Lancaster University



Sustainable Development Goals Report

2025

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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Introduction

At Lancaster University, we are committed to contributing to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through our research, teaching, community engagement and the way we manage our campus. We recognise the important role universities play in addressing global challenges, not only through our own actions but through the knowledge we share and the opportunities we create for others. Guided by our motto, 'Truth lies open to all', we aim to make a positive difference both within our University and beyond.

Care and community are central to our approach. Through initiatives such as the Morecambe Bay Curriculum, we are bringing education and local communities together to explore environmental challenges and create opportunities for learning. Our Giving HOPE project demonstrates how research can make a meaningful difference to people's lives, helping mothers and babies maintain connections during difficult circumstances.

Our research continues to contribute to understanding and addressing global challenges. Lancaster researchers have uncovered previously hidden flooding beneath Greenland's ice sheet, improving our understanding of how it responds to climate change. Closer to home, research into household recycling behaviours is helping identify practical ways to reduce plastic packaging waste.

We are continuing to invest in our campus infrastructure and the wellbeing of our University community, reflecting our commitment to creating a more sustainable and supportive environment. Our investment in renewable energy, including our new solar farm and existing wind turbine, alongside the development of Energy Centre 2, a low-carbon heating facility that will use heat pump technology to heat 95% of campus buildings, is transforming how our campus is powered and heated. We are also supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of staff and students through dedicated support services and free activities, including guided walks, mindfulness sessions and opportunities for physical activity.

This report brings together examples of the work taking place across Lancaster University and through our partnerships, reflecting the commitment of our staff, students and wider communities to creating a more sustainable, equitable and caring future. We hope that sharing these achievements will strengthen existing partnerships, encourage new connections and inspire further action towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

Professor Simon Guy

Pro-Vice-Chancellor Global (Digital, International, Sustainability)



End poverty in all its forms everywhere



Our partnership with Cardinal Newman College in Preston enables students to begin their journey to a Lancaster University degree through an embedded foundation course delivered at both the College and University campuses.

Research

Tackling economic insecurity

The *Work Foundation* at Lancaster University conducts research into insecure employment, low pay and financial pressures affecting workers across the UK. In July 2025, its analysis of a survey of 3,796 workers found that 17% struggled to pay or could not pay their monthly household bills, while 43% had little or nothing left after paying their bills. The findings highlight how financial insecurity persists despite wage growth and provides evidence to inform policies addressing in-work poverty and inequalities in the labour market.

Food insecurity and long-term disadvantage

Research led by Lancaster University examined the long-term consequences of food insecurity for children and adolescents in India, Ethiopia, Vietnam and Peru between 2020 and 2024. Drawing on data from the Young Lives study, which has tracked children's development since 2002, the project investigated how household poverty and unequal access to food affect health, education and future employment opportunities. It also explored how food insecurity differs between individuals within the same household, helping to develop evidence that can inform more effective poverty reduction and social protection policies.

Ageing and socioeconomic inequalities

Lancaster University researchers contributed to the *Ageing in the North* report, published in June 2025, examining how poverty and socioeconomic disadvantage contribute to poorer health outcomes among older people in the north of England. The research identified 904,200 economically inactive people aged 50-64 across the north of England and a two-year life expectancy gap compared with the rest of England. Lancaster researchers contributed expertise on dementia, loneliness and ethnicity, highlighting how financial hardship and unequal access to healthcare can compound existing disadvantages. The study demonstrates how poverty and poor health can reinforce one another, limiting employment opportunities, increasing financial insecurity and widening inequalities in later life.

Teaching and learning

Widening access to higher education

To help pupils prepare for higher education, the University's *Lancaster Access Programme* supports Year 12 and Year 13 students from backgrounds underrepresented in higher education. The programme provides free university preparation activities, campus experiences and opportunities to develop academic and personal skills. Eligibility criteria include household incomes of £30,000 or less, eligibility for free school meals and being the first generation in a family to attend university. Financial assistance with transport and funded residential activities helps reduce barriers to participation, whilst successful completion can provide access to reduced university entry offers.

Supporting underrepresented university students

Lancaster University provides personalised academic and personal development support through its *Lancaster Success Programme*, which is designed for students from backgrounds underrepresented in higher education. The programme includes individual coaching, peer support, workshops and an enrichment fund to help students access educational resources such as books and equipment. Students can also receive careers guidance and financial assistance with work experience opportunities. By providing support throughout undergraduate study, the programme aims to reduce inequalities in student participation, development and progression.

Improving access to employment opportunities

For students seeking career opportunities, Lancaster's *GROW Your Future* programme provides tailored careers and employability support for students from backgrounds underrepresented in higher education, including mature students. The programme offers employer networking events, micro-internships and additional careers guidance to improve access to professional opportunities. Financial support is also available for expenses associated with work experience and travelling to interviews. These activities aim to reduce financial barriers to career development, helping students build professional experience and improve their employment prospects following graduation.

Factors affecting structural inequalities

Students can explore poverty, social inequalities and international development through modules such as Welfare States: Poverty, Policy and Politics and Geography, Development and the Majority World. These modules examine welfare systems, economic disadvantage, global inequalities and the relationship between development policies and poverty. Through lectures, workshops and independent research, students develop an understanding of the social and economic factors contributing to poverty and consider how public policy and development approaches can address structural inequalities.

Engagement and outreach

Don't Ditch It

The University's *Don't Ditch It* initiative supported local and international charities by collecting reusable items donated by students and staff between May and October 2025. Working alongside the British Heart Foundation, the project diverted more than 35 tonnes of household items from landfill and collected over 4,300 donation bags valued at more than £50,000. Donations supported 32 charities and organisations, including those assisting refugees, people experiencing homelessness and financially disadvantaged families. The initiative helps reduce material hardship whilst promoting reuse and reducing waste.

Local food donations

A campus collection supported *Morecambe Bay Foodbank* during Global Positive Change Week, held 10-14 March 2025. Students and staff were encouraged to donate essential food and household items, including tinned foods, long-life drinks, nappies and other non-perishable goods. The collection was arranged through the University's Guest Services team, with donations intended for delivery to the foodbank on 14 March. The initiative supported local efforts to address food insecurity and encouraged the University community to contribute to organisations assisting households experiencing financial hardship.

Supporting local anti-poverty charity

Lancaster University's *Wind Turbine Benefit Fund* provides grants of up to £20,000 annually to support charitable and community projects across Lancaster District. In spring 2025, funding supported The Olive Branch, a local charity providing foodbank services and assistance to asylum seekers and families experiencing hardship. The charity used the funding to create a welcoming garden and waiting area, incorporating reused furniture, sustainable seating and planters. The project improved the environment for people accessing essential support services, whilst strengthening community wellbeing and local environmental sustainability.

Operations

Financial support and scholarships

Bursaries and scholarships form part of Lancaster University's support for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, helping to reduce financial barriers to higher education. For 2025 entry, the Lancaster Bursary offered £1,000 annually to eligible students with household incomes below £30,000. The Lancaster Opportunity Scholarship provided a further £1,000 annually to eligible students qualifying for contextual offers, with both awards available to students meeting the relevant criteria. Additional support included the Lancaster Sanctuary Scholarship, offering full tuition fee waivers, free campus accommodation and up to £5,000 towards living costs, and the Master's Scholarship for Black British Students. These schemes helped reduce financial barriers to accessing higher education.

Hardship funding and financial advice

Students experiencing unexpected hardship can seek financial assistance from the University through the *Lancaster Opportunity and Access Fund* (LOAF), alongside wider *financial guidance and support services*. The fund offers a route for students facing difficulties meeting essential living or study-related costs to seek additional assistance. College support services also direct students experiencing financial difficulties towards central University funding, bursaries and money advice. These arrangements aim to reduce the impact of financial pressures on students' wellbeing and their ability to continue their studies.



End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Our nine-college system delivers an annual programme of free events designed to engage and support students. Critically, they are open-to-all and stigma-free, embedding zero-cost social mealtimes as a key feature of our community.

Research

Developing healthy and sustainable food systems

Drawing on international research into food systems, Lancaster University researchers contributed to the 2025 *EAT-Lancet Commission* report on healthy, sustainable and equitable food systems, published on 3 October 2025. Professor Christina Hicks led the Commission's work on justice, alongside contributions from Dr James Robinson. The international assessment involved experts from more than 35 countries and found that food systems account for approximately 30% of global greenhouse gas emissions. It also estimated that healthier global diets could prevent up to 15 million premature deaths annually, highlighting opportunities to improve nutrition, food security and environmental sustainability.

Sustainable rice production in Ghana

To improve agricultural resilience in Ghana, Lancaster University is leading an *international agricultural partnership* to improve rice production and water efficiency in Ghana. Announced in March 2025, the £221,000 project brings together Lancaster researchers, Ghana's Crops Research Institute and Newage Agric Solutions Ltd. Building on earlier collaborative trials that demonstrated 30% water savings without reducing rice yields, the partnership is testing Alternate Wetting and Drying irrigation on a larger scale. By providing technical expertise and supporting farmer training, the project aims to improve agricultural resilience, reduce water demand and strengthen long-term food security in Ghana.

Developing more sustainable fertilisers

Lancaster University scientists partnered with north-west England business, Stopford Ltd, to support the development and testing of Nutragy, a *sustainable fertiliser* technology. Announced in September 2025, the project uses residues from the bioenergy industry to produce agricultural fertilisers, providing a potential alternative to conventional mineral fertilisers. Researchers from Lancaster Environment Centre are contributing expertise in plant science to assess the technology's effectiveness. The project aims to reduce the environmental impact of agricultural production whilst supporting crop nutrition, resource efficiency and more sustainable farming practices.

Understanding food choices and diets

To better understand local diets, Lancaster University Management School launched the *SPOON research project* in November 2025 to examine the factors influencing food choices and dietary habits across Lancaster and Morecambe. Led by Dr Josi Fernandes, the two-year study received £10,000 in funding from the British Academy and Leverhulme scheme. The research examines how household circumstances, food availability and everyday routines influence people's diets. By working with households from different socioeconomic backgrounds, the project aims to identify barriers to healthy eating and inform more effective approaches to improving nutrition and food accessibility.

Teaching and learning

Teaching sustainable food preparation

Students at Lancaster learn about *sustainable food* preparation through EcoEats, a student-led project focused on affordable, nutritious meals. The initiative provides practical cooking classes, food-related events and opportunities for students to develop skills in preparing healthy meals on a budget. Activities aim to improve awareness of food sustainability whilst addressing financial pressures associated with university life. By encouraging affordable cooking, nutritious dietary choices and reduced food waste, EcoEats helps students develop practical knowledge that can support healthier and more sustainable lifestyles.

Teaching agriculture and food security

Modules such as *Agriculture, Climate Change and Food Security* and *Cultural and Social Geography* explore topics including sustainable agriculture, food production and global food security. They examine how climate change, agricultural practices and global inequalities affect food availability and nutritional outcomes. Students learn about approaches to improving crop production, reducing environmental impacts and strengthening food systems. This teaching combines scientific knowledge with wider social and environmental considerations, helping students understand the challenges of providing sustainable and nutritious food for growing populations.

Supporting student sustainability learning

Sustainability learning is supported by Lancaster University Students' Union through *LUSU Green*, formerly Green Lancaster. In February 2025, students visited Claver Hill, a community food-growing initiative in Lancaster, to learn about community growing projects and composting. These activities provided opportunities to explore sustainable food practices and local food systems beyond formal teaching.

Engagement and outreach

Community food growing

To support local food-growing projects, Lancaster University's Wind Turbine *Community Benefit Fund* has supported Claver Hill Community Farm. The fund awarded £1,000 towards the installation of an additional polytunnel and composting facilities, supporting the site's ability to grow fresh produce and manage organic materials. Located near disadvantaged areas of east Lancaster, Claver Hill provides access to affordable fruit and vegetables alongside educational and volunteering opportunities. The initiative helps strengthen local food security, promotes community participation and supports more sustainable approaches to food production.

Promoting edible campus initiatives

Through hands-on growing spaces, the University supports *sustainable food* production through its ECOHub and Edible Campus initiatives. The ECOHub is a 4,000 m² growing space on South West Campus, containing approximately 40 raised planting beds, fruit trees and areas for growing soft fruit. The site is used by student societies and for teaching activities within Lancaster Environment Centre. In January 2025, LUSU Green worked with Edible Campus to build and replace vegetable-growing beds at the ECOHub, including replacing two existing beds. These initiatives encourage local food production, improve environmental awareness and support student engagement with sustainable food systems. These initiatives encourage local food production, improve environmental awareness and support student engagement with sustainable food systems.

