



Transforming Education, Transforming Lives

Education Strategy

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Transforming education, transforming lives

We believe education can transform the lives of individuals, families, and communities for the better. Our aim is bold and ambitious – to deliver an outstanding education for all our students.

This aim advances the mission set out in our Royal Charter to:

“...advance education, scholarship, knowledge and understanding through teaching and research, for the benefit of individuals and society at large.”

It's expressed in our concept of educational gain: to ensure all students are equipped with the competencies they need to be freethinking futuremakers who enjoy success and contribute to the social and economic wellbeing of their communities.



Welcome to the university of the *real world*

Hull is a civically engaged, research-intensive University.

We have a proudly progressive history of offering an excellent and transformative education, which changes the lives of our students and the communities in which they live and work for the better.

Our educational offer is built to meet and expand the ambition and curiosity of our students. Our courses engage students in exploring the subject they're passionate about and equip them to succeed, in and beyond their studies. They develop knowledge, competencies and skills, empowering them to create new ways of thinking and doing, gain experience in putting these into practice and make their mark in the world.

Since 1927, we've provided higher education at our Hull campus and the majority of our current students continue to be enrolled on courses delivered here. To extend our educational offer and expand equality of opportunity to participate and succeed in higher education, we work with other educational partners. These include colleges in the wider region as well as international partners. In 2003, with the University of York and NHS partners, we established the Hull York Medical School. In 2019, we launched Hull Online to meet the needs of students for high quality online education. In 2024, we opened our London Study Centre to further extend and diversify our offer.

While most of our students are engaged in the study of undergraduate courses, we have a vibrant and growing postgraduate

taught and research student community. While the balance varies for different types of qualification and in different subjects, the majority of our students are from the UK and the greatest concentration is from our region. We also have a growing number of apprenticeship students, supported by their employers to combine work with study. We're committed to growing participation in each of these types of provision and expect the overall balance to remain similar, with the largest group of our students studying undergraduate courses at our Hull campus.

We're committed to addressing the needs of our students, their communities, and wider stakeholders. We're based in a region where qualification levels at level 4 and above are significantly below the national average (35% compared to 47%) and where significant skills gaps and lower rates of productivity need to be overcome to generate growth, opportunity, and greater prosperity.

We deliver to a diverse community of students in which many are overcoming the challenges of socio-economic disadvantage. 40% of our students are from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and 43% from areas of low higher education participation, compared to an average of 34% and 23% at all Office for Students (OfS) registered providers.¹ We partner and work with a range of organisations to raise the aspirations and attainment of students in schools and colleges, opening-up educational opportunities that further enrich the lives of individuals and communities.

1. OfS Shape and Size dashboard, Full-time UG All Students, 2022/23.



Teaching worth its weight in gold

In 2019, we launched our 'Transforming Programmes' initiative to ensure all our courses were current, coherent, rigorous, and academically excellent.



Key elements of this approach included:

- A competence-based approach which focuses our courses on developing what students can *do*, as well as what they *know*.
- The development of curricula designed to equip students to be successful in a fast-changing world in which phenomena such as the fourth industrial revolution are transforming life and work.
- Course design principles including inclusive teaching and authentic assessment.

This programme of change has delivered excellent educational experiences and outcomes for our students. In 2023, this was recognised through the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) assessment in which we were rated as Gold overall, with the panel concluding that we delivered “typically outstanding quality provision for most groups of students and courses.”

Since this assessment, we've continued to deliver excellent educational experiences and outcomes for our students. For example, our 2024 and 2025 National Student Survey results indicate that we're outperforming our benchmark in Assessment & Feedback and Student Voice, and delivering at least high-quality experiences and outcomes in relation to Teaching, Academic Support, and Learning Resources.

As we move into the second half of the decade, we recognise new challenges that we must face to build on this success. We

know that the needs and aspirations of our students and potential students are not static and continue to change and evolve. Also, the social, economic and environmental context in which we live continues to be transformed at pace and intensity.

As educational institutions, we need to be at the forefront of these changes, equipping students to be innovators and thought leaders, capable of shaping and re-shaping the world in which they live and work. To achieve this, we'll need to renew our focus on being inclusive, agile, outcome-orientated and proactive leaders of change.

While we know the education we provide is excellent, we also know there has been a long-term decline in the number of students who have been attracted to our undergraduate course offer. This reflects a range of factors, including:

- An intensification of competition among higher education providers
- Changes in student preferences relating to what, where and how they study
- The continued low higher education participation rate in our region

We're committed to increasing the number of students who benefit from the excellent higher education we offer. To achieve this, we must be proactive in developing our offer to meet the needs and aspirations of students. This means engaging in an ongoing process of development that not only reacts to, but anticipates, changes in student and applicant



demand. We must continue to evolve our course portfolio, curriculum, pedagogy, and modes of delivery to be sector leaders of progressive change.

