

# Strategic Plan 2010–2015

*Challenging individuals and organisations to excel*



# Foreword

The University of Hertfordshire has successfully positioned itself as the UK's leading business-facing University. This is a resounding testament to our vision to develop a new model of a university within the UK higher education sector. As the leading business-facing University in the UK, the University has been focused on developing new and creative approaches to learning, teaching and research with a commitment to adding value to students and employers and regional, national and international economies.

The strategic plan 2010-15 continues this momentum and builds on the success of the University of Hertfordshire. The plan has been developed through detailed engagement with our staff, our students and our external partners. It will be a tool for guiding our future development as the University continues to grow in stature as an innovative and enterprising university, challenging individuals and organisations to excel.

I am confident that the University will achieve its vision to shape the next generation of business-facing universities. The University is well placed to respond to the demanding economic climate to meet the needs of its students, business and community as a business-facing university and will continue to be seen as an exemplar within the sector.



Jo Connell  
Chairman, Board of Governors



# Context

The previous Strategic Plan (2007-12) has been successful in positioning the University of Hertfordshire (UH) as the UK's leading business-facing University. The 2010-15 Plan builds upon this success and presents a clear focus for UH as an innovative and enterprising university.

# Our Vision

We will shape the next generation of business-facing universities.

We will continue to be an exemplar in the sector and we will play a leading role in addressing the economic and social challenges facing the UK in increasingly competitive global markets.

Innovation, creativity and an enterprising mindset will be the defining characteristics of our University. We will provide flexible and transformational learning and commit to adding value to our partners and delivering positive and productive engagements with business, industry and the professions.

The University will continue to play a central role in the local and regional economy, contributing positively to its social and economic development, and we will build our international profile and global reputation.





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# Our Mission

An innovative and enterprising university, challenging individuals and organisations to excel.

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# Our Values

The following core values will inform and sustain all of our activities.

We aspire to be:

- Student-centred
- Innovative, creative and enterprising
- Committed to supporting and developing our people
- Focused on excellence and its celebration
- Dedicated to enjoyment in learning and work
- A place of integrity where the individual is respected

# Our Strategic Focus

We will deliver our Vision through a focus on five key Strategic Drivers:

- 1 Student Experience
- 2 Learning and Teaching
- 3 Employability and Entrepreneurship
- 4 Research, Innovation and Enterprise
- 5 International Engagement

The delivery of these drivers will be underpinned by our:

- 1 Academic Profile
- 2 People and Culture
- 3 Financial Strength
- 4 Infrastructure and Sustainability
- 5 Community Engagement

Each of these ten areas will be supported by a detailed strategy and action plan. A set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each area will help to define the future size, shape and profile of the University and will provide the basis for monitoring progress.



# Student Experience

Our students will be active partners in their learning through a transformational experience within a supportive educational environment.

We will be known for:

- Putting the welfare of our students and their success at the heart of what we do.
- Respecting and responding to the student voice.
- Providing a learning and social environment which is an exemplar within the sector.
- Excellent service provision through the dissemination of best practice and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of our performance.
- The strength and quality of our relationship with our students, delivered through our Student Ambassador and Student Mentor schemes, Student Representatives and our Student Communications Strategy.



*A key aspiration is to deliver an exemplary student experience, placed by our students within the top 40 of all UK universities (National Student Survey).*



*A key aspiration is that by 2015 at least 25% of our learning and teaching will be through distance learning.*

# Learning and Teaching

Flexibility will be the key characteristic of all of our provision. The University will be recognised for providing the highest quality accredited education.

We will be known for:

- High quality bespoke learning tailored to meet the specific needs of individuals and organisations.
- Staff who, as experts in their field, provide engaging and stimulating learning opportunities and who have experience of working with business, industry and the professions.
- Variety of provision beyond traditional full-time programmes of study through the broadening of study patterns and delivery modes, including remote and distance learning.
- Embracing technological developments to enhance our learning provision and support the development of our activities, including distance learning and our work with business, industry and the professions.
- Timely assessment and feedback which is meaningful and which supports learning through problem solving, creativity and innovation.



