



## The Senate, 20 March 2024

### 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. In response to the recent Council Effectiveness Action Plan, 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 UK GENERAL ELECTION - higher education not expected to be a significant election issue for parties

- The year will see an unprecedented number of elections worldwide, the results of which will impact the University in areas from research collaboration to international student recruitment. The General Election in the UK must be held by January 2025 and is widely expected in Autumn of this year.
- As the UK political parties begin to shape their manifestos it is improbable that higher education (HE) will be a high-profile election issue, unless financial struggles bring universities into the headlines. The Conservative Party is expected to continue its focus on technical education, particularly apprenticeships, on rooting out 'poor quality' in higher education and improving the protection of free speech and academic freedom in universities, with new obligations in this area coming into force in August.
- Labour has indicated its immediate education priorities concern early years and schools rather than HE but has suggested it will make the student loan repayment system more progressive. Immigration is expected to be an election issue, with both main parties expected to support a reduction in net migration figures, whereas the question of addressing universities' declining tuition fee income and financial sustainability is not expected to be a priority for manifesto commitments.
- The Liberal Democrats, who could play a key role in the event of a hung Parliament, are also unlikely to address university funding issues, but have called for the immediate reinstatement of maintenance grants for disadvantaged students.
- The University will continue to engage with the political parties to influence their plans for government.

## **1.2 IMMIGRATION - Measures announced to reduce net migration have the potential to harm UK Science Superpower ambitions**

- In December, the government announced measures to reduce legal migration to the UK, in a bid to reduce net migration as per the 2019 Conservative manifesto. Included in the announcement was a review by the independent Migration Advisory Committee of the Graduate visa route to “prevent abuse”, raising the salary thresholds for Skilled Worker and spousal visas and conducting a review to reduce the number of occupations on the shortage occupation list.

The measures and accompanying negative statements surrounding immigration have the potential to damage the perception of the UK as a welcoming destination for international staff and students and come at the same time as UCAS data suggests that a third of UK universities saw a decline in overseas non-EU applicants in 2023. A healthy international student recruitment environment is vital for the diversity of UK campuses and cities, for the quality of education and research, as well as the financial sustainability of the higher education sector. Changes to the skilled worker and spousal salary thresholds can deter the movement of skilled workers and therefore pose a challenge to the UK’s Science Superpower ambitions. The Graduate visa route was designed to enable universities to compete globally, increase and diversify recruitment and help boost export earnings and was deliberately designed with no salary, skill, or sponsorship requirements.

- It is possible that further restrictions will be announced in the run up to the next General Election given the Conservative’s 2019 manifesto commitment to reduce net migration. The Labour Party is not expected to oppose the overall premise of the measures announced in December. The University will continue to highlight to all political parties the economic, social and cultural contribution that international students and staff make to the sector and stress that the Graduate visa route should be assessed against its original purpose.

## **1.3 INTERNATIONAL RECRUITMENT - Questions raised about Russell Group university entry requirements for international students**

- Recent media reports have focussed on Russell Group universities’ use of international foundation year programmes and examples of poor behaviour by international student recruitment agents. The different entry requirements for international foundation year programmes when compared with undergraduate degrees at Russell Group universities has been highlighted. However, as a Russell Group response [stated](#), International Foundation Year programmes “are different to degree programmes, have separate admissions processes and, crucially, different entry requirements, which have been incorrectly conflated” in the reports.
- Universities UK (UUK) [announced](#) a series of actions, including reviewing the Agent Quality Framework to ensure it is adopted by institutions and how it can be improved to identify and address bad practice. The quality and comparability of International Foundation Programmes and Foundation Programmes for UK students will also be reviewed.
- Separately, Robert Halfon MP, the Universities Minister, has [asked](#) the Department for Education (DfE) “to carry out an urgent investigation into bad practice by agents where it occurs” in the recruitment of international students to universities.

- The issue of whether international students displace home students on higher education programmes has also been raised. However, as the DfE has previously [said](#) “international students make a significant contribution to our universities which actually supports the creation of more places for domestic students, not fewer”
- At Sheffield, the [University of Sheffield International College](#) (USIC) offers foundation year courses for international students delivered by Study Group. A place on a University of Sheffield undergraduate degree programme is not guaranteed as this is subject to a student meeting the progression criteria. Like many institutions the University uses agents to support the recruitment of overseas students and is signed up to the [UK Agent Quality Framework](#) and the [UUK Fair admissions code of practice](#).
- The University also continues to work with policymakers to understand their concerns around admissions practices, but also on how policy can ensure a financially sustainable high quality university sector in the UK.

