

Teaching Excellence Framework 2023

Lancaster University institutional narrative

Part A. Institutional context

Educational mission and strategic focus

1. Lancaster University, established in 1964, is a collegiate, research-intensive institution located on the edge of the Forest of Bowland in the northwest of England. Our Strategic Plan for 2021-26 sets out an overarching vision for Lancaster to be “Globally significant – a sector leader and innovator that delivers the highest quality research, teaching and student experience, and that engages locally, nationally and internationally.” [1]
2. This vision is expressed through a commitment to advancing knowledge, wisdom and understanding through our excellence, with activity organised across three strategic priorities focused on the transformational benefits of education, research and engagement on individuals, communities and wider society.
3. The education pillar of the current University level strategy consolidates and builds upon the previous Education Strategy, further developing themes of employability, internationalisation, sustainability and inclusivity, and prioritising the importance of connections between education and research within the curriculum and student academic experience. [2]

Location and facilities

4. The University’s main campus occupies a beautiful 560-acre parkland site at Bailrigg, located three miles to the South of Lancaster’s city centre. Set within a perimeter of ancient woodland and abundant green space, the campus provides an attractive environment to study, work and live. It incorporates award-winning residential accommodation, specialist facilities for research, and spaces for learning and teaching, for student activities, and for administrative and professional services.
5. The campus is open to all, with members of the local community welcomed to enjoy a variety of outdoor spaces, community events, library, art exhibitions, theatrical and musical performances, and benefit from outstanding indoor and outdoor sports and wellbeing facilities. Campus-based accommodation provides almost 7000 bed spaces for students and their families, with residential facilities named Best University Halls at the UK’s National Student Housing Awards eight times since 2010, most recently in 2019.
6. Lancaster’s commitment to a sustainable campus is reflected in the focus on becoming carbon neutral by 2035. Already, our students benefit from the Green Lancaster initiative, a partnership between the University and Students’ Union focused on engaging students, staff and the local community in practical responses to climate and ecological emergencies. Coupled with careful management of green spaces, and the creation of renewable energy from the campus wind turbine, our focus on sustainability has resulted in a Gold rating for Environmental Impact awarded as part of the QS World University Rankings in 2022. We were in receipt of the international Green Flag Award for the tenth year in a row in 2022.

Organisational structure and governance

7. The University has a bicameral system of governance, with the Council being the governing body. The Senate acts on behalf of Council, to which it reports. The Council is the legal entity and ultimate authority of the University and it is unambiguously and collectively accountable for institutional activities, taking all final decisions on matters of fundamental concern within its remit. It is chaired _____ and includes lay members, senior University officers and representatives from the Senate and the Students' Union. Our approach to governance, including joint committees of Council and Senate for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Student Experience demonstrates the priority that both bodies give to the educational and wider experience of all students of the University.
8. The Senate is the academic authority of the University and has primary responsibility for its academic work, both in teaching and research, and for the regulation and superintendence of the education and discipline of the students of the University. Chaired by the Vice-Chancellor (VC), membership includes academic and academic-related staff, and student representatives. To drive its education priorities, Senate sub-committees include the Education Committee, and its sub-committees the Collaborative Partnership Sub-Committee and the Academic Standards and Quality Committee. These committees are linked to Faculty- and departmental-level committees, providing a robust academic governance system to facilitate regular, open and effective dialogue between those involved in education and student experience across all levels.

Established excellence

9. Lancaster received the prestigious Times and Sunday Times University of the Year award in 2018. We are consistently placed amongst the top 15 providers in the UK across all three UK University league tables, where we are also ranked as the highest ranked in the northwest of England. There has also been continuous improvement in relation to standing in international rankings and performance, having been consistently in the top 150 Universities in the world over the reporting period, most recently ranked 122nd in the Times Higher Education World Rankings [3]. We received the further accolade of being named the Times and Sunday Times International University of the Year in 2020 [4]. We have also been awarded a five-star rating for overall performance in the QS Stars rating system across all categories – teaching, employability, internationalisation, research, facilities, subject ranking and environmental impact.
10. Lancaster is a member of the N8 group of research-intensive universities, and many of our staff who teach are also highly research active. In REF 2021 we demonstrated world-class research quality, with 91% of our research output independently rated as 'internationally excellent' or 'world leading', including 46% rated in the highest 4* category [5].
11. We are particularly proud of our sector recognition and sustained league table performance across our portfolio in being achieved alongside a strong track record in widening participation. Consistently throughout the reporting period, 13% of our UK Undergraduate students were from IMD quintile 1 neighbourhoods [6], and 89% from state schools (significantly above our HESA benchmark) [7], reflecting our commitment to equality of opportunity and excellence in education for all. Student success is further underpinned by our progressive programme of activities for widening access and participation to students from school through to the workplace, provision that was awarded the accolade of

National Education Opportunities Network (NEON) Higher Education Institution of the Year in 2021, further detailed in Part C: Student Outcomes.

12. We renewed our institutional Bronze Athena Swan award in 2019, and are now working to deliver action plans addressing six key areas, including; EDI culture, gender pay gap, academic career pipeline, fixed-term contract staff, our family-friendly offer and professional services staff career progression. Since 2022, all departments or faculties hold Bronze or Silver Athena Swan awards, strongly supporting our progress towards gender equality.

Student identity formation and sense of belonging

13. 'The Lancaster Experience' – the collective, multi-faceted approach to student belonging, academic support, college membership and department – is fundamental to the strong sense of identity and connection our students have to Lancaster and their academic experience. Services and support strongly empower students to develop ownership, understanding and responsibility for their learning and development. Supporting them to fulfil their potential both academically, and as people who go on to make positive, transformational contributions to wider society.
14. A particularly distinctive feature of the University is its College system, which plays a central role in the life and experience of our students, from welcoming and integrating them into the University, to creating lasting student communities. Each of Lancaster's nine Colleges has a team of College Advisors who provide support to students, complementing Academic Tutor roles in the departments. Each undergraduate College also has an The Students' Union facilitate the JCR elections and support the executives to work in collaboration with their Senior Common Room (the staff equivalent to JCRs) to organise activities that engage students in the College.
15. The Colleges and Students' Union together offer many different kinds of opportunity and experience that complement Lancaster's core academic activities. These enable students to develop their potential across a broad range of endeavours, including volunteering opportunities, sporting and social activities. Our Lancaster Award scheme encourages students to obtain recognition for a range of extra-curricular activities, especially those related to employability and enterprise. As many as 1,400 students per year can be working towards the Lancaster Award, with c.300 per year completing it.
16. We are therefore proud that our students report that they feel a strong sense of belonging to our community of staff and students at Lancaster, with responses to National Student Survey (NSS) Q21 being significantly above our OfS benchmark in both 2021 and 2022. [8]

Globally vibrant, community focused

17. At Lancaster, we provide undergraduate and postgraduate education across four Faculties: Arts and Social Sciences, Science and Technology, Health and Medicine, and our Management School, collectively incorporating 27 academic departments. At undergraduate level, the University awards 385 different subject titles across 62 Common Aggregation Hierarchy Level 3 subject groups, 70 of which are PSRB accredited. [9]
18. In 2020/21, 12,560 of our students were undergraduate, and 4,910 postgraduate. Of the undergraduates, 99.9% were full-time, and 95.8% were under the age of 21 on entry. In the

same academic year, there were 9,820 students studying for a Lancaster degree registered with our international partners, with this number increasing to 10,500 in 2021/22.

