very high quality.

Very high quality features include:

- rates of continuation and completion for the provider's students and courses
- rates of successful progression for the provider's students and courses
- evaluation by the provider of the gains made by its students.

There are also some outstanding quality features including:

- highly effective and tailored approaches to ensuring students succeed in and progress beyond their studies
- clear articulation of the range of educational gains the provider intends its students to achieve, and why these are highly relevant to them and their future ambitions
- approaches to supporting students to achieve educational gains that are evidence-based, highly effective and tailored to students and their different starting points.

About the assessment

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

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

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

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

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

The panel reviewed the following evidence:

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

The panel applied its expert judgement to:

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

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

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

Summary of panel assessment

Information about this provider

The Coventry University Group (CUG) has sites in Coventry, Scarborough, Dagenham, Greenwich and Poland. The provider offers multi-start, step-on step-off, vocational undergraduate courses, lower tuition fees, and flexible learning. Students study one module at a time, and there are no end-of-year examinations.

In 2020-21 the provider had 30,600 students studying at undergraduate level: 28,790 full-time students, 690 part-time students, and 1,120 apprenticeship students. Subjects include Nursing, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Social Work, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Teaching.

The provider attracts a high number of students from some of the most deprived areas of the UK and from areas where students are least likely to participate in higher education.

The assessment considered information about the provider's undergraduate courses and students on those courses. Optional courses considered in scope of the assessment were:

- apprenticeships at undergraduate level
- validated-only undergraduate courses
- higher education modules or credit-bearing courses at undergraduate level that do not lead to the award of a qualification.

Transnational education (TNE) courses at undergraduate level were not considered within the scope of assessment.

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

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

Student experience: Gold

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

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

- most features are outstanding quality
- two features are very high quality
- no features are considered to be below the level of very high quality
- the very high quality and outstanding features apply to all of the provider's groups of students across all courses.

The indicators contributed no more than half of the evidence of excellence. The panel placed more weight on evidence pertaining to full-time provision, as part-time and apprenticeship courses account for a very small percentage of the total student population.

The panel found that the rating with the 'best fit' is 'Gold' as the evidence met the criteria 'most features of the aspect are outstanding quality for all groups of students'.

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

Teaching, assessment, and feedback

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The 'teaching on my course' indicators for full-time and part-time students provide initial evidence of an outstanding quality feature. However, there are three full-time subjects that are below very high quality for this indicator: Allied Health, Law and Psychology.

The panel noted further evidence of outstanding quality in the provider submissions, including:

- use of analytics to enhance monitoring of student feedback and taking a data-driven approach to address dips in student satisfaction. Courses that go through this process consistently outperform others in terms of student satisfaction
- the provider's coronavirus pandemic response - within 19 days the provider shifted 21,000 students from planned face-to-face exams, to a fully online time-constrained format with minimal disruption.

The 'assessment and feedback' indicator for full-time students provides initial evidence of an outstanding quality feature. This is also the case for apprenticeship students, but with less statistical certainty. For part-time students, the indicator shows evidence of very high quality, although the panel placed less weight on this due to low student numbers.

The provider gives further examples of an outstanding quality feature, including its own data that shows:

- ‘assessment and feedback’ for full-time students with a declared disability ‘was scored as outstanding quality’ for the full TEF period
- ‘assessment and feedback’ is outstanding for disabled students who are studying both full-time and on apprenticeship programmes.

The student submission highlights several issues with assessment and feedback including 70.2 per cent negative comments from the National Student Survey in 2022. However, as this represents only one year in the assessment period and it is unknown how many qualitative comments this accounts for, the panel placed less weight on this evidence.

The panel gave more weight to recent data showing an 80 per cent positive score for assessment and feedback.

Taking all of the evidence into consideration, the panel concluded that the provider has embedded outstanding teaching, feedback and assessment practices that are highly effective and tailored to supporting its students’ learning, progression and attainment.

Course content and delivery; student engagement in learning and stretch

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

The provider submission gave evidence to support this, including:

- the Curriculum Transformation Project which reviews and reapproves courses for September 2023 as well as addressing issues it has identified and those raised by the students’ union. This shows the provider’s commitment to continuous improvement but as it falls outside the assessment period, the panel could not consider this wholly outstanding
- the 2022-23 Enhancing Futures initiative
- examples of outstanding simulated learning environments in Biosciences.

The student submission raised issues around course delivery such as with evening classes and late notice of timetable changes, based on comments in the National Student Survey. The panel acknowledged these issues, however, it placed greater weight on the outstanding 2022 Autumn student survey results as these represented a significantly larger sample of students across multiple levels of study, in addition to outstanding ‘teaching on my course’ indicators and information about how the provider is seeking to improve educational parity through its Curriculum Transformation Project.