#### **1.4 OFFICE FOR STUDENTS - Universities regulator to make some changes, with further review to come**

- The Office for Students (OfS), England’s higher education regulator, has committed to reviewing its mechanisms for student engagement, improving relations with the sector and to ‘retest’ its approach to financial regulation, in [response](#) to a House of Lords Industry and Regulators Committee [Report](#) into its work. The Parliamentary inquiry looked at whether the OfS is performing as intended and highlighted a number of areas for improvement, including the way the regulator maintains independence from the government, how it engages with students and the institutions it regulates and its analysis of the financial health of the sector.
- The Department for Education (DfE)’s [response](#) to the Committee's report rejects a number of its findings, including with respect to the lack of OfS independence from government, but does commit to work on regulatory burden, to be delivered in summer 2024.
- Separately, the OfS will be the subject of an independent review as part of the Government’s Public Bodies Review Programme. This will be a technical review focusing on governance, accountability, efficacy, and efficiency rather than the strategic issues facing the higher education sector.
- Labour’s Shadow Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson MP told Vice-Chancellors in September that Labour will look to make changes to the OfS to ensure it is independent from the government, though wholesale reform of the regulator is unlikely to be a priority if the party were to win the next General Election.

#### **1.5 EU RESEARCH COLLABORATION - UK participation in Horizon Europe receives formal sign-off and University colleagues are encouraged to continue applying to the programme**

- The UK’s participation in Horizon Europe, the world’s largest research collaboration programme, was [formalised](#) in December 2023, [signing-off](#) the deal that was [agreed](#) in September 2023. The government has subsequently [launched](#) a campaign to encourage UK businesses, academics and researchers to apply for funding under the programme.
- UK researchers can now apply for grants and bids to take part in Horizon projects as the UK is a fully associated member for the remaining life of the programme to 2027. The

government has [confirmed](#) that the period of non-association “did lasting damage” to UK research with statistics showing a decline in applications during this time of uncertainty.

- The University is encouraging colleagues to continue applying to Horizon Europe.

## **1.6 INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS POLICY - Government consults on minimum service levels in universities and Parliamentary Committee looks at the impact of strikes on students**

- The Department for Education (DfE) has [consulted](#) on delivering minimum service levels in schools, colleges, and universities during industrial action. The consultation ran until the end of January 2024 and the government response has yet to be published.
- Introducing minimum service levels is likely to be prioritised by the government given it doesn't require a new Act of Parliament to be implemented before the General Election and reflects a dividing line in policy terms with the Labour party as the Official Opposition.

## **2. EDUCATION**

### **2.1 DELIVERY OF THE PORTFOLIO**

#### **2.1.1 Undergraduate Admissions**

- The UG Home application position remains stable with the number of offers issued ahead when compared to the same point last year creating a strong pipeline for Spring conversion activity.
- UG Overseas application submissions continue to trend below 2023 levels driven by a decrease from mainland China. Whilst there are encouraging application increases from other key international markets, overall numbers are relatively small by comparison.
- Following the UCAS equal consideration deadline we now move much of our focus onto supporting offer-holders in making their decision whether to accept our offer. Applicants have until 6 June to make their choices and therefore will not have a full picture until this point.

#### **2.1.2 Postgraduate Taught Admissions**

- PGT Home applications remain up on last year, with overall numbers still small at this early stage noting that students typically apply during the summer period. The offer position is positive with a range of wrap around conversion activities underway for this target group.
- PGT Overseas applications are down compared with the same point last year. We continue to see a decrease in applications from our largest markets with benchmark competitors reporting similar trends across the sector. To mitigate the reduction in applications we have implemented a range of actions to increase the number of offers issued.

#### **2.1.3 Postgraduate Research Admissions**

- We've seen an increase in both Home and Overseas PGR applications. The majority of applications are currently under consideration in departments therefore we expect to see an increase in offer-making during February and March, following a number of internal/external scholarship and funding deadlines.

