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Subject: **Annual Quality Assurance Report to Council on Academic Quality & Standards 2023/24**
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Executive summary

The Annual Quality Assurance Report provides oversight of the key University academic quality and standards developments for Senate and Council.

The Quality & Academic Development Department (QUAD) has led the development and drafting of this retrospective annual report which focuses on the University’s quality assurance processes and how they operated during the previous academic year. This work is undertaken in liaison with colleagues across Academic Services and the University and is based on guidance published by the Committee of University Chairs. Additionally, the joint statement on student representation in quality and academic standards is developed in consultation with the Students’ Union.

EQC noted the Annual Assurance Report at its meeting on 11 September 2024. EQC noted that Council may wish to receive a similar report from legacy St George’s at the same time as receiving the legacy City report. QUAD has been in contact with St George’s colleagues to ascertain what reports are readily available and will coordinate submission to Council accordingly.

Action(s) required from EQC:

A. To approve the Annual Quality Assurance Report to Council on Academic Quality & Standards 2023/24

The table below outlines which committees/groups have already seen the report and the resulting outcome/action from discussions.

Committee date	Committee title	Outcome/action	Action date	Paper version number
11/09/2024	EQC	Noted	N/A	V1

Assurance Report to Council on Academic Quality and Standards 2023/24

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This Annual Assurance Report provides oversight of City's academic quality and standards activities in the 2023/2024 academic year and demonstrates how internal and external regulatory compliance expectations were met. This includes a statement from the Students' Union (**Section A**).
2. Academic year 2023/24 continued the implementation of the revised external regulatory landscape noticeably in relation to the OfS interventions relating to academic quality and standards. This included the announcement that City received a Silver in the Teaching Excellence Framework exercise (**Section Q**). Alongside the OfS, City also continues to engage with a wide range of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies at a programme level (**Section N**).
3. City's academic quality and standards continued to adapt to the wider changes and institutional strategic developments that took place during 2023/24. City conducted its regular annual policy update and review of City's academic policies and processes. This work will continue into 2024/25, not least as we look to align the respective academic frameworks of City and St Georges (**Section I**). City also put in mitigations to manage the minor impacts on academic quality and standards resulting from the most recent UCU and Unison strike action (**Section B**).
4. Ensuring a positive student experience remains a priority. Module evaluations (**Section J**), and other student surveys (**Section P**), highlighted broader reflections from students on topics including teaching and learning, assessment and feedback and learning resources. City was also able to receive feedback at a programme level through its engagement with External Examiners (**Section C**). Levels of student casework appear to have stabilised since the pandemic, although we note an increase in student complaints (**Section G**). City continues to focus on academic integrity and misconduct, including the impacts on the development and increased use of generative AI (**Section H**).
5. As already noted, the implementation of City's new strategy has had an impact on a number of key areas relating to City's quality and standards framework. During 2023/24 City undertook a significant number of programme approvals, amendments and terminations (**Section L**) as colleagues sought to bring their academic offer in line with the education workstream (and frameworks) of City's strategy (**Section M**). In addition City continued with its usual processes to assure quality and standards through assessment board operations (**Section D**), annual programme evaluations (**Section O**) and periodic reviews (**Section K**).
6. In 2023/24 City's quality and standards function continued to provide oversight for degrees delivered through validation and partnership arrangements with other institutions (**Section F**), and for research degrees delivered through the Doctoral College (**Section E**).
7. This summary highlights where the key regulatory and institutional priorities will impact most directly on City's academic quality and standards activity. At the end of the report we, alongside our Students' Union colleagues, list the enhancement priorities for 2023/4 (**Section R**). A key priority will be working with St George's colleagues to ensure suitable alignment of our respective academic frameworks and structures as part of the broader discussions of a future combination.

OVERVIEW OF 2023/2024 ACTIVITIES

A. Students' Union Statement 2023/24

1. City, University of London Students' Union (City SU) continued to work in collaboration with the University to strengthen student representation.

2. Programme Representatives

- The total number of Programme Representatives (Reps) elected in Term 1 was 785. This was an increase of 5% on the 785 Rep elected in 2022/23, but still down on the 852 elected in 2021 and 829 in 2021/22.
- Despite an increase on the number Reps elected this year, this number could have been greater, but was stymied by some programmes not running this academic year, programmes being clustered together, and some Schools asking Reps to represent more than one cohort.
- Across the Schools, Bayes Business School saw an increase by 19% of Reps, SCC saw an increase of 22%, whilst SST saw the largest increase in Reps elected with 47%. Three Schools saw a decrease in recruited numbers; CLS were down by 29%, SPGA were down 7% and SHPS were down 3%.
- The Union initially held 18 Rep Induction Training sessions across two weeks, with 3 sessions dedicated per school. The sessions were held on campus, and there were many Reps who informed the Union that they were unable to make any of the 18 sessions. The decision was then taken to host one additional online training session for all schools, which over 100 Reps attended. A large number of Reps from the School of Health and Psychological Sciences were away from campus on placement and were unable to attend any of the regular sessions, resulting in an additional SHPS training session taking place on 15th November.
- At the end of the 20 training sessions, 69% (544 Reps) had attended one of the sessions, which is the highest percentage of Reps attending training in at least the last 6 years. All Schools saw an increase in the number of Reps attending training, apart from Bayes Business School.

3. Collaboration

- To support the collaborative nature of the Union's relationship with the University, drop-in sessions were organised for the week commencing 18th September to allow for programme staff and course officers to ask any questions about the processes or seek any advice on how to run Rep elections. This offer was communicated to staff via the Staff Guidance Handbook which was circulated the previous week. While staff didn't reach out to attend a drop-in session, a number of them did communicate their queries and concerns via email and MS Teams.
- In addition to the Staff Guidance Handbook, the Union also provided recruitment slides, sample nominations form and sample ballot paper to aid with the election process, as well as a shared live spreadsheet to input all the Reps' details once elected.
- Staff were informed that training would take place in the weeks commencing 23rd and 30th October and given the deadline of 18th October to submit Rep details. This was so that the Union was able to email Reps and provide with them information on the training sessions and the links to register.

4. Training Content and Objectives

This year, the training package was reviewed and rearranged to be clearer. A narrative that was introduced is 'the 3 Rs: research, represent and report'. The training reiterated that the core responsibilities of a Programme Rep is to research student opinions, represent them to staff and report back to their cohorts. The training this year also included how to use GetHeard@City and the role that Reps play on the platform.

The training objectives were to understand:

- The role, responsibilities, and boundaries of a Programme Representative
- How to gather student feedback and update students
- How to present feedback to staff
- How to use GetHeard@City
- What is expected of in committee meetings
- Signposting students to support services
- The support that is available to Reps
- How to resolve scenarios that Reps may encounter
- The training was received well by Reps and is demonstrated by 86% of Reps either 'strongly agreeing' or 'agreeing' with the statement "I have received adequate training in my role as a Programme Rep".

Further information on the Student Leaders Survey below.

5. Student Leaders Survey 2024

- The Student Leaders Survey 2024 invited feedback from Reps, Society Leaders and Assembly Members. Launched in Term 2, there were a total of 324 responses of which 214 were from Reps. With 66% of respondents coming from Reps demonstrates the engagement of Reps during this academic year.
- The survey asked Reps to feedback about their experience of employability and skills development, expectation management, support, and any additional feedback. Results positively increased in all areas.
- Over half of Programme Reps generally agreed that their time as Programme Rep has made them employable with 69% of Programme Reps 'strongly' or 'somewhat' agreeing with the statement. while only 5% disagreed. No change on last year.
- When asked about developing their skills, 74% of respondents agreed that the role has given them the opportunity to do so, a positive increase on last year. Only 6% disagreed with this statement.
- Reps chose communication and leadership as standout skills they had developed most while in the role.
- Additionally, 91% of respondents felt that their experience of being a Rep either met or exceeded their expectations. This was a 6% increase on last year.
- Reps also suggested how Programme Representation could be improved at City, they were similar to last year and included:
 1. Creating spaces for Reps to come together and collaborate.
 2. Providing more social opportunities for Reps, as well as more networking opportunities.
 3. More tailored employability and skills sessions.

