Set between the beautiful Lake District and the Trough of Bowland, Lancaster University unites a rich history of intellectual innovation with a responsive environment for cutting-edge research and education.
Lancaster University

The University was given its royal charter in 1964 and in just 50 years has become one of the leading research intensive universities in the country.

A collegiate university, all students are members of one of our nine colleges. The attractive self-contained campus is set in beautiful parkland and continues to grow. We provide award-winning facilities, with half a billion pounds of investment since 2005, while also reducing carbon emissions by 47% (the best result in UK Higher Education).

Lancaster is ranked within the top 10 universities in the UK's major university league tables, including The Guardian (10th) and the Complete University Guide (9th), and is amongst the top 1% of universities globally.

Lancaster is a university where academic excellence is fused with social inclusion, with 80% of students coming from state-funded schools and around 9% from low participation neighbourhoods, the best record among the elite group of UK universities.

Lancaster University’s research is consistently rated as world leading and was ranked 13th in the UK for its proportion of world leading research.

The Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences

The Faculty is consistently ranked amongst the world’s top 50 Arts & Humanities Faculties and is home to over 20 disciplines, many ranking in the top 10 in the UK.

The Faculty is diverse, with research and teaching strengths across the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Each Department has unique strengths and an international reputation, and collectively they are part of a faculty that challenges established thinking, champions new ideas, works creatively across academic borders and actively responds to local and global challenges. We are dedicated to exploring and maximising the benefits of interdisciplinary research with the sciences and medicine.

As a Faculty, we are committed to educating the brightest students to the highest standards, generating knowledge that inspires and matters globally, engaging and influencing beyond the University and encouraging all members of our community to reach their highest potential.

Our commitment to connectivity, inquiry and transformation is part of the DNA of Lancaster, glimpses of which you will find in the following samples of our intellectual programme.

Professor Simon Guy
Dean, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences
Our nine departments

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences is the largest faculty at Lancaster University. It has nine departments and 25 different research centres, supporting around 300 academic staff and 4,000 students.

English Literature & Creative Writing
Combining critical and creative excellence, focusing on literary study and creative writing. Informed by award-winning writing and outstanding scholarship.

Educational Research
Developing methodologically rigorous and socially relevant research into education with three acclaimed Research Centres in the areas of Higher Education, Technology Enhanced Learning, and Social Justice and Wellbeing.

European Languages & Cultures
Pioneering a distinctive exploration of European languages in the context of their related global cultures, yielding an exciting synthesis of languages and wide-ranging cultural studies.

History
Embracing socio-economic, environmental, cultural, political, religious and intellectual history, with an innovative cross-disciplinary emphasis.

Law School
A top 15 UK law school with a reputation for research, ranging from traditional “black-letter” law to critical socio-legal and interdisciplinary research in Criminology, with an effect on society beyond academia.

Lancaster Institute for the Contemporary Arts
Connecting Art, Design, Film, Theatre and public arts, LICA is recognised as a global leader for research in Art and Design.

Linguistics & English Language
One of the leading places to study language in the world, pioneering research into Corpus Linguistics, Discourse Studies, Language Teaching, Learning and Assessment, and Literacy Studies.

Politics, Philosophy & Religion
One of only two departments of its kind in the world, engaging with topics and problems of great contemporary relevance including conflict, diplomacy, terrorism, well-being and human rights.

Sociology
Bringing together Sociology, Social Work and Media Studies, we encourage critical engagement with real-world problems and specialise in mobilities, energy, the environment, migration, inequalities, violence & politics.
Connectivity

The Faculty and its nine departments are closely connected to the local, regional, national and international environments they are situated in.

We use an interdisciplinary approach to actively respond to the wider research and policy challenges that surround us, and use this to shape our research and teaching.

Our work is funded by research councils, The European Commission, charities, industry and government. We work collaboratively with stakeholders large and small, public and private, local and global.
Connectivity

A global community

We are major contributors to Lancaster University’s commitment to bringing the world to Lancaster, and connecting Lancaster to the world.

Lancaster University is home to a diverse and cosmopolitan community, with nearly 3,000 international students from over 100 different countries.

International students comprise over 20 percent of the undergraduate student body in the Faculty, and over 50 percent of the Postgraduate student cohort. We have major partners in China, Malaysia and Ghana, and extensive links to top ranked institutions in the USA.

Our Students’ Union was the winner of the Innovation in Internationalising the Student Experience category in the NUS/UKICSA Awards for its overseas travel programmes and runner-up Internationalised Students’ Union of the Year Award 2015.

The Creative Exchange

This four-year project brings together pioneering companies and the best academic thinkers to explore the potential of digital public space: where anyone, anywhere, anytime can access, explore and create with digital content.