The students’ union April 2022 BAME experience report highlights differences in experiences between white students and students from minority ethnic groups, citing issues with course content being overly euro-centric with minimum explicit steps taken to address equality, diversity and inclusion issues. However, this survey represents a very small percentage of the overall student population, and so the panel placed greater weight on the provider’s mechanisms to address such issues.

The panel considered whether this feature was outstanding quality but noted less evidence of impact in stretching students’ skills to consider it as such. The panel therefore concluded that

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

Research, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and employer engagement

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

The provider submission gives evidence to support this, including:

- embedding of 'employability' into all courses, with students benefitting from teaching staff with research and industrial experience
- tailoring of research and approach to subject areas with initiatives and evidence of positive impact on student cohorts.

The panel considered whether this would be an outstanding quality feature based on the provider's employment-focused education, extra-curricular initiatives and tailored research approaches. However, the panel noted that positive impacts on students' academic experience were limited to certain subject areas rather than all of the provider's courses and students.

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

Staff professional development and academic practice

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The provider submission gives evidence to support this, including:

- a professional recognition scheme, providing a clear progression framework in teaching and learning for all staff
- support for professional development that is embedded across the provider for all staff, including technicians, librarians, research students, research staff, academic development staff and teaching staff
- significantly above sector average results for awarding fellowships and outstanding levels of staff with recognised teaching qualifications.

There is evidence of outstanding support for staff professional development through the provider's professional recognition scheme, and excellent academic practice embedded across the provider in which all staff, including non-teaching staff, are supported to deliver an outstanding academic experience for students.

In summary, the panel concluded there to be outstanding support for staff professional development and excellent academic practice is embedded across the provider.

Learning environment and academic support

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The 'academic support' indicators for full-time, apprenticeship and part-time students show initial evidence of an outstanding quality feature. Although for part-time students statistical certainty is lower.

In the panel's view, performance across all modes of study represents outstanding quality, particularly with regard to five subject areas which perform particularly well.

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

- a data-driven approach to informing tailored academic support where needed, an initiative that has been centralised with outstanding results
- the provider's response to the students' union COVID-19 survey in 2020 that showed two thirds of students were impacted by digital poverty and resulted in the provider's laptop loan scheme
- outstanding levels of academic support for the Greenwich Campus, with evidence of putting students' academic needs at the forefront through:
 - a course matching process to determine the best-fit study location of new students
 - providing continuity by retaining a portion of teaching staff from a previous provider that had gone into administration
 - providing tailored academic support based on identified needs of improved digital literacy skills via workshops and guidance.

The panel agreed this demonstrates the provider's commitment to ensuring outstanding levels of academic support irrespective of campus location. In summary, the panel concluded that there is a supportive learning environment and, through the provider's data-driven approach, its students have access to a wide and readily available range of outstanding quality academic support tailored to their needs.

Learning resources

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The 'learning resources' indicator for full-time and apprenticeship students provides evidence of outstanding quality. For part-time students, the panel interpreted the indicator as reflecting very high quality.

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

- virtual learning resources are adapted to ensure flexibility of provision and lower barriers to communication, while increasing student engagement and peer learning
- students having access to a wide range of virtual learning resources that help develop skills sought by employers and complement their degree knowledge. Students can also gain professional accreditation in specialised areas

- outstanding physical learning resources through simulated learning environments e.g., an award-winning building that enables students studying Biosciences to gain work-based practical experience
- ‘online environments’ are the joint highest area of student satisfaction according to a student survey which also highlights praise for the library services, with an 88% satisfaction rate.

In summary, the panel concluded that the provider’s physical and virtual learning resources are tailored and used effectively to support outstanding teaching and learning.

Student engagement in improvement

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The ‘student voice’ indicator for full-time, apprenticeship and part-time students provides initial evidence of an outstanding quality feature.

The submissions provide further evidence of outstanding quality, including:

- an embedded culture of provider-student co-creation practices, including at senior and course levels, where there is a student reviewer at each course review
- consistent use of student survey analytics to initiate tailored improvements, resulting in improvements in the survey’s ‘student voice’ scores.

The student submission describes a positive relationship with the university and indicates that it is pleased with the provider’s proactive commitment to acting on student data to improve students’ experiences.

Considering the evidence from the indicators and the submissions in the round, the panel concluded that the provider embeds engagement with its students, leading to continuous improvement to the experiences and outcomes of its students.

Student outcomes: Silver

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

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

- most features are very high quality
- three features are outstanding quality

The panel applied the criteria and considered that the rating with the best fit is 'Silver' as most features are very high quality for typically all groups of students and courses.

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

Approaches to supporting student success

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

Evidence in the provider and student submissions supporting this includes:

- data-driven approaches to tailor support for progression, including the use of artificial intelligence to identify students at risk of non-continuation
- wide-ranging opportunities including the use of social enterprises and professional accreditations and the 'Talent Team', an employment-focused service, providing careers information, advice and coaching
- little to no variation in outcomes among student demographics.

