

The Senate, 18 March 2026

President & Vice-Chancellor's Report

Main Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Report provides summary information on current and forthcoming developments, both internal and external, for the information of Senate members. The President & Vice-Chancellor will introduce the Report at the meeting and members will have the opportunity to raise questions. This report is structured around the University Vision's four Pillars and their respective Priorities, after a section about the external environment. Where information relates to more than one Pillar or Priority it is included under the most relevant theme. Where appropriate, reference is made to other papers that appear separately on the Senate agenda. The report now comprises two parts, the main report and a supplementary report with additional information and updates, available in the Reading Room.

1. EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

1.1 Government confirms international student fee levy and salary sacrifice changes that will cost the University, but automatic undergraduate home fee inflationary increase not yet secured

- The government has announced details of its [plans to introduce a levy on international student tuition fees](#) to fund the partial reintroduction of maintenance grants, as well as confirming that maintenance loans will increase in line with forecast inflation. University finances will face further pressures as a result of changes to the salary sacrifice scheme, also [confirmed in the Budget](#), introducing a £2,000 cap on employee pension contributions made via salary sacrifice from April 2029. The government's commitment to legislate for an automatic annual inflationary increase to the undergraduate home tuition fee cap would result in additional income for the University but risks not being granted legislative time. The University will work to secure this legislative change, particularly given that putting the levy 'tax' on the statute books but not the fee increase arguably breaks Labour's manifesto pledge to act to create a secure future for higher education and provides the tool for more HE-hostile governments to damage the sector further.
- It is expected the levy will adversely affect international recruitment and universities' corresponding ability to cross subsidise education, research and innovation activity. [Economic analysis](#) commissioned by universities including the University of Sheffield, shows that the [government's initial modelling of a 6% levy, as proposed in the](#)

[Immigration White Paper](#), significantly underestimated the potential number of students who would be put off coming to the UK and the resulting economic harm.

- It is argued by some in government that the levy will see off further attacks on the Graduate Route visa, with retention of the visa underlined in the government's recently published [International Education Strategy](#), but this is uncertain given the political climate. It is clear arguments about university impact on economic growth resonate with the government, rather than those [focussing on university income per se](#). As [international student \(and net migration\) figures decline](#), it is likely the political focus will shift to include questions around who is coming in addition to how many people are migrating to the UK. For the University, this means focussing on responsible international student recruitment and compliance with visa requirements.
- The current political and media attention on '[Plan 2 student loans](#)', and the fact that the student finance system is not always clearly understood, makes for a more difficult environment in which to push for the automatic tuition fee increase in law. This makes it more important the levy is not implemented, if the sector cannot count on the fee rise to offset it. If the Government continues with plans to introduce the levy, we will argue for protections in the legislation that brings in the levy to minimise its abuse by future HE-hostile governments, including a 'time out' or 'sunset' clause.

1.2 UK to rejoin EU exchange scheme Erasmus+ as part of wider UK-EU 'reset'

- [The UK and EU have agreed that the UK will join the Erasmus+ exchange scheme](#) in 2027, as part of a wider UK-EU 'reset'. For the University, this will ease the creation of places for our students to go to other Erasmus+ countries (as Erasmus+ is reciprocal, unlike the UK replacement scheme Turing) and it will facilitate broader opportunities (like staff mobility and research collaboration). It is unclear whether Turing will run alongside Erasmus+; if it doesn't, this will reduce opportunities for non-Erasmus+ exchanges, though Erasmus+ now provides for some non-EU mobility. Turing has also prioritised students from underrepresented backgrounds, but there are ways of doing this within the Erasmus+ programme.

2. EDUCATION

2.1 ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITMENT

2.1.1 Undergraduate

- The UCAS equal consideration deadline (14 January 2026) has passed, and we have now received the majority of our undergraduate applications ahead of September 2026 entry.
- The undergraduate home application (+5%) and offer (+7%) position remains encouraging, with early acceptance rates (+17%) reflecting the improving market position, visibility and reputation of the University domestically.

Following several years of decline, this cycle has seen an increase in undergraduate overseas applications (+12%). Drivers include growth from China, Malaysia, Nigeria, Indonesia, and UK domiciled international students. The wider international market remains intensely competitive and colleagues in MARC/GE will be monitoring student

behaviour carefully over the coming months with targeted action to maximise conversion.

The emerging conversion rate for both home and overseas will become clearer during March, noting that applicants can only make decisions on their applications once all university/subject choices have responded with an offer or rejection. The focus is on maintaining a competitive turnaround time on application processing.

2.1.2 Postgraduate Taught

- Postgraduate Taught Home applications (+24%), offers (+45%), and accepts (+33%) reflect the work undertaken to improve the proportion of University of Sheffield graduates progressing from undergraduate to postgraduate study. Market research by MARC identified that our internal progression rate was below sector benchmarks and subsequently set a target to improve from 8% to 15%, which was achieved for the 2025 intake.