6. Looking Ahead 2024/25

- Since the close of term, the Union have undertaken a review of its Programme Representative offer and so far, areas identified for improvement include the include the induction training and publicity of the role. Through the summer months, the Union will be developing our training further to ensure that it is to the highest standard, as well as work on a promotional plan for lead up to Term 1 and the recruitment period.
- As part of the Union's strategic objectives for the year a Student Voice and Democracy review will be completed. This is to ensure that student representation and associated democratic structures are aligned between the various sites of the university.

B. Quality & Standards Industrial Action Working Group

7. UCU called for a week of industrial action in September 2023. In response to this, the Industrial Action Quality and Standards Working Group, which was established in 2021, continued to meet. It was Chaired by the Vice President (Education) and reported to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
8. The Group considered and revised the three framework documents which have been in place since 2021 and approved them for 2023/24.
 - Framework for Assessment Boards Impacted by Industrial Action
 - Framework for Handling Student Complaints Arising from Industrial Action
 - Framework for Managing Disruption to Teaching Learning and Assessment Due to Industrial Action
9. The impact of the brief period of industrial action was minimal in comparison to previous years and the disruption to teaching and learning was mitigated by Schools in line with the approved Framework. Mitigations included trying to replace teaching like for like, where it was possible and reasonable to do so. In cases where this was not possible, Schools mitigated by offering teaching online, providing students with teaching materials and offering Q&A sessions for support.
10. No further periods of industrial action were called by Unions, subsequent to the aforementioned period in September 2023.
11. UCU did not call for a marking and assessment boycott in 2023/24.

C. External Examiners Reflections

Audit

12. An internal audit on 'External Examining Appointments and Reporting' took place in 2023/24. The audit deemed there to be an acceptable level of assurance in the adequacy and effectiveness of systems of internal control in this area. Many positive practices were recorded, and three recommendations were made. The outcome of the audit has been reported to Educational Quality Committee.
13. The first recommendation was to set up and agree a procedure with Schools when External Examiners had not submitted their report on time. As External Examiners are asked to submit their Annual Report within two weeks of the assessment board, it is essential that the details of the assessment board are clear. Academic Services will take forward the recommendation by investigating a clear process for recording and amending assessment board dates.

14. The second recommendation was that External Examiners should be in place before the start of the academic year and it was agreed that QUAD would reinforce the expectation that programme External Examiners are in place before the start of the academic year.
15. The third recommendation was to provide a timeframe for responses to an External Examiner's Annual Report and has been incorporated in an updated External Examiner Policy to be implemented in 2024/25.

Annual Report Annotation

16. After an External Examiner submits their report, QUAD annotate the report and identify 'Good Practice', 'Strength[s]' and 'Item[s] for Response'. In order to maintain objectivity across the members of QUAD who perform this task, a training session was run and will continually annually. In addition, the guidance document was update.

Annual Reports

17. At the time of writing, the majority of undergraduate assessment boards had taken place, however the majority of postgraduate assessment boards were still pending. Thus far, 42% of External Examiners had submitted an annual report for 2023/24. Figure 1 shows the breakdown of annual reports received by School/Department.

Figure 1: Breakdown of Annual Reports received/annotated by School/Department

School/Department	Number of Reports Received	Number of External Examiners
Bayes Business School	11	54
City Law School*	28	46
School of Communication & Creativity	20	33
School of Politics & Global Affairs	11	19
School of Health and Psychological Sciences	16	58
School of Science & Technology	10	28
LEaD	1	3
Partners	13	18

*Please note that due to the number of programmes/modules overseen, some External Examiners submit two or more reports.

**Please note that some External Examiners oversee both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes/modules.

18. In 2023/24 academic year, quantitative retrospective data based on the 2022/23 annual reports was able to be extracted from the new annual report template for the first time. This has allowed a broader overview of the Quality of programmes at City that wasn't possible before. Initial analysis is positive.

Induction

19. External Examiner Induction sessions were held in November 2023 and May 2024 and were well attended by new examiners. For the first time this year, attendees were asked for their feedback. Whilst few responded, those that did were very positive.

Academic Lead

- 20.** Part way through the academic year, the Vice President (Education) delegated responsibility for External Examiner related responsibilities to the Academic Lead for City Educational Outcomes.
- In addition to the business-as-usual responsibilities, the Academic Lead provided helpful input in the development of the updated External Examiner Policy and is assisting in its full implementation for 2024/25. The Academic Lead was also instrumental in setting expectations by chasing Schools' responses to the External Examiner's Annual Reports in 2021-22.

External Examiner Documentation

- 21.** A schedule to update External Examiner related paperwork continues to operate. To date, the following documents were updated
- Policy (more information below)
 - Acceptance and Bank Details Form
 - Expenses Forms (more information below)
 - Annual Report Annotation Guidance and corresponding proforma (more information above).
 - Guidance for Partnerships (to go in VIP Handbook), Induction Checklist for Partnerships and QUAD roles for Partnership External Examiner Relationships

External Examiner Policy

- 22.** The External Examiner (Taught Programmes) Policy was reviewed in 2023/24, in line with the Policy Review Schedule. The final version included feedback from staff via two consultation points, from the Academic Lead for City Educational Outcomes and the Vice President (Education), and took into account external sources such as the OfS and QAA. In undertaking the review, a comparison with sector practice was carried out and best practice adopted. The policy was approved by Senate on 5th July 2024 for implementation in 2024-25. The major changes are summarised below.

Types of External Examiners and Appointment Criteria

- 23.** Under both the old and new policy, there should be an External Examiner appointed at programme level, however, the new policy now states [17 (refer to section of Policy)] that at programme level, the External Examiner would oversee the whole programme, not just the assessment process, as was the case under the old policy. To balance the workload for External Examiners of larger programmes against the need to have holistic programme oversight, the new policy also allows oversight at programme stage level.
- 24.** With the new policy stipulating a wider remit for External Examiners at programme level, a more succinct appointment criteria [21.1] allows greater flexibility and promotes the somewhat greater importance of the nominee possessing pedagogic knowledge. The External Examiner appointment criteria also removed the requirement to be in a senior role to act as an External Examiner, with more emphasis on specific knowledge and experience.

25. Work is currently underway to ensure that Schools are compliant with the new Policy. Most challenging is the shift away from appointing External Examiners on a modular basis as opposed to programme or stage wide. This is particularly challenging in CLS as historically, all External Examiner had been appointed on a modular (subject knowledge) basis. The VP (Education) Nominee has drawn up a list of principles to assist CLS to progress towards this goal.

Referral to the President

26. In rare circumstances, an External Examiner may wish to escalate an issue beyond the School's authority. The new policy relinquishes the President from such involvement and allows the Vice President (Education) to deal with such concerns [9.2, 9.23, 57] in line with other universities in the sector.

Appointment Term

27. Under the old policy, appointment was for four years, with the possibility of reappointment for an additional year in exceptional circumstances. The new Policy retained the four-year appointment term, with the possibility of reappointment for an additional year [28], but now includes a defined list of reasons under which reappointment would be approved, giving greater guidance in this regard.

Buddying

28. A buddying scheme for less experienced External Examiners was added in the new policy [9.4, 23.2, 45-47]. The scheme is not a formalised CPD opportunity, but rather an informal buddy system between less and more experienced examiners, arranged by Academic Services. This type of scheme is similar to that which other institutions offer. This scheme was thought to be particularly useful for practitioner based External Examiners.