19. This context makes the composition of Lancaster's student population one of the most internationally diverse in the sector, both in terms of the population studying at Lancaster (30% of our Undergraduate population in 2020/21 were non-UK domiciled), and the level of transnational education (TNE) (>10,000 TNE students, placing us in the top 12 among UK HEIs). [10] We also benefit from a richly diverse staff body, with 90 nationalities represented. Our TNE includes a select family of overseas partners located in China, Germany, Ghana and Malaysia. These partnerships provide opportunities for students to gain a Lancaster University degree alongside global education experiences including summer schools, study abroad and exchange programmes across and between campuses.
20. Our collaborative partnerships have helped us to grow a globally networked community that spans disciplines and cultures. As well as our overseas activity, our strategic ambition is to create positive and transformational engagement at a regional level. This is reflected in initiatives such as the development of the Morecambe Bay curriculum – a unique 'place-based' green curriculum for young people to learn about environmental sustainability.
21. Lancaster's global community is therefore not only global in outlook, but strongly rooted in the region. We have long-standing partnerships with three Further Education Colleges in the northwest of England – Blackpool and the Fylde College, Blackburn College, and Furness College – for whom we validate degree and degree apprenticeship provision, with >3,500 students (in 2020/21) at those colleges studying for a Lancaster award.
22. In addition, University Academy 92 Manchester (UA92) is an innovative higher education institution established in 2017 by Lancaster in partnership with the Class of '92 and is independently OfS registered. Focused on character and personal development alongside academic excellence, UA92 students are provided with personal coaching and industry mentoring, alongside structured block mode study. The institution is supported by a number of multinational organisations including Microsoft, KPMG, Manchester United and TalkTalk. These partners contribute to curriculum development and are an integral part of the learning experience, providing students with guest lectures, industry insight days, masterclasses and placement opportunities. The first cohort of UA92 students graduated in 2021/22.
23. Undergraduates studying Lancaster degrees at UA92 are included in our indicator data for the TEF 2023 exercise. It should be noted, however, that the numbers of students at UA92 are a relatively small proportion of our overall undergraduate population (2%). UA92 is also planning to submit a separate institutional narrative for the TEF exercise. General information and evidence about the quality assurance and enhancement of our collaborative partnership provision, including UA92, is located in the next section. This will be augmented in UA92's provider submission.

Provision excluded from Lancaster's TEF 2023 provider submission

24. TNE is an important aspect of Lancaster's institutional context and consequently is referred to elsewhere in parts of our submission. However, recognising the provider narrative limit of 25 pages, we have opted to focus on our UK delivery and to exclude specific reference to TNE undergraduate student experience and outcomes. Similarly, collaborative partnerships with FE providers are not in scope, and are not included.

Collaborative partnership teaching quality

25. Approximately a half of Lancaster University's undergraduates study at a collaborative partner institution away from the Bailrigg campus, gaining their Lancaster degree through a collaborative partnership with the University.
26. Quality assurance and enhancement processes with collaborative partnerships mirror those of Lancaster, maximising the opportunity to achieve congruence in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, whilst offering sufficient flexibility that individual partnerships settings are able to contextualise teaching to meet the needs of their location and distinctive student bodies. [11] To encourage excellence beyond minimum quality thresholds, partnership student performance is regularly monitored at management meetings and through the Annual Programme Review (APR) process, enabling the inclusion of data provided by our partners. [12]
27. Lancaster's commitment to TNE excellence is further evidenced through our involvement in the QAA's Quality Enhancement Scheme for TNE, a voluntary five-year review process commissioned by UUK and GuildHE aimed at enhancing HE provision through reviews of country-based activity awarded by UK-based HEIs. The 2021/22 schedule included a focus on German-based TNE and Lancaster's Leipzig partnership with Navitas was selected for a case study by the QAA. We have also already submitted evidence for Lancaster University College at Beijing Jiaotong University, with China among the countries for review in 2022-23.

Part B. Student experience

28. Lancaster's commitment to educational excellence is characterised by strong continuous improvement of our teaching quality, reflected in the teaching pillar of our University Strategy and our action-oriented Education Strategy. Our provider data indicates strong performance in all areas, reinforced by NSS overall satisfaction data being consistently significantly above our OfS benchmark. [13] Part B provides additional information and evidence to support our positive performance in relation to aspects of student experience.

Curriculum design, learning and assessment

29. Lancaster's outstanding educational experience for our students is, in part, attributable to how excellent teaching and assessment practice is systemically embedded across our provision. A strength of our teaching is to encourage subject-level autonomy in devising curricula, learning and assessment. This creates the space for our academic subject experts to develop pedagogic distinctiveness and innovation that meets the needs of students across all of our courses.
30. This diverse disciplinary distinctiveness is moderated centrally by our Annual Programme Review (APR) process. APRs are the formal quality mechanism for systematically reporting on educational quality, identifying examples of high-quality practice and highlighting areas for enhancement. They ensure comparability of teaching and assessment standards across the diversity of Lancaster degrees. They are conducted at cognate programme level, and aggregated at Faculty level to identify common themes of educational quality, enhancement and effective practice for faculty, and for institutional attention. Across all levels, the process

is linked to department, faculty and institutional action planning, held to account in Teaching Committees at respective levels.

31. We have also built in the flexibility for APRs to sharpen our focus on specific thematic areas in any given academic year. In 2017/18, the University concluded a Review of Assessment and Feedback, leading to the creation of five high-level principles designed to establish a baseline of effectiveness in assessment and feedback practice. [14] This work was augmented by extensive guidance and curation of examples of practice from across the University. [15] As part of the process of implementing the principles, the 2018/19 APR incorporated a special focus on how programmes were responding to their introduction, triggering action-planning throughout the system. [16] As early as 2019/20, our annual External Examiner Summary Report (which aggregates key themes from across undergraduate EE reporting), was identifying positive benefits to 'diverse modes of assessment ... giving students the opportunity to perform to their strengths', [17] a theme that was sustained in the following academic cycle. [18]
32. Other innovations in assessment include an increase in the adoption of authentic assessment approaches, designed to reflect the types of tasks expected of graduates in the workplace, closely allied to our employability agenda. For example, the Department of Accounting and Finance now use real-world case study data to engage students in tasks similar to that which they will encounter in the workplace. In 2021/22 a co-developed project between Law and Sociology explored the impact of authentic assessment on student learning. [19]
33. Beyond APR, the University employs a department-level quintennial Strategic Teaching and Learning Review (STLR) process. STLR is a forward-focused, enhancement-led strategic planning activity that provides opportunities to ensure links between departmental expertise and research interests align with teaching requirements for the future, and the identification of support and development needs the department may have in relation to staff and programme development. STLR also operates in-step with the quintennial Programme Re-approval Process, which involves rigorous curriculum and assessment mapping, and ensure that the overall integrity and coherence of a programme of study is maintained.
34. Lancaster supports the peer review of teaching staff to promote collaborative dialogue about the effectiveness of educational practice. Our Peer Observation and Review policy encourages Departments to develop approaches to peer review that support the strength of their teaching. [20] For example, the Department of Biomedical and Life Sciences require independent departmental academic review of all modules on an annual basis, involving sampling of course content, lecture recordings, learning resources, assessments, learning outcomes, accessibility, and analysis of end of module feedback from students. Reviews are made available to module convenors to reflect upon and inform future practice. Key learning is considered in whole-department meetings, enabling sharing of effective practice.

Developing an inclusive education at Lancaster

35. Inclusion is one of four core themes in the Education Strategy that permeates all levels of teaching, learning and assessment practices across the university. It is closely connected to wider university strategy and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) vision statements, and EDI charter marks including Athena Swan, Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, Disability Confident and our commitment to the Race Equality Charter.