Operations

Providing affordable campus meals

The University supports access to affordable food through its campus catering services, offering discounted meals and dining schemes for students. In October 2025, the University's Cheap Eats initiative provided hot vegetarian or vegan-friendly meals for £2.95 at participating campus outlets. Additional support included Freedom Eats, a prepaid dining scheme, alongside meal deals and other food discounts. These services help students manage everyday living costs whilst maintaining access to affordable meals, supporting student wellbeing and reducing financial barriers to obtaining food during their studies.

Providing emergency food assistance

Students experiencing food insecurity can access practical support from Lancaster University through *community cupboards, emergency food bags* and access to essential supplies. In May 2025, College communication channels highlighted emergency food provisions, which includes items such as rice, pasta, tinned vegetables and basic toiletries. The College Community Cupboard and Community Fridge schemes also allow students and staff to donate or collect unopened food and essential products, with facilities accessible 24 hours a day. These services help reduce immediate food insecurity and provide additional support for students experiencing financial hardship.

Reducing campus food waste

Lancaster University works to reduce food waste through sustainable catering practices, responsible sourcing and partnerships supporting the redistribution of surplus food. The University introduced its partnership with *Too Good To Go* in 2023, allowing participating campus outlets to sell surplus meals at discounted prices rather than disposing of them. Its *sustainability approach* also includes sourcing local ingredients where possible and reducing packaging and unnecessary deliveries. These measures aim to improve resource efficiency, reduce the environmental impact of campus catering and provide students with opportunities to purchase food at lower prices.



Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages



Campus in the City is Lancaster University's vibrant celebration of research in the heart of the community - designed especially to spark curiosity in young people, while offering something inspiring for all ages. It's an informal and accessible way to showcase the work of our researchers.

Research

Takeaway planning rules linked to lower childhood obesity

Professor Heather Brown and Dr Huasheng Xiang of Lancaster University contributed research on Gateshead Council's restrictions on new fast-food outlets to the *2025 Nutrition North* report. Gateshead stopped existing commercial premises from becoming hot-food takeaways, and in its deprived neighbourhoods with the most fast-food outlets, the prevalence of overweight and obese children fell by almost 5% compared with similar North East areas. Newcastle later revised its planning guidance to follow the Gateshead model. The report recorded 103.6 fast-food outlets per 100,000 people in the North, against an England average of 81.9.

Giving HOPE: keeping mothers and babies connected

Giving HOPE helps mothers and babies stay connected when they are separated shortly after birth. Led by Claire Mason of Lancaster's Centre for Child and Family Justice Research, and underpinned by the Nuffield-funded Born into Care research, the project provides HOPE Boxes containing soft blankets, cuddly toys, photographs and baby record books, co-designed with mothers with lived experience and midwives. In February 2025, Lancaster reported that the project had worked with more than 50 health trusts and local authorities across England, after a £20,000 ARC SHAPE Pitch Prize in 2024 supported its move towards becoming an independent community interest company.

Making online mental health forums safer

Researchers at Lancaster University worked with Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to improve the safety of online mental health forums. Led by Professor Fiona Lobban, the Improving Peer Online Forums (iPOF) project analysed posts from seven UK forums, surveyed around 800 users and carried out approximately 50 in-depth interviews and 18 interviews with forum staff. *Findings reported in December 2025* emphasised accessible design, psychological safety and sensitive moderation. Working with forum users, the team developed guidance on forum design, an animation and an e-learning curriculum for moderators to help make peer support more effective and welcoming.

Teaching and learning

Bringing clinical training into the community

Medical students and NHS staff across Lancashire and South Cumbria can practise clinical skills in a *mobile teaching unit* provided by Lancaster University. Funded by Health Education England and Lancaster, the eight-bed mobile facility can be arranged as a ward, operating theatre or emergency department. Trainees use medical manikins and simulated patients to practise clinical assessments, communication and procedures before working with patients. By taking teaching to different locations, the unit makes hands-on training more accessible to healthcare learners across the region.

Preparing the next generation of doctors

Lancaster University's five-year *Medicine and Surgery MBChB* combines medical science with practical clinical training. Students meet simulated patients in Year 1 and begin clinical placements in Year 2, supported by partnerships with more than 70 healthcare providers. For students meeting widening participation criteria, the *Medicine and Surgery with a Gateway Year* offers an alternative six-year route into medicine, helping widen access to medical education.

Training clinical psychologists for NHS services
Trainee clinical psychologists at Lancaster study for a ***fully funded Doctorate in Clinical Psychology*** while employed within the NHS. The programme can be taken through full- or part-time study and leads to registration with the Health and Care Professions Council. By combining doctoral study with NHS employment, it connects professional training directly with the mental health services in which trainees work.

Engagement and outreach

1. Health and wellbeing outreach in our communities

Medical students teach life-saving skills
More than 100 pupils at Lostock Hall Academy in Preston received basic life support and defibrillator training from Lancaster medical students. Reported in January 2025, the training formed part of Restart a Heart, an annual initiative led by Resuscitation Council UK to improve survival from cardiac arrests outside hospital. Medical students Alex Liloglou and Shobana Satchithananthan, the Medical School's 2025 Restart a Heart coordinators, organised the sessions with fellow students and Clinical Skills Educator Jill Sweetman. Across five classes, pupils learned to recognise cardiac arrest, perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and use a defibrillator.

Bringing health research to local families
University research reached local families through *Campus in the City 2025*, a two-day festival held across three venues with more than 30 family activities. Health-related highlights included a Teddy Bear Hospital and the Great Cholesterol and Artery Challenge, a hands-on activity exploring cholesterol and how it affects the body. The event gave families the chance to meet researchers and explore health science outside a lecture theatre.

Making care proceedings clearer for families
Parents and professionals facing the possibility of a baby being taken into care at or soon after birth were supported through Lancaster's collaboration with *Better Start Blackpool*. Led by Professor Leon Cruickshank, the co-design project began in 2023 and brought together Blackpool Council, NHS partners and Better Start. The team produced three sets of accessible documents explaining a complex process. A May 2025 Lancaster case study reported that the materials were being used across Blackpool's health and social care services, with a formal evaluation under way.

Listening to displaced communities about wellbeing
In November 2025, Dr Temidayo Eseonu, Lecturer in Politics and Policy, began ***evaluating mental health and wellbeing activities*** provided to refugees and people seeking asylum in the Blackpool area. Commissioned by Blackpool Poverty Truth, the evaluation runs until March 2026 and uses focus group discussions to gather participants' experiences. The work aims to inform how local services meet the mental health and wellbeing needs of displaced communities.

Using art to build a sense of belonging
Artwork shaped by women from the local refugee and asylum-seeking community featured in Bridging Worlds: Enclosures and Openings, a mixed-media ***exhibition in the University Library*** from 9 to 20 June 2025, during Refugee Week. Lancaster PhD artist James Fox developed the exhibition in conversation with community members and artists, drawing on a Migration Art course led by Somayeh Roostaei and Eleanor Denvir. The workshops, run by Global Link and funded by Lancashire County Council's Refugee Integration Team, aimed to build participants' confidence, self-acceptance and sense of freedom in their new surroundings.

Supporting vulnerable residents through a community garden
In spring 2025, Lancaster University's ***Wind Turbine Community Benefit Fund supported The Olive Branch***, a Lancaster charity that helps people experiencing hardship, including foodbank users, families and people seeking asylum. Funding helped create a garden with seating and planters outside the charity's premises, providing a more welcoming environment for visitors. The charity also connects people with support for mental health, domestic abuse and debt. Lancaster funded the garden; The Olive Branch delivered the project and its community services.

Supporting refugee survivors of torture
In November 2025, Lancaster's Professor Victoria Canning launched ***Supporting Survival***, developed with the Danish Institute Against Torture (DIGNITY). The 52-card toolkit draws on research and the experiences of survivors and practitioners to support discussion of torture, trauma and barriers to care. Funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and Lancaster's Impact Acceleration Account, it was being distributed through NGOs and international partners for use by survivors and those supporting them, including health and mental health practitioners.

2. Partnerships with health institutions to improve health outcomes

Expanding online rehabilitation with NHS partners
East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust and Lancaster University work together on NeuroRehabilitation OnLine (NROL), which delivers cognitive, communication and physical therapy by video call for people recovering from stroke and other neurological conditions. After NROL was rolled out across Lancashire and South Cumbria, new 12-month SBRI Healthcare funding announced in March 2025 was awarded to support its expansion into Cheshire and

Merseyside, with Lancaster academics providing oversight and evaluation. Professor Louise Connell holds a joint role in allied health rehabilitation at Lancaster University and East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust, connecting academic research with NHS practice.

Planning healthier environments with the NHS
In February 2025, *Lancaster University's Health Innovation Campus took part in a stakeholder consultation* on the future of Clay Fields, a 106-acre site in Whalley acquired by Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust. The Trust plans a flagship community for restorative and regenerative health and wellbeing, with NHS services in one of four proposed zones. Lancaster set out how its expertise in data science, leadership, design, sustainability and health technologies could support the project over the next ten years.

Researching better end-of-life care together
A three-year research partnership between Lancaster University and the charity Sue Ryder was announced in April 2025 to improve palliative, end-of-life and bereavement care. Dr Maddy French took up a new Senior Research Fellow post through the partnership between the University's International Observatory on End-of-Life Care and Sue Ryder, building on her research into equity of access to hospice and palliative care services. The post connects academic research directly with a national care provider, so that findings can shape how services support patients and families.

Health@Lancaster: joining up expertise for healthier communities
Health@Lancaster connects researchers across eight thematic areas of health and care, including public health and health inequalities, mental health, health and care service delivery, and sustainability, environment and health. It identifies areas where clusters of academics can work with partners on significant challenges, and its leadership team provides strategic oversight so that external organisations can find relevant expertise. A contact route lets organisations interested in working with the research teams get in touch, opening the way to joint projects.

3. Community mental health partnerships

Supporting children through school transitions
Children's experiences of moving between schools are the focus of collaborative work by Dr Jude Lunn of Lancaster's Division of Health Research and Jane Booth of Headssup. At a Health@Lancaster session in December 2025, they described evidence-based support projects for children moving through education settings across 80 primary and secondary schools in Lancashire. The partnership brings academic expertise into school-facing support for children's emotional and social wellbeing.

4. Global health research and capacity building

Building expertise to tackle neglected diseases
Lancaster's *Centre for Health Informatics, Computing and Statistics (CHICAS)* is a World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre specialising in geostatistical methods for neglected tropical disease research. Its international work has involved organisations including the Carter Center, Sightsavers, Evidence Action and the Fred Hollows Foundation. In March 2025, CHICAS convened an international technical meeting involving representatives from ministries of health, NGOs, universities and global health organisations across six WHO regions. The meeting developed proposals for different levels of geostatistics training, regional training networks and long-term funding and collaboration, aiming to strengthen local expertise and support evidence-based disease-control decisions.

Operations

Making movement and mindfulness accessible
Free physical activity and mindfulness sessions were offered to staff and students during the *2025 summer term*. Sport Lancaster's programme included 30-minute guided wellbeing walks around the campus Woodland Walk, lunchtime stretch and mobility classes, and weekly mindfulness in the Chaplaincy Centre's Quiet Room. Open to all abilities, with no booking needed for mindfulness, the sessions gave people simple ways to move, relax and connect during the working and study day.

Connecting students on Mental Health Day
University Mental Health Day on 13 March 2025 was presented by Student Wellbeing with University partners including the Chaplaincy, Student Success and Talking Therapies. Students and staff could visit stands from Lancashire Mind and Samaritans, a volunteer showcase from Lancaster CVS, and activities such as mindfulness, Movement for Wellbeing with Sport Lancaster and a Change Champions workshop on coping with change. Held in the Learning Zone and Chaplaincy Centre, the programme helped people meet support services, build connections and learn how to look after their mental wellbeing.

Providing sexual health services for students
Sexual health clinics run at the University Health Centre every Monday afternoon during term time, with further bookable clinics at Lancaster Medical Practice's Dalton Square and Owen Road surgeries, according to the University's *sexual health guidance* for students. Free contraceptives are available from the Students' Union Helpdesk on weekdays, and free chlamydia tests can be requested at surgery receptions. Students can also access information and referrals to other sexual health services through the NHS and *Lancashire Sexual Health Service*. These services help students access contraception, testing, confidential advice and sexual healthcare support.



Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Research

Advancing digital computing education

The BBC micro:bit is a programmable device designed to make computing accessible to children. As the only university partner in the original development consortium, Lancaster University helped develop its run-time operating system, hardware and coding experience. In November 2025, Lancaster was recognised with a *Queen Elizabeth Prize for Education* for this contribution. The wider micro:bit initiative has reached children internationally, helping 66 million children in 85 countries develop digital literacy, coding and problem-solving skills.