Response Timeliness

29. The unspecified timeframe to respond to External Examiner's Annual Reports was raised as a risk to the institution via an internal audit. The main reason for not stipulating a response time was due to the need for responses to be approved by the Board of Studies, with meetings happening at different times of the year for Schools. Thus, under the new policy, responses are instead to be approved by the Associate Dean for Education (ADE) (or delegate) [71-72] on behalf of the Board of Studies. This change has allowed for the introduction of a six-week turn-around-time for Schools to respond to a report in 2024/25.

City Staff in External Examiner Roles

30. To minimise conflicts of interest, reciprocation should be avoided i.e. an External Examiner should not come from a cognate programme that a member of City staff Externally Examines on. The new policy is a little more prescriptive in how this should be managed. Responsibility falls to City academic staff [25.7] who undertake duties elsewhere to inform City of this, and for Academic Service to keep a log of such appointments [70.7].

Expenses

31. Existing expenses forms have been streamlined into three separate forms and were updated to be more user friendly. At the same time a review of the expenses was undertaken and new guidelines drawn up in the interests of sustainability and frugality. Accompanying communications were circulated with the help of colleagues to ensure parity in practice across Schools and the Doctoral College.

D. Assessment Board Operations

32. Academic Services delivered four Assessment Board training sessions in May 2024 detailing the regulatory and operational approach for 2023/24 and City's approach to mitigating industrial action. The sessions were attended by over 100 academic and professional staff. Each session was recorded and was able to be shared with colleagues who could not attend.
33. The following Assessment Board guidance resources were updated for 2023/24 and published on the [Quality Manual](#):
 - Assessment Board Guidance 2023/24
 - Industrial Action Impact Report
 - Framework for Managing Disruption to Teaching, Learning and Assessment due to Industrial Action
 - Framework for Handling Student Complaints Arising from Industrial Action
34. Strong emphasis was placed on the pre-Assessment Board activity and preparation in each briefing session. Interim and Preliminary Assessment Panels were permitted to review student marks and also make recommendations for the application of the approved industrial action mitigations and/or further moderation or scaling to manage the impact.

Assessment Board Observations

35. A sample of decision-making Boards and all Chairs are observed annually by Academic Services, to ensure that Assessment Boards are effectively and rigorously reviewed. Academic Services ensure that each approved Assessment Board Chair is sampled, at least once. A total of 19 Boards were selected for sampling in 2023/24, representing 13% (19/149).
36. A full report summarising the outcome of the annual sampling of Assessment Board operations highlighting key themes, elements of good practice and the areas for improvement and risks identified during both the main Assessment and Resit Periods will be produced and reported to Senate and its Committees following the Resit Board observations.

E. Doctoral College

37. The City Doctoral College (CDC) is responsible for maintaining the quality provisions and operational aspects of postgraduate research including regulations, policies and system processes. Specifically, the Doctoral College:
 - has led on the policy for supervisor training including mandatory training for all supervisors;
 - continues to update the training available to doctoral research students on an annual basis to ensure it is current and cutting-edge going beyond the Vitae Framework;
 - continues to update policies and write supporting guidance to support staff with implementing the policies that underpin the quality of doctoral programmes;
 - led on the development and approval of Regulation 24a for professional doctorates;

- led on the proposal and approval of Data Protection training for all doctoral research students;
- developed a mechanism so that existing doctoral programmes can define and get approved programme specifications;
- worked with Schools on individual cases and programme design that will help address current poor completion rates;
- introduced risk reports as part of the Board of Studies agenda;
- supported Schools and the Quality & Academic Development in appeals cases;
- facilitated the provision of Centrally Funded Studentships;
- reinstated and redefined the Senior Tutor for Research forum as a community of practice exercise.

F. Collaborative Provision

- 38.** The University has ultimate responsibility for programmes delivered via collaborative provision: this includes activities delivered in partnership and managed locally in Schools, as well as where City validates programmes delivered solely by other institutions but which lead to a City award.
- 39.** Validation activities continued as scheduled with teaching at Validated Bodies completed via a combination of online and in person. Scheduled Course Boards and Assessment Boards for other joint venture Validations (that City regulates) continued to take place.
- 40.** The following aspects are of particular note:
- i. No revalidations of programmes took place in 23/24, a number are scheduled for 24/25.
 - ii. City colleagues attend all Assessment Boards for Validated Partners.
 - iii. Student marks were made available to the University soon after Assessment Boards which ensured borderline marks could be dealt with expediently by Schools before results are released to students.
 - iv. City continues to work with ESCP, whose MSc in International Management is validated by City, following ESCP formally receiving Taught Degree Awarding Powers (TDAP) from the OfS in 2024. It is anticipated that ESCP's TDAP will begin for students enrolling from 24/25 onwards with a teach-out period for any students already enrolled on the City-validated programme.
 - v. City continues to support ArtsEd through a period of change. This has included providing a staff member on secondment to act in the role of Interim Registrar.
 - vi. No new partnerships were developed and formally approved during 23/24. However, new Partnership activity is likely to increase as City's develops a new strategy and policy framework that will support the work in collaborative provision.

G. Student Casework

- 41.** City's complaint, academic appeal, student disciplinary and support for study procedures are multistage processes mirroring student-facing processes across the sector. Sector practice in managing student complaints and appeals is guided by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education's (OIA) Good Practice Framework, which suggests student-facing processes should progress over no more than three stages.
- 42.** Our processes encourage early resolution before engagement with the initial formal stage, managed at the local level within the School, Department or Service. The final stages take place at the institutional level within each process and are managed by Academic Services. This stage focuses on the review of the earlier stages.

43. As before, we remain engaged with various forums (in particular, the OIA and the Academic Registrar’s Council) as well as with other stakeholders in the University and the Students’ Union to keep updated with sector experience, guidance and practice.
44. Academic Services implemented the revised Regulation 10 (Support for Study) and the Sexual Misconduct Policy in September 2023, and continued work on the Bullying & Harassment Policy and Regulation 13 (Student Discipline) which were implemented in January 2024. Senate recently approved changes to Regulation 26 (Student Complaints) and Regulations 20, 20b, 21 and 21b (Academic Appeals). Work continues with Change Support Unit on a review of complaints and appeals processes.
45. The sector recently received the outcome of the OfS’s proposed changes to managing harassment (including sexual misconduct) in Higher Education. This will lead to further changes to casework regulations and policies in 24/25.
46. Student cases are reported on by calendar year to align with reporting by the OIA. The latest report for 2023 was noted at Senate in July 2024. Figure 2 below provides an overview of student case numbers over the last five calendar years.

Figure 2. Student Case Activity Data Overview 2019-2023

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Formal Student Complaints (Stages 2 and 3)	86	42	52	138	39
Academic Appeals (Stages 1 and 2)	1014	1189	467	353	766
Academic Misconduct	776	1454	1245	442	411
General Misconduct (institutional-level)	8	9	9	1	6
Support for Study (formerly Fitness to Study)	0	2	3	2	2
Student Complaints to OIA	18	20	25	25	15

Complaints

47. More complaints were received at Stage 2 this year (74 compared to 36). This is still lower than the high volume of complaints received in 2020 but represents an increase compared to typical pre-Covid levels of complaints. Although more complaints were also received at Stage 3 this year (12 compared to 8 in 2022), the increase is not proportionate. Only 16% of Stage 2 complaints were escalated for review at Stage 3 compared to 22% last year, and referrals are spread fairly evenly across Schools suggesting that there are no concerning trends at School-level about Stage 2 complaint handling. A greater proportion of complaints was upheld or partially upheld at Stage 2 this year (30%, compared to 14% last year) and this is likely to be one of the reasons for a lower escalation rate to Stage 3. Industrial action (strikes) accounted for the largest proportion of complaints (27% of all complaints received) which is unsurprising, although this has been skewed by the complaints in this area received by SST. SST note that students were encouraged to complain by academic members of staff participating in industrial action. Note also that industrial action (marking and assessment boycott) was only complained about in 3% of complaints.