36. Inclusive Learning Support Plans (ILSPs) represent the equitable system designed to ensure reasonable adjustments and support for disabled students are provided. The system enables staff from the Disability and Inclusion Service to work with individual students and their home department. The system is embedded within Lancaster's own student records system – LUSI – which has enabled us to continuously refine the effectiveness of ILSPs. For example, ongoing work is enabling support systems to meet the needs of specific groups of students (e.g. pregnancy, parent carers, care leavers, estranged, refugees and students transitioning) into a single system that captures all their reasonable adjustments and support.
37. This represents a significant shift from a disability focused ILSP, to one which is more holistic for students with different entitlements, within a system that has been more streamlined and effective for departments and professional services. Early indications are that a more integrated approach is having a positive impact. For example, attainment rates for disabled students have risen

Research-led teaching, research-stimulated learning

38. As a leading research-intensive university, we are fully committed to delivering a rich research-stimulated learning experience for our students. We do so within an environment that is steeped in the principles, practices and culture of research and knowledge creation across its breadth of disciplines. Our educational provision is designed and taught by our world-leading academic community who both teach and engage actively in research and who bring their research expertise and insights into the curriculum.
39. Lancaster expects as a norm that our academic staff contribute across all three key professional areas of research, teaching and engagement. As a result, the proportion of academic staff involved in both teaching and research is amongst the highest in the sector. Among research-intensive universities, Lancaster ranks 3rd with 80% of our core teaching staff active in research (range 55-91%). [22]
40. Throughout their studies, Lancaster students progressively engage with learning about the processes of research and its methodologies, the critical and problem-solving skills required to both understand and critique research and, in many cases, to then develop their own independent, original research in the form of dissertations and project outputs. The practice of co-authoring research publications with researchers and students is also well established. For example, in our Department of Biomedical and Life Sciences, the entire 2021 student cohort studying a module on Microbes and Diseases were co-authors on a collaborative peer-reviewed scientific publication related to the transmission of SARS-CoV-2, arising from an element of their assessed coursework. [23]
41. Our annual Undergraduate Research Conference [24] provides a vibrant platform for students to showcase their research and learning from their studies, and embodies Lancaster's research-imbued educational ethos. The conference is co-created with students, and led by students. Since its inaugural year in 2020, it has enabled 179 Lancaster students from across our international and regional partnership network to present their original research to a cumulative audience of nearly 800 students [25], forming a truly interactive global research community. Student feedback highlights the positive value of research networking and collaboration, and is a further example of how we develop aspirations for students to develop further study and careers in research. This is also reflected in our rank as

6th nationally in terms of the proportion of UK-domiciled undergraduates progressing to further study for a higher degree by research. [26]

42. A faculty-wide research-teaching nexus project undertaken by our Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in 2018 brought departments together to explicitly identify and articulate for students how their research informs and shapes their academic programmes of study. One innovative development that emerged from this work is our new 'Global Classroom' module – a model for teaching that utilises a digital media learning space to connect students and staff to global research perspectives, drawing on expertise and insight from across our international campus network.
43. A further feature of our research-stimulated education involves working with employers to explore the interface of research and professional practice, with students engaging with real-world and applied research in work-based contexts. This is significant to our commitment to regional transformation, with 42% of our UK-domiciled, full-time first-degree leavers remaining in the northwest region upon graduation. [27]
44. Several departmental initiatives are therefore focused on enabling authentic application of subject understanding in real-world settings. For example, the Lancaster Law Clinic (see below) and the bespoke Psychology Employability Programme (PEP), which offers placements for UG students in a variety of research assistant and community-based roles, such as within the laboratories of the Psychology department. Students take part in live research conducted by academic staff, gaining both work experience and applied research skills taught on the programmes.

Spotlight: Lancaster Law Clinic

Students work in the national, award-winning Law Clinic in the third year of their undergraduate Clinical Learning Degree, being trained to provide legal advice to members of the public under the supervision of a qualified Solicitor. In response to the pandemic, the Law Clinic introduced a virtual service, allowing the students and practising lawyers to continue to provide free legal advice, irrespective of client location. Since 2019, the Clinic has advised 170 clients and provided over £230,000 of free legal advice to the public. It supports the University's 'town and gown' Memorandum of Understanding [28] and the Civic University Agreement [29], as the Law Clinic's provision of free legal advice enhances the support available to members of the public.

The educational impact and distinctiveness of the Law Clinic has been recognised through high module evaluation feedback from students (5/5 for overall satisfaction in 2021-22) [30].

Underpinned by research and scholarship [31] [32], the Clinic employs authentic learning and assessment to simulate legal practice. Students acquire essential legal skills such as client interviewing, legal research and drafting, transferable communication and IT literacy skills, and the fulfilment of providing a civic service that makes a difference in the community.

"Participating in the Law Clinic is the closest experience to working as a professional lawyer that a law student can get throughout their course. The clinical experience has helped me acquire numerous technical skills such as legal researching and drafting, but also many soft skills, such as teamwork and time management." "Not only does the Law Clinic provide personal benefits in terms of my studies but aiding someone in a difficult time by sharing my knowledge is extremely rewarding." *Law Clinic student comments* [33]

45. In another example, the Department of Entrepreneurship and Strategy hosts a long-established Entrepreneurs in Residence (EiR) programme. Across the department's teaching at all levels, EiRs are regular active participants in teaching and wider student support. The scheme currently hosts over 80 EiRs, based variously in the north-west of England, more widely across the UK, and overseas. To extend the reach of the Entrepreneurs in Residence Scheme, since 2021, a collaboration with the Global Business Schools network has brought academics, students and entrepreneurs together from around the world with the aim of cultivating an international engagement network. The 'in residence' model is the template for similar Lancaster initiatives such as the Management School Leaders in Residence programme, and FASS residency programme where students and industry experts / practitioners work together.

Staff professional development and embedding effective practice

46. Lancaster's Education and People Strategies 2020 [34] set out a strong commitment to professional development of academic practice, recognising its important role in enhancing the quality of teaching and curriculum that positively benefit student academic experiences. This has been more recently reaffirmed through the development of one of our core institutional values in 'creating positive change by being ambitious in our learning, expertise and action'. [35]
47. Our threefold approach to staff development focuses on 1) the enhancement of individual teaching practice and effectiveness as educators, 2) the cultivation and sharing of excellent practice through networks that connect staff throughout our global education community, and 3) the creation of capacity and capability for curriculum design and development. [36]
48. This commitment is particularly evident in Lancaster having embedded engagement in teaching development into academic reward and recognition processes. There is an expectation for all academic staff to complete a formally recognised qualification and/or professional recognition for teaching in HE, reified into Academic Probation policy, and a pre-requisite for academic promotion at all levels.
49. Academic staff who are new to teaching complete a Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP), accredited against the Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Learning in HE (PSF). Colleagues with prior teaching experience can also demonstrate their track record of effectiveness in educational practice through our accredited ATLAS programme to claim for Advance HE (AHE) Fellowship or Senior Fellowship. In both pathways, staff are supported to develop their knowledge and practice, their capability as critically reflective educators, and to build networks for the purposes of peer review teaching and practice exchange. Lancaster maintains centralised data about academic staff teaching qualifications (informing HESA reporting). By the end of 2021/22, 71% of our academic staff with teaching responsibilities held a teaching qualification. [37]
50. Over the reporting period, teaching development provision supported 585 staff to achieve a category of PSF recognition [38] bringing the cumulative total of staff at Lancaster holding professional recognition to 1,314. [39] This figure includes professional services staff that teach or support learning, and a significant number of Postgraduate students who provide teaching support within their Academic Departments, most of whom complete the PSF accredited Associate Teacher Programme (>250 during the reporting period).

