



STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
A College of Queen's University Belfast

College Business Plan 2023-24



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Introduction

The Stranmillis University College Corporate Plan for the period 2022-25 sets out our Mission, Vision and Values along with our aims, objectives, 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. It informs our annual planning decisions and is used to measure our progress towards the achievement of our aims, as well as prioritising our actions.

This Annual Business Plan for 2023-24 has been authored using the 2022-25 Corporate Plan and sets out the aims, objectives, KPIs and outcomes for the academic year.

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 community¹ 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.

¹ Including children and young people
Governing Body Approved Date September 2023

Our Role in 10X

The Department for the Economy's "10x Economy: An Economic Vision" was published in May 2021 and sets out an ambitious vision for the transformation required to support the growth of the Northern Ireland economy over the next decade. As an NDPB of the Department for the Economy (DfE), Stranmillis University College has a significant role to play in supporting the achievement of the 10X objectives.

The 10x Vision is guided by the 10x objectives, grouped into three pillars of activity: innovation, inclusive growth and sustainability as described below.

Our objectives are:	
Innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase total R&D expenditure by 55%• Increase the number of R&D performing businesses by 450• Increase number of innovation active firms to 55% of NI businesses• 10% of NI businesses receiving Innovation Accreditation• Increase proportion of individuals leaving NI HE institutions with first degrees and post-graduate qualifications in narrow STEM subjects from 24% to 27%
Inclusive Growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase Northern Ireland Household Disposable Income above the SAE average while maintaining NI as one of the top performing SAEs in relation to the Gini-coefficient (a measure of income equality)• Close the employment gap between men and women; people with disabilities and people without; and most deprived area of NI and the least deprived area of NI• Increase the proportion of the working age population with qualifications at level 3 and above from 57.2% (2020) to 70%-75%
Sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 80% electricity consumption from renewable sources• Greenhouse gas emissions 48% lower than baseline• Double the size of NI's low carbon and renewable energy economy to more than £2bn turnover

Initial Teacher Education is an important lever for economic development and the achievement of DfE's 10X ambitions. This is recognised in DfE's "10X 23/24 Delivery Plan" which states:

“The Department funds initial teacher education at Stranmillis and St Mary’s University Colleges. The Department of Education is responsible for setting the policy around teacher education, for example the curriculum in schools that teacher education colleges prepare students to teach and deciding the number of places in initial teacher education. High quality teaching across the curriculum, and particularly in STEM subjects, is vital to ensuring that our young people receive an education that prepares them to take advantage of opportunities in the economy. As such, initial teacher education is an important lever for economic development and the achievement of our 10X ambitions.”

Consequently, the role of the University College, in partnership with other stakeholders, in supporting the 10X ambitions will be to ensure that we contribute to:-

- high quality teaching and learning within our nursery, primary and secondary level schools, facilitated by a high performing and highly qualified teaching workforce, which will be an enabler to all pupils reaching their academic and life potential.
- high quality STEM (including digital) teacher education programmes which promote these sectors to pupils and provide outstanding teaching and learning in the classroom to promote uptake of these subjects in school, through to FE/HE and then the workplace.
- opportunities for teachers and lecturers throughout their careers to avail of high quality life long learning/CPD, including higher degrees, which will enable their teaching to remain informed and relevant.
- high quality education-focused research that informs teaching and learning practice in all phases of education as well as providing evidence and recommendations to policy makers and stakeholders.
- high quality education-focused research that explores the challenges faced as well as providing evidence and recommendations to policy makers and stakeholders.

- highly qualified HE graduates from different backgrounds who progress quickly into well paid jobs, including education orientated professions education programmes which promote life long learning and act as gateways into further study to enhance well-being and career progression community based interventions along with WAP – Community Engagement Strategy and Widening Access and Participation Strategy.

Therefore, through this Business Plan, the University College will continue to set aims/objectives and KPIs which when achieved will deliver high quality outcomes in relation to the above.

Additional External Strategic Developments and Reviews

A number of additional major strategic developments and reviews have helped inform and shape the Corporate Plan 2022-2025 and hence this Annual Business Plan for 2023-2024.

These include the following:

- The Draft Programme for Government/
- Various Department for the Economy (DfE) Strategies and Objectives, including the Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland: Skills for a 10X Economy/
- Various Department for Education (DE) Strategies and Reviews including: The Learning Leaders Strategy, The Independent Review of Education in Northern Ireland and Educational Underachievement – A Fair Start.
- The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Corporate Plan 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.

College Strategic Priorities for 2023-24

- Pursuing our Mission
- Ensuring Financial Sustainability
- Developing our Full Cost Recovery Income
- Expanding our International Partnerships and Income
- Partnering with Stakeholders in the delivery of New Programmes
- Introducing additional postgraduate programmes including a doctorate programme
- Continuing to widen our Research Activity

Annual Business Plan Key Performance Indicators and Outcomes for 2023-24

The tables below provide Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each Objective associated with the College's Aims. Objectives and KPIs will be tracked and/or measured over the duration of the Business Plan, as appropriate, against the annual College Business Plans.

Aim	Objective	Key Performance Indicator
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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive annual Continuous Action for Programme Enhancement (CAPE) feedback for all relevant programmes. • Module evaluations on PG and UG courses scored substantively as good or better and used to inform internal quality review. Sustain or improve on the 2023 overall NSS satisfaction rate of 78%. • All programmes planned to be developed in 2023-24 (e.g. Skill Up programmes, Doctorate in Professional Practice etc.) to meet emerging student and sector needs and, as appropriate, content shaped by research and scholarship evidenced in course planning and delivery and through programme documentation.
	1.2 Deliver outstanding in-person and digital teaching and learning shaped by research and scholarship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Student Satisfaction rates as evidenced by annual internal and external student surveys (module evaluation, annual surveys, National Student Survey (NSS)). All substantive module evaluations on PG and UG courses scored as good or better and used to inform internal quality review. • Annual success & progression rates ² on substantive programmes maintained at least 94% or higher.