# Employability and Entrepreneurship

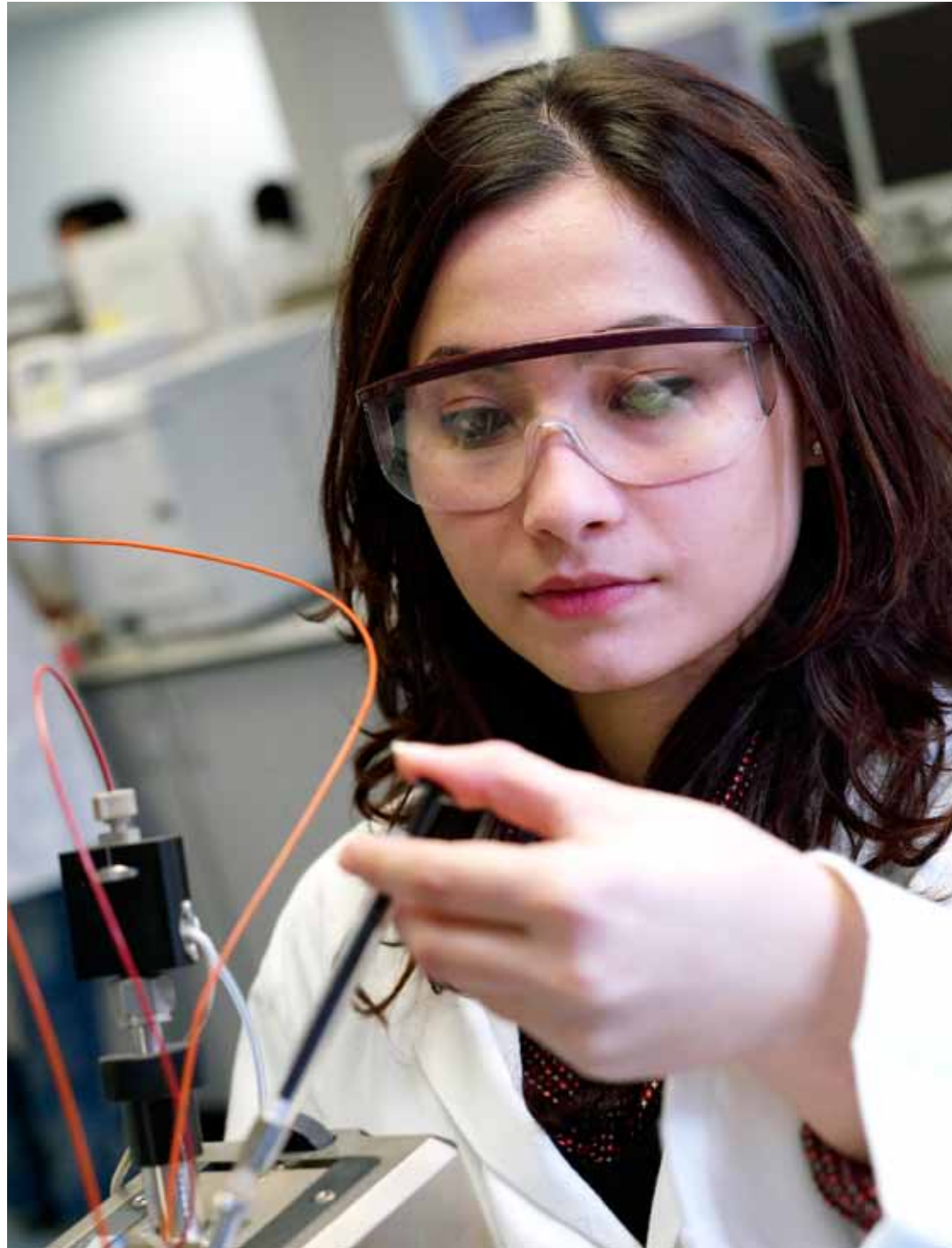
Our students will acquire the transferable skills necessary to prepare them to make an effective contribution as graduates in their chosen fields.