51. Approaches to professional development and recognition for teaching are closely aligned to academic reward systems. Categories of the PSF are key reference points at each of the four levels of our academic promotions criteria for teaching. Educational activities recognised through the promotions process, encourage links between individual academic practice and collegial contributions, for example valuing educational leadership, peer mentoring, collaborative peer review, the evaluation and exchange of effective practice, and the scholarship of teaching and learning. [40]
52. In 2019, the University Senate approved new Teaching & Scholarship (T&S) and Teaching & Engagement academic career pathways, to work in parallel with the existing Teaching & Research pathway. [41] This reinforced the value being placed on teaching in balance with other core strategic activities, appropriate to the focus of an academic's role, and set within the context of working within a research-intensive environment. This change has created a promotion route to Professor on a T&S basis. During the reporting period, there were 148 academic promotions based on either a teaching-led, or balanced T&S case (97 to Senior Lecturer, and 51 to Professor). [42]

Sharing and embedding effective practice

53. We create a range of spaces through which colleagues can connect, share and promote effective educational practices. Crucially, we also support staff to develop a scholarly and critically reflective approach, in order that any shared practices are robustly evaluated and evidence-informed. For example, the PGCAP Scholarship of Practice Academic Enquiry module leads to an array of disciplinary pedagogic insights. [43] These are often disseminated through our Annual Education Conference, or via a range of alternative sharing platforms with varying degrees of formality, reach and focus. This is broadly reflective of our aim to translate what is learned through individual practice development into benefit for the wider education community.
54. This cultivation of effective practice, interdisciplinary and cross-cultural professional learning, and a dedication to openness and sharing are evident throughout a range of professional learning spaces, including: networks (such as the Inclusive Learning Network, Digital Education Network, and Senior Fellows Network); whole institution sharing events incorporating staff from across the global partnership community (such as the *In Partnership* sharing series, and *Facing In/Facing Out* lecture and seminar events); and ground-up sharing practice activities including *Teach-Learn-Share* TeachMeets, *Teaching in Progress (TIPs)* events organised by the Teaching and Scholarship Network, and Faculty-led sharing practice sessions.
55. We also invest in approaches that create capacity and action for transformative educational change at an institutional level. For example, the Institute for Curriculum Enhancement (ICE) Fellowships scheme (2021-22) has seen a cadre of enthusiastic colleagues undertake a variety of curriculum and education enhancement projects, each underpinned by scholarship and seeking to improve the experience of our students. The scheme has led to several outcomes that have become more centrally embedded, including the development of a university-wide framework of assessment literacy [44], and the expansion of a widening participation initiative focused on developing information literacy for students making the transition to university. [45]

Learning environment and academic support

56. Lancaster students benefit from outstanding campus facilities and award-winning academic support services, including a comprehensive programme of academic skills and information literacy support provided by Learning Development and Faculty Librarian teams. This support is underpinned by Lancaster's strategic commitment to 'Ensuring all students are enabled to engage in their learning and to develop and succeed at the highest levels through providing appropriate academic support and learning development opportunities.' (Education Strategy)
57. Library and Learning Development operate a hub-and-spoke model of embedded faculty and centralised provision. This is extended to students studying at all levels, providing tailored support within each faculty, and university-wide support for English language development, mathematics and statistics, and a Library and Information Literacy Programme [46].
58. The Learning Development and Faculty Librarian teams have a rich and diverse offer that includes bespoke collaborative and embedded teaching, one-to-one tutorials, standalone series of workshops, pop-up library sessions, developing and supporting peer mentoring, and collaborating on curriculum development and inclusive teaching. Online guidance and support provided through subject guides, tutorials, videos and blog posts includes content created by, and in partnership with, students. The wealth of online materials as well as the ability of professional teams to rapidly transition to online teaching and support ensured continued engagement during the pandemic. A hybrid approach to teaching and support further extended provision in 2021/22, incorporating 379 taught sessions, more than 2,500 one-to-one tutorials, and 1,300 engagements with English Language support.
59. Evaluative feedback from students on these taught sessions and individual appointments is overwhelmingly positive. In a review of Learning Development support in the Management School students in 2021/22, the service saw significant increases in use of the service on the previous year. For instance, an 87% increase in the number of one-to-one UG tutorials. Across the provision, 90% of students reported that sessions were useful or very useful.

This illustrative comment

reflects wider indications that such support increases student confidence and independent learning, aided by the development of effective information and learning strategies. [47]

60. Targeted support is provided for specific groups of students, for instance, the Maths and Stats Hub (MASH) is for those entering without A-level maths; English for Academic Purposes is typically for international students whose first language is not English; and writing mentoring schemes support students in Arts, Humanities, Business and Social Sciences.
61. Uptake for these services is high. In 2020-21 alone, MASH recorded 4,100 visits from over 1,000 individual students. A survey of MASH students conducted the following year in 2021-22 (sent to 736 students and eliciting a 13% response rate), revealed that 80% of students agreed that support had increased their knowledge of key mathematical and statistical concepts, and also reported positively on increased levels of confidence and motivation. Academic staff have also commented on the impact of provision, one Mathematics Professor noting: 'There is a striking difference between the 'before MASH' era, and the 'with MASH'. I have the feeling that students are (i) keeping up with the material better (not only A-level

students), and (ii) engaging with the module more effectively.' A positive impact on retention and student grades has also been identified. [48]

62. Partnership with students is central to the success of academic support teams, whether through consultation with student representatives over library resources, or more directly through employment of students in a variety of roles. The Learning Development team employs more than 100 student partners annually across a range of mentoring, tutoring and teaching assistant roles; developing their teaching and leadership skills. [49] Employability and personal development benefits, including confidence and wellbeing, are reported by students who work with the teams.
63. The Learning Development team received a Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence in 2022, reflecting the extent of their sustained and impactful collaborative working with students. [50]

Spotlight: Connect Lancaster

The pandemic created barriers to students finding the support they needed at a critical time and hindered the university's ability to reach out with targeted support and monitor those in need. This prompted the rapid development of Connect Lancaster (launched June 2020), a mobile app-based student-query triage system, available across multiple devices, linking students directly to academic departments, colleges and support services.

Connect Lancaster enabled students to submit queries about any aspect of their study, experience, and wellbeing, with the system using a series of subject tags in order to automatically route enquiries to the most appropriate web-based information, service team or individual member of staff. The system's functionality also created a single route for students to report Covid-19 symptoms and test results, and incorporated a welfare health check-in function for vulnerable, ill or self-isolating students to maintain regular contact with staff, and trigger alerts to staff to conduct welfare checks.

Students were involved in the co-creation, IT development and naming of Connect Lancaster, and acted as project ambassadors to successfully engage academic departments in adopting the system. There were >67,000 student interactions with the system in the first 12 months. By April 2021, 33% of students were reporting that Connect Lancaster was their preferred method of contacting the University. This has subsequently led to its evolution as Advice, Support, Knowledge (ASK), fully integrated with a centralised student digital hub, implemented in early 2022. This now includes personalised information about students' academic study, including, programme and module information, timetables, and feedback on assessed work.

