1 Context

Newcastle upon Tyne is one of the oldest university towns in England in the sense that there has been teaching in it for an internal university qualification for longer than in any English town except Oxford, Cambridge, London and Durham. It is also the only town in England where university teaching began in the faculty of Medicine.

… In a practical every day sense, its history is in outline very similar to that of the other nineteenth century English foundations such as Manchester, Liverpool or Bristol. Like them, it was established as one result of the growth of population in a clearly defined region. To some extent it grew as the region grew and in its early days its main, though not exclusive, function was to supply trained men and women to the industry and the professions in the four northern counties of England.

E.M. Bettenson

The University of Newcastle upon Tyne: A historical introduction 1834-1971

Newcastle University, as is shown in this extract from its history up to 1971, took shape as a civic university, in response to the regional demands of the industrial economy. Since the very early days of the foundation of a College of Medicine in 1834, through the foundation of a College of Science in 1871, and a College of Engineering in 1904, to the eventual formality of getting its own University Act in 1963, it has maintained strong and productive links with civil society in its city and region. For a long time the North East of England was a powerhouse of the industrial economy, and the various shapes and structures of what eventually became Newcastle University provided the intellectual underpinning for the economic and industrial activities of this important region. The first Chairs at the Colleges, therefore, were not only in fundamental disciplines such as Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Arts and Literature, but also in the regionally important applied sciences such as Geology, Mining, Naval Architecture, Engineering and Agriculture. “Newcastle” became a brand name worldwide, known as a hub of industrial activity, with a strong civic university as its intellectual underpinning.
This combination of being locally rooted but globally relevant also underpins Newcastle University’s vision for the future. We see ourselves not only as doing high-quality academic work, measured and judged against the best done anywhere in the world, but also as choosing to work in areas responsive to societal needs and demands, particularly those relevant to own city and region. We believe in and strive for world-class academic excellence – but excellence with a purpose. We work not only on the supply side of knowledge creation and dissemination, but we also respond to the demand side of societal challenges. That is the hallmark of a civic university.

Our aim, therefore, is to do world class academic work, and to do it in such a directed manner, and with such a sense of purpose, that regional benefit becomes a consequential benefit. We believe, moreover, that our success in this regard will in itself become an exportable commodity, since the search for such a combination of global excellence and local relevance is one replicated in many places in the world.

2 Vision and Mission

In Newcastle and the North East of England, as in many industrialised regions, the economic drivers have changed, and therewith the demographic, social and cultural circumstances of civil society. We no longer do large-scale mining or shipbuilding. Employment opportunities have diversified. The age demography is changing. Education is becoming ever more important.

These changes, which require both reflection and adjustment, are often summarised by saying that we are moving into a knowledge-based economy. But knowledge has always been our business. Clearly, then, in these new circumstances the long-held ideals of Newcastle University are more relevant than ever. And that defines our vision for the University – the kind of university we wish to be:

Our vision is of Newcastle as a civic university with a global reputation for academic excellence.

As a civic university, we need to be responsive to the needs and demands of civil society for knowledge that will address societal challenges. As a world-class university, we must be active and internationally competitive at the supply side of knowledge creation and knowledge dissemination. And that defines our mission statement – what we aim to do. We aim:

- To be a world-class research-intensive university
- To deliver teaching of the highest quality
- To play a leading role in the economic, social and cultural development of the North East of England.
3 Functions and Structures

Arising from the three items of the mission statement, we have three core academic functions:

- Research and Innovation,
- Teaching and Learning, and
- Engagement.

Strategic leadership of each of these is provided, on a university-wide basis, by a Pro-Vice-Chancellor. Delivery of the core functions occurs in our three core academic structures, which are the three Faculties, each led and managed by a Pro-Vice-Chancellor.

- The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
- The Faculty of Medical Sciences, and
- The Faculty of Science, Agriculture and Engineering.

Each Faculty consists of a number of Academic Units, typically a School or a Research Institute, each led and managed by a Head. The core functions and core structures combine to form the academic map of the University, in which we envisage the Faculties as vertical columns, with the core functions as cross-cutting institutional activities. Interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary activities are coordinated and supported by the functional PVCs, while academic staff remain line-managed within the Faculties.

The academic enterprise is supported by a number of corporate activities within the Support Services, led and managed by the Registrar.

