



MANCHESTER
1824

The University of Manchester

Faculty of Humanities strategy

Our future

Knowledge | Wisdom | Humanity

2023-26 strategy

Foreword

The Faculty of Humanities comprises a uniquely broad network of disciplines where ideas and creativity flow.

Our interdisciplinary and international ethos helps to ensure that our research and discovery, teaching and learning and social responsibility have a positive influence and impact on the world around us.

We have set out our priorities for 2023/24 – 2025/26 to ensure our Faculty continues to enhance its activities to support our University achieve its goals: delivering quality research and an excellent student experience, with our people and our values at the heart of our actions.

Underpinning this work is an ongoing commitment to creating an inclusive environment for all our staff and students. It is imperative that we work together to embed equality, diversity and inclusion throughout our core activities, and contribute to our University's culture and wellbeing.

Our community includes staff, students, alumni, members of the wider Manchester city region, and local, national and global partners. We all contribute through our research, teaching and learning – applied in professional and civic contributions, volunteering, co-curricular activities and leadership within and beyond the University.

As alumni, our graduates go on to contribute and shape the world in many positive and diverse ways.

If you are a colleague within the Faculty, I hope that our strategy provides a context for activity in your own School and department or division and helps to clarify how your role supports our success and achievements. I also hope that if you partner with us, the strategy demonstrates that Humanities at The University of Manchester has aspirations and ambitions that are stretching, exciting and attainable. You all have an important role to play in our future.



Fiona Devine

Vice-President and Dean,
Faculty of Humanities

The University's purpose, vision and strategic plan

Our purpose

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

Our vision

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

Our strategic plan



Read our vision and strategic plan at www.manchester.ac.uk/strategic-plan



Introduction

Our Future, the University's vision and strategic plan, sets out our priorities as we move into our third century.

Operational excellence is at the core of our strategy. We will ensure we have the best possible operations in place to support the delivery of clear and measurable benefits for every part of the Faculty in support of achieving the University's vision.

Music student, School of Arts, Languages and Cultures



The Faculty of Humanities strategy sets down our strategic goals and objectives and supports our University to achieve its vision. It is aligned to our goals relating to research and discovery, teaching and learning, and social responsibility. In common with *Our Future*, it puts our people and our values at the core of everything we do.

Specifically:

- With research expectations and new clear priority themes, we will prioritise and deliver the Enhanced Researcher Development programme. This is designed to enhance research support, attract the highest quality postgraduate researchers and increase our capability in research citation analysis.
- Our key teaching and learning priority is to provide an excellent student experience with successful student outcomes. We will continue to enhance our high-quality portfolio of efficiently delivered programmes, cohort diversification and improved student support for wellbeing, and will act on relevant student feedback.
- We will continue to contribute to the sustainable development goals through our social responsibility (SR) work with research beacons, research platforms and research institutes to address global challenges. We will also embed SR across teaching, research, Professional Services (PS) and cultural institution activities.
- In line with putting our people at the core of *Our Future*, we will prioritise improving staff morale, wellbeing and workload; embed our Faculty equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) strategy and values; create an environment and facilities to support our people; and invest in estate development allowing space for creativity and wellbeing.
- Working with our local, national and international partners we will support the University's strategic themes for innovation, civic engagement and global influence, including our work with ID Manchester, our research institutes and business engagement networks. World-leading research starts with internationally networked scholars, providing a global education.
- We will deliver our contribution to the University's financial sustainability, supporting University overheads, the costs of strategic projects, and ensuring the University has sufficient funds to invest in its infrastructure. We will continue to review and implement efficiencies to support savings.

