

Wrexham Glyndŵr University

Vision & Strategy to 2025

Inspiring, Transforming,
Enabling and Sustaining



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Preface from the Chair of the Board and the Vice-Chancellor.

The Board of Governors of Wrexham Glyndŵr University are delighted to endorse the University's refreshed Vision and Strategy to 2025. We have witnessed considerable change and development in the past few years, both within the University itself and beyond. This review is a timely opportunity, therefore, to reflect the considerable progress we have made already, thanks to the hard work of staff, and to ensure that we continue to set ourselves challenging goals as we move forward.

The Board wholeheartedly embraces the mission and values underpinning Vision and Strategy to 2025, which find their expression in the four strategy domains: teaching that inspires, research that transforms, engagement that enables and structure that sustains.

The review of Vision and Strategy to 2025 has been informed by a range of cross-cutting themes, regularly considered by the Board of Governors: excellent digital capability to support our infrastructure and our teaching; the evolution of the shape of our portfolio and modes of delivery; stakeholder engagement and partnership working as a civic university; scenario thinking in the context of emerging national policies and wider socio-economic developments. The strategic plan will continue to be valid and dynamic and I look forward to seeing it implemented.

Maxine Penlington OBE,
Chair of the Board of Governors.



It is with a sense of pride that we present a refreshed Vision and Strategy to 2025 for our university. It is being launched in 2021 – at approximately the mid-way point of the lifetime of the plan, with many objectives already achieved and some being recalibrated.

During the review process, we have looked back at progress made in the past few years since the adoption of our vision and strategy in 2018, considered some of the recent developments and sweeping changes in our operating environment, and looked ahead to opportunities over the remaining years of the plan. We found that the values which underpin Vision and Strategy to 2025 continue to be strong and relevant, and we live and breathe them every day. Our primary focus is to deliver excellent outcomes for students, as articulated in our mission statement: to inspire and enable through higher education, research and engagement; working together with our students, staff and partners.

I am grateful to all those who contributed to the review, whether as participants in meetings and focus groups or as authors of particular sections. But first and foremost, my thanks go out to all colleagues and stakeholders who have played a part in our considerable achievements since we developed our Vision and Strategy to 2025. I look forward to seeing many more successes, as we move into the next phase of delivery.

Professor Maria Hinfelaar
Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive



Our Mission and Profile.

Our mission is to inspire and enable through higher education, research and engagement; working together with our students, staff and partners.

We are a university which is known to our students, staff and stakeholders as offering a genuine community feel. We provide education and research programmes to a high quality standard, recognised by the professions and industry as being practical and career-focused.

Our heritage dates back to the 1880s through various forerunner colleges, culminating in university status achieved in 2008. Our campuses are located in Wrexham, Flintshire and Denbighshire in North Wales.

We have a strong widening participation ethos as the leading university for social inclusion and mobility according to the Sunday Times, evidenced by benchmarked metrics. We bring innovative higher education opportunities to students with diverse backgrounds in our region, nationally and internationally. Our graduates achieve good outcomes which also benefit their employers, their families and the wider community.

We are civically engaged, collaborating with local government, public services, health care providers, schools and third sector organisations. We work in close partnership with our Students' Union, who contribute greatly to our academic successes and to our supportive and inclusive culture. We support delivery of the Students' Union Strategy, ensuring that consideration of students informs all actions and students are at the heart of decision making. We deliver our academic programmes through two Faculties with broad and synergistic portfolios:



**Vet Nursing Lab,
Northop**



**Optic Campus,
St Asaph**



**Main Campus,
Wrexham**



the Faculty of Arts, Science and Technology (FAST) and the Faculty of Social and Life Sciences (FSLs). They serve a comprehensive range of sectors: engineering and technology; the sciences; business and finance; arts and humanities; healthcare and social work; education and animal care. All programmes share a focus on employability, practitioner insight and relevant research; many carry recognition by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies. The Faculties and their students are supported by university-wide professional services teams.