## 2.1.4 Registration

- As of 1 December, the University had registered 12,962 new students against a target of 13,389, coming under target by 427 across all cohorts in the institution. The 1 December census point is used for statutory returns that inform teaching grants and funding. The downturn in PGTH intake has been seen across the sector as a mid-term trend, and therefore our targets for 2024/25 and future intakes have been reduced in response to ensure targets are realistic. The impact of the University's fall out from the QS World Ranking Top 100 (a university ranking that is particularly influential with international students), changes in market and a sector wide downturn in international applications has resulted in a reduced undergraduate overseas intake in 2023/24, and these factors are expected to have further impact on 2024/25 applications and registrations. The undergraduate overseas targets for 2024/25 have been slightly reduced as a result of the market challenges and UEB are considering whether further changes are required. The financial implications of these reductions are being carefully considered and managed by UEB.

- Table 1: New Student Registrations Against Targets as of 1 December**

Category	2023 Intake Target	2023 Actual Intake (1 December 2023)	Variance
Undergraduate Home (UGH)	4,643	4,686	+43
Undergraduate Overseas (UGO)	1,448	1,233	-215
<b>Undergraduate Total</b>	<b>6,091</b>	<b>5,919</b>	<b>-172</b>
Postgraduate Taught Home (PGTH)	1,976	1,518	-458
Postgraduate Taught Overseas (PGTO)	4,634	4,839	+205
<b>Postgraduate Taught Total</b>	<b>6,610</b>	<b>6,357</b>	<b>-253</b>
Postgraduate Research Home (PGRH)	401	382	-19
Postgraduate Research Overseas (PGRO)	287	304	+17
<b>Postgraduate Research Total</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>-2</b>
<b>University Total</b>	<b>13,389</b>	<b>12,962</b>	<b>-427</b>

- Total Registrations**

When counting all student registrations (new and continuing students) this totals a student population size of 30,211 in the 2023/24 academic year, compared to 30,307 in 2022/23.

- Table 2: New and Continuing Student Numbers as of 1 December**

Category	Total Registrations
Undergraduate Home (UGH)	16,438
Undergraduate Overseas (UGO)	4,063
<b>Undergraduate Total</b>	<b>20,501</b>
Postgraduate Taught Home (PGTH)	2,314

Postgraduate Taught Overseas (PGTO)	5,089
<b>Postgraduate Taught Total</b>	<b>7,403</b>
Postgraduate Research Home (PGRH)	1,412
Postgraduate Research Overseas (PGRO)	895
<b>Postgraduate Research Total</b>	<b>2,307</b>
<b>University Total</b>	<b>30,211</b>

### 2.1.5 Early modelling of potential student recruitment outcomes for 2024/25

- Early forecasting suggests that we are likely to achieve our home undergraduate and postgraduate student intake targets, but that we are unlikely to meet our overseas student intake targets for 2024/25.
- This reflects an increasingly challenging international recruitment environment (influenced by a number of external factors - review of the graduate employment route review, economic challenges in specific countries, increased competition from Australia/Canada and UK universities) and the University's fall out of the QS World Rankings Top 100. An update on the QS Top 100 is on the Senate agenda for this meeting.

### 2.1.6 Student Recruitment and Marketing

- **New student recruitment and marketing service**  
The new Student Recruitment and Marketing service has officially launched, marking the completion of a significant strategic project that has taken over 2 years to complete. This project aims to align and improve our support for student recruitment and marketing across the University. Work continues on supporting the new service with improved technology through a separate 'digital enablement' project which will deliver the first parts of a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) using Salesforce this year.
- **Offer holder days**  
Offer holder days began on 17 February and bookings currently stand at 2,261 across the four dates, which is 230 ahead of the same point last year.
- **Online open days**  
Visitor feedback for the PGT online open day was very positive with a high net promoter score of 53%.
- **Schools**  
The Schools Team has already increased the number of bookings it has taken as compared with last year and has started the transition to become a Lead Generation Team, focussing on generating high-quality leads from regions through a North and a South Team.
- **Campus tours**  
Numbers attending campus tours is 42% higher than the same period last year.
- **Subject tasters**  
We've seen a 17% increase in numbers attending our online taster sessions in Autumn/Winter 2023, compared with 2022.

- **The Ambassador Platform**

Over 1,000 students connected with our current students on our ambassador platform, in line with last year's numbers. Leads generated are now added to our CRM system, and users receive our promotional comms, including invitations to open days, events and activities.