Exploring challenges in digital higher education

Researchers at Lancaster University are examining how digital technologies are changing higher education. In a *2025 study on digitalised higher education*, Lancaster academics collaborated with international researchers to investigate the growing influence of artificial intelligence and major technology companies in universities. The study raised concerns about universities' increasing reliance on digital infrastructure and its implications for governance.

Developing eco-creative teaching approaches

In January 2025, Lancaster University researcher Dr Melis Cin joined the British Council-funded *Eco-Creative Pedagogies project*. Led by the University of Northampton, the 18-month collaboration brings together researchers and partners in the UK and Turkey. The project explores how creativity, environmental education and resilience can be integrated into teacher education. It aims to develop culturally responsive teaching approaches to help future teachers address climate change and sustainability in the classroom.

In collaboration with the BBC and other industry partners, Lancaster computer scientists designed and developed a pocket-sized computer to encourage children to learn fundamental coding and programming skills.

Teaching and learning

Improving student learning experiences

The 2025 *National Student Survey* highlighted positive feedback from students at Lancaster University. The University reported a 90.2% positivity score for academic support and 94.8% for how clearly teaching staff explained subjects. Results also included 91.6% positivity for learning resources and 93.9% for library resources. These findings provide a measure of students' views of teaching and academic support during their studies, helping the University identify strengths and areas for improvement in the learning environment.

Widening participation in higher education

Supporting students from underrepresented backgrounds is a focus of Lancaster University's efforts to improve access to higher education. Its *widening participation* approach includes outreach with schools and colleges, contextual admissions and support for students facing financial or educational barriers. The University's *Access and Participation Plan for 2025–29* sets out planned measures to improve equality of opportunity throughout the student journey. Among its targets, Lancaster aims to increase the proportion of students from the most deprived areas from 14.5% to 17%, helping widen access to higher education.

Photo credit: © Micro:bit Educational Foundation

Supporting inclusive teaching practice

Through its Curriculum and Education Development Academy, Lancaster University supports staff in developing teaching and curriculum design. The University held its *2025 Education Conference* on 24 and 25 June, bringing educators together to explore inclusive teaching and curriculum development. One keynote presented findings from a reciprocal mentoring project exploring the learning experiences of ethnic minority students and their implications for inclusive teaching and curriculum design. The conference provided opportunities to share research, teaching practices and ideas for improving the student learning experience.

Engagement and outreach

Connecting learning with local places

The *Morecambe Bay Curriculum's storytelling and writing project* connected children's learning with their local environment, history and heritage. Co-managed by Lancaster University's Professor Uta Papen and Joanne Easthope of Overton St Helen's Primary School, the project involved pupils and teachers from seven local schools in 2025. Together, they researched, wrote and illustrated seven stories inspired by their communities, which were later collected in the Local Legends anthology. Supported by Lancaster University, the project also provided storytelling and writing workshops to develop children's literacy and communication skills.

Inspiring children through science

During British Science Week in March 2025, Lancaster University staff and students introduced school pupils to scientific subjects through hands-on demonstrations. Lancaster representatives took part in the Furness STEM Show, attended by more than 1,000 children from 32 schools, with activities including DNA extraction experiments and brain reaction tests. Researchers also visited local primary schools to deliver interactive sessions on topics including DNA, microscopy and the immune system. These events gave pupils opportunities to meet researchers and explore science first-hand.

Supporting science learning in Ghana

Through an *international research partnership*, Lancaster University worked with local researchers, schools and community organisations in Ghana to bring practical science education into the classroom. In a project highlighted in September 2025, pupils at Umar Bun Hatab Islamic Basic School in Accra learned to operate and manage a biodigester that converts toilet waste into biogas and organic fertiliser. The school also received a demonstration laboratory, where pupils could conduct experiments and explore the links between science, sanitation and sustainable energy. The initiative has helped pupils develop scientific knowledge and share what they have learned with their families and communities.

Public lectures

Lancaster University's *public lectures* are free and open to the public, sharing research and academic knowledge beyond the University. Featuring experts from Lancaster and beyond, the lectures cover a range of scientific, cultural and social topics, with opportunities for audience questions and discussion. Recordings of most lectures are also available online, allowing more people to access the talks.

Operations

Improving access to higher education

Addressing inequalities in university access and student success is the focus of Lancaster University's *Access and Participation Plan* for 2025–29. The plan identifies barriers affecting underrepresented groups and outlines targeted interventions and measurable objectives. Progress is overseen by the University's Widening Participation Advisory Group, providing a framework for monitoring and evaluating efforts to improve access, student success and progression.

Public University library

Lancaster University Library welcomes members of the public to use its collections and study facilities, extending access to educational resources to the wider community. The Library provides information about visitor access and community membership, including arrangements for borrowing printed materials. These services support independent study and lifelong learning among residents.

Online short courses

In collaboration with EdX, Lancaster University provides *free online short courses* that allow people to study selected subjects without attending campus. These courses are accessible to learners with a computer, tablet or mobile phone. One example is the free eight-week course Corpus Linguistics and New Technologies: Data, Language, Society, which introduces corpus linguistics methods to researchers in the social sciences and humanities. By offering flexible online learning, the University helps make academic knowledge accessible beyond campus.

Supporting lifelong professional learning

Professionals can update their knowledge and skills through Lancaster University's *executive education* and *continuing professional development* opportunities. Lancaster University Management School offers education for people in leadership and business roles, while the Faculty of Health and Medicine provides learning opportunities relevant to healthcare practice. Programmes include the *Clinical Research: MSc* and *Healthcare Leadership: PGCert*, offering opportunities to develop specialist knowledge and skills throughout professional careers.



Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

The Women in Engineering Group brings together undergraduates, postgraduates, researchers and staff to support women through informal mentoring and networking to promote their professional development.

Research

Researching gender equality at work

Barriers to women's progression and inclusion at work are the focus of research by Lancaster University Management School's Academy for *Gender Equality* and Social Justice Research in Organisations. Through the European Union-funded TARGETED-MPI partnership, Lancaster worked with four other universities, including Stockholm School of Economics, to examine and address gender inequality in business and management schools. The project developed approaches to assessing institutional practices and preparing Gender Equality Plans, including guidance on inclusive teaching and research.

Researching refugee women's entrepreneurship

At the Research in Entrepreneurship and Small Business Conference 2024, Lancaster's Dr Sophie Alkhaled presented her work on how *refugee women use entrepreneurship* to support their families, despite displacement and unequal access to resources. The work explores how business activity can provide income and agency while also exposing women to practical and structural constraints. The Academy's June 2025 refugee entrepreneurship event continued the discussion, connecting research findings to questions of economic opportunity and gender equality.

Teaching and learning

Teaching gender and health equity

The influence of gender on health, disease and access to services is explored through Lancaster University's Principles of Global Health Equity module. The Critical Issues in Global Health Equity module covers sexual and reproductive health and reproductive justice. Both modules help students examine how health systems and social circumstances affect people differently.

Embedding gender-aware teaching practice

A guide to developing a *gender-aware and inclusive curriculum* was produced by Lancaster University Management School through the TARGETED-MPI project. It provides teaching staff with ways to consider representation, assumptions and inclusion when designing and reviewing modules.

Supporting women's leadership development

Women's leadership, career development and workplace equality are discussed through opportunities offered to our staff and researchers through its *Women's+ Network* which brings colleagues together around shared experiences and facilitating institutional change. The Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences organised *International Women's Day panel activities* providing a forum to discuss barriers to progression and the practical support available to women within academia and professional work.

Encouraging women into engineering

At our School of Engineering, the experiences and achievements of women in engineering are highlighted to support wider participation in a field where women remain underrepresented. The *Women in Engineering* information provides examples and perspectives that can help prospective students understand the range of opportunities available through engineering study and careers. Greater visibility of women working and studying in engineering helps to challenge stereotypes and encourage prospective students to make informed subject choices.

Engagement and outreach

Challenging stereotypes through theatre

Working alongside theatre practitioners, Lancaster University co-created an interactive production called *So Unfair!* to encourage children from all backgrounds to explore STEM subjects. Developed in 2024, the production gave 18 performances during 2025 and reached more than 1,000 audience members. Lancaster lecturer Jenny Roberts contributed engineering expertise and role-modelling. Evaluation of the earlier development phase found that around 40% of children's drawings depicted female engineers, demonstrating a broader perception of who can work in the profession. The project combines public engagement with practical opportunities to question gender stereotypes in science and engineering.

Sharing gender equality research

Research on women's careers, entrepreneurship and organisational equality reaches public and academic audiences through events organised by Lancaster University Management School. Its gender equality research community has used *International Women's Day* activities to bring researchers and participants together to discuss persistent barriers to progression and more inclusive workplace practices. These discussions offer routes for research findings to reach employers, professionals and interested members of the public.

Operations

Equality and inclusion

An *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy* and participation in the *Athena Swan Charter* form part of Lancaster University's institutional approach to equality. The Charter provides a framework for examining gender equality in higher education and looks at institutional and departmental considerations of representation, recruitment and career development. We have been committed to the initiative since 2008.

Gender pay gap

Lancaster University is committed to understanding the causes of our gender pay gap, to continuing to ensure our employees receive equal pay for equal value, and to developing a strategic response to reduce our gender pay gap. We published our *Gender Pay Gap Report 2025* which showed a downward trend in the hourly gender pay gap from 20% in 2024 to 19.2%. The report also showed Women accounted for 55.9% of the University workforce in 2025 but were less represented in higher-paid academic roles. Publishing these figures helps us identify structural barriers to career progression and allows us to monitor improvements to gender equality at work.

Family-friendly support

As a *family-friendly* employer, we offer facilities, activities, networks and policies to support our staff with parenting and caring responsibilities to make university life more manageable. These arrangements, such a family-friendly spaces and a pre-school at our Lancaster Campus, and family and compassionate leave can help reduce practical barriers to studying and working, particularly for people balancing education or employment with childcare.



Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all



Research

Monitoring Lake Windermere's water quality

Findings from the *Big Windermere Survey* were published in August 2025 by Lancaster University researchers and the Freshwater Biological Association. Working with 350 citizen scientists, the partnership collected more than 1,000 water samples across 110 locations during 10 sampling events over 2.5 years. Researchers tested 15 water quality indicators, including phosphorus and bacteria associated with risks to lake users. The data from the survey is being actively shared with a range of organisations both locally and nationally, as part of ongoing conversations about the poor water quality of Windermere.

Improving water-efficient rice cultivation

A £221,000 partnership announced in March 2025 sees Lancaster University support more ***water-efficient rice production*** in Ghana. Working with Ghanaian agricultural partners, our researchers are investigating the Alternate Wetting and Drying irrigation method that allows rice fields to dry periodically rather than remain continuously flooded. The collaboration aims to reduce water use by 15-25% while protecting farmers' livelihoods and crop yields.

The Big Windermere Survey is a unique collaboration between professional scientists and members of various communities with an interest in the water quality of Windermere and its catchment which generated an unprecedented dataset.

Teaching and learning

Water resources and hydrology

Lancaster Environment Centre provides education in hydrology, water quality and management of freshwater resources. Modules such as *Catchment Science, Hydrology and Water Quality*, *Water Resources Management* and *Environmental Field Skills* introduce students to how water moves through catchments, how pollution can be assessed and how resources can be managed sustainably. Such knowledge supports future work in environmental regulation, research and water management.

Environmental water and health

Our Environmental Pathogens module addresses water quality assessment, environmental pathogens and the public health consequences of pollution. Students learn how microbiological contamination and environmental change affect people and ecosystems. This is particularly relevant to protecting drinking water and managing risks associated with wastewater and recreational waters.

Engagement and outreach

The power of citizen science

The *Big Windermere Survey* has involved local volunteers directly in understanding the condition of Lake Windermere and its catchment. The findings, published by Lancaster University and the Freshwater Biological Association in August 2025, drew on more than 1,000 samples collected by 350 citizen scientists at 110 locations. Volunteers helped generate data from places that had not previously been routinely tested. Sharing the findings makes information on bacterial contamination and phosphorus more accessible to residents and organisations concerned about the lake, strengthening community involvement in decisions about water quality. The project stands as an inspiring example of community engagement and scientific collaboration.

Supporting sanitation education in Ghana

Sanitation innovation and practical community learning are brought together through Lancaster University's collaborations in Ghana. A 2025 project with pupils at an Accra school taught them to use a biodigester to see *how human waste could be turned into power* (gas), bringing light and fuelling kitchens in their school. Through laboratory and classroom activities, the young people saw how sanitation systems relate to energy, agriculture and environmental health. This pilot circular sanitation initiative is now inspiring interest and action to demonstrate the power of this work as a replicable model across Africa (Ghana, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania) and South and East Asia (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia).