Our research strengths are in photonics engineering, computing, composite materials, criminal justice, and arts in health therapies. We engage in research collaborations with a range of partners across academia, industry and government. Our flagship for technology-driven R&D is the award-winning Optic site at St Asaph, home to the Welsh Centre for Photonics Excellence which works closely with key players in aerospace.

We have significantly diversified the study modes offered to Wrexham Glyndwr University students in the last few years, offering new pathways and opportunities to a wider audience. Both Faculties have developed new taught postgraduate programmes which have attracted not only our own recent graduates, but also a growing number of international students. In addition, we have expanded our portfolio of international collaborative provision through franchising (Transnational Education), predominantly in South-East Asian countries, and we have launched a suite of flexible MBAs and MScs under the WGU Online banner, which are recruiting students from around the world. These fresh initiatives have expanded more rapidly than anticipated, widening access to HE opportunities for thousands more students and creating additional revenue for the University.

UK-based partnerships have also evolved, such as with Further Education colleges in the region, degree apprenticeships with local employers, major contracts with healthcare bodies and delivery of Teacher Education programmes with St Mary's University Twickenham.

The university has three subsidiary companies. North Wales Science Ltd runs the Xplore! Science Discovery Centre, formerly Technquest, relocated to Wrexham Town Centre with the support of Wellcome Trust funding and Welsh Government funding for regeneration. Glyndŵr Innovations Ltd oversees the Precision Optics Group, the business incubation centre at Optic St Asaph and the delivery of the WGU element of the North Wales Growth Deal programme, funding new facilities for advanced manufacturing. Glyndŵr Services Ltd is responsible for some of the ancillary functions at the university.

These subsidiary companies are an essential arm of the university contributing to our mission and profile, with close links to relevant academic or professional services departments.

Much has already been achieved since the adoption of Vision and Strategy to 2025, which is well on track. We have developed new student recruitment areas which are still on a growth trajectory. We have demonstrated solid academic quality benchmarks, receiving commendations in the Quality Enhancement Review under the QAA. We achieved sector-leading NSS results and improved student retention. We have delivered major projects within our ambitious Campus 2025 Masterplan, transforming the learning environment for our students. We have achieved outstanding results in our staff engagement survey, indicating levels of pride and satisfaction above sector averages. Our financial performance has been sustained and strong, generating operational surpluses and the capacity to invest in our facilities. We have enhanced the University's reputation in our cross-border region and throughout Wales.

We proved our ability to respond during a challenging time, when the sector and the region faced seismic changes and which brought a public health crisis, also leading to a social and economic crisis. We introduced the Active Learning Framework (ALF), which has reimaged



Visual of proposed Learning Gateway Building, Main Campus, Wrexham

how we deliver programmes in a more flexible and accessible way. We invested in additional resources for staff working from home, who continued to provide excellent services to our students and across departments. We created Covid-secure campuses, ready for a safe return. It is clear that we have an agile and cohesive culture, able to rise to the challenges. We are also keenly aware of the part we need to play in the wider recovery effort following the pandemic, which will be a key area of focus during the next few years.



We have every reason to be confident that we have the ability to respond to different scenarios, building on our achievements and continuing our close collaboration with our community of students, staff and stakeholders to deliver Vision and Strategy to 2025.



Our Values.

The vision and the University's values remain at the core of the work we are doing.

Recent developments, dominated by a pandemic and its wider impacts, have affirmed how essential our values are in how we take decisions and how we respond to challenges. Even more importantly, the vision and values articulated in Vision and Strategy to 2025 have underpinned our focus on how best to support our students and staff, as well as the wider community during challenging times.



Our values are to be:

Accessible

We are passionate advocates for lifelong learning and believe that background and circumstance should not be a barrier to engaging with higher education. We are dedicated to accessibility, fairness and inclusivity in how we teach, research and provide our services.

Supportive

We foster a supportive environment to encourage our staff and students to work together to achieve their learning, research and career goals. We care about our communities and proactively lead and support initiatives that enrich the local economy and the lives of local people.