Postgraduate Taught Overseas applications (+12%) and offers (+37%) continue to illustrate the shift in demand from China (+22%), Nigeria (+11%), Ghana (+7%), Indonesia (+7%) and Taiwan (+7%) which is focused predominantly in Management and Engineering.

Emerging market insight suggests that Postgraduate Taught Overseas decision making will again be later this year with wider choice both domestically and internationally for these applicants. We continue to monitor closely and, as with undergraduate admissions, we will adapt approaches to enhance conversion from this cohort throughout Spring/Summer.

2.1.3 Student Recruitment

- We are now entering our key conversion period. For UGH as of 28/01/26, there are 3339 student bookings across 4 offer holder dates (Feb-April), up 585 (21%) on this point last year. Student bookings for the 21 February are 1374, up 201 (17%) on this point last year. In March we will host our first ever London-based event to engage south-east offer holders who may not travel to Sheffield for an event.

In January, the Enquiries and Customer Services team closed 2,535 enquiries and the Lead Generation team delivered 86 interactions (+9 YoY) across 77 schools/colleges, collecting 460 leads (+371 YoY). This cycle Lifelong Learning has delivered 13 interactions on campus and within the local community, engaging with 206 prospective mature students and collecting 51 leads. A new recruitment strategy for Student Ambassadors to reduce costs, secure ambassador numbers and ensure better ROI for 2026/27 cycle will also include an “Ambassador Hub” to support our casual workers.

2.1.4 Student Recruitment Marketing Campaigns

- International marketing

Digital advertising targeting prospective undergraduate and postgraduate students in Indonesia, Türkiye, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates is now running.

In its first two months, the UG campaign has generated 103 million impressions and 397,000 clicks to our website. The cost per thousand impressions is 23 pence versus £1.21 for the previous campaign. This means we're efficiently reaching high numbers of our

target audiences. To date the PGT international campaign has generated 5.3 million impressions and 87 thousand clicks resulting in 234 external clicks to UCAS, 219 registrations of interest and 35 Sheffield live event bookings.

- Home marketing

The 2027 entry UG prospectus is being delivered to UCAS fairs where we are reviewing how prospects interact with the prospectus, and the wider sector’s marketing activity, to inform the next cycle.

UG/PGT Marketing campaigns - Our UG awareness campaign delivered 18.7m impressions and 43.4k clicks with an extremely cost-effective cost per click of £0.09. Our PGT awareness campaign delivered 3.97m impressions and 37.2k clicks with a cost-effective cost per click of £0.11. Key metrics for awareness advertising are primarily total impressions and clicks; we're tracking a range of conversions (actions taken) which have included 64 clicks to UCAS and 8 PG registration of interest submissions.

2.1.5 Registration of new students¹

Table 1: New Student Registrations Against Targets as at 1st December

Category	2025-26 intake target	2025-26 registrations (at 1 Dec 2025)	% variance between registrations and target
Undergraduate Home (UGH)	4,950	5,067	+2.4%
Undergraduate Overseas (UGO)	837	734	-12.3%
Postgraduate Taught Home (PGTH)	1,624	1,362	-16.3%
Postgraduate Taught Overseas (PGTO)	2,196	2,291	+4.3%
Postgraduate Research Home (PGRH)	356	284	-20.2%
Postgraduate Research Overseas (PGRO)	200	120	-40%

Data source: Reporting Service New Registrations vs Intake Targets.

Table 2: New and Continuing Student Numbers as at 1st December

Category	Total Registrations
Undergraduate Home (UGH)	16,863
Undergraduate Overseas (UGO)	3,086
Undergraduate Total	19,949
Postgraduate Taught Home (PGTH)	2,219
Postgraduate Taught Overseas (PGTO)	2,474

¹ The entirety of the data and text in Section 2.1.5, ‘Registration of New Students’, has been redacted in the version of this report for the SU. Please can questions relating specifically to redacted information be asked in the reserved business part of the meeting.

Postgraduate Taught Total	4,693
Postgraduate Research Home (PGRH)	1,310
Postgraduate Research Overseas (PGRO)	806
Postgraduate Research Total	2,116
University Total	26,758

Data source: Reporting Service Student Registration Trends.

2.1.6 Graduation

- January saw the delivery of nine graduation ceremonies where we presented 2,348 graduands, accompanied by ~ 5,600 guests. Our graduation survey has been sent out and we will be utilising the results along with those from July to develop our offer, with four task and finish groups progressing across distinct themes; on-campus atmosphere, academic school receptions, content, and communication journey.
- This Graduation week also included the installation of the new Chancellor, Andy Haldane, and the conferment of honorary degrees to Dame Sarah Storey and Martin Lewis. Social media content from the week generated over 1.8m organic views and over 100,000 engagements.
- The ceremonies were live-streamed and viewed by over 14,000 viewers (9,000 of which were live and the remainder on catch up), in 98 countries. In China, the livestream footage was shared and viewed on Chinese social media channels over 75,000 times, and received more than 43,000 engagements. The Installation of Andy Haldane accounted for over 57% of these total views, in line with the strategy to maximise coverage of, and engagement with, this historic event.
- We are also currently planning our March Graduation in China. Ceremonies will take place in Beijing and Shanghai, alongside Offer Holder and Alumni engagement events in these cities, as well as Chengdu. The aim of these events is to improve the graduating student experience, nurture new alumni, increase our profile and improve our reputation in this major recruitment market.

