

Strategy

2025–2030



Herts.

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The University exists to power people - our staff, students and society - to make an impact. Their impact is our impact. We are a modern, dynamic, enterprising university and an anchor institution in the region, supporting its growth as a top destination for a range of industries and professions.

We collaborate to drive great opportunities that lead to positive outcomes regionally, nationally, globally; from Herts to the world.

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Introductions



Over the last five years, we have successfully navigated a period of change, emerging stronger and more determined than ever. This period has shown just how resilient our community is, and today we stand poised to continue building on this progress from a position of strength.

Our global reach continues to grow building on our core purpose to deliver accessible, innovative education for UK undergraduate students, our vast alumni network, and our strategic collaborations across the world. Through our research and knowledge exchange activities, we continue to be closely aligned to meet the key future demands of business and society.

Despite the considerable challenges facing the sector, Herts is in a strong position to navigate these difficulties and will focus on the future to safeguard what they accomplished so far, in preparation for the future. This new Strategy will enable Herts to continue to drive change and empower our people in its success to deliver high quality teaching, research that has real world impact, enhancing global reach, and influencing through innovation and enterprise, essential aspects of our identity.

I want to say thank you to all staff at Herts for your dedication, hard work, and unwavering commitment to excellence. It is your passion and perseverance that make our achievements possible and our future brighter than ever.

David Sproul
Chair of the Board of Governors



As we embark on the University's next chapter with the launch of our Strategy 2025-2030, our mission remains fundamentally the same: to ensure everyone who might benefit, is able to access and achieve through higher education. This plan offers us a comprehensive framework to continue driving positive change and empowering our community - staff, students and partners - to achieve their goals. Over the past year, we have engaged in a rigorous consultation process, drawing valuable insights and contributions from staff across the University. The outcome is a shared vision, and one that places our people at the heart of everything we do.

The University exists to power people - our staff, students and society - to make an impact. Their impact is our impact. We are a modern, dynamic, enterprising university and an anchor institution in the region, supporting its growth as a top destination for a range of industries and professions. I am sincerely grateful to all our staff for their hard work in making the university what it is today.

Our Strategy 2025-2030 charts an ambitious path forward, equipping us to respond to future challenges while seizing new opportunities. Together, we will continue to forge ahead, ensuring that Herts remains a leader in higher education. Driving opportunities that lead to positive outcomes regionally, nationally and globally; from Herts to the world.

Professor Quintin McKellar CBE
Vice-Chancellor
University of Hertfordshire

Our vision

Our vision is to set the standard for what a modern university should be. We aim to bring the best of Hertfordshire together, collaborating to create better ideas, opportunities and outcomes that make an impact regionally, nationally and globally. Our unique combination of dynamism, drive and expertise will be known and admired worldwide, boosting our reputation and strength as an enterprising university as a result.

Our values

We are a values-led organisation. These values inform and sustain all our activities and reflect who we are as people. They tell everyone what is important to us and what drives us.

We value:

Friendliness; ensuring we act in a respectful and inclusive manner

Ambition; supporting those determined to achieve

Collaboration; encouraging working together for positive, shared outcomes

Enterprise; being impact led and placing enterprise at our core

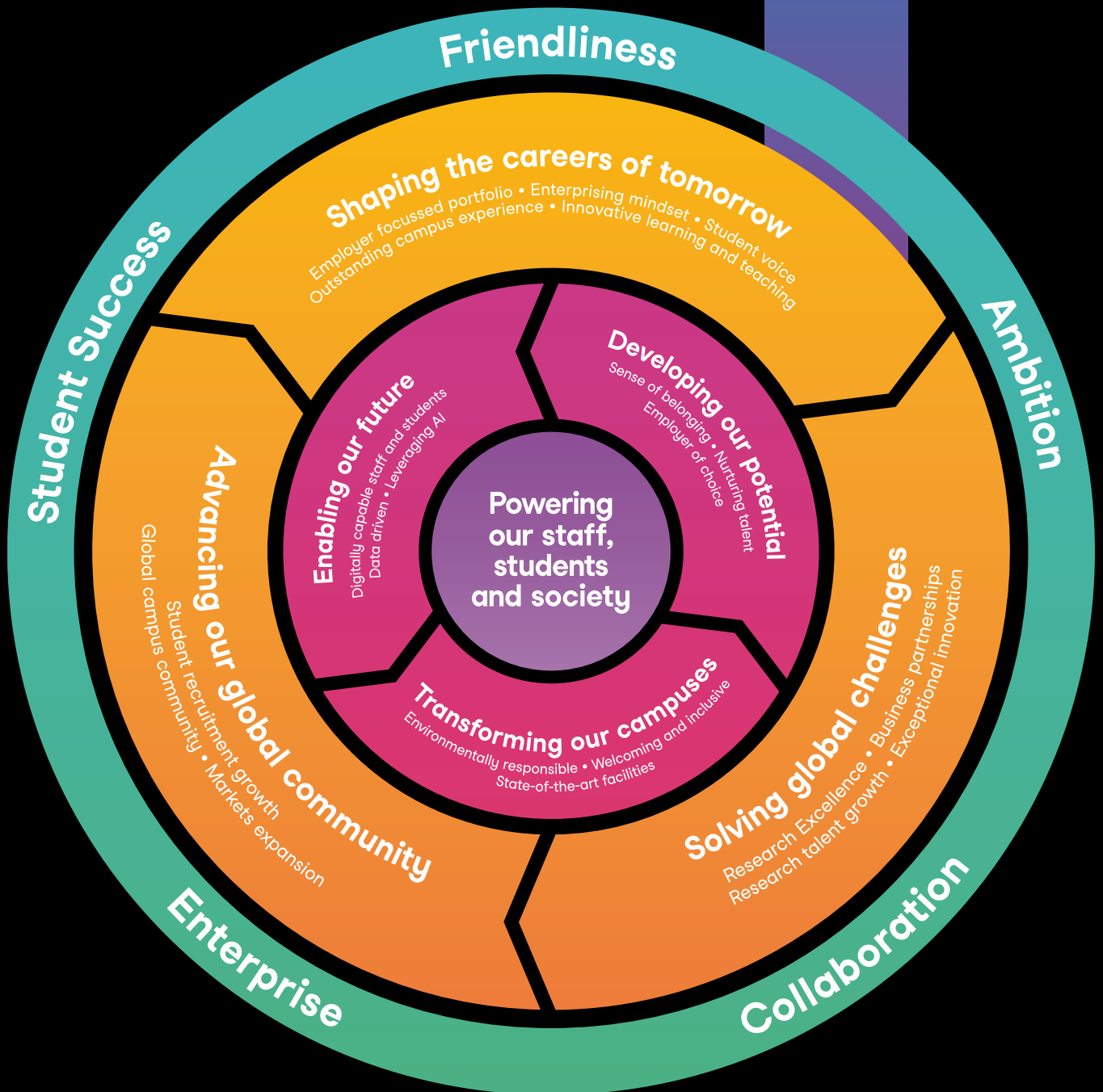
Student Success; working in partnership with our students and empowering them to reach their potential

2030 ambition

Our five-year ambition is to grow our reach and reputation regionally, nationally and globally as a modern, dynamic and enterprising university; experts at driving greater opportunities and outcomes for all, through our education, research and enterprise activity.



Modern. Dynamic. Enterprising.



Our 2030 ambition

Growth in impact



Top 50 university
for research
excellence
(REF 2029) ¹



Top 25%
for Knowledge
Exchange (KEF) ²



Top 50% for
Graduate
Outcomes



Net zero by 2050

Growth in global reputation



Top 25%
for student
satisfaction
(NSS, PTES) ³



Top 500 in QS
World University
Rankings



Top 50
university in a
UK league table

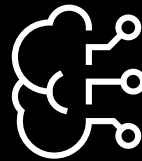


TEF Gold ⁴

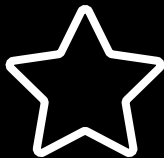
Growth for our community



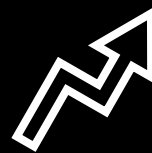
80% staff engagement score



Establish Herts as a digital-first university



Regional employer of choice



Financial sustainability with income growth

- 1 Research Excellence Framework
- 2 Knowledge Exchange Framework
- 3 National Student Survey, Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey
- 4 Teaching Excellence Framework



Strategic strands





Shaping the careers of tomorrow through education and student success

Our commitment to delivering an exceptional student experience is already gaining national recognition. We are the top university in the east of England for student satisfaction in the National Student Survey 2024 (NSS) and ranked fifth in the country in the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey 2024 (PTES). In 2023, we earned a silver rating in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), and our ambition is to achieve gold in 2027.

