University Strategy to 2017

Our Vision

The University’s core purpose is the transformation of lives, working locally and globally through the creation, sharing and application of knowledge. We will mobilise our efforts and focus our energies on three big challenges facing society:

- Promoting the sustainable use of global resources.
- Shaping the future through innovative design.
- Improving social, cultural and physical wellbeing

We have identified five core values which will underpin everything we do. These are valuing people, working together, integrity, making a difference and excellence.

We intend to become Scotland’s leading university.

Achieving this goal will be demanding and will take a long time – perhaps 25 years. Over that period a variety of strategies and tactics will be needed, reflecting the changing pattern of conditions to which we must respond. As a first step on this journey we require a route map covering the five years to 2017. While strategy should be under constant supervision it is useful to identify a planning period which allows a significant set of actions to be planned, implemented and assessed before a new comprehensive review of strategy is conducted.

The University Strategy to 2017 fulfils this requirement.

The Context

The University is a dynamic organisation, at various stages of development. In some respects, and in some places, we can already claim to be Scotland’s leading university. Eminence in research in biomedicine, art and design, civil engineering and history reflects a well established insistence on excellence. In learning and teaching, our capacity to transform lives is supported by current students, who this year voted us top in the UK in the student experience we are able to provide.

But challenges are also apparent. While we can show good examples of progress through working together, we have opportunities for further alignment of teaching and research. We must drive to be a first or second choice for applicants to all our programmes, reflecting excellence across the board. Our provision is sometimes more costly than that of our competitors. We can do more to attract, develop and keep the very best teachers and researchers. Once students are here all must be helped to progress academically and to absorb the attributes and experience which will help them compete in the labour market.

These challenges and opportunities arise at a time of flux and uncertainty. The economic environment is volatile and challenging. Our funding sources – governments, industry, charities, individuals – are all constrained in different ways. Job opportunities for our graduates, and the intermediate employment experiences that can unlock them, are fiercely contested. While our areas of excellence operate on a global stage more of our provision could be stimulated by international experience and ideas.

However, the changing world does offer us real opportunities to improve. This will require strong leadership throughout the University. We share the Scottish Government’s desire for a more coherent and focused provision of post-16 education, and we can lead in the creation of a successful regional, national and international model with our contribution focusing on higher level teaching and learning. In dealing with our wish to change lives we will develop and invest in vigorous wider access programmes. Our early adoption of three year degrees aimed at the newly unregulated markets offers scope for growth. The increasing emphasis by stakeholders on ‘wider impact’ plays to our strengths as a strong regional force for growth and
civic improvement, as well as reflecting our influence in global life expectancy through our work in neglected diseases.

The Approach

The University Strategy to 2017 comprises nine sections which consider these various challenges and opportunities. Each section is underpinned by a separate enabling strategy which develops the objectives and performance indicators in more detail. The nine sections make clear what is required across generic themes and complement the three global challenges we aim to address.

Firstly, we address the three broad categories of services we provide. These are Learning and Teaching, Research and Wider Impact.

Secondly, we consider two cross-cutting themes which we judge to be of critical importance during the next planning period. These are Internationalisation, and Employability, Enterprise and Entrepreneurship.

Finally, the Strategy addresses four enabling themes which represent the resources we apply to achieve our aims. These are People, Information, Estate and Financial Sustainability. These sections are addressed to the University as a whole, not just to those providing support services. These themes impact on every aspect of the University and require attention from all staff.

We have identified 15 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to help assess progress on our strategic journey. These will be measured annually and compared with our own targets and, where possible, the performance achieved by comparator institutions. Whilst these KPI's cannot reflect all aspects of performance they serve as useful proxies and each enabling strategy will expand on these in more detail. Importantly, these measurements of progress will be supplemented by regular, structured dialogue with our key constituencies – students, staff and stakeholders. While many of the aims which follow in this document relate to the need for us to be responsive to individual students, we also value greatly the opportunity to engage collectively with the student body through DUSA.

