

Table 1:

This commitment is evident in the University focus on Success for All Our Students within the University's Education Strategy (2019-2025) (see Section 7). Furthermore, in 2020, the Provost's Commission, which oversees work to ensure an open, diverse and safe university community for all, established in conjunction with the BME Staff, Students and Allies Network a forum focussing specifically on the BME awarding gap. The 'Let's Talk' series provides an open forum to discuss work underway to improve the University's BME awarding gap, and consider opportunities to increase the impact of actions and the pace of change.

The series has already identified a number of key areas that are being taken forward, including: work to support the transition of BME students into and through Higher Education; the development of a BME support and mentoring network and tailored health and wellbeing support. Finally, the University has prodded its Professional Services to ensure that there is a strong join-up between Widening Participation, Social Mobility, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Education and Student Support and Taught Faculty Professionals.

3. Assessment and Marking Practices

Regulation of standards is set out in the University's Taught Programmes Handbook. The University has a robust and rigorous approach to assuring the standardisation of assessment, marking and decision-making on the award of its degrees, confirmed through prior QAA Institutional Review and Institutional Audit. These have not changed significantly during the period covered by this. Consistency of marking is ensured through standard and best practice quality assurance measures, such as anonymity (wherever possible) and the use of moderation and sampling. External Examiners are appointed to oversee the standards of assessment on all taught programmes, producing annual reports, which feed into the University's quality review processes.

The University operates a three tier system of Assessment Progression and Awarding Committees (APACs). Tier One is the Discipline APAC, whose primary responsibility is to safeguard academic standards. Tier Two is the College APAC, whose primary responsibility is to ensure that academic regulations are applied consistently and equitably across Disciplines within a College. Tier Three is the University APAC, whose primary responsibility is to identify areas where policy clarifications or enhancements are required, to consider patterns of degree outcomes and academic standards and make associated strategic recommendations.

To ensure that the assessment criteria meets sector reference points, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) Subject Benchmark Statements are considered during the approval of programmes, together with the competency requirements of a Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) where appropriate. External Assessors are also appointed during the approval process to ensure that academic standards and the quality of the student academic experience are assured from the outset. The University also supports opportunities for academics to work as External Examiners and Advisors to enhance standardisation within the HE sector and participates in Advance HE's Degree Standards Project.

The procedures governing student academic appeals against assessment, progression or awarding decisions are detailed in the Student Cases Handbook. Students may also apply for mitigating circumstances, the procedures for which are set out in Chapter 10 of the Assessment, Progression and Awarding: Taught Programmes Handbook. This provides a 'safety net' in the event that a student is ill or affected by personal circumstances that potentially preclude them from undertaking an examination or submitting an assignment on time.

4. Academic Governance

The Statutes and Ordinances of the University of Exeter are the fundamental rules and principles that govern how the University undertakes its learning and teaching. Detailed Regulations cover the operation of teaching, examinations and other matters relating to students. The Council is the University's governing body, with responsibility for institutional policies and finances, estates and legal matters. Academic governance is provided by Senate, which is responsible for teaching and learning, examinations and research. The high-level work of Council and Senate is supported through various key Committees and the Dual Assurance structure, which focuses on particular areas of the University's activity.

The University has a well-established process of annual internal institutional review of its degree classification data, with the Business Intelligence Team of its Planning, Policy and Business Intelligence Department preparing a detailed and extensive report on degree classifications over time, up to and including the preceding academic year. The report is presented to Senate, as the senior forum for academic staff to shape academic strategy and scrutinise plans and raise issues of major strategic importance to the University, as well as to Council.

It is an expectation of the UKSCQA that governing bodies or academic senates should incorporate external assurance into the preparation of their Degree Outcomes Statements. The University, therefore, made an appointment to the role of University External Academic Advisor for the Degree Outcomes Statement 2020. The appointee is an experienced Senior Academic and Dean from a Russell Group University and has provided external scrutiny, quality assurance and advice. Their written recommendations are reflected in the content and presentation of this statement.

Arrangements for teaching, learning and assessment delivered through partnership arrangements are outlined in the Academic Partnerships Handbook and the Validated and Accredited Awards that may be delivered in partnership are listed in the Regulations.

5. Classification Algorithms

Degree classification algorithms are the rules by which degree awarding bodies consistently determine the degree classification for individual final year undergraduate students. Algorithms may vary slightly from one university to another but are typically based on the weightings attributed to each stage or year of study and the final credit weighted mark achieved. The University of Exeter's approach to undergraduate degree classifications may be found in Chapter 9 of the Assessment, Progression and Awarding: Taught Programmes Handbook. More specifically the Rules for the Classification of Bachelors and Integrated Masters Degrees are set out in Section 9.4.

There have been no changes to the degree algorithms used by the University of Exeter during the period covered by this statement. The degree algorithms are applied rigorously and consistently by Discipline APACs and verified by College APACs. Any exceptions, such as Aegrotat Awards made under Ordinance 16 of the University's Regulations, must be approved by the Academic Dean for Students / Dean of the Faculty of Taught Programmes at the University APAC.

To ensure that academic standards are upheld, there are consequences for failure in individual assessments and modules, and whilst referrals and repeat study are permitted within strict limits, the maximum grades that may be achieved are capped at the pass mark of 40%. Students may, however, apply for mitigating circumstances, which if approved would permit them additional time or an additional opportunity to complete an assessment without penalty. Further information on the consequences of failure in assessment is available in Chapter 11 of the Handbook.

