

Making Knowledge Work

University of Bradford Strategy 2015 - 2025

External context

The world economy

The nature of the world economy has changed dramatically in the 21st century. Free movement of goods, money and information has created a global market in information, technological know-how and services. Economic success now depends on the generation and exploitation of knowledge, and most countries are competing aggressively to build up a knowledge economy.

The role of universities

Universities have also changed dramatically. They used to be ivory towers for abstract teaching, reflective scholarship and fundamental research. Now they play the key role in the knowledge economy, as the creators of wealth and the motors for economic and social change. The most important universities are technology-based with strong links to industry, business and the professions.

The world student population is about 100m, worth \$1.5t and growing at 6%pa. The world market for research is another \$1.5t, with a similar growth rate. There are about 40,000 universities worldwide, and the number is growing rapidly. Emerging middle classes in developing countries are thirsty for the advantages of a university education. And all countries want the economic drive of a successful university sector. Thus, for instance, China has doubled the size of its top 20 universities in the last five years, the US and Germany have increased spending on R&D by \$21b and 18b euros respectively, and there are over 1,000 universities each in Brazil, Argentina and Indonesia. Technology universities are in the vanguard of this development.

Global challenges

The world in the 21st century is facing major challenges, unlike any it has seen before. Problems such as ill-health, poverty, climate change, energy and water supply, food security and terrorism are global, systemic and complex, requiring for their solution a deep understanding of science, engineering and social, political and cultural behaviour. Universities, and in particular technology universities, are essential to do the research which will provide this understanding, and to teach the next generations of world leaders who will grapple with these problems and find the solutions.

Britain's position

Britain is a post-industrial trading nation, which must develop a strong knowledge economy if it is to compete internationally. Since the 1960s, the UK has lost four million jobs in manufacturing, but created seven million in financial, technical and information services. Britain is, however, hampered by intrinsic problems, such as the legacy of its industrial past, a class-based disdain for engineering, professionalism, money-making and the world of work, and a deep divide between a wealthy South-East and relative poverty elsewhere. The UK cannot succeed with a single-piston economy based on the South-East alone

The UK government is beginning to understand some of these issues, as shown by the ten-year science and innovation framework and the new industrial policy. In the North, we must seize our own destiny and build a knowledge economy, based on our outstanding universities and the talent and hard work of our people.

Britain's universities

The global financial collapse of 2008, the world economic downturn and the UK's austerity programme are all driving increased competition for student recruitment and research funding. British universities must concentrate on their key strengths if they are to compete effectively and do well. There are great opportunities in UK sectors such as manufacturing and health, and in overseas student and business markets.

The University of Bradford

Our vision

The University of Bradford is a technology university with great strengths. Our ambition is to build on our heritage and these areas of strength, and to be a world leader in:

- (a) the creation of knowledge through fundamental and applied research;
- (b) the dissemination of knowledge by teaching students from all backgrounds;
- (c) the application of knowledge for the prosperity and well-being of people.

Making knowledge work

This vision is summarised well in the phrase ***making knowledge work***. On the one hand, cutting-edge research underpins knowledge transfer into productive capacity, leading to the creation of new jobs. On the other hand, high quality university teaching produces educated self-learners, whose career prospects are substantially enhanced.

A world-leading technology university

The University of Bradford is a technology university with great strengths. It began as the Bradford Institute of Technology. A broad definition of technology is that it is the application of knowledge to create goods and value. We believe in doing research and teaching in vocational and professional subjects, to deliver economic development and job creation, and career opportunities for our students. Our strengths correspond well with this vision, in the physical sciences and engineering, life sciences and health services, management and business, and

international relations, politics and societal impact. We want Bradford to be known as a world-leading technology university.

Many of the best universities in the world are technology universities: the IITs in India; the Technische Universitäten TU Munich and TU Berlin in Germany; the Grands Écoles in France; KAIST, Postech, HKUST and NTU in the Far East; and MIT, Caltech and Georgia Tech in the USA. The UK has strong technology universities in the South and Midlands, such as Imperial, Bath, Surrey and Loughborough. But Bradford is the only focused technology university in the North of England.