3. RESEARCH

3.1 RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

3.1.1 UK Research & Innovation (UKRI) funding

- Our research awards have been on a positive trajectory in recent years, with UKRI currently representing c. 35-40% on average of our total research grant awards. The Government is directing UKRI to focus R&D funding on economic growth and its

‘Missions’. DSIT has provided broad allocations for R&D funding, but UKRI is scrambling to refocus its schemes towards Industrial Strategy sectors and towards greater non-academic partnership working to ensure private leverage into public R&D investments. In the short-term, many of the Research Councils are pausing applications to their usual applicant-led schemes for discovery research. There are likely to be significant opportunities for Sheffield in the new approach as we have strengths in several of the Industrial Strategy sectors, but the pause for applicants is a cause of great anxiety across the sector, with communications piecemeal and lacking transparency, despite an [Open Letter](#) to the sector from the UKRI Chief Executive. The University is working with the Russell Group to seek clarity and to raise concerns about our talent pipeline if there is a pause in fellowship funding; fellowships are a typical route in STEM subjects to an independent academic career.

3.1.2 Research Excellence Framework

- We will make our submission to REF2029 at the end of 2028, with the results due towards the end of 2029. We currently receive £44M p.a. in unhypothecated research income directly linked to our REF results, as well as it being a key national benchmark for our research excellence, at both discipline and institution levels.

There was a ‘pause’ in developing the rules for REF late last year, but we now have greater clarity on the expectations for submission. We have continued our annual institutional stocktakes for research outputs and research impact to ensure the strongest possible pipeline and are now in a position to start to prepare for the third aspect of the submission, which is a narrative describing our ‘Strategy, People and Research Environment’.

4. INNOVATION

4.1 GLOBAL AND REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

4.1.1 Knowledge Exchange and Partnerships

- [Spin outs](#)

Spin outs are a key element of the current Government’s ambitions for economic growth. Sheffield is going from strength to strength. The Dealroom European Spinout Report 2025 ranked **Sheffield at 8th in the UK and 33rd in Europe** for the strength and impact of spinout activity, particularly in Deep Tech and Life Sciences. This recognition reflects the robust internal network we have been working hard to build and highlights Sheffield’s growing position as a leading innovation hub in the UK.

Last year, we launched a record 11 spin outs and our spinouts raised over £41 million in private investment, showing strong momentum and growing confidence from investors. This included backing from Sheffield Angels, marking their first investment in Sansanima - a company revolutionising vaccine safety without animal testing - and a £9 million funding round for breakthrough infrared sensor company, Phlux Technology, to expand into new markets. Northern Gritstone also invested a total of £10.1 million into Sheffield spinouts.

Our spinout portfolio now employs 683 people and generated £84 million in combined turnover last academic year. We believe that the development of the Sheffield ecosystem

will catalyse the growth of the venture investment into the portfolio over the coming years as many spinouts will start to seek capital for growth activities.

4.1.2 Global Engagement

- QS Summit and India Mission

The Vice-Chancellor spent the first few days of February at the QS Summit in Goa, India. This offered an opportunity to engage with key stakeholders from QS, as well as members of staff from universities of interest in India. The second half of the visit provided an opportunity for the Vice-Chancellor to visit strategically important recruitment partners in India as part of ongoing work to develop partnerships with select institutions in the country. The final aspect of the visit was an Alumni and Stakeholder Event in Delhi. This replicates the event that took place in Autumn 2023, and enabled the University to showcase institutional updates and the University's ongoing work in India

- University College Dublin

In January 2026, a delegation from the University of Sheffield, including academic colleagues from the Faculty of Engineering and the Faculty of Science, along with colleagues from the Department of Global Engagement, visited University College Dublin over two days to explore potential research collaborations. University College Dublin is being targeted as a potential University-level strategic partner.

4.2 ADVANCED MANUFACTURING RESEARCH CENTRE

4.2.1 AMRC Strategy

- The AMRC carried out a 'strategy sprint' through November and December to refresh its strategy in line with the University strategy and in response to published government industrial strategy, changing HVMC strategy, the integration of NAMRC, and University financial constraints. The strategy development included consultation with many parts of the university, HVMC, and industry. The strategy was signed off by UEB in December. The strategy focuses on Aerospace, Defence and Nuclear and builds on University and AMRC engineering and manufacturing innovation strengths. The strategic plan is being developed further with broader staff engagement and will be rolled out from Q2.