Physical and digital learning resources

64. Lancaster is home to an abundance of state-of-the-art specialist resources and facilities. To name but a select few, these include nanofabrication technology, controlled environment plant growth rooms, ultra-low noise Isolabs, Imagination Design studios, specialist UTGARD and Neutron labs for Nuclear Engineering, ultra-low temperature laboratories which have created some of the coldest temperatures ever measured, even a Bloomberg suite with cognitive adaptive learning technology used for chartered financial analysis. Such facilities are in active use for conducting world-leading research, and for use by undergraduate and

postgraduate students in their learning and own research projects. That we consistently perform significantly above our OfS benchmark in the NSS for access to course-specific resources [51] is a testament to how well-received these facilities are.

65. Centrally, the library is the primary location for students to study on campus and is open 24 hours and 7 days per week during term time. It is supported by sustained investment by the University in library resources – over the reporting period averaging £3.6m per academic year. This has led to the provision of a wide range of high-quality study spaces, most recently extended in April 2021, to provide a current total of 1,750 study spaces. This includes 50 student bookable group study rooms and dedicated space for study support and postgraduate students. The popularity of these facilities is revealed by high visitor numbers. In 2020/21 there were 825,095 library visits, compared to a sector mean of 171,576. [52]
66. We adopt a digitally-rich approach of ‘the library is where you are’ to engaging with students. A 24/7 chat service, online teaching and individual online appointments for academic support ensure that all students gain high-quality support regardless of location. This principle has also seen increase in our e-resources. Over the reporting period we increased our e-book collection from 361,136 to 423,793 items. Similarly, our e-journal resource increased from 33,137 to 96,978. [53] Our students have access to over 400 specialist databases [54] and word class primary source material. In 2020/21 there were 573,921 unique e-book requests and over 3.3m article downloads. [55]
67. Our commitment to embedding learning resources into teaching is seen through Leganto online reading lists. In 2020-21, 43% of Lancaster modules had adopted these (an increase from 30% in 2018-19). Digital resources are also provided through the Digital Content Store, with 78,429 views in 2021-22. [56] The Rapid ILL interlending service for articles and book chapters fulfilled 97% of requests in 2020/21 with an average fulfilment time of 8 hours. [57]
68. Student familiarity with resources is enhanced by subject guides and tutorials provide expert guidance to students and are well used (168,000 views in 2021/22). [58] Indeed, student satisfaction with learning resources is consistently high with a sector-leading satisfaction score of 91% in the 2022 NSS. In recognition of the quality of provision and the contribution it makes, the library was invited to join Research Libraries UK in 2022, and was shortlisted for the Times Higher Education Outstanding Library Team award in 2021, and won the award in 2022. [59]
69. In 2020, Lancaster invested in Blackboard Ally, a digital tool which enables staff to assess the accessibility of online resources. By 2021/22, c.80% of all learning material was fully accessible. Ally also allows students to download material in a range of alternative formats, meaning that they can easily view and edit the material on their own devices, and in the programmes that they are most comfortable with. In 2021/22 there were 11,442 instances of students downloading material in an alternative format.
70. Significant investment has been devoted to ensuring that there is automatic, accurate online captioning for all recorded materials. Currently, the accuracy of our transcription is approximately 85%, with new technologies being introduced from the 2022/23 academic year that should raise this to 97%. This ensures that all online resources are accessible to those with hearing difficulties, or who struggle to follow recordings due to language issues.

Spotlight: Embrace Digital

As a response to the pandemic and the need for the transition of teaching, learning and assessment to fully online, Lancaster established Embrace Digital. This web-based resource was developed through the collaborative efforts of academics, learning technologists, digital skills developers and educational developers to establish a set of delineated standards and associated practical guidance for effective online educational practice.

The aim was initially staff focused and integrated pedagogical guidance and digital skills guidance in a single digital hub to enable the development of consistent and high-quality teaching, underpinned by principles of accessibility. The hub included guidance on how to create accessible and engaging online content; suggested practice for the delivery of excellent teaching for all subject areas; offered step-by-step technical instructions to smooth the pivot to online by coupling suggested practices with associated digital skills training; and facilitated sharing of effective practice case studies.

Student-oriented elements of Embrace Digital followed soon afterwards, reflecting the single point of information approach modelled in the staff element. Embrace Digital continues to act as a starting point to support students' experience in the online learning environment, attuning them to the digital facilities and tools available to them, supporting our commitment to accessibility and inclusion, and enhancing students' digital literacy.

In the two years since launch in July 2020 the site has received more than 44,000 individual page views, and has received positive external recognition. Encouragingly, this included commentary in relation to online support for disabled students, with Embrace Digital "characterised by the clarity with which it explained the rationale or benefit for actions as well as how to implement the actions". (Newman, 2022, p91) [60]

our approach for having been: "creative, imaginative and innovative ... using blended learning in a very positive way to spread best practice quickly and not rely on people themselves having to reinvent ways of doing what could easily be provided if everyone worked together."

Embrace Digital received sector recognition in the form of a UCISA award for Supporting Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Research in 2022.

Student engagement, dialogue and continuous improvement

71. Lancaster's institutional strategy recognises the centrality of student engagement in the quality of our education and curriculum, making the commitment to a 'research-led and employer-informed Lancaster curriculum that places students at the heart of the work to enhance the learning experience'. [61]
72. The Students' Charter is co-created in partnership between the University and Students' Union, and is reviewed and renewed annually. It outlines the expectations between the university, student union and the student body in relation to academic experience, community and opportunity. [62] Crucially, the Charter embodies a core principle that Lancaster strives to achieve productive partnerships between its students and staff.

73. In practice, this is strongly enabled by our Student Academic Representation system, which is the foundation and formal structure for dialogue between students and the University about academic experiences at department, faculty and institutional levels. The sustained and continuous approach to this dialogue ensures that the university can deliver effective, meaningful change that benefits all partners in our learning community.
74. The focus on student engagement and representation for educational enhancement is embedded in our Manual of Academic Regulations and Procedures (MARP), requiring all academic departments and faculties to ensure support for course representation, provision of departmental staff-student committees, participation in student experience committees, and the active use of student feedback in the ongoing development of teaching and course design. [63]

Strengthening the student voice

75. Approaches to Student Academic Representation are regularly reviewed by faculties and departments, and the Students' Union operate an accreditation scheme to incentivise student academic engagement. This speaks to an overall commitment that we create positive conditions for productive dialogue with students that ensures their views are valued and that appropriate actions are taken.
76. For instance, the LU Management School (LUMS) and Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) involve student representatives on Course Approvals Sub Committees and Education and Student Experience Committees (formerly known as Teaching Committees). These faculty representatives are encouraged to apply a student perspective to all items under discussion. To support this, key committee members – including the Associate Deans for Education who chair them – implement regular catch ups with representatives to better support their transition into the role and instil confidence for them to contribute.
77. Elsewhere, the Lancaster Environment Centre has been an early adopter of a new departmental student role, that of the Student Experience Lead. Their main responsibility is to be the primary point of contact with the student reps, and to aid in the synthesis of key themes and issues arising across the department. Consequently, key activities involve the co-organisation of termly Staff-Student Experience Forum, and leadership of termly Student Voice meetings with every cohort to give every student a chance to discuss their experience.
78. The global pandemic also acted as a catalyst for many departments to further enhance student engagement and implement mechanisms beyond the formal guidelines in MARP. These approaches are increasingly attuned to the needs of students within their disciplinary context, with a variety of effective practices from across our 27 academic departments, reported via Annual Programme Reviews. [64]
79. For example, the Department of Management Science uses a Student Consultation Forum model, creating regular, informal discussions spaces that enable the department to act responsively to more immediate recommendations from students – such as adjusting administrative processes, or introducing activities to improve cohesion of student cohorts. Conversations also create a platform for developing deeper understanding of complex curriculum matters from a student perspective, better informing longer-term, formalised action-planning.

