Corporate Plan
2022-25

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Foreword

This Corporate Plan has been authored following consultation with staff and students and sets out our Mission, Vision and Values along with our Aims, Objectives, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Outcomes for the next three years. The plan emphasises our ongoing and resolute commitment to the delivery of outstanding student experiences, to be an employer of choice, to be financially and environmentally sustainable and to impact wider society. We will use this document to inform our annual planning decisions and to measure our progress towards the achievement of our aims, as well as prioritising our actions.

As we embark on our Centenary, there is a proud heritage at Stranmillis, of excellence in teaching and research, where supporting our students and staff, teamwork and collaboration with our partners are at the heart of everything we do. Fostering respect and ambition, valuing, encouraging and developing our students and staff, as well as enhancing the environment in which learning takes place, contributes to the supportive, dynamic and welcoming learning environment which our students, staff and those who visit our campus, enjoy. These qualities provide the foundation of our core values, which will serve to guide the entire College community to move forward with a shared sense of purpose in the delivery of our plans as we mark one hundred years of shaping education and embark on the next stage of the University College's development.

We will continue to maintain and develop further our relationships with Queens' University Belfast and our sister University College - St Mary's, as well as our relationships with the Department for the Economy (DfE) – our Sponsor Department, and the Department for Education (DE), all of whom have an interest in the University College's continuing success. We will also build upon other existing partnerships as well as develop new collaborations with local, national and international stakeholders.

We also remain confident that we have strong governance and management arrangements in place that will continue to serve us well in taking our plans forward.

Mr Edgar Jardine   Professor Jonathan Heggarty

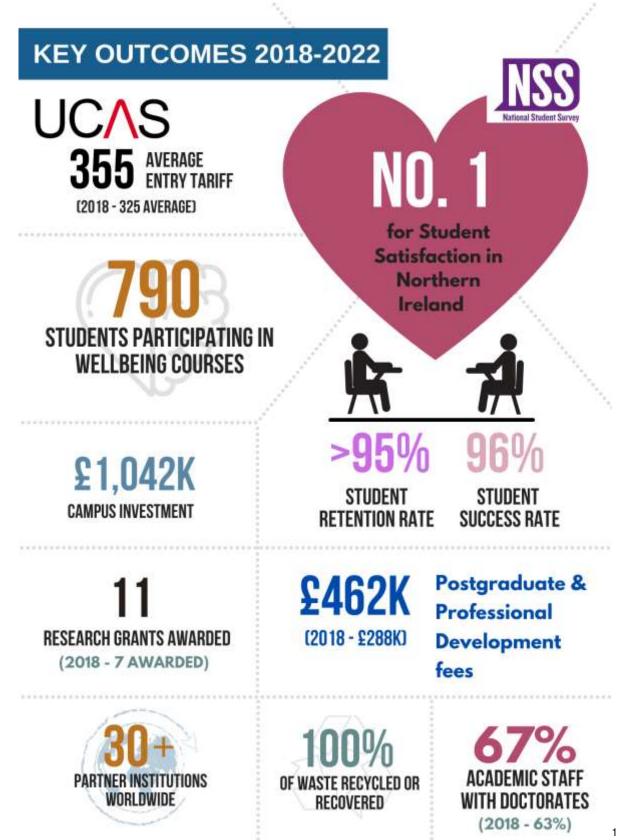Chair of the Governing Body   Principal and CEO

Introduction

This Corporate Plan sets out our direction of travel for the further development of the University College during the period 2022-2025, building on the successes of the previous Corporate Plan 2018-2021 and the Transitional Plan 2021-2022, as summarised within this document.

Over the last two years, the COVID-19 pandemic has been the most significant worldwide disruption we have faced in our lifetimes and the lockdown of the College presented a number of significant challenges that could easily have distracted us from our core purpose. Through the capabilities, agility and resilience of our staff and the financial support provided by DfE, we were able to overcome many of the challenges that the pandemic presented. New ways of working, teaching and learning were developed and embraced and some of these practices will be retained, at least in part going forward.