To ensure our students are equipped for successful careers, we will:

- co-create an employer focussed curriculum with industry and our partners that concentrates on enterprise, entrepreneurship and career development
- expand lifelong learning opportunities to meet the evolving needs of students and employers
- use our Student Engagement and Success plan, which focuses on education and developing students' skills for life. The plan will also encompass our newly designed frameworks which include Access and Induction, Personal Tutoring, Herts Academic Skills, Career Development, and Wellbeing and Mental Health to support student success
- deliver innovative, inclusive and authentic approaches to teaching, learning and assessment, monitored and evaluated for impact and quality, which support our students' success
- continue our longstanding commitment to research informed teaching and blended learning, adopting a flexible and personalised approach to students' learning and assessment
- further enhance our learning resources, estate, processes and systems to enable our students to maximise their learning and better manage their studies alongside work and personal commitments
- instil a culture of reflection and innovation, to deliver inclusive and authentic experiences for our diverse community of students



Solving global challenges through research and enterprise

Our performance in the Research Excellence Framework 2021 (REF), the Knowledge Exchange Framework 2024 (KEF) and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey 2023 (PRES) has matched or surpassed our peer institutions. In the last five years, we have successfully increased our research and enterprise income and the number of postgraduate research students.

We aim to be ranked among the top 50 universities in REF 2029; to sustain or improve our KEF position and our PRES results; to increase our research and enterprise income by at least 25%; increase our postgraduate research student numbers by at least 10%; and to increase the proportion of staff classified as having significant responsibility for research.

To achieve these targets, we will:

- deliver excellent research that contributes to society, the environment, and the economy, by building on our core strengths
- strengthen collaborations that address regional, national and global challenges
- expand our partnerships with business and industry to deliver research informed solutions
- increase the visibility of the excellent research and enterprise activity at Herts by focusing on key priority areas, to clearly articulate what we want to be known for
- take action to ensure our infrastructure and partnerships are aligned to our objectives and to showcase the expert staff and students, who are pivotal to our success
- foster a vibrant, diverse, and inclusive culture and environment that enables our research and innovation community to be exceptional



Advancing our global community through global reach and reputation

Herts is a community of almost 35,000 students and 3,000 staff from over 110 countries worldwide, and the University currently stands as the fourth largest international recruiter to the UK.

We have made huge progress in our overseas operations and are now a top 20 transnational education (TNE) provider in the UK with more than 15 partners across the globe. We have built an outward looking, globally connected community across staff, students and alumni, that share our aspiration for positive worldwide impact with over 24% of staff and students having a global experience in education, research and enterprise.

Over the last five years, we have further deepened our regional partnerships and impact as well as improving our brand recognition, reputation and regional student recruitment. There's no doubt the UK student recruitment landscape has been challenging but our strategies have delivered results that have stabilised our market share.

Over the next five years, we will:

- improve the prospective student application experience to grow our UK recruitment and regional market share
- continue to invest in our international recruitment operations and balance risk by diversifying our recruiting countries
- aim to become a top 10 TNE provider, tripling our income while focusing on creating more efficiencies within our operations. To do this we must continue to focus on building our global network of relationships and reputational measures
- build an outward looking, globally connected community to support student success and graduate outcomes
- aim to become a top 500 global university and top 50 UK university, making a positive impact in the places we operate

Transformational initiatives





Developing our potential by investing in people and culture

We are proud to have such a dynamic staff community that is deeply committed to driving our organisation's vision for growth and impact. Our people are the driving force behind the University's success in an increasingly competitive landscape. By investing in them, we invest in the future of our University creating a legacy of growth, innovation, and excellence.

Engaged and motivated staff are essential to the University's success and at the heart of our vision is staff wellbeing, engagement and inclusivity. Our University values will remain the foundation of everything we do, keeping our staff connected to the institution's mission and goals. We're committed to equipping our people with the skills and resources they need to thrive and flourish.