Overview of our strategy

MISSION

Our mission over the next three years is to:

Support our academic Schools' strengths and strategic vision

Provide an inclusive, high quality, research-led environment

Maximise cross-Faculty opportunities and team-based approaches to our strategic activities

Grow in size and shape to align with our strategic goals

Be world-leading and internationally networked

As part of a civic university, engage our communities through pioneering activity

Be people-centred in line with our values

Plan effectively to meet our financial targets and contribution

PRIORITIES

To achieve this, our priorities are to:

Enhance the quality of our research and impact

Increase interdisciplinary research and grant success

Improve the quality of our teaching and hear our students' voice

Enhance the experience of our students through measurable actions

Have strategic, planned growth in the size and shape of student and academic communities

Invest in our people and support and recognise professional and personal development

Improve international diversification of our cohorts

Embed social responsibility and EDI across all that we do

DELIVERY

Over the next three years we will focus on delivering:

Supported interdisciplinarity to continue success in high-value, cross-Faculty research grants and teaching

Continued planned growth in size and shape of our research and teaching communities, aligned to areas of Faculty strength

A programme of review and refresh for our taught programme portfolio, driving further high-quality teaching and assessment

Improved student experience and successful outcomes for all our students

Research, teaching and social responsibility engagement that networks, supports and addresses local, national and international challenges

Improved support for staff and student wellbeing

Financial sustainability and growth

A framework for succession planning and talent retention

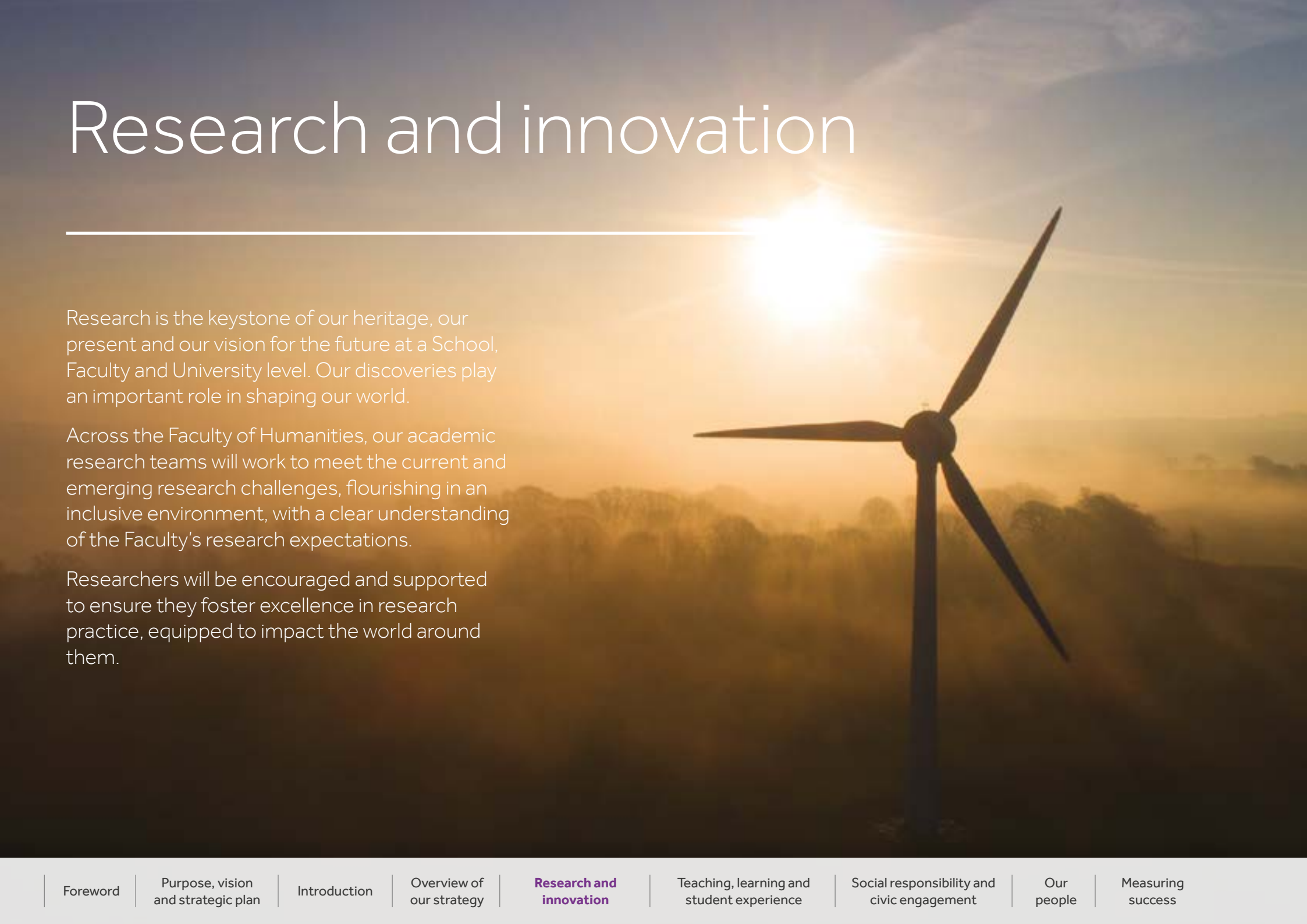
An inclusive workforce of more women, ethnically diverse and disabled staff and student body