Operations

Reducing water use on campus

Reducing campus water use, monitoring consumption and encouraging conservation among staff and students are priorities set out in our *water policy*. Initiatives to reduce water use include metering, identifying leaks and awareness campaigns for staff and students. Our total water use fell by 18% between the 2013-14 baseline and 2023-24, despite an increase in the campus building area and University population. Water consumption per person also fell from 36 to 21 cubic metres a year across that period.

Maintaining safe water systems

Our Facilities team carry out *water hygiene testing* and planned maintenance to support safe use of buildings and services and maintain a healthy environment for students, staff and visitors. This work contributes to responsible management of the Lancaster University Campus.

Providing drinking water on campus

There are water fountains located around the Lancaster Campus and water bottles can be refilled at University-owned food and drink outlets. Providing accessible drinking water can help our staff, students and visitors stay hydrated without needing to buy bottled drinks, reducing costs and disposable packaging.

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all



The University's Net Zero Energy Project started on-site in 2025. It will use state-of-the-art heat pump technology to generate a projected 39-Gigawatt hours (GWh) of low carbon heat and virtually eliminate the use of gas for heating across the Lancaster Campus.

Research

Improving solar farm sustainability

Lancaster University researchers published a study in January 2025 examining the environmental effects on the land of ground-mounted ***solar panels*** at 32 solar farms in England and Wales. They found that soil health, plant cover and biomass were adversely affected beneath panels than between rows. Researchers suggested increasing panel height, widening gaps between rows and planting shade-tolerant vegetation to help protect soil health. The findings can inform the design and management of solar farms that generate renewable electricity whilst reducing environmental impacts.

Developing more efficient bioenergy

In January 2025, Lancaster University reported that its spin-out company *ADTechOptima* had secured a £300,000 Innovate UK grant to develop technologies for more efficient biogas production. Established by researchers from Lancaster Environment Centre and the School of Engineering, the company is developing an additive to improve the performance of anaerobic digesters and the quality of the resulting nutrient-rich substance that can be used as a fertiliser. The technologies had been demonstrated at laboratory scale, with pilot trials planned alongside Cockerham Green Energy Limited. The work by our researchers optimises renewable energy production from organic waste.

Teaching and learning

Understanding renewable energy systems

The *Renewable Energy Systems module* at Lancaster's School of Engineering introduces students to the technologies used to generate and integrate low-carbon electricity. Students analyse technical, economic, environmental and ethical aspects associated with the exploitation of renewable energy sources. Understanding energy generation, system performance and practical design challenges help prepare graduates to contribute to the transition away from fossil fuels.

The transition to net zero

The real-world challenges involved in moving towards more sustainable energy systems are covered in Lancaster's *Managing the Energy Transition module*, including how to manage the energy system, environmental consequences, societal engagement and energy security. By learning how changes in infrastructure, governance and resource use affect the transition, our students are positioned for further study or employment in the sustainable energy sector.

Engagement and outreach

Introducing engineering and clean energy

Lancaster's *School of Engineering* is inspiring the next generation of engineers through school outreach activities that introduce children to engineering concepts and potential careers. Sessions aim to connect practical science and design to real challenges, including how cleaner energy technologies are developed and used, giving children opportunities to explore technical subjects and the skills needed to address environmental problems.

Developing the solar energy workforce

Lancaster University joined Loughborough University, Newcastle University and the University of Southampton in the *Sustainable Solar Energy Systems Network Plus*, launched in January 2025. The UK Research and Innovation-funded collaboration brings together researchers and industry partners to address skills and research challenges in solar energy. Activities are designed to support early-career researchers and encourage knowledge sharing across disciplines and sectors. The initiative is a response to estimates that solar expansion could require around 60,000 jobs, including 6,000 engineering graduates.

From classrooms to careers, our School of Engineering is igniting a passion for engineering in the next generation through engaging outreach activities.

Operations

Generating renewable electricity on campus

On-site renewable energy generation is part of our approach to reducing reliance on fossil-fuel electricity. Our *solar photovoltaic farm*, that was operational in October 2025, together with our wind turbine contribute renewable electricity to campus operations and are part of Lancaster's low-carbon infrastructure.

Low-carbon campus heating

We are proud to have made huge progress on the *Net Zero Energy Project* during 2025. The University secured more than £21 million from the Government's Green Heat Network Fund to develop Energy Centre 2, a low-carbon heating system. By December 2025, an additional 6.5 kilometres of district heating pipework had been installed, extending network coverage towards 95% of campus buildings. The new centre is designed to produce around 39 gigawatt hours of low-carbon heat annually.

Managing energy use and emissions

Alongside using more sustainable energy sources, our *Energy and Utility Plan* and *emissions-reduction* policies provide a framework for investment and managing energy demand across the Lancaster Campus to reduce energy use and emissions by monitoring building performance and improving efficiency.



Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Research

Researching insecure work and living costs

For many workers, earning a wage does not guarantee *financial security*. In July 2025, Lancaster University's Work Foundation analysed a survey of 3,796 UK workers. It found that 17% struggled to pay or could not pay their household bills each month. A further 43% had little or nothing left after paying bills. As a leading think tank, The Work Foundation made recommendation based on the findings to influence policy and debate to tackle the inequalities in the labour market and improve working lives across the UK.

Exposing modern slavery

Research at Lancaster University's Pentland Centre examines *modern slavery*, labour exploitation and decent work. Its *Modern Slavery and Justice* work considers how businesses and institutions can recognise risks within their operations and supply chains. It also explores responsibilities for protecting workers, particularly those vulnerable to exploitation. These findings can inform more ethical recruitment and procurement practices, as well as efforts to improve working conditions.

Teaching and learning

Fair work and entrepreneurship

Understanding fair work and enterprise is part of responsible management education at Lancaster University Management School. Modules such as *Labour Economics* explore how labour markets operate, how businesses develop ideas and what barriers some groups face when starting a business. They offer students different ways to consider decent work and inclusive economic growth.

Lancaster is one of the UK's most effective universities in supporting business innovation, partnering with stakeholders, and driving local growth and regeneration – rated highly since 2021 in Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF), published by Research England.

Valuable work experience

Placements and internships help Lancaster University students apply their learning in the workplace. Lancaster University *Management School* works with employers to provide *professional experience*, while science and technology initiatives connect students with businesses seeking technical skills. Placement opportunities available across the University, like in the *Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences* and *Biomedical Life Sciences* give students practical experience, help them explore careers and can provide support to participating organisations.

Engagement and outreach

Regional economic contribution

Lancaster University's *economic impact* was valued at nearly £2 billion 2021-22 as reported in November 2024. Of this, 61% benefited north-west England. The report also estimated that University activity supported 8,805 jobs across the UK, including 6,085 in the north-west region. Commissioned by Lancaster, the independent study examined the University's wider economic and social contribution.

Supporting small business management

Small business leaders can strengthen their management skills through Lancaster University's *Help to Grow: Management Course*. The course combines teaching with practical tools and opportunities to learn from other managers. It is designed to help leaders address business challenges and plan for the future. By supporting management development in small and medium-sized enterprises, our programme contributes to the skills base of the regional economy.

Connecting universities with industry

Industry–academia partnerships give businesses access to Lancaster University's research expertise. By working with researchers, organisations can explore ideas, test approaches and consider new technologies. By leveraging our expertise in digital technologies, AI, cybersecurity and industrial digitalisation, Lancaster University has transformed academic research into practical, industry-driven solutions. These innovations through the Centre for Digital Innovation (CDI) programme have created new jobs and paid internships and industry placements for students, while supporting business development and opportunities to improve productivity.

Operations

Fair, inclusive and enriching

At Lancaster, we are committed to creating an environment where everyone can feel welcome, thrive and fulfil their potential. Alongside salary and pensions, staff receive annual incremental pay rises. We publish our salary scales to promote transparency. A wide arrange of work/life benefits such as hybrid working, staff networks, career development opportunities and wellbeing initiatives are available to all staff, this includes the arts, sports and outdoor facilities at the Lancaster Campus. The University publishes its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion report each year which sets out our commitments, aims and planned actions to create a fairer and more inclusive University.

Promoting ethical procurement and employment

Responsible procurement includes considering the working conditions of people in our wide-ranging supply chains. Our modern slavery statements outline responsibilities for identifying and addressing exploitation, while procurement guidance sets expectations for purchasing decisions.



Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation

Lancaster University spinout Quinas Technology and global semiconductor company IQE have developed a scalable production method for the world's first quantum-powered universal memory ULTRARAM™.

Research

Advancing semiconductor memory technology

A £1.1 million research collaboration has brought *ULTRARAM* memory technology closer to industrial manufacture. In June 2025, a scalable method for producing the semiconductor layers required for ULTRARAM, which is designed for fast operation and low power use, was successfully completed. The partners on the Innovate UK project comprise Lancaster University and our spin-out Quinas Technology, IQE and Cardiff University.

Supporting innovation in AI security

Artificial intelligence systems face security risks that Lancaster University spin-out Mindgard is working to identify. Drawing on our research, Mindgard develops testing methods to help organisations find weaknesses and understand potential attacks on *AI technology*. Mindgard raised $8 million to develop its products and business; this investment illustrates how university research can lead to new commercial technologies in cyber security and demonstrates Lancaster's role as a leader in cyber innovation.

Teaching and learning

Practical engineering solutions

The Lancaster University Formula Student Team is a group of Engineering students undertaking an ambitious and technically demanding project as part of their master's dissertation. Their goal is to rebuild, refine and deliver a competitive electric Formula Student race car, applying advanced engineering principles in a real-world motorsport environment. The project also involves teamwork, planning and managing technical constraints. Bringing these tasks together helps the students develop engineering and project-management skills beyond the classroom.

Developing sustainable enterprise ideas

Forty-two students from nine Lancaster University colleges took part in ECOChallenge 2025, supported by *Work in Progress* and LUSU Green. Teams attended workshops before developing ideas to address community sustainability problems. Furness College's *Binnovation project* won first place with a proposal to improve campus bin stores and recycling. Other ideas addressed food waste at events and refillable drinks. The challenge gave students experience in pitching, teamwork and developing sustainable enterprise ideas.

Photo credit: Kacper Burczyk and Serdar Tekin

Teaching applied innovation

The *Innovation and Sustainability in a Global Arena* module on our MSc Business Innovation and Entrepreneurial Management degree examines the strategic role of innovation in addressing global sustainability challenges and enabling organisations to succeed in an increasingly interconnected and environmentally vulnerable world. Students develop analytical and strategic capabilities required to lead innovation for sustainable impact in entrepreneurial organisations, NGOs, and public sector institutions.

Engagement and outreach

Helping businesses adopt new technologies

A pioneering project bringing new technology and capabilities to professional services firms across the UK has been cited in the Government's 2025 *Industrial Strategy*. The *Technology in Professional Services* (TiPS) innovation adoption accelerator worked with more than 60 small and medium-sized law and accountancy firms to provide training and advice on adopting technology, including artificial intelligence. Led out of the Lancaster University Management School, the project partners are Oxford Brookes University, the University of Salford and Hyperscale Group Ltd, and is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and Innovate UK as part of the Next Generation Professional and Financial Services programme.

Building regional cyber partnerships

Regional *cyber security* partnerships connect Lancaster University researchers with businesses and other organisations and universities across north-west England. Collaborations such as *North West CyberCom* (NW CyberCom) and the Lancashire Cyber Partnership help to transform cutting-edge knowledge into innovative new products, services and policy, to better protect consumers, businesses and UK infrastructure. NW CyberCom won the Sector Collaboration Initiative category at the Knowledge Exchange UK Awards 2025.

Operations

Spin-out companies

Research developed at Lancaster University can reach businesses through licensing and *spin-out companies*. The University supports researchers with intellectual property advice, company formation and routes to market. Our portfolio includes *Quantum Base Holdings* (QUBE: LSE AIM) and *Quinas Technology*, which is developing ULTRARAM memory technology. These activities have created opportunities for inventions and specialist knowledge to be developed for use beyond academic laboratories.

Advanced engineering facilities

Engineering Building 2 and the Lancaster Quantum Technology Centre (LQTC) provide specialist *facilities for research* and teaching at Lancaster University. The LQTC establishes a significant new technology presence in the north-west of England.The spaces support work with advanced materials and devices, alongside engineering education and collaboration with external partners. Access to specialist equipment allows researchers and students to test ideas, develop technical skills and investigate new technologies.