Learning and Teaching

The University fosters an inclusive community of scholars and learners, creating a culture of achievement, committed to excellence and working together with our students at every level and in every form of learning. We will focus on high quality, high value outcomes produced efficiently through judicious investment in an atmosphere of world-class research. The knowledge we share will make an important contribution to tackling key societal challenges.

Our goal drives us to be a leader in learning and teaching. This means becoming a destination of choice for the ablest candidates. We are also determined to continue to drive our wider access agenda, ensuring that we can attract able but previously disadvantaged entrants. Outstanding entrants give us the best opportunity to transform lives and thus make an impact on society, so long as we also add value during the student journey. We will do this in part by correlating our learning and teaching strategy with research. Many teaching programmes will be mirrored by strong research programmes; all will be informed by excellent research. We will concentrate on those areas where we have, or are developing, strength. More will be done to share and learn from excellence in teaching through a thematic approach where the subject discipline boundary is less important than the pedagogic approaches needed to help our students to succeed. Our students need to be prepared to shape the world in which they live, not simply fit into pre-defined roles using pre-defined skills. This argues for less emphasis on disciplinary boundaries and more collaboration, flexibility, and a wider set of graduate attributes reflecting employability, enterprise, an entrepreneurial approach and a world view.
Our starting position as we embark on our five year plan period is varied. In some respects – medical and dental education, our Graduate School, the student experience we offer – we are already a leading player. We have the opportunity to do more, however, in a number of areas. We must reduce our reliance on local entry – while maintaining our commitment to our city-region - and increase our representation in markets where our freedom to recruit can be focused on excellence, unrestricted by quotas. This will increase diversity and our ability to raise horizons and fund investment. The value we add to the student journey can be increased through improving progression rates, while the recognition and promotion of excellence in our teachers requires further attention. We will improve our cost efficiency and effectiveness. The aims below set out a means of tackling these challenges and fixing a course on excellence in learning and teaching.

**Aim 1:** Ensure that our graduates and postgraduates are able to make an impact in their chosen fields, with the skills and knowledge to shape and lead society in the professions, research and the wider world

- review and reflect on the structure, content and enhancement of our taught programmes at all levels.
- engage students in our priority areas for joint working – sustainable resource use, designing our future and enhancing well-being.
- improve and develop our postgraduate provision.
- increase our representation in unregulated markets.
- embed graduate attributes and ideas of global and social sustainability into curricula.
- create overseas opportunities for students through new and stronger international partnerships.
- provide excellent support systems through academic tutoring and pastoral support.
- ensure that the non-academic, informal environment is vibrant and supports an outstanding student experience.

**Aim 2:** Design curricula for breadth and depth allowing experimentation, change and diversity and the development of critical enquiry and deep thinking skills

- apply rigorous and appropriate assessment and feedback systems.
- engage actively on the excellence and enhancement of our provision with the appropriate professional and regulatory bodies, and promote and learn from pedagogic research in general.
- develop interdisciplinary approaches to our subjects.
- ensure inclusion of the broader curriculum, including languages and other graduate skills.

**Aim 3:** Recognise and reward staff excellence in learning and teaching publicly and through promotion

- develop a robust staff professional development framework to support staff engagement with good teaching practice.
- develop better procedures for the reward and promotional recognition of excellence in teaching and supporting learning.

**Aim 4:** Identify and support those with the highest potential to benefit from our courses, no matter the route they take

- identify and recruit standard route entrants with high qualifications.
- seek out and support entrants with high potential from non-traditional backgrounds who may not have high qualifications through developing and implementing a formal widening participation and access strategy.
- increase the proportion of unregulated student numbers in UG and PG programmes.
- work with other educational providers in Tayside and Fife to create effective learning routes which recognise the individual learner.
• develop alternative degree and other qualification paths and part-time opportunities tailored to learners with different prior experience, while ensuring that they are fully part of the community of the University of Dundee.

