Newcastle University Global Strategy
Influencing Globally

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic summary</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our aims</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationally excellent and impactful research</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education for global citizenship</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Globally networked</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadening our horizons through global mobility</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic enablers</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment of priority actions with our guiding principles</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformative Initiatives</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix: Consultation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strategic Summary

Newcastle University has a critical role in shaping global society. We add to knowledge and understanding; develop highly skilled people; seek to practice our core values of equality, diversity, inclusion and social justice; contribute to social and cultural vitality; improve health and well-being; and act as a driver for international connectivity in the places where we operate. The role we will play in the future has local, national and international contexts and drivers.

Contexts and drivers

- We are in a strong position with significant international activity taking place through the work and commitment of our academic and professional service staff.
- We have had thousands of research and educational collaborations around the world and have focussed on a number of high-value, institutional-level partnerships.
- We also have two successful overseas campuses and deliver transnational education.
- Hundreds of our students take up opportunities to study abroad each year.
- International presence, partners, staff and students underpin our ability to tackle global challenges.
- Opportunities for international mobility and encounters with a diversity of cultures, and exposure to new languages and perspectives on campus are essential in equipping our students to be critical global citizens with the skills to succeed. There is a correlation between outward mobility and improved academic and employment outcomes. The UK lags behind many countries in the percentage of its students who have these international experiences.
- According to UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), ‘The UK is among the world’s top research nations, but its research base can only thrive if it engages with the best minds, organisations and facilities wherever they are in the world. Fostering an environment that attracts and retains talented international research staff and students is therefore a vital ingredient for fostering international research excellence.’
- We live in an increasingly diverse, multicultural society with a more mobile global labour market. Language skills, intercultural understanding, global awareness and an international mind set will be crucial for our students and staff in the future.
- Research funding is increasingly being channelled towards addressing major global challenges.
- We need to be increasingly aware of the environmental sustainability of our international activities.
- Brexit could negatively impact the ease with which we can develop European partnerships and win funding.

The Global strategy is one of four interconnected strategies, Education for Life, Research for Discovery and Impact and Engagement and Place. It wraps around and threads through these strategies. Our global vision is to excel by being an internationally networked and diverse community of students and staff who identify as global citizens, and who can respond to global challenges through the research we undertake and the skills and knowledge we create. The Global strategy provides an overview for how we will realise this vision and the detailed implementation plan that will follow it will prioritise the actions required.

Our aims

We believe it has never been more important to be a globally inclusive institution and to use our international presence to tackle the ‘grand challenges’ that affect society locally, nationally, and globally.
Our specific aims are therefore to:

- Foster an environment that places international ambition and activities in the centre of our everyday thinking and working.
- Engage with our global alumni community and support professional networking and career development events.
- Build and meet the needs of and collaborate with the global network of partners, stakeholders, alumni and friends of Newcastle University.
- Provide the quality of experience that attracts and supports exceptional international students and staff from around the world.
- Work with our partners to make a positive impact in low- and middle income countries by addressing ‘grand challenges’ relevant to them and championing social justice.

To achieve our aims, we have identified a number of priorities that have been developed as a result of engagement with staff, students and our institutional-level university partners. The priorities exemplify an emphasis upon four guiding principles which are to respond to society’s current and future challenges, to visibly lead, to work together, and to provide staff and students the freedom and opportunity to succeed. Strategic enablers represent the inputs that we can draw upon to realise the vision. This strategy also identifies university-wide transformative initiatives. This structure is summarised in Figure 1.

**Figure 1**

![Diagram of Vision and Priorities]

### Internationally excellent and impactful research

**Internationally recognised research**

To achieve our vision we must foster an environment that places international ambition at the centre of our everyday thinking and commit to produce and co-produce internationally recognised, impactful research. This will enable us to provide new knowledge and creative solutions that make a positive impact on the societies we serve. In turn this will help us to attract some of the world’s best academics, be one of the first choices for prestigious international partners, ensure our research is valued and impactful and continue to secure international research funding. Between 2006 and 2018 our university produced nearly 18,000 internationally co-authored research papers, therefore we are working from a very strong base.

We will continue to promote internationalisation through the activities of Institutes, Research Centres, Centres for Doctoral Training and our day to day research activities. Also through a number of initiatives captured in the Research for Discovery and Impact strategy. For example, by including an international dimension within Newcastle University Centres of Research Excellence (NUCoRES) and supporting the international aspirations of early career academics through the NUAcT programme (Newcastle University Academic Track). For example NUCoRES will be internationally recognised for the quality and impact of their research, strengthened by being members of, or leading, international networks and partnering with similarly esteemed research units in other organisations. Our international undergraduate and
postgraduate taught students will benefit from the international visibility of the NUCoREs. Our international research students will benefit from even greater opportunities to develop their research projects and training across disciplines within the thriving research environments the NUCoREs create.

