



**London
South Bank
University**

EST 1892



Teaching Excellence Framework Supporting Statement 2017

Contents

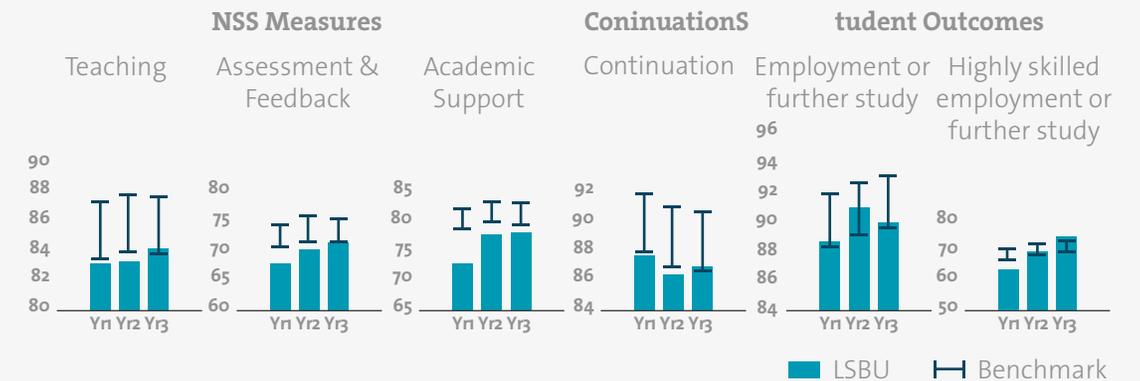
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1 | Executive summary

1.1 We at London South Bank University (LSBU) provide education for those from all backgrounds, supporting social mobility, and transforming the lives of our students and graduates. Our mission is “to be recognised as an enterprising civic university that addresses real world challenges”¹.

TEF metrics – LSBU compared with benchmark



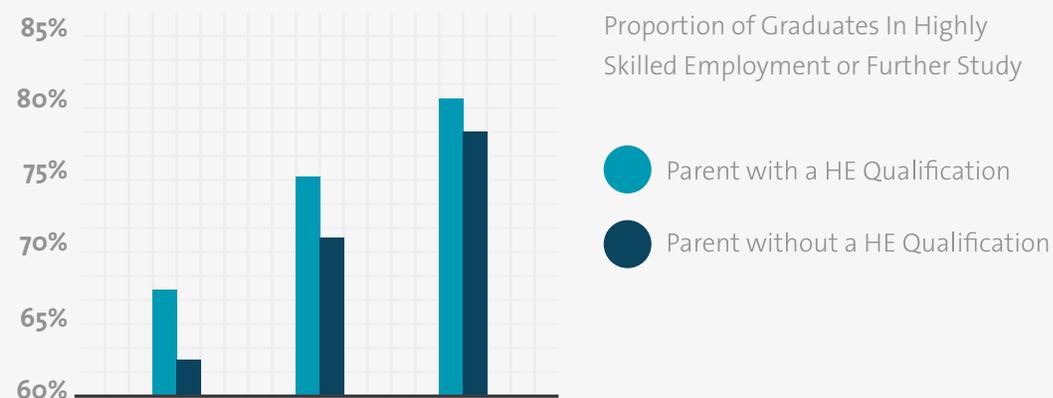
1.2 Our strategic and evidence-based approach to improving our provision has resulted in LSBU having year 3 TEF data consistent with a silver rating. A strong claim for a silver rating is made in this submission. LSBU has:

- A double positive flag relating to students in highly-skilled employment and further study;
- Improved progression rates, resulting in 76% of 2015/16 full-time first degree students re-enrolling in 2016/17 compared with 70% in 2014/15²;
- Excellent part-time provision, demonstrated by TEF metrics for non-continuation and highly- skilled employment or further study;
- Improved the student experience, particularly in relation to TEF categories. Student satisfaction in relation to learning resources was 3% above the sector average in 2016³;
- Increased student engagement; e.g. our ‘Students as Partners’ project to redesign the student appeals process has led to the rapid resolution of most student complaints, as evidenced by a dramatic 84% reduction in issuing ‘Completion of Procedures’ letters⁴;
- Won the Times Higher Education Entrepreneurial University of the Year 2016.

1.3 Located in an area with high ethnic diversity with pockets of deprivation and low participation in higher education, 53% of our undergraduate student population identifies as BME. A significant proportion of our students have a disability and/or come from less privileged backgrounds. 46% of our undergraduate students state that their parents have no higher education qualifications⁵.

1.4 The learning gain we achieve is demonstrated in the results of the DLHE survey⁶. We compared rates of graduate employment/further study for LSBU students whose parents do not have HE qualifications with students whose parents do. Not only has our graduate employment risen from 62% to 76% during the TEF period, but those whose parents do not have HE qualifications

LSBU 2012/13 to 2014/15 Graduate Outcomes



improved faster.

1.5 The Vice Chancellor, Professor Dave Phoenix, joined the university in December 2013. He established a new corporate strategy and appointed a new academic leadership team to generate the cultural and organisational change to achieve our mission and strategic goals. The university established a set of institutional values: excellence, professionalism, inclusivity, integrity and creativity (EPIIC), which we embed in all aspects of our culture. Our approach to the curriculum and student experience is articulated in the LSBU Educational Framework which describes our distinctive provision and drives improvements.

1.6 The essential components of the Educational Framework involve the development of students' professional and vocational skills in industry standard facilities; the

advancement of graduate attributes relevant to the course and aligned to the university's EPIIC values; the creation of opportunities within the curriculum for students to develop their social capital, and the encouragement of close relationships with employers and industry, and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRB).

1.7 The impact of this change in strategy and culture is visible in the improvement in the student experience over the last three years. While our negative flags for the core TEF metrics are all in relation to the National Student Survey (NSS), in which London universities habitually achieve lower scores (see paragraph 3.5), we show consistent improvements. Student outcomes in the last three years, especially against employability metrics and progression, have risen steadily and we expect this to continue (see paragraph 3.7).

FT Highly Skilled Employment or Further Study - Analysis of Negatively Flagged Groups Over Three Years Compared to Three Year Average Benchmark



1.8 Graduate outcomes of students are a particular strength of LSBU.

- For full-time students, highly-skilled employment or further study outcomes have increased from 62% in 2012/13 to 76% in 2014/15⁷;
- LSBU is the highest ranked London modern university for graduate outcomes⁸;
- LSBU is the highest ranked London modern university for starting salaries⁹;
- We have improved DLHE outcomes for student groups who are negatively flagged in the split metrics (first

degree students, young, male and disadvantaged students) - see adjacent graph;

- We offer an entrepreneurial education via the curriculum and extracurricular opportunities which have increased numbers of students engaging with entrepreneurship, and the extent and variety of employer engagement. Graduate start-ups with LSBU support have increased from 30 in 2013/14 to 57 in 2015/16¹⁰.
- The evidence in this submission shows we meet the criteria for a TEF silver award.

