



The Senate, 9 October 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.

1. EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

1.1 The Office for Students, to 'more sharply focus' on key priorities with potentially strengthened regulation in fewer areas including financial sustainability and quality

- Bridget Phillipson MP, the Education Secretary has endorsed a review's finding that England's higher education regulator should 'more sharply focus on key priorities'. Following the departure of Lord Wharton of Yarm, Phillipson appointed Sir David Behan interim chair of the Office for Students (OfS), to implement the recommendations of the independent review of the regulator he led.
- The review found that the case for 'bold regulation' of higher education is clear but that the OfS should reduce its number of strategic objectives. It recommends the OfS sharply focus on key priorities, which include:
 - monitoring financial sustainability
 - ensuring quality
 - protecting public money and
 - regulating in the interests of students.
- Access and participation work is also highlighted in the Review, as part of the regulator's assessment of quality of higher education, but it is likely access will be prioritised in its own right by the government, given the Labour manifesto commitment to improve access to universities. The Labour party manifesto also committed to improving teaching in universities. Issues 'that matter to students' like mental wellbeing and sexual harassment on campus are also recommended to be taken forward by the review.
- The recommendations see a number of calls from the sector adopted, including reducing regulatory burden and embedding the principle of 'collect (data) once, use many times', working with other regulators and arms length bodies to reduce areas of regulatory

overlap and duplication and consulting the sector and then piloting approaches before making changes to regulatory methods. It also contains points of disagreement with the sector, including on the need for a separate quality body, with the review recommending the OfS assume this function permanently, contrary to sector lobbying for a separate body.

- The process to appoint a permanent OfS chair has started and will conclude next year.

1.2 Labour win the general election

- Labour won the general election on 4 July with a 174 seat majority and Keir Starmer became Prime Minister. The size of the majority gives Labour a mandate for change. The Conservative Party were down to 121 seats from 250, the worst result since 1832. Rishi Sunak has announced he will step down as leader of the Conservative party, and the leadership and future direction is being debated as part of the leadership contest with the winner to be announced on 2 November. The Liberal Democrats have 71 seats, their best result in a century, Reform UK 5 seats, and the Greens 4 seats. Reform UK came second place in 98 constituencies and in 89 of these constituencies, it was second to Labour. This electoral threat to Labour may influence their decision-making in government. The Greens have their highest number of MPs ever.

1.3 5 overriding missions for Labour, with economic growth the priority; universities praised but not a policy priority

- The new Labour government will be ‘mission-driven’ and has set out 5 missions: to kickstart economic growth, to break down barriers to opportunity, to make Britain a clean energy superpower, to build an NHS fit for the future and to take back our streets. Economic growth and pulling all levers of government to achieve this mission in the most inclusive way, is the overriding priority. Notably, higher education is not highlighted as a priority in Labour’s plans. The new government is looking to deliver on its core missions through partnerships with those outside of government (including business and civil society), and with an emphasis on joined-up working across government departments, providing opportunity for universities to press the case for our value.
- The Labour manifesto emphasised long-term strategy and stability. The objectives within the missions are long-term, with Starmer talking of a ‘decade of national renewal’. This emphasis chimes with the policy asks the University and wider sector have been making of government, from the need for a sustainable funding settlement for higher education to longer-term research and development (R&D) budgets, providing stability in order to attract private investment.

1.4 Legislation announced on energy, skills, sustainable aviation fuels, using data for research; devolution

- The King’s Speech on 17 July emphasised the mission-led approach and the fiscal rules Labour has committed to, which imply budget cuts in non-protected areas like higher education and science. Legislation announced included: a Bill to set up GB Energy, which could back emerging green technologies; a Skills England Bill which aims to help meet skills needs and reform the apprenticeship levy; a Sustainable Aviation Fuel (Revenue Support Mechanism) Bill to de-risk investment in Sustainable Aviation Fuels, an area of research strength for the University; a Digital Information and Smart Data Bill to improve data laws to benefit research; an English Devolution Bill to give local leaders greater power over local economic growth.

- Manifesto commitments not requiring legislation, including, for example, an audit of the UK's relationship with China, will be delivered in parallel. The Government published the Terms of Reference for its promised Strategic Defence Review, which will report in the first half of 2025.
- Given Labour's manifesto commitment to 'set out the path' to spending 2.5% of GDP on defence and plans to publish a Defence Industrial Strategy to align security and economic priorities, spending could potentially be diverted from R&D in other areas to defence R&D.