The judgement that our provision was typically outstanding for most groups of students implies that there have been some groups for whom this is not the case. Whether this relates to the type of delivery, subject of study, or the demographic characteristics of the students, it falls short of our commitment to an inclusive approach which ensures that all students receive the best possible educational experiences.

The TEF assessment also highlighted aspects relating to Student Experience which we couldn't demonstrate were outstanding across our provision. These related to our ability to evidence the use of research, employer engagement, and professional practice to enrich learning and to the extent to which our learning environment and academic support were tailored to the needs of our students.

Also, through the analysis we undertook to inform our Access and Participation Plan (2025/6-2028/9), we identified risk to equality of opportunity in our provision relating to Completion and Awarding for students from areas of high deprivation and Awarding for Black and Asian students. We also identified risk to access and participation for groups that are under-represented in higher education and/or are socio-economically disadvantaged.

The TEF Aspect judgement for Student Outcome rated our performance as 'Silver'. While this indicates typically high-quality provision, it also highlights that we had not consistently delivered outstanding outcomes for students in relation to Continuation, Completion, and Progression to positive graduate outcomes. Further improving our rates for Continuation, Completion, and Graduate Outcomes is not only at the centre of our commitment to ensure all students benefit from the opportunity to participate in higher education, but is also core to delivering on our commitment to raise educational attainment and develop the human capital of the region and ensuring the financial sustainability of our provision.

Also, highlighted previously, there are inequalities in the outcomes experienced by different groups of students that we're committed to addressing. As such, a consistent focus on outcomes will continue to be at the centre of our work to ensure we deliver on our commitments for all groups of students.

As an institution committed to continuous improvement, we also recognise that excellence can't be maintained by standing still. Simply put, what worked in the past, will not necessarily work in the future. While we're proud of the strides forward that we achieved through Transforming Programmes, we're clear that we need to continue to improve, innovate, and respond to feedback.

We recognise that the full roll-out of Transforming Programmes has taken over 5 years. In the context of the societal, sector, and behavioural changes noted previously, we recognise that as an institution we need to be more agile, able to evaluate practice and implement changes more rapidly. This means we must be able to deliver change more quickly and effectively, while ensuring we continue to deliver excellent educational experiences and outcomes for our students. It also means that, in an uncertain and sometimes turbulent environment, the actions we'll need to take in pursuit of our goals are likely to continue to change and develop.



STRATEGIC ENHANCEMENT PRIORITIES

Digging deeper to go *above and beyond*

Building on our success, but with the commitment to drive this further, this strategy outlines five strategic enhancement priorities:

- An enhanced educational offer
- A modern, relevant education
- An inclusive and welcoming community
- Student and graduate success
- Driving transformation and capacity to improve

This document identifies key areas of work relating to each of these strategic enhancement priorities. These areas of work relate primarily to students taught and registered at the University of Hull, as this is our largest concentration of students. We'll roll out these strategic enhancement priorities across our other provision, taking account of the different needs and aspirations of students, contexts of study, and partnership arrangements. A delivery plan will identify actions that will be taken forward relating to these priorities.

An enhanced educational offer

Taking higher education higher

Our first strategic objective is to develop a broad and sustainable portfolio of courses that meet the needs, preferences, and aspirations of our students and potential students, employers, civic and industry partners.

As a university, we deliver courses across more than 30 subject areas, through programmes at foundation, undergraduate and postgraduate levels. We've diversified the forms and formats of delivery, with courses taught at our Hull campus, London Study Centre, Hull Online, through workplace apprenticeships, and at partner colleges in the UK and overseas. Our Strategic Portfolio Board drives our Student Growth Plan and associated strategies to ensure we maximise the opportunities to develop our taught course portfolio to extend access to excellent educational opportunities.

We will:

- Work with schools, colleges and other partners to map and develop new routes for progression to higher education that proactively address the needs of our community and region. This includes exploring innovations relating to the qualifications we offer, location of study, and intensity and format of delivery. We'll actively explore the opportunities arising from the roll out of the Lifelong Learning Entitlement to develop and provide greater access to educational opportunities.
- Develop the national and global reach of our offer to extend opportunities beyond our region. We're proud of our world-class research and educational offer and our commitment to shaping a fairer, brighter, better future for all. We currently welcome students from around 100 countries to our University. We recognise the benefits to all our students (both UK-based and international) in studying in diverse cohorts which can enrich learning, challenge preconceptions, and build connectivity, equipping students for life and work in a global context.
- Ensure the distinctive ethos of our University is brought to life across our portfolio of courses. We pride ourselves on being innovators and thought leaders in education, in what we teach and how we teach. We're committed to ensuring all our courses express the distinctiveness of our purpose, mission and ethos, and are ambitious to become the first choice for an ever-growing number of students.