1.9 In the academic year 2013-14, LSBU underwent a complete restructuring, with a revitalized focus on the student experience. The Year 3 TEF metrics that reflect the current teaching indicate a silver rating; across the 3 years, only the NSS scores (non-output measure) bring this down to bronze, but it would be silver if the London NSS effect (- ≥3%) is taken into account (see Section 3.5). We have one of the most diverse student populations in the UK (46% have parents that do not have an HE qualification, 53% are BME and 70% mature), and we are especially proud of the learning environment we have now created, the opportunities we give to all students, and the excellent outcomes in terms of employment, salary, and impact on the community. Against the TEF descriptors (TEF2 Guidance, Section), we believe our educational provision, student experience and graduate outcomes align with a silver rating.

| Silver criteria | LSBU evidence (paragraph refs) |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Excellent outcomes for students in particular with regard to retention and progression into highly-skilled employment and further study | 3.7 3.8 3.10 to 3.16 |
| Course design and assessment practices provide scope for high levels of stretch that ensures all students are significantly challenged and acquire knowledge, skills and understanding that are highly valued by employers | 6.1 to 6.6 8.1 to 8.8 |
| Appropriate levels of contact time, including personalised provision, secures high levels of engagement and commitment to learning and study from students | 3.8 to 3.12 5.1 to 5.5 |
| High-quality physical and digital resources are used by students to enhance learning | 7.2 to 7.4 |
| Students are engaged with developments from the forefront of research, scholarship or practice, and are sometimes involved in these activities | 5.4 6.6 8.2 to 8.6 |
| An institutional culture that facilitates, recognises and rewards excellent teaching has been implemented at the provider | 4.1 to 4.7 |

2 | Student Response



I'm Temi Ahmadu, President of London South Bank Students' Union, Student Governor of London South Bank University, and Graduate of the University, all of which gives me a unique perspective as to the successes and challenges faced by both the institution and learners at it.

Context of my university

When making any assessment of our institution it's incredibly important not to view us in the same light as other institutions. London South Bank University is one of the largest and oldest London institutions with a proud history of providing industry recognised qualifications to learners from non-traditional and diverse backgrounds, dating back to our early roots in 1892. Social mobility, 'not just for the few exceptionally bright, but for the masses' (Phoenix, 2015), is what our institution is about and achieves. In the university's OFFA agreement 2016/17 it clearly highlights how wide and deep LSBU's appeal is to non-traditional HE entrants:

- High BME participation (53%)
- High state school participation (97%)
- High mature/returners to education participation (70%)
- High participation from students who would have been entitled to free school meals, an indicator of childhood deprivation and social class.



We are proudly an institution that doesn't take just the very brightest applicants from deprived backgrounds, but instead raises the aspirations and life chances for swathes in a community."

The following section was prepared by London South Bank Students' Union on behalf of the student body at London South Bank University.

The 'learning gain' we get

In league tables the university is often downgraded because of the low entry tariff to access our courses but this is only half the picture. It is surely more an accolade to the quality of 'teaching and learning' for an institution which takes individuals with previous low educational attainment and creates some of the highest paid graduates in the country. We're the number one modern university in London for starting salaries and in the top 20 of all UK universities. The 'learning gain' whilst studying at LSBU must therefore be significant as the educational outcomes result in a 'graduate premium' that is significantly above our peers.

As a higher education provider, the majority of students we recruit are from communities and demographics that disproportionately face barriers to their learning. I've met many who have complicated lives, and overcome adversity to access HE. As an LSBU graduate, I'm proud to have attended an institution that offers a supportive teaching environment that enables its learners to achieve some of the UK's highest graduate starting salaries, but it is unrealistic however for LSBU to be seen as a panacea to all structural educational and societal inequalities that have amalgamated over an entrant's entire educational experience. What is remarkable and of note is those undergraduates from diverse backgrounds, who are the majority in number amongst our students, are more likely to be satisfied with their student experience than more 'traditional' entrants, even though their academic attainment is lower¹¹. This to me shows how LSBU re-engages these usually disaffected learners, giving them a positive HE experience and a good graduate starting salary, and will hopefully raise not only their social mobility but enable their children as well.

What students say

Over the past four years, the Students' Union has facilitated LSBU's independent, student-led, teaching awards. This programme captures and celebrates good practice across the university, highlighting to academic and professional staff the activities and interventions students feel make for an excellent, student experience. In 2016, 550 different academics and professional staff were nominated by students for giving an 'excellent' student experience. Amongst the many citations students said:

"She will go out of her way to keep you updated with jobs and to get industry people in, or even to send students out for industry practice." 2nd Year BA Games Culture and Design

"She's put me in touch with people who can help me further my academic and career goals, and given me opportunities I never would have had otherwise. As far as I can tell, she's the same with everyone - open, friendly, and always going out of her way to help a student achieve his/her goals."

3rd Year BSc Psychology (Addiction)

[I really appreciated the Professor's...] "contribution to helping students to gain valuable work experience and inviting various professionals within the legal profession to speak to students on career opportunities" 2nd Year LLB Law

Alongside this classroom activity, the institution delivers a number of projects and programmes focused on increasing social capital: industry career fairs; academic competitions, and targeted and bespoke activity aimed at 'levelling up' students who would normally face societal and educational inequality. These are all regularly in the scope of delivery of our work.

Social mobility and the 'black attainment gap'

With a high BME student population LSBU is rightly concerned with the black attainment gap and how it can narrow the inequalities of life outcomes. As a tertiary education provider, the university often deals with and supports students who have faced prior educational inequality, whether based on race or socio-economic circumstance.

The sheer numbers of students, as highlighted above, from BME and under-privileged backgrounds means unlike other institutions, interventions cannot be a bolt-on but embedded in teaching practice. NSS feedback shows BME students are more satisfied with their student experience than their non-BME peers.

Part of fostering this success is through creating an environment where under-represented groups in HE are represented within the workforce of the institution. As a learner at LSBU, regularly seeing academics at every grade that represented the diversity of our student body, local community, and me as a BME student, implicitly demonstrated LSBU is a place where everyone can succeed.

Whilst it is shocking that less than 90 Black African Caribbean Professors exist in the UK, I'm proud that two hold positions amongst our seven Executive Deans. LSBU has an academic and professional workforce that is more representative than the sector average of staff from non-Caucasian communities and more reflective of the student demographics it is seeking



Getting a few more working-class young people to enter Oxbridge is not the only – or even the most important – game in town."

*Professor David Phoenix,
Vice Chancellor LSBU.¹²*

to teach. This helps in removing some barriers and also giving strong BME academic role models.

Case Study

A civic university working with industry and the third sector to decrease social capital inequality and increase access to top-flight graduate careers.

In autumn 2015 the university, SU, The Prince's Trust and businesses came together to identify barriers and root causes to the national vacuum of senior BME talent in British STEM industries. The project sought to create an environment where senior industry leaders met with undergraduate BME students to create a two-way dialogue to support the development of social capital amongst this student cohort through demystifying career development into senior roles, and to educate business leaders as to the barriers faced by BME undergraduates entering STEM industry careers and progressing.



Student Experience Committee student member response

I'm Christabel Charles, a part-time student studying a BA (Hons) Business Studies, and one of the student members of the university's Student Experience Committee. As a part-time student, who works full-time Monday to Friday as a banking legal PA, LSB's unique Saturday part time course programme enables me to gain the academic qualifications I need to take the next steps in my career but without causing disruption to my current commitments. I was attracted to this course because it allowed me to continue in full-time employment and get my degree part-time over just three years. Also LSBU has a great reputation as the best modern university in London for business¹³.

As a learner, I've found the quality of learning and teaching during my studies to be 'excellent'. Lecturers not only understand and communicate the subject well but seek to personalise the learning, appreciating that, as a cohort, we are mainly mature students with existing industry experience and a lot of time pressures. Lecturers regularly change the pace and detail of the programme from that of the full-time syllabus in order to better meet our learning needs. Our academics don't see their students as a single homogenous group. They understand we bring a lot of 'lived experience' of the subject into the classroom and seek to use that as a learning aide when delivering course content which makes the subject relatable to our own real-world scenarios. As a part-time student, I feel I can get involved equally in many opportunities offered by the institution. We're encouraged to engage with co-curricular activities such as accessing professional bodies like the Institute of Directors of which I benefit, alongside the comprehensive Students' Union offer.