Innovative

We do things differently. We recognise that our success is dependent upon the collective energy, intelligence and creativity of the university community. We actively encourage new perspectives and innovation in teaching, research and our engagement with communities and partners. We question the status quo and are brave enough to embrace new ways of doing things. This enables our culture, structure, policies and people to drive excellence and respond effectively to need.

Ambitious

We are unashamedly ambitious for our staff, students and our communities. We recognise that there are no limits to learning and knowledge and we challenge people to embrace their aspirations and succeed through education.

Our Vision.

The University's mission and values find expression in the vision for our four strategy domains: teaching that inspires, research that transforms, engagement that enables and structure that sustains.

Together, these strategy domains shape our vision to be the place of choice for our students, partners and staff.

This vision translates into relevant opportunities and solutions in higher education, research and civic work. Priority actions and KPIs across these strategy domains are detailed over the following pages.



Teaching that inspires

Enabling inspirational learning through excellent teaching, providing opportunities for our students to flourish as healthy, active and responsible global citizens.



Research that transforms

Supporting innovation, learning and economic growth, through being internationally excellent in originality, significance and rigour.



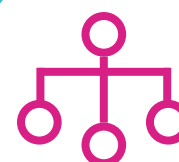
Engagement that enables

Enriching the region and beyond, supporting and developing individuals, communities, culture and the community.



Structure that sustains

Providing services and operating infrastructure that supports all parts of the strategy; delivering excellence through people, places and resources.



Teaching that Inspires

Aim	To enable inspirational learning through excellent teaching, providing opportunities for our students to flourish as healthy, active and responsible global citizens.		
Approach	To provide flexible and accessible learning underpinned by active student engagement and innovative assessment, embracing the best new digital practices with enhanced learning spaces on campus in our blended delivery of teaching. We place the well-being of students at the forefront of what and how we teach and complement this with extensive and personalised student support. Our programmes are relevant to the world of work and civic society; practice-based, research-informed and guided by the 'student voice'; delivered and supported by professional staff focused on an excellent student experience, helping our students to be enterprising, ethical, engaged and creative.		
Priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continuously review our portfolio and learning pathways across all levels to meet the needs of learners and employers, thereby attracting increasing numbers of students. 2. Develop flexible and accessible practice-based and research-informed learning that equips our students with the knowledge and skills for the world of work and to be active contributors to civic society. 3. Optimise student retention and achievement through great teaching and comprehensive support for academic success and personal wellbeing, enabling students from all backgrounds to succeed. 4. Collaborate with students as partners to develop an embedded and effective approach to student engagement. 		
Priority Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop taught provision that supports work and civic related experience opportunities for all our students, supported by expanded digital and physical learning infrastructure. 2. Ensure regular portfolio and pathway review to achieve alignment with regional priorities and support international provision, embedding and enhancing the Active Learning Framework. 3. Deliver a systematic and strategic approach to the development, reward and recognition for all those involved in teaching and supporting learning. 4. Establish and develop a mutually supportive partnership with students, actively using learner feedback to enhance the student experience. 		
KPIs used to identify and monitor progress	Proportion of students satisfied in NSS & PG Surveys	% of graduates in work or further study	% of graduates in managerial jobs
	Overall Student Nos	Student Retention	Student Continuation
		Number of students studying through medium of Welsh	Access and participation measures for student body of Welsh
Supporting Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy for Supporting Student Learning and Achievement • Digital Enhancement • Campus 2025 • Widening Access Strategy • Employability • Student Recruitment • Civic Mission Partnership • Learner Engagement and Retention 		

Research that Transforms

Aim

To support innovation, learning and economic growth, through engaging in research which is internationally excellent in originality, significance and rigour.

Approach

The university will improve its research capacity, impact and performance, and be better at telling others what we are achieving. It will do this in meaningful partnerships, with a strong emphasis on research which has an applied and commercial potential and that will look to support and grow the region on an international stage. It will work to ensure that it uses both the outcomes of research and the people engaged in research to inform our teaching, keeping it up-to-date, innovative, applied and relevant to regional needs across business and civic society.

