

MANCHESTER  
1824

The University of Manchester

Our people, our values

Our future

Knowledge | Wisdom | Humanity

2021-25 plan

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# Foreword

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This is the five-year plan for the *Our people, our values* theme, part of the University's strategic plan, *Our future*. It includes the initiatives we have planned in five [key areas](#) and the [measures](#) we will use to gauge their success.

The strategic plan places our people and our values at the core of everything we do. Our five-year plan focuses on transforming how colleagues across the institution work together, and in partnership with our students, alumni and external partners, to contribute to achieving our vision. It also provides context for new strategies led by the Directorates of People and Organisational Development and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

This theme's title has been carefully chosen, and its initiatives developed in response to feedback from 4,000 staff, students, stakeholders and alumni who took part in the *Our future* consultation. More than 800 colleagues also helped shape our values, which are key in influencing how we make decisions, deliver change and work in partnership as a connected community to get things done. We will encourage all colleagues to bring our shared values to life in their day-to-day work, so that they contribute to the achievement of the strategic plan's ambitious core goals of research and discovery, teaching and learning, and social responsibility.

Our staff, students and alumni are, as they always have been, the most important part of the University's future. Working together, we will ensure that Manchester continues to be a university of which our people are proud – a great place to work and study, as well as an institution where we successfully utilise new opportunities and further develop a culture of ongoing improvement with respect to all our activities and services.

The initiatives highlighted in this plan will encourage staff and students to achieve great things in a supportive and sustainable environment, with access to outstanding facilities and be part of an organisation committed to equality, diversity and wellbeing that enables everyone to thrive.



**Patrick Hackett**

Registrar, Secretary and  
Chief Operating Officer

# Purpose, vision and strategic plan

## Our purpose

To advance education, knowledge and wisdom for the good of society.

## Our vision

We will be recognised globally for the excellence of our people, research, learning and innovation, and for the benefits we bring to society and the environment.

## Our strategic plan



Read our vision and strategic plan at [www.manchester.ac.uk/strategic-plan](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/strategic-plan)

# Great people doing great things

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We will attract, engage, develop and retain the very best staff, students and alumni. We will also streamline our operations to enable our people to do what they do best while supporting the University's vision and strategic plan and freeing up time and funds to invest in our core activities.





### Attracting, developing and retaining great people

We will continue to implement an optimal talent attraction, development and retention approach to attract the best people from diverse backgrounds. Through enhanced and tailored development programmes, we will continue to train, support and nurture the talents of our staff and students in more effective ways, with digital skills, environmental sustainability awareness and empathetic leadership among the areas of focus.

We will maintain our commitments to partnerships that provide employment opportunities for our students, recognise and reward staff performance aligned to our values, and embed a new colleague talent and succession planning framework supported by leadership development programmes.

### Communicating and engaging with our staff and students

We will do more to listen to and engage with our staff and students, creating an environment where everyone has a voice, feels heard and informed, and takes collective responsibility for timely, clear, consistent and relevant communication. We will develop the digital capability to provide personalised communications, targeted messaging and two-way engagement, and promote broader visibility and engagement with leaders. Together, we will explore new and empathetic ways to act upon colleague and student voices.

### Transforming our services and activities

To improve the delivery of our core goals, we will rethink the way we undertake our Professional Services (PS) processes and activities. Reshaping PS is underway as a coordinated, University-wide, multi-year transformation programme (having focused initially on the activities within the Student Experience and IT Modernisation programmes) to reconsider how we do things.

We will look afresh at what we could stop doing, do less of, or do differently, to become more efficient while improving quality. We will also take this approach as we seek not only to transform services in the long term, but also to address the operational issues that we are experiencing as we emerge from the pandemic. Wherever possible, we will reinvest savings in our core goals.

## A more agile organisation

We will simplify our decision-making processes, policies and procedures to ensure they are fit for purpose and improve our responsiveness. We will publish guidance to ensure that all leaders are clear on what is within their control without compromising proportionate, robust governance. We will also keep our committee structures under review, seeking new approaches where procedures or policies create unintended consequences.