1.5 National budget constraints

- Labour will announce its first budget on 30 October and is expected to announce, in the spring of 2025, decisions on government spending allocations up to 2029.
- Labour has ruled out raising income tax, VAT and national insurance (the highest revenue-raising taxes) and committed to tight fiscal rules, meaning that non-protected government budgets, including higher education and science and innovation, could be subject to funding reductions.
- This also means there will be increased scrutiny over what existing funding delivers. Priority for spending is expected to be given to help achieve the objectives set out in the missions. A 'dynamic and strategic' state (p 25 of the manifesto) can be expected to prioritise certain sectors of the economy for support, like green energy technologies, in a way that was not seen under the Sunak administration. This may mean other sectors lose out.

1.6 Previous government's policies: Free Speech Act implementation paused; foundation year fee cut expected to go ahead; Lifelong Learning Entitlement maybe reviewed

- The government decided to pause the implementation of the previous administration's Free Speech Act. Many of the provisions of the Act were due to come into force on 1 August this year, including additional obligations on universities to protect and promote free speech and a complaints scheme run by the Office for Students. It's thought unlikely the Labour government will proceed with implementation of the Act, though universities have pre-existing obligations in this area, which will remain and may be policed differently following the Behan review of the Office for Students. Information on how the University upholds free speech and academic freedom and our obligations in this area can be found on this [web page](#).
- The foundation year fee cut for classroom-based subjects is expected to go ahead, given the tight fiscal constraints outlined above, subject to a wider review of post-16 education (committed to in Labour's manifesto).
- The Lifelong Learning Entitlement may be reviewed as part of the planned post-16 education strategy and review of higher education funding, though Ministers have stated they remain committed to lifelong learning and suggested the policy may have a role to play, albeit designed on the new administration's terms.

1.7 More positive tone from the Government towards the sector and on international students

- The new Government has changed its tone towards the sector. Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology, Science Secretary Peter Kyle MP declared that the previous government's "war on universities" had ended. He also said attacks on "rip-off" degrees from the former prime minister Rishi Sunak risked putting off future innovators and scientists.
- The Education Secretary, Bridget Phillipson MP, set out the government's 'different approach' to international students in a speech at the Embassy Education Conference. Phillipson said "be in no doubt: international students are welcome in the UK. This new government values their contribution – to our universities, to our communities, to our country." Phillipson has committed the government to the graduate visa, which offers international graduates the opportunity to remain in the UK for 2 years after graduating – or 3 years for a PhD – 'to work, to live, and to contribute'. The sector has been calling for commitment to the visa, which is part of the UK's competitive offer to prospective international students, following reports former Prime Minister Rishi Sunak MP wanted to scrap it.

2. EDUCATION

2.1 DELIVERY OF THE PORTFOLIO

2.1.1 Undergraduate Admissions

- The UG Home intake is expected to be above target reflecting a positive admissions cycle with an overall increase in applications, offers and accepts this year. This position illustrates the work undertaken in Student Recruitment, Marketing and Admissions to begin the process of regaining lost market share and improving the overall reputation and ranking of the University.
- A key performance indicator of that shift in market position is attainment upon entry with the proportion of the UG home cohort with attainment at ABB or above exceeding our Student Population benchmark (80%+) alongside an overall top three A Level tariff position (AAA-AAB) that improves on 2023 and marks significant progress from our pre-Covid position in 2019.
- We have also seen improvements in the diversity of our undergraduate cohort with 10% from a low participation neighbourhood (LPN) and encouragingly, nearly a quarter of our UG Home intake is from a widening access background providing a robust platform to transition into a new Access & Participation Plan period.
- The UG Overseas intake is expected to be below target and reflects an overall decline in applications, offers and accepts driven by a significant reduction in applications from mainland China this year. Whilst there have been encouraging application increases from other key international markets, overall numbers are relatively small by comparison.

2.1.2 Postgraduate Taught Admissions

- The PGT Home intake is expected to be marginally below target following sector wide trends in student behaviour. The PGT Home cohort remains volatile and hypersensitive to a range of wider environmental factors including the cost of living, student finance and employment market.

- The PGT Overseas intake is expected to be significantly below target reflecting the dramatic reduction in applications from mainland China driven by the change in QS ranking position for the University outside of the top 100. There have been a number of wider geo-political factors including negative Government rhetoric around international student mobility, however, the QS position linked with China recruitment represents the defining factor in this year's intake position.

2.1.3 Student Recruitment and Marketing

- Work here focuses on 2025 and 2026 entry. Pre-application open days continue to be the biggest influence on decision making according to UCAS data and therefore where we have strategically focused our efforts. The University has seen numbers attending increase for the third year in a row. Over 3 dates in June, July and September we have seen an 18% increase in numbers of prospective students seen as compared to 2023 which equates to 1294 individuals. This increase has been seen across all faculties which is particularly important with the largest increase in Engineering. This continuing increase is in a market where the cost of living crisis means students overall are attending less open days. Our continuing positive numbers can be directly attributed to high performing advertising campaigns with a call to action to sign up for the open day and a huge increase in lead generation through our attendance at fairs and strategic approach to engagement in schools which are followed up with direct communications inviting prospective students to our events.
- Supporting the in person offer is an extended number of online Sheffield Live sessions which continue to increase in number and popularity covering everything from personal statements to careers. These also support overseas recruitment with sessions on international scholarships and alumni. We also offer sessions targeting specific groups in line with our approach to EDI such as Access students, those with disabilities and LGBT+ students.
- Our marketing campaigns run throughout the year covering various points in two cycles and our exciting new creative for 2026 entry is now in development with digital advertising, social, UCAS Fairs and the prospectus as the key areas of focus for this.

