Academic Board
Wednesday 10th May 2017

Professor Chris Day
Vice-Chancellor and President
Our defining characteristics?

- A proud heritage stretching back 183 years
- A long history of excellence in teaching
- A strong regional focus ("regionally rooted")
- A key driver of the innovation culture and history of the region
- An emerging reputation for societal impact
- A long history of collaborative and partnership ("connected") working
- An increasing focus on interdisciplinarity
- Passionate, Friendly?
First inter-city railway line (Stephenson) 1829

The University of Newcastle was originally formed by Lord Armstrong as the College of Physical Science. 1871

Sir Joseph Swan develops the first practical light. 1879

Gladstone Adams designs the windscreen wiper as he drove home from a Newcastle United cup final in a storm. 1908

Lord William Armstrong invents the hydraulic crane. 1840

1940s – 1960s

Professor Sugata Mitra’s self-organised learning environments (SOLEs) are changing the culture of classrooms around the world. 1990s

Victor Pasmore is at the forefront of abstract art, while Richard Hamilton pioneers pop art. Both artists worked at Newcastle University. 2000s

Research led by Dr Nanette De Jong is fighting poverty through arts and culture. 2016 2017

Computing research at Newcastle University underpins high-performance switches in the New York Stock Exchange. 1940s – 1960s

Newcastle University is leading the breakthroughs in the development of ‘smart’ drugs known as PARP inhibitors. 1990s

Helping double the life expectancy of boys born with Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD). 2000s

Largest urban observatory in the world. 2000s

Newcastle University experts develop a new generation of prosthetic limbs which will allow the wearer to reach for objects automatically, without thinking – just like a real hand. 2000s

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Research & Innovation

Newcastle University

UK | Malaysia | Singapore
Where we are now….

• A good university in a great city with many things to be proud of:
  − A broad disciplinary base
  − Some genuinely world leading researchers across all three Faculties
  − Highly rated T&L by current measures
  − “Largely” happy, engaged staff and satisfied students
  − Financially sound with regular surpluses/healthy reserves
  − Producing a significant economic impact on the region/UK
  − In the Russell Group/Top 200 Universities in the world
Economic impact: university

- £1.1 BILLION GVA in the UK
- £800 MILLION GVA contribution to the three Northern regions
- 8,850 FTE JOBS full-time equivalent jobs in Newcastle
- 3rd largest employer in the city
- 4th largest employer in the region
- 6% of all jobs in the city
Our challenges...

• We need to address **2 critical issues** while continuing to build on excellence in **2 of our key strengths**

• The 2 critical issues are:
  - Our, at best, “lumpy” research performance and
  - Our external profile and reputation

• Only by addressing these 2 issues can we continue to deliver on our Teaching and “Societal” missions and achieve true global impact
The “strengths” we can’t be complacent about

• Teaching & learning:
  – TEF: emphasis on quality and employability
  – BREXIT and globally competitive market for international students

• Societal mission:
  – We are anchored in a region with some of the worst levels of social inequality in the country. To fulfil our societal mission, here, perhaps more than anywhere else in the UK, we have to play a role in improving this situation
Initial solutions - research

- **Nurture and celebrate the stars** and support and build critical mass in our strong areas
- **Recruit and retain the brightest and best** at senior and early career level
- Through *leadership*, mentoring, nurturing and support, improve **overall research performance** - *realising the potential* of all of our staff
- Encourage more **partnership** working: local, national and **international HEIs** and **across sectors** including public, cultural and commercial
- Encourage more **inter- and trans-disciplinarity**
- More “Wayne Gretzky”?
Initial solutions – reputation

• Make sure we have a well defined “identity” and “narrative” and are clear what our “brand” is

• Refresh our marketing strategy

• Huge opportunities around Freedom City, the Great Exhibition of the North and Science Central

• Consider joining (? forming) a global university network

• All staff, students and alumni as brand carriers

• More prominent role for the VC in national and international profile raising

• Bring the “coals” to Newcastle
Initial solutions – T&L

• To address the TEF criteria we have to learn from, and be better than, the “Loughboroughs” while exploiting our RG “pre-92” advantages: To achieve this we should consider:
  - Increasing our use of *Technology Enhanced Learning*
  - Working with employers to address the *Skills Agenda* and make the students more employable - *Degree Level Apprenticeships etc.*
  - Utilising our research strengths to produce *innovative research-led and/or combined courses* – for example in business and engineering?