The University as a whole is led and managed by the Vice-Chancellor and Executive Board, which consists of the three Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors, the three functional Pro-Vice-Chancellors, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Planning and Resources, the Registrar, the Executive Director (Finance) and the Executive Director (Human Resources). Executive Board functions according to an agreed set of principles, and each year agrees on a set of recurrent and project-related responsibilities.

The University Council is our governing body, Senate is the academic decision-making body, Court is an advisory body, and Convocation represents all alumni.

4 Strategy

We have a Strategic Plan for the University, which describes how we aim to realise our vision and mission. The implementation of our strategic plan, and our day-to-day operations, are rooted in our Institutional Values. We unpack the vision and mission into a number of institutional objectives, categorized in terms of our core functions, core structures and corporate activities. The strategic plan articulates the strategies we follow.
to achieve these objectives. Each strategy, in turn, cascades down to more detailed goals and targets.

Our institutional objectives are as follows.

4.1 Research and Innovation: Our overall objective, as formulated in the mission statement, is to be a world-class research-intensive university. Under this heading we group objectives regarding the classic conception of blue-sky research, the idea of research responding to societal needs, the application and commercialisation of research, and the broad ideas of innovation and entrepreneurship. Our Research and Innovation Strategy specifies the following objectives:

4.1.1 ...
4.1.2 ...
4.1.3 ...

4.2 Teaching and Learning, and the Student Experience: Our teaching and learning philosophy is based on the concept of education for life. By that we mean two things: providing knowledge and understanding that will last a lifetime, and providing knowledge and experience relevant to life and the world around us. We wish to deliver teaching of the highest quality, and to provide an environment within which effective learning can take place as part of an enjoyable and formative student experience. Our Teaching and Learning Strategy specifies the following objectives:

4.2.1 ...
4.2.2 ...
4.2.3 ...

We aim to provide an enjoyable and formative student experience, through:
- An active Student Union
- A wide variety of student societies
- An active presence in recreational and competitive sport.

Regarding the composition of our student body, we aim for:
- At least x% international students
- Amongst postgraduate students, a proportion of x% research students
- A proportion of at least x% of our annual intake to be students from the Northeast.

In pursuit of the latter objective, we aim to raise aspirations towards higher education through our PARTNERS Programme with more than 100 regional schools, and a clear Widening Participation Strategy. This is balanced by the aim to be a net importer of talent to the region. Of those students who come from elsewhere in the UK, we aim to provide an educational experience and opportunities for engagement with local employers in such a manner that a
significant proportion of these students will take up employment in the region after graduation.

4.3 Engagement: As a civic university, our engagement with civil society, particularly in our region, is an integral part of our activities. Engagement is not a separate activity to teaching and research; rather it is a critical approach to delivering these mainstream activities in such a way that their economic, social and cultural value to wider society is maximised. As such, engagement entails not only external interactions, but also a continuous process of internal development, encouraging staff to develop their day-to-day activities in ways that contribute to strategic priorities at the local, regional, national and international levels. Thus our engagement activities, while carried out in the sense of good citizenship, are firmly and specifically based on our academic expertise and experience. In consequence, all our Academic Units are expected to build up an engagement portfolio based on their research and teaching activities. Likewise, student activities form an important part of our institutional engagement profile. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Engagement) leads on the institutional coordination of our engagement with civil society.

Within the city of Newcastle we have two broad thrusts of engagement: the Cultural Quarter, and Science City. In addition, engagement has an external dimension, with regional, national and international profiles. Our objectives are as follows.

4.3.1 Cultural Quarter. Much of the very successful regeneration effort in NewcastleGateshead over the past two decades have been culture-led, and many of the icons of renewal (the Angel of the North, the Sage Gateshead, the Baltic, the Quayside) are cultural and lifestyle icons. With the Cultural Quarter, we aim to contribute by developing a particular cultural presence on our campus. This involves i.a. the Great North Museum, the Hatton Gallery, the Northern Stage, Culture Lab, the Northern Writers Centre and our Music Programme. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Engagement) has institutional responsibility for the Cultural Quarter.

4.3.2 Science City. Newcastle was designated as a Science City by the then-Chancellor, Gordon Brown, in 2005. This is a very modern manifestation of some of the original ideals of the College of Science, which was started in 1871 to provide an intellectual underpinning for regional economic activities. Quite simply, the objective of Newcastle Science City is to turn the city of Newcastle into a city of science – science with a purpose. Full details of the Science City project can be found on its own website. With the 150th anniversary of the original College of Science coming up in 2021, and given the importance of Science City in our strategic thinking, it seems appropriate to focus our institutional vision of reinventing the civic university for delivery by that date. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) has institutional responsibility for Science City.