2.1.4 League Tables

- Guardian

In the Guardian League table The University of Sheffield has risen from 21st place in the 2024 edition to 20th place in the 2025 edition. This equates to 12th place in the Russell Group up from 14th. The institution's position in the Guardian league table has fluctuated over the past 5 years but this is a continued improvement over the low of 45th place in the 2020 edition.

The 2025 edition of the league table is overwhelmingly stable with no change in the top 10 institutions and only 6 swapping places and only 2 new entrants into the top 20 with both Sheffield and Surrey moving in at 20th and 19th place respectively.

- The Times and Sunday Times

The University of Sheffield has been announced as runner-up for University of the Year 2025 by The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide. The annual league table placed the University 14th in the UK – a rise of four places since last year, securing its spot as the best University in Yorkshire.

- QS World University Ranking

The University of Sheffield has remained outside of the top 100 in the QS world rankings dropping from 104th place to joint 105th place with Utrecht University. This fall in rank is primarily driven by 3 metrics which collectively make up 65% of the total score: Academic Nominations (falling over 3 years following the increases seen during the pandemic, as is the case for most competitors), Employer Nominations (rising this year and over 5 years but being outstripped by competitors) and Citations per Faculty (rising this year and over 5 years but being outstripped by competitors).

- UEB have agreed a set of recommendations on how we will work to positively influence our rankings position. This includes a series of actions around building our global academic reputation in a more systematic way, continuing the work we have started to enhance research excellence and ensuring that our sustainability activity is clearly reflected in the data used by league tables, many of whom now include it as a key strand of interest to students. A clear process for internal engagement with the Employer and Academic Reputation Surveys is also now in place and being actively monitored.

- Daily Mail

In the second edition of the Daily Mails League Table Sheffield have placed 10th, up one place from last year. This makes us the top institution in the north of England and we have been ranked top in the Russell Group for both student experience and student support. Sheffield is behind only Oxbridge for both student assessment and teaching quality.

2.1.5 Access and Participation Plan

- The University's Access and Participation Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29 was approved by the Office for Students in August 2024 and has been published on the University website. The Plan sets out how the University will improve equality of opportunity for students from disadvantaged backgrounds to access, succeed in, and progress from higher education.
- By analysing the data, key areas to prioritise have been identified:
 - Students from lower socioeconomic groups (including those eligible for free school meals and those from low income postcodes) are less likely to come to the University, attain the highest grades and progress to graduate employment or further study compared to their more advantaged peers.
 - Our degree apprenticeship programmes attract a significant proportion of new entrants from lower socioeconomic groups and we want to continue to be an accessible route for these students and to maintain this success as our degree apprenticeship programmes expand.
 - Older students and those with disabilities are less likely to complete their degree programmes compared to younger students and those without a disability.
 - Black and Asian students are less likely to be awarded the highest grades than a white student.
- The above are addressed through a series of objectives, targets and intervention strategies outlined in the [Plan](#).

2.1.6 OfS Dashboards

- The OfS released updates to the Student Outcomes and Teaching Excellence Framework framework dashboards in July 2024.
- The Student Outcomes metrics look at Continuation, Completion and Progression¹ rates for students at all levels. The University is above the numerical thresholds for all top level indicators (with the exception of part time Other UG and First Degree populations, where performance is significantly below the threshold of 55% for Continuation and Completion due to historical coding issues which the OfS are aware of).

The University is comfortably above benchmark² for most of the Continuation splits for full time First Degree students. Completion rates are slightly below benchmark for full time First Degree students and UG courses with PG components. Progression rates for full time First Degree students are 1.2 percentage points below the benchmark of 74.2%, although time series data show a gradual improvement in performance.

- The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) considers outcomes for undergraduate students in Student Experience (NSS) and Student Outcomes (Continuation, Completion and Progression) alongside written evidence provided by the University. Whilst the full TEF exercise operates on a four-year cycle, benchmarked data are released annually to allow providers to track progress against those quantitative measures.

Due to changes to the NSS introduced in the 2023 survey, the Student Experience measures published in July 2024 are not directly comparable to those on which the TEF 2023 awards were made. Changes to the indicators have had a positive effect for the university, and there are no immediate areas of concern at an institutional level.