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

Reduce inequality within and among countries



Research

Remote working and disability inclusion

Blanket *return-to-office requirements could disadvantage disabled workers*, according to March 2025 research led by Lancaster University and its Work Foundation, with Dr Paula Holland as Principal Investigator. Its analysis estimated that 1.16 million disabled people in the UK mainly worked from home. Among more than 1,200 disabled survey respondents with remote or hybrid working experience, 80% of fully remote workers said home working helped them manage their health. The research also put forward recommendations for employers and policymakers to improve access to flexible working and reduce barriers to employment for disabled people.

Opening environmental careers to more students

Barriers facing students from minority ethnic backgrounds in environmental careers became the focus of *Inclusive Natural Environment Futures*, a nine-month project launched in 2025 and led by Lancaster's Dr Alexandra Gormally-Sutton in partnership with the British Geological Survey and the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG). The project received £61,000 through the Natural Environment Research Council's Opening Up the Environment programme. Researchers planned surveys, interviews, focus groups and a careers day at the British Geological Survey to understand students' experiences and identify changes needed to widen access to environmental careers.

Following children through the care system

A longitudinal study involving Lancaster University researchers followed 1,836 *children who entered care in Scotland* aged five or under during 2012–13. Led by the University of Stirling, the partnership includes Lancaster's Dr Linda Cusworth as Co-Investigator. Findings highlighted inequalities faced by care-experienced children: more than one in ten remained in temporary placements a decade after entering care, while caregivers reported emotional and behavioural problems at five times the general population rate. The study was named Herald Research Project of the Year in 2025, recognising its contribution to understanding and informing social care policy and practice.

Course modules such as Responsible Leadership, Gender and Inclusion on our BSc Business Management and Entrepreneurship degree equip students with a deeper understanding of balancing concerns of all stakeholders.

Teaching and learning

Preparing social workers to tackle inequality

Students on Lancaster's *Social Work BA Hons* complete 170 days of practice placements, in the second and third years, as well as 30 skills days. Placement organisations include local authorities, the NHS, charities, education, private sector organisations and voluntary agencies, giving students supervised experience of supporting people who face disadvantage. A first-year core module, Contemporary Social Issues 1: Power, Inequality and Everyday Life, examines inequality in people's lives. The course is accredited by Social Work England, so graduates can apply to join the professional register.

Promoting inclusive teaching across Lancaster's partnerships

Lancaster's Education Conference, held on 24 and 25 June 2025 at Health Innovation One and online, brought together University staff and partners to share approaches to inclusive teaching and curriculum design. Under the theme Reimagining Education: Inclusive Practices and Transformative Curriculum Design, the conference explored how universities can respond to different student experiences and create more supportive learning environments. A keynote from Lancaster University College at Beijing Jiaotong University's Weihai Campus examined approaches to building an inclusive community for staff and students, addressing cultural differences, belonging and the challenges of teaching across international partnerships.

Engagement and outreach

Supporting survivors of torture

Professor Victoria Canning, a Lancaster University criminologist, developed *Supporting Survival*, a 52-card toolkit, in collaboration with the Danish Institute Against Torture (DIGNITY). Launched internationally in November 2025, the toolkit draws on more than 15 years of research and insights from survivors and practitioners. Its four themes cover definitions of violence and torture, surviving violence, barriers to support and positive practice. Designed to make complex information more accessible, the cards are being distributed through international partner networks, with plans to reach around 200 NGOs worldwide. They provide survivors and practitioners with practical resources to discuss experiences, identify support needs and inform approaches to recovery

Connecting universities to address racism

More than 60 staff and students from UK universities joined a symposium hosted at Lancaster University in 2025 to discuss *anti-racism and decolonisation in higher education*. Lancaster's Dr Sunita Abraham co-hosted the event with colleagues from York St John University and the University of Liverpool. Participants discussed how to improve accountability, share practices and strengthen collaboration across institutions. The group agreed to explore an ongoing UK network, with a further online meeting proposed. The event created a national forum for sharing approaches and developing future collaboration.

Operations

Setting measurable widening participation targets

Quantified targets to reduce inequalities in access and student success are set out in Lancaster's *Access and Participation Plan 2025–26 to 2028–29*. By 2029, the University aims to increase the share of entrants from the most deprived neighbourhoods from 14.5% to 17%, students eligible for free school meals from 10.1% to 12.1%, UK Asian students from 12.8% to 16.8% and UK Black students from 4.6% to 6.6%. The plan also sets targets to narrow completion gaps for mature students and for students with a declared mental health condition.

Updating support for disabled students

Reasonable-adjustment requirements and staff responsibilities were clarified when Lancaster updated its *Disabled Student Policy* in January 2025. The policy sets out how adjustments are agreed and recorded in an Inclusive Learning and Support Plan (ILSP). Staff are required to review and respond to changes within two weeks of receiving notification of an updated plan and check the effectiveness of amended adjustments with the student.

Supporting career progression for Black women academics

In 2024-25, Lancaster University participated in the 100 *Black Women Professors NOW programme*, working with the Women's Higher Education Network (WHEN) to address barriers to career progression for Black women in academia. The 12-month programme combines career development support with institutional change, aiming to improve opportunities for Black women academics and strengthen the pipeline to senior academic roles. Lancaster's involvement forms part of its wider work to improve representation and equality of opportunity across the University.



Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Property prices around the world are rising faster than inflation according to the International Housing Observatory based at Lancaster University.

Research

Penrith town centre regeneration

Research from Lancaster University has helped inform Inspiring Eden, a regeneration initiative created to improve the cultural, community and business sectors in Penrith. In May 2025, the University was pleased to report Government approval of £7.09 million in Levelling Up funding for the wider project. Plans included a business and innovation hub in the heart of the town in Market Square and a creative and community hub in the town hall. Both are intended to support business and cultural activity. The funding approval marks progress towards the development of the proposed facilities.

Housing affordability

A January 2025 report from the *International Housing Observatory* highlighted pressures on housing affordability. Drawing on data for July-September 2024, it recorded a 1.3% quarterly increase in UK house prices and a 1.7% rise in rents. Leading economists from Lancaster University Management School, the University of Alicante and the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas monitor and undertake in-depth analysis of data of housing markets across the world. Its findings help researchers and policymakers examine how changing housing costs affect households.

Supporting architectural heritage conservation

Historical research by Professor Richard Brook from Lancaster's School of Architecture, contributed to the case for the *Renold Building*, a former Manchester University campus building, becoming a Grade II listed by Historic England. The Professor's work helps to explain the building's design and architectural significance and more generally, how architecture helps communities understand places that form part of their built environment heritage.

Teaching and learning

Sustainable architecture and design

Sustainable architecture and urban design are explored in Lancaster University's *Architectural Technology* module. Students are taught to consider how buildings and public spaces respond to environmental and social needs. Topics such as materials, building performance and the ways people use places help students assess more liveable and resource-efficient designs. These skills are relevant to the long-term development of sustainable communities.

Exploring cities and infrastructure

Cities depend on infrastructure that meets social needs while limiting environmental harm. Lancaster University's *Human Geography in Practice* module explores themes such as urban development and sustainability. Studying land use, transport and resilience helps our students understand the complexity and challenges of planning and managing communities.

Engagement and outreach

Including young adults in local planning

Lancaster City Council and Lancaster University collaborated to give 18 to 30-year-olds a real voice in major local plans through the Placemaking with Young Adults project. In May 2025, the University promoted participatory workshops in *Carnforth*, Lancaster and Lancaster and Morecambe College. Participants were encouraged to discuss housing, public spaces and future local development. The project aimed to get young people's ideas and aspirations to help shape policies that design a places which reflect what matters most to them and influences decisions which ultimately affect their future.

Sustainable community projects

Lancaster University's *Wind Turbine Community Benefit Fund* supports initiatives that foster community growth and sustainability. Each year, the fund allocates up to £20,000 to Lancaster District-based not-for-profit organisations, charities, trusts, community groups or voluntary organisations. *The Storey Institute Gardens* is a community green space that received support to replace sculptures that had been stolen during an old refurbishment in 1998. In November 2024, through the fund, new fruit sculptures were installed in the garden where residents meet, spend time outdoors and take part in community life.

Every year, our £20,000 Wind Turbine Community Fund helps bring sustainable community projects to life.

Operations

Sustainable travel choices

Cycling, public transport and *bike hire* are among the alternatives to private car travel that we promote. Our *Travel Plan 2025–30* sets out priorities for journeys made to and from our Lancaster Campus. Our aim is to make travel more accessible while reducing congestion and environmental impacts.

Green Flag Award winners

Landscaped areas at Lancaster University provide space for recreation and wellbeing for students, staff and visitors, while also supporting biodiversity. The summer of 2025 saw us win our 14th *Green Flag Award* in recognition of our Grounds Team's work in maintaining accessible, attractive outdoor spaces across the campus.

Through our Library, Lancaster Arts and engagement activities, we open doors to lifelong learning, cultural discovery and community connection for all.

Community campus

We encourage members of the public to come and use some of Lancaster University's quality learning and cultural facilities. We offer community membership to our award-winning *Library* so people can borrow from our print collections. *Lancaster Arts*, supported by and based at Lancaster University, presents exhibitions and events for audiences beyond the student community. The Library and Lancaster Arts create opportunities for our community for independent study, lifelong learning and participation in local cultural life.



Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

By adopting the Freshkeg Smart Milk System for some of our cafes and outlets, the University is eliminating hundreds of plastic milk bottles from waste.

Research

Reducing and recycling plastic packaging

Research led by Lancaster University found that confusing labels and inconsistent waste collections lead some households to put unsuitable packaging into recycling bins. In November 2024, the *Plastic Packaging in People's Lives* project involved 552 people and 91 organisations across consumer research, business workshops and supply-chain investigations. Working with retailers and waste organisations, researchers also tested assumptions about recycled packaging with supermarket customers. One participating business subsequently revised its supply-chain specifications to transport more food in bulk and reduce plastic packaging. The findings provide practical recommendations to help businesses, councils and households reduce plastic waste and improve recycling.

Funding research into sustainable business

A £1 million award from the Rubin Foundation Charitable Trust extended its partnership with Lancaster's *Pentland Centre for Sustainability in Business* in February 2025. The Centre brings together management researchers, scientists and businesses to examine how organisations can improve environmental and social practices. Its work includes the Business and Biodiversity Knowledge and Action Hub, which brought 40 people from businesses, reporting bodies and academia together for two workshops in 2024. Participants developed approaches to reporting on business-led nature restoration, with companies beginning to test these methods. The new funding supports further research and industry engagement through to 2030.

Exploring public support for sustainable diets

Researchers from Lancaster University and the University of Leeds worked with a UK citizens' panel of 40 people to examine how food consumption could become healthier and more sustainable. *Findings published in February 2025* showed support for eating less meat and dairy, alongside concerns about affordability, choice and the effect of change on farmers and lower-income households. The panel favoured practical education and cooperation between government and the food industry rather than blanket bans. Lancaster researcher Dr Andy Yuille was lead author of the resulting policy brief, and the panel's views will inform scenarios for reducing emissions from food.

Teaching and learning

Designing more sustainable industrial processes

Sustainability is embedded in Lancaster's *Chemical Engineering MEng Hons*, where students learn to design industrial processes that use resources more efficiently and minimise environmental impacts. The third-year core module Sustainable Process Engineering covers energy efficiency, environmental assessment and circular economy principles, while optional modules such as Hydrogen Technologies and Fuel Cells and Electrochemical Engineering explore technologies supporting cleaner energy and industrial innovation. Students also apply their engineering knowledge through individual projects and industry-linked consultancy work.

Teaching responsible consumer decision-making

Ethics, sustainability and the social role of marketing feature in Lancaster's *Marketing BSc Hons* at Lancaster University Management School, which challenges students to think about issues such as over-consumption and the ethics of collecting consumer data. Second-year core modules include Consumer Behaviour and Global Markets and Responsibility, and final-year options include Global Sustainable Development and Responsible Leadership, Gender and Inclusion. These subjects help students understand how marketing decisions shape consumption and how organisations can act responsibly.

Engagement and outreach

Giving unwanted belongings a second life

Reusable belongings left behind by students were collected through *Don't Ditch It* between May and October 2025. With the British Heart Foundation as lead charity partner, the project worked with 32 other charities and organisations and diverted more than 42.8 tonnes of unwanted household items from landfill. More than 4,300 bags of donations, with an estimated value of more than £64,170, were sorted by a team that included 16 paid student staff, and the items were passed on for reuse, resale or redistribution.

Making reuse part of campus shopping

ReStore Lancaster is a collaboration between Lancaster University and St John's Hospice that gives students, staff and visitors a place to buy pre-loved clothing, homewares and eco-friendly toiletries on campus. Sales of donated items help raise funds for hospice services while keeping useful goods in circulation. ReStore also hosts sustainability events and workshops. During Positive Change Week 2025, students learned how to turn leftover fabric into hair accessories at a scrunchie-making workshop, encouraging creative reuse and more responsible consumption.