The student submission includes comments about the provider's commitment to employability going beyond campus activities, by linking students to their local community. This includes the creation of 50+ social enterprises spanning multiple industries since 2014.

The provider emphasises that student experience case studies should not be isolated to the student experience, and that they are also central to enhancing student outcomes. The panel considered that the link to progression was evident in the submission.

In summary, the panel concluded that approaches to supporting student success are outstanding and that the provider deploys and tailors approaches that are highly effective in ensuring its students succeed in and progress beyond their studies.

Continuation and completion rates

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

The 'continuation' indicator for full-time students provides evidence of very high quality. However, there was a decline in performance Year 4 of the assessment period, which the provider acknowledges.

There are very high rates of continuation for most student groups, however there are significant inconsistencies across subject disciplines with both small and medium-sized student cohorts.

The 'continuation' indicator for part-time students shows evidence of very high quality, and for apprenticeship students, evidence of outstanding quality.

The 'completion' indicator for full-time students provides evidence of very high quality. However, there are significant inconsistencies across subject disciplines with both small and medium-sized student cohorts.

The 'completion' indicator for part-time students shows evidence of very high quality, and for apprenticeship students, evidence of outstanding quality.

The panel placed less weight on the 'completion' indicator for part-time students as these students represent a significantly smaller percentage of the overall population compared to full-time students.

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

Progression rates

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

The 'progression' indicator for full-time students is evidence of very high quality. There are very few subjects below benchmark and these subjects represent very small student cohorts.

There is no data for apprenticeship students.

The 'progression' indicator for part-time students provides evidence of outstanding quality, although this represents a significantly smaller percentage of students compared to full-time and so the panel placed more weight on the data for full-time students, reflecting very high quality outcomes.

Further evidence of very high quality in the provider submission includes the following longitudinal educational outcomes (LEO) data:

- average graduate salary level is £28,200, the same as the sector average
- average graduate salary for the lower quartile is £21,200 compared to the sector level of £20,900 (+£300)
- average graduate salary for the upper quartile is £35,100 compared to £37,300 (-£2,200)
- 86.6% of Coventry graduates are in sustained employment or further study, which is 0.2 per cent below the sector average.

Overall, the panel considered this data to be positive in the context of the student demographic.

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

Intended educational gains

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The provider adopts an institutional approach to educational gains by evaluating the skills gap in the geographic areas in which they operate, and tailoring provision accordingly. Examples in the provider submission include:

- developing new courses for healthcare students and apprenticeship students that respond to the region's needs at its Scarborough campus

- improving digital literacy skills at the Greenwich campus.

In summary, the panel considered there to be sufficient evidence to consider this feature outstanding and therefore concluded that the provider clearly articulates the range of educational gains it intends its students to achieve, and why these are highly relevant to its students and their future ambitions.

Approaches to supporting educational gains

The panel considered this to be an outstanding quality feature.

The panel considered the provider's approaches to reflect outstanding quality, demonstrated by the success of its place-based approach, and its dedication to continuously improving existing schemes, for example:

- the 'Add+vantage' scheme sets out a wide range of opportunities for students' to develop their skills that can be tailored to their specific ambitions. Due to mixed feedback, the provider is introducing a new initiative to address these issues
- the development of new courses that respond to regional needs. The provider was shortlisted for a Student Nursing Times & Apprenticeship award in 2019 as a result of this approach and expanded this practice across its other entities, in partnership with local NHS Trusts.

Considering all the evidence, the panel concluded that the provider's approaches to supporting its students to achieve educational gains is evidence-based, highly effective and tailored to its students and their different starting points.

Evaluation and demonstration of educational gains

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

The provider demonstrates that it is evaluating the effectiveness of its place-based approach through the Scarborough Campus case study, stating that this led to a 10 per cent increase in student places on the prestigious 'Florence Nightingale Leadership Course'.

The panel considered there to be insufficient evidence of an outstanding quality feature as the provider did not demonstrate that its students had succeeded in achieving the intended gains for the Add+vantage scheme. However, the panel considered there to be sufficient evidence to consider this a very high quality feature.

Overall: Gold

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

The panel noted the guidance that the overall rating should not be higher than the highest aspect rating and should be no more than one rating higher than the lowest aspect rating.

The panel considered the student experience aspect rating to be 'Gold' and the student outcomes aspect rating to be 'Silver'. The panel weighted these two aspects equally and considered all the evidence across all features and across all the provider's student groups, subjects and courses to come to a 'best fit' decision regarding the overall rating for the provider. The panel noted that elements of the student experience positively impact student outcomes and the student outcomes aspect itself also includes outstanding features. The panel considered, overall, that the student experience and student outcomes at the provider are typically of outstanding quality. The panel therefore agreed on a best-fit rating of 'Gold'.