Although some student complaints were categorised as about 'several' or 'other' areas, no undergraduate student complaints were received solely about quality of learning or teaching, which is very positive indeed. Only one student complaint was received solely about welfare support, and only two complaints were received solely about the marking and assessment boycott (one UG and one PGT).

Academic appeals

48. All Schools (apart from SCC) have seen a slight reduction in the number of Stage 1 appeals received in 2023. 916 Stage 1 appeals were received compared to 1074 in 2022. Despite an overall decrease in Stage 1 appeals, the figures remain high compared to pre-Covid levels. 70% of Stage 1 appeals were on the grounds of undisclosed extenuating circumstances (EC), similar to last year's 68%. 61% of appeals were upheld or partially upheld, which is very similar to last year (60%) and the year before (61%), so it seems that students do have grounds for appealing, rather than the increase in volume coming solely from students whose appeals will go on to be rejected.

Academic misconduct

49. The total number of Academic Misconduct in 2023 was 777. This is a significant reduction in cases by more than 50% (53.4%) compared to 2022 (1454). Case numbers in 2022 and 2021 were significantly increased compared to previous years and this was attributed to the impact the pandemic had on student mental health as well as the impact of remote teaching and online assessments. The fact that the overall number of cases has returned to a figure much more similar to pre 2020/21 numbers indicates that the impact of the pandemic has reduced as a factor and that the move to hybrid teaching and learning techniques has had a positive effect. Additionally, work to increase student and staff awareness of academic integrity, updates to the policy, the development of new resources and clear communications have also had a very positive impact. The majority of cases were first offences (78.7%) and were either Poor Academic Practice (30.8%) or Plagiarism (33%). A small number of the cases (13.2%) were dismissed and the majority of those with a case to answer were managed by applying Sanction 1 and 2 (75%). Just over a quarter of all cases (31.7%) were referred to an Academic Misconduct Panel and only 1 case was referred to University-level Disciplinary under Sanction 6.

General misconduct

50. There were 7 general misconduct cases escalated to University-level Disciplinary in 2023, which is similar to the 9 received in 2022 and 2021. Of the 7 cases that were considered at a University-level Disciplinary Panel, 2 were related to sexual misconduct, 2 were related to bullying & harassment, 2 were related to criminal convictions and 1 was related to conduct on campus. As we have reported in previous years, the idiosyncratic nature of student conduct cases means that it is difficult to draw conclusions on trends in this area, or to assess the spread of cases across Schools. However, we are seeing a slow rise in cases of sexual misconduct: 2 cases were considered at University-level in 2023 and 2 in 2022, whereas only 2 cases in total had previously been reported to the University (one in 2021 and one in 2019).

Support for Study

51. There were no University Review Meetings convened under this regulation in 2023. In 2022, two Fitness to Study Panels (as they were previously known) were convened. This was fairly typical and the low number of cases does make it difficult to establish trends, but the reduction in final-stage meetings could be to do with more structured support at earlier stages of the process because of work in Schools, with Student Health & Wellbeing and in line with the new Support for Study regulation.

Referrals to the OIA

52. 18 complaints were taken to the OIA in 2023, a slight reduction since last year (20) and 2021 and 2020 (both 25). This reduction (although small) is very positive news in the context of a much-increased caseload in 2022 (students have 12 months in which to take a complaint to the OIA so increases in volume tend to arise after a lag). 78% of the complaints taken to the OIA were found 'Not Justified' or 'Ineligible'. No complaint has been found to be 'Justified' by the OIA since 2019.

H. Academic Integrity and Misconduct

53. Academic integrity is at the heart of our commitment to academic excellence and reflects a shared set of principles which include honesty, trust, diligence, fairness and respect. The University's [Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy and Guidance](#) set out how allegations of academic misconducts are managed. Senate Regulation 13: Student Discipline may also apply.
54. The University continues to take academic misconduct seriously and seeks, at all times, to rigorously protect its academic standards.
55. The number of academic misconduct cases investigated at City had a significant increase across the Institution during 2019 - 2022 compared to previous years. This is thought to be in part, due to the impact of the global pandemic and the move to fully online teaching and learning during lockdown. However, from January 2023 to January 2024 there was a significant decline in cases (53%), returning numbers much closer to those before the pandemic.

Figure 3. Overall Academic Misconduct Cases Investigated - Data 2018-2023

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Academic Misconduct	777	1,454	1,245	442	411	147

(Please Note: The data within Figure 3 above, has been extracted from the Student Case Work Report which was presented to Senate in June 2024)

56. The fact that the overall number of cases have returned to a figure much more similar to the pre 2021 numbers suggests that the impact of the pandemic has reduced as a factor and that the move to hybrid teaching and learning techniques has had a positive effect.
57. Additionally, work to increase student and staff awareness of academic integrity, updates to the policy, the development of new resources and clear communications have also had a very positive impact.
58. This also includes new all staff training on the Policy and processes being offered by the Quality & Academic Development (QUAD) team. The first training session was held on the 31st January 2024 and was very successful with over 85 members of staff in attendance. The training will be repeated again in Autumn 2024 and Spring 2025.
59. In September 2022 an Academic Misconduct (AM) Cases Log template was developed by the QUAD and shared with Schools in order for data held locally regarding AM cases to be logged in an accurate and consistent way, which has also supported the reporting of the data to Senate via the Student Case Work Report. The data held locally by School and collated by QUAD between January 2023 and January 2024 can be found in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4. Academic Misconduct Cases Data from January 2023 – January 2024

Total Number of Cases:		777
Cases by School:	SHPS	64
	SST	172
	BAYES	79
	SPGA	216
	SCC	57
	CLS	188
	LEaD	1
UG:		588
PG:		189
AM Types:	Poor Academic Practice	240
	Plagiarism	257
	Collusion	175
	Cheating	12
	Contract Cheating	5
	Fabrication of Evidence/Data	1
	Theft of Work	3
	Uncategorised	84
First Offences:		612
Subsequent Offences:		165
AM Panels:		247
Outcomes:	Case Dismissed	103
	Sanction 1	298
	Sanction 2	285
	Sanction 3	82
	Sanction 4/5	8
	Sanction 6	1
Declared Disability or Reasonable Adjustments:		15
Declared Extenuating Circumstances Directly Relevant to this Case:		13

60. The data detailed above indicates that most AM offences between January 2023 to January 2024, across City were committed by Undergraduate students (75.6%). The majority of cases were first offences (78.7%) and were either Poor Academic Practice (30.8%) or Plagiarism (33%). A small number of the cases (13.2%) were dismissed and the majority of those with a case to answer were managed under Sanction 1 and 2 (75%). Just over a quarter of all cases (31.7%) were referred to an Academic Misconduct Panel and only 1 case was referred to Disciplinary under Sanction 6. There were 15 cases where students declared disabilities or reasonable adjustments and there were also 13 cases where the students had declared extenuating circumstances, directly related to their case. The School with the highest number of cases was SPGA (27.7%) and the School with the least number of cases was SCC with 57 cases (7.3%). Additionally, LEaD only reported 1 case.

61. The Academic Integrity & Misconduct Policy was last updated in October 2023 in response to the recent technological developments in Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) and further revisions to the Policy are currently being explored for implementation in the 2024/25 academic year.