### 2.1.7 Annual Planning Cycle

- **Mid-year action plan and risk register reviews**

Academic departments and professional services are currently conducting mid-year reviews of their annual action plans and risk registers, and making updates where required. Current performance against department strategic framework targets and the implementation of the new schools structure are both being considered as part of the updates. In a number of the faculties, the Faculty Vice-President is meeting with departments to review progress. Action plans for the 2024/25 academic year will be developed in June and signed off by UEB by July.

### 2.1.8 Teaching Excellence

- **New HEA Fellows**

39 colleagues from across the University have been recognised as Fellows of the Higher Education Academy (HEA). Advance HE, formerly known as the Higher Education Academy, awards four different categories of Fellowship, Associate Fellowship, Fellowship, Senior Fellowship and Principal Fellowship.

The list of winners can be viewed here:

<https://staff.sheffield.ac.uk/news/congratulations-our-39-new-fellows-higher-education-academy-hea>

- **Education Awards 2024**

The launch of the awards took place on 29 January 2024. Any member of staff or student can submit a nomination, and there are awards for both staff and students around a variety of different aspects of education and supporting learning. Full details, including the criteria for selection and the nomination form, are available on the Elevate website: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/saas/elevate/awards>

- **Annual Education Conference**

The programme for the annual Education Conference (27 March) is being finalised, having received almost 50 submissions for workshops and talks from an open call and from recommendations from senior education leaders. Registration opened on 12 February 2024.

- **NSS 2024**

The National Student Survey for final year undergraduate students is open from 5 February - 30 April 2024.

- **Exam information** was shared with students returning to campus throughout exam week via email. Updates for students have been provided throughout the term, including communications on the extenuating circumstances process and the new school structure.

### 2.1.9 Student Support Services

#### ▪ **Mental Health Strategy**

The University's [Mental Health Strategy Action Plan](#) was published on 15th January 2024 and formally launched at an event on Time to Talk Day - 1st February. The action plan aligns to the five themes of the [Student Minds University Mental Health Charter Framework](#), where each theme considers a different area of the University experience. The action plan builds on the recommendations that were produced from our submission and achievement of [the Charter](#) in Summer 2023. Progress towards the actions is reviewed on a regular basis by an Operations group and overseen by the University Executive Board One University Mental Health Strategy Group, which is chaired by Professor Susan Fitzmaurice - Vice-President and Head of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities.

## 2.2 DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

### 2.2.1 Student Attendance Monitoring

- A new service based on the existing student app and a BI portal has been rolled out across the University as the UG/PGT attendance service. This replaces the 47 different department solutions that were previously in place. Changes have also been made to the way in which attendance of international postgraduate taught students is captured, to ensure a more robust and consistent approach across departments. This will allow the University to remain compliant with the conditions of its student sponsorship license.

## 3. RESEARCH

### 3.1 RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

#### 3.1.1 Research Awards

- See section 6, Finance, below.

#### 3.1.2 Research Development

##### ▪ **Quick spend research funding**

In recent years, it has been increasingly commonplace for universities to receive short timeframe research funds, usually via UKRI. A typical scenario is notification in November, with spend by the end of March. Such short timescales are extremely challenging and usually enable us to build on existing projects to enable impact. A recent example is c. £350K for research with partners in ODA (Official Development Assistance) countries or low and middle-income countries. We have committed some of this to an exchange programme for researchers with the University of Cape Town with whom we recently signed a partnership agreement. This is focused on our shared areas of interest: energy, neuroscience, water and urban studies.

##### ▪ **European Funding: Horizon association**

Along with our peers in the sector, we have lobbied for association to the EU Horizon research funding programme. With that association confirmed on 1 January, we are encouraging researchers to consider how they can either re-engage or engage for the first time. Nationally, applications from the UK have fallen from 10% of the total to 6.5%. We are offering training and support for academic and research support staff to enable colleagues to lead applications. Horizon applications are built on consortia of cross-EU

partners, so there is a lead time for first-time applicants to identify and work with appropriate collaborators.