- We are in line with the benchmarks for all three Student Outcomes areas. These outcomes are very similar to our TEF 2023 position.

2.1.7 Graduate Outcomes Data

- The Graduate Outcomes (GO) survey data for the 2021-22 cohort was released by HESA on Thursday 13th June. All graduates who completed a higher education course in the UK after August 2017 are asked to take part in the survey 15 months after they finish their studies. The survey looks to understand whether graduates are in employment, have continued with further study (or are doing something else) and to what extent their qualification played a part. The GO data informs Student Outcomes (as above) and is also a key metric in the Access and Participation Plan. Data for students who graduated in the 2022-23 academic year, is expected to be available in June 2025.

¹ Continuation (full time): the proportion of students that were observed to be continuing in the study of a higher education qualification (or have gained a qualification) one year and 15 days after they started their course.

Completion (full time): the proportion of students that were observed to have gained a higher education qualification (or were continuing in the study of a qualification) four years and 15 days after they started their course. The most recent data point for these metrics is 2021-22.

Progression: the proportion of qualifiers that identify managerial or professional employment, further study or other positive outcomes among the activities that they were undertaking when responding to the Graduate Outcomes survey 15 months after they left higher education. The most recent results for 2021-22 are based on students who qualified in 2020-21.

² Benchmarks are not applicable to postgraduate study.

- Overall, the University of Sheffield and sector wide data shows another drop in response rates compared to previous years. The Positive Outcomes scores for Home UG has dropped to 91.2% compared to 93.5% in 2020-21. Graduate Prospects scores for Home UG (84.2%) show a slight drop compared to last year's figure (86.5%) but this is an improvement on 2019-20 graduates (81%).
- The Careers & Employability Service have prepared a series of interactive reports that are available via the [Reporting Service](#).

3. RESEARCH

3.1 RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

3.1.1 Research Awards

- See section 6, Finance, below.

3.1.2 Research Excellence Framework (REF 2029)

- The team which develops guidance for the REF on behalf of the four national funding bodies has announced that Open Access publishing for long form publications (typically books) will not be a requirement for the next exercise. This would have been a significant financial pressure for the sector so is a welcome development.
- The University has developed an Interim Code of Practice for our internal output review 'stocktake' to ensure transparency of expectation and process as we come closer to submission (2028). We are communicating the outcomes of the latest stocktake and ensuring that units are well calibrated against the REF criteria to enable us to accurately determine progress.

4. INNOVATION

4.1 GLOBAL AND REGIONAL

4.1.1 Regional Innovation

- One of our three strategic priorities for Innovation is supporting the South Yorkshire Region, using our excellence in research, education and knowledge exchange to positively influence the economy, health, sustainability and cultural vibrancy.
- We make a significant contribution to regional economic prosperity by supporting the infrastructure, ecosystem and teams with the opportunity to commercialise our Intellectual Property and support local businesses. A range of recent evidence includes:
 - The latest Beauhurst 'Equity Investments into Spinouts' 2024 report notes that by the number of equity deals completed in 2023, 'the University of Sheffield emerged as a notable contender, securing a place in the top five for the first time this year'. Sustained investment in our Commercialisation Journey has resulted in steady improvement in our spinout incorporation rate and the number of investments closed by spinouts. The report also placed the University as 18th in terms of the total investment raised, but we expect the value of investment rounds to increase over the coming years as spinouts mature and reach later stage investment rounds.
 - With Sheffield Technology Parks (STP), we have entered into a new agreement to provide new laboratory spaces in the city centre to help grow early-stage companies and help Sheffield capture the potential jobs created by innovation-led, scalable

businesses. The new lab spaces at STP are part of a broader spatial and economic concept - the Sheffield Innovation Spine - to link the infrastructure required to grow knowledge-led business in the city centre.

- The South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) has approved funding of £3m for a new programme to help regional businesses connect with universities to innovate and grow. The South Yorkshire Innovation Programme (SYIP) is a collaboration led by Sheffield Hallam University with the University of Sheffield and Barnsley MBC. It is designed to provide regional SMEs access to high-quality and bespoke innovation support including academic consultancy, student projects and placements and access to university equipment and facilities.
- Our ambitions for economic growth extend to our student community. Our Emerge: Be Enterprising team is opening a new space in the Ella Armitage Building to welcome students to its new Start-Up studio. This will be the new base for student entrepreneurs to meet and get involved in the Emerge programme of events.

4.1.2 Knowledge Exchange

- The latest Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) benchmarks us against English HEIs. We again place in the top 20 percent for working with businesses, developing IP, commercialising research and public and community engagement for the benefit of South Yorkshire and the rest of the UK. Results from the latest KEF also show that the University is highly engaged in research partnerships and working with the public and third sector.
- We held our inaugural KE and Impact Awards to celebrate innovative collaborations with external partners that have delivered tangible and far-reaching impact. The achievements of colleagues from across the Faculties and professional services were celebrated in eight categories and winners ranged from the first transatlantic flight fuelled by sustainable fuels to a collaboration which is helping to save lives through a reduction in NHS cancer diagnosis backlogs.