Generative Artificial Intelligence

62. In response to recent technological developments in Generative Artificial Intelligence (such as ChatGPT and Co-Pilot) a Generative AI Taks and Finish (T&F) Group was created in May 2023. The T&F group was formed to better understand the role of Generative AI at City and has developed and overseen an action plan to promoting a better understanding of Generative AI amongst staff and students in order to encourage responsible, ethical and effective use of these tools.
63. A lot of valuable work has been done by the Generative AI T&F Group during the 2023/24 academic year, including:
- the production of guidance for staff and students
 - updating policy relating to Academic Integrity & Misconduct and other regulations/guidance to confirm City's position on the unauthorised use of Generative AI by students in assessments
 - considering IT infrastructure for Generative AI
 - exploring potential implications on research
 - considering the role of Generative AI employability
64. Now that we have guidance in place to support assessment redesign and academic integrity, it is time to look at how City can further embrace the benefits of Generative AI and other AI tools more broadly for 2024/25 and beyond.

I. Senate Academic Regulation and Policy Review

65. The following policies, regulations and frameworks were reviewed, updated and/or created in 2023/24:

- **Student Bullying and Harassment Policy**
- **Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy**
- **Programme Approval Policy**
- **Programme Amendment Policy**
- **Student Placements Policy**
- **External Examiner (Taught Programmes) Policy**
- **Peer Review Policy**
- **Senate Regulation 3 – Boards of Studies**
- **Senate Regulation 4 – Senate's Committees**
- **Senate Regulation 10 - Support for Study**
- **Senate Regulation 13 – Student Disciplinary Regulation**
- **Senate Regulation 19 – Assessment Regulations**
- **Senate Regulations 20, 21 & 21b – Academic Appeals**
- **Senate Regulations 24a – Professional Doctorates**
- **Senate Regulation 26 - Complaints Regulation**
- **Credit Framework**
- **Module and Elective Framework**

In addition, following the merger of City and St George's into City St George's, University of London a mapping exercise of relevant policies and regulations commenced over the summer and is ongoing. Academic Services Directorate (City) and Quality & Partnerships Directorate (St George's) are leading on this area.

J. Module Evaluation

66. Each term, students on all credit bearing modules across City are surveyed on their experience and feedback. A standard question set is used across all modules, to enable comparisons, and an online system called EvaSys is used to operationalise the surveys.
67. The overall response rate for 2023/24 is 25.03%, which is 1.8% lower than in 2022/23. The percentage agree (students who selected 'Definitely Agree' and/or 'Agree' on Likert scale questions) is 81.95%, an overall increase of 2.26% on 2022/23. An overall mean of 4.16 based on all questions is an increase of 0.04 on 2022/23. The reports on the outcomes of PRD1 and PRD2 of 2023/24 were positively received by Senate.
68. In PRD2 of 2023/24, a new procedure responding to student feedback was implemented, which is currently being imbedded. The first monitoring report on compliance with the new process was received by the Education Quality Committee in May 2024.

K. Periodic Review

69. The Periodic Programme Review (PPR) process is a developmental peer-review process designed to assess a programme of study or a cluster of related programmes. This process involves a retrospective analysis that aims to identify opportunities for improvement and consider future developments. Each programme or cluster of programmes undergoes a review every five years. It serves as a key mechanism for City University of London to monitor and review its programmes and is managed by the Partnerships and Academic Development Team in the Academic Services. The PPR policy applies to all taught and research programmes, including foundation provision, distance learning, and partnership provision leading to a City University of London award. The institution is committed to consistently assessing its programmes to ensure quality and continuous improvements.

Figure 5. Programmes that underwent a review in 2023-2024 academic year by School

Bayes Business School		
Programme Title/Cluster	Date of Meeting	Outcome
MSc Shipping, Trade and Finance MSc Energy, Trade and Finance	03/10/2023	Endorsed
Undergraduate Programmes: BSc Business Management Degree Cluster BSc Accounting and Finance BSc Actuarial Science, Finance with Actuarial Science, Data Analytics and Actuarial Science BSc Finance Degree Cluster	31/10/2023 and 01/11/2023	Endorsed
Learning Enhancement and Development		
Programme Title/Cluster	Date of Meeting	Outcome
PhD Professional Education MA Academic Practice RISES CPD Fellowship programme	23/01/2024	Endorsed
School of Policy and Global Affairs		
Programme Title/Cluster	Date of Meeting	Outcome
Economics BSc Economics with Accounting BSc Economics	18/06/2024	Endorsed

BSc Economics (Economics and Econometrics) BSc Financial Economics MSc Business Economics MSc Development Economics MSc Economics MSc Economic Evaluation in Healthcare MSc Financial Economics MSc Health Economics MSc International Business Economics MPhil/PhD Economics Research Programme		
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School of Science and Technology		
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Programme Title/Cluster	Date of Meeting	Outcome
MSc Renewable Energy & Power Systems Management	18/09/2023	Endorsed
<u>SST MPhil/PhD Research Degrees:</u> Maths programmes: MPhil/PhD in Mathematics Computer Science programmes: MPhil/PhD in Computer Science MPhil/PhD in Human-Computer Interaction Engineering programmes: MPhil/PhD in Aeronautical Engineering MPhil/PhD in Air Transport Engineering MPhil/PhD in Air Transport Management & Safety MPhil/PhD in Air Safety Management MPhil/PhD in Automotive Engineering MPhil/PhD in Mechanical Engineering MPhil/PhD in Energy Engineering MPhil/PhD in Civil Engineering MPhil/PhD in Geotechnical Engineering MPhil/PhD in Structural Engineering MPhil/PhD in Hydraulic Engineering MPhil/PhD in Applied Physics MPhil/PhD in Communications Engineering MPhil/PhD in Control Theory MPhil/PhD in Control Engineering MPhil/PhD in Biomedical Engineering MPhil/PhD in Electrical Engineering MPhil/PhD in Electronic Engineering MPhil/PhD in Information Engineering MPhil/PhD in Measurement & Instrumentation MPhil/PhD in Mathematical Methods and Systems MPhil/PhD in Photonics MPhil/PhD in Systems and Modelling	04/06/2024	Not endorsed
Computer Science Programmes: BSc Computer Science BSc Computer Science with Games Technology MSci Computer Science with Games Technology MSci Computer Science with Cyber Security MSci Computer Science MSci Data Science Computer Science Foundation Programmes MSc Computer Games Technology MSc Cyber Security MSc Data Science MSc Human Computer Interaction Design MSc Software Engineering with Cloud Computing MSc Artificial Intelligence MSc Data Science (Apprenticeship)	18/10/2023	Endorsed

<p>UG Mathematics programmes: MSci Mathematics with Data Science * BSc Mathematics with Data Science (with Integrated Foundation Year) * BSc Mathematics with Data Science * BSc Mathematics and Finance (with Integrated Foundation Year) MSci Mathematics * BSc Mathematics with Finance and Economics BSc Mathematics with Finance and Economics (with Integrated Foundation) MSci Mathematics with Data Science (with Integrated Foundation Year) * BSc Mathematics (with Integrated Foundation Year) MSci Mathematics (with Integrated Foundation Year) * BSc Mathematics BSc Mathematics and Finance BSc Mathematics with Business **</p> <p>* Programmes commenced in 2022-23 ** Approved 2023-24 to launch in 2025-26</p>	12/06/2024	Endorsed
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70. All PPR review events took place in-person or online via Microsoft Teams or a hybrid setup. There was excellent attendance and contributions from students and alumni, programme teams, senior staff teams and external experts. There were minor issues with Schools and Programme Teams adhering to the standard deadlines for paper submission for a few programmes. One programme at the Bayes Business School was postponed from 2022-23 to 2023-24 and subsequently postponed to 2024-25. This was due to a change in the Course Director role. Additionally, the PPR event that took place in the School of Science and Technology for the MPhil/PhD Research Degrees had not been endorsed. Overall, the reports noted that students were satisfied with their programme of study that was structured and aligned with sector needs/expectations and Programme Teams were highly commended for their management of the programmes. These included:

- A strong commitment to embedding research into teaching.
- Excellent networking opportunities and strong alumni connections.
- Excellent teaching quality and diversity in assessment methods.
- Links to the industry and employability with employment prospects for graduates.