External partners will be invited to contribute to Newcastle University Partnership Academic Track (NUPaCT) appointments which will bridge academia and external stakeholders. Some of these appointments will international. The full development of our institutional level partnerships, new partnerships and student and staff exchange will be facilitated, in part, through the NUPaCT programme.

**Impactful research**

Our research needs to align, at least in part, with the demand side of the knowledge economy. Our university will continue to commit to research that responds to global challenges. We take the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) and other UN policy frameworks such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)) as benchmarks for organising, communicating and measuring the impact of our work in these fields. We will seek to embed the skills and knowledge identified by these global challenges in our learning and teaching. This will be spearheaded by the Global Challenges Academy, which was established in 2016. It will play a central role in ensuring our research, education, and engagement address the UNSDGs. It will identify appropriate international partnerships in order to enhance our capacity to respond to global challenges. It will continue to help maximise international engagement opportunities for our staff and students that impact low and middle income countries. The Policy, Skills and Enterprise Academies will help realise global impact by developing and exchanging best practices between academic and professional service staff and external actors. One of the foci of the Policy Academy will be learning about and networking with international policy makers. The Enterprise Academy will support best practice in partnering with international businesses. Academic skills development, through the Skills Academy will include those required to develop international research bids and partnerships. The academies will all help generate international impact through our research.

**Education for global citizenship**

*The education and experience we provide addresses international needs*

We will also respond to global challenges through the education we provide. Our Education for Life strategy aims to provide an outstanding educational experience rooted in strong disciplines and enhanced by a broad range of experiences. Our ability to deliver a globally informed curriculum and educate our students as global citizens will be enhanced by the diversity of nationalities which come together in our classrooms and spaces in and around our university.

Students and staff with diverse backgrounds from around the world provide diverse perspectives that enhance the quality of our discussions, debate, approaches and solutions. International students go on to become our international alumni and ambassadors increasing our global impact and profile. They also add to the cultural richness and the diversity of our region, and make a positive contribution to our regional and national economies. For these reasons, we will continue to grow an internationally diverse student body that can benefit from a Newcastle University experience.

We will support, engage and integrate international and home students and staff, building on our strong performance in international and domestic student satisfaction surveys and thereby create a truly positive international environment. As detailed in the Education strategy, we
commit to providing an international educational experience which challenges and empowers students and shapes graduates who are adaptable, responsive to future needs, and inter-culturally aware. This includes an attention to interdisciplinary education and research, in part through NUCoRES but also through Centres for Doctoral Training and by developing a new interdisciplinary school. We will also continue to innovate in education through our sites in Singapore and Malaysia. For example already we are facilitating fourth year medical students at our Malaysia site (NUMed) to carry out some of their study in Newcastle. There are opportunities for an additional year of research study for NUMed students, again in Newcastle. We will build on this where we can.

The approach is ‘whole-life-cycle’, engaging prospective, current and former students and staff. We will work to identify opportunities for international students to develop skills around employability that set us apart from other universities. We will enhance support for international students and the staff who teach them. We will engage students and staff in the process of internationalisation, unlocking existing knowledge, expertise and contacts, removing obstacles and ensuring there is recognition for international working.

Use of technologies that internationalise the student experience
We aim to be recognised as a leading university for the use of technology-enhanced learning to support campus-based education. We will explore opportunities to enable virtual mobility for students who cannot or prefer not to travel, and collaborate with our strategic institutional partners to enhance the development of a globally connected and informed curriculum. These initiatives will also support the development of an international research intensive environment that adds value to the education of all of our students.

Globally networked

Networks of excellence
Global networks enable us to partner with the best research and teaching teams around the world. Alliances with universities whose wider goals and values align with ours will help to challenge us, provoke new ideas and enrich our work. We will join or initiate for our key areas of research excellence.

For each of our existing and new institutional partnerships we should provide the appropriate support at each stage of the ‘partnership life cycle’. We can increase the depth and impact of the outcomes of strategic partnerships at both university and Academic Unit levels while continuing to encourage a broad range of academic-to-academic relationships. We will continue to remove obstacles for partnership development, develop toolkits of professional support for partnerships, and recognise common linkages and potential synergies across disciplines within our university. We will do this in part by continuing with the philosophy that we have to prioritise our partnerships. We will focus on purposeful, institutional partnerships and relationships that are aligned to our areas of research excellence.

