



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

Vision Green Paper.

This document sets out a proposed vision for the University of Sheffield for discussion with staff and students. Staff and students will be able to provide feedback on the paper in person and online throughout autumn 2019.

A vision for the University of Sheffield.

At the heart of the University's mission lies the ambition to make a significant positive contribution to society through world-class research, innovation and education. Our research and innovation aim to advance knowledge and understanding, and help solve some of the world's most pressing problems. Our education focuses on the current and future needs and interests of our students. We aim to attract and foster a diverse community of the best students from all over the world, and through outstanding research-led teaching equip them with the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to succeed.

The University of Sheffield is an organisation guided by strong values. We are ambitious and strive to be the best we can be. We believe in the value of working collegially and in partnership with others. We carry out all our activities with integrity and according to strong ethical and moral principles. We have a strong sense of social responsibility and we aim to ensure that our activities are sustainable. We are a global university with strong roots in Sheffield, and we are proud to build an inclusive, tolerant and diverse community.

We propose a vision for the future of the University in which we deliver even better research, innovation and education, and do so in a way that reflects and respects the values and the culture of the University. The University can become truly distinctive in how it combines being a confident, internationally leading, globally engaged research university with an approach that celebrates a diverse and inclusive community with a common purpose, in which every member of staff and every student has a sense of belonging and participation.

Our strategic priorities.

World-leading research and innovation

We will carry out world-leading research and innovation with a strong focus on excellence and impact. We will help solve some of the world's most pressing social, economic and health challenges and will deliver pioneering real-world solutions that make a difference to people's lives. We will attract the very best researchers and offer them an innovative and intellectual environment in which they can thrive.

What we will do:

- Provide support for all researchers to achieve high-quality research outputs and monitor and promote research impact across all research areas.
 - Support the continued development of the first four Flagship Research Institutes, identifying four additional flagship institutes.
 - Review the Research Centres in the University, with the intention to focus more clearly on a smaller number of key interdisciplinary themes, alongside research excellence at the department level.
 - Continue to grow our portfolio of research grants, with growth in income in all faculties, with the aim of ensuring we have the appropriate level of funding across the portfolio to achieve true research excellence.
 - Use the new Concordat on Research Integrity to review and, where appropriate, improve our research integrity processes.
- Provide essential support and development of postgraduate research students through a hub and spoke model. Improve supervisor training and better understand the non-academic needs of the PGR student community to enhance the services that we provide.
 - Implement the Concordat for Research Staff by 2021, with a focus on ensuring that all research staff have appropriate opportunities for career development and receive careers advice. Seek to increase the research support for new academic staff and aim to increase the number of prestigious early-career fellowships held at Sheffield.
 - Grow income from, and collaboration with, industry. Establish a University-wide flexible knowledge-exchange support system, ensuring that we have clear access points, engagement mechanisms and policies developed to suit the needs of a wide range of beneficiaries.
 - Renew our focus on commercial exploitation of University IP, in contribution to our impact aims. Align our research commercialisation approach to the city region agenda where appropriate and take advantage of local and national business-building initiatives.
 - Work with businesses to improve productivity of the Sheffield City Region; the Health and Care Sector to improve delivery and health outcomes for the region's population; and the education sector to raise skills levels in support of business growth.
 - Develop a programme of enhancement for our major research facilities and seek funding for new facilities in all faculties.

Outstanding education

We aim to attract a diverse community of outstanding students, and through the delivery of the very best research-led teaching equip them with the necessary confidence, skills, knowledge and opportunities to succeed beyond their time at University. Our programmes will be developed using a Programme Level Approach (PLA) and they will be strongly aligned to the future needs of students and employers. Our inclusive curriculum will provide equal opportunities for all to succeed. Our students will become highly employable and confident graduates, standing out as global citizens guided by strong values, ethics and standards.