4.1.3 Advanced Manufacturing Group

- AMRC-Training Centre
 - Achievement rates at 79.5% against a national average of 54.6%
 - NSS score for teaching on my course 97.1% satisfaction
 - We had 11 employer advisory boards with approximately 55 attendees. These are groups of employers that sit underneath the Industry Advisory Board and are skills specific areas. These groups sign off our curriculum intent and implementation. These were all re-visited in July to demonstrate progress and impact to which we received 100% employer satisfaction.
 - Developed a new, online Employer Hub (providing employers with online training, key operational information and policies to help support their apprentices in the workplace)
 - Implemented the new Employer Induction Training (for September starts, we've had over 90 attendees and excellent verbal feedback)
 - Developed key relationships with new employers within and beyond the region, including; Warburtons, Ocado, Gripple, Two Sisters Food Group and E-on.

5. ONE UNIVERSITY

5.1 COLLABORATIVE AND SUPPORTIVE CULTURE

5.1.1 New Schools

- The 'new schools' structure came into effect from 1 September 2024. In the first phase of the work, 18 out of 21 new schools have been established (taking into account restructuring that was done in Faculty of Health in the previous year), with the following schools coming into effect on 1 September 2025:
 - School of Languages, Arts and Societies
 - School of Information, Journalism and Communication
 - School of Sociological Studies, Politics and International Relations
- New schools will now be largely focussed on starting to embed these initial set of changes; writing new academic visions (including setting school level performance targets and updating risk registers); settling new leadership structures; setting up governance through committees agreed by UEB (and disassembling previous committees); ensuring critical business processes around Health & Safety (and similar) are communicated and understood; preparing proposals for future Professional Services structures.
- Alongside this, there are some significant cultural challenges to work through, including recognising where ways of working are unhelpfully different in incoming departments and determining how to achieve harmonisation in the new school. Faculty Change Boards remain in place to ensure there is a mechanism for monitoring how the new structure is bedding in.

5.1.2 People Development

- Professional Services Framework

To help realise some of the key benefits of the new School structure, a new Professional Services Framework has been developed. The framework seeks to address inconsistencies between Professional Services roles in Schools, recognising that at present there is wide variety in structures, resourcing levels, job descriptions, job titles, and grades. The framework will be provided to Schools to help inform their review of their Professional Services teams and development of proposals for their structures moving forward. This will constitute a significant amount of change but is seen as critical to realising the benefits of the new structure. Communication of the framework is at an early stage, and over the coming weeks and months, School Leaders will use the framework to help develop proposals for future structures. It is anticipated that formal consultation on the proposed new structures will begin in 2025. Further updates will be provided as this project develops.

5.2 WELLBEING

5.2.1 Bullying and Harassment Policy

- UEB have approved a new staff 'Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy'. The purpose of the policy is to raise awareness of what constitutes bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct and encourage increased reporting of incidents. A recent internal audit (Sexual Violence and Harassment: Report and Support) found reports of sexual

harassment in the University are lower than expected and the new policy, and associated communications campaign, seeks to address that. The policy will also better enable the University to fulfil its duty to protect staff from sexual harassment in the forthcoming 'Worker Protection Act' and will also aid compliance with the new Office for Students condition of registration to protect students from sexual misconduct due to come into force in August 2025.

- The policy was negotiated with campus Trade Unions and will be launched to staff in October. The launch communications will include a brief survey on staff experiences of bullying and harassment, their awareness of reports and support and their preparedness to report incidents. The outcomes of this survey will then inform ongoing development in this area.

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 July 2024 is now £190m, an increase of £12m (7%) compared to £178m in July 2023.
- There has been a decrease in the total number of awards - for the 12 months to the end of July 2024, the number of new awards opened is 879 compared to 952 as at July 2023. There has been a fall of 55 in the number of RCUK awards and 28 in the number of Industry awards in the 12 months to July 2024 compared with July 2023.
- In contrast the number Charities has increased by 17 as has the number of Overseas & Other awards.
- The value of new awards for the 12 months to July 2024 is showing the biggest rise in Charity awards which has increased by £16m to £42m and the value of UK Government award which has also increased by £16m to £65m. However, the value of RCUK award has fallen by £12m to £64m and the value of Industry award has fallen by £5m.
- Excluding Capital Projects, as of July 2024 in addition to the above figures, £63m awards have had notification of being successful, as compared to £54m in July 2023.
- In the 2 months since the last report, there have been 13 new awards for over £1m, the largest of these was for £8.1m awarded by The Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy to the Advanced Manufacturing Group.
- The value of the Research Net Contribution is £45m for the 12 months to July 2024 compared to £47m for the 12 months to July 2023 a fall of £2m (4%).
- As of July 2024, research grants work in progress (research order book) which excludes capital projects, stands at £354m which is an increase of £23m on the work in progress figure of £331m recorded in July 2023.

