

SENATE

Title of paper: Education Strategy – Education for life 2030+: A vision for education and skills at Newcastle

Main purpose of the paper: For discussion

Presenter(s): Professor Ruth Valentine, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education

Date of paper: 21 February 2024

Purpose of the paper

To provide Senate with the Education Strategy.

Recommendations:

Senate is asked to endorse the Strategy for submission to Council.

Consultation to date (including any previous committee consideration and its outcome):

University Executive Board, 6 February 2024, Executive Board endorsed the Education Strategy for submission to Senate and Council

University Education Committee, 14 February 2024

Education for life 2030+:

A vision for education and skills at Newcastle

Introduction

Our new Education for Life Strategy is ambitious and transformational and provides us with a bridge to the future of higher education at Newcastle. It will enable us to adapt to the rapidly changing national and global context for higher education, to build agility and flexibility within our curriculum, portfolio, capacity, and support structures, and to develop a learning environment that is inclusive and fit for the future.

Our strategy has been created in partnership with colleagues and students and aims to enhance the education experience of all our students, wherever and whatever they study, and empower them to build their own education for life.

I am passionate about driving continuous enhancement of our educational offer and the student experience at Newcastle and am committed to delivering an education for life that prepares **all** our students to be global citizens that can visibly lead and tackle the social and environmental challenges we are facing in the UK and world-wide.

The strategy we map out below will begin the transformational change we need toward 2030, but I acknowledge this is a significant piece of work, which will take time, commitment, and continued enthusiasm from all of us to achieve our shared vision. As Pro-Vice Chancellor, Education I will commit to continue to work with, listen to, respond, and value colleagues' voices in the implementation of our strategy and continue to work in partnership with our students, listening and co-creating, so we put students at the heart of everything we do.

Professor Ruth Valentine, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Education

We fully support a strategy that was co-developed with the Students' Union, prioritizing not only student voice but also a commitment to addressing and meeting student needs beyond 2030. This strategy is fully relevant to our diverse student body at Newcastle University, ensuring inclusivity and representation. Additionally, it is well-suited for the future, effectively striving to enhance the overall educational experience, foster global citizenship among students, and confront social and environmental challenges

Lulu Chen, Education Officer, Newcastle University Students' Union 2023-24

Chirag Kumar, Postgraduate Officer, Newcastle University Students' Union 2023-24

Vision

To be a global, future-facing provider of leading edge, inclusive and transformational higher education for our students.

Mission

To provide all our students with an **education for life** that engages, challenges and supports them to discover and fulfil their potential, both while they are studying with us and once they have graduated.

Aim 1: Equity

To provide a core, universal offer for all students, including tailored provision where needed, to ensure equity of access, experience and in outcomes for all, regardless of background, identity, nationality, location or mode of study.

Our University is made up of a diverse community of learners who come together in the experience of higher education. Our strategy must recognise, embrace, and support that diversity, meeting students *where* they are, and acknowledging and responding to *who* they are, to ensure that all our students have the opportunity to discover and fulfil their potential.

Aim 2: Encounters with the leading edge

To put at the heart of our curriculum and learning experiences, encounters with our world leading research and the leading edge of industry and practice.

As a research-intensive University the connections between our education and research have always been at the core of our provision. We will enhance and expand those connections and also work to embed and strengthen those connections in our curriculum by also providing meaningful encounters with the leading edge of industry and practice to ensure that our education remains relevant and connected to the future of work.

Aim 3: Fit for the future

Students

Embodied by our Education for Life Framework, which details the skills, knowledge and experiences our graduates will gain while they are with us, provide an educational experience that ensures our students are fit for their future and the world in which they will live and work.

Teaching, learning, assessment, and support

To ensure that our approaches are informed by developments in pedagogy and best practice and can meet the University's ambitions for its evolving portfolio, size, shape and modes of delivery.

Colleagues

To provide an enabling environment that supports colleagues to have the skills and capacity to embrace the possibilities present in the future world of higher education.

Education for Life: Delivery plan

Objective 1: Leading edge curriculum

A new universal curriculum framework for Newcastle

We will develop and embed a new curriculum framework that speaks to our values, is inclusive by design, supports our disciplines with pedagogic innovation, reflects the expectations of our employers, and simplifies and harmonises structures across the University.

In the framework we will commit to:

- Structured encounters with the leading edge of research, industry and practice for all our students
- Systematically embedding skills development and surfacing those skills to our students
- An opportunity for every student to engage globally within and beyond their programme

Objective 2: Educator accelerator

A step change in support of educational excellence

Our colleagues who deliver and support education are the driving force of our provision. We will transform the way we attract, develop, and recognise educators, professional colleagues and academic leaders to ensure that they have the time, skills and knowledge to power educational development and innovation and deliver an excellent experience for our students.

Objective 3: Student launchpad

A transformed model of academic support enabling all students to explore and achieve their potential

We recognise that every student arrives at university from a different starting point and takes a different journey through their educational experience. We will transform our model of academic support to better meet the needs of who our students are, focusing on providing professionalised academic, and where needed tailored, support within Schools and connecting with central skills, wellbeing and careers support. We will ensure that all students have a coherent academic support journey into, through and from Newcastle.

Objective 4: Newcastle beyond the curriculum

A new articulation of our core offer beyond the curriculum

We celebrate the wealth of opportunities for students to engage beyond the curriculum – mobility, placements, enterprise, sports, societies, volunteering, part time work and beyond – and recognise that we need to do more to articulate this offer and help students navigate and record what their experiences beyond the curriculum bring to their learning experience.

Our wider supporting commitments

Delivering the objectives outlined above will involve change on an individual and collective level. We have identified eight commitments that we make to support the change we want to see over the lifetime of this strategy.

Student partnership	We will work with our students across all of our objectives, engaging with them to co-create our new curriculum framework, transform academic support and articulate our offer beyond the curriculum.
Institutional strategic alignment and focus	We will prioritise our core strategies of education and research and ensure strategic alignment of support strategies and associated plans.
Cultural change leadership	We will act together to bring about change working to generate excitement and enthusiasm through a clear articulation for our motivations and of our goals.
Expanded educational leadership team to drive excellence in education	We will expand our capacity to lead educational change and provide clear focus and co-ordination across the University.
Education leadership roles and responsibilities	We will review and harmonise education leadership roles and responsibilities across academic units, faculties and the central University to create communities of practice, structures and governance that are fit for the future.
New ways of working	We will experiment with new ways of working, breaking down boundaries and developing processes that allow us to respond rapidly to changes in our environment.
Investment in supporting systems	We will invest strategically in the renewal of core systems and identify areas where new technologies can help us enhance our educational offer either directly, or by releasing quality time.
Restructure of and investment in education services	We will review how education services are provided across the University to realign resource and functions to where they are most needed in order to create the change we want
Strategic change and internal communications resource	We will support the communication and implementation of this Strategy with change management and communications expertise.

Annexes (For internal publication/use only)

- Shape of our offer 2030
- Detailed delivery plan