As we embark on this new planning cycle and the College gets back to a semblance of normality we are faced with further challenges, not least the unprecedented pressure on budgets, the slow return to normal levels of Hospitality and Conferencing Service bookings and increased running costs which are being impacted by current world events. We will respond positively to these challenges, and will aim to maximise opportunities to develop our income streams where possible, to reduce the impact of these challenges on the University College and assure its continued sustainability. Aligned to this we will also continue to avail of opportunities to review our processes to ensure that they are as effective and efficient as they can be.

College Performance

KEY OUTCOMES 2018-2022

UCAS
355 AVERAGE ENTRY TARIFF
(2018 - 325 AVERAGE)

790 STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN WELLBEING COURSES

£1,042K CAMPUS INVESTMENT

11 RESEARCH GRANTS AWARDED
(2018 - 7 AWARDED)

30+ PARTNER INSTITUTIONS WORLDWIDE

NSS National Student Survey

NO. 1 for Student Satisfaction in Northern Ireland

>95% STUDENT RETENTION RATE

96% STUDENT SUCCESS RATE

£462K (2018 - £288K) Postgraduate & Professional Development fees

100% OF WASTE RECYCLED OR RECOVERED

67% ACADEMIC STAFF WITH DOCTORATES
(2018 - 63%)

[1]

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[1] 67% of academic staff with doctorates is approximately twice the UK norm for Teacher Education.

Planning Context

The Purpose of Stranmillis University College

Our Mission

To transform the lives of children, young people and communities, through excellence in teaching, research and scholarship.

Our Vision

To be a leading institution with a reputation for excellence in the field of teacher education and related professions; driving innovative professional practice that will:

- *Shape education*
- *Unlock potential*
- *Connect locally and globally and*
- *Build better futures.*

Our Values – S.T.R.A.N.

Our core values, which are described below, underpin the culture and our behaviours within the University College and will support us in meeting our aims and objectives. They will provide the foundation for achieving our mission which is "*To transform the lives of children, young people and communities, through excellence in teaching, research and scholarship.*"

STUDENTS at the centre

We place our students at the centre of our planning and our future.

TEAMWORKING

We value working with others and the benefits that collaboration brings.

RESPECT for everyone

We promote social responsibility and respect by listening to and valuing all within and without our College community.

AMBITION for our students, our staff, our partners and our community

We are ambitious for our students, our staff, our University College, our partners and the wider community[2] as we strive to achieve outstanding outcomes for all.

NURTURING our students, our staff and our environment

We seek to value, encourage and develop all of our students and staff as well as our own physical environment and the world around us.

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[2] Including children and young people

Policy Context

The University College's Corporate Plan is shaped by the following policy context in which it currently operates.

Programme for Government (PfG)

The University College's mission closely aligns with the Northern Ireland Draft PfG Outcomes Framework Consultation Document published in January 2021 and makes a contribution to each of the following outcomes:

Strategic Outcome 1   Our children and young people have the best start in life.

Strategic Outcome 2   We live and work sustainably protecting the environment.

Strategic Outcome 3   We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect.

Strategic Outcome 4   We enjoy long and healthy lives.

Strategic Outcome 5   Everyone can reach their potential.

Strategic Outcome 6   Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon neutral.

Strategic Outcome 7   Everyone feels safe – we all respect the law and each other.

Strategic Outcome 8   We have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives.

Strategic Outcome 9   People want to live, work and visit here.

Department for the Economy (DfE) Strategies and Objectives

The University College will also contribute as appropriate to the Strategies and Objectives of our Sponsor Department (DfE), including the ***Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland: Skills for a 10X Economy*** which will provide, in particular, opportunities for:

- enhancing the digital skills of teachers and the children and young people in schools;

- helping to create a culture of learning; and

- addressing skills imbalances.