Recovering valuable metals from electronics

A *Knowledge Transfer Partnership* between Lancaster's School of Engineering and Morecambe-based ICT Reverse explored how valuable metals such as copper and gold could be recovered from discarded circuit boards using bacteria, in a process known as bioleaching. Supported by £129,000 from Innovate UK and further company funding, the project developed an approach intended to make metal recovery more sustainable and commercially viable. Following the successful completion of the partnership, a three-year PhD studentship was planned to take the research further, while ICT Reverse explored opportunities to develop the technology.

Sharing ideas on sustainable food packaging

An *international online event* on 9 July 2025 brought researchers and practitioners together at Lancaster University Management School to discuss responsibility for plastic food packaging. Organised through the International Communication Platform for Food Plastic Packaging, the event drew on collaboration with Sunway University and examined the roles of producers, consumers and waste management organisations in the UK and Malaysia. Researchers shared findings from the UK Plastic Packaging in People's Lives project and its Malaysian pilot, examining household consumption and waste practices in both countries. Speakers also discussed packaging regulations, waste management and the Global Plastic Treaty, helping connect research findings with policy and industry discussions.

Operations

Recognising more sustainable laboratories

Thirty-six laboratory suites achieved Bronze or Silver *LEAF accreditation in September 2025*, together covering 123 individual laboratory spaces. The Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework supports technicians and researchers to review how laboratories use resources and to adopt more sustainable practices. More than 20 colleagues attended a celebration event on 3 September, marking progress since Lancaster joined LEAF in September 2022.

Separating and recovering campus waste

Separate recycling is built into everyday campus life at Lancaster. *All student residences have three-stream kitchen recycling bins*, and segregated bins are installed in offices, administrative and teaching areas across campus. Collections cover paper and card, glass, plastics, cans, cartons, batteries, textiles, food and vapes, and the University reports that more than 70% of its waste is recycled. Reuse schemes such as Don't Ditch It keep unwanted items out of the waste stream altogether.

Setting environmental expectations for suppliers

Reducing resource demand, packaging and supply-chain impacts are priorities in Lancaster's *sustainable procurement guidance*. A Sustainability Impact Analysis of contracted suppliers checks, for example, whether they pay the Living Wage and publish a Modern Slavery Statement. The guidance calls for plastic-free packaging wherever possible, or fully recyclable plastic where it cannot be avoided, alongside fewer transactions and deliveries to reduce carbon emissions. It also aims to give small and medium-sized businesses, particularly local firms, opportunities to supply the University. All members of the Procurement Team have completed sustainable procurement training.

Cutting disposable packaging in campus catering

Changes to campus food and retail operations reported in 2025 included the Freshkeg Smart Milk System in some cafés and outlets, eliminating hundreds of plastic milk bottles. Food-waste collection and tracking was introduced in all University food outlets, and a Food Checker app now provides customers with allergen, dietary, calorie and carbon information for menu items. Commercial Services also worked with Procurement to appoint a supplier of more sustainable University merchandise.

Publishing progress on sustainability objectives

Lancaster's Sustainability Annual Report provides public information on the University's environmental performance and progress towards its sustainability objectives. In 2024-25, emissions associated with the procurement of goods and services accounted for approximately 57% of the University's total carbon emissions, highlighting the importance of responsible purchasing. The Procurement and Sustainability teams continued to improve how supplier emissions are measured and reported, using more accurate supplier data where available and developing tools to monitor procurement-related emissions.



Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

In the Cryosphere in a Changing Climate module students explore how these frozen regions function and why they matter.

Research

Hidden floods beneath Greenland's ice

In July 2025, researchers led by Lancaster University published satellite-based evidence of a major *flood beneath the Greenland ice sheet*. The team reconstructed an event in summer 2014 during which roughly 90 million cubic metres of water drained over 10 days, leaving an 85-metre-deep crater across around 2 km² of ice. The research provided the first observed evidence in Greenland that water from beneath the ice sheet can force its way upwards through fractured ice, a mechanism not represented in existing ice-sheet models. The findings highlight the need to better understand how Greenland's ice sheet responds to extreme meltwater events as the climate warms.

Rising climate extremes in the Amazon

A *Lancaster University-led report* published in October 2025 examined changing temperatures and water stress across the Amazon from 1981 to 2023. Working with more than 50 scientists, the researchers identified rapid growth in climate extremes in the central north Amazon, an area not previously considered among the most affected by climate change. The report found that 10% of the basin was experiencing increases in dry-season extreme temperatures of at least 0.77°C per decade, compared with an average temperature rise of approximately 0.21°C per decade. The findings identify areas facing growing climate risks and provide evidence to inform adaptation planning.

Supporting fair transitions to low-carbon living

Lancaster University is a partner in the *Centre for Joined Up Sustainability Transformations* (JUST), a five-year research centre led by the University of Manchester and supported by £8 million in funding from the Economic and Social Research Council and UK Research and Innovation. Launched in February 2025, the Centre works with communities across five regions in the north of England to explore how the transition to low-carbon living can be fair and inclusive. Lancaster researchers Dr Jacob Ainscough, Dr Alexandra Gormally-Sutton and Professor Rebecca Willis contribute to the programme, including its work in West Cumbria. Dr Ainscough and Professor Willis also co-lead the Centre's Democratic Innovations research theme, which explores how communities can have a greater say in decisions about sustainability and climate action.

Teaching and learning

Data and effects of climate change

Climate-related learning at Lancaster covers both the science of climate change and its effects on society. *Environmental Science modules* include Atmosphere, Weather and Climate, which explores the greenhouse effect and climate observations. Other modules, including *Cryosphere in a Changing Climate, Political Ecology and Understanding Climate Society*, examine changes in glaciers and ice sheets, climate justice and how societies respond to environmental change. Students develop skills in interpreting scientific evidence and understanding the wider implications of climate change.

The transition to sustainable energy

Lancaster's *Managing the Energy Transition* module explores how energy systems must change to reach net zero. It covers the decarbonisation of electricity, transport and heating, alongside energy storage, networks and greenhouse gas removal technologies. Using Lancaster University's own energy systems and the village of Burneside in the Lake District as case studies, students examine the practical challenges of moving towards low-carbon energy. They apply their learning through a professional report on energy system decarbonisation. The University's *Sustainability Policy* also highlights how its solar farm and wind turbine are used as teaching tools and a living lab.

Engagement and outreach

Helping schools plan local climate action

Free climate action planning resources for schools were developed through the *Morecambe Bay Curriculum* with Let's Go Zero, National Education Nature Parks and Climate Ambassadors. The materials include a locally focused planning guide and sections on adaptation, biodiversity, decarbonisation, and engagement and leadership. Lancaster University also worked with Lancaster and Morecambe College to develop resources on climate education and green skills. In July 2025, the *Morecambe Bay Curriculum Annual Conference* brought 186 educators, academics and community members to Lancaster University. Through workshops and practical planning resources, participants explored ways to develop climate action plans for their schools and education settings.

Working with communities on coastal resilience

In 2025, Lancaster University's ImaginationLancaster developed participatory tools for Our Future Coast, a project led by Wyre Council. A *public mapping platform launched in May* invited communities to identify places important to them around Morecambe Bay and contribute to the development of future coastal scenarios. In September, Dr Paul Cureton developed *a tabletop planning game* covering the coastline from Liverpool to Millom. Designed for two to 40 players and used in community workshops across north-west England, the game helps people explore coastal adaptation, nature-based solutions and local priorities. The work forms part of Our Future Coast, funded by Defra through the £150 million Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme.

A groundbreaking discovery beneath Greenland's ice is reshaping our understanding of how ice sheets respond to a warming world.

Operations

Net Zero Energy Centre

In March 2025, Lancaster University *marked a major milestone in its Net Zero Energy Centre project*, which aims to virtually eliminate gas use for heating on campus. The centre will house 7 megawatts of air and water source heat pumps and a 1-megawatt electric boiler, supported by an expanded district heating network. By December 2025, the University had installed eight thermal storage tanks and completed 6.5 km of additional heating pipework, extending the network's planned coverage from around 65% to 95% of campus buildings. Backed by more than £21 million from the Government's Green Heat Network Fund, matched by University investment, the project is expected to be completed in 2027 and save approximately 2,700 tonnes of carbon annually once operational.

Addressing travel emissions

Procurement and travel are Lancaster's largest sources of indirect emissions. In 2024–25, the University *reported 39,349 tonnes of CO_2e from procurement and 19,811 tonnes from travel*. To encourage lower-carbon business and academic travel, Lancaster has implemented a *Travel Decision Tree*, developed by Lancaster Environment Centre and reviewed in October 2025. The guidance encourages staff to consider whether travel is necessary, use online meetings where possible and choose lower-carbon transport. Domestic UK flights are prohibited except in exceptional circumstances. These measures help the University address emissions associated with its purchasing and travel decisions.



Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

A colony of frigatebirds, which provide nutrient inputs to nearby coral reefs, and scientists conducting a survey on a coral reef.

Research

Connecting seabirds and coral reef recovery
A *Lancaster University-led study published in July 2025*, led by Dr Casey Benkwitt, examined how nutrients from seabirds support coral reefs in the Seychelles. Researchers assessed five sites across four islands, including locations with and without invasive rats. They found that seabird-derived nutrients increased the growth of algae eaten by herbivorous fish, raising fish biomass and productivity without increasing overall algal cover. The findings provide evidence for conservation approaches that remove invasive rats and restore seabird populations, helping reconnect island and marine ecosystems and support coral reef biodiversity.

Tracking changes in Great Barrier Reef fish
A *Lancaster University-led study published in January 2025* analysed coral and fish monitoring data collected along more than 1,200 km of the Great Barrier Reef between 1995 and 2022. The researchers found that reef fish diversity patterns had shifted, with changes in species composition linked to growing environmental pressures. Changes in coral species composition were a stronger predictor of changes in reef fish diversity than coral cover alone. The findings show why marine conservation needs to consider the different corals supporting reef habitats, rather than focusing only on how much coral remains.

Ocean warming disrupts endangered sharks
More than 100 angelsharks around the Canary Islands were tracked in a *July 2025 study* co-led by Lancaster researchers with Dr David Jacoby as Principal Investigator. During a marine heatwave in 2022, females were largely absent from traditional mating grounds while males continued returning. Sea temperatures remained above 22.5°C for almost three times longer than in previous years. These findings suggest that prolonged ocean warming may disrupt breeding behaviour in a Critically Endangered species, highlighting the importance of monitoring temperatures and protecting sensitive marine habitats.

Quantifying small-scale fisheries worldwide
An *international study published in January 2025*, involving Lancaster University researchers, examined the contribution of marine and inland small-scale fisheries to nutrition and livelihoods. Professor Christina Hicks led the nutrition analyses, while Dr James Robinson also contributed. More than 800 contributors helped assemble evidence showing that small-scale fisheries supply at least 40% of global catch and support the livelihoods of almost 500 million people. The research also found that small-scale fisheries contribute 20% of dietary intake for six essential nutrients among 2.3 billion people living near coasts or large inland waters, demonstrating their importance to food security and sustainable fisheries management.

Exposing gaps in ocean industry reporting
Research co-authored by Professor Jan Bebbington of Lancaster University's Pentland Centre, published in September 2025, examined how leading companies report their impacts on marine environments. Led by Stanford University, the team analysed 2018–2020 reports from the 10 largest companies in each of eight ocean-economy sectors, including shipping and seafood. Fewer than one-third disclosed biodiversity-related impact indicators, and no such indicator appeared in more than two companies' reports. The researchers have shared their findings with organisations developing climate and nature-related reporting frameworks, helping inform discussions about which marine environmental impacts businesses should measure and disclose.

Photo credit: Dr Casey Benkwitt

Teaching and learning

Aquatic ecosystems

Aquatic Biogeochemistry, an optional second-year module in Lancaster's 2025-entry *Environmental and Earth Science pathway*, explores the chemical and biological processes that shape freshwater and marine ecosystems. Other modules in the pathway include Hydrology: Water in the Environment and Global Change and the Earth System. Through these subjects, students investigate how nutrients and pollutants move through water and how climate pressures affect aquatic ecosystems and biodiversity.

Engagement and outreach

Measuring freshwater restoration with local farmers

Water restoration work with farmers in Swaledale and Wensleydale began through the *SWEF-e partnership* in May 2025. Led at Lancaster by Dr Nick Chappell, in partnership with Swaledale & Wensleydale Environmental Farmers, the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust and the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust, the project tests whether scrapes hold back floodwater, grassland aeration improves infiltration and green infrastructure reduces nitrate levels in small streams. Lancaster's contribution includes installing monitoring equipment and working with local farmers to collect environmental data. The project is funded through Defra's Water Restoration Fund.