**Aim 5: create a sustainable learning environment which exploits all the appropriate approaches and technologies to ensure that all our students, in Dundee and elsewhere, are supported for success**

• provide efficiently high quality building, materials and equipment for learning and teaching.
• review and develop the learning environment in e-learning and distance learning to enable robust distance and blended learning styles and embed digital literacies in our curricula.
• review teaching programme costs and reduce where appropriate.
• reduce the number of academic modules catering for small number of students.

**Performance Management**

| KPI 1 | Overall student satisfaction |
| KPI 2 | Progression Rates |
| KPI 3 | Undergraduate learning and teaching added value |
| KPI 4 | Undergraduate entry qualifications for standard routes |
| KPI 5 | Proportion of students admitted from deprived areas or circumstances |
| KPI 6 | Total unregulated learning and teaching income |

**Research**

We will support world-class research, carried out by the highest quality academic staff. It will be strongly translational in nature, and effectively connected through well-supported knowledge transfer to whoever can best apply it to achieve benefits to society. New areas of research will be aligned with our key challenges, addressed by people working together across the disciplines. Our research will have high impact, will be funded from a more diversified range of sources and will stimulate the sustainable growth of the University. We will train and develop the next generation of researchers by increasing the quality and number of Research Postgraduate students, providing them with excellent support.

Dundee has breadth and depth in world-class research. Our proportion of total income from research grants and contracts (30%) is well above the sector average, with a value of over £70m, a 67% increase since 2006. Our research in cell signalling, early drug discovery, health informatics and cancer is world-leading and is underpinned by large private, public and charity collaborations. The University’s reputation as Scotland’s leading centre for Art and Design research underpins the V&A at Dundee project which will transform perceptions of our home city. Across the arts and social sciences and elsewhere we have staff who are at the forefront of their disciplines.

Notwithstanding our growth in research income, the current external research environment is challenging and too much of our present research activity is unfunded, with effort expended in areas that could be better directed. We need to attract more high quality Research Postgraduate Students. Our reaction to these challenges will be to raise standards to meet the best, to pursue excellence in appointments and appraisal and to seek out profitable collaborations within the University, within Scotland and overseas.

**Aim 1: Engage in world class research with high impact**

• critically evaluate research quality to invest in areas of high quality, and to disinvest in areas which are unlikely to meet appropriate standards. We will seek out internal interdisciplinary opportunities particularly relating to our three long-term global challenges:
- Promoting the sustainable use of global resources.
- Shaping the future through innovative design
- Improving social, cultural and physical well-being

- continue to invest heavily in areas of research strength, developing further our critically important relationships outwith academia – with business, government and charities.
- maintain our research reputation, income and future investment projects through achieving the best possible ratings in REF 2014 and subsequent evaluations, in part by investing in key appointments.
- build on our current strong translational research reputation in biomedical sciences through close alignment with commercial partners and national and international healthcare providers through the development of an Academic Health Science Network
- intensify research collaborations nationally and internationally, especially in relation to our three global challenges.
- ensure that research is visible to learners and inspires them.

**Aim 2:** Provide the highest quality research environment and facilities with regard to people, materials, buildings and equipment

- identify and apply rigorous performance review criteria, including probationary procedures, to all research staff.
- provide the best possible physical facilities for research, consistent with rigorous capital project appraisal and subsequent monitoring of investment return.

**Aim 3:** Increase research income and overhead recovery

- diversify the funding base for research through better engagement with industry and international funding agencies including the European Union, as well as better targeted application to Research Councils.
- identify and reduce unfunded research

**Aim 4:** Attract more and better Research Postgraduate Students

- increase the number and quality of RPG students, particularly through developing international partnerships.
- significantly improve support to RPG students.

