

Research, Innovation and Enterprise Strategy 2011-2015



Foreword

At the University of Hertfordshire, we are an innovative, enterprising institution, firmly focused on aligning our research and knowledge-based activities with the future demands of both business and society. It is our clear goal to lead and define the next generation of business-facing universities with research, innovation and enterprise fundamental to achieving this end. These three key areas also form a significant part of our Strategic Plan. We recognise that the way we perform within them has a major impact on our overall mission, and the way the world sees us.

By continuing to nurture research, innovation and enterprise, focusing on fundamental enquiry of the very highest quality, we will fully engage with all sectors of the economy and society. We will inspire innovation and creativity, delivering direct benefits for our partners and stakeholders both in the business world and the public sector. At the same time, by embedding research, innovation and enterprise into our curriculum and teaching approaches, our research-active, business-aware staff will also bring real benefits to our students, offering them an even more valuable, inspiring educational experience that prepares them for a bright, prosperous future.

Together with our subsidiary companies, we are recognised as a leading provider of both virtual and physical business support on a national scale. In achieving this position, our staff have already shown themselves to be enterprising in their own right, and this dynamic culture will continue to flourish. This strategy will support those who wish to start or grow their own business, regardless of size. It will benefit public sector and not-for-profit partners who need to provide accessible and effective services at optimal cost. Finally, it will provide for the growing needs of all employers and their employees to access quality higher education learning from the workplace.



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Creating a dynamic culture and environment

As a forward-thinking, business-focused university, we are committed to producing diverse research excellence that will have a powerful impact on the wider world.

At the heart of our strategy is the creation of a dynamic environment and pervasive research culture where academic staff have ample time to carry out research and where innovation and scholarly enquiry thrive. Our aim is to continue to ensure research shapes the learning agenda and enriches our students' experience.

All of our research will take place within three dedicated Institutes spanning closely linked disciplines:

- Health and Human Sciences
- Science and Technology
- Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities.

Each brings together a range of academics, encouraging multidisciplinary research and nurturing partnerships with other universities, businesses and organisations. By strategically allocating HEFCE (Higher Education Funding Council of England) quality-related funding to specific key areas, we will ensure the University sustains research of the very highest calibre.



To help our academics, we will continue to invest in state-of-the-art equipment and facilities, and an environment that encourages face-to-face interchange and collaborations. They will also benefit from comprehensive support in areas such as funding applications and knowledge exchange activities, as well as having access to a specialist team dedicated to protecting intellectual property and ensuring everyone – the University, academics and external partners – benefits from our research. Development programmes for staff and research students will also be readily available, spanning research policy, culture and practice.

We recognise that a strong sense of community is vital for our research to flourish. Therefore, our Research Institutes will regularly host conferences, seminars and other events where academics and research students can share their ideas and work in progress, opening up new partnerships and avenues of discovery.

Raising our international profile

We live and work in an increasingly global society and as a university, we will strengthen our profile as a creative, innovative organisation by continuing to embrace this perspective, responding to international priorities and making a substantive contribution to meeting global challenges.

We will be known for:

- Vigorous levels of international research collaboration and powerful partnerships with academic, industrial, commercial and public-sector organisations based on EU Framework programmes and other active global research links.
- Attracting EU and other overseas private and governmental funding to support planned, systematic growth in collaborative research, international staff and student exchanges.
- Publishing in high-quality international journals, with world-leading collaborators where appropriate, to ensure the widest possible readership and recognition for our research.
- Disseminating our research by presenting at leading international conferences, colloquia and exhibitions.
- Organising, chairing and, where appropriate, hosting international conferences, exhibitions, and other high-profile events.
- Growing our strong presence in both national and international research quality rankings.



Key aspiration:

To increase significantly the amount of international collaborative funding we attract, as well as the number of publications we achieve in the highest quality journals.

Impact, exploitation and dissemination

If our research is to benefit both research users and society as a whole, it is essential that it not only has the potential to make a practical difference, but is disseminated and effectively used.

We will be known for:

- Producing excellent research outcomes that advance knowledge and understanding across all sectors of the economy and society.
- Exchanging knowledge and ideas with business and professional partners, especially through effective use of communications, to make sure as much of our best research as possible is translated into powerful services and products.
- Conducting research that underpins high-quality teaching and learning, equipping our students with the intellectual and practical skills they need in an increasingly competitive employment market.
- Carrying out research that has a focus on social, economic, cultural, scholarly or scientific impact, the value of which is recognised by the external community through support from funders and users of research.
- Producing research outcomes that have a major, visible impact and showcasing them through the media, our website and knowledge transfer schemes, to benefit regional, national and international stakeholders, as well as society at large.