Department for Education (DE) Strategies and Reviews

The University College's mission is also closely aligned with key DE policy initiatives and developments, such as:

- *The Learning Leaders Strategy.* The University College supports this strategy, which was published in 2016, and sets out DE's vision for the next 10 years as "Every teacher is a learning leader, accomplished in working collaboratively with all partners in the interests of children and young people."

  The Strategy prioritises five key areas:

  1. **Teacher Professional Learning Framework** – empowering teachers to build on their strengths and access additional support, through combinations of learning approaches geared towards personal learning and career preferences and reflecting the needs of their pupils.
  2. **Development and Dissemination of Good Practice** – supporting the identification and harnessing of innovative practice in professional learning already in the system in order to effect improvement and develop 'next' practice.
  3. **Building Professional Learning Communities** – supporting closer collaboration between practitioners, schools and school clusters and professional learning providers.
  4. **Building Leadership Capacity** – strengthening the current support and professional learning for school leaders.
  5. **Engagement** – engaging with practitioners and other stakeholders across the system on the actions arising out of this Strategy.

- *The Independent Review of Education in Northern Ireland* was established under the *New Decade New Approach* agreement and began its work in September 2021. The University College supports and will engage with this review, the Terms of Reference for which includes the review of a broad range of systemic issues and challenges facing the broader education system in Northern Ireland.

- ***Educational Underachievement – A Fair Start.*** An Expert Panel on Educational Underachievement, which was also established as an Executive commitment under the ***New Decade New Approach agreement*** and was chaired by the University College's Director of Research and Scholarship, published its final report and Action Plan on 1 June 2021, following endorsement by the NI Executive. *A Fair Start* presents a total of 47 detailed, costed actions to address educational underachievement, focusing on 8 Key Areas: Redirecting the focus to Early Years; Championing Emotional Health and Wellbeing; Ensuring the relevance and appropriateness of Curriculum and Assessment; Promoting a whole community approach to education; Maximising boys' potential; driving forward Teachers' Professional Learning (TPL); Supporting the professional learning and wellbeing of school leadership; and ensuring interdepartmental collaboration and delivery.

The University College is ready and willing to contribute to the implementation of the *'Fair Start'* Action Plan, the impact of which will be significant, promoting equity, fostering greater collaboration between schools, families and communities, closing the achievement gap, investing in the future and giving all of our children and young people 'A Fair Start'.

National Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The University College is also committed to making a contribution to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. The 17 SDGs are inter-related - they recognise that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability.

The University College will do this within our teaching and research, as well as across all our operations, including the goals to substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries by 2030 and to strive to ensure that all students acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development through education.

Aims and Objectives

We will deliver the following Aims and Objectives over the lifetime of our Corporate Plan.

1. Aim: To deliver outstanding student experiences

We will deliver this through the following objectives over the lifetime of the business plan:

1.1. Ensure that all undergraduate (UG), postgraduate (PG), continuing professional development (CPD) and lifelong learning (LLL) programmes meet student and sector needs.

1.2. Deliver outstanding in-person and digital teaching and learning shaped by research and scholarship.

1.3. Recruit high calibre students on core programmes including those currently under-represented in Higher Education.

1.4. Provide high-quality, timely services which support student welfare and wellbeing and enable students to achieve their full potential on their programmes, including of study.

1.5. Achieve high undergraduate and postgraduate retention and success rates and high post-graduation progression rates.

2. Aim: To be an employer of choice

We will deliver this through the following objectives over the lifetime of the Strategy:

2.1. Recruit and retain high calibre staff.

2.2. Invest in the development of staff, including growing leadership capacity within teams.

2.3. Maintain a safe and attractive work (and study) environment for the College community which promotes wellbeing.

3. Aim: To be financially and environmentally sustainable

We will deliver this through the following objectives over the lifetime of the Strategy:

3.1 Ensure financial sustainability by increasing income from the following sources:

a) fee-paying students outside of the MASN quota including in-person, blended and remote delivery of programmes;

b) Hospitality, Accommodation and Conferencing Services (HACS) and use of the campus physical resources;

c) research and scholarship; and

d) additional public and private sector projects and partnerships.