4.3.3 Internal Engagement: We engage with our students and staff to foster the idea of an academic community. Through our Development and Alumni Relations Office (DARO), we keep in touch with and offer networking
opportunities to alumni worldwide. We aim to offer opportunities for continued academic interaction to retired staff. We aim to make use of members of Court and Convocation as a resource base and as ambassadors in the community.

4.3.4 Regional engagement: Our objective of playing a leading part in the economic, social and cultural development of the North East demands that we maintain an active portfolio of regional interaction. In our Teaching and Learning portfolio, we aim to raise aspirations towards higher education through our PARTNERS Programme with more than 100 regional schools, and a clear Widening Participation Strategy. In our Research and Innovation portfolio, we engage with regional business and industry through our Business Development Directorate, the regional clearing-house partnership Knowledge House, and our Resource Centre for Innovation and Design. We partner with the Newcastle City Council and the Regional Development Authority, One Northeast, in the Science City venture. We are active in the NewcastleGateshead Initiative and similar civic partnerships. Our Faculty of Medical Sciences, in pursuing the objectives of a regional medical school, works very closely with the Newcastle NHS Hospitals Foundation Trust, the Strategic Health Authority and the James Cook Hospital in Middlesbrough. We collaborate with the other four universities in the region through Universities for the North East (UfNE). We partner with Durham University to pursue commercialization opportunities through an initiative called the Angel Alliance.

4.3.5 National engagement: We are a member of the Russell Group of research-intensive universities, and Universities UK. All members of executive Board, and all senior members of staff, are expected to participate in national bodies as appropriate to their various portfolios.

4.3.6 International profile: The key objective of our Internationalisation Strategy is to build up a substantial presence with strong collaborations in a few key positions around the world, in order to achieve a global coverage for the Newcastle University brand.

4.4 The Faculties: All our academic work, in each of our three core functions, is carried out within the Faculties, and more particularly within the Academic Units making up the Faculties. The Faculties are line management and managerial entities, whereas the core functions are institutional coordinating portfolios. While we articulate our institutional goals in terms of the three academic core functions, we carry them out within our Academic Units. It is vital, therefore, that the work done within the Faculties should mesh with our institutional objectives. Accordingly, in support of the University Strategic Plan, each Faculty has its own strategic plan on how to support and attain our institutional goals, in the context of its own disciplinary clusters.

- Strategic Plan of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Strategic Plan of the Faculty of Medical Sciences
- Strategic Plan of the Faculty of Science, Agriculture and Engineering
Within the context of the Faculty plan, each Academic Unit has its own strategic plan. Each Head of an Academic Unit is responsible for drawing up an annual workload allocation model, to deliver on the core functions. We have a generic **Academic Job Summary** describing the mutual expectations between the University and the individual academic. Each academic member of staff is expected to update his/her **Curriculum Vitae** on a regular basis, using our online **MyProfiles** system, not only to list research publications but to give a rounded description of activities in each of our core functions, as well as service to his/her Academic Unit and the University generally. Drawing on this data, each Academic Unit produces an annual report every year.

4.5 Corporate: We do not regard the University in the first place as a business, because our primary motive is not profit but academic excellence. However, we understand that we need to be businesslike in our activities in order to attain our academic goals. We therefore identify the following corporate objectives.

4.5.1 Financial sustainability: We have a **Five-year Financial Plan**, with the budget being the annual implementation of that plan. The financial plan is our tool for realising two objectives: to fund our academic objectives, and to manage the university in a financially sustainable manner. Each Academic Unit is a budgetary and management entity in its own right, and, while recognizing that cross-subsidization is sometimes required for academic reasons, we strive for each Academic Unit to be financially self-sustaining. Our institutional financial objectives are spelled out in our:

- **Financial strategy**,  
- **Value for money strategy**,  
- **Capital Plan**, and  
- **Business Opportunities Strategy**.

4.5.2 **Human Resources Strategy**:  
4.5.3 **Estate Strategy**:  
4.5.4 **IT Strategy**:  
4.5.5 Project Management: We manage all our projects on professional project management principles, with clear lines of responsibility and active risk management. Each major project has a member of Executive Board as the project owner.