Alongside its academic support, the institution has always been keen to remove challenges I've raised for part-time students. From course teaching staff to the Deputy Vice Chancellor, they've taken on board our feedback and worked to ensure difficulties are dealt with and our student experience is good; including expanding the academic programme to allow us to gain PRINCE II qualifications as part of our Bachelors course.

The student experience at London South Bank University has been a positive one. My needs as a mature and part-time student are different to those of a regular undergraduate. As a learner I need flexible support services and teaching that understands my needs as a part-time student in full-time employment and access to learning resources that fit with my part-time and weekend learning. LSBU anticipates and understands those needs and is delivering a supportive and positive learning experience for me. The simple fact that a Saturday-taught, part-time undergraduate course exists meant that I could easily access higher education and get my degree.

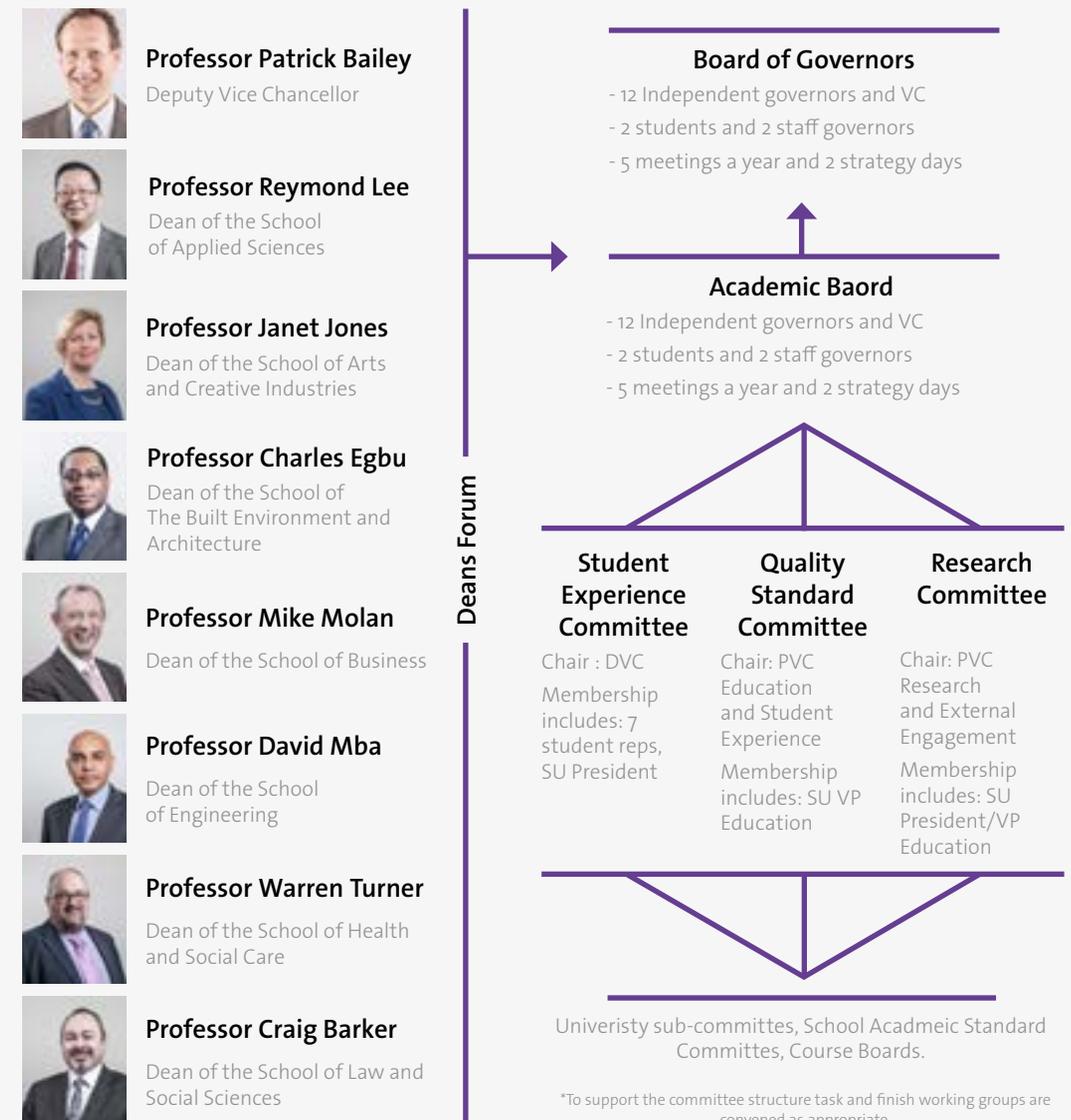


3

Excellent outcomes for students – our context and strategic approach

3.1 Students' success is at the forefront of all activity at LSBU. Our corporate strategy emphasises that students are participants in their learning and that the student voice is listened to. We have a well-developed student representation system with student representatives on all our committees. More than half the members of the Student Experience Committee (chaired by our Deputy Vice Chancellor) are students. The Students' Union President is a member of the annual professorial promotions panel. There was a Students' Union representative on the LSBU TEF working group and the Students' Union wrote a section of this submission.

LSBU Committee Structure*



3.2 LSBU has a highly diverse student cohort, which reflects our local demographic¹⁴. From the data we submitted in our most recent HESA return, our current student population is 17,607 students. Of our 2015/16 undergraduate students:¹⁵

- 46% state that their parents have no higher education qualifications; 39% stated that their parents had higher education qualifications (15% were unsure);
- 53% are BME; 44% are White; 3% are unknown;
- 15% have stated a disability; 9% have stated a specific learning disability;
- 58% are female; 42% are male;
- 29% are under 21; 43% are 21-30; 27% are over 30 years of age.

3.3 We are proud of the diversity of our staff who provide role models for our diverse student body; for example, three of our seven Executive Deans are BME. Equality, diversity and inclusivity issues are reviewed and promoted through committees. Staff and student networks facilitate us to champion good equality and diversity practices across the whole university. The LSBU EPIIC value of inclusivity is evident in our Stonewall top 100 recognition and our recent Athena Swan submission.