71. A number of conditions and recommendations were noted for each programme/cluster. Common issues included:

- Review feedback on assessments.
- Ensure that the Programmes Teams are complying with the Personal Tutoring Policy and review its effectiveness through appropriate mechanisms.
- Ensure that the Action Plans are specific and measurable.
- Benchmarking to ensure fee structure is appropriate for the market.
- Implement a workload allocation model to support staff.
- Ensure that the curriculum is compliant with City's Curriculum Model and Credit Framework.
- Incorporate the inclusion of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations in the curriculum.

72. A new policy and revised processes for the conduct of PPR events, scheduled to launch in 2023-24 had been put on hold and would be revisited in 2024-25. The current process is reviewed at the programme level and there is a shift towards a departmental review.

L. Programme Approvals, Amendments & Terminations/Suspensions

73. The new policy and process for Programme Approvals was effective from term 2 (January 2023) in the 2022-23 academic year. The University Programme Approval Committee (UPAC) Stages 1 and 2 were replaced by the School Programme Review Committee (SPRC – Stage 1) and City Programme Approval Committee (CPAC – Stage 3). The administration management and servicing of these committees is split between the Schools and QUAD. SPRC is administered at the School level, and CPAC is by the QUAD Team. City colleagues have reflected on the process a year after its launch and reviewed the guidance and policy. Various forms and memberships were revised to provide clarity. Additionally, some of the information that existed under the old process was also restored. These changes included:

- SPRC Terms of Reference continues to be revised to provide clarity over attendance and the role of SPRC secretaries.
- Minor edits were made to the policy and guidance for SPRC.
- The right-to-work checks for External Advisors were removed from the guidance.
- New tables for core, elective, and compulsory modules at the undergraduate and postgraduate taught levels were added to the programme specification template.
- Reference to the Termination/Suspension policy was added to the policy.
- HECoS was reinstated in the Module Specification templates; type of study was amended so that there are now two options for Full-Time and Part-Time study modes and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) details were restored in the Programme Specification template.

Other changes were ongoing and would be implemented for 2024-25.

74. SPRC (Stage) 1 - Strategic Consideration and Resourcing by Schools

- 17 proposals (some covering more than one related programme) were considered.
- All proposals were related to new undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research programmes.
- 16 submissions were approved with conditions and recommendations.
- 1 submission was not approved with conditions to resubmit and an invitation to resubmit for the 2025-26 launch.

Figure 6. The following meetings took place in each School:

School	Number of meetings	Outcome
Bayes Business School	4	All programmes were approved with conditions and recommendations
The City Law School	2	All programmes were approved with conditions and recommendations
School of Communication and Creativity	3	All programmes were approved with conditions and recommendations
School of Health & Psychological Sciences	3	All programmes were approved with conditions
School of Policy & Global Affairs	3	1 programme was not approved 2 programmes were approved with conditions
School of Science and Technology	2	Approved with conditions and recommendation

- 75.** CPAC (Stage 2) University-level approval – curriculum design, assessment methodologies, credit values, exit points, and learning and teaching.
- 19 proposals (some covering more than one related programme) were considered.
 - All proposals were related to new undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research programmes.
 - 15 submissions were approved with conditions.
 - 1 submission approved with recommendations.
 - 1 submission approved.
 - 2 submissions were not approved

Figure 7. The following meetings took place in each School:

School	Number of meetings	Outcome
Bayes Business School	3	All programmes were approved with conditions
The City Law School	0	N/A
School of Communication and Creativity	6	4 programmes were approved with conditions 2 programmes were not approved with 1 rescheduled in early October 2024
School of Health & Psychological Sciences	5	3 programmes were approved with conditions 1 programme approved with recommendations 1 programme approved
School of Policy & Global Affairs	3	1 programme was not approved 2 programmes were approved with conditions
School of Science and Technology	3	All programmes were approved with conditions

- 76.** The programme amendments cycle in 2023-24 saw a reduction in the overall volume of amendments submitted by Schools compared to previous years, although in many cases the amendments were significantly more complex, as Schools addressed issues relating to compliance with City’s educational frameworks alongside routine updates to programme content.
- 103 minor amendments were submitted, by Schools covering 258 programmes across City. This included 151 undergraduate programmes and 107 postgraduate programmes.
 - 14 ‘escalated’ amendments were submitted, covering 55 programmes across City. This included 46 undergraduate programmes and 9 postgraduate programmes.
- 77.** The Terminations and Suspension policy was being reviewed to provide clarity on timelines and processes. A section on low recruitment on existing and new programmes will be added for 2024-25.
- Overall, 12 submissions were approved for one or more programmes per application with a total of 18 programmes suspended or terminated.
 - 12 programmes across the institution were suspended – 5 at the undergraduate (UG) level, and 7 at the postgraduate taught (PGT) level.
 - 6 programmes across the institution were terminated - 1 at the undergraduate level, 4 at the postgraduate taught level and 1 at postgraduate research (PGR) level.

Figure 8. A breakdown by each School is provided below:

School	UG	PGT	PGR	Suspension/ Termination
Bayes Business School	0	0	0	N/A
The City Law School	0	0	0	N/A
School of Communication and Creativity	0 1	1 3	0 1	Suspension Termination
School of Health & Psychological Sciences	1 0	1 1	0 0	Suspension Termination
School of Policy & Global Affairs	0	3	0	Suspension Termination
School of Science and Technology	4	2	0	Suspension Termination

74. In 23/24 City colleagues ran a tender exercise to find a supplier to provide a curriculum management system. The exercise was successful and City is now working with Courseloop throughout 24/25 to design and implement the system. The system will provide the definitive source of information relating to City's curriculum and programmes. It will also be the tool by which the programme approval, amendment, suspension and termination processes are managed.

M. Revised approach to alignment with City Educational Frameworks

75. In October 2023, Senate approved the creation of the Education Implementation Group (EIG), as a body to oversee the implementation of key educational frameworks at City and to monitor compliance with these frameworks, including the requirements set out in the Curriculum Model and the Assessment for Learning Code of Practice. The latter was approved by Senate in December 2023 and sets out a number of expectations for Schools relating to assessment design and feedback practices.

76. EIG receives requests from Schools for exemption from these frameworks, considering each on its merits and reaching a decision on whether or not they can be approved. In cases where exemptions are not approved, feedback is provided to programme teams and support is offered to enable Schools to re-design their provision to be compliant. EIG reports its decisions to Educational Quality Committee (EQC). Academic Services have worked with the VP Education and Academic Lead for City Educational Outcomes to support the work of EIG and, where necessary, programme re-design through City's programme amendment process.

77. As well as making decisions on specific exemptions, the work of EIG identified further opportunities to enhance City's regulatory framework to enable a more coherent curriculum offering across all its academic provision.

Module categories, definitions and compensation

78. City's Assessment Regulations and Module and Elective Framework included definitions of the following module categories - core, core/elective and elective. No definition of a compulsory module existed but the module category was noted in the Assessment Regulations.

79. The definitions of existing module categories were updated with the addition of a compulsory and a compulsory/elective category. The relationship of each module category and compensation was clarified. The approved categories have been added to the relevant policies and regulations and Schools will update programme documentation in the programme amendment cycle in 2024/25.

Programmes, specialisms and pathways

80. City's Assessment Regulations included a definition of a programme and a programme specification, but there was no clear definition of pathways, specialisms and/or routes. This had led to differing practice across Schools and lack of clarity when developing new programmes.
81. Clear definitions of a programme, programme specification and a Single, a Joint and a Major/minor Award were agreed by AGNC and Senate. Additionally, a definition was agreed for specialisms within a programme and a pathway.
82. The definitions have been added to the relevant policies and regulations and Schools will work to update programme documentation and structure in 2024/25.

N. Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)

83. The responsibility for PSRB relationships is devolved to the School Board of Studies within which the programmes reside. Reports arising from PSRB engagements and responses to any matters arising are used as part of the normal review process, through Annual Programme Evaluation (APE) and Periodic Review. Boards of Studies and Programme Approval and Review Committees (PARCs) or other relevant sub committees consider reports and responses and monitor any follow-up action that is required. Updated PSRB Registers are reported to Educational Quality Committee annually to enable the Committee to undertake scrutiny and advise Senate of outcomes from, and the effectiveness of, academic quality processes involving PSRBs.
84. City has links with 57 PSRBs which provide valuable externality to 225 City programmes and routes within programmes (this includes several accredited standalone modules). In March and May 2024, Educational Quality Committee reviewed the updated School PSRB Registers, reflecting on the 2023/24 academic year.
85. A new template for Schools to record accreditations was introduced by QUAD during 2023/24, which enables clearer reporting and is more closely aligned with external data reporting requirements.

O. Annual Programme Evaluations

86. Annual Programme Evaluation (APE) is one of City's primary evaluation methods for assuring the quality and continual enhancement of programmes. The APEs play an important role in assessing progress against strategic priorities and gauging support requirements. This reporting, forms part of our annual assurance process, it also supports the dissemination of good practice and enables oversight of the way in which strategic priorities are being implemented at programme level.
87. Each year, a review of the quality, good practice and themes arising from Annual Programme Evaluation (APE) is conducted and a report made to Senate. The review process is retrospective, therefore the update provided within this report reflects on the 2022/202 academic year.

B3 Student Outcomes

88. In October 2022, the Office for Students (OfS) published Condition B3 'Student Outcome' data on their public dashboard for each provider in England. Condition B3 has been implemented to set minimum expectations for all student outcomes and to enable the OfS to act where any group of students is perceived as being left behind.

In order to robustly reflect on the B3 data and to avoid the duplication in workload for programme teams, a new section regarding 'Condition B3 Student Outcomes' was included within the UG and PGT APE forms.

Figure 9. Overall City B3 Data April 2023:

City UG April 2023	Indicator %	Numerical Threshold	Proportion of statistical uncertainty	
			Below Numerical Threshold	Above Numerical Threshold
Continuation	92.1%	80%	0%	100%
Completion	90.1%	75%	0%	100%
Progression	77.1%	60%	0%	100%
City PGT April 2023	Indicator %	Numerical Threshold	Proportion of statistical uncertainty	
			Below Numerical Threshold	Above Numerical Threshold
Continuation	95.5%	80%	0%	100%
Completion	95.4%	80%	0%	100%
Progression	91.1%	70%	0%	100%

89. City's UG data is, overall, significantly above (by over 10%) the B3 condition numerical thresholds for all three performance indicators. Compared to the previous B3 Student Outcome Data published in October 2022, Continuation has improved slightly by a further 0.5%, Completion has also improved by 0.3% and Progression has remained the same. Similarly, City's PGT data for April 2023, is overall significantly above (by over 15%) the B3 condition numerical thresholds for all three performance indicators.
90. The 2022/23 UG & PGT APE Reports which were received by Senate in 2024 provided a reflection on the April 2023 B3 Student Outcome Data which was extracted from the dashboards as well as the completed APEs.
91. As the APEs are retrospective, the April 2023 B3 Data was the most recent data we had during the time of reflection. The 2024 B3 Data was later published by the OfS in July 2024 and will be reflected on in the 2023/24 APEs which will be received by EQC and Senate in 2025.

APE Quality Reporting Summary

92. The quality (i.e. completeness / comprehensiveness) of all completed APEs is analysed by Academic Services to provide assurance of the implementation of the APE policy through an institutional level review.
93. All 2022/23 APEs were received by the published deadline and the overall quality of the APEs was very high, providing an effective and robust overview of the health of programmes, including good practice items and comprehensive action plans mapped against the University Strategic Themes.
94. The Quality & Academic Development (QUAD) team have completed a desk based institutional level review of the APEs from across City and some common themes and areas of interest have been noted as follows:
- Teaching, has for many programmes, remained hybrid or has returned mainly on campus. Some programmes are continuing to deliver large group teaching online, although a significant number of smaller group teaching, i.e. tutorials, labs and workshops are delivered on campus.
 - School colleagues have worked hard to implement both online and reincorporate more on campus learning and student feedback showed that these sessions helped nurture peer to peer support among the cohort.
 - Responding to the university-wide directive on unifying all modules at 15 credits, some departments have begun a major exercise to bring their programme into line.

Although this has not been without its challenges, it has offered an opportunity to refresh many of our programmes.

- Funded studentship initiatives are continuing to take place across most Schools in order to support and encourage the increase of PGR student numbers. Some positive impact has already been noted.

P. Student Surveys & Action Plans

95. City conducts an annual suite of surveys to gain feedback on student satisfaction, the institution's performance and to identify issues that need to be addressed.
96. The surveys comprise:
 - Your Voice 1 (Undergraduate (UG) Year 1 internal survey)
 - Your Voice 2 (UG Year 2 internal survey)
 - National Student Survey (NSS) (UG Year 3, national survey)
 - Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)
 - Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) (Biannual)
97. City invites students to participate in one programme-related survey per year. Students participate in the surveys anonymously. All surveys take place in a single 'survey window' in the spring term. This principle enables the University to work in conjunction with the Students' Union to undertake focused promotional work with the aim of eliciting high rates of participation.
98. Changes were also made to the question set for Your Voice surveys to remove duplicate questions also found in the NSS and module evaluations. The changes were made following student and staff consultations and questions around community, finances and cost of living were added. Question sets for the NSS, Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey are set nationally. Summary reports for Your Voice 1 and 2, NSS, PTES and PRES are reported to Education and Employability Board and Student Experience Board, with further reports going to SLT, Senate and Council on Student Experience.
99. Get Heard, a new digital student feedback platform launched in September 2023 for all students.

Overview of Student Survey Outcomes in 2024

100. Voice 1 and Voice 2:

Despite changes to the timing and duration of campaigns for YV1 and YV2 to students in 23/24, the response rates for both the YV1 and YV2 surveys remain low, with a response rate of 3.6% (-5.7%) for YV1 and 6.8% for YV2 (-0.2%). General observations include:

- Overall, students continue to praise the support and resources available to them.
- There continue to be many positive comments regarding the number of opportunities for students to socialise and feel part of a community.
- Students commented on improvement in teaching and learning experience with emphasis on learning practical skills.
- Negative comments persist around disorganized and inconvenient timetables, timely assessment feedback and quality of feedback communicate
- Students expressed the continued impact of cost of living and financial hardship on their wellbeing and learning experience.
- There has been a slight positive shift in knowing how student feedback has been recognised and acted upon in their Schools.

101. NSS:

The overall response rate for the institution was 71.6% (+1.6% from 2023). General observations include:

- This year, the overall positivity score for the core question set (1-24) was 80.5% for City, this is an improvement of 1.9 percentage points on the score from 2023. This performance is 1.3 percentage points higher than the formal target for 2024, agreed at 79.2% overall positivity. The overall positivity score of 80.5% sees City ranked 82nd out of 131 U.K. institutions based on the average of the core set of questions (q1-q24). This is the same U.K. ranking as 2023. City is ranked 58th nationally based on the average of all questions (Q1-27), moving up 2 places from 60th in 2023.
- City's highest ranked theme is 'organisation and management', where we are ranked 38th in the U.K. and 5th in London. The most improved theme is 'learning opportunities', where we improved from 78th to 63rd and are now ranked 10th in London. Our biggest drop was in 'learning resources', which declined from 3rd in London to 7th in London. City's highest ranked question is Q25 which asks how well the Students' Union represent students' academic interests, which has seen a significant increase of 44 places to 25th - congratulations to our SU colleagues. The most improved ranking by question was within 'teaching on my course', where Q1. 'How good are staff at explaining things?' increased 36 places in the ranking, from 92nd to 56th nationally. The Assessment and feedback theme continues to be an area for improvement with City ranking 101/131 providers despite 1.9% increase in positivity score to 74.4%.

