



# Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023

*Provider Submission*



## Foreword

### from the Vice-President of Education and Student Success

Delivering a transformative education for talented students from all backgrounds and from around the world is at the heart of King's vision and strategy.

I'm delighted to share that King's has been awarded an overall Silver rating for our Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023 submission. This award is underpinned by two further aspect ratings: a silver rating for student experience, deemed of very high quality and a gold rating for student outcomes deemed as typically outstanding. The outcomes from TEF 2023 will last for four years from September 2023.

The award panel specifically noted and praised our successful commitment to widening participation through the period of this assessment. They also referred to our commitment to improving areas of challenge for King's such as assessment and feedback, noting the encouraging signs of transition to better embed and tailor our approach to improving the student experience. While we should be very proud of this result and the positive feedback from the panel, we should not be complacent. Our biggest priority over the coming years is to continue this journey of transformation to ensure our students can engage, progress and succeed during their time with us and beyond.



We welcome this report as a strong endorsement that we are on the right track to continue to push ahead on areas of the student experience that require improvement.

This report and its findings are a testament to the hard work of so many in the King's community who work to improve the educational journey of our students.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adam Fagan".

**Adam Fagan**  
Vice-President of Education and Student Success

# Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023

## *Provider Submission*

## Contents

### Page

2	What is the TEF?
4	1 Educational excellence at King's College London
18	2 Student experience
50	3 Student outcomes
56	4 Educational gains
62	5 Conclusion
66	Endnotes

## What is the TEF?

The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) is a national exercise introduced by the government in England, governed by the Office for Students. The aim of the TEF is to assess excellence in teaching within higher education providers, and how this ensures positive outcomes for students in terms of graduate level employment or further study. The focus of the TEF is on undergraduate students only.

### Why is the TEF important?

By measuring the things that are important to students and to King's, the TEF:

- › Encourages universities to work with their students to develop a better student experience for all.
- › Promotes greater focus on teaching and employability outcomes.
- › Recognises excellent teaching in the higher education sector.
- › Helps students choose which university is best for them.

### How was the TEF award measured, assessed and awarded?

Each institution was assessed on their performance over the past four years (2018/19 – 2021/22) in two aspects; Student Experience and Student Outcomes. Each aspect was rated as Gold, Silver or Bronze, with the provider's overall rating being a combination of the two. For TEF2023, the OfS introduced the rating "requires improvement" where there were serious concerns about the quality of provision.

Higher Education providers were assessed against the criteria below through a number of nationally

collected core data metrics to measure the performance of providers.

**Student experience**, this included scores from the National Student Survey (NSS):

- › **Teaching**
- › **Assessment and feedback**
- › **Academic support**
- › **Learning resources**
- › **Student voice**

**Student outcomes** was based on information from Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and the Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) which records how many students gain graduate-level jobs or go onto further study. The three measures were:

- › **Continuation** – proportion of students continuing on their course or gaining a qualification beyond one year.
- › **Completion** – the proportion of students completing their course.
- › **Progression** – the proportion of students progressing to managerial or professional employment or further study.

Alongside the data, each provider had to write a 25-page narrative that:

- › Outlined the ethos of teaching and learning
- › Contextualised the data
- › Described educational gain, what a 'provider' is doing beyond the curriculum to provide opportunities that enrich students' university experience, foster a sense of community, and help them develop skills and attributes that will serve them well in life, beyond university.

KCLSU submitted an independent 10-page submission setting out students' views on the quality of their experience and outcomes. Student submissions were reviewed alongside the metrics and provider submission, to determine the award given to the university.

Ratings were determined by an independent panel of students and academics, overseen by the Office for Students (OfS).

The TEF exercise happens every four years, the next one will be in 2027.

### What do the ratings mean?

There are three ratings categories signifying increasing degrees of excellence above our minimum quality requirements – Bronze, Silver and Gold.

#### Gold

The student experience and outcomes are typically outstanding.

#### Silver

The student experience and outcomes are typically very high quality, and there may be some outstanding features.

#### Bronze

The student experience and outcomes are typically high quality, and there are some very high-quality features.

#### Requires improvement

The provider was assessed in TEF and no rating was awarded due to an absence of excellence. Improvement is required for a TEF rating.

### How, where and when will findings be published?

Our overall outcome award, along with our provider and student submission, and panel feedback has been published on the OfS website, as well as on the DiscoverUni and UCAS sites.

### What was King's awarded?

King's College London received a **Silver** award for the TEF2023 outcome. This is underpinned by two specific awards: one for student experience which was rated silver and a gold rating for student outcomes.

#### Summary headlines:

- › Within Student Experience, many of the features assessed were rated 'high quality', with student resources highlighted as a specific area of outstanding quality.
- › Across Student Outcomes, most features assessed were rated 'outstanding'.

This document details King's College London's provider TEF2023 submission sent to the OfS.





# 1

## Educational excellence at King's College London

### Page

- 8 Size, shape and diversity
- 9 In the heart of London, connected to the world
- 11 Our faculties and programmes
- 13 Our vision and education strategy
- 14 Effective leadership
- 15 High calibre staff
- 16 Excellent outcomes and improving experience



King's College London is a civic university with five campuses located in the heart of London. It is a multi-disciplinary, internationally renowned research-intensive university, ranked 35 in the world. King's delivers an exceptional education to more than 38,000 students<sup>a</sup> (more than 22,000 full-time equivalent undergraduates).

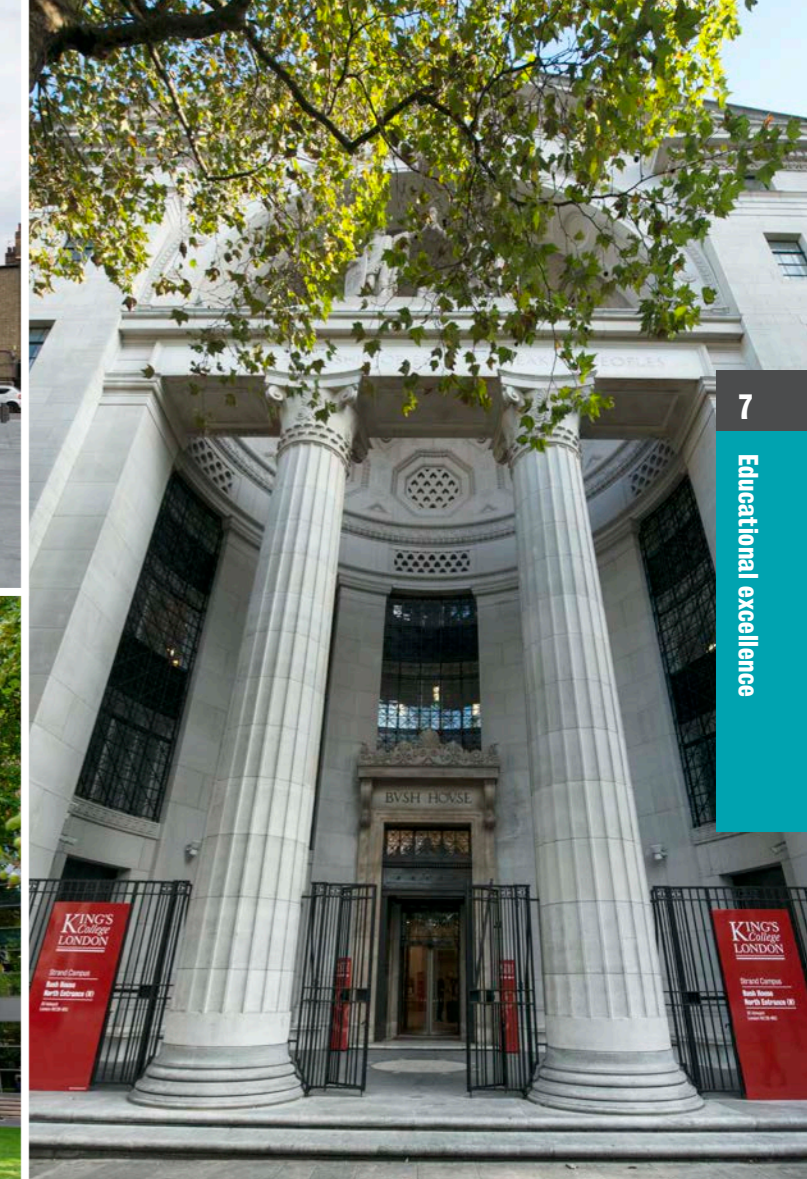
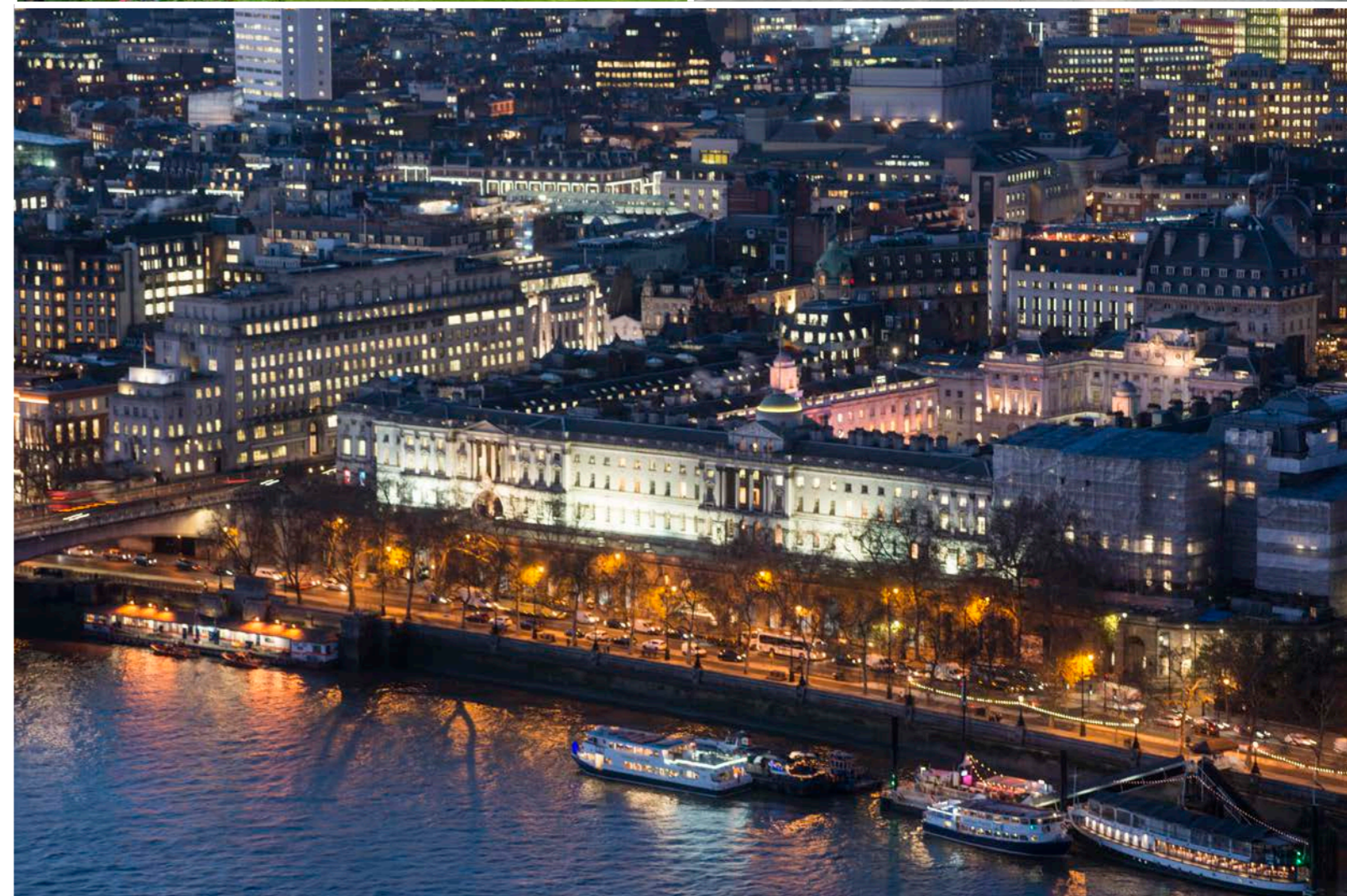
We are dedicated to driving positive and sustainable change in society and realising our vision of making the world a better place, and for nearly 200 years have been dedicated to the service of society through pioneering education and research. We bring together academic staff and practitioners who are leading experts in their fields and have a shared ambition to serve our student community and see them be successful in every sense. We attract outstanding students from diverse backgrounds, who are challenged and supported to achieve excellent outcomes.