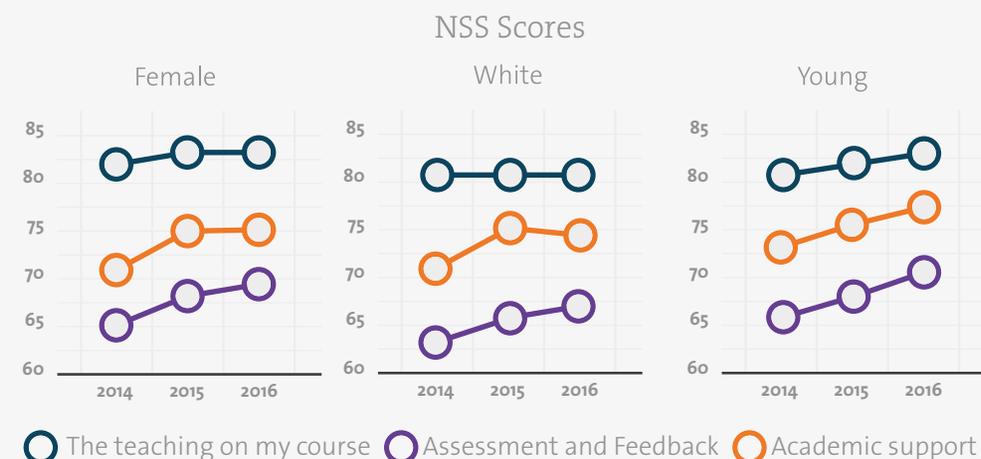
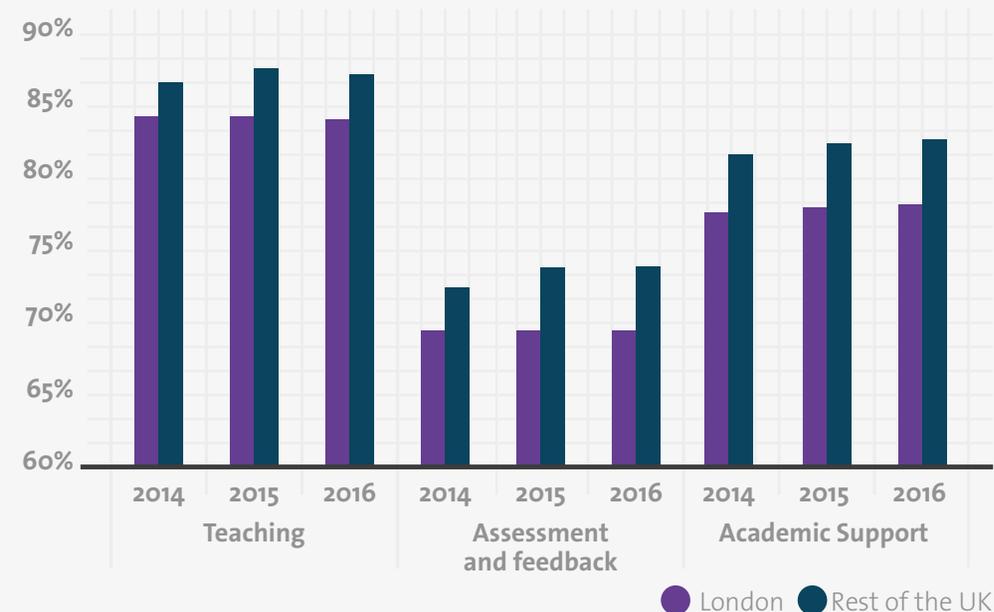
Student experience metrics

3.4 The implementation of the corporate strategy has made a powerful impact, and the evidence from NSS scores over the previous three years indicates that LSBU's student experience has improved year on year (see paragraph 1.1). We continue to work towards further improvement.

3.5 London providers on average receive lower NSS scores: the difference between the London average and UK average is at least 3% in each of the three years in each of the three question categories (see right¹⁶). The LSBU difference from benchmark threshold for each question area is within this range.

3.6 Students identified in our split metrics as being least satisfied are white, young and female, and in both modes of study currently have negative flags. However, their satisfaction level has also increased over the previous three years as shown right¹⁷.

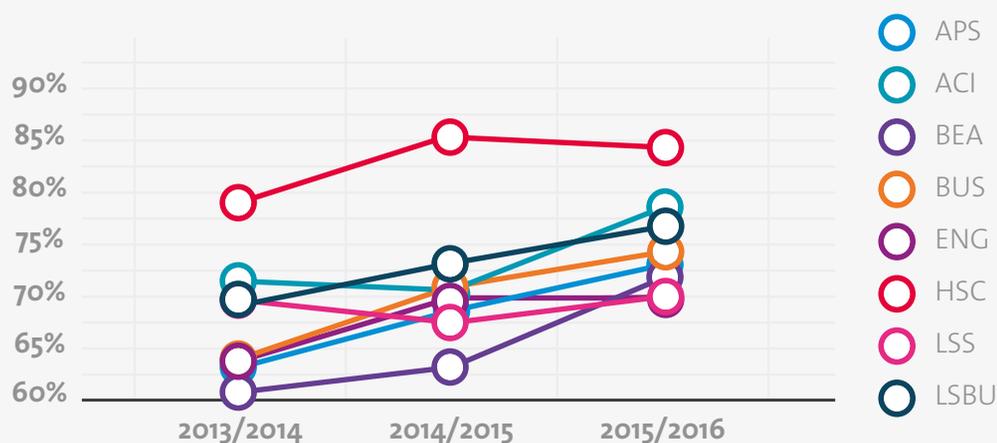
Graph to show weighted average of London NSS scores compared to the rest of the UK 2014-2016
(HE institutions only, 33 London, 120 rest of the UK)



Progression metrics

3.7 Improvements in progression can be seen in all seven LSBU Schools over the last three years. We are improving corporate systems and piloting different approaches in Schools and Professional Services in order to build our institutional understanding and capability. We collaborate with external partners, including the Higher Education Academy to benchmark and improve our practice⁸ (see graph below).

Proportion of Student that progress from Year 1 to Year 2 (UG)



3.8 Examples of our personalised learning and progression initiatives include interactive learning development sessions in modules with lower pass rates delivered by specialist staff in the Centre for Research Informed Teaching (CRIT). Sessions are tailored to the specific discipline and assignment, and focus on academic processes like writing, analytical and evaluative thinking, mathematical reasoning or the processes involved in enquiry-based learning. A total of 39 modules across all Schools included one or more learning development session in 2015/6. There was an average of 11% improvement in first attempt pass rates compared with 2014/15. The extent of the improvement in the pass rate directly correlated with the number of embedded learning development sessions.

3.9 This initiative will be supported by our learning analytics project, run with IBM, which will allow us to predict student cohorts at greatest risk of non-progression

and increase integrated support to them. Individual student profiles will enable personal tutors and student engagement interns (see 5.5) to contact and support individual students at risk more effectively.

3.10 Our process for withdrawals and interruptions has improved retention. We have replaced the previous form-based system with a process that invites students who have indicated a wish to withdraw from their course to a meeting with a senior student adviser. This meeting aims to identify opportunities to support them to continue their studies, or to interrupt instead of withdraw. This process helps students understand the implications of their decision. It also develops a personalised support plan that enables them to manage the issues affecting their progression. In all, 34% of the 89 students who attended meetings in 2015/6 intending to withdraw have remained at LSBU and the initiative has been consolidated into our business as usual approach.

3.11 A further example of our commitment to personalised provision is our disability and dyslexia support service (DDS) which provides a range of services and support to aid progression. Figures for 2015/16 show that failure rate was halved to 6% for disabled students with whom the service works to provide DDS support, compared with 12% for those without support.