**Aim 5:** Review and improve our current research policies and governance.

**Performance Management.** The following performance indicators will be measured to assist in assessing performance in meeting these Aims:

- KPI 7 Total research income
- KPI 8 Number of staff with personal fellowships, investigator awards or programme grants
- KPI 9 Research income and overhead recovery per academic FTE

**Wider Impact**

In transforming lives our impact must extend beyond learning and teaching and research. We will seek to spread the knowledge and skill we create by engaging with business, with individuals and with civil society. In so doing we will create income and reputation for the University, develop our city region and its economy, improve health and the environment and enrich the lives of a wide range of individuals. We will ensure that these outputs are fully valued in the University, that inputs are applied to realise them and that leadership in wider impact is achieved.
The core business of a University has often been regarded as learning and teaching on the one hand, and research on the other. However, it is increasingly recognised that the creation and dissemination of knowledge have important wider impacts. This is a process of exchange with knowledge moving back to the University as well as outwards to recipients. The University has developed a strong platform in this broader aspect of its remit, as seen in its interface with the world of business and in its public engagement and outreach. These activities address directly the requirements of our mission and the expectations of our stakeholders as we transform lives and focus on our key challenges. They also provide stimuli to growth as we spread our knowledge for public good and our own financial sustainability, as well as creating further demand for our learning and teaching, research and expertise.

The wider impact agenda is broad and complex. For our purposes we can usefully consider it as dividing into two overlapping elements. Firstly, there is commercial knowledge exchange, our direct engagement with entities, both private and public, in the world of commerce and business. This has at its heart the exploitation of discrete packages of knowledge created through research, teaching and scholarship. This exploitation can be for financial gain or for other benefits, such as our contribution to economic growth, a particularly important outcome for our government stakeholders. The University employs a wide range of collaborative models with industry, ranging from multi-partner consortia to single-body partnerships. Through successful and innovative commercialisation we have an opportunity to create real distinctiveness.

The second area is that of public engagement and outreach, where our audiences are broader, and the interface is less concerned with individual pieces of intellectual property. Our work here is channelled to two overlapping audiences. Firstly, there is the individual recipient of our knowledge, services and facilities. This covers a wide range of artistic, educational and cultural and business interests provided locally and increasingly further afield, not least through alumni. Secondly, there is our civic role, where we interact at a collective level. Our local civic relationships are strong and creative, reflecting the direct benefit which accrues to the University from being part of a more prosperous and attractive Dundee and vice versa. More widely we seek impact opportunities through economic development, for example through the V&A at Dundee project, and through our contribution to health, education and societal change in the developing world.

Aim 1: **Distinguish the University through innovative and effective knowledge exchange to become the partner of choice for a broad range of external collaborators**

- encourage and promote knowledge exchange among staff and students by celebrating the value and impact of enterprise as an output of research, learning and teaching and by linking it to staff performance management.
- establish new mechanisms for partnering with industry and the public and third sectors. Become a preferred source of advice, information and consultancy.

Aim 2: **Translate research outputs through knowledge exchange to address societal challenges and through our impact provide reputational and financial benefits to the University**

- increase licensing of technologies and innovation to a wide range of third parties.
- assist new company formation and wider Scottish company growth, thereby supporting local economic development.
- develop consultancy.

Aim 3: **Grow our impact with individual recipients of knowledge and ideas**

- understand, measure and evaluate our provision of social, health, educational and cultural services to the general public.
- prioritise the development of new engagements beyond Dundee.
Aim 4: Through our civic role, help to create a stronger and more attractive Dundee City Region, and contribute to progress in Scotland and the world

- help to build a ‘better Dundee’, fostering growth and reducing inequality.
- support progress in developing countries.
- improve professional and artistic practice and influence policy making.

Aim 5: Support wider impact activities by the creation of supporting infrastructure

- develop an excellent system of alumni development support
- implement a customer relationship management system, focused on our most important relationships and partnerships.
- identify a single system for identifying, recording and appraising our wider impact work.

Performance Management

KPI 10 Income from industry and “other” sources

Internationalisation

We need a determined focus on internationalisation to help deliver our objectives in learning and teaching, research and wider impact. We are already an international university in many respects and will go further in bringing to our students and staff programmes, inputs and outputs with international content, experience and reach. We will do this by bringing the world to Dundee – through new students and new teaching – and by taking Dundee to the world – through transnational modes of learning, through alumni and through sustainable partnerships with world-leading institutions, so improving our reputation.