- Exploiting our research-based intellectual property through licensing, spin-out companies and other collaborative ventures.
- Our high-performing staff, their respective research groups, and their ability to identify and address increasingly complex, multifaceted regional, national and global research questions.
- Our proactive approach to staff networking through participation with national and international learned societies, professional bodies, practitioner groups, editorial boards and peer review panels.
- Our publicly accessible, comprehensive University Research Archive, which will enable us to share and disseminate knowledge, encouraging new external collaborations.

Key aspiration:

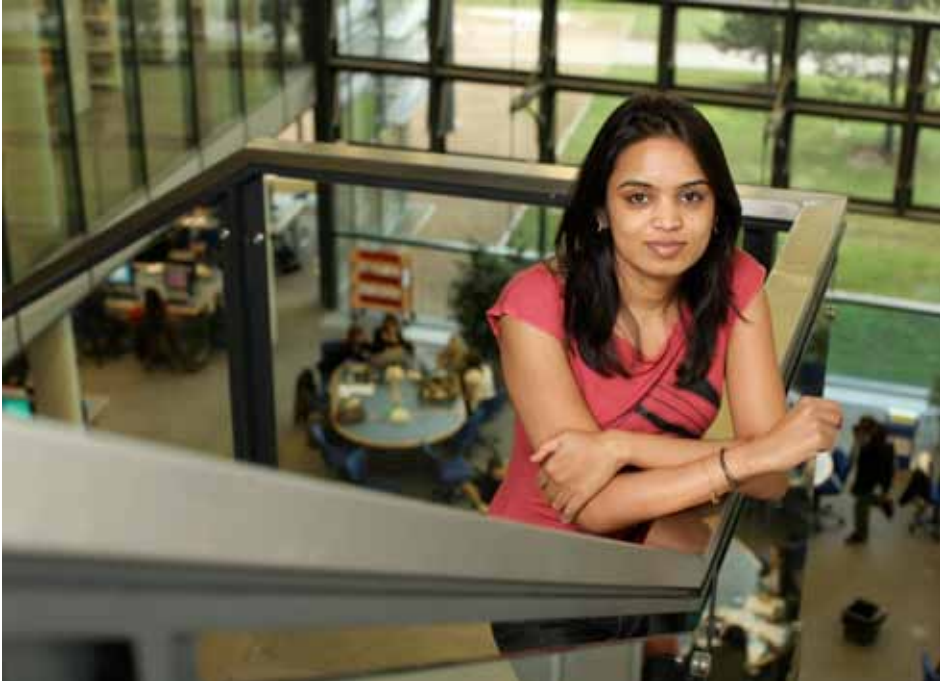
To demonstrate an increase in the impact of our research year by year.

The next generation of researchers

To remain at the cutting edge of important new knowledge, a vibrant, productive research community must nurture new research talent, continually growing in strength and challenging ideas with fresh new perspectives. At the University of Hertfordshire, the next generation of researchers is central to our ongoing research strategy and we are committed to supporting their developing work.

We will be known for:

- Our wide-ranging postgraduate research programmes, from traditional PhDs through to Professional Doctorates, reflecting our diverse student population.
- Recruiting a high proportion of postgraduate research degree students onto our Professional Doctorate programmes.
- Giving research students high-quality supervision and an excellent student experience.
- The career mobility our Dual Award programmes give to our research students.
- Our vibrant, supportive postgraduate student community.
- Having an efficient, effective research infrastructure, with robust processes and practices.
- Providing excellent support, which gives our research students the skills and confidence to break new ground.



- Our continuing full commitment to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and the European Charter for Researchers.
- Having Research Institutes which provide specific support for early career researchers, including mentoring and the opportunity to access internal pump-priming grant funding.
- Developing the next generation of researchers, contributing to research-informed teaching and providing for the sustainability of research activities.

Key aspiration:

To give our research students an even better experience and improve their success rates, while growing our research community by attracting more students to our research degrees.

Creating an ambitious, enterprising culture

Our enterprising researchers and staff are key to making sure our expertise, know-how and facilities have the greatest possible impact on society as a whole. By using their initiative, resourcefulness and imagination, they will help to make sure we achieve an enterprising culture, which we will support by:

- Providing training, mentoring and exploratory award schemes that encourage staff and researchers to apply their knowledge innovatively.
- Identifying, securing and protecting the intellectual property of the University, our collaborative partners and individual researchers.
- Deploying available funding to close the gap between research and its practical implementation, allowing concepts to be tested and their market potential to be assessed.
- Helping staff to form partnerships and raise external investment to maximise the potential impact and economic benefit of University-led innovation.
- Exploiting innovative outcomes from our learning and teaching processes, for example by providing advanced learning tools and consultancy services to the education sector.