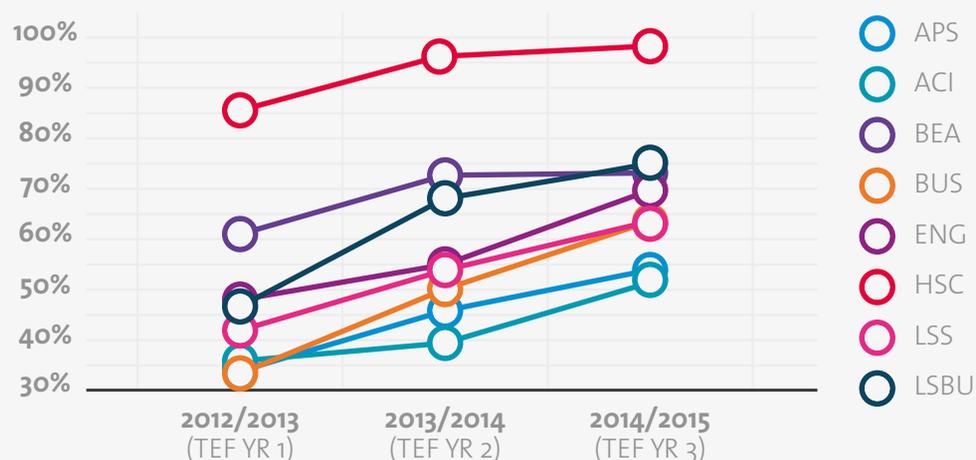
3.12 This positive and improving approach to personalised learning results in LSBU having no flag in the core metrics for non-continuation. In our split metrics there are negative flags for young advantaged first degree students but we are pleased to see improvement has been demonstrated for this group over three years (see below⁹), and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has acknowledged the difficulties of using POLAR data in London20.

| Year of entry | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|
| Young entrants (first degree only) from high participation (POLAR3) neighbourhoods, non-continuation rates. | 13.4% | 13.8% | 12.3% |

Graduate outcomes metrics

3.13 Student employability is the primary goal of our corporate strategy and all seven LSBU Schools show an improvement in graduate outcomes (see below²¹). We take concerted actions to improve employability embedded in the curriculum (for example, via the articulation of course specific graduate attributes linked to our university EPIIC values) and to develop initiatives led by the central Employability Team (e.g. the implementation of new software to manage student placements). We are proud of our close and extensive links with employers and with professional, statutory and regulatory bodies, and that over half of our courses are professionally accredited.

Graph to Show Graduate Employment or Further Study Outcomes (DLHE EPI cohort)



3.14 The overall metric for full-time, highly-skilled employment or further study is not flagged; however, in our split TEF metrics, first degree students, young, male and disadvantaged students receive negative flags. Nevertheless, as previously stated, increases in DLHE outcomes have been achieved over the TEF time period for the negatively flagged student groups. The overall improvement in year three has been significant and we are now ++ rated for highly-skilled employment/further study in both the full-time and part-time cohorts.

3.15 Regarding our BME student community, the split metrics show that in the main they are supported effectively and LSBU meets their expectations. The data relating to BME students receives a negative flag in only one of the TEF full-time mode categories. However, 8% of our students

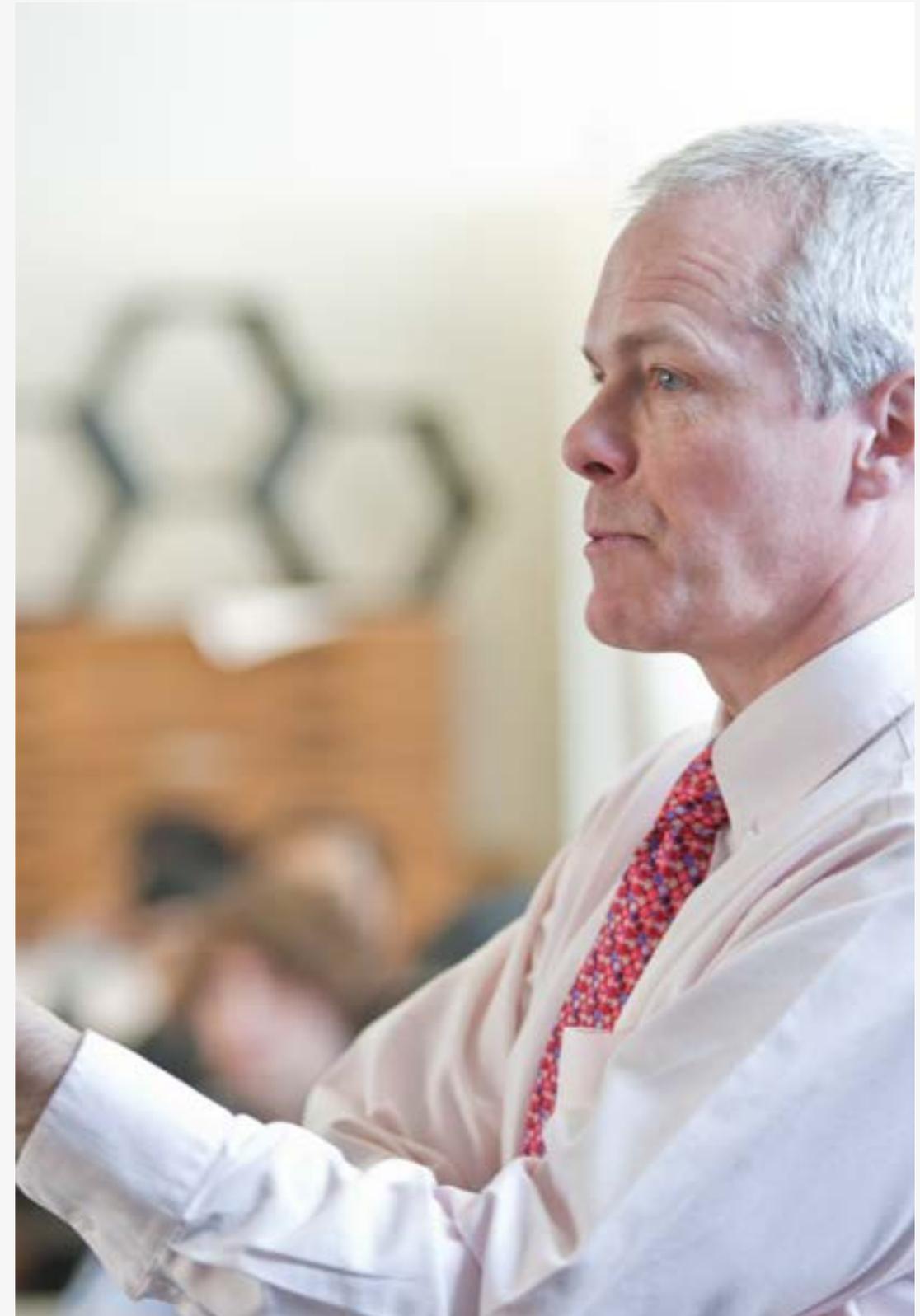
identify as “BME other”, and we have negative flags for their progression and graduate outcomes. We are in the process of investigating the reasons for this variation to remedy the situation.

3.16 The overall metrics show that LSBU is an excellent provider of part-time higher education. The SU section of this submission, written by our part-time student champion, reinforces this. Trends regarding part-time BME students are similar to those for full-time BME students, with one negative flag and a double positive flag against non-continuation rates. We recognise the significantly lower levels of satisfaction in TEF year 3 require redress and we have commenced investigation and action.