Much of the University is already international. Almost a quarter of our students by headcount are from outside the UK. A significant proportion of our research and teaching is world class and addresses issues of global concern. We are recognised as one of the top 200 world universities, with a variety of teaching and research partnerships with institutions overseas.

Nevertheless, we can do more to fully integrate an international approach across all of our activities in research, teaching, student support, wider impact and administration. We will critically assess our portfolio of partnerships to ensure that we are effectively expanding our knowledge base and making our ideas known to the world. Our traditional overseas business model – attracting young people to spend several years at Dundee – is under threat from a number of sources. New models, particularly related to higher value offerings, to partnership relationships of equals, and to the blended/distance learning spectrum – are required.

These requirements are consistent with recognition that the University performs a vital regional and national role also. All our students, whatever their origin, must be prepared for careers in an increasingly globalised world.

Aim 1: Build sustainable, high-level international partnerships.

- establish procedures to identify, select, manage and develop international partnerships at different levels of complexity.
- foster a select and managed group of high-level partnerships using a customer relationship management approach.

Aim 2: Bring the world to Dundee, by recruiting overseas students, by providing a safe and supporting environment, and by internationalising the curriculum and wider experience of all our students.

- recruit more high-quality international students.
• enhance the campus experience for international students and staff, and for British students through exposure to cultures and ideas from overseas.
• develop the skills and knowledge of our students to enable them to work effectively in a global environment.
• recruit teaching and research staff with international experience.

Aim 3: Take Dundee to the world, by promoting the University as a world centre for research, teaching and innovations, often in collaboration with high-quality partners.

• promote the University as a world centre for research, teaching and innovation.
• expand and improve our provision of viable, remotely-provided degree and professional development courses.
• develop networks of international alumni and links with business overseas.

Aim 4: Develop and resource the Internationalisation Strategy

• embed internationalisation into decision-making structures.
• develop and enhance systems, policies and procedures to support the management of compliance, risk and quality assurance in international settings.
• develop capacity and capability amongst University staff in internationalisation and support this with a communication plan.

Employability, Enterprise and Entrepreneurship

The range of activities we offer to support student employability and to encourage enterprise and entrepreneurship development are well regarded. We are conscious however of the need to do more. For employability, this will be seen in significantly improved levels of graduate level employment and in access to advanced programmes of study. Our graduates will have an ‘edge’ in the employment market through employability-related activities delivered through mainstream programmes and through extra-curricular and voluntary opportunities. Of equal importance is the acquisition of enterprise skills – including creativity, leadership, ideas development, critical thinking and problem solving – and the ability to apply these in organisational settings. We will encourage and nurture students who demonstrate individual entrepreneurial potential. Our commitment to improving student employability and the development of enterprising attitudes, skills and ability must permeate the institution and requires staff engagement and student participation.

The University uses a variety of means to encourage students to recognise and develop the specific skills, knowledge and personal attributes which will transform their attractiveness in the labour market. However, some employers report a gap between their expectations and graduates’ readiness for employment. This issue becomes more serious when weighed against increased competition, both for jobs themselves and for the placement and internship opportunities which research shows are crucial enablers of future employment success. As part of our transformative mission we must work to ensure that more of our graduates are equipped for successful careers whether in the public, private or voluntary sectors.

We will ensure that awareness of employability as an issue and the importance of the development of enterprising attitudes and abilities is threaded into the fabric of academic course work. This applies across the institution and will include disciplines and student cohorts which have been less engaged in the past. These include students in ‘vocational’ disciplines where employment outcomes were previously more straight-forward, and our Scottish students, who have sometimes been left behind by their overseas counterparts particularly in seizing the opportunities there are to nurture and develop as enterprising and potentially entrepreneurial graduates. Our Careers Service will intensify efforts to provide work placements and voluntary opportunities, and to understand and pass on intelligence on what the job market requires. All of this will require more and deeper links with employers at local level and with business organisations such as CBI and the Chamber of Commerce. Our Enterprise Gym is well established as an agent for student development in enterprise and
entrepreneurial skills, but this needs to be linked seamlessly with other relevant activities within the institution.