² Progression into employment or further study where known

	1.3 Recruit high calibre ³ students on core programmes including those currently under-represented in Higher Education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual enrolment targets met for all substantive⁴ programmes including MASN. ITE – 148 annual intake and Non-ITE – 277 (3 year total). • Average UCAS Entry Tariff maintained at 130 (BEd Primary - 144, BEd Post Primary – 126, BA ECS 132, BSc HPAS – 116). • Annual Widening Participation targets to recruit under-represented groups met in line with DfE annual targets in relation to the following target groups: NI MDM Quintile 1 - 86; Disability – 106; Receipt of DSA - 32; Young males from NI MDM Quintile 1 -11 Adult Students - 135; Care Experienced - 2.
	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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal survey of users of student services rates services as good overall or better.
	1.5 Achieve high undergraduate and postgraduate retention, success rates and high post-graduation progression rates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95% retention, 94% success & 94% progression rates on substantive under-graduate programmes achieved.

³ It is important that students are recruited with integrity and demonstrate aptitude for their chosen course of study.

2. To be an employer of choice	2.1 Recruit and retain high calibre staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain/improve applicants per vacancy on 22/23 average. • Achieve an annual voluntary turn-over rate of 12% or under, excluding fixed term staff.
	2.2 Invest in the development of staff, including growing leadership capacity within teams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earmark 10% of annual Staff Development budget to support staff undertake further academic/professional qualifications as appropriate to business need and priority. • Percentage of lecturing staff with/undertaking doctorates maintained at 65% or above.
	2.3 Maintain a safe and attractive work (and study) environment for the College community which promotes wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All statutory health and safety requirements met and reported on to College management and Governing Body. • Estates Strategy updated and implemented to plan to maintain and improve the physical environment.
3 To be financially and environmentally sustainable	<p>3.1 Ensure financial sustainability by increasing income from:</p> <p>a) fee-paying students outside of the MASN quota including in-person, blended and remote programmes</p> <p>b) Hospitality, Accommodation and Conferencing Services (HACS) and use of the campus physical resources;</p> <p>c) research and scholarship; and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual targets for each income stream met as below: • fee-paying students outside of the MASN quota to generate income of £826K; • Hospitality, Accommodation and Conferencing Services (HACS) and use of the campus physical resources to generate income of £2,554k; • Research and Scholarship to generate income of £60K;

	<p>d) additional public and private sector projects / partnerships.</p> <p>And reduce expenditure by reducing energy usage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional public and private sector projects and / or partnerships – £60K. • Achieve a reduction in energy consumption the 21/22 baseline in line with expert guidance.
	<p>3.2 Develop and sustain a high-quality learning and working environment, including digital infrastructure and outdoor facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical environment/infrastructure maintained and improved including in line with the Estates and Digital Strategies. • Achieve annual percentage of core IT system uptime of at least 95%. <p>Achieve a reduction in energy and water consumption and an increase in the volume of waste recycled over the 21/22 baseline in line with expert guidance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a University College overarching Environmental and Sustainability Strategy.
	<p>3.3 Continue to meet the requirements of the University College's Management Statement / Financial Memorandum (or any replacement agreement).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Statement / Financial Memorandum (or Partnership Agreement) with the DfE adhered to, measured by mid-year and end-of year Assurance Statements –To be completed and returned to DfE within deadline and with no significant outstanding actions.
	<p>3.4 Continue to operate an effective system of corporate governance and risk management and ensuring effective College management.</p>	<p>Evidenced through positive reports with respect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal / External Audits – Overall Satisfactory Assurance to be achieved for 2023-24 Internal Audit Programme. Achieve unqualified Financial Statements for the year to 31 July 2024 with no significant issues identified in the related Key Audit Findings presented by External Audit.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DfE Mid-Year and Annual Assurance Processes –To be completed and returned to DfE within deadline and with no significant outstanding actions. • BCP documentation maintained up to date and annual testing programme to be completed to agreed schedule;–Testing schedule developed and implemented during 2023-24. The impact of any lessons learned from testing to be reflected in procedures, processes, resources available. • Annual review of risk management and regular review and updating and reporting of Risk Registers maintained. Corporate and Departmental Risk Registers to be kept updated and regularly presented for consideration by the appropriate committees.
4. To impact wider society	4.1 Develop and nurture local, national and international partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with at least two international partners in relation to study, research, scholarship and charitable activities. • Increase student and staff international mobility against 22/23 figures. • Increase number of partnerships against 21/22 baseline to support community based learning/family education initiatives/intergenerational learning.
	4.2 Focus research and scholarship to shape teaching, inform policy and change practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure at least one new funded research and/or scholarship project e.g. from DE and/or DfE in 2023/24. • 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).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop two new partnerships in development/delivery of CPD and/or LLL programmes. • CPD provision expanded through offering further Skill Up CPD programmes in 23/24.
	4.4 Champion the use of technology to enhance outcomes in education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital and Technical Services Team to offer digital related training sessions to teaching staff. • Stranmillis University College to participate in Industry Forums and Groups including: CCEA and BCS Digital forums. • Continue the development of the CDIT with QUB and Belfast Met.

Monitoring and Reporting Progress

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

