

About this update

This update takes stock of progress towards our goals and priorities for 2020, and also recognises the considerable achievements of our staff and students over the four years since Our Strategy for 2020 was produced. In the context of the rapidly changing external environment in which UK universities now operate and our considerable progress across a broad range of areas, it is important that we remain agile in pursuing our commitment to excellence. As a consequence we have consulted with our staff, students and stakeholders on our priorities.

Our strategy remains broadly fit for purpose, but there are some areas which we must prioritise between now and 2020 in order to achieve our vision. Increasing and strengthening our engagement with other organisations and networks, enhancing our use of digital technology, further improving our reputation and rankings, growing in scale and reaffirming our values and commitment to equality and diversity were identified as particular priorities. These are reflected in our new Key Performance Indicators, in the adoption of an additional 'dimension' around digital innovation, and in the updated actions under our three continuing priorities of research, teaching and engagement.



Our Strategy for 2020

The next steps to becoming a global leader in higher education.

Committed to Excellence – Actively Engaged – Enhanced Reputation and Ranking – Continued Growth



Our Vision

A university that is globally significant – a leader in higher education that provides the highest quality research and teaching, and engages locally and internationally on the issues and debates of the day and future. Driven by research, and stimulating learning, the globally significant university informs and changes practice and thinking worldwide.



Our strategic goals

1 To establish ourselves as a global university

Our primary goal is to establish Lancaster University as a global leader in higher education. We define global leadership as being a 'go to' university for research and teaching that is widely respected and transforms lives, communities, practices and thinking in countries across the globe. We will measure this goal by making progress towards a top 100 position in key global rankings of universities, which will require a step change in what we do and how we operate.

2 To strengthen our national position

We will strengthen our positioning and profile as a leading UK university, stimulating and shaping the national higher education agenda and public thinking. We will be a source and driver of new thinking and practice that improves communities, lives and the economy. We will measure this by consistently being placed in the top 10 in leading national rankings of UK higher education institutions.

Celebrating our success: key achievements 2013-2016

Working together, Lancaster University's community of staff and students has achieved a great deal in the four years since the publication of our Strategy for 2020 including:

Growth and reputation:

- + Attaining top ten rankings in all three UK league tables
- + A 13% increase in undergraduate applications with full-time enrolments increasing by 3.6% to 4,980 and student numbers on the Bailrigg campus around 1,300 higher than in 2012/13
- + A new campus in Ghana opened in 2013 and rapid growth in our students studying in Malaysia
- + An extension of our international partnerships through the opening of a joint institution with Beijing Jiaotong University at the Weihai campus
- + Significant investment in our staff through our 50th Anniversary Lectureship initiative and other appointments
- + Improvements in the 2016 staff survey results, including ranking first for 'staff advocacy' out of 54 HE institutions surveyed in the last 18 months
- + A sustained positive financial performance with turnover increasing by £52M in three years
- + Investment of over £500M in the Bailrigg campus in the last 15 years

- + Reducing our carbon emissions by 23% since 2005 and generating 15% of our annual electricity from our wind turbine
- + Winning the Carbon Reduction Award for a second time in the 2014 Green Gown Awards

Student experience:

- + Positive improvements in the student experience evident in a range of NSS measures including returning to the top 10 for student satisfaction in the 2016 NSS survey
- + Continuing to lead the sector in the provision of student accommodation, winning the Best University Halls award five years out of the last six
- + Winning the Best Booking Experience and Best Moving In Experience awards in the 2016 National Student Housing Survey

Research and enterprise:

- + A strong overall performance in the REF 2014 exercise, ranking 13th for the proportion of world-leading research out of the 128 institutions assessed
- + The establishment of four new university-wide research institutes in Security, Data Science, Materials and Social Futures
- + Achieving an additional four departmental bronze awards and a further two silver departmental awards to add to our institutional bronze award under the Athena SWAN charter
- + A 52% increase in the value of our research awards per annum between 2013-14 and 2016-17
- + A £12M increase in annual research income

Our Values

We believe in:

- + Pursuing excellence in all we do
- + Celebrating diversity and being committed to equality of opportunity and treatment in our staff and student community
- + Working together to support the development of the University
- + Promoting and defending independent academic enquiry and freedom of thought
- + Being brave in our decisions, ready to embrace new possibilities and achieve our strategic ambitions
- + Enabling our staff and students to fulfil their career and personal ambitions
- + Developing durable relationships and interactions that meet the needs of our students, alumni and partners
- + Ensuring accountability, integrity and professionalism in how we operate both in the UK and overseas
- + Engaging actively to change the world, through our teaching and research and also by leading on economic and social improvement



Key Performance Indicators

| Strategic area | Indicator | University 2020 Target |
|--|---|---|
| Research | Citation rates (FWCI) | 50 th (Global) / 1.94 |
| | Total annual research income | 35 th (UK) / £45M |
| Student recruitment and institutional growth | Student population total | 15,000 |
| | UG entrant qualifications | 15 th (UK) / Tariff score of 460/175* |
| International | Student headcount based at overseas partners | 9,500 |
| Teaching | NSS assessment and feedback score | 20 th (UK universities) / 78% |
| | Undergraduate year 1 to 2 retention rate | 25 th (UK) / 96% |
| | Professional level graduate employment / study | 15 th (UK) / 83% |
| Engagement | Research income from non-RCUK / non-EU government sources | 38 th (UK) / £16M (by 2020) |
| Sustainability | Financial health - cash flow | Adjusted operating cashflow in 9-11% range (3 year rolling average) |
| Reputation | UK league table ranking | Top 10 (annually) |
| | International league table ranking | Progress towards top 100 |
| | Staff recommending the University as a place to work | 90% of staff |

*This target is given using both the current and revised UCAS tariff points systems.