Act as a hub for the North East of England’s global connectivity
Our aim to meet the needs of and collaborate with our global network of partners, stakeholders, alumni and friends of Newcastle University will also help provide connectivity for the region because we have thousands of research and educational connections across Europe and the rest of the world, and we are continually connecting people and places. Our emphasis in our Engagement and Place Strategy on entrepreneurship, using the campus as a Living Laboratory, the establishment of The Newcastle Helix and the many connections we make, should benefit the North East region through increasing its international connectivity. In doing so, we will harness resources from across the region to address global issues and raise the global profile of the region. We will work in close partnership with a range of organisations who share our goals and vision, including Newcastle City Council, Schools, Seven Stories,
the Centre for Life, the Great North Museum, Newcastle Gateshead Initiative, NE1, Newcastle International Airport, businesses and VCSE (voluntary, community and social enterprise) organisations to ensure the North East of England’s offer is clearly communicated and that we are projected as an internationally minded region. We will build on our position as a leader and a guide within the region on global affairs, cultures and international diversity.

Broadening our horizons through global mobility

Innovation in mobility
Our vision is only possible if we give staff and students the freedom and opportunity to succeed. An element of this is preparing students for global lives and careers - an 'Education for Life' – and international mobility is a key component of this. Mobility plays an essential part in creating a generation of globally-connected, culturally sensitive and internationally-aware graduates. The more students understand about the world we operate in, the better they can contribute to its continued success. It is essential that we continue to both offer a range of mobility opportunities so those who wish to go abroad are able to do so, and to offer a taught experience at home that is truly international and supports learners for a future of work in a global world. At the same time this needs to be an inclusive opportunity so that all of our students can benefit.

We will make international and virtual mobility (e.g. the use of technology to create a mobility experience) a fundamental part of what Newcastle University is known for. We aim to double our undergraduate participation in overseas experience from c. 6% to 13%. We will ensure our students can develop linguistic skills, cultural awareness, and broaden their experience. The internationalisation of the curriculum will mean that while mobility is rightfully encouraged, there are opportunities to ‘up-skill’ and increase cultural awareness for students who are unable to be internationally mobile.

We will exploit the excellence and scale of research at Newcastle University and the strength of our regional and international partnerships to overcome the deficit in researcher mobility in and out of our institution. These opportunities will contribute to career development and lifelong learning. We will provide, signpost and source funding for staff mobility. Internationally mobile staff will help to build the partnerships and foster the global culture that underpin the Global strategy. Staff will be encouraged and supported to develop their international experience and extend their own global networks and contacts with a view to internationalising approaches to research, education and engagement. In particular the Skills, Enterprise, Global Challenge and Policy Academies will provide support, advice and expertise that help to open up opportunities to be more internationally minded in a range of domains. Finally there should be opportunities created to allow staff to move between our own sites in Singapore, Malaysia and in the UK and to share working practices through online fora and communities.

Strategic enablers
Strategic enablers represent the inputs that exist in our university that we can draw upon to realise the vision.

Our people:
All of the ambition outlined in this strategy is about supporting our students and staff to develop as global citizens. This includes upholding a number of important values, including that of academic freedom. This will be gained through a variety of activities in the university for example: international mobility opportunities; reflecting on what and how we deliver our taught programmes; the diversity of our student and staff community; and support for preparing research bids which specifically target the challenges faced by low and middle income countries. We will continue to promote organising international conferences at all of our sites around the world.
Infrastructure:
We have four physical sites that represent welcoming, diverse, inclusive communities of students and staff, located in different place-based contexts. Our international reach and presence will evolve over time in order to respond to opportunities and meet global challenges, and will be supported by an enhanced digital infrastructure. There are other examples of support in our infrastructure already, such as the language resource centre.

Networks and Partnerships:
Networks and partnerships are central to the Global strategy. NUCoREs, national centres and other significant research investments will develop and strengthen external networks and partnerships, through identifying the best to work with. As a university we will prioritise partners and networks which align closely to our research and education strengths and will support them effectively.

Environmental Sustainability:
By embracing technology for communication we can offer alternatives to carbon intensive travel such as long distance flights and we can broaden the benefit of international partnerships by using them to assist internationalisation of the curricula. Our hardware and software infrastructure will need to undergo development and expansion in order to better support our commitment to environmental sustainability.

Effectiveness and Financial Sustainability:
Efficiency in developing partnerships will reduce the opportunity cost. Securing funding for international research and educational collaboration will support, escalate, and sustain global activities. International revenue streams will develop and expand with increased and diversified philanthropy, corporate engagement, and other funding opportunities.