New enhanced physical spaces to support the growth in the Faculty Size and Shape project

An environmental sustainability strategy to support our move to carbon zero by 2038

An integrated PS culture where colleagues can thrive

Research and innovation



Research is the keystone of our heritage, our present and our vision for the future at a School, Faculty and University level. Our discoveries play an important role in shaping our world.

Across the Faculty of Humanities, our academic research teams will work to meet the current and emerging research challenges, flourishing in an inclusive environment, with a clear understanding of the Faculty's research expectations.

Researchers will be encouraged and supported to ensure they foster excellence in research practice, equipped to impact the world around them.



KEY PRIORITIES AND DELIVERABLES

New priority themes

We will develop new priority themes for the research strategy that align to the Inequalities Beacon, the four University platforms and the five research themes across the Faculty. These include Creativity, Digital, Inequalities, Sustainability and Post-Covid Society. We will also foster research excellence in single disciplinary areas, both fundamental and applied, but also prioritise interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary themes aligned to the priorities of the UK Research Institute (UKRI) and other funders.

Research expectations

Our Faculty-specific statement of research expectations will align with, but go beyond, REF expectations on the quality and volume of world-leading research, publications, impact-related outputs, grant income generation, and contributions to the research environment and sustainability of vital subjects. Its emphasis will be on the growing importance of impact-related work for meeting our social responsibility agenda and our wider contributions to the economy, culture, health and wellbeing.

Researcher development programme

A career-long researcher development programme will foster the development of all research-active staff across all career stages, supporting the growth of research leadership across the Faculty, and enhancing research culture, environment and experience.

Enhanced research support

Strategically, our business engagement and grant writing teams will work more closely together to better align with our priority themes and key performance indicators. This will enable staff to deal successfully with the increasingly volatile external funding landscape. PS resources and expertise will be focused to support the aim of further increasing income streams from industry, charities, donors and UKRI.

Attracting the highest quality postgraduate researchers

We will be driven by quality in selecting postgraduate research candidates, while diversifying our intake. We will maintain fair, inclusive, and competitive selection processes and attract candidates who will publish appropriately and generate the wider impact of the highest reach and significance, ensuring the best possible employment outcomes.

Increasing our capability in research citation analysis

We will improve our citation volume by building on the commissioned work undertaken by the Centre for Science and Technology Studies (CWTS) at the University of Leiden. This provided a comprehensive bibliometric and citation mapping analysis of our major research institutes. We will use this to enhance our areas of research strength and develop greater potential to work collaboratively, globally, and in new interdisciplinary areas.

Teaching, learning and student experience

Our pioneering taught courses draw upon our world-leading research, internationally networked scholars and our strong links to global industry. All students will be supported and empowered to learn, achieve and flourish in an inclusive environment, and will feel their voice is heard. They will benefit from high-quality teaching and leave equipped with the knowledge, skills, global awareness and mentality for lifelong learning, ready to positively shape the world around them.