80. Similarly, the School of Computing and Communications operate a weekly feedback model, enabling student representatives to meet with the Head of School and Directors of Teaching over lunch every week to offer their feedback and suggestions. Staff follow up a few days later by publishing a short video to all staff and students in the School, making transparent the themes raised and updating on any actions taken. This has created space in more formal committees for longer-term and more strategic matters to be considered in greater detail.
81. Such instances reflect how at Lancaster we embrace continuous enhancement in relation to student engagement. Faculty- and Department-level initiatives have created a positive culture of belonging and co-engagement between our students and the academic community. Taken as a whole, our multifaceted and flexible approach for dialogue and creating opportunities for students to feedback about their course and experience are well-received. This is particularly evident in our students' responses to NSS Q23 (Opportunities to provide feedback about their course) which were significantly above our OfS benchmark in 2021 and 2022, placing us in the upper quartile of universities participating in the NSS for this question. [65]
82. Lancaster's Academic Tutoring (AT) system is another key aspect of the academic support in place for our students. It aims to provide continuity and personalised discipline-focused guidance, feedback and support about learning and academic progress. All academic departments are given the autonomy as to how to implement AT support that best complements local subject conventions and pedagogies.
83. We are committed to regular monitoring and improvement of the AT system. In 2020/21 we conducted a major survey of students' experiences of AT, completed by 610 undergraduates from a broad cross-section of the student population representative of the full range of subject areas, gender balance, nationality, ethnic diversity and students declaring a disability. Whilst 64% of respondents reflected positively on their experience of AT, the survey also revealed areas for further enhancement, for instance in regards to improving awareness, consistency of experience, and frequency of the support available to students. [66]
84. Actions to strengthen collaboration between the Students' Union and the University, including improving our approach to AT, were outlined in ensuing proposals approved by Senate in 2020/21. [67]

with a remit for working closely with student partners to enhance student engagement and voice; the introduction of a new University Student Feedback Committee to consider developments in student representation, and oversight on student engagement in Education-related projects such as Curriculum Transformation, Athena Swan and the Race Equality Charter; and, our commitment to the creation of a new *Student Futures Manifesto*, which places renewed emphasis on working collaboratively with the Students' Union and the wider student body to co-create actions that will improve our students' academic experience.
85. We believe these actions will further improve what is already demonstrably high quality and strong, reliable access to our academic support. This is evident in our NSS responses to Question 12 (I have been able to contact staff when needed to), where we rank 5th in the sector (among universities), more than seven points significantly above our OfS benchmark in 2022, reinforcing both our commitment to action, and the impact of continuous improvement of academic support. [68]

Part C. Student outcomes

86. Lancaster's strong performance against student outcome measures is evident in positive indicator data across continuation, completion and progression – in all areas within or above benchmarks. In particular, the majority of our subjects have excellent continuation in the context of high benchmark values of above 95%. This is underpinned by a strong strategic commitment 'To prepare our graduates to lead responsible, intellectually curious, productive and fulfilling lives within a complex and inclusive global society'. [69] In this section, we expound the range of approaches taken to supporting our students' journey across their engagement with Lancaster. This is organised into additional information and evidence about our whole institution approach to Widening Participation and supporting academic skills for success, and our multifaceted approach to the development of employability skills.

Inclusive academic success for all

87. Lancaster is highly committed to supporting students from all backgrounds to access higher education and to succeed in their academic endeavours and beyond. We believe in the importance of creating a culture of inclusivity and are proud of our long tradition of being a university that is open and accessible to all, regardless of background. As part of our whole provider, student lifecycle approach to widening participation (WP) (Figure 1), we believe that social mobility is not achieved once a student has made it to University. Instead, we sustain a range of approaches to ensure equality of opportunity for students from under-represented or disadvantaged groups continues across all stages of the student journey.

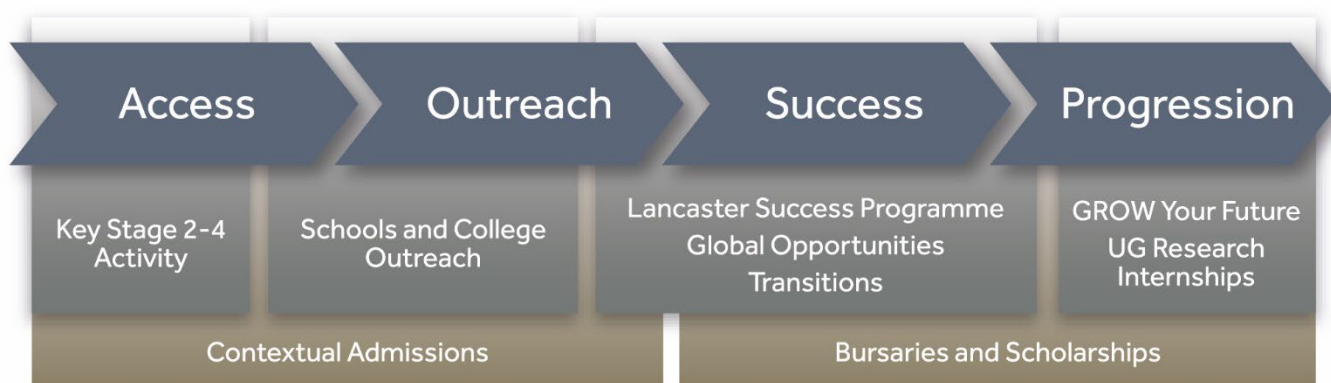


Figure 1: Lancaster's Lifecycle approach to Widening Participation

88. Across the reporting period, Lancaster has allocated c. £5.5 million per annum to WP related activities annually. This has included a commitment of £2.3 million a year to support WP students pre- and post-entry to university. In 2021-22 alone, this funding supported projects that engaged in the region of 13,000 students pre-entry, and 2,000 students post entry.
89. Access and outreach activity incorporates the Lancaster Access Programme and Realising Opportunities scheme, together having engaged >600 students during the reporting period. Up to 43% (in 2021/22) of students completing these programmes subsequently register at Lancaster. [70] Since 2018 Lancaster's Role Model Ambassador Programme has promoted the value of higher education amongst students from different ethnic minority backgrounds by understanding barriers to access, dispelling misconceptions and supporting young people

to apply. During the reporting period, the scheme has reached over 700 students from the South Asian community, working in partnership with faith and non-faith schools and community groups. The scheme was Highly Commended in the Widening Access Initiative of the Year (Outreach) category at the NEON Awards 2022. [71]

90. Supporting student success into and through study at Lancaster is, however, a key priority for maximising the opportunities for all of our students to achieve the excellent outcomes. The University transitions team provide comprehensive provision, including group and peer mentoring, one-to-one support, pre-arrival buddying, and wellbeing events. It also incorporates targeted initiatives such as Smart Start, a pre-arrival programme for incoming students with a social/communication condition – typically Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) – who are making the transition to studying at Lancaster. The programme has consistently attracted 100% of students declaring an ASD, who report on its positive influence on their experience at the start of their University journey. [72] [73]

Spotlight: Lancaster Success Programme (LSP)

The LSP uses a coaching-led approach to reduce gaps in non-completion, attainment and progression. From the point of offer, students participate in pre-arrival support and are then matched with a Student Success Coach who meet with them throughout their entire student journey, via a combination of one-to-one meetings and group-based action learning sets, workshops and social events.