4.2.2 Other activity

- The AMRC hosted the Chancellor of the Exchequer Rt Hon Rachel Reeves alongside region leaders and industry on 29 January 2026. The visit went well and highlighted the University's impact on the economy of the region and beyond. Media coverage was secured in the [Yorkshire Post](#) and [The Independent](#).
- The AMRC has continued its business transformation following the integration of the Nuclear AMRC. In December, Laura Staton joined the AMRC Board as Director for AMRC Health, Safety and Environment. Ryan Diver joined the AMRC Board as Director for Data/AMRC One University Director.
- The AMRC's COMPASS facility is in its final commissioning stages and will be opened formally this Spring.
- The AMRC had a successful business development period with over £8m of grants and commercial orders announced in December alone.

5. ONE UNIVERSITY

5.1 STRATEGY AND PLANNING

5.1.1 Strategic planning

The academic vision and medium term plans for the Faculty of Arts, School of Languages, Arts and Societies, School of English and School of Law were approved by UEB in December 2025. These plans articulate the academic vision, key areas of focus and medium-term targets. This completes the work to redevelop the faculty and school plans following the move to a new school structure.

5.1.2 Communications on academic reviews

We communicated the commencement of academic reviews in a further group of schools that were included in the latest round of Voluntary Severance (Medicine and Population Health; English; History, Philosophy and Digital Humanities and Sociological Studies). We will continue to engage colleagues in those areas throughout the process.

We have been communicating the findings of reviews in East Asian Studies, Chemistry, and Materials Engineering and Council has considered these as part of the formal constitutional and governance process. We will continue to engage with key audiences, including staff, over the coming months.

5.2 PHILANTHROPY

5.2.1 Campaign targets, milestones and Significant Developments

- Campaigns and Alumni Relations (CAR) has secured another £5.5m since the last report to Senate, through a combination of mass fundraising and major gifts from individual donors and philanthropic Trusts & Foundations. This takes our 'new funds raised' to £5.8 million. We are confident of exceeding £10 million (against a target of £8 million) by financial year-end.

5.2.2 Fundraising

- We have secured £3.4 million from The Grantham Foundation for the Protection of the Environment to support the University's Grantham Centre for Sustainable Futures over the next 10 years.
- Fundraising for the Insigneo research institute has started well with a six-figure donation from an alumni donor and a five-figure gift from a local supporter.
- The University's new Access to Sheffield Scholarship, has attracted its first six-figure gift. This is from an alumni donor who has previously supported scholarships for home undergraduate and Master's students.
- An application to the Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust has resulted in £0.48 million for equipment for the Sheffield Institute for Translational Neuroscience.
- Two alumni donors have invested a total of £172,500 into the University spinout, [Mitotype Precision Labs](#). The investors are also facilitating new connections through their personal networks.

5.2.3 Access, WP and Employability

- The Susan Crosbie Leaders in Law Programme, established by a member of our external Campaign Leadership Board, has received repeat support with a new six-figure donation from Mark and Sarah Crosbie to support Access + (WP) Law students at Sheffield. Mark Crosbie and the Leaders in Law Programme has also been recognised in this year's [Social Mobility List](#).

5.2.4 Reputation and rankings

- Sheffield's global alumni community has 12 finalists in the British Council Study UK Awards following the record number of entries.

5.2.5 International recruitment

- We have seen excellent growth in our international alumni engagement. Our international alumni groups have over 10,000 members with 34 groups situated in 24 countries across the globe. This is an increase of more than 1,600 members since this time last year with 9 new groups established.
- We are planning flagship graduation and alumni/offer holder events in Beijing and Shanghai in March 2026. There will also be an alumni/offer holder event in Chengdu. Following China activity, alumni receptions in Hong Kong and Singapore will take place.
- The new USA-UK [Siddall Sheffield Scholarship](#) has launched successfully and is attracting candidates following work to encourage applications through partner institutions, academic contacts, exchange students, alumni and scholarship advisors.

5.3 REPUTATION

5.3.1 League Table Update

- [QS Rankings](#)

We were ranked 28th in the QS World University Rankings: Europe 2026, climbing one place from last year.

Our work around the QS rankings continues. The highest quality contacts filtered from the thousands submitted by colleagues across the University, for both academic and employer surveys, were submitted to QS for use before Christmas. The surveys are now being sent out by QS. As part of our wider reputation campaign, and specifically in this period, we are increasing our global and local profile directly with targeted academics and employers through paid advertising, social media, research newsletters and PR, as well as encouraging our own community to share their stories about research on social media. Headline figures in month three of this campaign are:

- 9 million impressions achieved in the campaign's first 3 months via paid advertising targeting global academics and employers.
- 53% email open rate, vs a benchmark of 30%
- 8% email click through rate, versus a benchmark of 1%
- 2381 visitors to the /ambition website landing page. (18.20% increase since 22 Dec).

