



The School Of Education.

Our School Our Future Our Plan

Introduction from Head of School

This strategic plan reflects our shared goals and ambitions from 2017-2022. We aim to sustain a positive reputation as an outstanding School of Education for our teaching and research, and to sustain our strengths and identity.

Our ambitions are to design and offer inspirational and research-led teaching and learning, and engage in innovative research, encompassing global trends, challenges and ideas. Our approach to education is critical, innovative and inclusive, with a focus on social justice and equity, as reflected in our strategic priorities.

Our strategy links closely to the University's Strategy, and has been developed collaboratively to reflect the contribution of Academic and Professional Service colleagues to achieving our ambitions.

Professor Elizabeth Wood
Head of School

Our School: Values and Principles

We have a collegial working environment, which involves sharing responsibilities and fostering positive relationships across all areas of our work. We aim to reflect and learn from the past, and plan collectively to achieve our aspirations. We support all colleagues in their professional development and enable them to contribute towards shared aspirations for the School's growth and success.

Our School encourages creativity and innovation in research and teaching, and celebrates diversities. We believe in being courageous in our research, and in research-led teaching, in ways that provoke critique, influence people and impact upon communities, policy makers and society. We share our work within and beyond the University, as well as learning from our many partner organisations and students, reflecting our local, national and global

communities. Through our research and teaching we aim to explore how the local and the global are reconfigured through technological and geo-political developments, and their respective consequences (positive and negative) for childhood, youth, education, upbringing and on/off-line community lives. We focus specifically on the perspectives of those who are 'left behind', or disadvantaged by actions and consequences in education policy, provision and practice.

We are proud to be international, in both our composition and our outlook. Through our research and teaching we critically examine the role of education in promoting fairness, inclusion and social justice for all. We reflect these commitments in our ethical, theoretical and methodological approaches, understanding knowledge as created, shared and distributed across communities, people, places and time.

Our values and principles will be implemented through this action plan in all areas of the School's life.

The School's strategic priorities

Our Education and Student Experience

As a School of Education, our collective strengths in learning and teaching enable students to develop personally, intellectually and professionally. We offer a high-quality education which equips students for their future, with teaching that is critical, reflective and research-led. Our collective and collegial approach is grounded in constructive dialogue with one another as professionals and we adopt a principled approach to education, empowering students to be agents of change.

Collectively we will:

1. Recruit and retain high-quality students across our programmes, enabling individual progression and development to ensure students are able to pursue their life and career choices, and develop the attributes of at Sheffield Graduate.
2. Provide new routes to higher education, to widen access across social and geographical groups, and enhance student diversity, promoting international mobility and online engagement on a global scale.
3. Work creatively with students as responsible partners, by empowering them to shape and navigate the learning environment, fostering communities of learning where students can support and learn from each other as well as from staff.
4. Innovate in internationalisation, creating the School as a global gateway for students to interact and learn from and with each other, and promoting engagement with disenfranchised communities across local, national and global contexts.

5. Adopt a critical, decolonising approach to curriculum design, learning and teaching, so that the diversity of our experiences can be explored and shared.
6. Build upon our innovative use of digital technologies, to enhance working in flexible, efficient, and student-centred ways that support students' learning and professional development, interaction and learner engagement, based on sound pedagogical principles and our professional experiences.
7. Provide outstanding research-led and reflective teaching, promoting the University's outward-facing ethos to our work and putting our research into practice to support students' development, knowledge and understanding.
8. Strengthen our programme-level approach so that students have the opportunity to experience a coherent, progressive, and challenging curriculum across all our programmes.
9. Provide targeted support for students' needs in language, mental health, and well-being.

Our Research and its Impact

Our research culture places impact at its heart, and we demonstrate excellence in our research and its impact on many different communities and settings, locally, nationally and globally. We value our interdisciplinary approaches and international collaborations across all areas of our research, and play an active role in a number of interdisciplinary research centres across the University to enhance our research culture. Our doctoral and post-doctoral researchers are integral to our research culture, and we support our students and staff in their personal and intellectual development.

Collectively we will:

1. Build upon our REF 2014 success to produce world-leading publications, and research that has wide-reaching impact.
2. Consolidate the reach and impact of our activities, working collaboratively to develop our critical scholarship within our theoretical, methodological and political perspectives.
3. Support the development of our researchers through interdisciplinary collaborations and best practice dissemination, with particular focus on Early Career Researchers.
4. Support research through effective mentoring, including reviewing publications and funding applications.
5. Develop and promote opportunities for engaging in interdisciplinary research within and beyond The University of Sheffield, leading and contributing to interdisciplinary research centres and networks..
6. Respond proactively to key policy levers and changes across all stages and aspects of education, influencing policy direction and working with Local Authorities on impact.