Aim 1 Enable our student leavers to secure graduate level employment or to further their careers through higher level study, and assist in developing the potential of those students who demonstrate entrepreneurial capability.

Aim 2 Ensure that our staff and students regard employability and enterprise as important and, accordingly, support activities designed to promote these.

- encourage staff and student engagement with employability and enterprise activities, stimulate demand for the Dundee Graduate Skills Award (DGSA) and record and report employability skills, knowledge and attributes robustly.

Aim 3 Embed employability and enterprise in mainstream learning and teaching.

- embed relevant credit-bearing content in academic programmes, incorporate opportunities for employer liaison and ensure that relevant learning in employability is taking place.

Aim 4 Students should have access to a comprehensive range of opportunities, within programmes as well as voluntary and extra curricular, to enhance their employability and to nurture enterprising and entrepreneurial attitudes and apply these.

- develop and enhance the suite of provision provided by the Careers Service, including the Enterprise Gym, particularly in relation to providing more and better internships and placements.
- improve the uptake and spread of key activities by School, by UG/PG status, and by country of origin.
- develop relevant attributes through broader extra-curricular activities.
- provide support for staff, student and graduate start-up businesses.

Performance Management

KPI 11 Graduate level employment and uptake of programmes of further study.

People

The University will achieve its goal of leadership primarily through its people and our strategy aims to ensure we attract and recruit the highest calibre people and develop and motivate them. All staff will understand their role in building success and their performance and development will be managed carefully. Clear pathways will be created for employees to develop their careers and to enable succession planning. We will develop a new generation of leaders. Our provision of a supportive and equal working environment will be complemented by employees who take seriously their responsibilities for the health, well-being and safety of all, and for taking opportunities for personal growth.

Over the last planning period a number of key People objectives have been met. A robust methodology for job evaluation now exists, and the development of a performance review system, OSAR, is also in place although it is not yet used to its full potential. The University now has a systematic methodology for defining the size and weight of jobs, for agreeing personal aims and objectives and for reviewing performance. Progress has also been made in integrating staff development activities and in introducing e-recruitment. We have good, recent experience in managing and supporting staff through periods of change. This will underpin the new Strategy and provide a platform for significant further gains in developing, managing and communicating with our people.
Aim 1: Attract, recruit, develop, retain and reward the highest calibre people

- understand and implement the most effective recruitment methods.
- maintain the University’s reputation as an “employer of choice” in the local market.
- provide a fair, supportive and stimulating culture and work environment for staff.

Aim 2: Ensure that staff understand their personal responsibilities and objectives and meet them

- ensure that performance is managed comprehensively, using the OSAR procedure, assisted by staff training in objective setting.

Aim 3: Provide staff with a fair and transparent career progression path consistent with the University’s criteria of excellence

- develop and implement clear and firm probation and promotion criteria.

Aim 4: Provide opportunities for professional and leadership development to underpin improved performance, career development and succession planning

- identify and develop leaders
- identify staff with potential and nurture this talent through training and development.
- improve staff induction.
- support team-based development.
- strengthen communication and engagement between staff and University.

Aim 5: Create a framework for effective two way communication between the University and staff

- discover the views and the extent of engagement and satisfaction of staff as part of a comprehensive survey of key constituencies – staff, students and shareholders.
- enhance staff engagement by developing a framework for effective, two-way communication.
- enhance the relationship between the University and the representative bodies.

Aim 6: Effect change quickly and flexibly whilst managing people sensitively and ensuring consultation and legal compliance

Aim 7: Promote and support equality of opportunity for all staff and students in a healthy and safe environment

Performance Management

KPI 12 Staff satisfaction

Information

Effective use of information is a precondition of success in higher education. We must understand and respond to the fast-changing information environment, as the demand for multiple connectivity and the adoption of new technology increases. We will continuously improve and make more efficient our facilities and core business systems. We will ensure that our staff are able to use information effectively and that they are appropriately supported.