- ROI is impressive with cost per thousand people reached (CPM) down to £5.36, from £42,34 in November and against a benchmark for international awareness campaigns of £45.
- We have now embarked on a partnership with Mammoth, who are an agency specialising in global reputation and brand work, to create and roll out our five year roadmap to build a long term sustainable approach to reputation, activate our brand and position the University as a global leader.
- THE Subject rankings

In the recently released THE Subject rankings Sheffield has seen mixed performance across subject areas with 4 improving, 3 with slight decline and 4 remaining static as detailed below:

Subject	Rank 2025	Rank 2026	Change
Arts & Humanities	76th	69th	↑
Business & Economics	151st-175th	151st-175th	↔
Computer Science	151st-175th	151st-175th	↔
Education Studies	101st - 125th	101st - 125th	↔
Engineering	96th	97th	↓
Law	151st-175th	126th-150th	↑
Life Sciences	99th	101st-125th	↓
Medical Health	101st-125th	98th	↑
Physical Sciences	126th-150th	126th-150th	↔
Psychology	101st-125th	88th	↑
Social Sciences	61st	67th	↓

5.3.2 KPI Update

Employability

- Our rank in the graduate prospects % as published in the TEF data set has remained static at 15 between the 2021-22 graduating cohort and the 2022-23 graduating cohort. Students are surveyed on their activity 15 months after graduation and our overall % has fallen from 79.2% to 78.0%.

5.4 MEDIA COVERAGE AND IMPACT

- We continue to secure high-level coverage of the University's MND research and expertise, including:
 - New clinical trials using innovative remote monitoring tech was covered widely in [The Independent](#), [The Standard](#), [Yorkshire Post](#) and all local radio stations.
 - Groundbreaking research identifying a new drug that offers hope in slowing the progression of MND was covered in [Sky News](#), [The Independent](#), [The i](#), [ITV News](#),

[The Daily Express](#), [The Standard](#), [Capital radio](#) (item starts 1:07) and a range of other trade and local publications/radio outlets.

- The announcement to the [first Rob Burrow Professorship](#), named after the late rugby league star Rob Burrow CBE, secured national and regional media coverage, including [The Daily Telegraph](#).
 - To coincide with Kevin Sinfield’s 7:7 ultra-marathon fundraising challenge, we secured coverage of Sheffield’s leading MND research on the BBC, including [here](#) (item starts: 00:54 and continues [here](#)), [here](#) (relevant section to University at 3:06) and [here](#).
- News about the University's latest honorary graduates Martin Lewis and Sarah Storey was secured on [ITV Calendar](#) in the Good Morning Britain programme, the front page and online in the [Yorkshire Post](#), [Hits Radio](#) and the [Birmingham Mail](#).
 - Health [research](#) challenging the use of BMI in assessing obesity risk in older adults featured in [The Independent](#), [The Daily Mail](#), [The i](#), [The Times](#), [Daily Express](#), [The Scotsman](#), LBC news ([clip 1](#) and [clip 2](#)) and other leading national and regional media.
 - A [new study](#) that found disparities in air pollution for low-income and diverse communities in major northern cities featured in the [Daily Mail](#), [ITV Calendar](#), [Yorkshire Post](#), [BBC Radio Sheffield](#) and trade press including [Business Link](#) and [Air Quality News](#).
 - Media coverage of [new research](#) focused on tackling employment barriers for neurodivergent people in South Yorkshire led to discussions with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA), including proposals for future collaborative work to address the issue. The coverage also prompted enquiries from SYMCA’s East Midlands counterpart (EMCCA) and a local law firm specialising in this area.

6. FINANCE

6.1 RESEARCH AWARDS

- The values and number of new research awards in the last 12 months compared to the same point in previous years are shown in the table below.
- An increase in value (+£14m) and number of awards (+47) is seen compared to this time last year, with increases across the main funders and AMRC (noting that AMRC data here does not include commercial work). Average award values have also increased across the main funder types, with an increase in large value UKRI awards (more than £1m) but the number of smaller charity awards (less than £20k) at similar levels as prior years (this does vary at Faculty level).
- In the 3 months since the last report, there have been 12 new awards for over £1m. The largest of these is for £4.6m awarded to the Faculty of Health from D.H.S.C.

