



bucks  
new university

Buckinghamshire New University  
Strategy **2016-2021**

welcome to



bucks  
new university



# Buckinghamshire New University Strategy 2016-2021

We are proud to present the University strategy for 2016-2021. The key principles for the future development of Bucks are articulated here with a renewed commitment to the success of our students and our status as an 'anchor institution' in the regional economy.

The strategy is built around three core aims relating to our education offer, our engagement in the research and enterprise agendas and the quality of our people and organisation. These different strands highlight our priorities, but it will be our coherent delivery of all three strands that will strengthen and enhance our position in the higher education sector.

There is a danger with strategies that they become static documents that live on a shelf. Our intention with this strategy is to see it as a call to action for the whole University community. The success factors that we have identified are not simply wishes. They will be used to motivate and drive change to make the student experience at Bucks even better.

Students are at the heart of all that we do and we hope that the key messages around transformation that you will find in this strategy are a constant inspiration. We already have a deserved reputation for being a supportive and welcoming learning community. Our challenge is to ensure that the quality of our teaching, research and enterprise and employability are equally recognised.

Our vision and strategy are key indicators for the kind of University we want to be, but it is the continued hard work and dedication of all of our staff, working in partnership with students and stakeholders, that will make the real difference and help us to realise our ambitions. In creating a transformative culture where innovation, creativity and enterprise flourish, we will ensure that Bucks has an exciting future with graduates who can change the world.



**Professor Rebecca Bunting**  
Vice-Chancellor

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rebecca Bunting".



**Dame Christine Beasley**  
Chair of Council

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Beasley".

# Our Vision

## A leading University for professional and creative education and applied research



### Student success

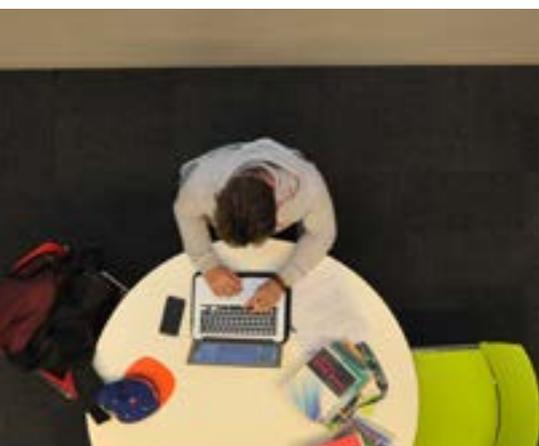
- Develop a course portfolio at all levels that is attractive to applicants, sector engaged and leads to excellent graduate outcomes and employment.
- Create the conditions for student success through a leading-edge, employment-focused curriculum, with recognised excellence evidenced across the University in teaching and in learning support.
- Be an inclusive learning community, ensuring that our courses and services enable success for students from diverse backgrounds.

### Reputation and impact

- Value and promote high quality collaboration and partnerships for teaching and research.
- Strengthen our international profile and activity, recognising that we live and work in global communities.
- Extend our role as an anchor institution, able to use our local, national and international reach to benefit our students, partners and the wider community in which we operate.

### Applied research

- Strengthen our reputation for research and enterprise in areas of academic and professional expertise.
- Become more commercial in our working practices in order to invest in our success.





**In order to be successful, we will:**

- be a professional, caring and supportive university, ambitious for our staff and students
- be committed to **equality and fairness**, creating opportunities for social mobility
- **develop and support our staff** to meet the challenges the university faces in the increasingly competitive environment in which we operate
- work in partnership with our **students** to promote student engagement and success
- develop a culture where innovation, **creativity and enterprise flourish**
- ensure that our **infrastructure and administration** are effective, efficient and fit for purpose
- maximise the potential of our **campuses** to support our priorities.



## Education Strand

We will craft an accessible university education that enables our students to persist in their learning, and succeed as learners and as sought after graduates. We aim to create transformational experiences that change lives and nurture in our graduates the attributes to enable them to change the world. We will stretch and challenge our students to succeed, so that they thrive in graduate-level roles in the challenging and competitive environments they will face. To create and deliver transformative education, we will form strong partnerships with carefully selected organisations in a wide variety of sectors. We will be an anchor institution, established in the fabric of the regions, sectors and professions we choose to work in.

Through the application of our creativity, our professional practice and a strongly commercial edge, we will grow as a university, so that we are able to make an even greater difference tomorrow than we do today.

### In partnership with students, our education sets out to change lives. It:

- develops graduates who succeed
- adds value to our economy, cultures, communities and partners
- catalyses and is inspired by our research and enterprise activity
- tackles real world problems with real world solutions.

### Our priorities – we will:

- challenge and support our students to **engage**, to persist and to succeed, in their academic studies and in creative and professional graduate-level roles across the world
- craft **high quality, flexible, curricula**: informed by research and professional practice, innovative and international in outlook, developing a core set of attributes of the Bucks graduate, addressing employer needs and delivered to increasing numbers of learners
- consistently create **excellence in learning and teaching**, through developing our educators and applying the latest educational methods to empower and engage students across their whole student learning experience
- apply **the latest technologies and data sciences** to widen participation, and personalise and improve the learning experiences of all our students
- commit to **partnerships that facilitate progression** to higher education, extend our reach, enrich our education, and anchor the University in the fabric of the regions, sectors and professions we work within.