102. PTES:

The overall response rate for this survey was 15.6% (+7.7%). Overall, the results seem to indicate that PTES students continue to be positive about their overall experience, with City performing in the top quarter of the sector. The questions for sense of belonging at the institution (56%, -14% on Sector benchmark) and opportunities to interact with other PGT students (52%, -12% on Sector benchmark) continue to show room for significant improvement.

103. PRES:

This is a biannual survey so was not completed in 2024 and is due to next be completed in 2025. An action plan has been devised in response to 2023 results and is being led by Doctoral College.

104. The Vice-President (Education) and Vice-President (Digital and Student Experience), continue to meet with School SLTs to discuss the Survey results and student outcomes data to identify actions as part of ongoing School Student Experience Improvement plans. These plans are designed to align with City's strategy, School Strategic plans, quality assurance processes and portfolio review.

105. Check ins on progress against School Student Experience Continuous improvement action plans are scheduled at regular intervals throughout the academic year.

Q. Regulatory Development & Compliance**Teaching Excellence Framework (OfS Condition B6)**

106. City submitted its Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) submission to the OfS on 24th January 2023, and City Students' Union also provided a separate submission.

107. City received its outcome on 28th September 2023, and was awarded a Silver rating overall. For student experience, City received a Bronze award, and for student outcomes, City received a Gold award. The award will last for four years.

108. The TEF panel summary statement noted that ‘typically, the experience students have at City, University of London and the outcomes it leads to are very high quality, and there are some outstanding features.’ For student experience, several features were commended as ‘very high quality’, including course content and delivery that encourages students to engage in their learning and develops their skills, a supportive learning environment, physical and virtual learning resources, and effective engagement with students. On student outcomes, several features were described as ‘outstanding quality’, including the use of tailored approaches to ensure student success and progress, high progression rates, particularly for students from underrepresented groups, and clearly explained educational gains that students are expected to achieve. Several other features were commended as ‘very high quality’, including high continuation and completion rates, effective support for students, and evaluation of gains made by students. The full summary statement can be found on the [OfS website](#).

Regulating Student Outcomes (OfS condition B3)

109. The OfS has set a minimum requirement that all providers must deliver positive outcomes for their students. This requirement aims to:

- protect students from providers, and courses, where performance falls below a minimum requirement
- protecting taxpayers’ money by ensuring that student support funding and OfS public grant funding is not given to providers whose students are unlikely to complete their course or achieve positive outcomes.

110. This will be tested by considering, whether, in the OfS’s judgement, a provider’s outcomes are at or above specific numerical thresholds, which will be calculated by reference to sector-wide performance and will be reviewed every 4 years.

111. The OfS first published the indicators in September 2022, with the revised B3 condition coming into force in October 2022. Updated outcomes data covering 2021-22 was published in April 2023. Outcomes data covering 2022-23 was published in July 2024. As in previous years, the Quality & Academic Development (QUAD) team provided access to the data to relevant School colleagues, to enable analysis and reflection on this data at subject level in the APEs (See section N).

Regulating quality and standards (OfS condition B1, B2, B4, B5)

112. The OfS published its new approach to regulating quality and standards in Higher Education in England in May 2022. These conditions came into force alongside the specific approaches set out through TEF and student outcomes regulation set out above.

113. Since then, the OfS has undertaken quality and standards investigations into provision at a number of providers across the sector, focusing primarily on business and management courses and computing courses. Some of these investigations have highlighted specific areas of concern, although no decisions on breaches of conditions have been made as a result of any of these investigations.

114. Colleagues from across City are working to ensure policies and processes align with these conditions with a particular focus on mapping to our processes for programme approval, amendment and review, as well as other relevant City policies.

Terms & Conditions and Consumer Protection (OfS condition C1)

- 115.** The terms and conditions for study at City, University of London 2024/25 were reviewed and revised in anticipation of the merger with St George's, to produce a single set of terms and conditions applicable to students starting at the combined institution from September 2024. These have also been undergone a legal review to ensure compliance with consumer protection law, in light of updated guidance for the sector from the Competition and Markets Authority. The updated terms and conditions were published in August 2024.
- 116.** Academic Services, working with the Apprenticeships team, also prepared a separate set of terms and conditions covering students on Apprenticeship programmes delivered by the combined institution that are due to be published in August 2024.

Student Complaints scheme (OfS condition C2)

- 117.** City's commitment to this condition is covered in Section G of this report: Managing Student Appeals, Complaints, Disciplinary and Fitness to Study.

Student Protection Plan (OfS condition C3)

- 118.** City's [Student Protection Plan](#) sets out what applicants and current City students can expect to happen should a course, campus, or indeed the institution close. Having such a plan is a requirement of the Office for Students. In anticipation of the merger with St George's, the Plan was reviewed and revised by Academic Services to ensure that it fully reflected the risks and mitigations across the combined institution. The updated Plan is expected to be published in August 2024.

Degree Outcome Statement

- 119.** In 2019 the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment published a Statement of Intent proposing that every HE provider across England produces and publishes a Degree Outcomes Statement analysing their degree classification profile and arrangements for teaching, learning and assessment of students, academic regulations, and academic governance. City published its first Degree Outcome Statement in December 2020 reflecting on the 2018/19 academic year. Subsequently the 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22 statements have also now been published.
- 120.** The 2022/23 Statement included a greater focus on awarding gaps, particularly those across different ethnic groups within the student population. It was reviewed and approved by Educational Quality Committee and Senate and was published in August.
- 121.** The Degree Outcome Statement is a brief, high-level report and follows the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment's (UKSCQA) recommendations. Each statement covers a 5-year period, and the content is largely drawn from our Annual Programme Evaluations and strategic work including the Access and Participation Plan and TEF preparation as well as our Regulations and collaborative arrangements.
- 122.** In a first of its kind statement Universities UK (UUK) and GuildHE members committed to return to pre-pandemic levels of 'upper' (1st and 2:1) degree classification by 2023. UUK and GuildHE published an update in January 2023 on progress made in reducing grade inflation, noting that 'significant action' had been taken across the sector.

123. The 2022/23 Statement indicated that City was in line with the wider trend across the sector. The percentage of good honours awarded reduced to 78.7%, from a peak of 87.5% in 2020/21, bringing it below the level in 2019/20, although still higher than in 2018/19, the last full year unaffected by the pandemic. The figure for 2022/23 is in line with the sector average, as reported by HESA.

R. Enhancement Priorities for 2024/25

Academic year 2024/25 is expected to be one of significant change for City's quality assurance functions. The following is a non-exhaustive list of priorities for the year:

- Following the merger, a key focus will be on ensuring timely alignment of the respective academic regulatory frameworks into one framework for City St George's, University of London
- The design and implementation of the new curriculum management system.
- Continued implementation of outcomes from Portfolio review across the University.
- The development of a new collaborative Provision framework
- The development of a new short courses and CPD framework
- Review of APE and PPR functions.
- Implementing actions following the major review of the complaints and appeals process.
- Ensuring adherence to the OfS new condition of registration relating to harassment and sexual misconduct.
- Continued work to align with the OfS conditions of registration relating to quality and standards, including preparation for potential regulatory interventions from the OfS.
- Preparing City's academic framework and processes for the governments proposed Lifelong Loan Entitlement scheduled to start in 2025.