



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

2015-2020

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INTRODUCTION

This is the De Montfort University Strategic Framework for 2015–20.

This framework has been developed and refined through discussion and engagement with our whole university. It was approved by our board of governors in July 2015. As vice-chancellor, I commend its clarity and its confidence. This framework is a statement of intent. It articulates what we want from the next five years and how we will achieve it. It will underpin everything we do from today.

In this document, we identify intelligent new connections between our areas of strength that will extend our scope and influence. Our attuned international instinct will benefit the home city that we champion, as we attract the world's thinkers and creators to Leicester.

Talents cultivated at DMU will be free to realise here their own visions for innovation and enterprise, bringing benefits to our wider society. By building bonds between our staff, students, graduates and the city, we will offer successful education, care, health and civic projects. In each, we will be a core partner. Partnerships of varying scales, all important, will define the next five years.

Our proud reputation for transforming the lives of students from diverse backgrounds will evolve so that individuals receive the learning and experience they demand. At the same time, our academic community will have the freedom to make purposeful challenges to convention.

Only by ensuring that we have a genuinely interdisciplinary curriculum, a truly inclusive learning environment, and that we provide real flexibility around study, volunteering and placements, will we continue to lead. Strengthened by research relevant to real lives, we will become the definition of an influential, global, 21st-century institution.

We can be confident in looking ahead because we do so from a position of strength, built on shared success. To prosper further, we must bring these visions and values to bear in everything we do, every day.

Our governors, the Executive Board and I look forward to working with you all in realising this strategic framework for De Montfort University.



Professor Dominic Shellard
Vice-Chancellor

**BY 2020, OUR UNSURPASSED
COMMITMENT TO THE**

PUBLIC GOOD

**AND TRANSFORMATIONAL
SCHOLARSHIP**

**WILL POSITION US AS THE
DEFINITION OF A
TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

GLOBAL UNIVERSITY

VISION





MISSION

WE ARE A SCHOLARLY

COMMUNITY

THAT IS COMMITTED TO THE

PUBLIC GOOD

AND UNDERPINNED BY AN UNRIVALLED ABILITY TO

**CHALLENGE
CONVENTION**

AND CREATE IMPACT

VALUES

CREATIVITY: Our strongest roots lie in being innovative and creative. By applying these principles across all that we do, we enable our staff, students and graduates to succeed in a dynamic and turbulent environment.

PROFESSIONALISM: Our stakeholders and partners recognise and value the professionalism of our staff, students and graduates.

PRIDE: Our staff, students, alumni and key stakeholders are proud of our impact and celebrate the diversity of our scholarly community.

RESPECT: We acknowledge our responsibility to cultivate sustainable working and learning environments that embody and promote equality of opportunity amongst communities, both within and outside the university.

ASPIRATION: We raise the aspirations of our students and aspire to transform the communities with which we work by making a meaningful contribution to their social and economic development.



TRANSFORM OUR STUDENTS BY DELIVERING AN INDIVIDUAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE

We will:

- Focus on teaching excellence through diverse approaches to learning, teaching and assessment that enable all students to maximise their potential
- Provide an inclusive and stimulating learning environment that recognises the value of co-creation
- Ensure students develop a broad range of skills for success in academic study, life and employment
- Provide individualised learning and support to students through integrated and accessible services and networks

We have a reputation for transforming students with outstanding potential from diverse, non-traditional backgrounds into successful graduates able to pursue their chosen paths after graduation.

Over the next five years we will focus on an approach to learning, teaching and the student experience that sees every student supported individually. Students will be recognised as co-creators of knowledge within our scholarly community. It will be an approach that empowers our academics to challenge current conventions around learning, teaching and assessment, allowing them to ensure each student is able to maximise their potential. Supporting a wide range of accessible co-curricular activities will also be a crucial part of this approach and will be seen as complementary to students' learning activities.

Our learning environment will need to be genuinely inclusive to enable all students to participate in it equally. This will require the full and innovative use of learning technologies that support the co-creation of knowledge and enable students to take ownership of their learning journey.

Our curricula will need to be interdisciplinary, contemporary and relevant; we will identify the elements that make our graduates distinctive and embed these attributes into our modules and programmes.

Increased flexibility will be required as the learning patterns of our students change to incorporate placements of varying lengths and co-curricular activities, such as volunteering, that add real value to their future success. Through #DMUlocal and the accelerated development of opportunities under #DMUglobal, we will increase awareness and understanding among our students of civic responsibility and global citizenship.