- Making sure innovation and enterprise activity has a beneficial impact on both the student experience and future research, enlivening the curriculum through up-to-the-minute case studies and inspiring people to explore ever more challenging avenues of enquiry.

Key aspiration:

To increase the number of staff taking the outcomes of their research to market.

Engaging with employers and the professions

The Employer Engagement agenda calls for a new kind of relationship between Higher Education institutions and employers. By working with businesses to design and deliver courses, we can achieve the agenda's aim of significantly increasing the number of HE learners in the workplace.

We recognise that there is increasing demand within the national workforce for retraining at multiple career breakpoints and we will rise to this challenge by:

- Extending the student experience beyond traditional boundaries, significantly widening access to higher education for those in the workplace or mid-career.
- Providing a rich mixture of study opportunities to help individuals achieve personal or professional development goals, enhancing their careers and widening personal horizons.
- Offering employers and individual learners a 'one-stop-shop' approach for all their skills, learning and educational needs.
- Diagnosing employers' needs and developing tailored solutions aimed both at enhancing their short-term productivity and fulfilling their medium and long-term growth plans.



- Taking a flexible approach to delivering the most appropriate services to our business partners, calling on the strengths of the whole UH Group to provide on-campus, on-site and online learning.
- Enhancing our partnerships with professional associations so we can provide jointly accredited training suited to all stages of professional career development.
- Forming wide-ranging alliances with other training providers to accredit their existing programmes and accelerate our penetration within new professional development markets.

Key aspiration:

To increase substantially the variety of bespoke development opportunities for employers.

Stimulating the economy through innovation

As a university, we have established a national profile for our dynamic business-facing approach, underpinned by first-class facilities, internationally recognised staff and quality research with real-world impact. Through Exemplas, BioPark and other ventures, we are also a leading provider of business support and outstanding facilities. We will further strengthen our reputation by:

- Actively participating in the world of Open Innovation, sharing our research to make sure its outcomes are fully exploited through free access, licensing, joint ventures or spin-out companies.
- Engaging with online and face-to-face business and enterprise networks to disseminate our capabilities and understand business needs.
- Making a vital contribution to our Local Enterprise Partnership, building awareness of the value of entrepreneurship within Hertfordshire and encouraging new business growth.
- Forming partnerships with local and national business support providers so that together we can help attract high-value inward investment and actively reach out to incoming businesses and organisations.



- Offering top quality business innovation space and facilities for both internal and external enterprises.
- Providing enhanced support and mentoring for those using our facilities, from incubation businesses to established organisations, so we are addressing all stages of business development and fields of knowledge-based enterprise.
- Helping find new ways of protecting and maintaining our world for the future by engaging with sustainable community initiatives, harnessing technologies and talent, and catalysing change.

Key aspiration:

To be the prime provider of innovation facilities in Hertfordshire to support new start-ups and business growth.

Supporting others to create and grow business

To promote enterprise within the business world and society in general, we need to use our business-facing approach to help meet the needs of people starting or growing their own enterprise. Whether these pioneering businesses are launching new products and services, accessing new markets or enhancing their core business processes, we will strive to meet their diverse needs by:

- Integrating and aligning our market and economic intelligence activities so we can offer high-quality, demand-led solutions to our customers.
- Adopting a customer-orientated approach when we engage with clients, so we can fully assess and understand their changing needs.
- Helping our partners to accelerate strategic change through collaborative knowledge transfer projects that draw on both academic excellence and first-class graduate talent.
- Enhancing our capacity to meet both the short and long-term research and development needs of our business partners through contract research, expert consultancy and access to specialist facilities.



- Strengthening our links with the corporate world so we can help them develop both people and processes, becoming a valued partner in their ongoing strategic development.
- Supporting enterprising alumni who want to establish and grow their businesses, helping them meet their aspirations and encouraging them to form links with other alumni, staff and current students.
- Participating in local and national programmes, such as innovation voucher schemes, that help spread a culture of innovation and enterprise into new organisations and sectors.

Key aspiration:

To increase significantly the number and range of knowledge transfer and exchange projects undertaken by the University in partnership with businesses.

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