6. Teaching Practices and Learning Resources

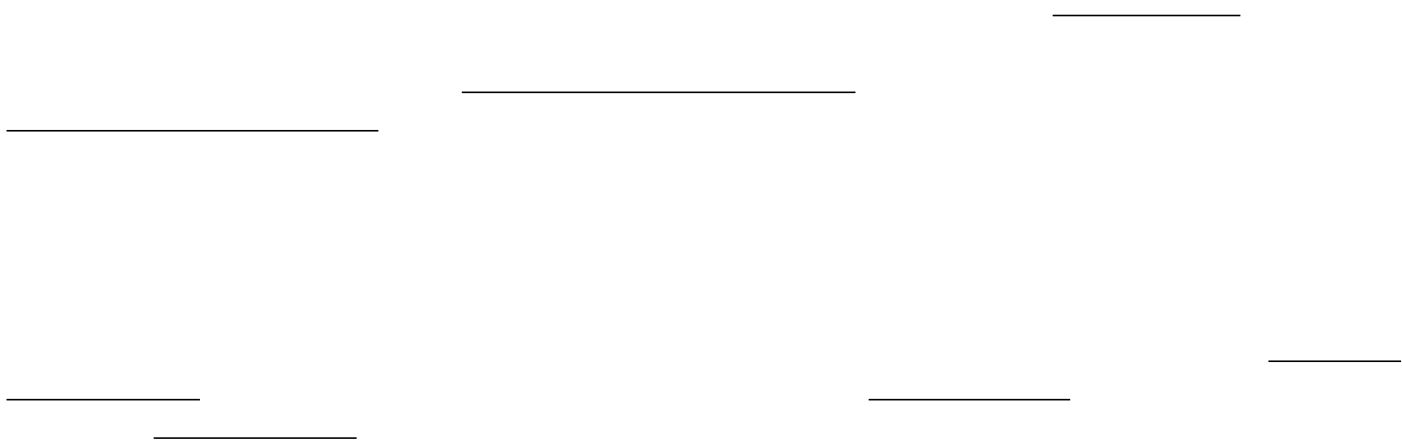
The University prides itself on its commitment to excellence in all aspects of teaching, learning and assessment. This is evidenced by the award of Gold under the provider level Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) in 2017, an award it still holds. The TEF Panel judged that University of Exeter students from all backgrounds achieve outstanding outcomes. The metrics indicated outstanding levels of student satisfaction with teaching, assessment and feedback, and academic support in all cases notably exceeding benchmarks. More information on Teaching Excellence may be found on the University's website.

Beneath this headline, the University consistently strives to enhance the quality of its teaching and learning. The cross-University work of the Teaching Quality Assurance and Enhancement Department, which provides a range of professional services to both staff and students to support the development of high quality teaching and learning, provides a good example of this and includes the:

- Programme Development Team;
- Technology Enhanced Learning Team;
- Quality and Standards Team;
- Academic Development Team (supporting teaching staff); and
- Academic Skills and Student Engagement Team (supporting students).

The University's Quality Review Framework sets out the process for the annual Quality Review of Taught Programmes. This is a multi-layered process starting with the Annual Review of Modules and culminating with the Annual Review of Colleges by the University. There are two elements within this, which focus specifically on teaching excellence and standards:

Teaching Excellence Action Plans (TEAPs) have been designed to reflect the strategic importance of teaching



7. Identifying Good Practice and Actions

7.1 Commitment to Success for All

The University's new [Education Strategy 2019-25](#) makes a commitment to delivering education and student experience of the highest international quality, and to supporting all of its students to realise their potential; this commitment is also captured in our [Access and Participation Plan](#). One of the strategy's priorities is to enhance our undergraduate offer in: the quality of learning, teaching, student support and student outcomes. The strategy also defines as a characteristic of excellence in education, [Success for All Our Students](#), underpinned commitments include: to support all students to fulfil their potential and make a positive contribution to the wider world; and to strive to eliminate gaps in access, awarding and progression to employment seen between groups defined by socioeconomic (dis)advantage, ethnicity, age, disability, gender and nationality.

The University continues to evolve its approach to delivering success for all and has augmented its leadership and governance arrangements by creating an enhanced Success for All Strategy Group, chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education), to lead this area of work from 2020-21 onwards. The Strategy Group will be supported by a series of working groups, each focusing on a key area of access, success and progression, including the BME awarding gap. Student Representatives are fully engaged with this process and the work will be further enhanced through the creation of, and appointment to, a new dedicated role of Associate Academic Dean for Students (Racial Equality and Inclusion) in 2020-21.

7.2 The Centre for Social Mobility

The University's [Centre for Social Mobility](#) is the UK's only university centre dedicated to improving social

Identifying Goodon Strategy 2019-25

7.4 Establishment of Degree Outcomes Steering Group

Chaired by the Academic Dean for Students/Dean of the Faculty of Taught Programmes, a steering group supports the annual internal review of the University's degree classifications and the preparation of the Degree Outcomes Statement. Drawing on academic and professional expertise across the University and engaging with student representatives and members of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team, this will enable a more collaborative approach to be adopted. Amongst other matters, the Steering Group will focus