We have both a moral and financial responsibility to ensure that we provide students with a first-class educational experience, that sets and responds to their expectations and enables them to access the right academic and welfare support in a timely way when required. We will provide an integrated student support system that brings together personal tutors with our academic and welfare support services. Being proactive in identifying students who might be at risk and providing relevant and bespoke support will enable them to overcome barriers to their success.

Key Performance Targets

- National Student Survey (NSS)
- Learning Gain - basket indicator combining Widening Participation, entry tariff, good honours, Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey

Key Performance Indicators

- Module level feedback/module mark combined index
- Retention/student engagement index
- Proportion of student contact time not spent in lectures

TRANSFORM





Key strategic themes

CREATE AND APPLY KNOWLEDGE THAT FURTHERS GLOBAL SOCIETAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

We will:

- **Create a dynamic and pervasive research and scholarly culture**
- **Nurture, recognise and support researchers and research leaders**
- **Increase the impact and visibility of our research**
- **Deliver enhanced value from commercialisation**

The creation and application of new knowledge sits at the heart of our mission, but the challenging external environment will need us to deliver a step change in our research capacity, leadership and capability if we are to compete effectively.

By 2020, we will establish a research culture that is dynamic and pervasive, in which staff and doctoral researchers are encouraged and motivated to undertake ambitious and rigorous research that challenges convention and redefines paradigms.

Individual Research Plans (IRPs) will form an integral part of the mechanism for doing this, as they enable us to recognise and support staff undertaking high-quality research or demonstrating the potential to do so. We will encourage and celebrate the success of our staff who achieve prestigious external scholarships or higher doctorates. Our Future Research Leaders programme will provide the basis for identifying our staff who can be developed to shape the future of their discipline at DMU and in the wider sector. We will increase the investment in our VC2020 programme to bring in new, exciting and talented early career researchers who will make a significant contribution to our research environment and dramatically increase our research capacity.

Increasing the number of doctoral researchers and improving their overall experience will be central to enhancing our research culture. By focusing on the creation of a discrete number of multi- and/or inter-disciplinary doctoral training programmes, we will be able to improve the critical mass of our highest-performing areas.

Investment in our research will be based on highly selective and competitive mechanisms that reward excellence but also support the development of areas with significant potential for future success. Impact and visibility will be two of the key measures applied for making future investments in research, and we will emphasise the relevance of our research through its application in the real world. In doing so, we will deliver greater value from enterprise and innovation, as we work in partnership with business and industry to translate our best ideas into practical benefits for the economy and wider society.

Key Performance Targets

- Market share of (a) research and (b) innovation income
- PhD student completions per academic (Full Time Equivalent)

Key Performance Indicators

- Proportion of staff with Individual Research Plans (IRPs)
- Research grant applications success rate
- Income from enterprise and innovation activities

CREATE

PROMOTE AND IMPROVE OUR CITY

We will:

- Be the partner of choice within our city
- Support the promotion of Leicester as a global city of intellectual, cultural and sporting importance
- Provide a significant contribution to the social and economic development of our city through the activities of our partners, staff, students and alumni

Rooted in Leicester's past, but with a dynamism and boldness that will help to define Leicester's future, the next five years will see us play a critical role in the transformation of our city.

Through our sector-leading and multi-award winning Square Mile initiative, we have started to establish a deep and mutually beneficial relationship with our local community and major civic institutions in our city. Building on this success, over the next five years we will rapidly expand the scope and ambition of our civic engagement through a unique partnership with the city council focused on responding to some of the critical challenges facing our city. This partnership will be one of the most extensive between a university and a local authority anywhere in the world, and will evolve as new priorities and dimensions emerge over the next few years.

In the first instance, we have jointly identified three priority areas:

- The improvement of educational achievement by providing support for literacy, science, technology and maths subjects in Leicester's schools
- The well-being of our city and its communities
- The rejuvenation of our city centre by encouraging our graduates to remain in Leicester and establish start-ups

This strand of our framework is not just about looking inward. We have a responsibility, with the city mayor, University of Leicester, University Hospitals Leicester and other major public agencies within the city, to take Leicester to the world and enhance the global, intellectual, sporting and cultural reputation of our city through our research and educational activities. By doing so, we will help the city create a virtuous circle of investment from tourism and major global organisations which will provide the social and economic capital to transform Leicester.