What we will do:

- Shape and deliver our curricula and programmes using a Programme Level Approach (PLA), which aims to give students more opportunities to develop the deep knowledge, broad skills, and range of attributes they need to become assured and considered graduates.
- Develop a University-wide programme for the development of our students' generic skills, such as critical thinking, communication and collaboration, to be integrated with departmental and faculty-level provision through a PLA approach.
- Support all departments in the further development of an inclusive curriculum, which fosters a sense of belonging for all students and creates equal opportunities for all to succeed.
- Through Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), equip our students with the knowledge, skills, values and attributes needed to work and live in a way that will bring about solutions to the environmental, economic and social challenges that we face.
- Articulate how our teaching benefits from our strengths in research. Promote best practice in research-led and inquiry-based learning, embedded effectively through PLA.
- Promote Engaged Learning, which combines academic rigour and disciplinary knowledge with opportunities for students to learn with and from external partners. Support student engagement with businesses and communities outside the University that enhances employability and personal development.
- Give all students the opportunity to develop skills that make them culturally agile, internationally employable, and ready to play a part as global citizens.
- Clarify the role in our institutional portfolio of non-traditional programmes, such as apprenticeships, distance programmes, and programmes that lead to micro-credentials. Create the structures and processes necessary for the effective and efficient delivery of such programmes.
- Regularly review and develop programmes to ensure we are meeting student need and demand. Seek and respond to student feedback about our teaching and, where appropriate, involve employers and other stakeholders in these reviews.
- Maintain the highest entry requirements and standards to attract the very best students, whilst ensuring we remain sensitive to individual students' circumstances when making offers.
- Use the best available technology to help develop and improve our teaching and support student progression.

Strong partnerships and productive engagement

Our external engagement work brings significant economic, societal, health and environmental benefits. We are an anchor institution for the Sheffield City Region and through our high-quality research, innovation and education we will be a catalyst for its social, cultural and economic development. We have a global outlook and will continue to expand and diversify our reach across the world, exploring new opportunities and regions for student recruitment and partnership activity. We take full responsibility for the impact of our activities on the environment and have set ourselves ambitious targets backed by concrete action plans to become one of the most sustainable universities in the country.

What we will do:

- Working in partnership with key organisations, play an important role in the development of the city and the region. Through our research and other activities, help attract partners and businesses to Sheffield and the region.
- Continue to work in close partnership with our Students' Union to provide the highest possible quality education and student experience.
- Geographically diversify our international activities, including student recruitment and partnerships, by exploring new opportunities in carefully selected countries and regions.

- Seek to develop a small number of key strategic partnerships with research intensive universities, with the aim of improving the excellence and impact of our research and, where appropriate, our education. Play an active part in the Worldwide Universities Network (WUN). Seek to develop more strategic partnerships with major companies and other organisations.
- Develop close partnerships with selected EU universities and organisations to support our continued engagement with the EU post-Brexit.
- Strengthen our links with international alumni, utilising their knowledge, expertise and advocacy for the benefit of our education, research and partnerships.
- Support activities that help raise aspirations to higher education among potential students from all backgrounds.
- Continue to improve our sustainability and accelerate the development and implementation of an ambitious sustainability strategy.

To be One University

Our people are the key to our success. We aim to attract a diverse community of staff and students from a broad range of backgrounds, demographics and cultures, and create an inclusive environment in which everyone can succeed and flourish. We want to foster a culture in which everyone is united around our shared vision, values and common purpose, and in which individuals are active participants and stakeholders in the success of the University.

What we will do:

- Create a more diverse and inclusive staff and student community, aiming to eradicate the attainment gap between Black, Asian and Other Minority Ethnic (BAME) and white students and eliminating the gender career gap.
- Provide a framework that allows faculties and departments to flexibly create their own plans based on and aligned to the overall vision and strategy.
- Encourage a vibrant entrepreneurial culture across the University, supporting local initiative and creating resources, space and processes to enable bottom-up innovation. Ensure that the right policies and practices are in place to encourage and reward enterprising behaviour and innovation activity.
- Ensure we have the right structures, processes and services in place to enable collaborative working across the University.
- Utilise our academic expertise to help shape our own organisation's development and create an environment where the sharing of knowledge and good practice is the norm.
- Ensure that decision making is transparent and collegial. Establish effective two-way mechanisms to enable our staff and students to be active and knowledgeable participants and advocates of our organisation.
- Be mindful of the wellbeing of our students and staff. Continually review our student support provision and invest in areas where demand has not been met. Create an environment where colleagues are able to carry out their core activities without unnecessary stress and pressure.
- Provide development opportunities for our academics and professional staff, supporting all colleagues to realise their potential and achieve individual, team and University ambitions.
- Ensure that we are resilient, agile and financially sustainable. Identify opportunities for investment and development where we know it will have the greatest impact and create significant benefits to the organisation. Increase and diversify our income streams, including through philanthropy and commercial activities.