Research awards for the last 12 months		Dec-25	Dec-24	Dec-23	24 to 25 Change
Total new awards	£m	£156m	£142m	£156m	+£14m
	number	706	659	762	+47
(excl. AMRC)	>£1m	31	31	34	
	<£20k	224	192	204	

UKRI	£m number <i>average £k</i> >£1m	£61m 162 <i>£375k</i> 15	£53m 153 <i>£349k</i> 13	£61m 215 <i>£285k</i> 14	<i>+£7m</i> <i>+9</i>
Charity	£m number <i>average £k</i> <£20k	£40m 195 <i>£207k</i> 79	£34m 186 <i>£182k</i> 69	£38m 206 <i>£183k</i> 84	<i>+£6m</i> <i>+9</i>
UK Government	£m number <i>average £k</i>	£35m 157 <i>£224k</i>	£30m 139 <i>£216k</i>	£36m 143 <i>£248k</i>	<i>+£5m</i> <i>+18</i>
EU	£m number <i>average £k</i>	£6m 13 <i>£492k</i>	£1m 4 <i>£175k</i>	£0m 3 <i>£79k</i>	<i>+£6m</i> <i>+9</i>
Other	£m number	£14m 179	£24m 177	£21m 195	<i>-£10m</i> <i>+2</i>
AMRC (on C&AT)	£m number	£33m 244	£24m 105	£21m 100	<i>+£9m</i> <i>+139</i>

- Excluding Capital Projects, as of December 2025 in addition to the above figures, £79m awards have had notification of being successful, similar to £76m in December 2024.
- The value of the Research Net Contribution is £58m for the 12 months to December 2025 compared to £42m for the 12 months to December 2024 an increase of £16m (38%).
- As of December 2025, research grants work in progress (research order book) which excludes capital projects, stands at £341m which is a decrease of £5m on the work in progress figure of £346m recorded in December 2024.

7. LEGAL AND REGULATORY MATTERS

7.1 OFFICE FOR STUDENTS - REPORTABLE EVENTS

- Since the previous report to Senate in December 2025, there has been one new reportable event notified to the OfS.
- The impact of industrial action taken in 2025 and early 2026 on students' education and learning is being mitigated as far as possible but there remains the risk that in a small number of Schools the impact on students will not be effectively mitigated. The position is being actively monitored and managed. In December 2025, we notified the OfS of a reportable event due to the risk that not all of the lost learning could be replaced. The OfS responded with several queries and requests for clarification about our approach, including highlighting its most recent guidance and related CMA guidance over terms and conditions in student contracts, which the University was aware of and planning to review and update in time for 2026/27. We remained in dialogue with the OfS and met with them on 16 February to fully understand any residual concerns and ensure we could provide assurance that we had or would be undertaking the necessary steps in a timeframe that satisfies the regulator. Following that meeting, amendments to our terms and conditions have been agreed and implemented or planned for implementation through the usual annual review.

7.2 OFFICE FOR STUDENTS

- The University of Sussex has mounted a High Court legal challenge against the record £585,000 fine imposed by the OfS last March for failing to uphold freedom of speech. It claims the OfS acted beyond its legal powers to impose the fine, and put too much weight on a trans and non-binary equality policy in place at the time. The hearings have concluded and a judgment is awaited.
- The OfS will conduct [enhanced monitoring](#) of RTC Education Ltd after finding the college in breach of OfS conditions of registration relating to quality. The OfS also imposed a specific condition of registration on the University of Greater Manchester, which awards the qualifications for these courses, after it was also found to be in breach of these conditions.

7.3 COMMITTEE OF UNIVERSITY CHAIRS (CUC)

- The CUC has published an [interim communication on the Higher Education Code of Governance Review](#). It sets out that an initial draft of the reset Code will be shared with CUC Steering Group and Reference Groups in March, followed by a period of refinement and further engagement in April. Approval of the new code will be sought at the CUC May plenary. The University will undertake a comprehensive review of the new Code's provisions and report this to Council. We will also be monitoring the OfS' reaction to the new Code and any subsequent changes in the regulatory framework.

The Senate, 18 March 2026

President & Vice-Chancellor's Report

Supplementary Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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1. EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

No Supplementary content.

2. EDUCATION

No Supplementary content.

3. RESEARCH

3.1 Arthur Scargill Archive

- The archive of Arthur Scargill, activist and former President of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) from 1982-2002, acquired by the University of Sheffield Library Special Collections, Heritage and Archives in June 2023 is now open to all researchers following a two year cataloguing project. The University is also offering [PhD studentships](#) supported by the Hossein Farny endowment for research using the archive. More information about the archive is available [online](#).

4. INNOVATION

4.1 ADVANCED MANUFACTURING RESEARCH CENTRE

- Following departures from the business, Professor Kevin Kerrigan and Professor Tom Hodgson took up the roles as interim Heads of Group for Composites and the Integrated Manufacturing Group respectively. Recruitment for the substantive roles are imminent.
- The AMRC continues to make adjustments to its cost base and to find efficiencies.