**In order to be successful, we will:**

- support **student learning and engagement before students arrive**, through distance learning, progression partnerships, and personalised support for transitions into Bucks
  - provide a measurable and **significant improvement in the levels of student engagement with learning experiences** that impact positively on student academic and employment success, including the reorientation of our co-curricular activities to maximise that impact **and enable students to secure graduate-level employment experiences**
  - **review our programmes** to ensure that they can efficiently provide growth and high quality, are informed by research and professional practice, and all incorporate employment experiences and develop a core set of attributes that we will define for the Bucks Graduate
  - create **a curriculum offer from level three to doctoral learning**, growing sustainable provision at all levels to create diversified routes for learners to continue to acquire higher level professional knowledge and skills throughout their lives
  - see that all subjects provide **excellence in teaching**, through evidence-informed innovation and improvement in learning and teaching practice
- **review the academic structure** of our educational provision, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of our teaching, learning and assessment
  - procure and apply **the best digital learning technologies** and enable the digital fluency of our staff and students to make use of it
  - provide **predictive analytics** for students, and the staff that support them, to inform curriculum and service action, and significantly improve retention and success
  - develop the professionalism of our partnership management, **forging deeper relationships with defined priority organisations** in the regions, sectors and professions we work within
  - **increase the volume of our education delivered in partnership** with other organisations in the UK and internationally.



# Research and Enterprise Strand

Building on the enhanced profile for our work secured in Research Excellence Framework 2014 (REF 2014), the research and enterprise strand of our strategy will ensure that Bucks New University is better recognised as a leading UK University in applied, practice based and translational research and related advanced scholarship in our fields of professional, creative and translational practice.

## Our Applied Research and Enterprise work:

- shapes practice
- informs policy
- supports innovation
- underpins our curriculum
- catalyses entrepreneurship
- enhances economic growth
- enriches society.

## Our Priorities – we will:

- A. increase our **research and enterprise income** to enable growth and investment in these activities
- B. improve the volume and quality of staff research outputs to grow our **international profile for excellence** in our fields of professional, creative and translational research and enterprise practice
- C. ensure that our Research & Enterprise activity **enriches and enhances the student experience** and is part of what makes the Bucks Graduate distinctive
- D. secure improved **external recognition** of the contribution and impact of our research and enterprise work.

## In order to be successful, we will:

Establish cross-disciplinary and university-wide research clusters which provide the optimal environment to support and develop researchers working across a wider range of cognate fields of inquiry and practice and which enable more of our research and enterprise activity to enrich and inform our work in learning and teaching. These clusters will help Bucks to:

- **increase the scale and quality of research** returned to REF2021 by building research partnerships, increasing the quality of our outputs, growing research income, and maximising the research potential of our staff
- become the **university of choice for early stage research staff (ESR)** and postgraduate research students in our fields of professional, creative and applied research
- **evidence our success** by providing the basis for enhanced external recognition of our work - e.g. attainment of Research Degree Awarding Powers (RDAP), HR Excellence in Research Development award and Athena Swan accreditation.



### **In order to be successful, we will:**

Establish a central research and enterprise support function that will assist the university by providing support, development and advice that helps our academics to:

- **increase the income generated from our Research & Enterprise work** through higher quality bidding for larger sums to a greater range of funders and funding calls
- grow collaborative industry and end-user funded research and consultancy to enable investment in **sustainable growth**
- work as **collaborative and entrepreneurial partners** in the key economic sectors that benefit from our research.

Set out our expectations of the **Bucks Academic** in terms of:

- **agreed hallmarks** of expected activity across the main domains in which our academic staff work – vis. education, professional practice and research
- **clear examples of the expected outputs** and contribution to leadership, management and administration of academic staff from Lecturer to Professor.

# People and Organisational Effectiveness Strand

## A number of key cross-institutional priorities will transform the effectiveness of the University

### In order to be successful we will:

- implement a new framework that will ensure that our **employees have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities**, have development opportunities and are equipped with the necessary skills and attributes to contribute effectively to the success of the University
  - prioritise investment in an **advanced digital infrastructure** for education, research and high quality services and improve our data and business intelligence capabilities at all levels through a University-wide programme of systems development, learning and review
  - **generate a sufficient recurrent surplus** to sustain the University's infrastructure and academic activities. We will embed a more coherent approach to budget setting and monitoring across all faculties and support departments, looking to reduce overheads and promote a more proactive approach to value for money
  - **improve our commercial and business understanding** to take advantage of opportunities which present a positive return on investment
- ensure that our estate and facilities will enable new or **improved ways of working, increased efficiencies and improved opportunities for a better return on investment**
  - **create sustainable and mutually beneficial collaborations with** UK, EU and international partners, refining our partnership approval, development and quality assurance processes to ensure that this key area of our activity is centrally coordinated and underpinned by more agile, risk-based procedures and protocols which are fully aligned with the new strategy
  - **create a stronger brand identity** and recognition, transforming the profile of the University through positive stakeholder relationship management, strategic corporate communications and clarity on key corporate messages.



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