Our values

Our vision needs to be realised in the complex external context described above, and in line with our underlying fundamental values. Our values describe our expectations of the ways in which we will operate and how staff, students and visitors behave towards each other. We will create opportunities for everyone to reflect on how they demonstrate these values and we will challenge behaviours that do not align with our agreed values, which are as follows:

- (a) we encourage participation and openness;
- (b) we encourage creativity and innovation;
- (c) we support academic freedom and respect the right to express diverse points of view;
- (d) we provide equal opportunities for all staff and students to achieve their full potential;
- (e) we apply the best ethical standards in everything we do.

Academic themes

We have developed three overarching academic themes, which we will use to frame decisions about developments in teaching and learning, research and knowledge transfer, and to guide our partnerships. Our academic themes are:

- (a) advanced healthcare;
- (b) innovative engineering;
- (c) sustainable societies.

Strategic objectives

The University of Bradford's strategy has four overarching objectives:

- (a) excellence;
- (b) internationalisation;
- (c) equality and diversity;
- (d) sustainability.

These objectives will help us achieve our vision, within the context of the external environment, at the same time as maintaining our fundamental values. They will act as guidelines for our future development, and will be used to prioritise activities over the next five to ten years.

Excellence

Academic and operational excellence should be a hallmark of all our activities. We will:

- (a) recruit and retain high quality staff and students;
- (b) ensure excellence in teaching and learning and in research and knowledge transfer;
- (c) enhance the quality of the campus and its facilities, in particular the IT infrastructure, as befits a technology university, and which supports an excellent student experience;
- (d) collaborate, wherever possible, with other excellent universities, institutes, laboratories, companies and funders.

Overall we aim to do ***cutting-edge research and knowledge transfer***, and to put ***students at the heart of learning***.

Internationalisation

Universities participate in the global market as drivers of the knowledge economy. We need to be internationally involved and internationally visible. This sits alongside our long-standing commitment to the local and regional communities and economy, and we will use our international reach to support our local and regional partners. We will:

- (a) do research that impacts on policymakers, society and business leaders worldwide;
- (b) deliver teaching that prepares students to become leaders in the global economy;
- (c) create opportunities for international exchange with partners overseas.

We aim to be a university where international teachers and researchers want to work, and overseas students want to study. We aim to be a ***world-leading technology university***.

Equality and diversity

The University of Bradford is well known for its commitment to equality, diversity and inclusivity; and for its friendliness and interdisciplinarity. We believe that a vibrant intellectual atmosphere derives from a mix of people from different backgrounds. We will:

- (a) recruit and retain students and staff from all regions and countries, irrespective of background or characteristics, guided by the principle that those people have the ability to succeed at the University of Bradford;
- (b) develop a varied programme mix, with an inclusive curriculum and a welcoming and supportive environment;
- (c) encourage cross-disciplinary research and teaching, both within Bradford and externally with partners;
- (d) build links with the city and region, as well as nationally and internationally.

We believe in a campus that is ***international and diverse***.

Sustainability

We aim to balance academic, social, financial and environmental concerns. We want people and society to benefit from our activities, while ensuring financial viability by maintaining surpluses and cash flow, and minimising environmental impacts. There is no merit in running an outstanding university which becomes financially insolvent or destroys the environment. We are proud of having ***a world-leading eco-campus***. We will:

- (a) promote integrated planning of our financial and human resources, to support excellence in teaching and learning and research;
- (b) minimise and recycle waste, increase biodiversity, promote energy-efficient transport, and reduce carbon output wherever possible;
- (c) develop a positive and healthy campus which supports student and staff wellbeing and success;
- (d) undertake and act on regular assessments of our environmental impact.

Our key messages are:

Our outstanding teaching and research are ***making knowledge work***;
We will be known as a ***world-leading technology university***;
We will deliver ***cutting-edge research and knowledge transfer***;
We will put ***students at the heart of learning***;
We will create intellectual vibrancy by being ***international and diverse***;
We are proud to have ***a world-leading eco-campus***.

Measuring our success

Our University Strategy will be delivered through a number of supporting strategies, which include detailed objectives, deliverables, milestones and key performance indicators. Those strategies are:

Academic;
Learning & Teaching;
Research & Knowledge Transfer;
Student Experience;
International & Partnerships;
People;
Information Technology;
Financial;
Estate.