Our updated priorities for 2020

Our strategy is founded on three priorities of *equal* importance. Success across all three of these domains will be critical if we are to fully realise our strategic goals. In the rapidly changing context of UK higher education, the University community has identified that we now need to increase our engagement with third parties, enhance our reputation and to continue to grow in scale. We have reviewed and updated our objectives to reflect these factors, and new or revised objectives are highlighted against each of our three overarching priorities.

1 Priority 1 Research that changes practice and thinking

Our first priority is to undertake research of the very highest quality by international standards, as recognised by our peers and by users and adopters. In order to achieve this we will:

- + Develop a culture and environment that enables the best research globally to be undertaken by staff and students at Lancaster, including the encouragement of multi and inter-disciplinary work across the University
- + Continue to support our research students and researchers, especially during the early stages of their careers and in support of career progression
- + Continue to grow and diversify our research income, in particular income from private sector and international sources, in order to achieve and sustain our £45M target by 2020
- + Continue to improve our research performance as measured in the REF and future assessment exercises, as well as other external benchmarks of research quality
- + Develop our capacity to better understand, support and improve research performance
- + Build and extend our international partnerships in world-class research in order to enhance our reputation overseas
- + Maximise the benefits and impacts of the knowledge and intellectual property we generate through work with business, industry, charities, the public sector and policymakers

2 Priority 2 Teaching that transforms people's lives and society

Our second priority is to continue to improve the quality and reach of our teaching in order to prepare our graduates to lead responsible, intellectually curious, productive and fulfilling lives within a complex and inclusive global society. In order to achieve this we will focus on the four core themes of employability, internationalisation, sustainability and inclusivity in order to:

- + Continue to improve on our teaching, as evidenced by the NSS and other assessments in order to establish Lancaster as one of the highest quality and most innovative teaching institutions in the UK
- + Attract, develop and engage high quality staff who are excellent and innovative in their teaching
- + Continue to enhance the student experience, by engaging students in their learning and by celebrating and promoting the distinctive nature of our collegiate approach and the opportunities for wider learning and development that Lancaster offers
- + Ensure sustainable growth by increasing UG and PGT student numbers at Bailrigg, through engaging in a range of innovative partnerships with others both on and off campus
- + Maximise positive outcomes for our students, by enhancing our retention and related student support
- + Continue to innovate by engaging our students in the development of programmes which reflect student and employer demand, thereby attracting the most talented students
- + Emphasise the distinct and transformational nature of teaching and learning at Lancaster
- + Develop research-stimulated teaching and learning that promotes employability, is open, innovative and engaged, and is an exemplar to learners and universities globally
- + Invest to enhance our provision of flexible learning through increased use of the latest digital technology, including in collaboration with our partners overseas
- + Continue to develop and enhance our students' employability, which will include working towards offering all students the opportunity for a placement relating to work, research or international study
- + Further globalise the student experience and develop graduates who are socially responsible and who understand how to work effectively in a multicultural and globally interconnected world

Dimensions

Our strategy is only as good as our ability and capacity to deliver it. We will continue to deliver this strategy through the following dimensions:



3 Priority 3 Engage actively with students, businesses and our communities

The University views engagement as using its collective intellectual and wider capabilities for economic and societal benefit. In doing so, we engage with businesses, including small and medium enterprises, as well as policymakers and other agents of social and economic change and development, including charities, NGOs and other international organisations. We will strengthen these ties, building innovative and interdependent relationships that inform and stimulate our research and teaching. In order to achieve this we will:

- + Strengthen our engagement activity, focusing on and incentivising our priorities of generating value, shaping agendas and enhancing place
- + Reinforce our global engagement, raise our profile overseas and reaffirm our established credentials as an open and welcoming community that values equality and diversity
- + Strengthen our reputation and profile nationally and internationally to ensure our brand is prominent amongst leading universities globally
- + Be an exemplar of engagement with businesses and other organisations in research, teaching and students' learning
- + Develop closer and innovative relationships and partnerships with businesses and employers as well as with public policymakers and practitioners

- + Engage actively in economic stimulation and innovation through the exploitation, exchange and transfer of intellectual property and relevant insight and knowledge
- + Develop ever closer and more interactive relationships with our students and alumni
- + Lead on renewal and growth of our local community to create value for Lancaster and the North West region, including the enhancement of cultural assets, physical infrastructure, health and economic development
- + Play a wider role of engagement as a civic leader – contributing and leading culturally, socially, intellectually and economically

Looking further ahead

In a fiercely competitive environment, achieving our vision will require innovation, expansion and continuous improvement over a longer timeframe to 2025 and beyond. With this in mind, we will take stock again in 2020 through a comprehensive consultation and planning exercise to ensure we have a strategy that is right for the position and circumstances we find ourselves in at the beginning of the new decade.