Our ambition is to be pioneering in what we teach and how we deliver education and support. Whilst our students achieve remarkable academic and employment outcomes, their experience is in some cases less than we aspire to. Therefore, our goal is to ensure excellence across all our programmes and a level of student experience commensurate with our positive student outcomes. Working in tandem with King's College London Students' Union (KCLSU), and with groups of students from all faculties, we have co-produced robust strategies and agreed the investment and focus required to ensure that we deliver on this ambition.

## Our goal is to ensure excellence across all our programmes and a level of student experience commensurate with our positive student outcomes.

A founding member of the University of London and a member of the Russell Group, King's is ranked highly in every significant league table. We are ranked **6th in the UK (THE World University Rankings 2023)**; 37th in the world (QS World University Rankings 2023); **7th in the UK for graduate employability** (THE Global Employability University Ranking 2021); 5th in the UK, 5th in Europe and 24th in the world for delivering against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (2022 THE Impact Rankings). In the Research Excellence Framework 2021, **King's was 6th in the UK for research power**, and ranked **3rd amongst multi-faculty universities for impact**. Overall, 55.1% of research outputs were rated 4\* (world leading).

<sup>a</sup> UG, PGT and PGR





## Size, shape and diversity

In 2017 we developed Vision 2029, in response to a significant demand for a King's degree, from a diverse segment of UK and international students, we made a decision to grow in size while widening our participation.

We have achieved both. We have seen a significant increase in our undergraduate student numbers from 17,440 in 2017/18 to 21,885 in 2021/22, with non-UK domiciled students increasing from 5,960 to 8,655.

As numbers have increased, our student body has become increasingly diverse. Thanks to our commitment to widening participation (see page 25 for further information), we have significantly increased access to low-income students from 21% in 2017/18 to 36.5% in 2021/22 (ACORN – geodemographic segmentation of the UK's population, measure of socioeconomically disadvantaged areas).

Our undergraduate UK domiciled student population from black and minority ethnic backgrounds has increased from 49.6% in 2017/18 to 63.7% in 2021/22.

We have increased the amount invested in bursaries and hardship funding each year with an annual expenditure of £10.3m in 2021/22, to which we have **added an additional £3m for academic year 2022/23**, including a package of subsidised food and an emergency fund for students struggling with the cost-of-living crisis.

## In the heart of London, connected to the world

Our location in the centre of 'the best student city in the world' (according to QS Best Student Cities 2022) is key to the King's student experience.

Our proximity to Westminster, Whitehall, the Inns of Court, and the City means that during term time there is a full daily programme of events, with speakers from government, the legal world, business and finance, the arts and other universities. Many of these events are co-organised with over 300 student societies, and students are always welcome and encouraged to attend.

We regularly host political leaders past and present from across the globe.

Our connections with prestigious NHS Trusts, prominent businesses, and third-sector, cultural, arts and science organisations allow us to provide the best possible opportunities for volunteering, internships and placements.







## Our faculties and programmes

As of 2022/23, we deliver over 130 undergraduate programmes through nine faculties in:

- › Life Sciences and Medicine (c5,500 full-time equivalent undergraduates)
- › Arts and Humanities (c3,900)
- › Natural, Mathematical and Engineering Sciences (c3,500)
- › Social Science and Public Policy (c3,250)
- › Florence Nightingale Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery and Palliative Care (c1,700)
- › King's Business School (c1,650)
- › The Dickson Poon School of Law (c1,100)
- › Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience (c1,000)
- › Dentistry, Oral and Craniofacial Sciences (c900)

In 2017 as part of an intensive engagement process, we heard from both our students and applicants that whilst they appreciated the breadth of programme and module choice at King's, they found the offering complex and confusing.

In 2018 we comprehensively reviewed all our modules and programmes, led by a curriculum commission that included the KCLSU sabbatical officers who ensured that student views were represented. The driver of this multi-year-long portfolio simplification exercise was primarily quality. We removed 271 programmes with declining enrolment numbers, and where we no longer had underpinning research excellence to ensure that the content was fresh and relevant. We modified a further 61 programmes. A detailed

*Student Protection Plan* and *Student Terms and Conditions* ensured that enrolled students were not impacted as we modified programmes or phased out the programmes to be discontinued over a five-year period.

We also sought to make space for innovation – new inter-disciplinary programmes, modules, and modes of delivery – to ensure that what we offer our students now and in the future is a genuine reflection of our commitment to research-inspired education of the highest quality. We have introduced major new undergraduate programmes in psychology and business which have achieved commendable accreditations (see page 37), national and international reputations and very high levels of student satisfaction in a short period of time.

The Associate of King's College London (AKC), the original award of King's, is still popular today. It allows students to explore diverse ethical, religious and cultural perspectives alongside their main programme of study, making the ethos of "knowledge with purpose" real (see page 39).

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KING'S STRATEGIC VISION 2029

## Our vision and education strategy

Since 1829, King's has been committed to the pursuit of "knowledge with purpose," deployed to shape the modern world. We aim for King's graduates to be distinguished "not just by the content of the curriculum but by their wisdom, character, service ethic and global mindset"<sup>1</sup>.

However, our student experience, especially as reflected in the NSS, does not consistently meet our aspiration and benchmarks. When our new President took on his role 18 months ago, he made student success his number one goal in our *Strategy 2026*, and the top priority for investment for the next few years.

In close partnership with our students, we are:

- › delivering a more flexible, customisable curriculum that allows more of our students to study topics outside their primary discipline
- › embedding student mental health and wellbeing into the fabric of our teaching, learning and student support
- › enhancing inclusive education, tailored for our diverse background of students, to ensure equal participation in opportunities on offer
- › aligning all our programmes with the university's guiding principles for assessment for learning, addressing over-assessment, enabling inclusive assessment and enhancing authentic assessment for employability outcomes
- › making significant investments into the organisation and management infrastructure (timetabling, examinations etc.) and processes to deliver a simple, nimble and seamless experience for our students.

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We are enhancing inclusive education, tailored for our diverse background of students.



## Effective leadership

Our governance and leadership structure helps us balance consistency of practice across the nine faculties with a degree of necessary flexibility and diversity. We do not standardise for the sake of it.

And we never discourage disciplinary-relevant experimentation and innovative practice. Our governance also ensures maintenance of a commitment to the objectives of our education strategy.

The Vice President (Education and Student Success) – reporting directly to the President and Principal – has overall responsibility for education at King’s, supported by the Executive Director (Education and Students), and a team of vice deans of education<sup>b</sup> (one from each faculty). Our Directorate of Students and Education, led by the Executive Director (Education and Students), provides professional services support at both central and faculty level for all educational matters.

Within our faculties, departments and their education leads manage and deliver our programmes.

The College Education Committee and its sub-committees have devolved responsibility from Academic Board. The committee oversees all educational matters across the student lifecycle, including monitoring of our quality assurance framework. It is chaired by the Vice Principal (Education and Student Success) and includes faculty vice deans of education and KCLSU sabbatical officers. It reports between faculties, our student representative body and the central university executive. The committee also has responsibility for identifying and passing on best educational practice across the university.

To improve coordination and cohesion across functions and faculties, in 2020/21 we revised our senior management structure and introduced a new role: Senior Vice President (Academic). This role links education and research ambitions and shapes our academic vision and future plans.

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**We never discourage disciplinary-relevant experimentation and innovative practice.**

<sup>b</sup> Dean of Education in some faculties

## High calibre staff

We bring together academic staff and practitioners who are leading experts in their fields. They have a shared ambition to serve our student community and see them succeed in every sense.

Educational innovation and evaluation are supported by King’s Academy (13 FTE plus a further 6 newly designed posts to be filled), our developmental centre for education expertise, academic staff development, curriculum design and digital innovation. King’s staff are well represented within professional bodies for teaching and research across all disciplines, including the National Advisory Regulators, Health Education England (HEE), and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA).

Our staff have led the development of several subject benchmark and characteristic statements. King’s staff are advisory members for QAA Subject Benchmark Statements in<sup>2,3</sup>: biomedical science, chemistry, classics and ancient history, engineering, and business and management. We have four National Teaching Fellows of the Higher Education Academy alongside 15 Principal Fellows and 102 Senior Fellows.





## Excellent outcomes and improving experience

Undergraduate students at King's have access to a rich ecosystem of opportunities that allows them to make meaningful connections, follow their interests and pursue their ambitions as knowledgeable, curious, civic-minded graduates ready for further study or the global labour market.

We celebrate the diversity of both our student population and the programmes that we offer. Despite the potential risks associated with such complexity, alongside a significant increase in overall student numbers, our student outcomes are consistently high quality across all split indicators, highlighting the value of the educational gains that we provide.

We fully recognise that engaging students, capturing their voice, and involving them in genuine co-production whilst challenging, is fundamental to success. Whilst KCLSU is our official partner, we also recognise that a relative minority of students participate in university wide elections, and many more students identify with their faculties and disciplines. To address this, six of our nine faculties have embedded local student advisory councils into their educational governance structures - enabling students to inform the strategic direction of their faculty. These have resulted in positive outcomes. For example, the student advisory council in the Faculty of Social Science and Public Policy (the SSPP25), played a key role in the design of diverse assessment approaches directed to reducing attainment gaps. Further examples of such initiatives are provided on page 44.

In sum, whilst King's is renowned as a research-intensive university, it is as committed to education and student success as it is to knowledge creation. As reflected in the data, our student outcomes remain consistently very good, despite a significant increase in overall student numbers and considerable diversification of our intake. Student experience at King's is a more challenging picture.

We have some areas of good practice [King's Business School, Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, and The Dickson Poon School of Law] and have examples of innovation with evidence that we can deliver change. However, some persistent issues and weaknesses relating to Assessment and Feedback, Academic Support, and Student Voice are reflected in our NSS scores. Where we have put innovations in place, we are beginning to see an improvement in the NSS data. For example, the introduction of a range of new student support measures within King's Business School led to an **increase in NSS overall satisfaction from 73.7% in 2021, to 83.3%** the following year. We are also committed to significant investment in our core systems, training and development, and ensuring that we have strong governance to drive compliance and consistency. In the next sections we provide evidence of where we have data, engaged students, and improved experience in a number of disciplines and domains. We are confident that as we scale this ambition and approach to all our disciplines and invest the resources that are now committed, we can turn around the areas that show weaker metrics on student experience.

*Our students, through the officers of KCLSU have opted to prepare a separate, independent, submission and so have not contributed directly to this document. We have, however, shared it with them and have been providing them with guidance throughout this TEF process. We fully support this approach as it allows our students' voice to be freely heard on the issues that impact them.*







# 2

## Student experience

### Page

- 21 Student satisfaction results
- 24 Transforming the student journey
- 25 Making a King's education accessible to all is fundamental to our ethos
- 28 We provide a range of support services to ensure our students succeed
- 34 Our processes ensure our programmes are of exceptional quality
- 37 Our students learn in an exciting, challenging, intellectual environment
- 40 Our students benefit from excellent learning resources
- 44 Our student voice informs change
- 46 Our teaching excellence is rooted in staff professional development
- 48 A summary of the approach we took during the Covid pandemic



Our undergraduate students benefit from a transformative university education with experiences inside and outside the classroom.

They are exposed to cutting-edge research and the latest developments in their academic disciplines. And they're part of a community that supports and inspires the co-creation of knowledge by research-active staff and students. But students gain more from their time at King's than subject knowledge. On page 58, we show how we view educational gain as the output from the synergy that occurs between academic programmes and co-curricular activities.

Our very good continuation, completion and progression metrics show that teaching and assessment methods at King's are rigorous and impactful. All our external partners, from professional bodies to external examiners, applaud us for the rigorous standards we uphold and for how we prepare our graduates for life beyond university.

**We view educational gain as the output from the synergy that occurs between academic programmes and co-curricular activities.**



## Student satisfaction results

In the NSS 2022, 78% of our students report that they were satisfied with the teaching on their course (within 2% of the sector and 3% of the Russell Group benchmark). There was also a significant improvement in satisfaction results for learning resources, which increased by 6.6% to 80% (within 1% of the sector and 2% of the Russell Group benchmark).