## **4. INNOVATION**

### **4.1 SOUTH YORKSHIRE**

#### **4.1.1 Regional Innovation**

- The University has established a new collaboration with Sheffield Technology Parks, Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield City Council and the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority to create a 10-15 year vision for a Sheffield Innovation Spine through the city to ensure the region captures economic benefit from the University's spinout activities as part of the South Yorkshire Investment Zone. A two-year feasibility study will begin shortly.
- The Vice-Chancellor is a member of the recently established South Yorkshire Mayoral Economic Advisory Council (MEAC) alongside other national and global expertise. The MEAC is a strategic initiative designed to strengthen South Yorkshire's economic growth and capitalise on the opportunities from the South Yorkshire Investment Zone.

#### **4.1.2 Regional Innovation Funding**

- The recently announced Investment Zone is progressing through the governance gateways which will enable SYMCA to draw down funding from April 2024. The purpose of the funding is to create regional clusters which will drive productivity. We will have the opportunity to apply for funding for a small number of innovation projects to support the objectives of the Investment Zone. Internally, we have run a process to surface potential projects for this funding and are in early dialogue with SYMCA on the opportunity to direct award a couple of these as trailblazer projects. This has also enabled us to identify projects which, whilst not suitable for Investment Zone funding, we can support in other ways and which will contribute to regional innovation.

#### **4.1.3 City, Culture and Public Engagement**

- The University of Sheffield is supporting Sheffield City Council (SCC) with the shaping of their Cultural Strategy. The Director of City, Culture and Public Engagement (CCPE) sits on the Governance group alongside other key stakeholders and is providing guidance to the consultants appointed to develop the Strategy which is due to launch in Spring 2024. CCPE is also supporting the recruitment of new strategically important Culture roles at SCC.

## **5. ONE UNIVERSITY**

### **5.1 COLLABORATIVE AND SUPPORTIVE CULTURE**

#### **5.1.1 Senior Recruitment**

- Vice-President and Head of the Faculty of Social Sciences
- Professor Craig Watkins' tenure as Vice-President and Head of the Faculty of Social Sciences is due to come to an end on 31 May 2024 and he has decided to step down from the role at that point. Professor Ruth Blakeley, former Head of the Department of Politics and current Faculty Director of Research & Innovation has been appointed to the post which she will take up on 1 June 2024.

- Provost & Deputy Vice-Chancellor

Following an external recruitment process, we look forward to welcoming Professor Robert Mokaya (OBE, FRS) to take up the role of Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor. He will take up the role on 17 June.

- Professor Mokaya brings a wealth of experience in leadership, strategic oversight, and ground-breaking research. He is currently Professor of Materials Chemistry and Pro Vice-Chancellor for Global Engagement at the University of Nottingham, where he's also a member of UEB.

In his current role at Nottingham, he is the strategic lead for Environmental Sustainability and chairs the Environmental Sustainability Committee. He was previously the interim Pro Vice-Chancellor for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and People. In this role, he provided leadership and strategic oversight of the University's EDI agenda, and had responsibility for championing University-wide EDI priorities for students and staff.

Professor John Derrick will continue in his role as Lead Faculty Vice-President until then. The University wishes to thank him for his support and leadership during this interim period.

## **6. FINANCE**

### **6.1 RESEARCH**

#### **6.1.1 Research Awards**

- The total value of new awards for the last 12 months to the end of December 2023 is now £177m, an increase of £9m (5%) compared to £168m in December 2022.
- However, there has been a decrease in the total number of awards - for the 12 months to the end of December 2023, the number of new awards opened is 862 compared to 934 as at December 2022. The reason for this drop relates to the timing of the 2023/24 AMRC Catapult awards, with 67 fewer Catapult projects within the December 2023 figures compared to December 2022. Further Catapult awards are due to be opened in the next few months. UK Government awards in total have fallen by 48 to 234 because of this reduction in Catapult awards.
- In contrast, the number of Charity awards has increased by 23 to 206.
- The value of new awards for the 12 months to December 2023 is showing the biggest rise in Charities awards which has increased by £15m to £38m and is the highest value for the last 3 years, whilst the value of UK Government has increased by £4m and Overseas and other awards by £3m.
- Excluding Capital Projects, as at December 2023 in addition to the above figures, £65m awards have had notification of being successful, as compared to £68m in December 2022.
- In the 2 months since the last report, there has only been 1 new award for over £1m, this was £1m awarded to AMG from the Department of Science, Innovation and Technology.
- The value of the Research Net Contribution is £44m for the 12 months to December 2023 compared to £40m for the 12 months to December 2022 an increase of £4m (10%).

