

MANCHESTER
1824

The University of Manchester

A man and a woman are looking at a large, curved digital display in a modern, brightly lit room. The man is on the left, wearing a light-colored sweater, and the woman is on the right, wearing a dark sweater with a colorful patterned sleeve. They appear to be engaged in a collaborative activity, possibly a presentation or a workshop. The background is filled with colorful, abstract patterns and lights, suggesting a high-tech or creative environment.

Global influence

Our future

Knowledge | Wisdom | Humanity

2021-25 plan

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Foreword



To be recognised globally as one of the top universities in the world, it is vital that we embrace internationalisation in all of our activities and leverage Manchester's national reputation to build our profile and influence among the global academic, philanthropic and business communities, along with key decision-makers and opinion leaders. In the first two years of the plan international activity was constrained by the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on travel in particular, but measurable progress has still been made.

Internationalisation is already evident in our student and alumni population, staff composition, research networks, The University of Manchester Worldwide (UMW) centres, supporter relationships, cultural reach and the arena in which we are judged. While our numbers are high, the proportions of international students and staff could be improved and will need to do better in order to face growing competition.

We must also diversify our international student population to maximise our cross-cultural experience offering and increase resilience to potential disruption. An important consideration is the extent to which we offer international students a full experience of the UK, while also embodying their specific needs in the curriculum and wider environment.

Increasingly, our home students need to be prepared to function in an international environment, with many wishing to spend time studying abroad as the world reopens post-pandemic. Other countries are driven to provide an English language experience and so make more effort to achieve mobility. The UK's future as a global trading nation demands that we match this. We have been fortunate that international standards have gravitated to the UK model in areas such as degree length, but we cannot assume that this will continue indefinitely. We will therefore develop a broader range of transnational education offerings – some with our strategic partners and also via increased leverage of our UMW international centres.

In the research domain, there has been a continuing trend of international collaboration, reflected in rising proportions of co-authorship and consistent evidence that such outputs are more highly cited than purely national outputs. Motivations for collaboration include access to complementary expertise, knowledge or skills – with increased likelihood of finding an appropriate partner due to an expanded choice-set; access to unique sites, datasets, facilities or population groups; sharing costs and risks; and addressing transnational or global problems. Key support to date has come from EU programmes and national development funding. Both sources have been placed in doubt since this plan was drafted, emphasising the need to adapt to other means of support. Collaboration around key infrastructure such as CERN and the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) remains secure.

One of the key capabilities in a successful research strategy is to link with partners of the highest quality, which both relies upon and drives reputation. There is also an opportunity to use philanthropy to leverage further research funding – either through matched funding or using philanthropic support to create income-generating programmes and posts, which in turn contribute to reputation.

We have only recently begun to take full advantage of international business collaboration opportunities. Our leading position with UK business is founded upon strategic partnerships with global firms based in the UK. Nonetheless, the long-term static position of R&D investment in the UK and the rapid growth of

business R&D elsewhere means that for us, growth requires engagement beyond our current horizons. In regional terms, this also involves working with the city region to attract and collaborate with inward investors that are relocating and engaging in our ecosystem. At the same time, we need to give priority to national interests, particularly where security is concerned. We have the largest alumni base of any UK higher education institution, combined with a physical presence in key emerging markets – creating an ideal environment to leverage support for business collaborations through internal and external advocacy, facilitating introductions and networks, and providing market intelligence and insight.

The global higher education marketplace is both crowded and growing, and today's media landscape is international and fast-moving. It is no longer enough to build a good reputation in the UK alone. We need to establish a distinctive brand identity and a compelling narrative that has global resonance and reach and talks about what we are doing as a University to address some of the world's leading challenges, while also educating responsible global citizens



Luke Georghiou

Deputy President and
Deputy Vice-Chancellor

Purpose, vision and strategic plan

Our strategic plan

The strategic plan sets our University's priorities for the first five years of our journey towards the vision. We have built our strategic plan around three core goals and four themes.



The global influence plan sits within the broader purpose, values and measures of our 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 values

As an autonomous institution, we will strive to bring our shared values to life.