At 5% above the sector average, **82% of students agreed that library resources at King's have supported their learning well.** The 2022 survey also recorded that:

- 82% of students agreed staff are good at explaining things
- 84% of students agreed their course is intellectually stimulating (1% above sector average)

- 81% of students agreed their course has provided opportunities to bring information and ideas together from different topics
- 79% of students agreed their course has provided opportunities to explore ideas or concepts in depth.

Whilst we have underperformed in some aspects of the NSS, we have been delivering significant improvement and responding decisively where student feedback highlights a problem, the best





examples being in new programmes recently introduced in the King's Business School, and the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience. In both cases there has been a significant increase in overall satisfaction between 2020/21 and 2021/22 (up 9.6% and 6.8% to 83% and 88% respectively), whilst our Dickson Poon School of Law achieved an increase in satisfaction rates across every section of the NSS survey.

Our assessment and feedback, student voice, and academic support NSS scores are below the benchmark. To improve in these areas, we are delivering accurate and dynamic timetables along with clear programme information to students. We are working to ensure that all programmes embed assessment for learning and deliver feedback to students that is both timely and empowering. We are improving communication with our students, and we have made accessing university and programme information simpler. Over the next 3 years, we will also make more effective use of student data to share information, maximise opportunities, remove obstacles to learning, and enable as many King's students as possible to make full use of the curricular and extra-curricular resources we provide.

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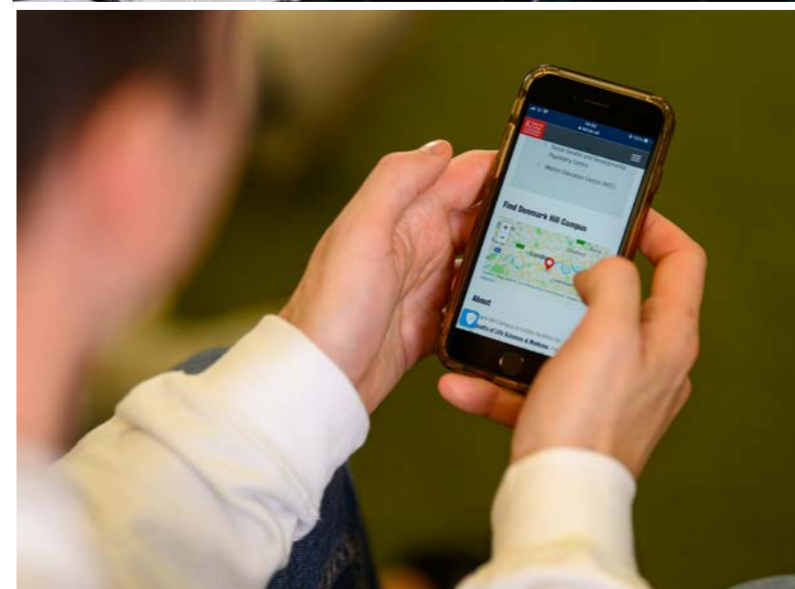
**We have launched a new student app in September 2022 that has already transformed communication.**

We are introducing a new Curriculum Management System that will support all types of educational offering (taught and research, executive education and short courses). This will allow us to collect and store all curriculum data to provide a comprehensive single source of truth for all curriculum information. Programmes will be administered more efficiently, assessments will be mapped to learning outcomes, and students will benefit from consistent and accurate module information. We have also made significant investment in King's Academy, including appointment of a new Director, to ensure that there is the expertise and capacity to support programme leads to revise assessment schedules for all undergraduate degrees.

We have launched a new student app in September 2022 that has already transformed communication of essential information such as timetables and student records to our students. So far, over 6,000 undergraduates are using the app.

At a department and module level there are excellent results spread across the faculties. Areas with overall satisfaction at or above 85% include Accounting & Finance, Economics & Management, History & International Relations, Pharmacology, Politics, Psychology, Sport & Exercise Medical Sciences, and War Studies. In many of these cases, improvement reflects a university-level ambition to work with staff and students to co-design strategies for change.

Although significant challenges remain to improve key elements of our students' university experience, we have, through an extensive listening exercise, gained an in-depth understanding of exactly what needs to be done, how, and where.





## Transforming the student journey

Many of the persistent issues that students raise relate to some of our operating systems and associated ways of working. Investment in key professional services has not kept pace with the considerable growth in student numbers.

We are addressing this through a major education transformation programme to address our weaknesses relating to the student experience. We have recently appointed an Executive Director for Transformation of Education and Student Outcomes to lead the programme, which is a top priority for the senior executive of the university.

The transformation programme is being supported by an initial investment package of £13.3 million in its first two years, with an estimated investment of £40-60 million over the subsequent three years. When complete, students will enjoy a user-friendly, digitally enabled, personalised experience. And staff will benefit from clear efficiency gains, giving them more time to focus on work that adds value to students.

We also recognise that certain student groups, for example Asian students, do not view the quality of teaching they receive as highly as other student groups. We are addressing this in partnership with our students, through initiatives such as a university-wide programme on inclusive education led by the Student Transition and Outcomes team, and the appointment of two inclusive education student partners in each faculty responsible for working with staff to draw up action plans.

While the pandemic stopped many aspects of our transformation as we focused on moving most of our teaching and assessment online and placing our medical, dental, nursing, physiotherapy and dietetic students in practice, we learnt a great deal.



With no face-to-face exams, we fast-tracked our move to programme-level assessment, online assessments, as well as the use of digital resources to support teaching and learning. All this injected new momentum into our transformation programme.

Despite recent challenges, including prolonged periods of industrial action, we are confident that we provide an excellent student experience. Over the following pages we lay out the basis for that conclusion. We start with our commitment to making university education more accessible. We then move through how we support students during that transition from school to university and throughout their time at university. And we end with information on how our investment in physical and digital resources, alongside staff development, enhances the quality of our programmes.

## Making a King's education accessible to all is fundamental to our ethos

We seek to provide our graduates with a well-rounded student experience and support that helps them develop the skills that they need for life after graduation. This begins by promoting access to study at King's and providing foundational academic support.

The percentage of undergraduate students from widening participation (WP) backgrounds enrolled at King's in 2018/19 was 38% rising to 48% in 2021/22, and in 2020/21 this reached 50%<sup>4</sup>. This includes students from low-income families, areas of low university participation, and some black and minority ethnic backgrounds, as well as students who are care-experienced, estranged, forced migrants, or young carers. **The number of students graduating from our WP programmes and enrolling at King's has increased by 78%, from 140 in 2018/19 to 249 in 2020/21.** Our split metrics for all these groups are in line with, or exceed, our high benchmarks for continuation, completion and progression.



### Social Mobility & Widening Participation department programmes

With a total budget of over £2 million a year, this department oversees two sector-leading programmes:

#### Scholars+

This programme provides GCSE tutoring in English and Maths. Initial evidence from piloting suggests that students exceed their teacher predictions at GCSE by at least one grade.

#### K+

Scholars+ students can then enrol on our second key programme at A-level. K+ has been running for 12 years and is our flagship two-year development programme for Year 12 and 13 pupils in London and Essex who have the potential to study at Russell Group universities. Successful applicants gain knowledge of subjects they're interested in as well as a unique insight into being a student at King's. They also receive support in boosting A-level results while developing connections with other students. Over the census period, **1,360 students have been through the programme, with over 80% of them receiving an offer to study at King's.** Those who come to King's are supported through a bursary scheme that helps fund the resources they need for successful transition into university. Over the census period this has amounted to a total funding of over £900k.





### Extended Medical Degree Programme (EMDP)

This programme addresses the under-representation of students from non-selective state schools at medical school. This more gradual transition into our medical degree, with added academic, pastoral and financial support in the early years, is one of the largest and longest-running programmes in the UK. It was established in 2001 and has over 650 graduates.

- › Around **90% of students are from black and minority ethnic backgrounds** compared to 50% on our standard MBBS programme
- › 85-90% of EMDP students are from households <£40K income
- › approximately 90% are the first in their family to go to HE
- › completion rates are similar to the standard medical (MBBS) programme (EMDP 96% vs standard MBBS 98%).

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**Over 2,000 Foundation students have progressed to undergraduate programmes at King's since 2016, contributing to our excellent outcomes for non-UK students.**

### Contextual offers

Our commitment to broadening access to King's is also evident through our increasing use of contextual offers – to over 2,000 in 2021/22 across most undergraduate programmes. These efforts, alongside the outreach work of our Schools Liaison team, have increased the number of students from underrepresented backgrounds accessing the university.

### King's Foundation Programme

The King's Foundation Programme is our one-year specialist provision to prepare international students who want to study an undergraduate degree in the UK yet have only completed the equivalent of 12 years' secondary education. With nine tailored pathways introducing them to UK higher education, students can develop their subject knowledge and academic English. Over 2,000 Foundation students have progressed to undergraduate programmes at King's since 2016, contributing to our excellent outcomes for non-UK students (where our split metrics exceed benchmarks for continuation and completion).

### King's Broadening Horizons Awards

These awards jointly launched in 2015 with the Widening Participation Department, are aimed at increasing the number of students from disadvantaged backgrounds who can access the mobility opportunities available at King's. Successful applicants receive funding to help support their participation in year or semester long opportunities, be they study or work abroad, volunteering, health programme electives, a research visit, a summer school or one of our bespoke summer cultural trips. Over 260 eligible students were supported to participate in overseas opportunities, with an average award of over £500 per student between 2018 and 2022.



## We provide a range of support services to ensure our students succeed

As our student population has increased and diversified, so has our provision and support for new students.

Many 'first in family' students, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds, do not have a clear picture of what studying at university involves. We therefore need to make sure they're properly supported from the moment they accept a place at King's.

While our TEF Indicator for Academic Support is below benchmark at 69%, some areas of the university have markedly improved in this aspect. For example, in NSS 2022, Film Studies, Biomedical Engineering and Imaging Sciences, Law, and Psychology all achieved scores above 75%. We are proactively sharing best practice from these departments across the university, guided by our Associate Director of NSS and PTES Strategy. Further progress can be seen in our module evaluation data: **in 2021/22, 78% of students were satisfied with the academic support they received<sup>5</sup>**. Our challenges partly reflect the increasingly complex and difficult life circumstances of our students – compounded by the impacts of the pandemic – that require support outside the classroom. For example, over the past four years, we have seen a year-on-year increase in the number of Student of Concern referrals, from 494 in 2018/19 to 1,636 in 2021/22, whilst last year, 10,460 undergraduates submitted mitigating circumstances requests, up from 9,120 the previous year.

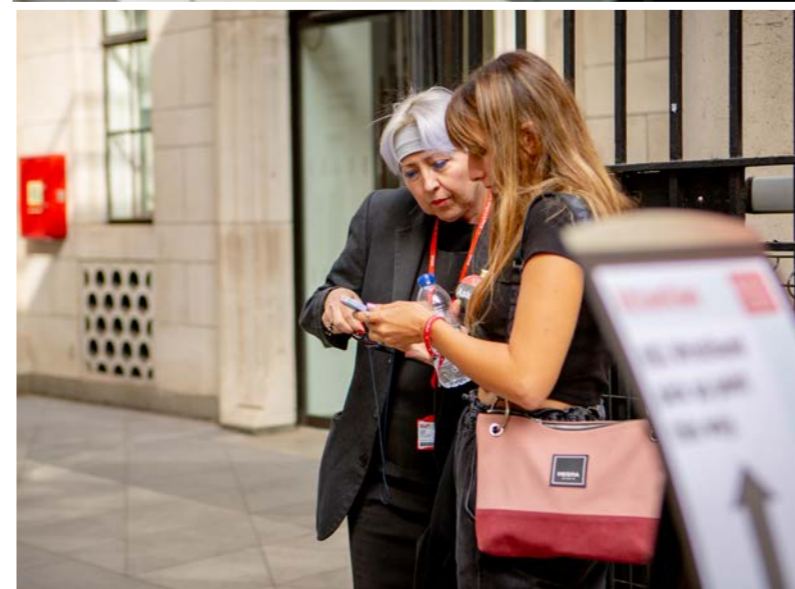
### Induction at King's

Our own research into students starting university has informed our practice. Extensive research since 2019 by the What Works team in our Social Mobility & Widening Participation department revealed

two major findings. The first is that most students identify with their programme rather than their department, faculty or university. And the second is that the first year is critical for students establishing their self-efficacy and sense of belonging. Before joining us, all new students get access to the online resource *Starting your studies at King's* to work through at their own pace. Launched in 2021, this was developed by staff and students across five departments and brings together videos, key infographics and activities on academic, language, library, study and digital skills. While we wait for the outcomes of formal evaluation, our data shows that the resource is highly popular with students, seeing over 9,600 unique visits from August to October 2021, from a starting cohort of 14,500.