## Engaging our alumni, friends and supporter communities

We will work in partnership with our distinctive network of alumni and donors throughout their lives, providing them with access to lifelong and flexible learning opportunities, inspiring them to engage with our world-class research, and unleashing the impact of their advocacy and support. Through innovative programmes and improved digital systems, we will create even more opportunities for them to be part of and enhance our University community.

Our history is punctuated by the leadership and generosity of philanthropists and donors. We will work with our supporters so that each generation can build the next phase of success for those that follow. We will mark our bicentenary in 2024 by celebrating our heritage and launching a multi-year fundraising and engagement campaign that can harness the collective strength of staff, students, alumni, friends and supporters to shape our future.



# Wellbeing

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We aim to create a place to work and study where all of our people feel able to thrive and can fully achieve their professional and personal aspirations against a backdrop of continuous change. We will increase our efforts to embed the right processes, support, pathways and conditions to help our students and colleagues achieve success. We recognise that the wellbeing of our people is not only the morally right thing for us to support, but also leads to enhanced organisational performance and student outcomes.



### Managing staff workloads

We will review staff workloads and the distribution of work; develop new, consistent approaches to workload management; and encourage colleagues to take an active role in shaping this. We will ensure that colleagues are appropriately skilled and supported in their role(s), playing to colleagues' strengths and recognising personal circumstances.

There will be no expectation that a member of staff must contribute equally to all of our core goals and themes. We will ensure the overall scale and pace of change is appropriately managed and supported to reduce unnecessary demands. We will continue to encourage smarter working, and our leaders and managers will encourage all colleagues to consider: where can we free up time to dedicate to our core goals? What can we stop doing or rethink the way it's done?

### Raising awareness of wellbeing

We will ensure that wellbeing is at the foundation of staff and student training and engagement, supported by an innovative and leading programme of wellbeing activities and events hosted by our specialist teams (such as mental health and disability support). Every colleague will have access to regular one-to-ones with their line manager, a set of objectives and personal development plan, opportunities to work as part of a team and participate in mentoring activities.

We will equip leaders and managers with the tools they need to lead, and provide colleagues and students with the support to empower them to deliver positive outcomes. We will raise awareness of flexible and evolving hybrid working options wherever these are feasible and ensure that they meet the needs of both the University and our people.

### The Greater Manchester Mental Health Service for students

After a successful two-year pilot of the Greater Manchester Mental Health Service – a dedicated centre to support university students with mental health needs – we have, so far, committed to funding the centre for the 2023/24 academic year and intend for it to become permanent. We will also consider how the service could be extended in the future.



# Equality, diversity and inclusion

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Our students and staff will be representative of the diversity within our communities and supported by fair and progressive employment practices. We will build on our existing work to promote and embed equality, value diversity and promote inclusion, to ensure our University community continues to embrace the breadth of experience, thought, and background, and reflects the wider societies we serve.

STUDENT  
AMBASSADOR



### **A diverse workforce**

We will review our recruitment approach to ensure that we attract and appoint from a wide pool of talent and provide ongoing support. Our leaders and managers will have at least one inclusion-related annual objective. We will focus on the key messages and share data to ensure all colleagues understand their role in – and responsibility for – creating and maintaining the diversity and inclusiveness of our working and learning environment.

### **Implementing our Access Participation Plan (APP)**

We will deliver the University's APP, as a minimum, to ensure that all students with the potential to succeed have the opportunity to join the University and that under-represented groups do not experience adverse differential outcomes. We will review and rethink the support we provide – from outreach activities and admissions processes to the scale and effectiveness of our student support and bursary expenditure – to ensure all students reach their potential and achieve their goals.

### **A diverse global student community**

We will enhance the diversity of our global student community by developing and implementing an international student recruitment approach, focused on attracting a wide range of students and increasing our recruitment efforts in under-represented countries.

### **A safe place to work and study**

Characterised by fairness, dignity and respect, we will have an environment with zero tolerance for discrimination, bullying, gender-based violence and harassment. We will build on our Speak Up: Stand Up campaign to empower staff and students to challenge inappropriate or threatening behaviour through our active bystander training (mandatory for staff and offered to students) and will have robust processes to report concerns. We will also integrate an inclusive leadership framework into our leadership development programmes.