A collaboration between our ImaginationLancaster research centre, the Royal College of Art and Newcastle University, the project also explores how academics and industry can engage in effective knowledge exchange. This can help towards building better productivity and new strategies for companies in the digital age.

“Access to a multidisciplinary team and thought leaders in design and co-creation methodology has been important in our growth as a design-led technology company.”

Lee Omar, Director
Red Ninja

Our campus in Ghana, the first UK University in West Africa, has close to 250 students and is expanding rapidly, in particular through our LLB programme in Ghanaian Law.
Hyperlocal connections

We are committed to working with and being a part of our city and region. As the highest ranked university in Northwest England, we believe that we should take a lead in the development of our surrounding communities and region.

We work with regional police forces and national government on improving crime reduction projects, cooperate with NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups for Cumbria and South Cheshire to inform the ways patients are represented, and are developing the Northern Engagement Initiative to offer local authorities a range of collaborative opportunities to enhance their policy capabilities and delivery.

Challenging ideas

We are working on radicalisation and the role of ideology, social networks and the digital environment in terrorism, global conflict and civil society protest. We hope to challenge the ungrounded assumptions that may obscure a clearer understanding of violent extremism.

Our collaborative work connects with Security Lancaster, a Centre of Excellence for Cybersecurity, and builds on recent research and collaborative work with government, policy bodies and think tanks. We are developing existing links and projects within Lancaster University between Politics, International Relations, Religious Studies, Sociology, Psychology, Linguistics and Computer Science.

Our critically engaged research in this area is of major importance for contemporary public discourse, debate and policy on international and national security, counter-terrorism, cyber-security, corporate risk management and social cohesion.
Inquiry

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences holds true to the University’s original mission to challenge established thinking and champion new ideas through high quality research and teaching.

We are a pluralistic research community working collaboratively across the arts, humanities and social sciences, using diverse methodologies and theoretical approaches as part of a broad commitment to impactful critical enquiry.

We devise and employ a range of pedagogic approaches to create a research-led, learning culture of exploration and inquiry among our students.
**Digitally-mediated education**

Our Department of Educational Research offers unique Distance Learning PhDs in Education, undertaken entirely online, over 4 years.

The programmes are designed so that participants can study entirely from home and enable issues, theories, methods and evaluations to be applied specifically to the particular concerns, contexts and priorities of the organisations and environments in which participants are working.

The programmes build a mutually supportive spirit among a worldwide PhD community of over 300 students, who all have overlapping professional and academic interests.

“I never felt like I was studying alone despite living a thousand miles away from Lancaster. I wholeheartedly recommend it to anyone interested in educational research.”

Chryssa Themelis
PhD researcher

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**Mapping literature**

Led by Professor Ian Gregory from our History department, the Spatial Humanities project focuses on text, geographic information systems and spaces. Funded by the European Research Council under a Starting Researcher Grant, the aim of the project is to create a step-change in how place, space and geography are explored in the Humanities.

Building on Lancaster University’s technical expertise in Digital Humanities, Corpus Linguistics and Geospatial Analysis, as well as its applied expertise in the history of the English Lake District, we are developing and applying methodologies for analysing unstructured texts — including a large corpora of historical books, periodicals and official reports — within a geographical environment.

“I created my own project from the ground up, reading Dorothy Wordsworth’s The Grasmere Journal, extracting data from the text, and analysing the data through mapping. I have also been able to explore the area written about in this work.”

Eliza Skakel, Visiting Scholar
Mount Holyoake, USA
Inquiry

Delving into meaning

‘The Author and the World’ is an AHRC-funded collaboration between researchers in the departments of European Languages & Culture, English & Creative Writing, Linguistics, History and Contemporary Arts at Lancaster University. Led by Dr Rebecca Braun, the project actively encourages the input of creative writers, translators, and industry professionals, aiming to interrogate the literary, social, political, linguistic, and historical significance of the author as a cultural artefact and a producer of literary texts.

The work is carried out through multiple discovery methods: academic symposia; practice-focused workshops; ongoing online debate and artistic experimentation. By pooling different disciplinary approaches to phenomena such as celebrity, gender, multilingualism, political protest, intellectual communities, and cultural mediation, the project is demonstrating how study like this can act as a conduit for exploring the very nature of culture.

Interrogating energy

Our DEMAND Centre is a distinctive approach to end use energy demand, recognising that energy is not used for its own sake but as part of accomplishing social practices at home, at work and in moving around.

The Centre’s approach generates an ambitious research agenda that is crucial for organisations involved in demand management and in radically reconfiguring infrastructures, buildings and transport systems in line with greenhouse gas emissions targets.

While greater efficiency is important, the trend is often towards more resource intensive standards of comfort, convenience and speed. We lack a sophisticated understanding of how these trends take hold and of the underlying dynamics of demand itself. The Centre examines changing patterns in mobility and building-related energy use and takes forward a wide-ranging agenda for future research and policy.