Key Performance Targets

- Economic and social impact of DMU on Leicester (annual report)
- Number of DMU graduates employed or self-employed in Leicester 12 months after graduating

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of #DMUlocal volunteering hours
- Educational improvement of schools working within #DMUlocal
- Number of Leicester citizens engaged with from a wellbeing perspective



PROMOTE



Key strategic themes

STRENGTHEN OUR GLOBAL REACH AND INFLUENCE

We will:

- **Develop, promote and publicise our international profile**
- **Increase recruitment and participation of international students**
- **Increase the cultural competence of our students**

Universities of the 21st century will be defined by the global connectedness and cultural competence of their staff, students, alumni and stakeholders, and their contribution to improving global societal and economic development.

Two-way student mobility designed to transform the cultural competence of our students sits at the heart of our internationalisation agenda. We will build on the early success of QAA-commended #DMUglobal and expand it to be the most accessible, extensive and flexible international experience programme of any UK university. To ensure students gain the maximum benefit from their experience, we will provide innovative language learning and cultural preparation schemes that are embedded within our academic activities. To ensure that we are able to increase the number of incoming exchange students, we will review our curricula to ensure that it is flexible enough to cater for students from across the globe and not just those whose home HE systems are closely matched to our own.

We will not be able to achieve our ambitions without expanding the range and depth of our international strategic partnerships, and forming an integrated global network of similar organisations across the globe. We will continue to develop sector-leading, multi-strand relationships with global organisations whose values closely align with

our own. By doing so, we will not only improve our international profile, but also secure significant investment that will enhance our student experience and research. We recognise that strategic partnerships will not just be measured financially, and will develop a focused portfolio of partnerships that yield a range of benefits to our students, our researchers and the university as a whole.

Our strategy to transform the cultural competence of our students means increasing substantially the number of students we have from outside the UK. Our partnerships will help to enable the step-change in the size of our global community that we seek by 2020. We will also actively develop new relationships with, and engage further with existing, European partners to increase our proportion of students from the EU.

Key Performance Targets

- Proportion of our income that is from international activities
- Proportion of our students who have had a #DMUglobal experience

Key Performance Indicators

- International student enrolments
- Number of actively engaged international alumni
- Number and value of our international strategic partnerships (annual report)

STRENGTHEN

ENHANCE OUR EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH OUR DIVERSE AND VIBRANT SCHOLARLY COMMUNITY

We will:

- Pro-actively attract and retain high-quality staff
- Manage organisational performance
- Recruit and retain students with outstanding potential from all sections of our society
- Ensure we have a richness of diversity and equality within our community

Our success by 2020 will be driven by our academic ambitions, but enabled by an intense focus on improving our efficiency and effectiveness, and developing a vibrant scholarly community whose strength is in its diversity.

18 We must be pro-active in our recruitment and retention of high-quality academic and professional services staff, working towards a reputation for being a preferred choice both for those in their early careers and high-performing established staff. We will better support staff to understand how their contributions relate to our strategic success, and will have a supportive performance culture which focuses on enabling all staff to achieve their potential. Further developing our workload models, and having efficient systems and processes, will enable us to decrease the administrative load on academic staff, thereby increasing time for academic development.

Being pro-active in recruiting and retaining students from all sections of society who will benefit from the DMU experience will remain a priority. This includes developing an even stronger postgraduate community, both to provide a pipeline to doctoral study and further enhance our graduates' employability. Widening access across all our

learning opportunities will be a core principle of our admissions policies to enable us to maintain and enhance the diversity of our student community.

To support this, we will continue the development of a physical environment that encourages an atmosphere of innovation, inspiration and community. We will further develop a culture that is based on mutual respect and understanding, as well as freedom of thought and expression. This will ensure that we value the different contributions and experiences of all who make up our community. Investment will be focused on areas that are strategically important to us and we will disinvest from areas that do not meet this criterion. We will regularly and rigorously review the performance of our schools and directorates to ensure that they are delivering their required contribution to our success.

Effective leadership is critical to our success and our leadership charter and summits will guide the attributes and behaviours we expect from all our leaders.

Key Performance Targets

- Percentage of staff positively grading the question "Overall, how happy are you working at the university?" in the staff survey
- Proportion of time our academics have for academic activities

Key Performance Indicators

- Proportion of staff completing their MyAppraisal
- Proportion of our income drawn from non-home/EU undergraduate related sources
- Diversity index comparing DMU to relevant local and national communities

ENHANCE





**De Montfort University
The Gateway
Leicester
LE1 9BH, UK**

**T: +44 (0)116 255 1551
W: dmu.ac.uk**