4 | Facilitating, recognising and rewarding excellent teaching

- 4.1 Our culture facilitates, recognises and rewards excellent teaching. We have 223 Senior Fellows, 214 Fellows, 28 Associate Fellows and six Principal Fellows of the Higher Education Academy²². We have eight National Teaching Fellows (NTFs), six of whom received their awards while working for LSBU. Two of our NTFs are on the executive team of the university.
- 4.2 To support a culture fully aligned to our mission, we developed two frameworks: the Academic Framework to support the careers of academic staff; and the Educational Framework, to support students and curriculum development.
- 4.3 The LSBU Academic Framework was established in 2014/15 to identify expectations for all academic roles from lecturer to professor. All academics, including professors, are expected to demonstrate core requirements for teaching and cases for promotion must demonstrate stretch achievements in two out of three of teaching, research and service. For promotion to professor, claims must show core requirements for teaching are met, for example, by developing innovative educational materials, achieving strong module feedback and high student success. If the promotion case is based on teaching excellence it must show achievements such as publishing influential textbooks, winning significant external educational grants and receiving international educational awards. In the 2015/6 promotions round to professor and associate professor, more than half of the successful cases included teaching excellence. By including the SU President as a member of the annual promotions panel, we involved students directly.
- 4.4 The LSBU Educational Framework describes our distinctive educational provision and it is used to drive improvements in consistency and quality. It comprises the development and application of students' professional and vocational skills in industry standard facilities; graduate attributes relevant to the course and aligned to our University EPIIC values; opportunities integrated into the curriculum for students to develop their social capital; and close relationships with employers, industry and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.
- 4.5 To develop and enhance the Educational Framework, LSBU has established the Centre for Research Informed Teaching (CRIT), the university's incubator for innovation, development and research in teaching and learning, which works with both staff and students (see paragraph 3.8).

- 4.6 Professional development for teaching is intrinsic to achieve our goal to develop distinctive graduates who achieve academic success, enter graduate level work and can adapt to change and lead progress in their professions, practices and industries. Until 2015, an earlier configuration of the CRIT team delivered an HEA accredited Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching. The PGCert is currently being revalidated to align more closely to the LSBU Educational Framework.
- 4.7 CRIT works with other sections of LSBU to continually develop the institutional Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). This enhances its capacity, functionality and reliability and ensures alignment with the university's corporate strategy and the requirements of the Educational Framework. All taught modules have access to a Moodle space through which staff can provide blended learning and other online activities and resources. For example, the Law Division has used this capability to successfully pilot flipped classroom teaching models. To further develop the digital capabilities of staff and students and build capacity in Digitally Enhanced Learning the university has rolled out Lynda.com, an online training resource, as a tool to facilitate the personal and professional development of staff and students. Video tutorials from this service can be embedded for students within the VLE or provided as standalone activities. Initial feedback and use of this new service is encouraging, showing the need to further promote and develop this area.



5

Student engagement

- 5.1 Students are full members of LSBU governance structures and decision making. University and School committees include student members; SU sabbatical officers are members of the Board of Governors, Academic Board and its committees, including forming half the membership of the Student Experience Committee. The professorial promotions panel includes a student (as mentioned in paragraph 4.3).
- 5.2 Students shape university projects and processes. In 2015, the „Students as Partners’ project completely redesigned the Student Appeals process. Changes included a new resolution stage between students and their course director. The Students’ Union and students who had experienced the previous appeals systems were extensively consulted in the redesign and were
- 5.3 members of task-and-finish groups. Following the introduction of the revised system, there was an 84% reduction in the issue of Completion of Procedures letters.²³
- 5.4 We use Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQ) for all taught modules to monitor and improve courses based on student feedback. We inform students of the outcomes of the evaluation and the action taken. MEQ Overall Satisfaction scores consistently average above 80%. Schools hold regular formal course boards, where staff and students discuss issues about the operation and improvement of courses. Information about changes to the delivery of a course or module as a result of previous student feedback is included in the course and module guides. School actions taken in response to MEQs, the NSS and other surveys are fed back to students through a ‘You Said, We Did’ campaign.
- 5.5 Student ambassadors undertake much of LSBU’s outreach work in the community including mentoring and sports coaching. The student ambassador scheme recruits, trains and employs around 100 ambassadors each year. The ambassador scheme increases participating students’ engagement with the university and provides them with a stable income, supporting their retention. It also provides work experience to build their professional and transferable skills and employability. Many of our ambassadors are mature students or have come to university via non- traditional routes and this programme builds their confidence, an important aspect of the LSBU Educational Framework. It also builds relationships across

institutions and with the local community as many ambassadors went to school and college locally.

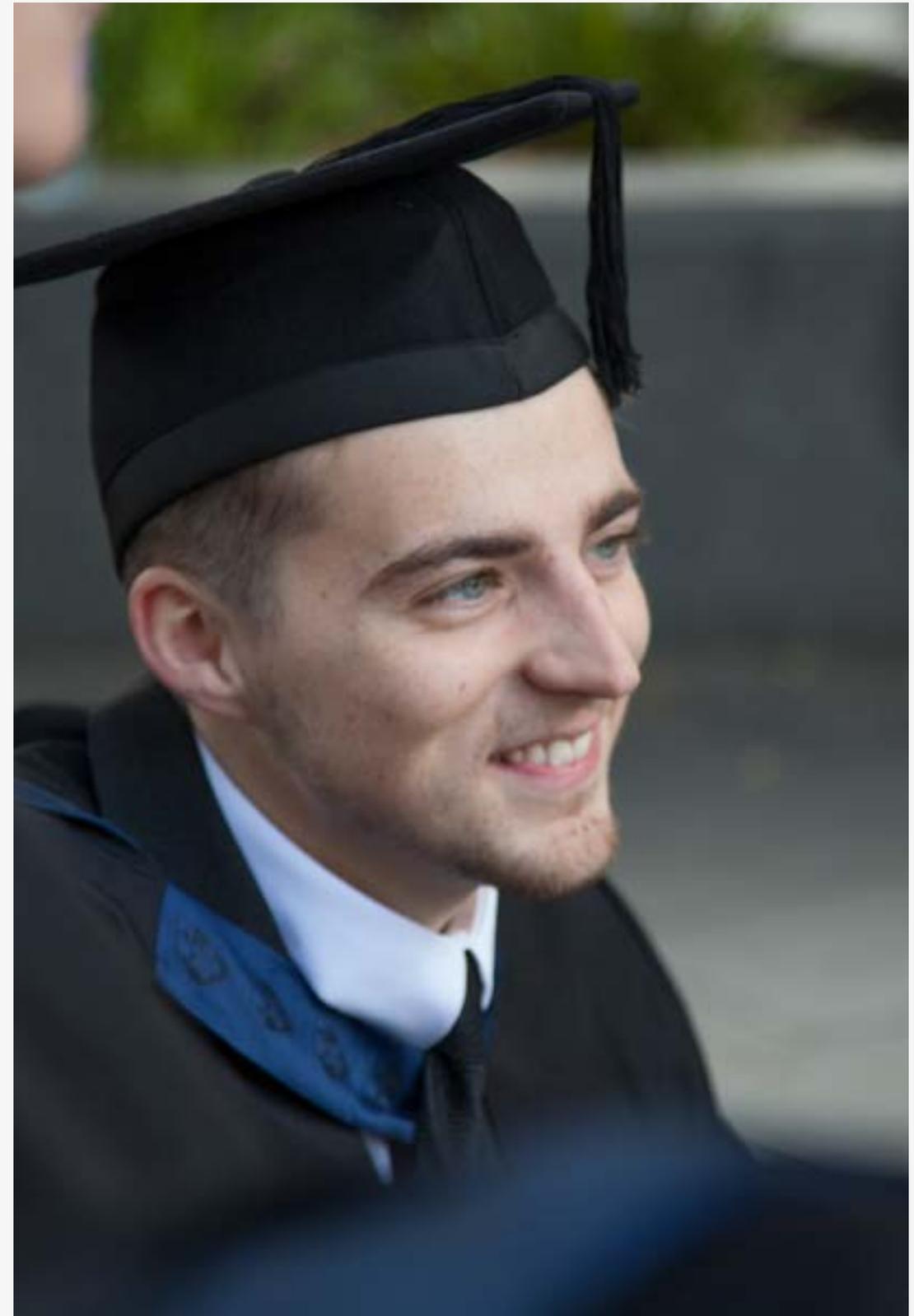
- 5.6 As part of our personalised approach to learning, we have developed initiatives to engage students as individuals. For example, we have an electronic Student Attendance Monitoring system that enables us to contact and support students with poor attendance. In 2015/6 we allocated specific staff within each School with the responsibility to monitor and support student attendance and engagement. The Higher Education Academy identified this initiative for particular praise at a meeting with LSBU staff focusing on retention. A partnership with IBM has led to the development of a predictive learning analytics system (see 3.9), to enable the identification of students at greater risk of not achieving positive outcomes when we implement it in 2017.