Paul Muldoon is a Distinguished Visiting Professor in our English & Creative Writing department. An Irish poet as well as an editor, critic, and translator, he is also the winner of a Pulitzer Prize.
Transformation

Complex global challenges characterised by interlocking problems and multiple factors can only be tackled by interdisciplinary work.

At Lancaster we are committed to generating new forms of social, natural and design science to analyse and propose interventions within the interdependent systems implicated in these global challenges.

Working across academic borders we aim to bring together colleagues and activities located across departments and faculties, linking them with one another and external partners — both academic and non-academic. Our collective aim is to understand and engage with some of the world’s intractable problems.
Envisioning possible futures

Our Institute for Social Futures draws upon expertise across the Faculty and University.

The Institute, co-directed by Professors Linda Woodhead and Richard Harper, explores how methods of ‘anticipating futures’, including utopian/dystopian imaginaries, scenarios, forecasts, learning from history; visualising futures can effectively address the grand challenges facing the world, and how new systems may be contingently embedded.

This requires collaboration, openness to unusual partnerships, and willingness to embrace new and visionary ways of working and thinking including co-design and collaboration with groups, companies, NGOs, innovators, rural/city governments and communities that in various ways are wrestling with the prospects and implications of multiple and contested futures.

Through the Institute we are strengthening links with leading institutes around the world to co-examine, analyse and intervene in concentrated areas of interdisciplinary endeavour such as institutional, mobility and diversity, health and wellbeing, educational, and security futures.

Professor Rachel Cooper co-directs ImaginationLancaster, a design-led research centre based within LICA.

Launched in 2006, ImaginationLancaster is one of the most dynamic successful design research centres in the UK with an active research portfolio of over £15 million. The group of 22 academics and researchers undertake collaborative research in a wide variety of areas including urban living, game design wellbeing, sustainability, policy and co-design.
Voices of change

The ESRC Centre for Corpus Approaches to Social Science is bringing a new method in the study of language – the corpus approach – to a range of social sciences, providing insight into the use and manipulation of language in society in a host of areas of pressing concern, including climate change, crime and education. The centre is highly interdisciplinary, drawing on expertise from Linguistics, the Law School, History, Sociology and PPR. By providing fresh perspectives on such problems, we are helping to develop new approaches to challenging practices such as hate speech both in terms of raising awareness and of informing policy makers and other stakeholders of how such language may be used to wound and offend.

“The emotional wounds inflicted by hateful invective can linger long beyond the time it takes for physical injuries to heal.”

Professor Paul Iganski
Principal Investigator, CASS
Professor of Criminology
and Criminal Justice

Contemporary debate on faith

Initially held in central London every spring, the Faith Debates now travel out into the UK to engage with new audiences and issues. The Debates were founded and are organised by Charles Clarke, former Education Secretary and Home Secretary and Professor Linda Woodhead, Professor of Sociology of Religion at Lancaster University. The Debates have become a major point of reference for research and debate on religion and secularity, putting religion back onto the agenda of public discussion in the UK. Key speakers have included former Prime Minister Tony Blair, the Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, and newspaper editor Charles Moore.

The Westminster Faith Debates bring together leading academics and public figures to debate the latest research on religion and values.
Excellence & recognition

Our Faculty is consistently ranked amongst the world’s top 50 Arts & Humanities Faculties and is home to over 20 disciplines, many ranking in the top 10 in the UK.

Our research is highly ranked with some areas of notable quality with Politics, Philosophy and Religion ranked third overall and ranked top in the UK for research impact, Sociology ranked third for world leading research and second for research impact, and English Language and Literature ranked third in terms of research power.

We have consistently excellent student experience results and outstanding employability, with 97% of Lancaster students go into work or further study within six months of graduating.
Lancaster is ranked within the top 10 UK Universities in the UK’s major university league tables, including The Guardian (10th) and the Complete University Guide (9th) and is amongst the top 1% of universities globally.
Our research is consistently rated as world leading and is ranked 13th in the UK for its proportion of world leading research.

### Overall results

- **4*** research is world-leading, **3*** is internationally excellent, **2*** internationally recognised and **1*** nationally recognised.

### Research outputs

Each department’s research was assessed for ‘originality, significance and rigour’, with reference to international research quality standards.

### Research impact

This is an assessment of the ‘reach and significance’ of our research’s impact on the economy, society and culture, as well as our approach to enabling impact from research.

### Research environment

An assessment of the vitality and sustainability of our research environment.
An invitation.

We are open to explore new connections and opportunities. We would welcome an email, a visit and a conversation with you.

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
FASS Building
Lancaster University
Lancaster LA1 4YD
United Kingdom

 +44 (0) 1524 510851
 fass@lancaster.ac.uk
 lancaster.ac.uk/fass