Supporting sustainable fisheries and tackling illegal fishing

Professor Jan Bebbington of Lancaster University's Pentland Centre works with the Stockholm Resilience Centre on *Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship* (SeaBOS), a science–business initiative bringing researchers together with nine of the world's largest seafood companies. Lancaster researchers contribute scientific knowledge and support dialogue with industry leaders on ocean sustainability challenges including illegal fishing, seafood production and aquaculture, helping translate research into more sustainable business practice.

In 2025, Lancaster researchers involved in the Ocean Justice and the Blue Economy project drew on research with 300 small-scale fishers in North Maluku, Indonesia, where fishers identified destructive and illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing as concerns associated with declining fish stocks and livelihoods. The work highlighted the importance of access to information and stronger participation by fishing communities in decisions about ocean crime and fisheries management. In July 2025, Lancaster also published a *public-facing article on illegal fishing*, raising awareness of its environmental and social impacts and the importance of involving affected coastal communities in responses.

That same month, Lancaster's Ocean Justice and the Blue Economy project worked with Indonesian partner *Segara Nusa Nawasena* to organise nine participatory workshops in Bitung, Jakarta and Kupang. The workshops brought together small-scale fishers, women, children and young people to share experiences and develop knowledge about ocean justice and the blue economy. By involving coastal communities directly, the project brought local perspectives into discussions about fairer and more sustainable ocean governance.

Exploring the environmental impact of tourism

In 2025, the Morecambe Bay Curriculum provided *free further education resources* for Travel and Tourism learners, developed by Lancaster and Morecambe College tutors with input from Lancaster University. The Eco Tourism study compares Eden Project Morecambe, Penzance and Bwindi in Uganda to help learners examine how tourism can benefit or harm local communities and ecosystems. It supports learners to assess environmental pressures, responsible visitor behaviour and approaches to managing tourism sustainably in coastal and natural destinations.

Young perspectives on coastal futures

Around 30 young people aged 13–19 from Blackpool, Morecambe, Lancaster and Barrow-in-Furness participated in the *SeaSights project* reported in September 2025. Participants photographed coastal places that mattered to them and discussed what should be protected or changed. Led by Dr Celine Germond-Duret, the project found that young people wanted greater influence over seaside development and more facilities in coastal towns. Lancaster also shared this approach at a youth ocean-action event during the June 2025 UN Ocean Conference.

Coastal learning on the beach

Through the Morecambe Bay Curriculum, Lancaster University helped teachers connect classroom geography with local coastal environments. *The Beach is our Classroom* resource, co-designed in 2024 by teacher Lynn Reddy and Dr Suzana Ilic, supported practical learning for pupils at Greengate Juniors and George Romney Primary. Their joint visit, reported in September 2025, involved mapping, tide-line investigations, shell identification and observing the coast. The collaboration developed pupils' fieldwork skills and encouraged them to consider the environmental value of beaches close to home.

Bringing ocean justice into policy discussions

Members of Lancaster University's People and the Ocean Knowledge and Action Hub took part in the *One Ocean Science Congress and UN Ocean Conference* in Nice from 3 to 13 June 2025. They shared findings from ongoing projects, learned from other scientific and policy initiatives and supported a side event examining how to create a fairer and more inclusive blue economy. Hub members also delivered a session on justice in the ocean economy during Lancaster's Festival of Sustainability on 26 June 2025.

Operations

Sustainable seafood on campus

Lancaster's *Sustainable Food Policy* sets standards for food served across University catering outlets, including seafood sourcing. The policy states that no fish is served from the Marine Conservation Society's 'fish to avoid' list, helping the University avoid sourcing seafood from species and fisheries identified as environmentally unsustainable. The University also works with suppliers to improve the sustainability of its food supply chain, while its *conference and events catering* prioritises locally sourced, traceable and sustainable ingredients wherever possible.



Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

The research apiaries at the campus provide valuable research environments, biodiversity benefits and honey for sale in the University sustainable shop.

Research

Combining approaches to restore grassland

A long-running grassland experiment initiated by Lancaster ecologist Professor Richard Bardgett shows that using several restoration techniques together can support biodiversity and farming more effectively than relying on a single measure. *Published in May 2025*, the study drew on an experiment established at Colt Park Meadows in the Yorkshire Dales in 1989. Researchers assessed 26 ecosystem functions, including plant diversity, pollination, hay production and soil carbon storage. Combining seed mixtures, red clover and carefully managed nutrient additions improved several benefits simultaneously, providing evidence for land managers planning grassland restoration.

Protecting soils during construction

A Local Soils Model Policy and Guide developed by Lancaster researchers with Lancaster City Council and Cornwall Council was launched in May 2025. *The guidance helps planning authorities* protect soil before and during construction. It recommends assessing existing soil quality, preparing a construction-phase soil management plan and monitoring soil management after development. By bringing academic soil science together with practical local government experience, the work provides councils with tools to reduce avoidable harm to soils during development and improve how land is managed afterwards.

Using environmental law to protect threatened cacti

A conservation network led by Lancaster University researcher Dr Jacob Phelps helped support a *legal case against the illegal trade in threatened Chilean cacti*. In March 2025, Lancaster reported that an Italian court had found two defendants guilty of trading more than 1,000 protected cacti taken from the Atacama Desert. The judgment also awarded €20,000 to a conservation organisation to support cactus protection, research and education. Through Conservation-Litigation.org, Dr Phelps brings legal and conservation expertise together to explore how environmental harm can be remedied.

Developing new tools to monitor soils

Two research developments in 2025 involved Lancaster in advancing soil monitoring. *A November study with the University of Manchester* showed that detailed airborne spectral images can help predict soil microbial diversity beneath vegetation, offering new ways to monitor soil health and biodiversity. Separately, *a Lancaster-led team received more than £1.15 million from the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council*, plus £100,000 from the University, to develop a mobile platform measuring how much carbon crops, soils and grasslands take in or release.

Photo credit: Jenny Roberts

Teaching and learning

Studying ecology and conservation

Wildlife, habitats and the impact of people on ecosystems are central to the Ecology and Conservation route in Lancaster's 2025-entry *Biology pathway*. Students explore ecological theory alongside practical fieldwork designed to develop the skills needed to investigate and protect biodiversity. The pathway covers the relationships between organisms and their environment, as well as approaches used in wildlife conservation. Its published course structure provides a route for students to study terrestrial ecosystem management and the challenges of preventing biodiversity loss.

Learning to monitor wildlife habitats

Practical training in surveying and monitoring terrestrial biodiversity is described in Lancaster's *Environmental Biology module catalogue*. Ecology Field Skills introduces standard habitat survey methods and species identification, including fieldwork in natural habitats around Lancaster. The advanced Ecological Monitoring Techniques module covers identifying plants and animals, sampling populations and monitoring habitats. Students develop survey protocols for different wildlife groups and use RStudio to analyse the relationship between biodiversity and carbon storage.

Engagement and outreach

Helping families support native bumblebees

Two public events at Leighton Moss in summer 2025 helped the *BeeBox team* and the RSPB raise awareness of native bumblebees. Almost 60 visitors attended a BeeBox painting session on 31 July, with another 20 participating on 7 August. Families learned about threats facing bumblebees while decorating nesting boxes designed by researchers from Lancaster Environment Centre and the School of Engineering. The boxes were intended for placement within the reserve, alongside a wider study of conditions that help bumblebees establish nests.

Teaching responsible tourism and biodiversity

Responsible tourism is explored in Eco Tourism: A Comparative Study of Local, National and Global Tourist Locations, a free *Morecambe Bay Curriculum resource* for further education learners. Using destinations including Eden Project Morecambe, Penzance and Bwindi National Park, it examines the positive and negative environmental impacts of tourism and how tourism affects localities, non-human species and ecosystems. Learners consider strategies for managing responsible tourism destinations and whether tourism contributes to environmental degradation. The resource is one of 16 sustainability packs co-produced by local educators and Lancaster University academics. During 2024–25, the Morecambe Bay Curriculum promoted these materials across local schools and colleges and delivered five professional development sessions for teachers, supporting place-based sustainability education.

Volunteers help restore campus habitats

Staff and students supported practical biodiversity work on Lancaster's campus during 2025. As reported in the University's *August 2025 Green Flag Award announcement*, the Grounds Team planted 600 British native trees to establish new woodland and hedgerows, and developed areas of grassland into wildflower meadow. This work was supported by fortnightly conservation sessions with LUSU Green and contributions from University staff, providing opportunities for the campus community to take part in habitat conservation and restoration.

Operations

Managing campus land for biodiversity

Lancaster's *Biodiversity Plan*, approved in February 2025, guides the management of campus habitats. The Grounds Team monitors and maintains around 278,000 square metres of woodland alongside grassland, hedges and shrub beds, scheduling maintenance to minimise disturbance to wildlife. The plan commits the University to reviewing its management procedures annually and organising at least eight biodiversity engagement activities each academic year.

Supporting pollinators through campus habitats

Lancaster supports pollinators through habitat management and research. An *October 2024 University report* recorded 12 honeybee hives across the EcoHub and a new research apiary at Hazelrigg, supporting studies of bee health and hive design. The University's Biodiversity Plan also includes planting for pollinators and managing campus habitats to support wildlife.



Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Lancaster University Law Clinic offers free legal advice to members of the public.

Research

Policing Academic Centre of Excellence
Lancaster University was *selected in May 2025 as one of nine Policing Academic Centres of Excellence*, which share £4.5 million over three years from the National Police Chiefs' Council and UK Research and Innovation. Officially launched in November 2025, the Lancaster centre brings together psychology, law and criminology with computational social science, linguistics and sociology. It aims to ensure that *policing is shaped by the latest and best scientific expertise*, working with police forces and industry partners on challenges including public trust, crime prevention, personal safety, and surveillance and sensing.

Examining the risks of AI-enabled crime
In March 2025, Lancaster University and the Alan Turing Institute's Centre for Emerging Technology and Security *published research examining how artificial intelligence is changing serious online crime*. Led by Professor Joe Burton, the report explored threats including financial crime, romance scams, phishing and child sexual abuse material. Drawing on consultations and interviews with government, industry and law enforcement organisations in the UK and Europe, the researchers recommended creating an AI Crime Taskforce within the National Crime Agency's National Cyber Crime Unit and strengthening international law enforcement cooperation. The report provides specific recommendations to inform national policy and law enforcement responses to emerging technological risks.

Documenting harm from the Afghan data breach
Professor Victoria Canning of Lancaster University was an academic consultant on research with Refugee Legal Support and the University of York into the consequences of a Ministry of Defence data breach affecting Afghans. *Findings reported in October 2025* drew on a survey of 350 people, including 231 affected by the leak. Of those affected, 200 (87%) reported personal risks or threats to family members, while 207 (89%) reported consequences for their own physical or mental health. The findings were published by the House of Commons Defence Committee, providing evidence of the human consequences of the breach to inform parliamentary scrutiny and discussions about government accountability.

Putting kinship carers at the centre of research
A research report and *practical toolkit* developed with the charity Kinship were launched in December 2025. The project involved 21 kinship carers in online focus groups, while another 10 took part in workshops to co-create guidance for researchers and policymakers. Led by Professor Judith Harwin, the work explored how relatives and family friends who care for children can shape studies about their lives. The toolkit provides practical advice on meaningful participation, helping make family justice research more inclusive and responsive to lived experience.

Studying the impact of mothers facing trial
A £1 million award in January 2025 supported the *Child Outcomes for Mothers Facing Trial (COMFT) study*, including £830,000 from the Economic and Social Research Council. Led by Professor Karen Broadhurst, the project brings Lancaster University together with the Ministry of Justice, Swansea University, the University of Central Lancashire, Cafcass, Cafcass Cymru and the charity Birth Companions.

Researchers are working closely with the Ministry of Justice's Data First team to link criminal and family justice data in England and Wales. The study addresses Ministry of Justice research priorities and is designed to generate evidence for policy and practice decisions affecting women, children and families involved in the justice system.

Teaching and learning

Providing legal advice through student learning
Lancaster University Law Clinic reopened for public appointments in November 2025, combining legal education with free access to advice. Third-year and postgraduate Law students, supervised by a qualified solicitor, provide advice on matters including landlord and tenant disputes, small claims, family law, and wills and probate. Since 2019, the clinic has helped more than 300 clients and provided more than £400,000 worth of free legal advice.

Learning about Parliament from its Speaker
Parliamentary Studies is a third-year undergraduate module run in partnership with the UK Parliament. *On 17 January 2025, House of Commons Speaker Sir Lindsay Hoyle* visited campus to discuss parliamentary work and respond to students' questions about representation, reform and accountability. A University report published later that month said that 30 students were enrolled on the module. The teaching combines academic study of parliamentary structures and democracy with contact with elected representatives and officials, giving students direct insight into public institutions and political decision-making.