• To address the international student issue we have undertaken a root-and-branch review of our support and strategy for international recruitment, appointed a new Director and re-established a joined-up International Office
My take on pursuing excellence versus rankings/league tables?

1. World class research, teaching, societal engagement & Impact

2. ▲ Reputation

3. ▲ Rankings

4. ▲ Number/quality of students
   ▲ Quality Staff
   ▲ Funding
   ▲ Collaborative partners
Developing a refreshed Vision

• What are the external/internal challenges to our current vision and how might we address them?
• Our vision needs to be clear on the “Why” we do what we do
• Needs to be distinctive
Vision 2021

• “A world class civic university” which is:

• “A civic university with a global reputation for academic excellence”

• We also use the phrase: “Excellence with a Purpose”
The Civic University: external challenges

• The idea of a civic university
  – Goddard et al: Case studies of 8 Unis
  – Universities as a “Public Good”

• The idea of “impact”
  – Now firmly part of REF

• The idea of challenge-led research
  – Now embedded eg GCRF/UN SDGs

• Other universities are catching up
  – Defining their own versions of SCTs
  – Using the ‘Civic University’ label
  – “Civic” role now part of Russell Group mantra
The Civic University: internal challenges

• Some staff (? + students) appear uncomfortable with the civic label
  − “It’s too parochial in the global world we now operate in”
  − “It’s only about the SCTs which are too narrow”
  − “It distracts us from our core academic business”
  − “It hasn’t helped our reputation (as judged by league tables)”

• Some staff (? + students) don’t appear to buy in to the “purpose” agenda
  − It doesn’t relate to “our” work – which is typically either:
  − “Classical” research, with the “purpose” of advancing their field resulting in high quality publications and grants AND/OR:
  − Teaching, with the purpose of facilitating learning of the highest quality
  − Neither are focussed primarily on producing “societal/civic” impact
We accept that being a “civic” university is now one of every university’s three core functions along with research and teaching & learning.

We omit it from our vision statement and use something like:

“Excellence with a purpose – transforming lives or futures”

AND/OR expand it to something like:

“Excellence with a purpose – advancing knowledge, educating for life and transforming society”

Explains the “Why”
“Excellence with a purpose” for all

1. We need **excellence in all 4** to produce societal impact
2. **Only** universities can cover all 4 types of research and take the long-term view
3. 1 → 5 may take “years” and is completely unpredictable
4. All 4 require engagement/”co-creation” with partners/society - Uni as the “catalyst”
5. Requires appointment of/development of “Translators”

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**Diagram:**

- **Theoretical, “Discovery” “Blue skies” Research**
- **Applied Research**
- **Societal Impact**
- **EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS**

2. and 4. = “Translational research”; 4 also referred to as implementation, practice or policy-based research.
What will make our vision distinctive?

• Derives from **three distinct elements:**
  
  (a) In both R&T, our disciplinary strengths *and* our interdisciplinary working (eg. Dentistry, Geography – QS World top 50)

  (b) The global societal challenges we focus on AND:

  (c) The *nature and extent* of our societal engagement and our clear focus on *translating* our excellence into societal impact

• Crucially we need *all three* to deliver real *and broad* societal impact
Our Values

- Use Vision 2021 and the HaSS values as the starting point for discussion
- Ensure these values help us change the “we’re doing ok” “Newcastle” culture into one that embraces change and accepts the need for continuous improvement
- Addresses the “JADEs” (Just About Doing Enoughs)
Values – to include some of…..