KEY PRIORITIES AND DELIVERABLES

Improved student experience

We will improve the student experience, success and student outcomes by introducing a programme of curriculum development that ensures a flexible, inclusive, sustainable and quality-driven approach to teaching and assessment. This will be enabled by digital support and a conducive physical learning and study environment.

We will further investigate the root causes of differential attainment and awarding gaps and will work to implement interventions and support to close these gaps. We will foster a culture that promotes and enables the full and fair participation of all students to improve student access, retention, attainment and progression. We will also ensure employability is embedded in the curriculum to enable students, throughout their time at University and beyond, to reach their potential and support them on the path to their chosen career aspirations.

Internationalisation and diversification strategy

We will support the University's internationalisation and diversification strategy by increasing the international diversity of our cohorts across the Faculty, improving student experience, student learning and inclusion. Our teaching will be globally networked, partnering with internationally renowned institutions where possible for teaching delivery. We will also prepare graduates to live in and contribute responsibly to a globally interconnected society and become global graduates.

Improved support for student wellbeing

We will improve student wellbeing support through our PS teams, our teaching, and through delivering extracurricular personal and academic development opportunities, enabling immediate and convenient access to pastoral and general academic support services, along with a seamless interface between the Schools and other University services. We will enhance student engagement monitoring and will explore and enable broader engagement of non-academic roles in the delivery of research-led teaching, especially projects.

Teaching expectations

We will deliver the University's teaching expectations through innovation in high-quality, world-leading research-led teaching. We will ensure staff are provided with guidance on teaching expectations, and clarity on how to provide information to support students with their studies. We will also consider the resources (time, physical, IT) to enable them to deliver on those expectations. We will drive assessment innovation with a view to reducing assessment load for students and staff.

Through the opportunities offered by the Flexible Learning Programme, we will collaborate across Schools and Faculties to improve flexibility in teaching – through pace, place and mode of delivery. We will develop policy and career paths for academic and teaching staff supported by the peer review and evaluation process, in collaboration with the Institute of Teaching & Learning (ITL), to drive teaching quality and support our Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) ambitions. We will implement our Size and Shape strategy to grow our student and staff numbers in line with our core goals of excellence in teaching, research and social responsibility.

Social responsibility and civic engagement

Manchester is unique among UK universities in having social responsibility as a core goal in our strategic plan, *Our Future*. We take this commitment seriously and will ensure that our staff and students are equipped to meet the social responsibility and civic challenges ahead and to flourish in an inclusive environment. We will be clear on social responsibility expectations and foster social responsibility and EDI excellence in practice, so that our staff and students can make a positive impact on the world around them.



KEY PRIORITIES AND DELIVERABLES

Social inclusion

We will ensure there is clear governance and ownership of EDI processes and issues and develop a clear Faculty communications and engagement plan to support our strategy. We will strive for improved access and participation plans (APPs) and to reduce awarding gaps in Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, disabled students and low social-economic communities in Greater Manchester – working closely with our researchers, including those in the **Centre on the Dynamics of Ethnicity (CoDE)** and the **Work and Equalities Institute (WEI)**.

We will ensure our job descriptions, advertising and recruitment are gender-neutral and inclusive, along with a refreshed inclusive recruitment marketing strategy. We will tackle inequalities in Greater Manchester through research, impact and social responsibility actions, such as our support for the Greater Manchester Inequalities Commission and the Oldham Economic Review.

Prosperous communities

We will work with Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), local authorities and other partners on regional and local inequalities. We will engage with institutes and projects including **ID Manchester**, **Work and Equalities Institute (WEI)**, the **Manchester Urban Institute (MUI)**, the **Sustainability Consumption Institute (SCI)**, the **Productivity Institute** and the **Manchester Institute**

of Innovation Research (MIoIR) for interdisciplinary collaboration and work with partners in industry and research. We will refocus the priorities of the Faculty Strategic Civic Engagement Fund so that by 2026 we deliver four flagship civil or policy engagement projects.