- As of December 2023, research grants work in progress (research order book) which excludes capital projects, stands at £345m which is an increase of £3m on the work in progress figure of £342m recorded in December 2022.

## **7. LEGAL AND REGULATORY MATTERS**

### **7.1 REPORTABLE EVENTS**

Since the previous report to Senate no reportable events have been notified to the OfS.



## The Senate, 20 March 2024

### President & Vice-Chancellor's Report – Supplementary Report

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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#### 1. EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

No Supplementary Content.

#### 2. EDUCATION

##### 2.1 STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

###### ▪ Sport and Physical Activity Strategy

The University's [Sport and Physical Activity Strategy](#) was endorsed by the University Executive Board on 16 January 2024. The strategic vision for Sport and Physical Activity is built upon the five strategic principles noted below:

- Embedding participation
- Inspiring achievement and supporting excellence
- Advocating for the power of sport
- Connect and collaborate
- Value for money and growth

This strategic document will be crucial in enabling positive contributions to support student recruitment, sport participation, physical and mental health, wellbeing, employability, attainment, civic agendas, and an outstanding student experience. Our aim is to ensure sport and physical activity can be a part of every student's experience and make a significant difference to their time here in Sheffield.

The strategic document has considered and aligns with the University of Sheffield's current strategic plan, with specific focus around the 'One University' pillar. It also recognises various local and national strategies including Sport England, Active

Partnerships, British University Sport, and the Sheffield City Council. The Sport & Physical Activity service is dedicated to offering high-quality sporting services and facilities to all members of our community and we strongly believe in the transformative power of sport to improve lives. We are committed to making our facilities and services accessible to everyone, irrespective of age, ability, or background.

- The strategy document is currently awaiting final amends and a foreword from the President and Vice-Chancellor. The Strategy will be launched following the Varsity 2024 programme.

## **2.2 EMPLOYABILITY**

### **2.2.1 Employability Insights events - looking ahead**

- Over 80 colleagues from central and faculty PS teams and academics gathered for an Employability Insights event on 24 January 2024 designed to prompt consideration of the future of employability provision at the University. Speakers presented insights into 'Gen AI related to graduate recruitment and skills', and a summary of EAB's research report 'Reclaiming the ROI Narrative in HE: Critical Career Development Investments to Make Your Institution Distinctive'. Active discussion followed the presentations, and two further events are planned this year.

## **2.3 DIGITAL EXPERIENCE**

### **2.3.1 New VLE Implementation**

- Preparation is underway for the Early Adopter Virtual Learning Environment Training Programme. This training programme will support the batch of early adopters that will be migrating to Blackboard Ultra in September 2024. The data collected from this programme will be used to inform the wider Ultra migration project. Early Adopters come from a range of departments with every faculty represented.
- **New degree algorithm**  
The University has also addressed its complex approach to awarding degree marks by moving onto a singular degree algorithm. This brings us much more in line with other Russell Group universities and OfS guidance, reduces manual calculations, and improves consistency and transparency for students.

## **3. RESEARCH**

No supplementary content.

## **4. INNOVATION**

### **4.1 INNOVATION IMPACT**

#### **4.1.1 Success and Achievement**

- We delivered a successful event on innovation-led growth with the N8 Research Partnership and RSA (22/11/23), featuring 22 speakers and panellists from across industry, academia, policy and politics. Around 100 people attended and positive feedback was received about the professionalism of the event and the networking opportunities it provided.