All new students engage in a programme of induction activities that range from university wide to bespoke programme sessions. Our international students can also attend a series of online and on-campus events to support their transition. *International Orientation<sup>6</sup>* provides an opportunity to meet other students, become part of the King's community and find out more about life in London.

**The first year is critical for students establishing their self-efficacy and sense of belonging.**







### Supporting those without support

Through the *Stand Alone Pledge* we've committed to helping students who are studying without the support or approval of their families. We have developed a bespoke package of support for care-experienced, estranged and forced migrant learners (around 200 per year) to give them a positive university experience from admission to graduation. This includes:

- › a self-identification task during enrolment to identify students at the earliest opportunity
- › a buddy programme
- › additional financial support (an annual non-means tested bursary of £1,000 plus additional funding for study abroad opportunities or post-graduate study at King's)

- › year-round accommodation for the duration of their degree programme
- › access to internship opportunities
- › a specialist careers service which includes bespoke events and appointments with a WP careers consultant

### Rethinking the first year

As part of our Education Strategy, we have made the first year of study a transitional year to reduce the pressure our students feel in entering an unfamiliar environment. Results no longer count towards the final degree classification, and students can compensate up to 30 credits (from a total of 120) without impacting their progression.

To develop a more flexible curriculum and foster a

greater sense of belonging, we are piloting a *King's First Year – Gateway to King's* module, with civic engagement and service-learning elements. This will support the transition of students regardless of their chosen degree. We intend to launch this across the university from 2024/25.

### New measures will improve and strengthen personal tutoring at King's.

Our Personal Tutor Portal provides online access to resources tutors need to support their students. Resources embed inclusive practice in their design and are developed by our central personal tutoring team and colleagues across the university.

We have strengthened and developed the role of senior tutor in departments to ensure much more comprehensive monitoring of students' academic progress and overall university experience and welfare. The senior tutor oversees and supports the personal tutors and ensures consistency and good practice. Senior tutors across the university share best practice and discover new university initiatives through our Senior Tutors Forum. Personal tutor training is delivered as a module on our online teaching and learning environment (KEATS<sup>2</sup>) with departments able to access bespoke, face-to-face training sessions with wellbeing and welfare advisors. We are also piloting new personal tutor models, including in King's Business School professional tutors employed solely to support first year undergraduate students, which over the past two years has produced a five-fold increase in meetings between students and their tutors.

### Effective transition into and through study

Our King's Academic Skills for Learning resource provides students with support, activities and

c King's E-Learning and Teaching Service

guidance to develop independent learning skills and academic literacies. Available from the point of induction and throughout their programme, it includes self-study resources, interactive workshops<sup>7</sup> and one-to-one appointments with specialist tutors trained in academic literacy and learning<sup>8</sup>. During 2021/22 28,000 students (UG and PGT) enrolled on the resource site. In our most recent survey (September 2022) over 95% of students that attended during induction stated that they found the preparatory workshop useful for starting their studies and that they better understood academic expectations. Our Library team also provide a suite of e-learning tutorials to support students with referencing and the use of bibliographic software<sup>9</sup>.

### Disability Support and Inclusion

This team supports all students with a disability who face barriers to studying. Students work with one of our disability advisers to draw up a King's Inclusion Plan (KIP)<sup>10</sup> outlining what they need, such as specialist software, extended library loans or access to subject specialist study skills support. Where adjustments to assessments are required, we provide Personalised Assessment Arrangements (PAA), which might include extra time, rest breaks, specialist seating, or in some cases alternative forms of assessments. The KIP and PAA are forwarded to the student's academic department who are responsible for ensuring the agreed support is put in place.

This means that the outcomes of our disabled students (92.4%) are in-line with our benchmark (92.9%). The Disability Support and Inclusion team provide a disability perspective on strategic committees and working groups and ensure inclusive and accessible practice is embedded across teaching and learning, including our physical and digital estate.





## Mental health and wellbeing

Supporting our students' mental health and wellbeing has been a priority since we signed the *Time to Change* pledge in 2014. We have embedded this in *Vision 2029*, our *Education Strategy 2017-22*, and our recently launched *Strategy 2026*.

In 2018, we established a committee to develop our *Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy* and turn strategic priorities into meaningful changes for students. We have expanded our Counselling and Mental Health team to provide a pyramid of support that is integral to the strategy. We have created two leadership roles (a Head of Counselling and an Associate Director of Counselling and Mental Health Support) and hired 5.5 FTE counselling psychologists/mental health advisors. We have also recruited 12 FTE wellbeing and welfare advisors based within our faculties to provide local support to students and personal tutors. As a result of this growing investment in a holistic approach, we have reduced the appointment wait time for students referred for counselling to less than three weeks, or 24 hours in urgent cases.

We have seen a significant increase in students reporting mental health concerns. Our current mechanisms work well once we are aware of the issue, but we feel strongly that we must better understand the reasons behind these concerns. From February 2022, we carried out a *King's Mental Health and Wellbeing Survey*, developed by our Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, to measure mental wellbeing of our students across the whole institution. We had 4,695 student responses, around 10% of the student population at the time.

The data are being used to focus our mental health and wellbeing services in the right areas. For instance, we have transformed our Student of Concern process from focusing on students with reported serious mental health issues to acting as a single point of access, triaging for referral to

areas like welfare or financial hardship. Each week the student services management team meet and discuss cases that require multidisciplinary support. This change means that students get the holistic and personalised support they need, both short and long term.

In addition, the work has led to the expansion of the 'Time to Thrive' programme, initially available to postgraduate students, but now available to all taught students. The programme was designed in collaboration with students to help them build their understanding around wellbeing, learn strategies to develop resilience, set goals and promote social connectedness.

Physical activity is an important aspect of overall wellbeing. King's Sport has become King's Sport and Wellness to emphasise their focus on wellbeing, with recent initiatives including *Move Your Mind* and an *Active Wellness Scheme* supported by the opening of the Wellness Centre and Clinic.

King's Sport and Wellness offers gyms, sports clubs and their BeActive programme of social and recreational activities. In the past year over 9,500 students engaged with these opportunities. The department also provides student placements, research collaborations and career development opportunities. Our commitment to innovation, inclusion, sustainability and improving the health of our university community, including the student experience and outcomes, has been recognised by Quest – UK Quality Scheme for Sport and Leisure (Excellence Award, 2022), The Federation of International Sports Universities (Platinum, 2022) and UK Active (Highly Commended, 2019).

We have also developed a 'King's Move' app<sup>11</sup> where activities such as walking, running, cycling or swimming lead to points that can be redeemed for rewards such as hot drinks in our cafés, gym day passes or a King's clothing.



## Our processes ensure our programmes are of exceptional quality

New programmes and changes to existing programmes are first considered by faculties, taking account of student views, and then by the Programme Development and Approval Sub-Committee.

The programme team then fully develops the programme and modules, in line with our *Education Strategy*. Students and external specialists contribute to approvals and reviews, ensuring the programme meets sector standards such as the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualification of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies, QAA subject benchmark statements, and QAA characteristic statements. The Faculty Education Committee give final approval when the programme and its modules meet the required standards<sup>12</sup>.

### Improving policies and practice for assessment and feedback

Like many across the sector, our lowest NSS scores are for assessment and feedback. Where we have introduced new approaches and worked in tandem with our students, there is evidence of impact to be found in our data. For example, in 2020, King's Business School introduced a new marking and assessment framework for all students and programmes, plus a comprehensive revision to delivering feedback. In the 2022 NSS, the score for Assessment and Feedback rose by 11% to 57%.

We aim to give all students constructive feedback in a timely manner. Our policy is a maximum four-week turnaround for summative feedback, supported by extensive feedback on formative work. External examiners' reports often note the high quality of feedback, showing this is an area in which we continue to improve. After the pandemic, we have redoubled our efforts to change our policies and

practices across the university and build on best practice that already exists within faculties.

Our annual module evaluations with granular, termly data show higher scores for assessment and feedback than in NSS. These scores have been steadily increasing over the past four years<sup>13</sup>: in 2018/19 these overall scores were 70.0% and in 2021/22 were 76.5%.

As part of *Strategy 2026*, we are reducing the summative assessment burden by moving to an assessment for learning approach, ensuring intended learning outcomes are appropriately assessed. The pandemic delayed progress on assessment mapping as we moved to online assessments, but we have resumed this work.

Our *Assessment for Learning Toolkit*<sup>14</sup>, collated by King's Academy in 2018, is an evidence-based information hub based on the framework developed by Sambell, McDowell, and Montgomery<sup>15</sup>. It provides resources that enhance assessment and feedback and is used by others across the sector, including University College London and Manchester Metropolitan. There are currently 31 case studies of innovative and best assessment practice from across King's<sup>16,17</sup>.

### Students have played a key role in changing our assessment practices

In response to student feedback, we have revised the university's marking framework<sup>18</sup> (to take effect



this year) to enhance rigour and clarity of double marking and introduce revised marking criteria that reflect the new QAA Level 6 Qualification Descriptors. We use a range of assessment approaches such as music recitals, Objective Structured Clinical/Practical Examinations (OSCEs and OSPEs), blog or vlog production. This ensures that assessment is authentic and academically robust. We are piloting a step-marking scheme for essays with bands instead of the 0-100% scale which implies an unreasonable degree of accuracy.

We have involved students at all stages of the process. For example, in 2020, 'SSPP25' co-created a revised marking and assessment policy that was piloted in three departments (War Studies, Global Health, International Development). In all three this resulted in an improvement in NSS 2022 results for assessment and feedback (an increase of 13%, 8%, and 2%, to 74%, 63% and 68% respectively). Given the full extent to which students were involved in designing the new framework in the Department

of War Studies, it is perhaps unsurprising that the 2022 NSS results also recorded a jump from 55% to 68% for 'student voice'. The new policy has now been adopted across the Faculty.

Students noted in module evaluations that they did not fully understand the criteria used in marking their work so this is another area we're focusing on. Our Business School tested the clarity of the language used in their marking rubrics through ten student focus groups. They identified language that students found problematic and discussed changes that could improve understanding. This work led to a glossary of terminology aimed at 640 students, 73% of whom downloaded a copy within the first three weeks of the module starting. We're introducing this approach across the university via rubric champions in each faculty, who will support staff and help students understand rubrics and their meanings in assessments. A book chapter is due to be released in September 2023 to impact beyond King's<sup>19</sup>.





Following a survey with over 1,350 responses, in 2019/20 KCLSU led a *Scrap the Cap* campaign to reduce the penalty on coursework submitted within 24 hours of a deadline. A group co-chaired by KCLSU proposed a penalty of 10 numerical marks instead of a cap at the pass mark of 40%. Students welcomed the change which was approved by our College Education Committee in January 2021.

Students and educators from medicine and dentistry, alongside colleagues in the IT department, developed a King's e-portfolio which launched in August 2020. Students at clinical placement sites can now complete their portfolio online and their clinical supervisors can monitor progress across clinical activity, simulation and assessments. It has since been adopted for nursing and midwifery, so that all health faculty students are supported in their competence assessments and transition into the Health Education England postgraduate workplace.

We're working with students on a revised mitigating circumstances policy that acknowledges our increasingly complex and challenging times and recognises a shift in the demographics of students. We improved our mitigating circumstances framework in 2020 so students can submit requests online and faculties have guidance on how to deal with requests. This has reduced the processing and response time, ensured consistency across the university and provided accurate data on the number and types of circumstances being reported. We're now moving into the next phase that will allow us to give pre-emptive and pro-active support to students who need a wider range of services. Working with our students ensures our processes are student-centred, fair and transparent.

## Our students learn in an exciting, challenging, intellectual environment

Our score for the NSS question "teaching is intellectually stimulating" has ranged from 84 to 87% agreement over the past four years. To keep stretching our students, one of our strategic goals is to develop a flexible curriculum with study topics outside of primary disciplines.