Our Strategic Partners

We have a range of established and productive partnerships with communities and organisations in local and global contexts that reflect our research and teaching, ranging from educational and social services, NGOs, policy-makers and practitioners. We work in collaboration with city/region schools in Initial Teacher Training, Continuing Professional Development and Educational Psychology, and with Local Authorities on strategic priorities.

Collectively we will:

1. Develop research with our strategic partners that prioritises ethical and empowering methods and approaches, and recognises culturally diverse and distributed ways of knowing.
2. Promote engagement with disenfranchised and marginalised communities on a local, national and global scale in diverse social and education contexts.
3. Support research that engages with community partners to sustain co-production, public engagement, and impact, and works with the strategic priorities of communities and organisations.
4. Engage in critical research which links to local, national and global communities and generates research applications, funding, public engagement and impact.
5. Reflect the priorities of the Sheffield city region relating to education and young people in our activities.
6. Respond to strategic priorities in mental health and well-being in schools and communities.
7. Use a stakeholder-themed approach to impact and public engagement led by research centres that builds on existing close working relationships with non-university partners.

Our Place: Locally and Globally and Our Public Responsibility

Our research and teaching encompass local, national and global perspectives and communities as we engage with international policy drivers, their impact on education systems, provision and practice, and the experiences of young people. Our public responsibility is reflected in the critical and reflexive approaches we adopt in our teaching and research, and our commitment to ethically responsible and co-produced research with diverse communities.

Collectively we will:

1. Work closely with our partner schools and local government organisations to address city/region education priorities and raise attainment, through quality teacher placements and supply, and strategic CPD/research partnerships.
2. Respond in innovative ways to policy changes and funding opportunities in initial and continuing teacher development (SCITTs, Apprenticeships, new Primary PGDE).

3. Identify and engage with sources of funding to support strategic research and teaching links with partners, and appoint staff who are able to lead changes in line with our principles and values.
4. Focus on Opportunity Areas to broaden horizons and raise the aspirations of young people.
5. Engage with international strategic partners on new programmes, research and global challenges.
6. Further our international focus through the continued internationalisation of our curriculum and portfolio.

The Challenge of Resources

Following a period of restructuring in 2015-16, we are now in a phase of growth and development, based on positive recruitment and increased income and a 5-10 year plan for succession planning, building on existing research strengths, and developing new areas for research and teaching. We continue to monitor the wider external context in HE, as well as the specific contexts relating to accreditation of our professional development programmes. We work productively with the regulatory standards and inspection requirements of the DEd Child Psychology, MSc and PGDE, which place specific demands on staff time and expertise.

Collectively we will:

1. Ensure that our governance is responsive to internal and external changes and that we are alert to threats and opportunities.
2. Work collaboratively across professional service, academic and teaching staff to respond to University-level changes, develop effective systems and structures, and support the quality of student experience across all our programmes.
3. Utilise staff development opportunities to ensure effective and collaborative approaches that meet our ambitions and the Faculty strategy.
4. Influence the development of high quality accommodation for the School as part of the Faculty Estates Strategy, ensuring that School space is of a high standard and fit for purpose.

The Power of People

We aim to attract ambitious and creative staff who will lead change and innovation in research, teaching and professional services in response to our aspirations, values and principles, as well as to external drivers. We aim to sustain a collegial and cohesive approach to developing and realising our ambitions, that reflects the talent and capabilities of our staff and students.

Collectively we will:

1. Enhance staff development opportunities, ensuring that good practices in curriculum design, pedagogy and assessment practices are shared across the School and inform programme development.
2. Support career development and promotion to enable all colleagues to develop and fulfil their ambitions and potential.
3. Involve staff in the development of our strategic ambitions, and ensure plans are communicated on a regular basis, enabling feedback and participation.
4. Utilise feedback from our student body, examiners and other external organisations and stakeholders to inform programme development and improve our School practices.
5. Ensure that the health and wellbeing of all our staff is central to our activity.

Implementation and Review

This document sets out our ambitious strategy and the role of our staff in securing high quality provision in all areas of our work. We will reflect on the efficacy of this strategy and review our progress on an annual basis, within the following committees: Learning and Teaching, Research and REF, School Executive. As we evaluate and review our priorities, we will continue to work with our partners and stakeholders to maintain our position as a leading School of Education in learning and teaching, and research.

Date, January 2018