4.5.6 **Strategic Positioning**: Our aim is for Newcastle University to be recognized as an international exemplar of a civic university. We have a **Strategic Positioning Strategy** which articulates our key messages in forms appropriate for key target audiences, and aims to ensure that our successes are known and our good practices taken up elsewhere. We monitor our **position in the League Tables** published in the press, but our decisions are not guided by them.

4.5.7 Corporate social responsibility: As a civic university, we have a clear **Social Responsibility Portfolio**. We aspire to run the University in an ecologically sustainable manner, with a **Waste Reduction Plan**, a **Carbon Reduction Plan** and an **Energy Efficiency Plan**. Research projects must receive ethics
clearance according to our Research Ethics Policy. We believe in the simultaneous pursuit of quality and equality, and to this end we implement an Equality Policy. We attach a high importance to health and safety issues, which is a standing item both on Executive Board and on Council agendas, as stipulated in our Health and Safety Policy.

5 Key Performance Indicators:

Key performance indicators (KPIs) are a measure of progress towards meeting our strategic objectives. Accordingly, our KPIs follow the same categories as our list of objectives above. We report to Senate and Council on each of these five categories of KPIs once per year, the report being delivered by the relevant member(s) of Executive Board. We benchmark our performance against a comparator group of city-based and civic-oriented universities.

5.1 KPIs for Research and Innovation: [To be completed by PVC(R&I). Note: metrics used here should align with the RAE outcome and the REF.]

5.2 KPIs for Teaching and Learning and the Student Experience: [To be completed by PVC(T&L).]

5.3 KPIs for Engagement: [To be completed by PVC(E).]

5.4 KPIs for the Faculties: [To be completed by Faculty PVCs.]

5.5 KPIs for Corporate Performance: [To be completed by the relevant Service Directors, under the leadership of the Registrar.]

6 Risk Management

Risks are potential events which may prevent us from reaching our strategic objectives. We follow an approach of being risk-aware rather than risk-averse. Being risk-aware requires the early identification and evaluation of risks, with a consequent strategy of risk mitigation, a control status at any given time, and an eventual reporting route.

Our Risk Management Strategy distinguishes project risks, which are specific to each of our various projects, from corporate risks, which arise from our recurrent business.

Project risks are identified and evaluated for each project, in a risk register drawn up as part of the project management strategy for that project. The risk register will evaluate each risk in terms of likelihood and impact, name a risk owner, and list risk mitigation controls. The project manager takes overall responsibility for risk management, and reports to the project owner, who, for major projects, is a member of Executive Board. Depending on the magnitude of the project and the evaluation of the risks, the risk management report may go from Executive Board to the Audit Committee, to serve before Council.
Corporate risks arise from the pursuit of our strategic objectives, categorised in terms of our three core functions and our corporate activities. The corporate risks are identified and reviewed each year for the year ahead in our Corporate Risk Register, and are the responsibility of members of Executive Board, as indicated by our core functions and structures, and specified in our Delegations Document. The Risk Register for the year ahead, as well as a Corporate Risk Management Report on the previous year, serves before the Audit Committee of Council once a year.

We do not attempt to formulate a taxonomy of risks, but we may use, as appropriate for descriptive purposes in any given risk register, the following distinctions:

- **Description:** What kind of risk is at issue? Examples:
  - Strategic risk: Impedes or threatens our strategic objectives.
  - Academic risk: Impedes or threatens our academic objectives.
  - Reputational risk: May harm our reputation, even irrespective of the factual situation.
  - Operational risk: Impedes or threatens our normal operations. Loss of functionality or services, such as utilities, IT or security.
  - Risks affecting staff or students: Risk to life and limb, health and safety, security, wellbeing, morale or other human concerns.
  - Environmental risk: Damage by wind, frost, flood, lightning or other environmental factors.

- **Level of Control:**
  - Risks that we arise from our own choices and actions, and are thus to some extent within our power to avoid or control.
  - Risks that arise from the environment within which we find ourselves. These may or may not be foreseen, but cannot be avoided or controlled, though actions in mitigation may be possible.
  - Crises and Disasters: These are typically unforeseen and have a sudden and major impact. They cannot be prevented or controlled, and being unforeseen cannot be mitigated by advance measures. They require a rapid response and a disaster recovery plan.

- **Frequency:**
  - One-off risks only appear once, such as the Millennium Bug, or the risks in changing from one computer operating system to another.
  - Recurrent risks appear and disappear as part of our normal academic cycle, such as the annual risk of not meeting our student recruitment target for that year.
  - Enduring risks are always in the background, such as risks of systems failure or economic change.