6 | Rigour and stretch

- 6.1 Responsibility resides with the Academic Board for academic standards and for the direction of academic matters. As shown above the Quality and Standards Committee, the Student Experience Committee and the Research Committee report to Academic Board.
- 6.2 The academic standards of the university's awards are documented and upheld by the University Academic Regulations. Extensive revisions of the Academic Regulations were undertaken over the last two years. They were reduced from 140 pages to nine with the content and style made more accessible to students and staff. In 2016, our academic regulations received a Plain English Crystal Mark and a sign of their increased usability can be seen in the online regulations receiving double the hits in 2015/16 compared with 2014/15 (3,000 rising to 6,000).
- 6.3 We have approximately 200 external examiners. Their reports help us benchmark the extent that our course design and assessment challenge students and provide stretch, while helping them acquire the knowledge, skills and understanding that are highly valued by employers. The university runs annual surveys to gather statistics on external examiners' responses about our academic standards.
- 6.4 Key findings from the latest External Examiners' survey show that provision is of high quality:
 - 99% of our external examiners state standards at LSBU are comparable with those seen elsewhere at other institutions;
 - 97% of those who answered considered the overall performance of students at LSBU to be broadly comparable with that of their peers on similar courses elsewhere in the UK;
 - 95% considered the assessment appropriate for the outcome of the modules in their entirety;
 - 97% of examiners believed assessment to be appropriately varied and 96% considered it up-to-date.
- 6.5 Action plans developed as a result of the annual external examiner reports are discussed at School Academic Standards Committees; an overarching report is taken to Quality and Standards Committee to identify and share issues and good practice, and identify areas for improvement.

6.6 Our research is aligned with LSBU's mission and focuses on influencing policy, creating new commercial capabilities and supporting developments in public services including healthcare. Stretch for our students is generated through links between research and teaching. Involvement of students in research that supports their professional practice is illustrated by our summer internships scheme. This has included work with the Sport and Exercise Science Research Centre, health trusts, clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) and primary care providers in London. The scheme supports citizen participation and leadership in health, as well as the development of a MOOC in Health Education.



7 | High quality physical and digital resources

- 7.1 Stretch is also provided to students through engagement with current professional practices. As one aspect of this, and aligned with the LSBU Educational Framework, we provide students with professional and industry standard facilities to ensure a relevant education and to enable students to build confidence in their skills through practice and experimentation with the ultimate goal of increasing their success during their studies and after graduation.
- 7.2 Examples of our industry standard facilities with a more disciplinary focus include:
- an on-campus industry standard theatre and rehearsal suite comprising a 90-seat auditorium, with a second 30-seat studio theatre and six rehearsal studios;
 - LSBU's Elephant Studios, incorporating production studios with lighting rigs and green screen, ARRI cameras, a Dolby Atmos sound recording studio, 11 editing and high-end grading suites for post-production work in film, sound and journalism, a fully equipped radio studio and newsroom for both broadcast and online streaming, and a Green Room for interviewees and artists to use;
 - 6,000m² specialist laboratories, workshops and computer suites to support our science and engineering students;
 - a Virtual Engineering Laboratory, so students can interact with simulated large-scale industrial projects;
 - nursing wards with simulator mannequins: SimMan, Sim Junior, SimBaby and SimMom, life-size computer controlled mannequins that can be programmed with various clinical conditions. Operated by a computer in real-time, they respond to a student's actions;
 - a Digital Architectural Robotics Lab (DARLab), a research platform in architectural education to expand the boundaries of architectural practice by supporting experimentation and cross-discipline collaboration among students, industry partners and academic staff.
- 7.3 Our learning resources teams have achieved year on year improvements in excess of the national average

“

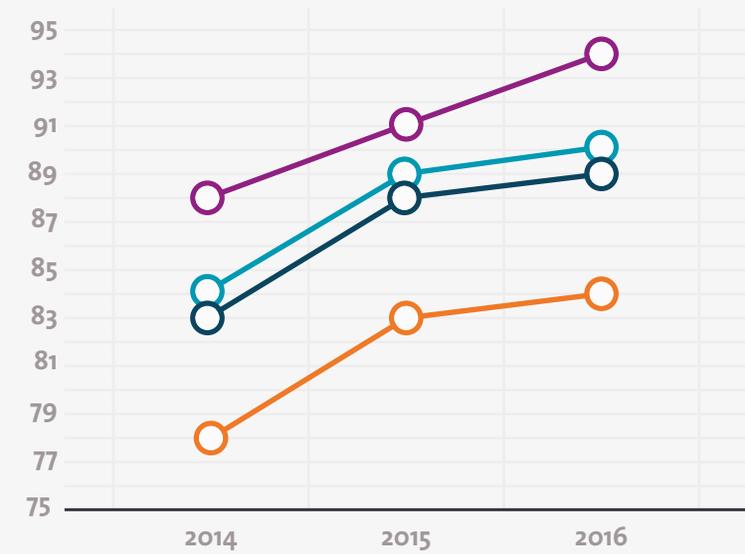
By working more closely with LSBU, we feel we can better influence the syllabus and draw on the university's experience to develop our youngsters. There is a move towards ensuring that courses and work experience are better integrated, so that learning is more joined up and LSBU seem keen to help out in this respect.”

Neil Weller, Troup Bywater & Anders, a nationwide network of consulting building services engineers and designers

NSS scores²⁴, using student consultation and feedback to improve the facilities and resources that support students' learning.

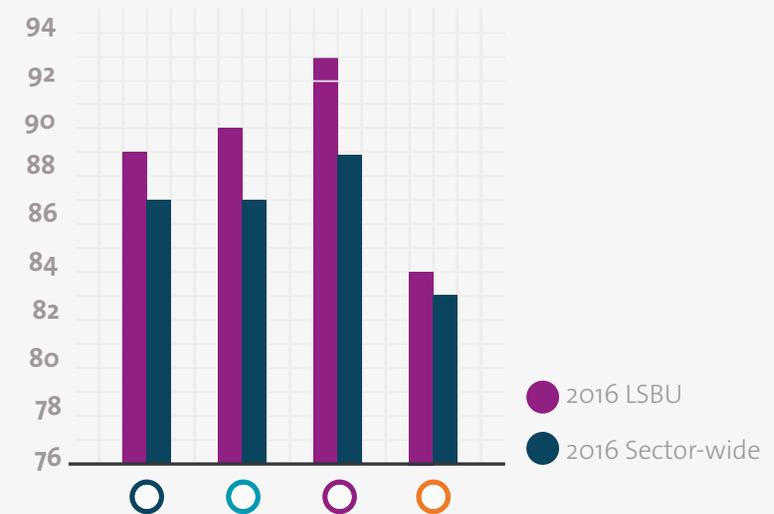
7.4 Library and Learning Resources is one of four LSBU areas along with Accommodation Services, the Student Life Centre and the Academy of Sport, to achieve ServiceMark accreditation for excellent customer service from the Institute of Customer Service in 2015/16. This made LSBU the first organisation to achieve ServiceMark accreditation in four areas at the same time²⁵.