### **An environment that promotes equality**

We will identify, develop and implement positive action to address the imbalance of opportunity or disadvantage faced in the workplace and aim to close pay and attainment gaps. We will support staff from under-represented groups to develop their careers, including applying for promotion and through mentoring, coaching or sponsorship schemes.

### **Inclusive approach to education and research**

We will embed equality, diversity, and inclusion in our teaching and learning. We will build and sustain an inclusive research environment and culture.

# Environment and facilities to support our people

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We will seek to create an outstanding and sustainable working and learning environment that supports our staff and students in achieving their potential. With that in mind, we must balance the expectations of our people, a maturing campus estate, the possibilities created by technology, the cost of change, and our obligations to respond to the climate emergency in a coherent long-term plan.





## The largest single-site for engineering and materials in the UK

The completion of our new engineering and materials facility offers a transformative opportunity for the delivery of education, research and professional services. This vibrant, interdisciplinary environment creates a chance to rethink how we support our students, deliver services to our people, undertake research, work and collaborate. The facility will have sector-leading spaces for students, creating a truly 'learn anywhere, anytime environment' and collaborative workspace, bringing the University together as one connected campus.

## Living, working and learning in a digital world

We will utilise strategic technology to support our core mission, enabled through our technology programmes that educate and support our people with the tools to increase the automation and digitisation of our workplace. Champions and innovators across our University will drive local and federated delivery of digital capability, with central teams providing the support to make this happen strategically.

### Delivering our carbon commitments

We support Manchester's goal to be a zero-carbon city by 2038. Over the long term, reducing our carbon emissions will demand behavioural and policy change, sustainability programmes, and investment in buildings and technology. We will develop a costed plan, and a long-term energy efficiency programme to include extending the use of renewable energy. We will engage our people to identify and implement new ways to achieve zero carbon.

### Rethinking our approach to timetabling

We will develop a timetabling approach with colleagues and students that aims to optimise the student and staff experience, blended learning opportunities, and utilises our teaching estate, to release capacity and support our decarbonisation ambitions. We will do this via a University-wide project that spans student voice, policy and procedure, staff, technology and estates considerations.

### A new estates strategy

As demands on our estate evolve, we will consult widely to prepare a new priorities and an estates strategy for the next ten years. The delivery of the strategy will be dependent on funding.

### A library redefined

As part of our estates strategy, we will propose plans to either refurbish or replace our main library so that it can provide an outstanding environment, meeting the needs of staff and a large, diverse student body at our research-intensive institution. We will build on practices currently delivered in the Alan Gilbert Learning Commons and expand a range of scholarly, student support and wellbeing services to enhance the experience for all.



# Our values

# CAREERS

We will bring our values – knowledge, wisdom, humanity, academic freedom, courage and pioneering spirit – to life across our University as we work together to deliver *Our future*. We will embed our values across the employee experience, including developing a values-led approach to our employer brand, staff recruitment, reward and recognition, and wellbeing. Our values have already been demonstrated through recent achievements that have seen Manchester named as one of the world's leading universities for action on sustainable development (*Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings*), the creation of ID Manchester (Europe's most ambitious innovation district) and our approach to hybrid working in Professional Services, which will deliver significant mutual benefits for colleagues and our University.



# Key measures of success

## Board scorecard metrics

### Equality, diversity, inclusion

Year-on-year increases in the diversity of our staff, so that we better represent our local and regional profile, with a particular focus on ethnicity, gender and disability.

### Wellbeing

Improvement in surveyed colleague perceptions of health, wellbeing and workload.

### Colleague satisfaction

85% of our people will say the University is a good place to work.

### Managing strategic change

To deliver the agreed financial benefits of the strategic change portfolio, including an additional £20 million contribution from Professional Services by 2025/26 to enable investment in our core activities.

### Decarbonising

Reduce direct carbon emissions from owned or controlled sources (scope one) and indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy (scope two) at a long-term average of 13% per annum.

### Space utilisation

Improving the utilisation of space across the University's estate.

### International student diversity

Enhancing the diversity of our international student community.

### Financial sustainability

We will generate an operating cash surplus of 10% of revenue before strategic expenditure.

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