Knowledge

We are ambitious in our pursuit of new ideas, greater understanding and discovery.

Wisdom

We share and apply our knowledge and experience to guide balanced and evidenced decisions for ourselves and for society.

Humanity

We embrace and celebrate difference, respect and support each other, and act with integrity to benefit society and the environment by transforming and enriching lives.

Academic freedom

We support with enthusiasm and vigour the principles of freedom of thought and speech.

Courage

We think and speak freely, and act boldly to challenge assumptions and shape our future for the greater good.

Pioneering spirit

In the radical Manchester spirit, and inspired by our people, history and scale, we create the exceptional.

This plan builds on our international activities over the last five+ years and aims to position us as one of the top 25 universities across a portfolio of global influence measures. We aim to achieve this by focusing our next phase of impact and innovation against three main priorities:

1. International collaboration and partnerships

We will continue to develop a focused portfolio of partnerships, extending our existing commitments and cementing diverse relationships, to enhance the reputation and increase the global influence of all partners. Through initiatives including joint postgraduate opportunities, sustained research programmes, staff and student mobility, development of online and blended learning (OBL) programmes among others, we will develop sustainable partnerships where mutual benefit is central.

2. Attracting global talent

Our learning is enriched by an internationally and socially diverse population of the world's most talented students and researchers. We will put a suite of measures and infrastructure in place to grow and diversify our international participation.

3. Global reputation

We will be highly ranked in recognised international reputational league tables. We will grow our reputation for excellence through strategic stakeholder management, where an investment in people and technology enables two-way engagement, targeting and partnership, allowing us to increase advocacy and influence the debate on a global stage. We will also encourage our staff to undertake leading roles in external bodies which influence the direction and reputation of the university sector. Via the establishment of our International Advisory Board, we have engaged with a new set of senior stakeholders, sharpening our strategic focus and increasing our global influence.

Priority one

International collaboration and international partnerships



Priority one encompasses the ways in which we work with organisations in other countries to advance research, teaching, innovation and social responsibility. The actions set out how we intend to work with key international partners in the academic sphere, business, philanthropists, governments and non-governmental organisations.



Action one: building strategic academic partnerships

To further develop our network of strategic partners – both on a multilateral basis to tackle global challenges and on a bilateral basis – we will increase the quality and impact of Manchester’s research and the internationalisation of our curriculum and student body. Development of our current strategic partner network has boosted our research collaborations with these institutions at individual academic and research group levels. It has also led to the Manchester, Melbourne and Toronto alliance, including the joint digital health centre, the roll-out of a dual award PhD programme with Melbourne (with advanced plans for one with Toronto) and a strong return on research grants secured or in the pipeline. Global classrooms are also under development.

We expect to develop a globally balanced portfolio of up to ten strategic partnerships, supported by a strong set of institutional and Faculty-level partnerships. While many key partnerships will be nucleated by and embedded through research collaborations, some may be anchored in the area of shared teaching, innovation and knowledge exchange or co-branded, co-delivered OBL initiatives. We will critically evaluate and, if appropriate, enter into the development of new research institutes with select strategic partners, taking the University’s research closer to growing global markets and increasing the scale and impact of Manchester’s discovery overseas. This selective but ambitious approach will attract global philanthropists – drawn in by our reputation for innovation and excellence.

Action two: growing international innovation and business engagement

We have a strong record of securing sector-leading investment from UK and EU companies and look to achieve the same success securing funding from the rest of the world. Innovation District (ID) Manchester is a unique opportunity to create a world-class community with innovation, collaboration and enterprise at its heart, here in Manchester. We will support the innovation theme goals to build dialogue with ten key potential international industry partners around our offer and coordinate with colleagues in relevant intermediary agencies, such as the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office/Science and Innovation Network. We will apply our national interest criteria to such projects, aiming where possible to secure inward investment (working with national and regional agencies) and ensuring full attention to national security and compliance with relevant regulation such as export controls.