We plan in a complex and ever-changing environment. Student expectations are of a University whose network is fully connectable with the full range of available hardware and software. Similarly staff expect and require the University to adopt new technologies and approaches whilst providing an effective information environment which is efficiently delivered. This strategy seeks a balance which combines genuine academically led
innovation with robust enterprise systems. This will require a review of working relationships, communications and efficient coordination of resources in those teams supporting information systems across the University.

Our plans for improving the content, scope and management of business systems are well developed. Their implementation will continue, reducing duplication in data holding. A research information system (PURE) will be rolled out in the plan period, and further use of cloud computing will be explored. The provision of library and learning materials has been overhauled through the introduction of self-service technologies and the expansion of electronic resources. Further change is scheduled including the achievement of increased efficiencies in the use of library buildings and the development of a more effective and manageable support function in e-learning. Attention is also required to increase personal competence amongst staff in the use of information systems. This will strengthen the link between the potential of our information assets and the ability of staff to secure this advantage. This will complement our continuing investment in physical assets, software solutions and access to facilities.

Aim 1: Develop and maintain an excellent information environment which is responsive to new technologies and which is supported by a more coherent relationship between support functions.

- improve the capacity of underlying communications infrastructure and support staff resources to deal with multiple personal devices. Provide an updated wireless network and implement identity management systems.
- develop a collaborative, standards-based approach to managing commodity IT and core systems, eliminating duplicated and parallel activity.
- ensure that we comply with regulatory and stakeholder expectations in information provision.

Aim 2: Improve the use of and return from core systems, adding to them carefully with integrated reporting facilities and new functions

- improve the quality of data to allow the introduction of integrated reporting.
- Improve and add to core business systems.

- increase the transparency of system management and improve collaboration throughout the product lifecycle from procurement to decommissioning

Aim 3: Define for staff groups appropriate levels of information competences and ensure these are acquired, maintained and displayed

Aim 4: Maintain a rolling programme of investment in facilities and systems, supported by modernisation of management processes

- meet the expectations of users of the Library and learning support through the improvement of physical and electronic facilities.
- ensure adequate current investment to maintain the integrity and capacity of core infrastructure and systems.

Estate

We will provide efficiently the best possible facilities for learning and teaching and research. The way in which we use, develop and manage our land and buildings demonstrates our public responsibility, our internal sustainability and our commitment to the health, safety and productivity of our staff. We will act to reduce and control our use of resources, particularly, but not exclusively, energy and space, maintain our estate, and look for opportunities to improve the overall environment of the University community. This is a shared responsibility across the University. We will be a “good citizen” in demonstrating overall environmental sustainability through reducing our carbon footprint.
Our estate can be described as the University environment within which we work including older buildings adapted to new needs, new buildings, the utility services we supply, and the spaces between buildings. Our challenge is to design and create environments fit for the needs of our students and staff in the 21st century and at the same time be effective stewards of the resources with which we are entrusted. This involves a drive to reduce our carbon footprint, both for its own sake and also as a means of bearing down on recurrent costs.

Our approach to developing and managing our estate has to respond to a challenging funding environment. As well as cost pressures on utilities, our capital funding from Government has been decreased, causing us to alter priorities. Our capital programme, which has yielded significant improvements in the quality of our estate in recent decades, will be much reduced for the foreseeable future. For the plan period our focus will be on monitoring and, to an extent, reducing our building footprint, making more efficient and imaginative use of it, and reducing our consumption of energy. At the same time, we must be ready to respond to opportunities to support academic growth and to enhance the quality and appearance of external spaces.

Aim 1: Use building space efficiently, vacating sub-standard space and maximising intensity of use

- reduce the historical space holding.
- Use space efficiently through improved space management.

Aim 2: Maximise energy efficiency

- minimise energy use consistent with the need to support a growing portfolio of productive activity.
- improve the efficiency of energy supply and conservation and demand management.