We have started with a range of interdisciplinary modules including *Black In The Union Jack*, *Black Lives In Modern London*, *Sustainability and Climate*, *Investigating the Colonial Past of King's*, and *Gender, Sex and Sexuality*.

We evaluate programme quality through programme approvals and reviews by external examiners, external specialists and external peers and through the professional statutory and regulatory bodies which accredit over 70 of our undergraduate programmes. These include the General Medical and Dental Councils, Institute of Physics, the British Psychological Society, and the Royal Geographical Society. Recently King's Business School achieved accreditation by both the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business and EQUIS<sup>d</sup> in short succession. This confirms that our programmes offer rigour, are of high quality, allow students to develop skills and are taught by passionate and knowledgeable subject leaders:

*"...the panel was impressed with range of clinical experience that each student carried out. In addition, the clinical facilities and the nursing support available to all students in the dental hospital was considered to be excellent. The panel also noted the training and support that KCL made available to their staff, and the students spoken to provided positive feedback on the support they received from staff as they*

*progressed through the programme"* General Dental Council, January 2019 accreditation<sup>20</sup>

Employers contribute to the undergraduate curriculum in several ways, for example through departmental advisory boards or through professional bodies such as the General Medical Council. We also have a wider Employer Advisory Board, who work with our careers service to keep our knowledge of employer expectations up to date. We have embedded employability in the curriculum by requiring that modules and programmes reflect the Knowledge, Attributes, Skills, and Experiences (KASE) employers need. These were identified by our Careers and Employability team, working directly with employers, and formalised in our KASE framework. Students use the framework throughout their degree to work on their career development.

King's is renowned as a research-intensive university. But we are as committed to education and student success as we are to knowledge creation. Our research-informed modules and programmes are taught by world-leading researchers, industry experts and healthcare professionals. We make our research a tangible benefit for all our students through opportunities such as advanced undergraduate projects in research laboratories, core and elective modules with research components, capstone dissertations, research methods training and industry placements.

<sup>d</sup> European Foundation for Management Development Quality Improvement System





Students collaborate with staff on research projects through our King's *Undergraduate Research Fellowships* scheme (see page 59) and during summer studentships in our research labs.

In the health schools, our Academic Health Sciences Centre, King's Health Partners (KHP), includes King's College, Guy's, St Thomas' and Maudsley hospitals. It offers enormous opportunities to improve patient care by integrating clinical education with research. Our students engage with pathways from fundamental scientific discovery through to clinical trials and health services research.

We are confident that our students gain clear benefit from being immersed in our research environment.

**Our students are provided with a range of learning experiences beyond the classroom**

Our Associate of King's College London award<sup>21</sup> shows our commitment to an international, interdisciplinary, and innovative curriculum<sup>22</sup>. The modern AKC offers an inclusive, research-led programme of lectures and allows students to explore diverse religious and cultural perspectives alongside their main programme. Around 5,620 undergraduate students completed the AKC between 2019 and 2022.

Being in London allows us to connect with a host of organisations that enhance our students' learning. Alongside public and private sector employers we have collaborations with many cultural organisations. Our cultural teams broker and deliver internships and other opportunities for students as part of creative collaborations, events and exhibitions and we have teaching collaborations with the British Museum, British Library, the Science Museum, the Globe Theatre, the Royal Archives and Tate Modern.

**Our Associate of King's College London award shows our commitment to an international, interdisciplinary, and innovative curriculum.**

Beyond voluntary student activities, *Vision 2029* embeds "service to society" into the curriculum. Students can enrich their degree with modules that serve a local community. In our Faculty of Dentistry, Oral and Craniofacial Sciences, the *Clinical Humanities & Wellbeing* module includes 30 hours of volunteering. By the end of 2022, 1200 students will have completed this module. In the Department of Geography, the *Sustainability in Practice* module allows students from across the university to address real-world sustainability problems with local partners such as Transport for London and Westminster City Council.

All our faculties offer the opportunity to spend either a semester or a full academic year abroad studying at one of our partner institutions. Around 475 students choose to study across 26 countries each year. The pandemic disrupted such opportunities, but many partners arranged for our students to take modules online alongside students in their institutions, widening their skills, experience and networks.

Despite a global decline in language learning, our King's Language Centre offers modules in 27 different languages, from beginner to near native level, that students can take as part of their degree. Over the four-year period, 7,345 undergraduate students took optional language modules. Other students (and staff) chose to study a language as an evening class, either online or on campus.



## Our students benefit from excellent learning resources

We're proud of the physical and virtual resources at all five of our campuses, that ensure our students have access to a wide and readily available range of outstanding facilities tailored to programmes.

Our indicator for the learning resources metric (80.8% satisfaction, in line with a benchmark of 82.3%) demonstrates students' satisfaction with this provision. High-quality learning environments include wet and dry labs, moot courts for law students, lecture theatres that can be transformed for performances or events, simulation centres, computer labs, and a state-of-the-art Finance and Trading Room for business students.

We have excellent library facilities across the five campuses with subject-specific resources and help from staff, including a 24/7 chat service. Students also have access to other University of London and Senate House libraries. Our libraries are open 7 days a week and, at key times of the year, 24 hours a day. Students can book group study rooms and assistive technology rooms and access world-class resources through our reading list service and system, including our accredited Archival Collection and Special Collections. We have over 220 laptops available for loan in our libraries and over 1,530 student PCs across our campuses.

Students help design and deliver our library services, gaining valuable employment and experience. Libraries & Collections use targeted user experience interventions, organise seasonal feedback campaigns (*Festive Feedback Trees*) and the annual Library Champions programme, with students and library staff collaborating on projects related to specific aspects of our libraries. Recently, Digital Humanities students, as part of their *User-Centred Research* module, undertook qualitative research projects involving library

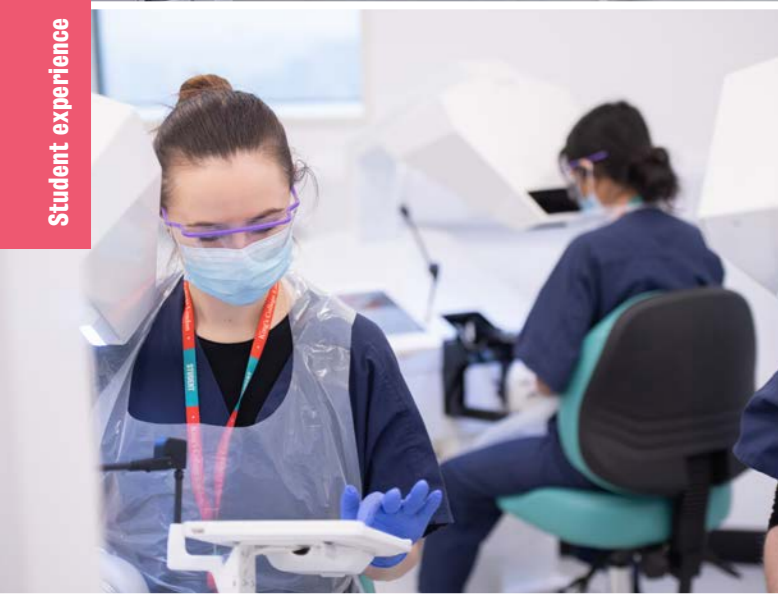
spaces and services. This has resulted in extended opening hours, work to improve signage, increased visibility of resources and guidance for staff on how to de-colonise reading lists. Learning through these projects is shared on the service improvement blog, *Library Loop*<sup>23</sup>.

Our Centre for Technology Enhanced Learning transforms and improves the digital experience for staff and students across the university by delivering innovation and expertise in learning technologies. They collaborated with stakeholders including KCLSU to launch the Essential Digital skills programme in 2020. This fully online, self-paced programme is aimed at new students (but open to all) and teaches the digital skills required to succeed at King's and thrive in the digital world. As of September 2022, 4,373 students have enrolled on the programme, with just under one million interactions. Students who complete the programme receive a digital certificate as part of their *Higher Education Achievement Report*. Feedback shows that the programme has had a positive impact, with around 80% agreeing that they use these skills daily, have more confidence in the digital world, and feel motivated to continue using skills.

As part of our *Education Strategy*, all students have free access to a LinkedIn online training library of over 16,000 courses with high-quality, current, and engaging video tutorials. Courses are created by industry experts and range from beginner to advanced. Between 2019 and 2022, over 5,000 undergraduate students engaged with 28,778







elements of LinkedIn learning content, primarily to develop technical (hard) skills. The most popular courses (*Internet Safety for Students, Information Literacy, Digital Citizenship, and Excel Essential Training for Microsoft 365*), are now part of our *Essential Digital Skills* programme.

**We have made strategic investments to transform physical spaces, facilities and resources**

We've committed to ambitious carbon reduction targets across our estate. We're incorporating these into an estates masterplan supporting new pedagogic approaches, ways of working and student requirements, funded by significant capital investment. The design working group includes our Disability Support and Inclusion team to ensure we meet the needs of students with disabilities. Student consultation and representation on project boards lets us engage students throughout the project design and implementation.

Recent developments include:

**Chantler SaLL (Simulation and Interactive Learning) Clinical Skills Centre at Guy's Campus**

Completed in 2019 at a cost of £1.1million, this is a digitally enabled simulation suite for clinical education with mock healthcare environments and training facilities. The Centre uses advanced audio-visual electronic equipment, including computerised manikins, which allow students to develop their practical competencies, give and receive feedback and evaluate the teaching sessions.

**Redevelopment of the King's Building Quad**

Completed in 2022 at a cost of £46m, this resulted in better campus infrastructure, including improved social space for students. A new state-of-the art collaborative teaching and research space for the department of Engineering includes:

- › increased number of laboratories with cutting-edge research facilities
- › two maker spaces fitted with tools and equipment allowing students to move from theory through problem solving to prototype creation
- › fabrication labs with heavier equipment that allow students to build complex projects
- › design and build space that acts as a hub for all students on the Strand Campus

**Equipment in the Faculty of Dentistry, Oral & Craniofacial Sciences**

A £3million investment funded high-fidelity phantom-head dental simulators and virtual haptic machines that simulate physical touch. This gives students a complete digital clinical workflow from intra-oral scanning of real patients, to practising procedures using advanced augmented reality. King's teaching staff help at every stage by providing demonstrations, real-world experiential context, and immediate feedback within laboratory-based clinical sessions. The faculty was the first dental school in the UK to successfully integrate a seamless clinical digital learning environment across all its facilities. The simulation suite won the *Technological or Digital Innovation of the Year* prize for 2021, *Times Higher Education*<sup>24</sup>, and is informing practice at other dental training institutions and trusts.



## Our student voice informs change

We have a close working relationship with our students' union, KCLSU. Our *Memorandum of Understanding* outlines how we work together, and our triennial *Relationship Agreement* defines priority areas for strategic focus<sup>25</sup> with termly reports to the University Executive.

A key initiative has been the recent launch of a new Student Voice Partnership Agreement, that provides a framework for reviewing, designing, and delivering representation practices across the university. We hold regular meetings between KCLSU Sabbatical Officers, the Vice Principal (Education and Student Success), and the Executive Director (Education and Students). The CEO of KCLSU is a member of the University Executive.