Over the next five years, we will:

- continue to build an inclusive, high-performing environment for our 3,000-strong workforce, so they can excel and make meaningful contributions to society
- create a positive culture where every member of our diverse community feels valued and supported. By proactively identifying and removing barriers, we will aim to ensure that every member of staff - regardless of background - has the opportunity to thrive
- strengthen open communication, celebrate achievements and provide meaningful feedback opportunities, cultivating a culture where our staff feel heard and inspired to give their best
- provide enhanced support services, flexible working arrangements, and family-friendly policies, to create a balanced, supportive work environment where our staff can flourish
- launch a comprehensive professional development programme to enhance the capabilities of our workforce and ensure they are ready to tackle the challenges of a rapidly changing world. We'll continue to recognise and reward innovation and excellence across teaching, research, technical and professional services
- we will establish transparent, fair compensation structures and implement systems to reward exceptional performance



Transforming our campuses by investing in our estate and sustainability

Over the past five years, we've made significant investment in our campuses, driven by a commitment to provide facilities that enhance both the staff and student experience. Major projects such as the Institute of Sport, the Enterprise Hub, and Spectra – our state-of-the-art home for Physics, Engineering, and Computer Science – have transformed parts of our campuses and expanded what we offer to our community, including our research and business partners.

A well-planned, inclusive, and environmentally responsible campus reflects the university's ambition to make a lasting impact regionally, nationally, and globally. Our estate will serve as a foundation for academic excellence, innovation, and a vibrant community for years to come.

Amid a growing university population, evolving sustainability goals, and changes in how we work and study, our physical spaces must adapt to remain flexible and fit for the future.

In the next five years, we will:

- use strategic estate planning to ensure our campuses provide outstanding spaces that meet the diverse needs of our community. A welcoming and inclusive environment is essential for fostering academic success, a sense of belonging, and wellbeing
- optimise how we use our spaces to accommodate the evolving needs of the University and better support our mission of delivering world-class education, research, and innovation
- put sustainability at the heart of our estate development and management. Through the implementation of energy-efficient systems, we are committed to reducing our environmental impact and meeting global sustainability targets
- embark on bold capital projects over the next five years. This includes the removal of ageing buildings, such as the Wright Building and sections of the Main building, to make way for the new, highly sustainable building for health and social work. Additionally, College Lane Campus will become the home to the new Hertfordshire Medical School

Enabling our future through digital transformation

Over the next five years, we'll build on strong foundations to establish Herts as a digital-first university where technology drives our community's impact. Our aim is to create a dynamic digital environment that directly supports our goals in education, student experience, research, and global reputation. With trusted data empowering smarter decision-making, we're set to enhance the services we offer our entire community.

To drive our strategy forward, we will:

- leverage digital technology to enrich staff and student experiences. Through a transformation programme, we'll equip our community with cutting-edge tools and skills that maximise their time and potential
- adopt sector-leading practices in governance, project management, and evaluation, making sustainable staff and student focused improvements
- stay at the forefront of artificial intelligence (AI), continuously capturing new ideas and exploring AI advancements for both academic and operational benefits. By emphasising a digital-first approach, we'll ensure every new initiative starts with a digital solution
- prioritise cloud-smart approaches to boost scalability and sustainability, creating an adaptable IT ecosystem that responds swiftly to evolving demands
- continue to embed cybersecurity across all technology, applications, and data management practices, making it a cornerstone of our operations. We will educate our staff and students on their role in maintaining a secure environment
- support our carbon net-zero initiatives with a digitally driven strategy, supporting our responsibilities as an anchor institution



Closing statement by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor



As we move forward with the launch of our Strategy 2025-2030, I am immensely grateful to our staff and students for the progress we have made over the last five years. We are rightly ready, confident and excited to implement the transformative actions outlined in this plan.

We are committed to turning the vision we've collectively shaped into tangible, meaningful results. At the heart of this journey will be our focus on investing in our staff, enhancing the student experience, advancing our teaching and learning environment, and expanding our global impact.

We will concentrate on three cross-cutting strategic priorities: Education and Student Success, Global Reach and Reputation, and Research and Enterprise. Digital transformation, continued investment in our estate and a firm commitment to sustainability will ensure we have strong foundations for our success. Our goal is to empower everyone at Herts to make a radical impact - pushing boundaries and breaking barriers. Above all, we want our community to feel a deep sense of pride in having studied, worked, or partnered with the University of Hertfordshire.

We are excited to work together to deliver on this bold strategy. With a continued commitment to innovation and an enterprising mindset, we will create a future that not only tackles the challenges ahead but also forges new opportunities for our community.

This plan is an ambitious roadmap—one that I truly believe Herts is ready to deliver. This is our moment to capitalise on our strengths, and seize the opportunities ahead. Let's be determined and imaginative, and together we will make it happen.

Professor Mairi Watson
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
University of Hertfordshire





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