We will identify new international government organisations to which we can act as advisor on policy matters, including health innovation. Our key research strengths will be showcased with support from the Department of International Trade, in key priority territories in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia. We will also continue and extend our partnerships with non-governmental, philanthropic institutions and international organisations where we have shared objectives, notably in the area of sustainable development.



Priority two

Attracting global talent

This priority focuses on people and, in particular, the offer we make to international students at all levels from undergraduate to postgraduate research (PGR). As well as enhancing the Manchester experience for international students, we will extend the range of international experiences available to our wider student body, including those studying outside Manchester, via UMW.





Action one: targeted growth in the number of international students and diversification of country of origin, field and mode of study

International students constituted 35% of our student population in 2020/21. We want to ensure that students benefit fully from their time in this country, both in their experience of the UK and through working in a truly international environment. While we recognise the support that home country organisations and nationally focused associations provide, we want to ensure that all students experience the richness of working with people from multiple backgrounds and cultures. This also benefits the University by avoiding over-reliance on a few sources, which increases vulnerability to disruption.

We will diversify the composition of the on-campus student body by increasing international student numbers to 40% by 2025, with an emphasis on growth in underrepresented domiciles such as India, Sub-Saharan Africa and North America via strategic investment – in turn reducing the dominance of

any single domicile. This will require an investment of staff (including localised representatives) and time to make the most of recruitment pathways specific to these target countries. At the same time, we will increase efforts to attract international students to degree courses in which they are under-represented and to broaden our OBL offer via UMW. We will develop the scale and impact of our current scholarship offering to low-income countries and groups, via funding from our alumni base as well as other interested philanthropists and philanthropic institutions, to reduce financial barriers to global talent.

Action two: increasing the international postgraduate research base

We will increase the number of international postgraduate research (PGR) students, harnessing their output to boost the reach and power of the University's research base. Our current funding will be reviewed with a view to create a more targeted approach to bursaries. We will make better use of overseas PGR students as ambassadors to their home countries/institutions, both during their time at Manchester and thereafter (a pilot study is currently operating at the Faculty of Science and Engineering). Roll-out of dual award PhDs with strategic partners will further cement the relationships, but funding remains a key constraint.

The new President's Global Catalyst Fund provides pump-priming resources to support our strategic partnerships and wider global aspirations. Even with a full fee waiver, the living costs for two years in Manchester have to be found, so we will redouble efforts with overseas government funding bodies. There is scope to be more strategic internationally with the Presidential Doctoral Scholarship programme and Deans' Scholarships. We will work harder to encourage our international undergraduate population to consider higher degrees at Manchester, to address our underperformance against the Russell Group average. We will continue to sign agreements with a wider range of national government funding bodies worldwide.

Our Faculty-level partnerships in the Global South will focus on developing a world-class research environment – via staff upskilling programmes and fellowships – creating new opportunities for onward PGR study. We also plan to increase the proportion of our PGR students with international exposure and mobility as part of their programme of study and will seek to identify the resources to support this. Creation of a PGR strand to our successful Turing Scheme application is the first step in this mobility challenge.

Action three: embedding an international experience for students

Our graduates need to be equipped to function in an international environment and to contribute to addressing global challenges. In the first years of the plan this objective has been restricted by the pandemic, effects of Brexit and wider geopolitics. We will develop the global awareness of our students by rebuilding their outward mobility to partners overseas in order to develop international learning and awareness and create a generation of global change makers. Our success to date with the Turing programme is a measurable result.

Our international experience will recognise considerations of sustainability with digital experiences used to provide 'internationalisation at-home'. We will also identify alumni and supporters, both as funders and hosts of workplace

opportunities where there is employment alignment with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By encouraging Faculty and School summer school activities to extend to reciprocal models, we can significantly increase our capacity for outbound mobility. This outward mobility will be offered where possible to PhD students in terms of internships with both industry and academic overseas partners.



Priority three

Global reputation

This priority focuses on building the global reputation and influence of our University. It recognises that Manchester has made great strides over the past 15 years to enhance the visibility of its brand, along with its reputation in the UK and in some key overseas student recruitment markets. It also recognises, however, the need to do more to build the University's profile and influence among the global academic and business community and with the world's decision-makers and opinion leaders.