Students can make their views known through multiple channels, raising concerns and engaging in co-creative discussions that enhance their education. These include:

- › committees from departmental through to university level, including College Education Committee (and its sub-committees), Academic Board, and College Council
- › Staff:Student Liaison Committees (SSLCs) for every programme that includes elected course representatives from all year groups
- › surveys such as module evaluation, National Student Survey, wellbeing survey
- › representation on working groups
- › periodic programme reviews, both through membership of review panels and by meeting

the panel to discuss their experiences on the programme<sup>26</sup>

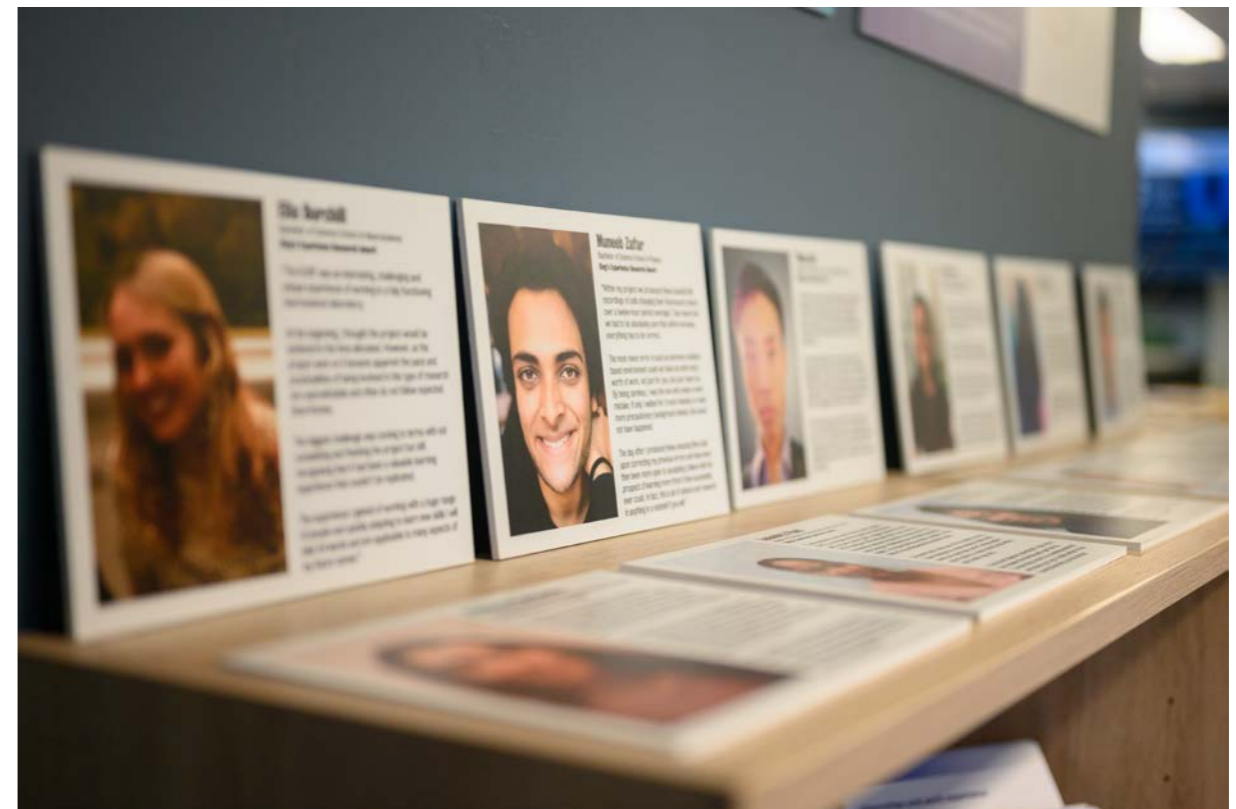
- › student panels such as King's 100, KBS20<sup>e</sup> Student Advisory Council, SSPP<sup>f</sup>25 Panel, Digital Education Student Committee

In 2018/19 we introduced our King's 100 – a panel of one hundred students from across our community who are strategic partners in the development of initiatives that impact our students' experience. For example, since its introduction they have been involved in the development of the flexible curriculum and a review of our marking framework.

*"King's 100 made me aware of the power our student body has in changing the way things are done at our university and the lasting impact student contributions can have"* *Third year international relations student*<sup>27</sup>

Building on the success of King's 100, our faculties have introduced their own advisory councils such as the SSPP25, KBS20, IoPPN<sup>g</sup>25, Law Council, Dentistry Council, and Faculty of Life Science and Medicine student forum. These groups meet several times a year, typically focus on 2-3 projects, and have a membership that reflects their diverse student community.

e King's Business School  
f Social Science and Public Policy  
g Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience



For example:

- › KBS20 has been involved in twelve core projects since 2019 including running a 'feedback week' that engaged 70 student representatives and secured 1,527 student survey responses (54%, undergraduate) that shaped a new mode of teaching (a workshop model), devised an 'industry immersion week' for students (60 on pilot this year) and a new personal tutoring model (professional tutors).
- › IoPPN25 successes include the IoPPN Student 'Heartbeat Tracker' (from 2020) that established a fortnightly reciprocal dialogue mechanism between student and faculty which led to the creation of a new social media channel (@YourIoPPN Instagram), that among other things, increased student attendance at faculty-wide events by 50% in 2022.
- › The Law Council devised a support package for personal tutors directed specifically towards the needs of law students and complemented materials available on the Personal Tutor Portal.
- › The Faculty of Life Science and Medicine student forum led on the repurposing of a room as a private study space for medical students.
- › The Dentistry Council worked with the faculty to co-design a study skills module for undergraduate dental students. The introduction of this module has correlated with an increase in the number of Distinctions awarded (75% in 2021/22, up from 47% in 2020/21), and a 44% reduction in the failure rate amongst students who engaged with the study skills module.

In sum, these student councils do more than receive feedback, they ensure students directly shape faculty plans and are empowered through formal partnership to lead on key faculty agendas.



## Our teaching excellence is rooted in staff professional development

King's Academy ensures that all staff are prepared to teach at the level expected by King's, focusing on areas like curriculum design and assessment, professional development and recognition, learning development, community, network and dissemination, and inquiry, scholarship and research.

The Academy supports the training of our Graduate Teaching Assistants and other PhD students who teach via its GTA Development programme. In addition to these core development programmes all staff have a range of CPD opportunities, including workshops, resources, toolkits and bespoke support, at all career stages<sup>28</sup>.

Staff can attend informal monthly lightning lunches to share news of initiatives, teaching practice, works in progress, technology innovation and educational research. Recent topics included *Embedding Community Organising* and *Co-creating Covid (Vaccination) Services with Students*. We support staff to pursue projects that improve education through the College Teaching Fund which has an annual budget of £235,000. Across this four-year period the fund has supported 183 projects on assessment, technology-enhanced learning and improving the student experience.

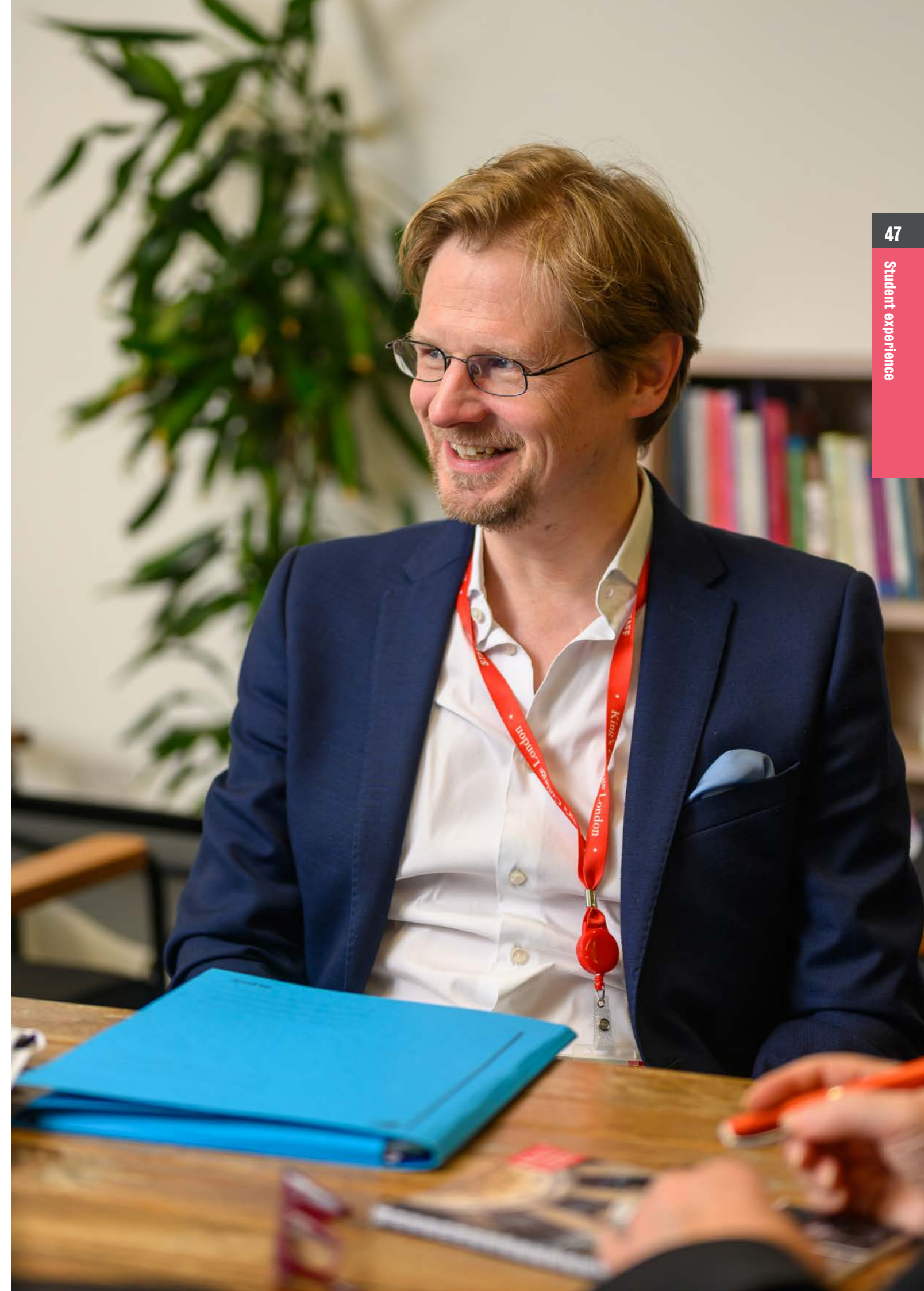
We have a long history of accreditation by AdvanceHE to award staff with Higher Education Academy (HEA) recognition. Over the past four years we have been above sector and Russell Group average for the awards of Associate Fellow and Fellow of the HEA. In 2019/20 King's rose above sector average for the number of staff with any level of fellowship status and we continue to maintain this. **In 2021/22 King's was nearly 4% above sector average** and nearly 14% above Russell Group average (in 2018/19 we were 7% above the Russell Group average)<sup>29</sup>.

As part of academic probation, all new academic staff must complete the Learning and Teaching Programme that paves the way for HEA recognition. Since 2018, nearly 500 members of staff have completed the programme. And for promotion, all academic staff must demonstrate excellence in education regardless of their career path.

Our Academic Education Pathway, launched in 2018, provides a specialist academic career path focusing on the delivery of education, education-related scholarship, and leadership. The network has grown over the past four years, and we currently have 425 practitioners on the Academic Education Pathway, including 10 Professors of Education.

Since 2002, the student-led King's Education Awards<sup>30</sup> have celebrated staff who have made a real difference to the students' experience. In the three most recent years the awards were run (not 2019/20), there were 3,685 nominations for staff and the student judges selected eight winners per year across seven categories, including *Innovation in Teaching*, *Inclusive Education*, and *Excellent Feedback*.

The *Festival of Learning and Teaching*<sup>31</sup> is an annual event run by King's Academy to celebrate education across King's and to share innovation and good practice. Across the census period, 1,294 staff attended the conferences (it was not held in 2019/20). The 2021/22 event focused on six themes: assessment and feedback, inclusive education, student partnership and co-creation, student transition, attainment and outcomes, sustainable education, and transforming the curriculum.





## A summary of the approach we took during the Covid pandemic

During 2019/20, King's Academy developed a comprehensive package of staff support available on our VLE on the principles of online teaching. Over 4,000 members of staff engaged with the resource, and it continues to be regularly used. We also provided 4,300 places at 240 staff workshops.

We were developing digital education approaches for our *Education Strategy*, and this work accelerated during the pandemic. The Centre for Technology Enhanced Learning developed online resources to upskill staff to deliver excellent digital education. These skills and resources are now embedded in business as usual<sup>32</sup>.

In response to Covid, we brought forward a £1million investment to ensure an inclusive and

accessible environment that allows students to fully engage with their studies. The *Captioning and Transcription* project, launched in November 2020, allows staff to upload lecture recordings and request human transcription within 2-4 days in place of automatic transcription that is inaccurate with technical language. This particularly benefits students with English as an additional language or individuals with specific learning disabilities, who might otherwise have difficulty engaging with

the nuances of live lectures. Since the service's successful introduction, a total of 150,000 minutes (2500 hours) of video content have been human transcribed, increasing the accuracy of captions to 97-99%<sup>33</sup>.