Since 2019 the programme has supported 358 students. 98% of participants said they would recommend the LSP to other students, and 82% felt that being part of the LSP ‘enhanced their time at Lancaster.’ 96% of survey respondents felt that one-to-one coaching sessions were valuable for their learning, with 91% of all participants on the programme regularly attending their one-to-one sessions. Such positive sentiment has been reflected in the impact the LSP has had on key completion and attainment targets. [72] students engaged on the LSP who entered university with a contextual offer [73] this compares with 10% for that same group as a whole at Lancaster University. Within this larger group, the impact for UK mature students’ non-completion (16.6% as a whole) was significant, with that figure falling to [74]

Alongside supporting students to complete their degrees, our coaching-informed approach has supported students to address and overcome key attainment challenges. When surveyed, 80% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that the LSP helped them devise strategies to manage the demands of their courses, 82.3% thought it gave them the confidence to seek support with academic problems, 80.4% felt it helped them have a more positive mindset, and 90% thought it helped them set and achieve their goals and to reflect on their progress. In total, 71% felt that the LSP helped improve their grades and the data shows that the performance of WP students on the course was able to keep pace with the student population overall, and that they were more likely to achieve a first-class degree when compared with students who entered university with a contextual offer who did not participate on the LSP (31% and 26.6% respectively). [74]

The Lancaster Success Programme won the Student Success Initiative of the Year at the Student Social Mobility Awards in 2022. [75]

91. This is complemented by support through our award-winning Lancaster Success Programme (p.18), and a range of global experiences opportunities underpinned by £3.2 million per annum in financial support, with 3,429 WP students receiving a Lancaster scholarship and/or bursary (612 students received both) in 2021/22.
92. Centralised approaches are further tailored in targeted Faculty activity, for instance the Undergraduate Office in LUMS developed a 'Ready for your Management School' course. Initially delivered as an online induction for students, this was expanded to facilitate the building of the student community and enhance faculty communication with students. The Department of Marketing developed a programme, ENABLE (Engage Now, A Better Learning Experience), to assist incoming and UG first year students to prepare for university life. This has been embedded at UG level through compulsory skills-based modules which offer excellent support on how to manage university life and study.
93. Another feature of Lancaster's undergraduate provision that underscores high performance for continuation, completion and progression is the scope for students to move between final schemes of study after their first year – referred to as Part One within Lancaster. This is further supported in NSS data for Q14 (Good advice was available when I needed to make study choices on my course), where in both 2021 and 2022 student responses are significantly above our OfS benchmark. [76] For instance, Management School programme structures and elements of the syllabus are aligned in Part One, enhancing flexibility for students to adjust track to settle on their preferred major and final degree designation, positively contributing to outcomes across the Faculty.

Student employability and career capability

94. At Lancaster we believe that equality of opportunity for developing employability skills, gaining work experience, and access to career planning and professional development resources should be open to all, irrespective of background. One of our three strategic priorities is the provision of "teaching and learning that transforms people's lives and society", including integrating core themes of employability, internationalisation, sustainability and inclusivity within our teaching activities. Transformative teaching not only provides an outstanding learning experience for our students, but also develops their employability and graduate attributes to maximise their chances of success post-graduation. Our commitment to student employability and graduate outcomes spans the student lifecycle from pre-entry to career support for life after graduation, evidenced in our excellent performance in relation to the progression measures. These are significantly above our benchmarks for numerous subject areas, and for students from underrepresented groups. (e.g. Free school meal eligibility, IMD quintile 1 and 2, and lower ABCS quintiles.)
95. We deploy a model of triennial review and institution-level action planning for the continuous enhancement of careers and employability provision. This has led to the establishment of a range of targeted initiatives that, as a whole, provide developmental opportunities aligned to the diverse needs of all Lancaster students. For example, GROW Your Future is a student community and employability programme for those from WP backgrounds, supporting them to succeed in their future careers. The programme engages c.400 students every year across four research-informed topics, reflecting the key challenges students from WP backgrounds may face when entering the graduate labour market - career planning, career confidence, building a professional network and 'growing yourself' to become more

employable. The programme was shortlisted for University Progression Initiative of the Year, Student Social Mobility Awards 2022. [77]

96. A combination of the Undergraduate placements scheme and in-house Employment and Recruitment Service (ERS) provide a vast range of employment opportunities for students. ERS results in more than 7,700 contracts being awarded to students to undertake various work opportunities every year, equivalent to around 280,000 hours of work undertaken and an annual payroll of over £2.5 million. This constitutes approximately 1,000 students engaged to work in various capacities.
97. Related to the employability agenda, Lancaster creates opportunities for students to develop leadership skills and widen their engagement at a global level. For instance, the Future Leader Experiences programme, delivered in partnership between Lancaster and Common Purpose, has supported 255 students since 2018, providing students with the chance to develop global networks on a global scale, hear from speakers from across the world reflecting on their leadership journeys, and develop their own leadership skills and competencies. As a consequence of the programme, students strongly agreed that they felt better able to work with people who are different to them, and were able to better adapt to new environments. [78]
98. Our continual review and revised strategic targeting of graduate recruiters saw us progress from 29th to 26th most targeted university by employers 2020/21, [79] and win the Institute of Student Employers Best University and Employer Engagement Strategy Award 2020. [80] Our online employability provision and digital upskilling of our staff that served our students so well during the pandemic and the following hybrid working environment has led to Lancaster University being the Overall Winner of the Abintegro Award for Developing Employability in 2019, and again in 2021. [81]
99. We are further reassured of the holistic impact of our employability and careers support by the high proportion of Lancaster respondents to the Graduate Outcomes survey that either strongly agree or agree that their current activity fits with their future plans, compared to the sector as a whole (79% for Lancaster, 75% for the sector).

Part D. Educational Gain

100. In Part D we outline our institutional definition of Educational Gain, including information and evidence about how we have adopted a whole-institution approach to the development and implementation of graduate attributes, and how this work is now feeding into an ongoing programme of Curriculum Transformation.
101. Lancaster's commitment to meaningfully delivering educational gains for our students stems from our Education Strategy 2017-2020, which identified a focus on developing 'a vision for what a Lancaster Graduate is beyond their discipline, and articulating the transformation facilitated by Lancaster's Education.' [82]
102. Enabled by this strategic focus, Lancaster's Graduate Attributes and Values were approved by Education Committee in October 2018 [83]. In summary, the four core dimensions of the graduate attributes are:

- ❖ **Academic Excellence** Lancaster graduates are highly skilled and knowledgeable subject specialists
- ❖ **Global Citizenship** Lancaster graduates are inclusive, collegiate, socially responsible, and engaged global citizens
- ❖ **Self-awareness** Lancaster graduates are self-aware, open to development and change
- ❖ **Professional Excellence** Lancaster graduates are fully prepared for graduate employment opportunities, professional in outlook and approach

103. These are broadly aligned with the three key areas of educational gains: academic development ('Academic excellence'), personal development ('self-awareness') and work readiness ('professional excellence'); whilst 'global citizenship' adds a further dimension straddling professional and personal development and adding a distinctive 'flavour' to the offer at Lancaster.
104. A phase one implementation of the Graduate Attributes was undertaken during 2018/19 [84], involving a mapping exercise to identify opportunities for students to develop graduate attributes via academic programmes and enrichment activities. Such enrichment activities enable students to take part in educational activities outside of their formal programme of study, involving Careers, Enterprise, Students' Union, Colleges, and global opportunities.