3.2 Develop and sustain a high-quality learning and working environment, including digital infrastructure and outdoor facilities.

3.3 Continue to meet the requirements of the University College's Management Statement / Financial Memorandum (or any replacement agreement).

3.4 Continue to operate an effective system of corporate governance and risk management and ensuring effective College management.

4 Aim: To impact wider society

We will deliver this through the following objectives over the lifetime of the Strategy:

4.1 Develop and nurture effective local, national and international partnerships.

4.2 Focus research and scholarship to shape teaching, inform policy and change practice.

4.3 Promote and deliver Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Lifelong Learning (LLL).

4.4 Champion the use of technology to enhance outcomes in education.

Key Performance Indicators and Outcomes

The tables below provide key performance indicators (KPIs) for each Objective associated with the College's Aims, Objectives and KPIs, which will be tracked and/or measured over the duration of the Corporate Plan, as appropriate, against the annual College Business Plans. Those to be measured annually are identified as such in the table. The table also presents the Outcomes associated with achieving the College Aims, along the contribution the University College will make towards the Programme for Government Strategic Outcomes.

Aim	Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Outcome
1. To deliver outstanding student experiences	1.1 Ensure that all undergraduate (UG), postgraduate (PG), continuing professional development (CPD) and lifelong learning (LLL) programmes meet student and sector needs.	• All substantive programmes evaluated as relevant and meeting needs through positive internal and external Quality Assurance outcomes e.g. validation processes/inspection reports etc. • High Student Satisfaction rates as evidenced by annual internal and external student surveys (module evaluation, annual surveys, National Student Survey (NSS)). • All new courses and programmes developed to meet emerging sector needs and, as appropriate, content shaped by research and scholarship evidenced in course planning and delivery (UG, PG, CPD).	A high performing institution where people want to study and continue their learning. They are encouraged and supported and have opportunities to reach their full potential. Contribution to the Draft PfG, Strategic Outcomes 1, 3, 5 & 8

	1.2 Deliver outstanding in-person and digital teaching and learning shaped by research and scholarship.	- High Student Satisfaction rates as evidenced by annual internal and external student surveys (module evaluation, annual surveys, National Student Survey (NSS)). - Annual success & progression rates[3] on substantive programmes maintained at least 94% or higher. - Existing and new programme content shaped by research and scholarship evidenced in course planning and delivery.	
	1.3 Recruit high calibre [4]students on core programmes including those currently under-represented in Higher Education.	- Annual enrolment targets met for all substantive [5] programmes including MASN. - Average UCAS Entry Tariff maintained at 130 (BEd Primary - 144, BEd Post Primary – 126, BA ECS 132, BSc H,PA and S – 116). - Annual Widening Participation targets to recruit under-represented groups met in line with agreed annual targets	

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[3] Progression into employment or further study
[4] It is important that students are recruited with integrity and demonstrate aptitude for their chosen course of study.
[5] UG, PG and CPD programmes

		with DfE in relation to the following target groups: NI MDM Quintile 1; Disabilities (DSA); Adult Students; Care Experienced.
	1.4 Provide high-quality, timely services which support student welfare and wellbeing and enable students to achieve their full potential on their programmes of study.	• High Student Satisfaction rates as evidenced by annual internal and external student surveys (module evaluation, annual surveys, NSS).
	1.5 Achieve high undergraduate and postgraduate retention, success rates and high post-graduation progression rates.	• 95% retention, 94% success & 94% progression rates on substantive programmes achieved.