A modern and relevant education

Developing the graduate of the future

Our second strategic objective is to ensure every student is actively engaged in a learning process that's both supportive and challenging, and equips them with the knowledge and skills for living and working in the 21st century.

In doing so, we continue to build on the progress we've made in building courses that develop a student's competencies and capabilities. We'll continue to design, build and deliver courses that are based on an inclusive and scaffolded curriculum, ensuring students are supported, challenged and inspired in their learning. We'll continue to focus on developing our courses to ensure they meet the needs of society (globally, nationally, and regionally) and engage students in addressing key global challenges through engagement with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. We recognise that in a fast-changing world, *what* students learn and *how* they learn it should never stand still, and we'll continue to enhance the delivery and content of our courses.

We will:

- Expand the opportunities for students to engage in relevant experiential learning which enrich their academic and personal development. While many of our courses offer such opportunities, we're committed to ensuring all students can engage in activities which bring learning to life and build real-world experience, such as community-based projects, placements, interprofessional and interdisciplinary live-briefs and simulations, as elements within their course.
- Align all our courses to at least one of our research institutes, school research themes and/or an industry or clinical partnership ensuring the relevancy of learning. As a research-intensive university, we're at the forefront of creating new knowledge that transforms how we understand and interact with the world around us. Plus, through our engagement with public sector, commercial and civic organisations, our staff and students engage with people at the cutting-edge of practice. We'll ensure the benefits of this work feed into the curriculum and teaching across all our courses.
- Ensure all our courses teach students how to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) productively and ethically in the context of their subject. We recognise that this is a fast-developing area of technology which is already having significant impact on the economy and in society. Employers are looking to universities for intellectual leadership and to our graduates for the skills to navigate the risks and opportunities presented by AI.



An inclusive and welcoming community

A friendly community to discover their *true potential*

Our third strategic priority is to ensure every student feels part of our learning community and is supported to grow and flourish as an individual, in an environment that nurtures personal growth, agency, and achievement.

Since our founding, our University has always been at the forefront of widening access to high quality higher education, welcoming students from both home and overseas to be part of our community of learning. Across and beyond our region, we'll continue to work with a range of partners to open new pathways of opportunity and ensure that, while students are at university, they experience inclusive learning environments that respect and value the diversity of their aspirations and experience.

We will:

- Review our approach to personal supervision and tutoring to ensure it's tailored to the evolving needs of current and future cohorts of students, and supports them to engage in their learning and succeed. We recognise that a one-size-fits-all approach doesn't ensure we consistently meet the needs of all groups of students. We'll develop and implement a more adaptable approach that focuses on providing appropriate academic advice and guidance to all students, as well as additional support to those experiencing more complex and challenging circumstances.
- Deliver the intervention strategies set out in our Access and Participation Plan (APP). In 2024/25, we finalised an APP which will start in September 2025 and is designed to address key gaps in student outcomes. This sets out a range of intervention strategies designed to enhance knowledge and skills, information and guidance, academic support, personal support and wider student experience, mental health, and addressing the cost pressures faced by our students.
- Further develop student life and wellbeing. We want our students to flourish and enjoy their time at university. We'll review our student-facing policies and processes to ensure they're as clear and simple as possible. We'll work with our Students' Union to extend the opportunities for all our students to engage in activities that build a happy and healthy community of learners.



Student and graduate success

Achieving their full potential is just the start

Our fourth strategic priority is to increase the levels of continuation, completion, and progression to graduate outcomes, ensuring our students graduate from their studies with the knowledge and skills they need to make a difference in the world, both in their working lives and as active and engaged citizens.



We've pioneered a competency-based approach to education focused on developing what students can do, how they can create and apply new knowledge, and acquire the high value skills that employers are looking for. Our courses are designed to ensure all students develop competencies that relate to self-awareness, disciplinary and professional experience, and knowledge management, which map to our graduate attributes of critical and independent thinking, leadership and collaboration, digital literacy and knowledge management, communication, and self-management.

We will:

- Identify and address barriers to continuation ensuring we deliver on our commitment to transforming the lives of our students. We recognise that the 'first-year' academic experience at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels is as a key point of transition and orientation to an unfamiliar environment. We'll work to better understand the obstacles experienced by different groups, such as first-generation students, commuter students, and international students, and work to address these.
- Further enhance our assessment strategies and practices to ensure these provide students with the best possible opportunities to develop, demonstrate and articulate their learning. It also includes further developing our use of authentic assessments, which require students to apply their knowledge and skills in real-world contexts, and further aligning our assessment to our competence-based approach.
- Develop how we support students to successfully navigate the opportunities beyond the university and get the most from their studies. This includes work to further embed career development support in our courses, improve signposting to specialist support services, further develop support for entrepreneurialism, and enhance mentoring and other engagement opportunities for students with our alumni and external partners.