Monitoring our progress:
The Global Strategy Implementation Plan and a set of KPIs will be developed and reported to Council regularly.

Alignment of priorities with our guiding principles

There are four guiding principles in the university Vision and Strategy. Table 1 summarises how our priorities can also be articulated in terms of our university’s four guiding principles.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working together</th>
<th>Visibly Leading</th>
<th>Responding to current and future needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Networks of excellence</td>
<td>Maximising our global presence through our SE Asia hub</td>
<td>Globally impactful research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen key institutional partnerships</td>
<td>Developing global reputation</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Development of regional strategies and regional interest groups</td>
<td>Attracting best students and staff</td>
<td>Education and experience we provide addresses international needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>A global alumni community</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Freedom and opportunity to succeed</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Innovation in student and staff mobility</td>
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The academies, in particular the Global Challenge Academy Use of technologies that internationalise the staff and student experience

Acting as a hub for the North East of England’s global connectivity

Transformative initiatives

Our vision is to excel by being an internationally networked and diverse community of students and staff who identify as global citizens, and who can respond to global challenges through the research we undertake and the skills and knowledge we create. To achieve this there are two areas of activity that are particularly critical. Firstly, striving to increase the international diversity of our university community and secondly, accelerating our work to transform our international presence.

We need diverse ideas, perspectives, approaches and a global reach. Therefore we need to attract a diversity of the best staff and students to Newcastle University, when competition for the best talent is fierce. Our ability to compete for the best students and staff will be fundamental to all that we do and done well, will be transformative to the university.

To achieve the vision and uphold one of our university’s values - to work in partnership to have impact - we will need to have a stronger global presence. Three of our four guiding principles, to give staff and students the freedom to succeed, to respond to societies’ current and future challenges and to visibly lead also necessitate that we continue to transform our global presence. We start from a strong position but there is much more we can do.

Building a diverse international community

Our university: People, staff and students are at the heart of our strategy. Our values, the emphasis on staff and students, as well as the sort of university we represent will help attract and retain an international community. The support we offer our staff throughout their careers in research and education will be key. For example the NUAcT (Newcastle University Partnership Academic Track) programme will attract some of the best international early career academics to the university. NUAcT is designed for early post-doctoral researchers and for those making the transition to independence. It will be a significant differentiator in the market because it will give the most able candidates the freedom, support and training they need. Nurturing our staff to develop as global citizens, through the increased mobility of researchers between countries, global exchange networks, support for interdisciplinary research and the NUPAcT programme will be important.

Our educational offer: We must provide an outstanding educational experience. Our educational offer needs to prepare students for global careers, some of which do not yet exist. It needs to adapt to the changing needs of an international student market (e.g. the types of courses; conditioning students for employment). Students will benefit from different learning models, across a range of languages, to cater for different needs and aspirations and to build cross-cultural awareness. Regularly reviewing the types of courses we teach, their international dimensions, relevance and the use of the best available technologies for teaching will be essential.

Students and staff with diverse backgrounds from around the world provide diverse perspectives, approaches and solutions. For these reasons we will continue to grow an internationally diverse student body that can benefit from a Newcastle University experience.
We aim to increase international student recruitment and in a manner that positively impacts on the student experience. We will improve our effectiveness at attracting international students to study with us through direct entry into the university and through preparatory pathway courses with our partner INTO. In addition we will look to develop and promote our global experience in ways that will make us more attractive to UK students.

**Mobility:** We will be innovative in developing mobility opportunities (including virtual mobility through the use of technology) so that more of our students can be part of a university experience elsewhere in the world. We will adopt a broader range of mobility models, recognising that asymmetrical exchanges with partners can be of equal value when responding to demand and opportunity, and we will provide opportunities across more regions. Mobility models will include study placements; work placements; volunteering; research and graduate mobility. We will offer mobility opportunities of mixed duration (e.g. full year or one semester, shorter term and summer school), and provide curricular and co-curricular language education across the University, again responding to demand and opportunity. In doing this we will be informed by and responsive to, the obstacles to student and staff mobility.