7. LEGAL AND REGULATORY MATTERS

7.1 REPORTABLE EVENTS

Since the previous report to Senate was circulated the OfS has not been notified of any reportable events.



The Senate, 9 October 2024

President & Vice-Chancellor's Report

Supplementary Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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1. EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

- No supplementary content

2. EDUCATION

2.1 DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

2.1.1 Systems Updates

- The successful implementation of the Salesforce solution for SRMA resulted in providing an online enquiry function capability which replaces the current AskUs which is due to expire the first half of 2025. During Clearing, some enquiries received were managed end to end through this functionality and successfully resolved, demonstrating the effectiveness of our Salesforce implementation for enquiry handling. Capability is also now in place for a wider system rollout to enable the SRMA teams with managing leads under one platform and a single source of truth, deliver personalised communications based on segmented customer data and manage all online enquiries through a connected system.
- The Secure Data Service has successfully passed the ISO27001 audit, maintaining the accreditation for the Data Safe Haven for another year, as well as successfully expanding its coverage to all other platforms run by the Secure Data Service. The team has also made significant progress in expanding data access, with six Schools now having access to ONS data, facilitated by a streamlined process with a single point of contact for each school.

3. RESEARCH

3.1 RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

3.1.1 Digital Support

- The Data Analytics Service has contributed to 14 research projects, with a value to the University of ~£2m. A notable collaboration for the period has been with the Department of Civil and Structural Engineering and Doncaster City Council to implement live monitoring of indoor air quality.
- The Research Computing Support team has continued to provide essential support and expertise to the Researcher community. Since April, they have successfully addressed 333 complex individual researcher inquiries and conducted 30 one-to-one consultations. Additionally, in collaboration with the Data Analytics Service and Research Software Engineering, the team has delivered 56 training courses, totalling 249 hours, and reaching 717 researchers. This included a number of new courses developed as part of the TEF-funded Training Development programme.

4. INNOVATION

4.1 INNOVATION IMPACT

4.1.1 Success and Achievement – 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.
- Supported graduation on social media - an excerpt of Honorary Graduate Chris Bush's speech had over 100k views on Instagram Reels (73k), TikTok (26k) and Twitter (4k).
- Shared press releases on honorary graduate Millie Bright receiving her degree and Maisy Wilkes's achievements - the student awarded this year's Chancellors Medal.
- Delivered a reputation campaign focused on the University's work on Motor Neurone Disease, targeting global academics, policymakers and employers. The campaign featured targeted social media content, a sponsored edition of the Times Higher Education e-newsletter featuring Professor Dame Pamela Shaw and reflections on SITraN, a special edition MND staff newsletter and related content on the Staff hub and a special edition of the Sheffield Briefing – our external stakeholder newsletter; media coverage as part of the campaign included a Daily Express article and Look North feature on MND and the breakthrough drug tofersen, including comment piece from Professor Dame Pamela Shaw.
- Promoted the Big Walk via social media and a press release, securing coverage on Look North, ITV Calendar and BBC Radio Sheffield.
- Worked with local communities to mitigate end-of-tenancy student move-out waste, including reactive comms with residents and councillors and patrols; and holding litter picks to deal with rubbish.
- Letters of congratulations were sent to regional partners Martin Swales (SYMCA) and Sharon Kemp (Rotherham Council) following their recognition in the King's Birthday Honours.

- Provided support in relation to the Nuclear AMRC change project, which launched on Wednesday 10 July.
- Shared a press release on the new 'Tasty Spoon'™ which will enhance food flavours for people living with dementia. After careful planning, drafting, research, collation of press lists and pitching to key outlets, the press release achieved widespread national press coverage, including Sky News, The Independent, Sky, Daily Mail and Daily Express, as well as extensive regional media coverage. This has already led to strong impacts as a direct result, including industry and sector enquiries about testing and buying the spoon when available. A complementary video to accompany the story was shared on TikTok and had significant positive engagement: it generated a total playtime of 3h:45m:22s, 27,000 views, 302 likes and 22 comments. It also gained the @sheffielduni TikTok account 37 new followers.
- Targeted media coverage prior to results day in various publications focusing on our student audience and/or key influencers such as parents/teachers. This included Sheffield Star; Complete University Guide: Preparing for your university Clearing call; Complete University Guide: What's a teacher's role in preparing students for Clearing? and Complete University Guide: Calling UCAS Clearing hotlines; The Student Room a comment piece in the Yorkshire Post; an advice piece in Prospects.
- Media pitching on results day resulted in widespread media coverage that strongly reflected important University of Sheffield messaging about the University accepting 'high-quality' applicants in clearing (to counter the media narrative of RG's lowering tariff), as well as additional messaging about our accommodation guarantee and responsible recruiter approach. Coverage highlights included: The Guardian; The Telegraph; BBC News; Daily Mail; The i; Yorkshire Post; Capital FM, Heart Yorkshire and Hits Radio SY.
- A press release on University of Sheffield students launching a first-of-its-kind record label to help young musicians resulted in extensive press coverage and increased sign ups from students to the label.
- A press release on helping alternative proteins go mainstream for a sustainable planet received coverage across national news outlets including BBC News, Sky News, The Independent and The Telegraph.
- Supported the launch of both Festival of the Mind and Off the Shelf, securing widespread local media coverage through press release and social media content.
- Facilitated a BBC News story on sustainable aviation fuels featuring SAF-IC and its capabilities to help test new fuels before being put into large scale production.