Better health

We will roll out data and lessons learnt from the **#BeeWell wellbeing project** to connect with other research and institutes across the University. Our work will be aligned with the United Nations sustainable development goals. We will consult health research experts and collaborate with relevant policy making bodies, health and care agencies, and colleagues from the **Manchester Institute for Collaborative Research on Ageing (MICRA)** to develop a new portfolio of projects that accelerate the impact of our work throughout the Greater Manchester region and beyond.

Environmental sustainability

We will develop a Faculty environmental sustainability strategy to feed into the University's 2038 carbon zero target. We will work with the Vice-Dean for Research to ensure environmental sustainability is considered and written into research grants where appropriate. We will also work with the Vice-Dean for Teaching, Learning and Students to ensure that environmental sustainability is incorporated in the Faculty's curriculum and considered in the delivery of our programmes, both face-to-face and digitally.

Our people

*Architecture students and staff,
School of Environment, Education and Development*



Foreword

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and strategic plan

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our strategy

Research and
innovation

Teaching, learning and
student experience

Social responsibility and
civic engagement

**Our
people**

Measuring
success



Professional Services

With the aim of driving and supporting the change needed for our Faculty to achieve its academic mission and organisational requirements, we will:

- continue to focus on staff development, cultural change, wellbeing and engagement across PS teams to ensure our Faculty is a place where colleagues can thrive and grow their careers;
- focus on workforce planning and resourcing levels to ensure workloads are planned and manageable;
- enhance the culture of performance development and management, with clarification of expectations in a supportive environment;
- improve management information by making it more accessible to inform strategic decisions, eg research cost recovery and contribution;
- enhance our marketing capability by supporting Schools and departments with international market intelligence, insight, marketing and recruitment;
- ensure our strategic collaborations are effectively governed and help innovative teaching and research by enhancing the support for research (pre- and post-award) and business engagement liaison; and
- proactively contribute to ensuring all our students are supported and empowered to learn, achieve and flourish in an inclusive environment.



People priorities

The 'our people, our values' theme lies at the core of *Our Future*. Our Faculty leadership and underpinning values will guide and drive the cultural change needed to create an environment where all our people can thrive and achieve their full potential.

We will enhance our leadership and management capabilities across the Faculty to create a positive and engaging working environment for all teams. We will do this by defining people leadership expectations and behaviours; ensuring clarity of matrix leadership across the Faculty; providing learning opportunities for our leaders to grow; and identifying and developing future leadership talent.

We will build on our culture of high performance by providing all our people with clear performance and development objectives and by committing to a continuous cycle of feedback, coaching, one-to-ones and performance and development reviews. We will recognise great performance and will provide support and guidance where there is underperformance. We will advocate flexible working practices, policies and processes that promote a healthy work-life balance.

We will develop our workforce planning capabilities to enable our academic and professional teams to build the resources and skills needed for the future. We will introduce a framework that identifies and develops talent, potential and critical skills across our Faculty; and a succession planning framework that recognises critical roles and builds opportunities for succession.