2. **To be an employer of choice**	2.1 Recruit and retain high calibre staff.	• Ratio of average applicants per vacancy of at least 9:1 • Achieve an annual voluntary turn-over rate of 6%. • Ensure appropriate promotion pathways and processes exist for staff	People desire to work in Stranmillis University College. Staff are supported and developed to meet the needs of our diverse learning community and are satisfied with their working environment and the focus placed on health, safety, and wellbeing.
	2.2 Invest in the development of staff, including growing leadership capacity within teams.	• Allocate at least 10% of annual Staff Development budget to support staff to undertake further academic/professional qualifications as appropriate, to business need and priority. • Percentage of lecturing staff with/undertaking doctorates maintained at 65% or above. • Annually provide leadership development training opportunities for staff as appropriate.	Contribution to the Drft PfG, Strategic Outcomes 3, 5, 7, & 8

	2.3 Maintain a safe and attractive work (and study) environment for the College community which promotes wellbeing.	• Over duration of Corporate Plan, increase staff satisfaction from baseline of 21/22. • All compliance targets for Health & Safety achieved annually. • Estates Strategy implemented to plan to maintain and improve the physical environment.	
3 To be financially and environmentally sustainable	3.1 Ensure financial sustainability by increasing income from: a) fee-paying students outside of the MASN quota including in-person, blended and remote programmes b) Hospitality, Accommodation and Conferencing Services (HACS) and use of the campus physical resources; c) research and scholarship; and d) additional public and private sector projects.	• Annual targets for each income stream met as per business plan.	Natural and physical resources and infrastructure are protected, a healthy community and workforce is supported and sufficient revenue is raised for the College to remain financially viable. Contribution to the Draft PfG, Strategic Outcomes 2, 7, & 8

	3.2 Develop and sustain a high-quality learning and working environment, including digital infrastructure and outdoor facilities.	• Physical environment/infrastructure maintained and improved in line with the Estates and Digital Strategies. • Achieve annual percentage of IT system uptime of at least 95%. • Annual sustainability targets met including energy usage, recycling.	
	3.3. Continue to meet the requirements of the University College's Management Statement / Financial Memorandum.	• Management Statement / Financial Memorandum with the DfE adhered to, measured by mid-year and end-of year Assurance Statements.	
	3.4 Continue to operate an effective system of corporate governance and risk management and ensuring effective College management.	Evidenced through positive reports with respect to: • Internal/External Audits • DfE Mid-Year and Annual Assurance Processes; • BCP testing completed to agreed schedule; • Regular review and updating and reporting of Risk Registers maintained.	

4. To impact wider society	4.1 Develop and nurture local, national and international partnerships.	• Increased engagement with international partners in relation to increased study, research, scholarship and charitable activities. • Increased student and staff international mobility against baseline of 21/22. • Increased number of partnerships against 21/22 baseline to support community based learning, family education initiatives and intergenerational learning.	Partnerships in teaching, learning and research help to shape and inform education policy and practice. Contribution to the Draft PfG, Strategic Outcomes 1, 5, & 8
	4.2 Focus research and scholarship to shape teaching, inform policy and change practice.	• REF2021 baseline results built on throughout lifetime of Corporate Plan. • Engagement with policy makers in DfE, DE and other relevant government departments evidenced through collaborative activities and sponsored research and scholarship. • New research areas and funding explored including VET (Vocational Education and Training).	

4.3 Promote and deliver Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Lifelong Learning (LLL).	• Increased partnerships, measured against baseline, with sector stakeholders to develop and promote CPD programmes. • CPD provision expanded in line with sector needs and annual recruitment targets met. • Lifelong Learning more closely aligned to 10X Skills Strategy, with a greater focus on skills including literacy, numeracy and digital skills.	
4.4 Champion the use of technology to enhance outcomes in education.	• Annually, continue to develop student and staff technology capability including investment in digital resources. • Partner with industry organisations to promote digital skills and digital careers in all phases of education.	

Monitoring and Reporting Progress

Annual College Business Plans will be authored over the lifetime of this Corporate Plan to direct College activity towards achieving the range of identified outcomes.

Tracking of progress against the annual Key Performance Indicators will take place as follows:

Monthly — Senior College Management will review annual KPIs on a monthly basis throughout the academic year.

Quarterly — The Executive Leadership Team will review annual KPIs on a quarterly basis.

Annually — The Governing Body will review progress against annual KPIs and the three year KPIs on an annual basis. Committees will review KPIs in line with reporting schedule.