• Academic freedom
• Excellence, ambition and aspiration
• Enquiry, exploration and creativity
• Inspirational academic leadership
• Diversity, inclusivity and a support culture
• Trust, integrity and respect
• Tolerance and open-mindedness
• Social responsibility
• Transparency and candour
• Academic freedom
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Strategic Aims (adapted from current mission statement)

• To do world-class research
• To deliver teaching and facilitate learning of the highest quality
• To play a leading role in the economic, social and cultural development of the North East of England
Suggested strategic aims

• Perform world leading research within and across disciplinary boundaries
• Educate to the highest quality to inspire and improve
• Engage with society at the global and regional level to generate beneficial impact and transform lives
Framework for strategy development

Engagement and impact strategy
  a) Global
  b) Regional (NE)

Research strategy

Education strategy
Global Societal Challenges?

• Should be based on UN SDGs
• Add to the “Why”
• Do we need to focus on specific GSCs?
  – E.g. Energy, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Clean Water & Sanitation, Peace & Justice
• And/or should we have broader themes/domains that are more inclusive and cut across several GSCs?
  – Data science
  – Sustainability
  – Ageing
  – Urban/Cities
UN Sustainable Development Goals

1. No Poverty
2. Zero Hunger
3. Good Health
4. Quality Education
5. Gender Equality
6. Clean Water and Sanitation
7. Affordable and Clean Energy
8. Decent Work and Economic Growth
9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
10. Reduced Inequalities
11. Sustainable Cities and Communities
12. Responsible Consumption
13. Climate Action
14. Life Below Water
15. Life on Land
16. Peace and Justice
17. Partnerships for the Goals
Sustainability
Core principles to aid in the development and implementation of our strategy

• Stick to our defining characteristics:
  − Encourage and support **Partnership** working (external partners)
  − Embrace **Innovation** in all that we do (and risk?)
  − Encourage/support more **Interdisciplinarity** (working across and between disciplinary boundaries)

• **Pl² or π²?**
Additional core principles

• Focus on talent management throughout our pipeline from students to academic leaders
• Provide staff and students with inspiring environments
• Accord parity of esteem to research and teaching and to P(S)S and academic staff
• Place ethics, sustainability and stewardship of resources at the heart of everyday practice
• Ensure process efficiency, value for money and state-of-the-art IT support in/for all that we do
Next steps

• *Participation* of staff, students and external stakeholders through PVC-led Focus Groups (for each of the 4 sub-strategies), Workshops and World Cafes

• Carry out perception survey (internal and external)

• Improve marketing capacity and work to develop our “brand”

• Aim to present revised strategy to Council for sign off December 2017
Gender pay gap

• HESA data from 2013/14 showed an 18% gap between male/female academic salaries (UCU Report, 2016)
• In 2015/16, the gap was 14.8% (published last week in Times Higher)
• Our own 2015 Equal Pay Review showed an academic (non-clinical) gender pay gap of 14.5% - above the sector average (12.6%) but below the Russell Group average (16.3%)
• As at 31 March 2017 this figure reduced to 13.4%

At professorial level, women are paid:
• 99.5% of the average male salary, for Band 1
• 101.8% of the average male salary in Band 2
• 108.6% of the average male salary in band 3.

So, we’re heading in the right direction, but clearly more needs to be done…
Actions

I have pledged publically to understand more about the issues and how we can address them, including:

- Setting up a task and finish group to investigate the issues and make recommendations to EB
- Publishing our gender pay gap data
- Considering gender as part of a review of promotions, eg support available to female applicants
- Considering as part of a review of professorial pay arrangements
- Building gender issues into new reward strategy and policy
- Building into our new Diversity and Inclusion Strategy
Questions

• Do you agree with this assessment of our characteristics, strengths and challenges?
• What really matters to us in Newcastle?
• What about “Excellence with a purpose – transforming futures” as a refreshed vision?
• What makes us/could make us distinctive?
• Are these proposed values fit-for-purpose?
• What about our Global SCs?