LSBU Learning Resources NSS Scores 2014-2016



- Overall Learning Resources
- 16. The Library resources and services are good enough for my needs.
- 17. I have been able to access general IT resources when I need .
- 18. I have been able to access specialised equipment, facilities or rooms when I needed to.

2016 Learning Resources NSS Scores
LSBU Vs Sector Average



8

Professional practice

8.1 Being responsive to the needs of employers and building relationships with employers is vital to us. It provides the building blocks for our graduates to achieve successful and rewarding professional careers. We are in the top ten institutions in the UK for employer sponsored education, a topic on which our Vice-Chancellor recently authored a Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) report²⁶, and we have nearly 1,000 employer partners. We involve employers in the design and delivery of our courses so that students are stretched and enabled to develop skills that are valued by employers. As noted above, LSBU is the highest ranked London modern university for graduate outcomes and over half of our courses are professionally accredited.

8.2 The Academic Framework (see paragraph 4.3) makes explicit that all academic staff are expected to undertake research, knowledge transfer and professional impact activity. This enables a learning environment which is enriched by student exposure to, and involvement in, provision at the forefront of professional practice. As well as increasing their awareness of current business practice, this helps foster ambition and motivates students to excel in their academic work. Across all our Schools we have many examples of engagement with professional practice, including:

- The LSBU Legal Advice Clinic (LAC) which opened in September 2011 and is a free drop in legal advice service for the local community in which law students advise clients, under the close supervision of university employed practising solicitors. The LAC has advised nearly 1,000 clients, making a contribution towards the overwhelming demand for high-quality social welfare law advice in Southwark and the surrounding area. In February 2013 the Clinic Team published its Drop-In Clinic Operating Manual as a free teaching and learning resource for other higher education institutions who might wish to develop a similar project. In 2014, the Clinic was highly commended in the 'LawWorks and Attorney General's Pro Bono Awards' in the 'Best Contribution by a Law School' category.
- Digital photography students who have incorporated and run their own photography agency, the South Bank Collective Community Interest Company (CIC).

- An innovation and enterprise module in the School of Engineering in which 500 final year students work on a business case for an innovative idea.
- The long standing partnership between LSBU and Transport for London that encompasses award winning research and consultancy projects like cooling the London Underground.
- A free drop-in service to local businesses offered by students from the School of Business.

8.3 The employability and enterprise staff work directly with students, providing workshops, competitions, mock interviews, CV writing, and support for preparing application forms and LinkedIn profiles, among other activities. Employability and enterprise also provide sessions for academic staff including labour market insights and routes into industry, as well as employer sessions. The staff run events throughout the year including careers fairs, employer workshops, 'kick start your career' days, and hosting entrepreneurs, employers and professional bodies on campus. Examples of innovative activity include the 'A Day in the Life of...' initiative, where groups of up to 40 students spend a day in the headquarters of top companies such as Barclays and Warner Brothers, being guided around the workplace by senior management. This builds students' social capital, confidence and aspirations, and has fostered close relationships resulting in guaranteed intern placements.

8.4 We have made a commitment to offer all students the opportunity for a placement, internship or other professional opportunity during their studies.

8.5 LSBU is at the forefront of the new Degree Apprenticeship delivery. We are one of only 18 universities to receive funding from a new £4.5 million fund to support Degree Apprenticeships. LSBU staff had significant input in ten Trailblazer standards, and we are one of the first universities to deliver the Chartered Surveyor Degree Apprenticeship reflecting our position as a leading university in this field.

8.6 The government's new apprenticeships scheme strongly aligns with our strengths in vocational education and part-time provision. In addition to £250,000 of funding to develop new Degree Apprenticeships (see 8.5), the

quality of our employer-sponsored courses has been recognised by two major grants. In an ambitious venture that links the university, employers and the community, HEFCE has provided £3 million of Catalyst funding to underpin campus development and delivery infrastructure for 2,000 degree apprenticeships by 2020, linked to a £5 million grant from the London Borough of Southwark to provide a one-stop-shop for employers, current students, potential apprentices and community activities that increase engagement with higher education.



9 | Conclusion

- 9.1 We have shown in this submission that we achieve excellent outcomes for our students, in particular with regards to retention and progression into highly-skilled employment and further study. External examiners' reports benchmark our course design and assessment practices and show we provide scope for high levels of stretch that ensure all students are significantly challenged and acquire knowledge, skills and understanding that are highly valued by employers. We have appropriate levels of contact time, including personalised provision, and the impact is evidenced by our retention, progression and graduate level outcomes. Our physical and digital resources are above the national average according to the NSS. Students are extensively engaged with developments at the forefront of practice, and this has been acknowledged with the award of Entrepreneurial University of the Year.
- 9.2 We have an institutional culture that facilitates, recognises and rewards excellent teaching, demonstrated by, for example, our promotions processes and engagement with HEA recognition, including eight national teaching fellows. When viewed in the context of the diversity of our student body, and in particular the success of graduates who are the first in their family to participate in higher education, we are proud of the evidence of our impact.

Footnotes

1. LSBU Corporate Strategy 2014 & OFFA Agreement
2. LSBU internal student data and Student HESA Returns 2013/14 to 2015/16; different ways of calculating progression account for variations between HEFCE metrics and the HESA return.
3. 2016 National Student Survey (NSS)
4. Comparing 2015 with 2016 data; see paragraph 5.2.
5. All data in this paragraph from 2015/16 Student HESA Return. Data relating to parents' HE qualifications, includes undergraduate students who gave a response.
6. Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) Survey 2012/13 to 2014/15 cohorts
7. 2012/13 -2014/15 DLHE surveys
8. 2017 Times & Sunday Times University League Table
9. 2017 Times & Sunday Times University League Table
10. 2014/15 and 2015/16 HEBCI Return
11. National Student Survey Results, 2015 & 2016
12. Grove, J. (2015, November 6). www.timeshighereducation.com/news/higher-education-green-paper-reaction. Retrieved from Times Higher Education: www.timeshighereducation.com/news/higher-education-green-paper-reaction
13. LSBU ranked No.1 London Modern University: For business, management and marketing, Guardian League Table (2016)
14. London Borough of Southwark Demographic Factsheet 2015
15. Student numbers referenced from 2015/16 Student HESA return and expressed as FPE
16. National Student Survey 2014 to 2016
17. National Student Survey 2014 to 2016
18. London Retention Project, Higher Education Academy https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/taking-fresh-look-retention?utm_source=CRM&utm_campaign=Corporate%20-20Subscription&utm_medium=Email&utm_content=Subscriber%20VCs
19. UK Performance Indicators 2011/12 to 13/14: Non-continuation rates (table 3b)
20. P6, Further information on POLAR3 - An analysis of geography, disadvantage and entrants to higher education – HEFCE Feb 2014.
21. Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) Survey 2012/13 to 2014/15 cohorts
22. 2015/16 staff HESA submission
23. Comparing 2015 to 2016 data
24. National Student Survey 2014 to 2016
25. 'Putting customer service at the heart of campus life', The Institute of Customer Service www.instituteofcustomerservice.com/research-insight/customer-service-news/article/putting-customer-service-at-the-heart-of-campus-life
26. P9 Making a success of employer sponsored education, David Phoenix, HEPI, April 2016



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