Priorities

1. Grow outputs and income associated with research.
2. Develop research capacity and capability of the university by developing its staff.
3. Grow the post-graduate research community.
4. Increase the number of active industrial and academic research collaborations.
5. Increase the visibility, impact and value of our research.

Priority Actions

1. Create a vibrant research community with increased capacity and effective support, through increasing the number of staff and student PhDs.
2. Successful REF and RDAP submissions.
3. Strategy for knowledge transfer and exploitation that will benefit both academic and the wider economy and civic society.
4. Develop a plan for communicating the impact and success of our research.

KPIs used to identify and monitor progress

REF Outcomes

RDAP Application

Research Income

Proportion of staff with PhDs

PGR student numbers

Collaborative and contract research income

Number and quality of research outputs

Supporting Strategies

- Research Strategy
- Enterprise Strategy
- People Strategy
- Mental health and Well-being Strategy
- Campus 2025
- Environmental and Sustainability Strategy
- Digital Enhancement Strategy
- Civic Mission Partnership Strategy

Engagement that Enables

Aim	To enrich the region and beyond, supporting and developing individuals, communities, culture and the economy.		
Approach	We will provide accessible intellectual leadership and knowledge capital to tackle challenges and meet needs, local, regional and international, to support and drive vibrant and sustainable economies. We will do this by being responsive, working collaboratively and seeking to co-create solutions.		
Priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Catalyse regional and national enterprise and innovation through the development, transfer and exploitation of skills and knowledge. 2. Enhance educational achievement nationally and internationally by working with communities, educational partners and employers. 3. Strengthen community resilience, wellbeing and civic leadership capacity. 		
Priority Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage with employers and national and local government to support and develop regional and national industries. 2. Lead educational partnership activity in the UK and internationally, with innovative and responsive approaches. 3. Co-create innovative approaches to address social inequality in partnership with communities and leaders. 		
KPIs used to identify and monitor progress	Number of international students	Enterprise income	Number of new business ventures
	Number of students in transnational education (TNE)	Number of students on placements	Number of knowledge transfer partnerships (KTPs)
	Civic Mission Projects impact assessment (case studies)		
Supporting Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Strategy • Enterprise Strategy • Civic Mission Partnership Strategy • Widening Access Strategy • Employability Strategy 		

Structure that Sustains

Aim	To provide services and operating infrastructure that supports all parts of the strategy; delivering excellence through people, places and resources.		
Approach	Given the constantly changing environment, the university will continue to review and revise its organisational structure to assure delivery of this strategy, embedding lean, agile, flexible and professional working practices across academic and professional staff areas. This will be informed by robust management information, including resource, business intelligence and workforce planning, sound financial controls and good governance. Supported by strategies in key areas such as digital enhancement, human resources and campus development. It is also underpinned by providing a fair and inclusive workplace in which health and well-being and professional development are encouraged and supported.		
Priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ongoing support and development of university staff to achieve their potential and support university growth. 2. Develop the learning and working environment through sustainable infrastructure delivery. 3. Grow the financial resources of the university, underpinned by good management practices and efficiencies and organisational structures that are flexible, agile and fit for purpose. 		
Priority Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a workplace that attracts, retains and supports staff in the delivery of our strategy. 2. Continue to deliver Campus 2025, transforming the physical and digital learning environments, across all our campuses, to provide high quality support for all our work and all our people. 3. Maintain and develop financial controls and continue to create and explore additional income generation opportunities. 4. Have in place and implement key supporting strategies. 		
KPIs used to identify and monitor progress	Operational Surplus/ Deficit & EBITDA/ Cash generation	Liquidity days ratio	Pay costs as a % of turnover
	Staff Satisfaction Survey	% of PDRs undertaken	Staff Turnover
	Number of cpd hours/member of staff	Energy usage and CO2 outputs	Diversity targets and measures within the Equality and Diversity Action Plan
Supporting Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus 2025 • Digital Enhancement Strategy • Finance Strategy • Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy • People Strategy • Environmental and Sustainability Strategy 		