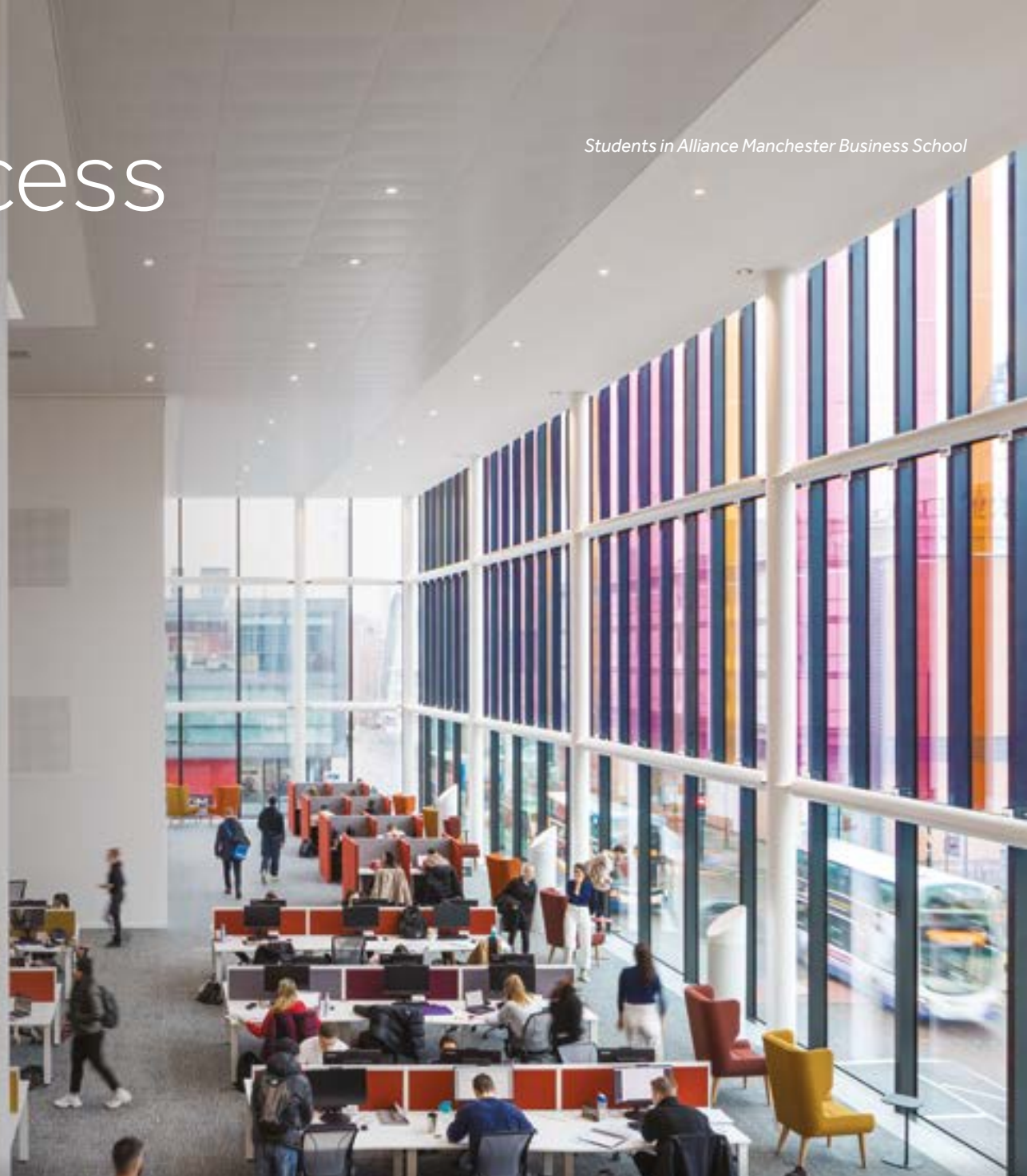
Creating a values-driven culture of belonging, inclusivity and wellbeing, and building more diverse teams at all levels will remain our guiding principles. We will focus on building an environment that allows all our teams to work collaboratively to do the best that we can for each other, for our students and for the Faculty.

Measuring success

Students in Alliance Manchester Business School

We will use a range of measures to evaluate our success including, but not limited to, those listed below.

- We will aim for top-five units of assessment (UoA) for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and set a stretching target for postgraduate researchers' completion.
- We will use student satisfaction data to assess our teaching.
- We will continue to improve our staff satisfaction survey and use its findings to enhance the staff experience.
- Our SR measures will include our APPs, EDI metrics, and our performance against engagement and impact measures and sustainable development goals.
- We will be assessed against our financial contribution and savings targets.



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