Action one: building a distinctive international profile

Our reputation is one of our most valuable assets and needs to be professionally managed and monitored. In a crowded marketplace, we need to establish a distinctive brand identity and compelling narrative that talks about how we are addressing some of the world's leading challenges and educating responsible global citizens. We will audit and review all of our brand assets (including sub-brands) to ensure that they benefit from and contribute to the University's global reputation. We will repurpose our communications and marketing resources to focus on global campaigns (such as the research beacons, international student recruitment, SDGs and global strategic partnerships) that can be evaluated and prioritise digital channels with reach beyond the UK.

Action two: engaging our stakeholders

By changing the focus of our reputation-building activities away from 'one size fits all' broadcast communications, we can have more meaningful two-way engagement with our key stakeholders, particularly staff, students, alumni and external partners. This approach will enable us to deliver – and our partners to shape – many of the ambitions identified in *Our future* and will also create a powerful group of advocates and ambassadors for the University brand.

Time and energy will be devoted to mapping out and understanding the needs of our stakeholders; developing a co-ordinated and targeted programme of events and resources to engage with them (such as our 200th anniversary celebrations and the University's first institutional development and engagement campaign); investing in technology solutions to monitor and manage our interactions; and recruiting and developing our own staff to become effective relationship managers. We will build partnerships with organisations in Manchester and around the world to enhance the profile of our city and our University. Our staff will be provided with support, training and opportunities to build networks so they can undertake leading roles in a wide range of international and external bodies.

Action three: increasing leverage of UMW centres

We aim to increase our global presence via the UMW network, with a focus on building brand equity, increasing access to University programmes to new groups of students and developing new partnerships. We will explore the potential role of the centres as satellite locations for students as part of our outward mobility offering. We will leverage the proximity to market, increasing business engagement staff resource in-country to broker strategic links with industry. We will also undertake analysis of models for potential additional centres, either standalone or jointly with a strategic partner.

Global influence: making it happen

Delivering our priorities will be driven by enabling the development of internationalisation and the proactive management of our global reputation and consequent global influence – embedding it into all aspects of our work and engaging in external partnerships and agendas.





The key principles are a shared responsibility, so that we work as a team across Faculties and functions, ensuring the full engagement of staff, students and alumni and striving to be a partner of choice for leading players in the academic, business and policy worlds.

Our new International Advisory Board will continue to provide an independent view on the University's internationalisation strategy and goals. Board members represent a wide range of expertise with a view to assessing the global reputation and impact of the University – providing advice, guidance and insight to the President and the Senior Leadership Team, to help drive forward and achieve our global objectives.

Thanks to the Rory and Elizabeth Brooks Foundation we have established the President's Global Catalyst Fund, which will provide essential funding to accelerate our activities set out in this plan. We will continue to encourage other donors to support our global ambitions.

Key measures of success

We will assess our progress across all actions using the following objective measures:

Board scorecard metrics

To be consistently ranked within the top 25 universities in the world, as measured by the *Times Higher Education* (THE) Most International Universities ranking.

To improve our international reputation as measured by the THE and QS Global Reputation Rankings, World 100 Reputation Tracker and our own biennial qualitative survey of global external stakeholders, with the specific target of maintaining an average of top 25 in the QS Reputation Surveys.

Additional global influence metrics

Working collaboratively with global partners to share facilities, knowledge and research capacity to tackle global challenges. This will be measured by the number of collaborative grant applications and successes with strategic partners, from a baseline of 2018/19 or the start of the partnership.

Delivering an outstanding international student experience through the development of a rich and diverse international student body, enhancing the intercultural skills of our graduates. Measured via uptake of the international activities, including international internships and the rollout of shared delivery transnational education ventures with our strategic partners.

To diversify the composition of the international student population by growing intake from priority countries.

Attracting the best talent to work and to study at the University and to harness this talent pool for the global good. This will be measured by student numbers relative to 2018/19 baseline and People and Organisational Development data on staff.

Attract further donations to the President's Global Catalyst Fund to grow it to a level that matches and supports our international ambitions.

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