We will be known for:

- Providing our graduates with lifelong skills through opportunities for accredited student placements, employment on and off campus, volunteering and community based activity and opportunities to engage in enterprise development.
- Providing programmes of study which prepare students for work, lead to graduate employment and which are recognised by relevant professional organisations and bodies.
- Facilitating learning in a manner which encourages enterprise and provides our graduates with the confidence to challenge conventional thinking and drive change in the public, private and voluntary sectors.
- Maintaining an effective network for Alumni support and ensuring that the University remains as a partner throughout a lifelong learning experience.



*A key aspiration is that we will be placed in the top 40 of all universities for graduate employment overall (HESA).*



*A key aspiration is to be ranked within the top 50 of all UK universities for the quality of our research within the Research Excellence Framework and for the income from our commercial activities (including subsidiaries) to represent at least 35% of Group turnover.*

# Research Innovation and Enterprise

We will be recognised as an enterprising and business-facing university in which our research and knowledge-related activities are closely aligned to meet the key future demands of business and society.

We will be known for:

- The 'international excellence' of our research (as recognised by HEFCE through the Research Excellence Framework) in a number of selected areas.
- High quality, responsive and impactful research, consultancy and client engagement with demonstrable outputs which meet the needs of partner organisations.
- The application of our world-leading research through the development of successful knowledge-transfer partnerships.
- The development of postgraduate research through enhanced postgraduate recruitment activity.
- UH Ventures as a profitable and efficient vehicle for the provision of high quality workforce training and CPD.
- The breadth, stability and financial contribution of UH Group companies.



# International Engagement

Our international activities will advance our commitment to scholarship and learning by providing access to our educational provision for individuals and organisations around the world and by developing the global horizons of our staff and students.

We will be known for:

- Cultural diversity, with our students developed to operate as global citizens, through the internationalisation of the curriculum and the continued development of our international staff and student recruitment.
- Engagement with business and public sector organisations internationally to provide tailored research, consultancy and CPD services.
- International partnerships and joint venture delivery leading to a high profile brand.
- Placement and exchange opportunities for staff and students within our key discipline areas, through our extensive international links and global college network.



*A key aspiration is to expand the number of students studying UH degrees overseas from 2000 to 4000 student FTEs.*



# Enabling Areas of Activity

Five principal areas of activity will underpin our strategic drivers:

- 1 Academic Profile
- 2 People and Culture
- 3 Financial Strength
- 4 Infrastructure and Sustainability
- 5 Community Engagement

## Academic Profile

We will continue to be recognised for the distinctiveness of our academic portfolio across Arts, Humanities, Education, Sciences, Engineering, Creative Arts, Law, Business and Health.

We will be known for:

- The market focus of our portfolio and the range of inter-disciplinary opportunities, including our joint honours programmes.
- The efficiency and quality of our programme delivery.
- The involvement of business, industry, the professions, students and alumni in the development of all of our programmes and the ongoing monitoring of their performance through formal curriculum development groups.
- Our ability to innovate and respond rapidly to prospective student and employer demand through the delivery of new and flexible programmes and the provision of bespoke accreditation services.
- Our ability to develop and deliver bespoke courses in partnership with public and private organisations and SMEs.
- Our innovative and responsive delivery models for selected markets, through UH Ventures and UH Global, privately through our other Group companies and via third-party partnerships.

*A key aspiration is to achieve an average tariff across all undergraduate programmes of at least 280 points.*



*A key aspiration is for more than 80% of UH staff to be undertaking some form of professional development activity.*

# People and Culture

Our people will be valued internally and externally for being innovative, solution-oriented and business-like. Respect, integrity and the celebration of individual and collective achievement will be embedded in our culture.

We will be known for:

- Pro-active involvement of staff and students in all aspects of University development, creating a culture of mutual respect and confidence.
- Being a flexible learning organisation in which individuals are encouraged to develop their capabilities to enhance the University's reputation and to celebrate individual and team success.
- The external recognition of academic staff for their expertise and contribution to knowledge and its effective application to solve key social and economic challenges.
- The creative and efficient contribution of professional staff to the provision of high quality services supporting the development of the University.

# Financial Strength

Financial planning based on a forward thinking financial strategy will secure the future success of the University.