5. ONE UNIVERSITY

5.1 COLLABORATE AND SUPPORTIVE CULTURE

5.1.1 Senior Recruitment

- **University Secretary** - The recruitment process for the role of University Secretary went live on Monday 12 January and will close for applications on Friday 6 February. We are partnering with search agency Odgers Berndston for this campaign. Final interviews for the role are scheduled to be held in April. We hope that the appointed candidate will take up the post over the summer. David Swinn has been filling the position on an interim basis since Jeanette Strachan's departure last year.
- **AMRC CEO** - Applications for this role closed on 21 November. Final interviews took place on Friday 23 and Wednesday 28 January. Once an outcome has been reached further communications will follow. Professor Ben Morgan will continue in this role as Interim CEO.
- **Associate Dean (Education) (Faculty of Social Sciences)** - Professor Eleanor Davies has been appointed to the role on a permanent basis. Professor Davies started on 1 November 2025. Professor Davies was previously Professor of Business Education & Director of Education at Keele University from January 2024.
- **Director (Clinical Trials Research Unit)** - Professor Matthew Hammond has been appointed to the role on a permanent basis, and started 7 January 2026. Professor Hammond was previously Deputy Director of Norwich Clinical Trials Unit at the University of East Anglia from November 2019.
- **Professor of Cancer Immunotherapy** - Professor Mariaelena Pierobon has been appointed to the role on a permanent basis, starting 27 October 2025. Professor Pierobon was previously Associate Professor with Tenure at George Mason University (USA) in their School of Systems Biology since August 2024.

5.2 STATUTORY RETURNS

- A large number of statutory returns were successfully submitted well ahead of schedule during the 2025-26 academic year. This included the majority of the University's student data submissions to statutory bodies, including the OfS and DfE. Most notably, the Student (Data Futures) return was submitted 3.5 weeks before the mandated sign-off date - the University was the first large provider to reach this stage. This follows a programme of development to enable greater automation, faster processing, and improved data quality reporting. These changes have strengthened data assurance and supported more effective issue resolution by data owners. PwC will be conducting an audit of processes in March.

5.3 STRATEGIC PROJECTS

- Following the launch of the new Professional Services structures across Faculties, new hubs for **Procure-to-Pay (P2P) (Finance)** and **Faculty Doctoral Schools (PGR Support)** have been established and are fully operational. The benefits of these are:
 - Standardised P2P and PGR support delivery across all Faculties and Schools via consistent operational frameworks
 - Consistent purchasing card processes

- Enhanced assurance that we are adhering to Financial Regulations and Policies across Faculties and Schools
- Simplified, standardised workflows to improve accessibility and user engagement with P2P and PGR activities
- Improved accuracy in managing and reporting financial activity
- Strengthened business continuity and operational stability
- Effective communities of practice

5.4 REPUTATION

▪ Time Magazine

Time Magazine has published a new world ranking for 2026 and the University of Sheffield has performed very well, ranking in 53rd place with a total score of 68.55. Our scores in the three domains used were, Academic Capacity & Performance: 71.49, Innovation & Economic Impact: 55.71 and Global Engagement 89.42. Further analysis of this new world ranking and monitoring of its global impact are ongoing.

5.5 PHILANTHROPY

5.5.1 Pattison legacy gift

- In 2025 Eric Pattison, an alumnus of the School of English, left a gift of over £1mi in his will to the University. In accordance with his wishes the funds are being used to create and deliver a range of new and improved digital scholarship services within the University Library supporting teaching and research within the School of English and Arts and Humanities more generally. A number of undergraduate scholarships will also be created in Eric Pattison's name. More information is available [online](#).

5.6 NEW YEAR HONOURS LIST 2026

5.6.1 BEM (Medal of the Order of the British Empire)

- Mr Terence Hensby BEM (BEd Hons Education, 1980). Volunteer, Dronfield Rugby Club. For services to Community Rugby.
- Mr John Edwin Warren BEM (MA Early Childhood Education, 2013). Nursery Director, Kingsway Nursery Group, London and Managing Director and Freelance Consultant, John Warren Consultancy. For services to Early Years and Education.

5.6.2 OBE (Officer of the Order of the British Empire)

- Professor Alan Keith Fletcher OBE (BSc Biomedical Science, 1991; MBChB Clinical Medicine, 1992). Lately National Medical Examiner for England and Wales, NHS England. For services to the NHS.
- Dr Jonathan Hague OBE (BSc Tech Materials Science and Engineering, 1987; PhD Polymers 1991). Executive, Unilever and Chair, Liverpool City Region Innovation Board. For services to Research, Innovation and Economic Development.
- Dr Christopher Bryn Pritchard OBE (BSc Hons Combined Studies/Maths, 1976). Chair, Scottish Mathematical Council, Secretary, James Clerk Maxwell Foundation and lately President of The Mathematical Association. For services to Mathematics Education.

