

University Priorities for 2023/24

We will improve the student experience and retention for all students, with a focus on improving student engagement, assessment and feedback redesign and refresh, the implementation of longitudinal academic induction and staff development. We will support academic staff to ensure that student check-in is implemented, Personal Development Tutors and student representatives are engaged with our students and for those that are 'at risk' we will further develop our approach to the Keep on Track service and safeguarding. We will support all students to be successful and ensure that no student groups are disadvantaged with support for widening access students embedded into the services we provide. We will review our timetable policy and use to ensure that where possible timetables for students can be clustered for on-campus learning events and ensure that re-assessment opportunities are provided for students earlier in the year.

We will ensure sustainable student recruitment for the University for Scottish, RUK and international students. For Scottish domiciled students we will achieve our student number targets set by the Scottish Funding Council with a particular focus on increasing our intake of direct entrants from college and postgraduate taught students. To achieve this, we will align the marketing, recruitment and conversion activities across all stages of the applicant journey and increase conversion of offer-holders through a personalised approach to conversion and revamped CRM implementation. We will continue to ensure there is fair access for all students and we aim to increase the number and proportion of widening access students admitted to the University and work collaboratively with the HUB for SUCCESS to increase opportunities for Care-experienced students. For international student recruitment we will increase our international student numbers with a focus of growth outside our current top-3 recruiting countries.

We will improve our infrastructure and estates to facilitate future growth of the University and improve the staff and student experience through Project VISION, ensuring alignment and progress against the Environmental Sustainability Strategy and our size and shape ambitions. We will begin the implementation of our infrastructure and estates strategy (including digital), deliver priority in-year campus improvements and continue to embed and optimise hybrid working practices for staff.

We will establish an Embedded Pathway College, successfully recruiting the first cohort to commence in January 2024. These launch pathways will primarily be for entry into undergraduate programmes but also include entry into postgraduate programmes too in the Business School and the School of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment. A range of additional pathways will be developed for a September 2024 start and will include provision across all other schools.

We will enhance our research environment to increase the impact of our academic work, building on our success in the most recent Research Excellence Framework assessment. To achieve this, we will introduce a Doctoral College that will assist in the recruitment of postgraduate research students and improve the quality of student experience. We will improve local research environments, through continuing the embedment of research centres and review their impact and focus for investment. We will bid systematically to develop and launch a Centre for Doctoral Training.

We will develop an overall Student Accommodation Strategy in line with Project VISION, establishing appropriate agreements to meet the long term needs of our growing student communities. Student accommodation will be secured for students who enter our undergraduate programmes in first year or direct entrants and those students entering the new pathway college.

We will enhance our curriculum to deliver on our mission to provide high quality teaching & learning through the development of new postgraduate taught programmes and embed use of the new Curriculum Management Environment alongside phase two enhancements. We will continue to drive forward staff engagement with the ENhance framework to ensure that our curriculum design is innovative and high quality, embedding agreed core themes, such as sustainability.

We will ensure we have the best academic and professional services staff now and into the future to deliver for our mission through an improved approach to workforce planning. Informed through our agreed future strategic size and shape of academic disciplines we will ensure that we develop workforce plans to attract and retain staff, advance workforce succession and ensure staff inclusion.

We will enhance our staff experience through the delivery and implementation of 'Your Voice' action plans focussing on the key themes of Addressing underperformance, Collaboration and Work & Wellbeing. In addition to these University themes local School and Service staff engagement plans will be implemented. We will develop the University's employee relations and reward framework and the professional services career framework, support the Early Career Academic Programme and deliver prioritised IT enhancements that will positively impact the staff experience.

We will improve strategic external engagement through development of a structured University level approach supported by local strategic engagement strategies covering external educational partnerships; Knowledge Exchange, commercial & industry engagement; and public and community engagement, including local college partnerships