Driving transformation and capacity to improve

We're driven by an unwavering desire for progress

Our fifth strategic priority is focused on enablement, to ensure we can drive educational transformation, enhance our capacity to continuously improve, delivering this strategy in a dynamic environment of challenge and change.



The actions to achieve this objective relate to our people and our processes. At the core of these and the delivery of this entire strategy, is the need for us to be more inclusive, agile, proactive, and outcomes orientated. Three cross-cutting themes are core to the successful implementation of this strategy:

- Work with our students as partners. We value the insight our students have as key participants and beneficiaries in our educational community. We'll work with our students to develop the implementation of our strategy to ensure it meets their needs and delivers on their aspirations.
- Enhance collaborative working. We recognise the vital contribution all colleagues make to ensuring we consistently deliver outstanding educational experiences and outcomes to all our students. To achieve this plan, everyone needs to work together and play their part in delivering our ambitious change agenda to enhance and grow our educational offer.
- Ensure effective and efficient practice. For example, as a University, we've made significant investments to provide access to high-quality physical and digital resources that enrich the learning of our students. These include well-equipped classrooms, laboratories, workshops, simulation suites, library and study spaces, our virtual learning environment, and specialist software and equipment to support our students' learning. In the current financial climate, with limited opportunities for new investment, we will work to ensure we make the best use of our existing resources to ensure they deliver maximum value for our students.

Our people make the *difference*

Our Academic and Professional Services staff and their expertise are the foundation of our University and the education we provide.

Our continuing professional development (CPD) ensures that, as colleagues progress throughout their careers, we have the right support in place for them to grow and develop in their role and to ensure they remain at the forefront of practices. We recognise, celebrate, and reward their achievement through clear and well-understood career progression and promotion pathways relating to excellence in teaching and scholarship delivered via the revised Academic Careers Framework.

We will:

- Develop CPD to support the implementation of this strategy. We need to ensure academic and professional service colleagues are equipped with the right skills across the University to meet new and emerging challenges, such as developments in artificial intelligence.
- Improve support for Programme Directors. We recognise the key role of academic leaders across the University in ensuring we consistently deliver excellent experiences and outcomes for our students at course level, drawing on their expertise, understanding of their subject context, and their engagement with communities of students. We'll build the community of colleagues engaged in course leadership, providing them with tailored support and the opportunity to contribute to the development of educational policy and academic regulations.
- Enhance support for scholarship of teaching and learning. We'll support collaboration and networking opportunities for academics with a teaching and scholarship focus and those engaged in pedagogic research to support innovations in teaching, learning and assessment, and ensure their impact on education and outcomes.



It takes *hard work* to make easy gains

Our Academic and Professional Services staff are committed to the continuous improvement of our courses and students' experiences and outcomes.

We recognise that, since the previous strategy was launched, there have been significant developments in sector quality enhancement practice and regulation. These include a greater focus on the timely analysis of data and the expectation that this informs educational delivery.

We will:

- Enhance our approach to driving course improvement. We'll further develop our course continuous enhancement and monitoring systems to ensure we have efficient and effective, data-driven and risk-based quality enhancement processes in place to drive improvements in student experience and outcomes.
- Review our Codes of Practice, Academic Regulations and policies. We'll ensure they're streamlined, fit for purpose and not unduly burdensome for colleagues or students. This includes reviewing the ongoing requirements relating to Transforming Programmes. We've now completed a full cycle of implementation and it's timely to review the implementation going forward to ensure its principles support course development and enhancement on an ongoing basis.
- Enhance our access to and use of data. We'll focus on the development and easy accessibility of data to support Programme Directors and course teams to facilitate them to better monitor, evaluate and enhance the delivery of courses in real time.



We didn't come this far by holding back

We'll primarily measure the success of this strategy through the University-level KPIs relating to:

- KPI 1: Continuation
- KPI 2: Student Experience
- KPI 3: Graduate Outcomes
- KPI 7: Degree Awarding Gaps

The data that feeds into these KPIs provides key insights into the educational experiences and outcomes of our students and is aligned to key external regulatory expectations and commitments.

The successful delivery of the Education Strategy will also have a positive impact on:

- KPI 6: Civic Impact
- KPI 9: League Table Ranking
- KPI 10: UG and PGT student population
- KPI 11: People satisfaction

The University Education Committee will:

- Approve and monitor annual delivery plans to action this strategy.
- Identify further indicators that we'll monitor to ensure we're on-track to achieve these outcomes and to cover groups of students who fall outside the definition of these indicators.



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