5.6.3 MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire)

- Mrs Mary Patricia Bochenski MBE (BEd Hons Education, 1974). For services to People with Disabilities.
- Mr Andrew Fishburn MBE (BA Accounting & Financial Management, 2007). Managing Director, Virgin StartUp. For services to Small Businesses and Entrepreneurship.
- Dr Paul Kevin Hegarty MBE (BSc Biochemistry, 1981; PhD Biotechnology, 1986). Trustee, Licensed Trade Charity. For Charitable Service to the Hospitality Sector.
- Dr Philip Derek Lumb MBE (BMEDSCI Medical Science, 1993; MBCHB Clinical Medicine, 1995). Forensic Pathologist, High Peak Forensics. For services to Forensic Pathology and the Criminal Justice System.
- Professor John Gareth Rees MBE (BSc Geology, 1982). Chief Scientist, Multi-Hazards and Resilience, British Geological Survey. For services to Multi-Hazard Science and Disaster Risk Reduction.
- Mrs Margaret 'Maggie' Ann Wood MBE (MA Applied Research and Quality Evaluation, 1999). Lately Director of Nursing and Quality, Practice Plus Group. For services to Patients in Health and Justice Systems.

5.7 MEDIA COVERAGE AND IMPACT

- Our research on reducing childhood tooth decay as a continuing national government priority secured coverage in [The Independent](#) and the [Yorkshire Evening Post](#).
- LBC published [an interview](#) with Yara Shawa, a student from Gaza who is studying at the University through the Gaza-Palestine scholarship. In the piece, Yara speaks about her experience of living in Sheffield so far and the support she has received.
- Academics from the Institute of Sustainable Food and the National Alternative Protein Innovation Centre (NAPIC) — appeared on a BBC *Focus* podcast discussing the growing popularity of alternative proteins. This provided a high-profile platform to showcase the University's expertise in sustainable food to a wide and engaged audience.
- Promotion around Paul Brindley and Michael Martin's research into mapping [18,000 children's playgrounds and revealed inequality across England](#) was featured in the House of Commons' Research Briefing on children, young people and the built environment.
- [Now Then](#) magazine covered the work of the University's Grantham Centre for Sustainable Futures, highlighting how research developed with Syrian refugees is being applied locally to address climate resilience and sustainable food production in South Yorkshire, reinforcing the University's global-to-local impact in climate innovation.
- Professor Dominic Broomfield-McHugh, from the School of Languages, Arts and Societies, [reviewed](#) the new musical drama *Blue Moon for The Conversation*, which included him attending a special press screening of the film at Sony's studios in London. This has led to *The Conversation* inviting him to review a new Sky mini series about Mozart and Antonio Salieri, helping to position leading music expertise at the University.
- After generating media coverage on a [University breakthrough raising hopes for a Strep A vaccine](#) that could save hundreds of thousands of lives globally, the lead researcher was invited to a WHO/Strep A Global Vaccine Consortium meeting in Geneva and the work was mentioned multiple times in discussion about future vaccine trial endpoints.

5.8 STAFF AND STUDENT COMMUNICATION

- We shared an in-depth update with colleagues at the all-staff briefing on 28 January about the vision for the future of our campus and our new Sustainability Strategy. We will be following this with further engagement, including drop-in sessions and working groups.
- We have continued to keep staff and students regularly informed about industrial action including how we have sought to work with the Trade Unions to bring the dispute to an end, providing factual information about strike days and ASOS, how the majority of teaching is not impacted, how we are replacing lost learning and information about the complaints procedure.
- The Library has been working with SU officers and colleagues on an exhibition “[More Than a Degree: 120 Years of Life at the Student Union](#)” which opened on 2 February.

6. FINANCE

6.1 WORKFORCE

6.1.1 Industrial Action update

- The University has withheld 100 per cent of pay from approximately 60 staff who have refused to replace teaching cancelled due to strike action since 19 January, and will continue to do so until 6 February 2026. Pay deductions for participating in action short of a strike will cease after 6 February. Staff who have been participating in this form of action short of a strike are therefore expected to work as normal from their next scheduled working day.

It remains the case that the University does not accept partial performance, and reserves the right in future to withhold up to 100 per cent of pay from those who are not willing to fulfil all the requirements of their role. From 7 February onwards, the University is electing to not exercise its right to withhold pay from colleagues in this position. An ongoing refusal to replace teaching cancelled due to strike action remains partial performance and is a breach of contract. The University still expects that all learning missed due to strike action is replaced, in line with OfS expectations. The University will keep this position under review and may seek to reintroduce pay deductions in future.

Heads of School will work with colleagues who participated in the action, and those contributing to the replacement of lost learning, to ensure that workload is appropriately prioritised and managed following their return to work.

6.1.2 Professional Services Review Conclusion

- Most School and Faculty structures are now fully populated. Through the process of populating the new structures, a number of colleagues have secured internal promotion, and new recruits external to the University have also joined and commenced induction. As part of implementing the new structures, we have begun developing communities of practice across the University to share and improve practice.
- No staff have been made compulsorily redundant as a result of this large-scale change programme.

7. LEGAL AND REGULATORY MATTERS

No Supplementary content.