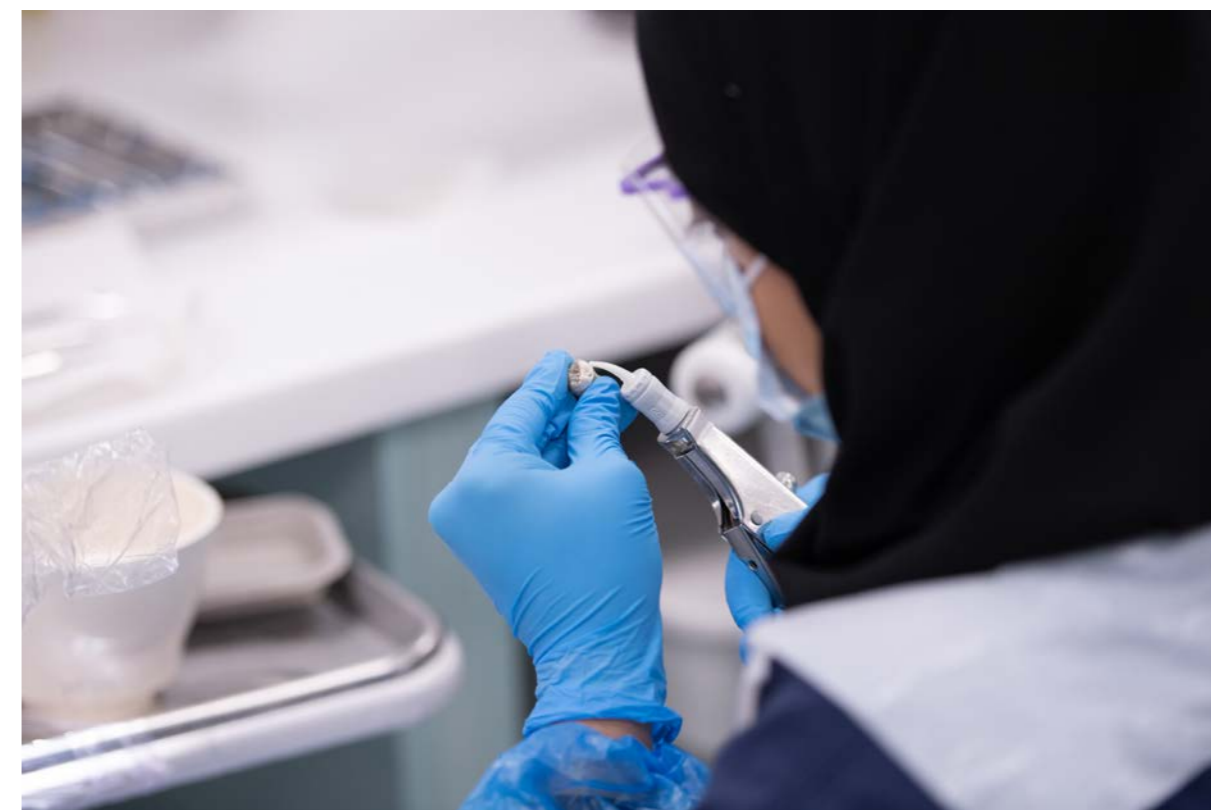
Many of our health programmes introduced simulations to maintain the development of practical skills. Students from the Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery and Palliative Care were given Labs at Home kits consisting of a stethoscope, a pulse oximeter and a sphygmomanometer, with 90% of students agreeing that the kit helped with their clinical skills and 80% agreeing that they felt prepared to undertake clinical skills on placement<sup>34</sup>. The faculties of Social Sciences & Public Policy and Natural, Mathematical & Engineering Sciences used the Labs in a Box concept to let students develop laboratory and field skills in their home environment.

We delivered essential clinical teaching on campus in a Covid-compliant environment. In 2020 we were able to graduate approximately 400 medical students early, most of whom went on to support the NHS during the pandemic. Over 650 undergraduate nursing students were also deployed into the NHS on paid placements, with hours completed used as part of their programme.

The university also worked with Microsoft in the early stages of MS Teams development, including testing the breakout room function that is now used across the sector.

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**We delivered essential clinical teaching on campus in a Covid-compliant environment.**







# 3

## Student outcomes

**Page**

- 52** Our student outcomes are excellent, whether considering overall or split-level indicators
- 55** Preparing students for the world of work is an essential part of what we do



## Our student outcomes are excellent, whether considering overall or split-level indicators

Our data shows we are in line with or above our benchmarks for continuation, completion and progression for the vast majority of our subject areas.

Continuation statistics for full-time students are in line with the benchmark, reflecting the excellent teaching and support we provide our students. Our completion statistics also show our high standards, with 95% of our students graduating by the relevant census date. Our progression statistics reflect our commitment to seeing our undergraduates succeed and feel prepared for employment or further study, and **our performance is in line with a high benchmark value of 94.8%.**

Our statistics for part-time students show us being below benchmark for completion and continuation. Although this is concerning at face-value, it reflects an anomaly in the reporting methodology. Practising nurses can enrol part time on free-standing modules that form part of our degree programmes. While they do not intend to, and are not expected to, continue on the programme, they appear in our statistics. We do not offer part-time undergraduate programmes, but occasionally we may support students by allowing them to complete part of their programme on a part-time basis.



Students can appeal against the decisions of Assessment Boards on the grounds of mitigating circumstances or administrative error, and KCLSU Advice<sup>35</sup> supports them in the process. Most of our appeals are managed within the university. If unsatisfied with the outcome, students can approach the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). Of the 124 cases reported to the OIA over the four-year period up to the end of 2021/22, only two were found to be justified.

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Our progression statistics reflect our commitment to seeing our undergraduates succeed and feel prepared for employment or further study.







## Preparing students for the world of work is an essential part of what we do

Our progression data over the four years of the census is in line or above benchmark both at headline level and when looking at our split metrics. This shows that our students gain a university education that equips them well for graduate-level work or post-graduate studies.

We are particularly proud of our split metrics that show all our students do well, including groups historically at risk of less positive outcomes such as mature students, disabled students, those from IMD quintiles 1 and 2, those who were eligible for free school meals and learners who are from ethnically diverse backgrounds.

Since 2017, our programme approval and review process has required an employability review into all new programmes to ensure the learning aims and outcomes have incorporated our KASE Framework (see page 37). Programme teams meet with our Careers and Employability Consultants to go through programme and module specifications with our *Employability Toolkit* resource and identify where students can gain relevant skills for future employment. We have held around 79 workshops across our taught portfolio, and we expect to see an impact in future Graduate Outcome Surveys.

We have a dedicated Careers and Employability Service offering central support for all students at the point of need. Our careers events support students along their career journey, enhance their employability, and provide access to relevant networks. Recent events include careers fairs incorporating employer presentations, employer masterclasses hosted by business representatives that highlight exciting innovations and trends across multiple industries, and drop-in careers lounges where students can speak informally to a careers consultant. Our suite of employability workshops, #MyNextSteps, reaches nearly 2,000 students a

year, covering key topics in rotation. This helps us deliver inclusive employability learning at scale, catering to a range of career interests. Over 6,000 unique students attended our events last year and 2,700 accessed bespoke one-to-one support. We also invested in 100 extra days of careers guidance for students and new graduates whose university life was impacted by the pandemic.

Since 2018 we have used virtual delivery to expand our employers' network to expose students to speakers and organisations across new regions and geographies. Examples include fireside chats with senior alumni in New York, a discussion with the High Commissioner of Zambia, and an event on museums with representatives from Tate St Ives, Science Museum Group York and Bristol Museums.

Over the past two years we have significantly developed our self-service employability learning tools on KEATS. Students can identify the best resources based on the outcome of their *Career Readiness Survey* completed during enrolment. We use the responses to share relevant events, resources and activities via newsletters, send targeted interventions across the year, inform faculty of career activities relevant to their subject area, and target specific work-based learning programmes and workshops. Inclusive design means these resources are accessible to all students<sup>36</sup> and in the past 12 months we've seen over 10,000 unique visitors to these pages.







# 4

## Educational gains



We're proud of the academic achievements of our students. But we want our students to develop beyond the classroom as individuals: independent, critical thinkers willing to challenge dogma or injustice and to use their talents to inspire and improve the lives of others.

We view educational gains as emerging from the intersection between curricular and co-curricular opportunities that allows the knowledge and skills developed in the classroom to be practiced, honed and applied in real-life scenarios, whether that be developing an award-winning science publication, choreographing a charity Diwali Show or carrying out pro bono work for local community organisations. This ensures that on graduating, King's students have the attributes sought by employers and are equipped to make a positive contribution to society.

We provide co-curricular opportunities that enrich our students' university experience, foster a sense of community, and help them develop skills and attributes that will serve them well. Add to this around 300 societies and groups including sports clubs, volunteering opportunities, student media, networking groups, and campaigning groups<sup>37</sup> offered by our Student Union and every student has an opportunity to pursue their interests.



There are many examples of student opportunities from individual faculties, including dentistry students going into schools to teach children dental hygiene, the development of an award-winning science publication by biomedical science students, participation in the annual iGEM<sup>h</sup> competition, law students providing free legal advice to members of the community via the King's Legal Clinic<sup>38</sup>, and business students offering consultancy to organisations within our local boroughs.

In 2021 we created King's Edge<sup>39</sup> (and its partner programme Forever King's Edge for recent graduates), a one-stop hub hosting co-curricular activities and events for all students, organised around the themes of work experience and employability, academic skills and research, creative and digital skills, entrepreneurship, languages, leadership, sustainability, and sports and wellbeing. As they progress through their degree, our KASE framework allows students to identify their personal development needs that align with their career and personal ambitions and to pursue opportunities that will plug that gap.

We have highlighted below a few examples of extra-curricular activities available across the wider university:

### Student Opportunity Fund

Since 2013 students have been able to collaborate on projects across the King's community through our Student Opportunity Fund<sup>40</sup>. They can put their learning into action (for example through pro

<sup>h</sup> International Genetically Engineered Machine

bono work) or take part in advanced training over the summer. Over the four-year census period, we allocated £404,563 of funding to over 850 students and have recently ringfenced 20% of the funding specifically for Black students, to address the specific disadvantages faced by those students.

### King's Experience Awards

All taught students can undertake one of our King's Experience Awards<sup>41</sup> in service, leadership or research (KURF) to develop their employability skills through self-reflection and gain formal recognition alongside their degree. During this census period there were 736 leadership awards, 311 service awards, and 1,165 research awards: a total of 2,215.

### King's Global Summer Experiences

Students unable to study abroad as part of their degree, whether for personal or academic reasons, have the opportunity to do so during the summer months. These include both exchange and non-exchange opportunities at international partner universities (in countries ranging from China to the USA, Mexico to Switzerland, Germany to South Korea) and other recommended organisations. Over the past four years more than 550 students went on exchanges to 35 partner universities in 19 countries.

### Enterprise Award

The Entrepreneurship Institute's Enterprise Award is a year-long, co-curricular programme that helps students develop an entrepreneurial mindset breaking down the behaviours, approaches and attitudes of a successful entrepreneur. In 2021, 380 students signed up to the programme and 141 gained the Award (90 were undergraduate), a 50% increase from the previous year (UG and PGT). Results from pre and post surveys show that the majority of students undertaking the programme



reported they had increased their entrepreneurial skills<sup>42</sup>.

### King's20 Accelerator

In 2021 we celebrated 100 innovative ventures developed over the previous 5 years by King's students, staff and alumni through the Entrepreneurship Institute's King's20 Accelerator. Together, these ventures generated over £29 million in revenue, £39 million in investment, £5 million in grants and employed over 650 staff. Of the 100 ventures, 33 were started by undergraduate and postgraduate students.

### Cultural competency within the curriculum

Our graduates' potential to make a positive difference in the world is strengthened by their ability to communicate across cultures, identities and disciplines. We've embedded this in some degree programmes, notably those with a clinical component, and we're further developing it as a core element of undergraduate education at King's. The *Cultural Competency Kickstarter* (launched September 2021) is a



university-wide optional online module, co-created with students. It empowers them to critically reflect on understanding their own identity, how they relate to others, and how they can make a positive difference at King's and in the wider world. Building on this, a level 5 module, *Cultural Competency: Professionalism & Practice*<sup>43</sup>, provides practical academic, professional, and personal tools for cultural competency awareness, aimed at making positive change.