- We worked in partnership with Boeing and Virgin Atlantic to secure media coverage of the University's involvement in the historic transatlantic flight using 100 per cent sustainable aviation fuel. News of the take-off was shared via a press release and social media content, which received 35k impressions. The University was also namechecked in a video from the Prime Minister on Twitter. The flight received significant national and international media interest, and was covered by 531 news outlets, including ITV News, The Telegraph, The Independent and Daily Mail.
- We delivered winter graduations, sharing the news of honorary graduates through a press release which received widespread regional coverage.
- We covered the news that University of Sheffield spin out company, Crucible Therapeutics, secured £5 million financing from Northern Gritstone and Argobio Studio to develop novel therapies to treat the most common genetic form of motor neurone disease (MND), amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), and frontotemporal dementia (FTD). The story received coverage in 22 outlets, including Sky News, and BBC News Sheffield.
- In November, Parkinson's UK Patron, Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Gloucester, met neuroscientists from the University who are tackling the root causes of the progressive condition. Revolutionary research at the Sheffield Institute for Translational Neuroscience (SITraN) has resulted in promising breakthroughs, including identifying drug targets and candidates for a neuroprotective therapy to slow down or stop Parkinson's. The collaboration was covered by regional and National press, including The Times, The Daily Telegraph and The Rotherham Advisor.
- We promoted the launch of a new Centre for Korean Studies that will boost the UK's body of specialists in Korean language, culture and society. The news was covered by specialist education media, including Research Professional News.
- We shared the news that Vanessa Toulmin, Professor of Early Film and Popular Entertainment History, and Chair of the Morecambe Winter Gardens Preservation Trust, who helped to win funding to transform Morecambe Winter Gardens into one of the north's leading music venues, had received The King's Award for Voluntary Service. The news was covered regionally, in the Lancaster Guardian.
- We worked with the Campaigns and Alumni team to secure media coverage of Jennie Stevens' fundraising challenge which will provide scholarships for disadvantaged students.
- A new report by Professor John Holmes, Director of the Sheffield Alcohol Research Group, which found the cost of alcohol-free drinks may diminish their impact on the health of the nation, received coverage from the Daily Mail and the National Institute for Health and Care Research.
- The THE reputation rankings were published on Tuesday 13 February. The University is ranked 126-150, which is the same position as last year.

## **4.2 SOUTH YORKSHIRE**

### **4.2.1 City, Culture and Public Engagement**

- The University is a delivery partner on Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC)'s CDF2 Forging Ahead (2022 - 2025). The CCPE team is working on two projects with academic input; 1. Storying Goldthorpe: a pilot project to understand young people's views and thoughts on culture in their community. Discussions are ongoing regarding its roll-out across the other five boroughs of Barnsley and the data will be used in influencing cultural strategy for Barnsley. The pilot has been a co-produced project drawing from Professor Dave Forrest's academic research in Storying and involving School of Architecture Live Works students. The second project Mapping Barnsley, a project to complement Storying, with an objective to map cultural organisations and assets across Barnsley using already existing data and a programme of events to attract creatives from the town was due to be completed in February 2024.
- It is one year since the University of Sheffield's Player - the streaming platform for hosting public-facing podcasts, videos and digital exhibitions showcasing the University's research - was officially launched. The Player currently has more than 400 pieces of content, 31 series bringing together content from Festivals and events as well as four curated channels covering Arts & Culture, Environment & Sustainability, People & Place and Science & Technology.

## **5. ONE UNIVERSITY**

### **5.1 COLLABORATIVE AND SUPPORTIVE CULTURE**

#### **5.1.1 Corporate Communications**

- The University's internal staff newsletter, This Week In Focus, has been shared with staff throughout the semester to communicate key institutional updates on the new schools structure, as well as information on events and resources.

### **5.2 SUSTAINABILITY**

- Communications on Christmas closure dates and procedures were shared with staff and students, including The Big Switch Off to encourage energy-saving across the University campus.
- COP28 was marked by the University on social media; research impact related to the COP theme days was shared, as well as updates regarding sustainability on our campus and the wider region.
- We have communicated our position of 24th in the world in the QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2024. This is an improvement from 2023, when we were 116th overall. The news led to an interview with BBC Look North, BBC Radio Sheffield, The Yorkshire Post and Sheffield Star, as well as The Tribune in India.

### **5.3 PHILANTHROPY**

#### **5.3.1 Milestones and Significant Developments**

- CAR has secured informal support from selected high-profile alumni donors and influencers for an event in London marking the public launch of the University's Forged

in Sheffield Campaign. Formal invitations from the Vice-Chancellor will now follow. The event will likely be held in early October.

- An intensive phase of staff recruitment is close to completion. This has been supported by Strategic Investment budget and will see CAR’s staff FTE increase by 8.2 FTE.
- CAR’s flagship supporter publication, Your Gift, has been mailed to 7400 supporters. Another 2500 have received a digital copy. The circulation has been increased in the run-up to the public Campaign launch.
- Alumni mentors have been recruited and onboarded onto the University new student-alumni platform, Sheffield Connect, for the next e-mentoring programme that started in February 2024.
- CAR hosted its first dinner in Singapore on 6 March as part of a new focus on prospective donors and influencers in south-east Asia. The event was hosted by the British High Commissioner, alumna Kara Owen.