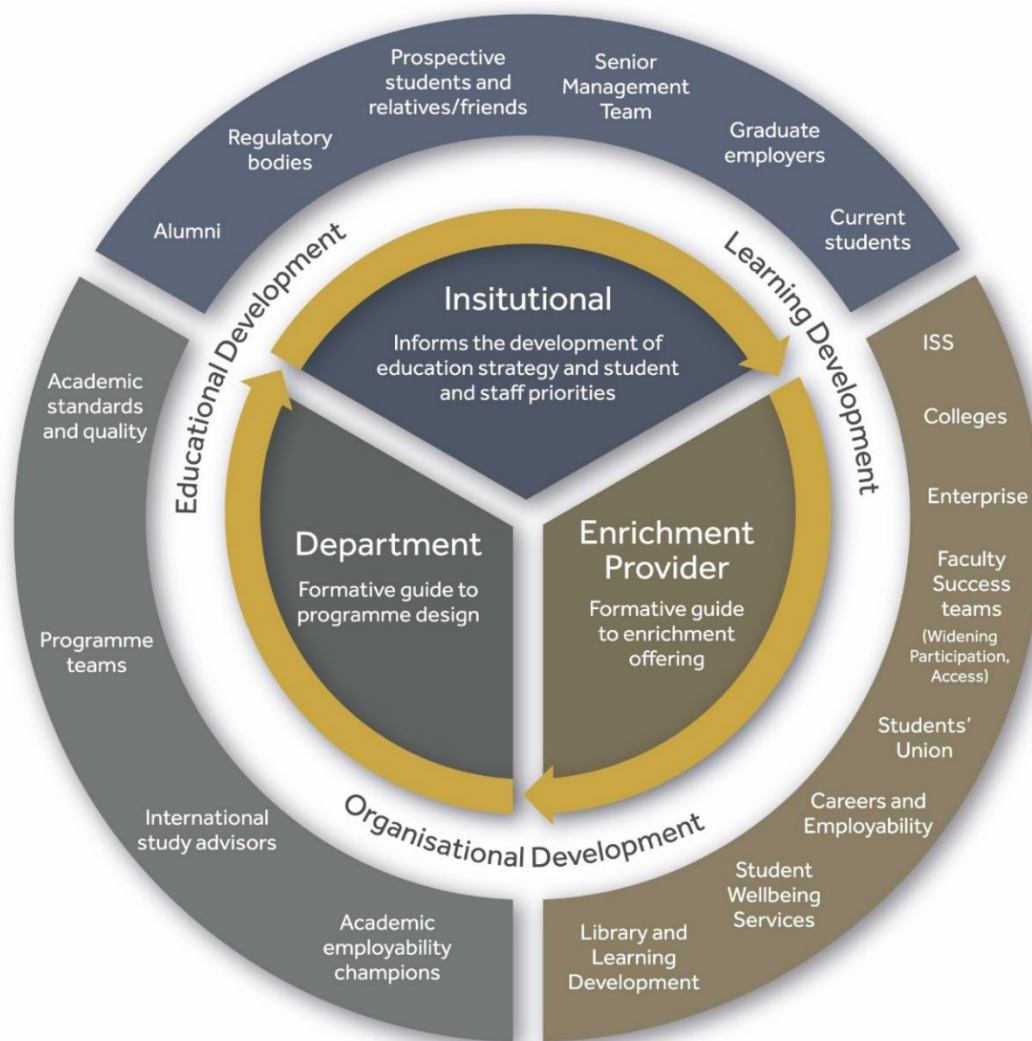


Figure 2: Graduate attribute core dimensions and stakeholder map

105. Figure 2 describes how constituents have been involved in the implementation of these Graduate Attributes and associated values. The inner wheel describes the categories and objectives of the various stakeholder groups. The middle circle highlights the centrality of Organisational, Educational and Learning Development, with their activities influencing all stakeholder groups across the institution. Most other stakeholder groups align to one of the following categories: Department, Enrichment Provider or Institution. What the model explains is that the collective involvement of the stakeholder groups is essential to the successful implementation, for instance, in informing future changes to service provision.
106. During the pilot, Graduate Attributes were woven into the University's guidance and application form for widening participation funding for 2019/20, located within the University's Access and Participation Plan 2020/21 to 2024/25 [85], and anchored by the University's Employability action plan (2019/22) [86], demonstrating early commitment to institutional embedding, and reflecting the importance of embedding an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion ethos into the Graduate Attributes from the outset. Consequently, several professional services and academic departments involved in the pilot have continued to develop the use of graduate attributes at an informal level, despite wider institutional level adoption being paused as a consequence of the pandemic.
107. Our approach, then, is characterised by an institution-wide approach to the ongoing evolution, articulation and embedding of educational gains. This comprises departments reviewing their programmes so as to consider how they align to graduate attributes, drawing upon them as dimensions for programme design. Alongside, 'enrichment providers' such as Careers, Colleges and the Students' Union are able to develop services and student support that align with graduate values and attributes development.
108. Whilst further progress on implementation was stalled by the pandemic, we are now in a position to rekindle and build on our learning from the phase one pilot activity. In mid-2022, a programme of Curriculum Transformation was initiated at Lancaster, within which there is a core workstream focused on embedding signature Lancaster values, skills and competencies. [87] This three year change programme provides the platform for a) Lancaster's graduate values and attributes to be further iterated to ensure their suitability in the current institutional and sector context, and b) To leverage our learning from our foundational work in 2018/19 to systemically embed the attributes into: redesign and reaccreditation of programmes; our course approvals system and processes; Annual Programme Reviews of teaching quality; periodic Strategic Teaching and Learning Reviews; and wrap-around support for educational and curriculum design.
109. In this ongoing implementation, we anticipate the need to triangulate information from existing systems (e.g. NSS optional questions, GO survey data, UKES, internal student experience surveys) that can baseline, track and measure the educational gains being made by our students. We envisage this dovetailing with our institutional focus towards programme-focused educational experiences more generally, for example, refinement of how we monitor end of level student experience and outcomes more holistically.
110. Lancaster's institutional approach to Educational Gain acknowledges continuous global, national, sector and institutional change. The model we have constructed therefore reflects the adaptability and resilience that such change necessitates. The framework outlined focuses on embedded engagement of key stakeholder groups as a source for continuous

improvement. Crucially, we recognise the need for there to be a process of mutual development, articulation, awareness-building, and supporting with our students, before more specific aspirations and goals are established or measured. Our programme of Curriculum Transformation includes a core strand focused on personalised learning, and will become a vehicle for progressing and embedding educational gains.

Concluding remarks

111. Lancaster's focus on educational excellence, stimulated by world-class research, permeates our institutional strategy, structures and processes. It is shaped by our values of collegial respect, formation of strong communities, and creating positive transformational change through our expertise and action. The activities of our University create the conditions for our students to thrive and fulfil their potential, enabled through a range of excellent practices and evidenced in our outstanding performance across our indicator data.
 112. The result is that our students are engaged in an education characterised by a strong sense of belonging to their subject, immersion in a culture of research and enquiry, and set within an environment of rich cultural diversity and outstanding quality academic support and learning resources. Underpinned by our work to enhance student engagement and dialogue about the academic experience, and our approaches to developing and rewarding excellent teaching, we are committed to continuous improvement across all aspects of our provision. Locating our foundational work in the area of educational gain within a major programme of curriculum change demonstrates Lancaster's ambition to continuously build on existing excellence, ensuring successful outcomes for all of our students.
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