### King's Civic Leadership Academy

As part of *Vision 2029* we have embedded service to the local community (through the KCLSU Volunteering Record) into the King's student experience. The King's Civic Leadership Academy<sup>44</sup> (CLA) is a development programme for second year undergraduate students from underrepresented backgrounds with an interest in societal change. The 9-month placement includes learning about community organising and how to become a civic leader. Each student is awarded £3,000 and connected with a community partner in London. The students spend 240 hours working on impact projects with the organisation and receive 60 hours of leadership training to help them build connections and increase their civic participation.

Students that have taken part in the programme feel more empowered to make change in their communities, with evaluations showing improvements in their reported self-efficacy and social capital:

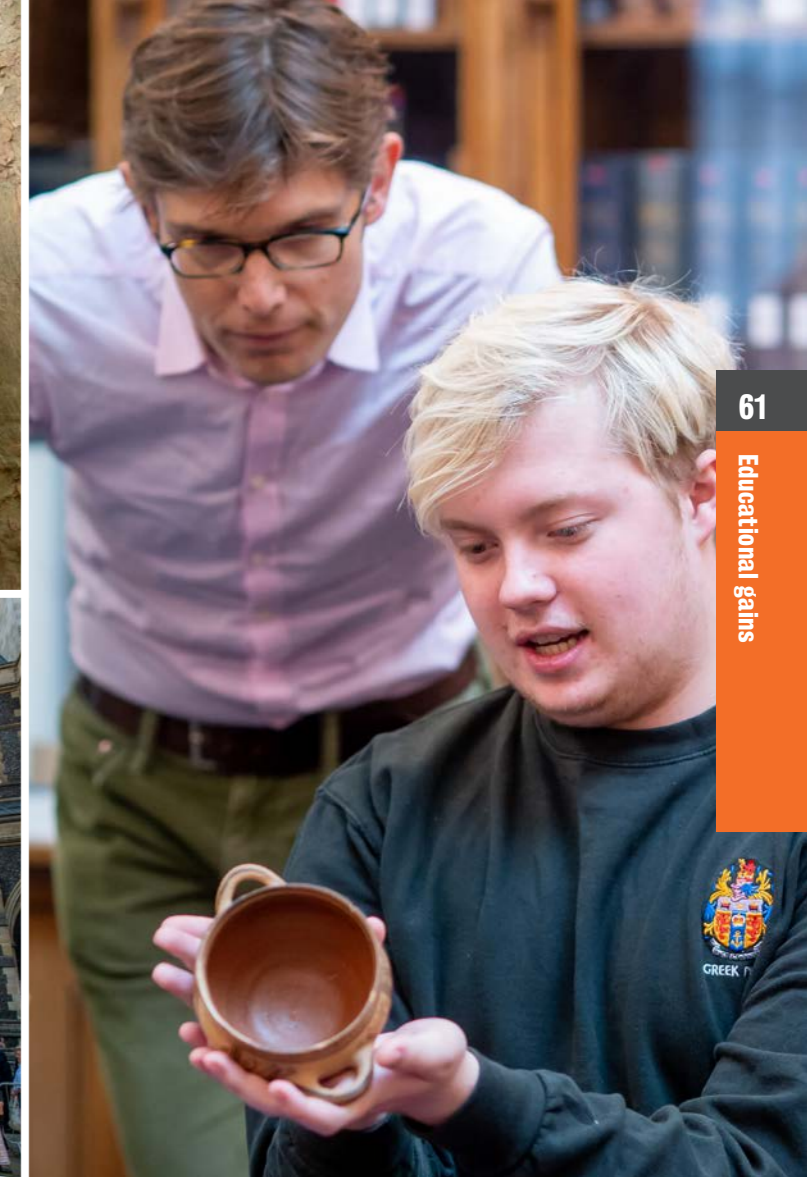
*"I felt that CLA would allow me to...be part of London and get to know people beyond my area and university. I wanted to do something for the city, and this seemed a great way to do so...It helped me understand what I wanted to do in the future and has given me experience and skills I can use when preparing for job interviews. I've now got relevant and meaningful experience I can draw upon<sup>45</sup>." King's CLA alumni*

### King's Civic Challenge

A related programme, the King's Civic Challenge<sup>46</sup>, connects our students and staff with community organisations or charities from one of our local boroughs (Westminster, Lambeth and Southwark). They work together on projects to tackle issues identified by the community partners. The programme launched in 2019 and over 130 undergraduate students have taken part. Those who completed the post-challenge 2021/22 survey reported improvements in skills and abilities such as consulting and collaborating while being civic and community minded. Over 80% stated that their ability to recognise moral, ethical and social issues had improved, and over 90% reported increased confidence in their ability to make a difference to the world around them.

### Policy Idol

This interdisciplinary annual competition is a showcase for innovative thinking open to all current students. Contestants pitch their policy ideas to a panel of external judges from politics, academia and industry. Notable judges include Baroness Louise Casey, Julia Gillard (former Prime Minister for Australia) and Jo Johnson. Finalists receive a significant cash prize and bespoke training to develop their policy ideas, and many have gone on to make a difference in areas such as reducing food waste, promoting STEM, and addressing social inequalities. The Policy Institute also run a student network managed jointly by staff and students.







# 5

## Conclusion





In this submission we've provided an insight into the richness of opportunities and experiences available to undergraduate students at King's College London.

Over the past four years, we have made significant progress in broadening our education offering beyond the purely academic. We have transformed the university both in terms of the number of students we recruit and the diversity of our population. Most importantly, we have grasped the challenges we face to ensure our teaching and learning is consistently excellent and to address

lingering student concerns around assessment and feedback, academic support and student voice. By working closely with our students, using our extensive data to inform strategies, sharing good practice, and investing in our people and systems, we believe we know how to build on our excellent student outcomes and deliver an outstanding student experience for all of our learners.





## Endnotes

- 1 King's Strategic Vision 2029 [External]: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/about/assets/pdf/kings-strategic-vision-2029.pdf>
- 2 QAA Quality Code, Subject Benchmark Statements where advisory panel members are noted, [External]: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements>
- 3 QAA Quality Code, Subject Benchmark Statements where advisory panel members are noted, [External]: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements/sbs-reviews-2022>
- 4 Admissions demographics report – widening participation PowerBI dashboard [Internal]: <https://app.powerbi.com/groups/me/apps/600eda0c-b8c1-4d69-8eb6-2d756b18569a/reports/50b2ac58-40dd-4cf6-8d65-69b37f5eea21/ReportSectionfd362300a2b2c8b44543>
- 5 Module evaluation PowerBi App [Internal]: <https://app.powerbi.com/groups/me/apps/e958c9c4-17e9-41cb-afe7-0e1fa53bc2f7/reports/8b3e6f17-6024-493d-b574-ba19b871f7f1/ReportSection8c7e71a0d7863c7b79b2>
- 6 King's International Orientation [External]: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/events/series/international-orientation-2022>
- 7 King's Academic Skills Workshops KEATS site [Internal]: KASL – Workshops (kcl.ac.uk)
- 8 King's Academic Skills for Learning (KASL) E-learning and Teaching Service [Internal]: <https://keats.kcl.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=62576>
- 9 King's Library resources webpage [External]: <https://libguides.kcl.ac.uk/klask>
- 10 Webpage providing information on King's Inclusion Plans as support mechanism for our students [External]: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/disability/what-we-offer/inclusion-plan>
- 11 King's Move app [External]: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/sport/physical-activity/kings-move>
- 12 KCL Quality Assurance Handbook, noting procedures for programme approval, [External]: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/governancezone/governancelegal/quality-assurance-handbook>
- 13 Module evaluation data held on PowerBI APP, current; a summary report produced by our Strategy and Planning and Analytics team, February 2022, [Internal]
- 14 Assessment for Learning Toolkit: [External]: Assessment for Learning at King's – Assessment and Feedback Strategies recommended by King's Academy (kcl.ac.uk)
- 15 Assessment for Learning book where our Assessment for Learning Toolkit is referenced [External]: <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9780203818268/>
- 16 KCL blog site for our Assessment For Learning case studies [External]: <https://blogs.kcl.ac.uk/aflkings/category/case-studies/>
- 17 KCL blog site for our Assessment For Learning examples of good practice [External]: <https://blogs.kcl.ac.uk/aflkings/category/examples-of-practice/>
- 18 KCL Strategy 2026, published October 2022 [Internal]: <https://internal.kcl.ac.uk/strategy2026/sustainable-research-innovation>
- 19 Book chapter on Assessment Rubrics [External]: <https://www.igi-global.com/book/improving-learning-through-assessment-rubrics/299331> (due to be released in September 2023)
- 20 General Dental Council accreditation report (page 2 of the report) [External]: [king's-college-london-programme-report-with-observations-2019.pdf](https://www.kcl.ac.uk/programmes-report-with-observations-2019.pdf) (gdc-uk.org)
- 21 King's College London AKC Award [External]: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/akc>
- 22 KCL Associateship of King's College (AKC) Award, [External]: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/akc/why-should-i-study-the-akc>
- 23 Library Loop Blog [External]: <https://libguides.kcl.ac.uk/blog/about>
- 24 Webpage illustrating a Times Higher Education Award won: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/news/kings-wins-for-digital-innovation-at-times-higher-awards>
- 25 KCLSU/KCL Memorandum of Understanding 2022-23, relevant to page 2 [Internal] 13 July 2022 Paper reference KCC-22-07-13-10.3
- 26 KCL Quality Assurance Handbook, referencing specifically processes for programme approval and review and panel memberships, published annually September (Section B and C of the handbook) [External]: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/governancezone/governancelegal/quality-assurance-handbook>
- 27 Webpage illustrating quote from a student on Student 100 panel [External]: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/students/finding-my-voice-building-connections-and-shaping-the-student-experience-at-kings>
- 28 King's Academy webpage, noting professional development opportunities [External]: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/academy/professional-development>
- 29 AdvanceHE Annual Review of Accredited Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Schemes 21-22, published October 2022 [External]: <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/news-and-views/growth-fellowship-advance-he-publishes-annual-review-accredited-cpd-schemes>
- 30 King's Education Awards [External]: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/academy/networks/kea>
- 31 Festival of Learning [External]: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/academy/networks/festival-of-learning-and-teaching>
- 32 King's Centre for Technology Enhanced Learning workshops [External]: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/ctel/for-staff/cpd-workshops>
- 33 Introduction of captioning and transcription service [External]: <https://blogs.kcl.ac.uk/digitaleducation/introduction-of-captioning-and-transcription-service-at-kings-college-london/#more-1281>
- 34 Labs at home survey results February 2022 [internal]
- 35 Webpage providing information on support providing to students via our student union [External]: <https://www.kclsu.org/help/advice/>
- 36 Webpage on one of Careers workshop [External]: Spotlight on Inclusion | Employer Engagement | King's College London (kcl.ac.uk)
- 37 KCLSU webpage [External]: <https://www.kclsu.org/groups/>
- 38 Webpage providing information about the King's Law Clinic and community engagement [External]: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/legal-clinic/our-mission>
- 39 King's Edge [External]: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/kings-edge>
- 40 Student Opportunity Fund information page [Internal]: <https://keats.kcl.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=106869&section=9#tabs-tree-start>
- 41 King's Experience Awards information [External]: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/students/enrich-your-journey-with-kings-experience-awards>
- 42 Entrepreneurship programme evaluation results pages 26-27, [External]: [https://issuu.com/kingsentrepreneurshipinstitute/docs/ei\\_impact\\_report\\_20-21](https://issuu.com/kingsentrepreneurshipinstitute/docs/ei_impact_report_20-21)
- 43 Cultural Competency: Professionalism & Practice module [External]: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/abroad/module-options/cultural-competency-professionalism-practice1>
- 44 Civic Leadership Academy webpage [External]: Leading the change | Feature from King's College London (kcl.ac.uk)
- 45 Impact report for Civic Leadership Academy [Internal]: Link
- 46 King's Civic Challenge webpage [External]: King's Civic Challenge | King's & London | King's College London (kcl.ac.uk)



## With special thanks

The TEF2023 project team would like to thank everyone across the College who contributed to the submission.

The members of the TEF2023 project team were:

- › **Vice President (Education and Student Success), Professor Adam Fagan (Professor of European Politics) – Project Sponsor**
- › **Executive Director, Education & Students, Darren Wallis – Business Sponsor**
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