### 5.3.2 Alumni Engagement and Volunteering

Financial Year	Volunteer hrs (target)	Total hrs to date	Campaign Target
	2023/2024		
Volunteer hrs**	882 (15,000)	66,806	108,924
Volunteer hrs (students) ***	12,012 (20,000)	139,033	187,021
	<b>12,894 (35,000)</b>	<b>205,839</b>	<b>295,945</b>

\*\* Figures have been updated to include hours contributed by Alumni and friends. ‘Friends’ are defined as non-alumni who are not TUoS staff.

\*\*\* Data on student volunteer hours covers the period 01.08.18 – 21.12.23. Further data on student volunteer hours will be included in subsequent reports as it becomes available.

- The latest online alumni event in the Bright Minds series took place in December. Led by Grantham Scholar, PhD student Ava Sjoberg, the event discussed her research looking into cement encapsulants and how this fits into the process of safe disposal of radioactive wastes in the UK. Approx 200 alumni registered for the event from 36 different countries.
- Over 120 students and an equal number of alumni completed the Careers Service e-mentoring scheme. Students took part from across the faculties receiving weekly one to one support and advice from alumni working in roles of interest to them over an 8-10 week period. The spring scheme is taking place February-May.
- Over 100 alumni have signed up to come to campus to support the engineering project weeks for first and second years; Global Engineering Challenge and Engineering, You're Hired. Alumni will act as industry mentors sharing their expert advice and real-world experience to support the student projects.
- US-based alumni are being invited to join the new US alumni group launch on Sheffield Connect in February. An Indian alumni group to launch will follow in March/April. Preparations are also underway for three US alumni engagement events in February in Austin, Houston and Washington DC.
- The first student mentoring phase of Student Alumni Communities, which was launched in September 2023, has been completed and the second started in February.

### 5.3.3 King's Honours

#### ▪ New Year's Honours 2024

- **Dame Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire**  
Professor Dame Carol M Black DBE (Honorary DSc, 2006). Independent Advisor on Combatting Drugs. For Public Service.
- **CBMG: Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George**  
Dr Rurik M Marsden, OBE, (PhD Animal and Plant Sciences, 2000). Development Director, British Embassy Yangon, Myanmar. For services to International Development.
- **CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire)**  
Angela Foulkes (N/A). Chief Executive and Principal, The Sheffield College. For services to Further Education.  
Timothy D Gardam (N/A). Chief Executive, The Nuffield Foundation. Journalist. For services to Journalism and to Education.  
Professor Timothy J G Kendall (BMedSci, 1981; MBCHB Medicine, 1983). Lately National Clinical Director for Mental Health, NHS England. For services to Mental Health Care in England.  
Isabelle Trowler (Former Staff - Crook Public Service Fellow 2017-18). Chief Social Worker for Children and Families, Department for Education. For services to Children's Social Care.
- **OBE (Officer of the Order of the British Empire)**  
Millie Bright (Honorary degree pending), Footballer. For services to Association Football.  
Denise J. Christie (N/A), Chair, Elizabeth Casson Trust. For services to Occupational Therapy. Trust is departmental donor.  
Duncan Edwards (BA Geography and Politics, 1985), Chief Executive Officer, BritishAmerican Business, and Honorary Director, The St. George's Society, New York, United States of America. For services to UK/US Trade relations and to Charity.  
Sophia M Mason (N/A), Trustee, Garfield Weston Foundation. For services to Arts Philanthropy.  
Dr Sabesan Sithamparanathan FREng (BEng Electronic Engineering (Communications), 2007). Founder and President, PervasID and Enterprise Fellow, Girton College, University of Cambridge. For services to Innovation Technology.  
Howard Wilkinson (BEd Physical Education, 1975). Chairman, League Managers Association. For services to Association Football and to Charity.

#### ▪ 2023 Resignation Honours

- **OBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire)**  
Robert Butler MP (BA French and Economics, 1989), Member of Parliament for Aylesbury. For political and public service as Parliamentary Private Secretary at FCDO and Member of Parliament for Aylesbury.

## **6. FINANCE**

No Supplementary content.

## **7. LEGAL AND REGULATORY MATTERS**

No Supplementary Content