We will be known for:

- A healthy diversity of income from government, business and philanthropic sources, with reduced dependency on single income streams.
- A financial strategy which secures future investment to meet our vision and to provide the necessary discretionary funds for innovation and creativity.
- The management of our operations in a business-like manner with value for money at the centre of all our activities.
- Courage in our investment strategy, being prepared to take managed risks as necessary to secure our position as an effective and sustainable business.
- Our extensive scholarship programme; we aim to achieve more than 500 externally-funded student scholarships by 2015.



*A key aspiration is to ensure an average surplus of 2.5% of turnover over each three year period and to be in the top half of HEFCE indicators related to the monitoring of surplus.*





# Infrastructure and Sustainability

We will continue to invest in the development of our physical estate to meet the needs of our students and staff. We will maintain our profile as a university with facilities of the highest quality when benchmarked against any UK university. We will operate to minimise environmental impact and we will seek to promote sustainable development.

We will be known for:

- The quality of our electronic and web-based facilities and resources to support teaching and promote blended learning.
- Investment in the ongoing development of our estate and the development of our facilities and resources to promote learning, teaching and research.
- Our ownership of UNO buses and our commitment to the provision of intra and inter-regional transport services to provide amenity for the broader community whilst seeking to reduce the environmental impact of travel.
- Our knowledge-transfer activities in relation to environmental and sustainability issues through our research activities, the development of our Centre for Sustainable Communities and our related inter-disciplinary consultancy activities – specifically ‘Green Potential’.

*A key aspiration is to be within the top 20 UK universities in the ‘People and Planet’ Green league table with at least 85% of University accommodation in Category A or B in terms of condition and fitness for purpose.*

# Community Engagement

We will strive to develop and promote our position within the local and regional community through our Community Engagement Strategy. This will help us to underpin the social, economic and educational development of our region.

We will be known for:

- Our extensive interaction with primary and secondary education schools and colleges through our innovative educational engagement strategy and our recognition of a wide variety of progression routes.
- The range of services and level of support we offer for business and professional organisations through our business services and related activities, including short courses, consultancy, business start-up support and our ownership of Exemplas.
- The scale and level of the engagement of our staff and students in the local community through voluntary work, including our Law Clinic, our extensive School Governor programme and active involvement in a range of county-wide festivals, events and environmental activities.
- Our strong and positive links and regular interaction with key community stakeholders, including residents, local authorities, EEDA and members of the University Court.
- Our innovative and diverse arts programme, under the UHArts umbrella, and our support for community-based arts events, activities and organisations including the resident de Havilland Philharmonic Orchestra.
- Our activities to promote the health and well-being of the local community through education and training, our work with the NHS and open access to our extensive sports facilities and related activities.



*A key aspiration is to have in place a progressive Community Engagement Strategy which maximises the effective deployment of the physical and social capital of the University and to have firmly established the Centre for Sustainable Communities.*



# The University in 2015

Recognising the many external pressures and trends which the University must address and taking into account the University's strategy through to 2015, the implications for the size, shape and profile of the University are that by 2015:

The number of UK and EU students' studying full time at UH is planned to remain stable at its 2009 level of c.17,000 - and subject to public policy and economic constraints, may reduce slightly.

Our academic portfolio will continue to reflect a broad subject base although the total number of programmes and modules will be streamlined through ongoing portfolio review.

STEM subjects, an integral part of the University's heritage, will continue to feature in line with UH's success at achieving government recognition and funding and to reflect broader social and economic needs.

The number of students studying part time will grow as more students seek to combine work and study. The University and its associated companies will together be the largest HE provider of CPD in the UK (excluding the Open University).

The proportion of both postgraduate research and taught students will grow through forecast increases in market size and improved postgraduate positioning as a result of our research reputation and a pro-active marketing strategy, from 11% to 18% of our full-time population.

The percentage of international students studying at UH will grow through focused recruitment and international activities, from 12% to 16% of our full time student population.

The University will be more selective in student recruitment, as measured through an improvement in incoming tariff scores, from 240 to 280 points, as a result of the University's strengthened positioning and positive league-table performance and a strategy to broaden our intake of UK students beyond our current regional catchment.

The quality of the University brand will grow with sustained improvement in league table position overall to within the top half for overall league table performance when compared with all UK universities on the basis of an average across The Times, The Independent and The Guardian tables.





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