4.2 GLOBAL AND REGIONAL

4.2.1 Regional Partnerships

- As part of the University's work with the Sheffield Policy Campus to encourage new research partnerships with Government Departments based in Sheffield - such as the Dept for Education, Dept for Work and Pensions, and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - a new series of policy-focused research seminars has been organised with the first set focusing on Artificial Intelligence (AI). These will take place throughout October with our academics alongside other partners e.g. SHU, Govt Departments and local colleges, and are focused on sharing academic research and live

policy challenges, and how academic expertise could improve policy-making on the impact of AI e.g. on labour markets and skills.

4.2.2 Global Engagement

- East China University of Science and Technology (ECUST)

Global Engagement lead and hosted a visit by East China University of Science and Technology on Tuesday 16 July. The visit gave colleagues an opportunity to engage with research and education leads in the Faculty of Engineering as well as the Management School. Sheffield has an existing partnership in Chemistry, but ECUST are looking to develop this into Management in research and education.

- University of Tennessee

The Faculty of Engineering, with support from Global Engagement, hosted the University of Tennessee for further conversations about offering a “Faculty led” summer school as part of their outbound programme of summer study. This would offer the opportunity for a cohort of students, led by a University of Tennessee academic, to spend time studying in the Diamond during the summer of 2025.

- Tsinghua University

The School of Architecture and Landscape hosted Tsinghua University on the 2nd September. The second highest ranked university in China. Meaningful discussions were held around the potential of collaboration in research and education, with a keen interest shown in the opportunity for joint post graduate programme development. Conversations were supported by Global Engagement.

- Northwest University of Political Science and Law (NWUPL)

The Vice President of NWUPL is visiting the University of Sheffield on Wednesday 9 October with a delegation to have discussions in developing the existing partnership in Law; and hopefully expanding the partnership to include the School of Economics and Management School. Global Engagement is leading on the visit with input from the three Schools involved.

- HELP University

Global Engagement will be hosting a visit by HELP University, Malaysia on Tuesday 3 December to discuss the University’s existing recruitment partnership in Law and Psychology; as well as looking at how the relationships with Sheffield’s Management School can be developed. HELP is one of the University’s key recruitment partners in Malaysia, with a consistent track record of sending high-quality students onto the 2nd year of Sheffield degree programmes.

4.3 CITY, CULTURE AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

4.3.1 Festival of the Mind

- Festival of the Mind, the University’s largest public engagement festival, returned for its 7th edition this year featuring more than 100 events from 43 projects which showcase research from across the faculties in partnership with local creative talent. Venues this year include the Spiegel tent in Barker’s Pool, Futurecade in the Millennium Galleries and Persistence Works, an award-winning studio complex part of Yorkshire Artspace. Online

content will also be delivered through the University Player during the Festival and beyond.

4.3.2 Off the Shelf

- The programme for this year's Off the Shelf Festival of Words, one of the North's largest literary festivals, has been released. Now in its 33rd year and delivered by the University at venues across the city in October, this year's programme features renowned names such as Richard Ayoade, Sara Pascoe, David Olusoga, and Julian Clary who are joined by local talent Sunjeev Sahota and Kerry Hudson, as well as our University academics through talks and online digital podcasts.

5. ONE UNIVERSITY

5.1 COLLABORATIVE AND SUPPORTIVE CULTURE

5.1.1 Staff Survey

- Communications to launch the 2024 staff survey will begin week commencing 30 September. The survey will open on 7 October until 21 October. As with the 2022 staff survey, we will be using the Hive survey platform which allows real time analysis of responses throughout the survey period and a fast turnaround of response analysis as the survey closes. Headline results will be presented to UEB on 22 October and all staff by 21 November, with a full report being presented to UEB on 2 December.
- The survey is presented in 5 sections:
 - Working relationships
 - Progression and reward
 - Workload and wellbeing
 - Leadership visibility and communication
 - Further insights
- The questions set is closely aligned to the question set used in 2022 to allow for benchmarking, it includes 'net promoter score' questions that measure levels of staff engagement and as in 2022, the survey also serves as our organisational Stress Risk Assessment.