**Transforming our global presence**

**South East Asia hub:** We have a strong and successful physical presence outside of Newcastle in Singapore and Malaysia. The Malaysia (NUMed) and Singapore (NUIS) sites have been very successful both in terms of the quality of the education they provide and their financial viability. Both sites allow us to develop partnerships, perspectives, innovations and solutions for education and research that we could not achieve in Newcastle alone. Research activity is strong and can be strengthened going forwards. Also we can continue to build both sites as ‘front doors’ for a range of stakeholders to access Newcastle University. For both Singapore and Malaysia we will now take them into a phase-two of their development, through a South East Asia strategy, where the intent will be to look for common opportunities for sharing of resources and experience and developing stronger, place-relevant, research profiles. It will require that our academic and professional service staff can be internationally mobile between our campuses to share learning and good practice. Research partnerships with leading universities in Singapore and Malaysia, and other South East Asian countries will strengthen. Connections to government organisations and alumni, commensurate with strengthening of our reputation in South East Asia will continue to develop. Attracting excellent staff and strengthening of our research reputation will also allow us to access international research funds and to continue to attract national and international students to both sites. Our intent is to continue to maximise how these sites can support the university vision and strategy.

**Strategically-placed regional offices:** Our infrastructure in London, Singapore, Malaysia and Newcastle offers a range of opportunities to internationalise our education and research. These four locations will be complemented by strategically-placed regional offices, in India, China, Southeast Asia, and Hong Kong and expanded to include a presence in North America, with UK-based outreach to and engagement with Europe, Africa, South America and the Asia-Pacific region.

**Regional strategies:** Building global capability, reach, and expertise will require ambitious and well-coordinated strategies. These strategies will be informed by regional interest groups, which will bring together and share knowledge, experience, opportunities, and capability from across the University and its wider community, and supported by a network of regional offices and logistics centres.

**Strengthen key institutional partnerships:** We will continue to support key institutional partnerships. These will continue to yield benefits such as joint research funding, staff and student exchange, and reputation raising. We will strengthen these by escalating and
diversifying our activities and through careful management and leadership. We will develop three-year plans for institutional partnerships detailing existing linkages, priority areas, and plans for future work. Partnership development will be enabled by streamlined and strengthened pathways for decision making, coordinated toolkits of administrative support, and networks of internationally engaged academic staff. These partnerships and the collaborative activities which they foster will enable us to enhance our global profile and reputation.

A global alumni community: Our alumni are a key part of our global profile and c. 22% live and work overseas. Our global community of alumni are highly talented, internationally mobile and empowered by a world class education. Our alumni community is an influential, energetic and global network: they are our institution’s greatest ambassadors, and lifelong members of our professional, social and academic communities. They are current and future leaders and influencers. Individually and collectively, our alumni are helping to shape the world around them.

We aim to foster a global alumni community that actively engages and promotes our University and advances our international interests. The University is committed to continually enhancing the value of each graduates’ degree, to maintain its credibility and currency, regardless of graduation year. The aspiration at Newcastle is to build on the success of past alumni programs and unlock the full potential of our global alumni community. We will offer lifelong value for alumni through programmes such as NCL Spark, and to engage with this meaningful network in important strategic areas, including teaching and learning; graduate employability; marketing and student recruitment; raising our national and international profile; and philanthropy.

We aim to leverage the profile, access and reach of our global alumni network to:

- Connect and maintain links between classmates, former academic staff and the University;
- Engage alumni with opportunities for current students and graduates e.g. mentoring; special events; lifelong learning activities;
- Engage with industries relevant to University curriculum and research;
- Celebrate the achievements of alumni and our students.

Appendix: Consultation

The strategy has been informed by analysis, reflection and broad dialogue led by the Pro Vice Chancellor for Engagement and Internationalisation. There has been input from Deans and Associate Deans for Internationalisation in each of the three faculties and University Internationalisation Committee (UIC). We have drawn on a number of consultative events since April 2017, such as World café events, focus groups, presentations at committees and numerous informal small-group and one-to-one meetings, most of which are listed below.

5 April 2017 - Town Hall meeting on University Strategy and Vision including Global strategy.
11 April 2017 - Town Hall meeting on University Strategy and Vision including Global strategy.
24 April 2017 - Town Hall meeting on University Strategy and Vision including Global strategy.
13 September 2017 - EB Lunch on Internationalisation.
16 November 2017 - Heads of Academic Unit Away Day.
13 December 2017 - EB Lunch on Internationalisation.
6 February 2018 - Town Hall meeting on University Strategy and Vision including Global strategy.
14 February 2018 - Town Hall meeting on University Strategy and Vision including Global strategy.
21 February 2018 - Town Hall meeting on University Strategy and Vision including Global strategy.
6 June 2018 - Presentation at FMS Away Day.
20 June 2018 - Presentation at HaSS FEB.
20 July 2018 - Circulation to UIC and other stakeholders.
5 November 2018 - Discussion at Executive Board.
29 November 2018 - Heads of Academic Unit Away Day.
18 December 2018 - Discussion at Executive Board.
8 January 2018 - Discussion at Executive Board.