Aim 3: Improve the overall environmental sustainability of the University

- reduce our carbon footprint.
- improve understanding, awareness and monitoring of sustainability issues and better align responsibilities for required improvements.
- integrate sustainability into the curriculum, taking advantage of the estate as an asset in learning, teaching and research.
- ensure that approval, procurement and building procedures take account of full life cycle issues of cost and carbon use.

Aim 4: Improve and maintain the condition of the estate

- improve the quality of buildings.
- take forward a capital programme characterised by whole life cost appraisal, sustainability impact and academic and financial return.
- develop and implement a programme of works to develop and exploit the external environment and green spaces of the estate, including the Botanic Gardens.

Performance Management

KPI 13 Quality of buildings.

Financial Sustainability

A key consideration of our Strategy, when set against a difficult and uncertain economic environment, is the achievement of financial sustainability. Our current surplus target of 3% is
too low, given our cost inflation and the considerable refurbishment demands imposed by the estate. Determined actions on raising income and controlling costs will provide an annual financial operating surplus equal to 6% of turnover. This will itself require judicious revenue-saving investment. Improved financial forecasting and investment appraisal will allow well-judged strategic investment decisions to be made.

The external financial environment as we approach our new planning period is one of uncertainty and volatility. This directly affects the decision-making of prospective students and the investment decisions of research funders, both public and private. The ability of government to support our capital programme has reduced sharply. Against this background the University must set a financial course which enables it to have the flexibility to adapt to any financial shocks – or opportunities – which may arise. It must also provide funds for continued investments towards achievement of our long term goal.

In recent years the University has been unable to generate sufficient cash from its operating activities year on year in order to fund strategic investments at the level desired. It cannot be expected that Government awards in capital expenditure will return quickly to previous levels, and so we must ourselves achieve an appropriate level of investment from our operational activities. The selected quantum is an annual financial surplus of 6% of turnover. As well as working hard in both income and expenditure to achieve this, we must also be able to withstand the impact of economic downturns and/or funding reductions. This will be done through robust forecasting, risk management and contingency planning.

The University will seek to maximise its income by increasing unregulated activity and by diversifying across activity and funders. Our dependency on Scottish Funding Council grants will continue to reduce. Core funding and unregulated income will be supplemented by philanthropic giving. In parallel with measures to safeguard and where feasible grow income we will bear down on costs without impairing income-generating capacity. For capital projects, the whole life cost of assets will be appraised to ensure that up-front savings are not cancelled out by higher on-going costs.

**Aim 1: Generate sufficient surplus to fund investment at 6% turnover**

- control costs and generate cash to meet short term liabilities and to fund strategic investments.
- develop and implement systems for reviewing the financial sustainability of taught courses, in collaboration with the Quality Enhancement process.

**Aim 2: Carry out robust forecasting**

- improve accuracy of cash and annual surplus forecasting.

**Aim 3: Ensure that unregulated income creates a surplus, except in exceptional and justified circumstances**

- develop course-level contribution reporting to make visible the surpluses or losses which are generated.

**Aim 4: Maximise income from non-core commercial activities**

- ensure that each area of non-core commercial activity has a business plan in place.

**Aim 5: Require capital investments to meet clear strategic and financial returns**

- develop further investment appraisal methodology and post-implementation review.

**Performance Management**

KPI 14 Operating surplus.
KPI 15 Total income per academic FTE.
Summary of Key Performance Indicators

KPI 1  Overall student satisfaction
KPI 2  Progression rates
KPI 3  Undergraduate learning and teaching added value
KPI 4  Undergraduate entry qualifications for standard routes
KPI 5  Proportion of students admitted from deprived areas or circumstances
KPI 6  Total unregulated learning and teaching income
KPI 7  Total research income
KPI 8  Number of staff with personal fellowships, investigator awards or programme grants
KPI 9  Research income and overhead recovery per academic FTE
KPI 10  Income from industry and “other” sources
KPI 11  Graduate level employment and uptake of programmes of further study
KPI 12  Staff satisfaction
KPI 13  Quality of buildings
KPI 14  Operating surplus
KPI 15  Total income per academic FTE

Version 12/03/2013