5.2 DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

5.2.1 Senior Recruitment

Internal Appointments:

- Dean of the School of Clinical Dentistry - Professor Ali Khurram took up the role on 1st September 2024. Professor Khurram has been working in the School of Clinical Dentistry since 2011, most recently as Professor of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology.
- Interim Head of School of East Asian Studies - Dr Thomas Mcauley has taken up the role on an interim basis from 1st September 2024 until 31st August 2025. Dr Mcauley has been working in the School of East Asian Studies since 1997, most recently as Senior Lecturer in Japanese Studies.
- Faculty Director of Research & Innovation (Mechanical Engineering) - Professor Elizabeth Cross took up the role on 1st September 2024. Professor Cross has been working in the

Mechanical Engineering Department since 2011, most recently as the Head of Department.

- Faculty Director of Education (Science) - Professor Andrew Beckerman took up the role on 1st September 2024. Professor Beckerman is an internal appointment. Professor Beckerman has been working in the Science Department since 2003, most recently as the Professor in Evolutionary Ecology.

External Appointments:

- Professor of Process Safety - Professor Fiona Macleod took up the role on 1st September 2024. Fiona had previously worked as a Consultant for a range of clients, including the University of Sheffield, teaching a module on the MSc in Process Safety and Loss Prevention.
- Associate Director: Engineering & Maintenance in Estates and Facilities Management - Bob Sweeney took up the role on 1st September 2024. Bob had previously worked as FM Director at TClarke Contracting Ltd.
- Head of Product (Education & Student) in Information Technology Services - Martin Rodenby took up the role on 19th August 2024. Martin had previously worked as Programme Director at Nottingham Trent University.
- Assistant Director (Service & Platforms) in Information Technology Services - Michael Sanderson took up the role on 19th August 2024. Martin had previously worked as Director of IT and Data at Nova Education Trust.
- Chair in Criminology - Professor Alex Stevens took up the role on 1st August 2024. Professor Stevens had previously worked as Professor in Criminal Justice at the University of Kent.
- Chair in Psychology - Professor Susan Sherman took up the role on 1st August 2024. Professor Sherman had previously worked as a Reader in the School of Psychology at Keele University.
- Associate Director of EFM (Property & Strategic Asset Management) - Ashley Roberts will take up the role on 23rd September 2024. Ashley had previously worked as Head of Campus Services at the University of Nottingham.

5.3 SUSTAINABILITY

5.3.1 Digital

- A further 2 faculties (Social Sciences and Engineering) along with Professional Services and the University Security Team have been rolled out as part of the telephony replacement work. The AXP (Contact Centre) migrations have also been successfully completed, which included University Health Service, IT Service Desk, EFM Helpdesk, Student Registry and Clearing. Work is now underway to look at the phasing of the remaining roll-outs to align these to work to reclaim under utilised licences to control costs.

5.4 PHILANTHROPY

5.4.1 Alumni Engagement and Volunteering

Financial Year	Volunteer hours (target)		Total hours to date	Campaign Forecast
	2023/2024	2024/2025		
Volunteer hours**	14,566 (15,000)	13 (13,000)	80,503	108,490
Volunteer hours (students)***	42,027 (20,000)	(20,000)	169,048	209,048
	56,593 (35,000)	13 (33,000)	249,551	317,538

** 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 – 30.06.24. Further data on student volunteer hours will be included in subsequent reports as it becomes available.

- Alumni engagement

In July 2024 CAR celebrated the incredible contribution our 1000+ alumni volunteers make across the University with a special event on campus hosted by Vice President for Education, Professor Mary Vincent. Alumni joined staff and students who've benefited from their support to network during a drinks and buffet reception.

- Alumni Volunteer of the Year and Mentoring Awards

These prestigious awards, recognising exemplary volunteers, were this year presented at the above event in July. Nominations were submitted by staff and students across the institution. This year's Volunteer of the Year was awarded to Binna Kandola, OBE, for his outstanding commitment to supporting Master's students in the Management School.

- Alumni story bank

This new resource, providing a central bank for University staff to find and share alumni stories, will launch in the autumn. The project has been led by CAR with sponsorship from One University Director Hugo Dobson. Alumni case studies are an increasingly important marketing tool to support messaging around student recruitment, employability, fundraising, research and reputation. The creation of the bank will build a more effective process, reducing duplication, streamlining our communications with alumni, ensuring GDPR compliance, and helping all University staff to use alumni stories to the best effect.

6. FINANCE

- No supplementary content

7. LEGAL AND REGULATORY MATTERS

- No supplementary content