Engagement and outreach

Supporting survivors of torture with practical resources
Supporting Survival, a set of 52 discussion cards developed by *Professor Victoria Canning* with the Danish Institute Against Torture, launched internationally in November 2025. The cards explore four areas: understanding torture and violence, surviving harm, barriers to support and improving practice. Designed using research and insights from survivors and practitioners, the toolkit has been distributed to international NGOs and partner organisations working with refugees and people seeking asylum. It aims to help practitioners and survivors discuss difficult experiences and navigate support more effectively.

Helping local councils plan for the future
A *future scenario planning briefing and toolkit* published in April 2025 aimed to support evidence-led decisions in local government. Professor Radka Newton, Dr Jekaterina Rindt and Dr Mirian Calvo developed the approach through the I-Connect project, working with Lancaster City Council and regional organisations. The toolkit helps policymakers consider alternative futures and test choices about transport, development, environmental sustainability and community wellbeing. The briefing was published by the University of Liverpool's Heseltine Institute for Public Policy, Practice and Place.

Professional development for councillors
Professional development sessions for *elected councillors* were advertised at Lancaster for 22 May 2025. Led by Dr Martin Steven, the sessions addressed changes in local government funding, devolution and regional policy after Brexit. The programme combined academic teaching with networking and collaborative activities, offering councillors opportunities to consider how policy developments affect their roles. With an advertised attendance fee of £90, the initiative connected University expertise with local democratic institutions through a structured professional-development programme.

Hosting discussion on devolution and accountability
Lancaster brought local residents, policymakers and academics together through *Lancashire Voices: The Devolution Question*, a public forum held on 9 December 2025 at Health Innovation One. Organised by Dr Temidayo Eseonu and colleagues in the School of Global Affairs, the Question Time-style event brought together local government representatives, policy experts and community voices. Audience members had opportunities to question the panel about regional devolution, including how decisions about public funding and local services should be made and held to account.

Connecting policy voices across party conferences
In 2025, the Work Foundation and Lancaster University *organised policy roundtables* at the Labour and Conservative Party conferences, covering employment rights, disability employment, opportunities for young people and living standards in coastal communities. The programme included a roundtable on the disability employment gap, bringing employers, unions, disability organisations and policymakers together to discuss proposed employment reforms. *The Work Foundation subsequently shared insights from the discussion*, contributing evidence and analysis to wider policy debates.

Operations

Transparent and accountable governance
Lancaster's *Council* is the University's highest governing body, operating under its published Charter, Statutes and Ordinances. Its membership includes student representatives and elected academic representatives from the Senate, providing opportunities for these groups to contribute to institutional governance. The University publishes Council membership details and meeting minutes, alongside financial statements and institutional policies, supporting transparency and accountability in decision-making.

Protecting academic freedom and open debate
Lancaster's commitment to *academic freedom and freedom of speech* rests on a culture of critical inquiry, in which ideas are challenged respectfully and in a spirit of open discussion. The University's *Code of Practice for Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom* was updated with Council's approval in July 2025 and took effect on 1 August 2025. It sets out how visiting speakers, protests and complaints are handled, balancing freedom of expression with the University's responsibilities to its community. The Code protects academic freedom in both research and teaching and applies to academic staff across career levels.

Preventing bribery and corruption
Responsibilities for preventing bribery and corruption are set out in Lancaster's published *Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy*. First approved by Council in 2019, with minor amendments approved by the Audit and Risk Committee in May 2022, the policy explains how concerns should be raised, including through the University's whistleblowing procedure, and the consequences of breaches for staff and partner organisations.

Publishing annual financial information
Lancaster publishes its *audited financial statements* each year, with editions from 2018–19 to 2024–25 available online. The accounts provide a formal record of the University's income, expenditure and resources, complementing the governance information published through University Council and supporting transparency about how a charitable higher education institution uses its funds.

Engaging local communities in University priorities
Lancaster's *Civic Commitment* includes the Lancaster Exchange, an interactive public forum that brings together local residents, local authorities, businesses, charities, further education providers and other community partners. Through discussion and feedback, local stakeholders can contribute their perspectives on the University's contribution to the region, helping to inform Lancaster's civic priorities and future engagement with local communities.



Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

Research

Sharing water-saving farming expertise in Ghana
In Ghana, Lancaster University worked with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research – Crops Research Institute and Newage Agric Solutions Ltd on *irrigation research reported in March 2025*. Earlier field trials of Alternate Wetting and Drying achieved a 30% reduction in water use without reducing rice yields. A £221,000 African Agriculture Knowledge Transfer Partnership supports further trials and knowledge exchange in the Weta irrigation district, with Lancaster researchers providing expertise in plant and soil science. The work builds on the *Africa Research and Innovation Partnership network*, which extends across 12 sub-Saharan African countries and approximately 30 academic, business, policy and community partners.

> "Our collaboration with Lancaster University and the Crop Research Institute is a testament to the power of unity in advancing agricultural science and technology by merging academic excellence with cutting-edge research and industry expertise, ensuring food security for generations to come."
>
> Martin Nartey, General Manager
> Newage Agric Solutions Ltd

> "Healthy soils are key in tackling climate change, flood risks, and supporting biodiversity, but they are often overlooked, damaged or treated like waste in urban planning and development."
>
> **Jess Davies, Professor of Sustainability**

Connecting UK and Malaysian packaging research
Lancaster University Management School and Sunway University in Malaysia collaborate on research into food plastic packaging. Their *second knowledge exchange event*, held online on 9 July 2025, brought together academics and practitioners to discuss packaging responsibility in the UK and Malaysia. Led by Lancaster's Professor Maria Piacentini and Dr Alison Stowell, the event included discussions on Global Plastic Treaty negotiations, UK packaging policy and findings from household packaging research in both countries. The exchange enabled researchers and practitioners to share evidence, compare approaches to waste management and identify opportunities for cross-country learning.

Working internationally on small-scale fisheries
Small-scale fisheries were the focus of a *global collaboration involving more than 800 contributors*, published in Nature in January 2025. Building on the international Illuminating Hidden Harvests Initiative, the study was co-led by researchers from Duke University and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, with Lancaster's Professor Christina Hicks leading the nutrition analyses. By pooling data from around the world, the partners estimated that small-scale fisheries produce at least 40% of global catch and support almost 500 million livelihoods. The collaboration provides a shared evidence base to inform fisheries management, nutrition and food security policies.

Turning soil research into planning guidance
Researchers at Lancaster University collaborated with Lancaster City Council and Cornwall Council to *create a Local Soils Model Policy and Guide* launched in 2025. The guidance explains how local planning authorities can account for soil quality before and during construction and monitor land after development. The project brought together academic expertise and local government practice, helping translate soil science into usable policy tools. Its recommendations include baseline soil assessment and management plans for larger projects, supporting shared action on soil conservation and sustainable land use.

Teaching and learning

Exploring international sustainable development
Political, economic, social and ecological perspectives on sustainability are compared in Lancaster's *Global Sustainable Development module*. Students examine different modes of governance, business and management, with a particular focus on how businesses engage with nature, and consider perspectives from different communities and countries. The module asks them to present meaningful diagnoses and recommendations for more sustainable outcomes.

Developing eco-innovation ideas with business partners
A *10-week Eco-Innovation module* in 2025 challenged Lancaster students to develop business ideas addressing environmental problems. Led by Professor Nigel Watson, students presented their plans to a panel of experts in sustainability, entrepreneurship and business development. The winning team proposed producing biochar, with prizes donated by Colin Curtis, Managing Director of TBL Services, who has contributed to the module as an industry panellist for four years. The collaboration brings business expertise into teaching, helping students develop practical enterprise skills and explore solutions to challenges linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Engagement and outreach

Partnering with Sue Ryder on palliative care
A three-year research partnership between Lancaster and *Sue Ryder* was announced in April 2025. Dr Maddy French took up a joint Senior Research Fellow role linking Lancaster's International Observatory on End-of-Life Care with the national charity. By combining academic research expertise with Sue Ryder's experience of palliative care and bereavement support, the partners established a shared approach to developing research that can inform improvements in care and support for patients and families.

Monitoring Windermere with citizen scientists
The Big Windermere Survey brings together Lancaster University, the Freshwater Biological Association and local volunteers to investigate water quality. Its August 2025 report drew on more than 1,000 water samples collected by 350 citizen scientists across 110 locations during 10 sampling events over approximately two and a half years. Scientists analysed 15 water-quality measures, including phosphorus and indicators of bacterial pollution. The results give communities and decision-makers a more detailed picture of environmental pressures on the lake and demonstrate the value of combining scientific analysis with public participation.

Extending education beyond the University
Lancaster University provides educational opportunities for alumni and the wider public through its programme of public lectures. In May 2025, the free *Lancaster Environment Lecture* welcomed alumni and members of the public to hear environmental campaigner Bella Lack discuss the experiences of young people facing the global environmental crisis and approaches to addressing it.

Across Morecambe Bay, the *Morecambe Bay Curriculum* brings Lancaster University together with local educators, schools and community organisations to provide place-based sustainability education. Its 2024–25 impact report recorded more than 350 members and 140 partner schools, colleges and early-years settings, while its 2025 Climate Action Planning conference brought together 186 educators to develop knowledge and skills around sustainability and climate action.

Lancaster also supports educational outreach for refugee and asylum-seeker communities. The University's 2025–29 Access and Participation Plan records an annual Education and Careers Day for resettlers, developed with Lancashire Refugee Resettlement, Future U, local universities, colleges and charities, providing people from sanctuary communities with information, advice and guidance on education and career pathways. Lancaster's University of Sanctuary work also includes English-language provision and learning resources for local refugees and people seeking asylum.

Giving families support through shared research
Giving HOPE, led by Claire Mason of Lancaster's Centre for Child and Family Justice Research, works with NHS trusts and local authorities to support mothers and babies separated shortly after birth. Its HOPE Boxes were co-designed with mothers with lived experience and midwives. In February 2025, Lancaster reported that the project had worked with more than 50 health trusts and local authorities across England. A £20,000 ARC SHAPE Pitch Prize, awarded in 2024 and announced in February 2025, supported the project's planned transition from a university-led initiative to an independent not-for-profit Community Interest Company, creating opportunities to expand its partnerships and support.

Volunteering for a local charity
ReStore, the University's sustainability shop, is a partnership with local charity, St John's Hospice. Students can volunteer in the shop while supporting fundraising for the hospice and promoting reuse and sustainable consumption. In September 2025, Lancaster students took part in a dedicated ReStore volunteering session, contributing to a partnership that combines community support with practical sustainability action.

Operations

Reporting publicly against the global goals
Lancaster's *Sustainable Development Goals* webpages bring together the University's contributions to all 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals, drawing on examples from research, teaching, community engagement and campus operations. Developed with contributions from across the University, the report provides a publicly accessible overview of Lancaster's sustainability initiatives and achievements, supporting transparency and knowledge sharing with students, staff and external partners.

Coordinating sustainability across the University
Lancaster's *Sustainability Strategy* is overseen by a Sustainability Steering Group and Sustainability Board, bringing together representatives from faculties and departments across the University. Faculty sustainability groups feed into this structure, helping coordinate activities and share progress. Following its 2020 climate emergency declaration, Lancaster committed to achieving net zero Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions by 2030 and net zero carbon emissions overall by 2035, supported by policies and plans including its Energy and Utilities Plan. The governance structure also supports collaboration with students, researchers and external partners on sustainability initiatives.

From ambition to action:
we are on track to meet our climate emergency commitment to becoming net zero from Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions by 2030.

Working through a district-wide strategic partnership
Lancaster University is one of nine founding organisations of the *Lancaster District Strategic Partnership*, established through a memorandum of understanding signed in August 2024. Partners include Lancaster City Council, the University of Cumbria, Lancaster and Morecambe College, NHS organisations, business representatives and voluntary and arts sector organisations. The partnership brings together organisations from across the district to work on shared priorities, including sustainability, the local economy, health and wellbeing, and community development. In 2025, the partnership continued to strengthen its collaboration, with *quarterly meetings* and a Climate and Nature Strategy among its initial areas of focus, as highlighted by *Lancaster City Council*.

Find out more

To find out more about how we are tackling global challenges through our research, teaching, actions at our campus and engagement with our wider communities, visit our sustainability webpages

lancaster.ac.uk/sustainability

You can contact our Sustainability Team by emailing us at sustainability@lancaster.ac.uk.

We would like to thank all the staff and students at Lancaster University and everyone we work with locally, regionally and globally to deliver the work contained in this report for our contribution towards the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.