

# BEING WESTMINSTER OUR STRATEGY 2018 – 2023



## PLAYING YOUR PART

To make our University a great place to work, with people at the heart of what we do, everyone has a pivotal role to play. Our collective request to each of us is that:

Every day we connect with why we're here – to provide education and opportunity so that people from every background can realise their true potential, contributing to a richer, happier society.

That we do so with a progressive outlook, always open to new, innovative ways of working and bold in our approach to teaching and learning.

That we show compassion to each other, and look out for our individual and collective wellbeing, being actively inclusive, sensitive to difference, building a united Westminster community.

And that we take responsibility for doing the right thing, even when that feels difficult.

**Your continued feedback, comments, suggestions and ideas are always welcome.**

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**INTRODUCTION FROM  
THE VICE-CHANCELLOR**





# OUR TIME IS NOW



Our University has a long and distinctive history. Since our founding as London's first polytechnic and one of the firsts in the UK in 1838, we have provided an environment, culture and education that has supported a hugely diverse and international community of students. Many have gone on to do great things – in some cases realising extraordinary achievements that have been widely recognised; in others, making a difference in quieter ways as good citizens and contributors to their communities. We have much, both past and present, to be proud of, and education will remain our central purpose.

Our character comes in part from our base in the heart of London, with all the vitality, edge and connectivity that brings. These interactions add energy and perspective to our work, forming relationships and opportunities for all our students and colleagues.

Our University is also well known for our innovative and relevant research. It contributes to the education of our students by bringing leading-edge insights to our teaching and to society through its bold approaches to issues that concern us all. There is scope to build on the national and international recognition of our research and this will form an increasingly important part of our success in the future.

We also enjoy, and continue to host, many events and debates in the arts, politics, science, business and law, opening our doors to welcome our local community and visitors from across the UK and the world. This is an important part of who we are, pushing boundaries in ways that are underpinned by the respect and compassion of a truly inclusive organisation.

In a dramatically changing world our University has a great deal to offer. The industrial strategies of different countries, including the UK, call for people – younger and older – from increasingly diverse backgrounds, with strong core values and a work-ready education. They are needed to fuel growth and prosperity while also accomplishing it in a human way. In increasingly polarised political landscapes, and as the world we live in moves inexorably towards robotics and artificial intelligence, the values of compassion and inclusivity shared by all of us as students and colleagues, have a crucially important role to play in

bringing our communities and society together. Our University is in an excellent position to address these challenges and it is our opportunity and duty to do so.

I hope that what is described feels familiar to you and reflects the reasons you joined us and have stayed with Westminster. It is informed by all the conversations and experiences shared by so many of you with me over the last few months, which have been extremely welcome. I know that this comes after a challenging period of transformation and I am determined to do all I can to ensure the happiness, safety and wellbeing of all of us colleagues, students and those associated with our University, which I see as our overriding priority.

This strategy builds on our unique history and achievements. It will help us all to focus on what matters, investing energy in an integrated way to create a future for our University that we each feel proud of and secure within.

It sets out our story: our purpose and what we stand for, our ingredients for success, where we are aiming to be and how we can all play our part to get there. It describes our next five years and beyond. The detail of how we progress will be grounded in plans that cover all parts of our organisation. These are in development already and will continue to be part of our regular work as we realise our potential, turning strategy into reality.

The University of Westminster is an exceptional organisation. We have a proud history and a unique spirit, and, as we follow through on this strategy, a confident shared direction for our future.

It is a great privilege to be part of our University and to work with such talented colleagues and supporters including the Quentin Hogg trust. We share such similar motivations for working here, yet we bring great diversity and strength to each of our respective roles. I am so much looking forward to our journey together over the next years.

Our time is now.

DR PETER BONFIELD  
VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER



**2**  
**PURPOSE, MISSION,  
VALUES: WHO WE ARE**



Right from the start, we  
have had a pioneering spirit

- We are one of the UK's first polytechnic institutions, established almost 200 years ago to educate the working people of London. We have become known for the many ways in which we help our students to realise their full potential, regardless of background.
- Our teaching is practical, relevant and contemporary.
- Our research has impact in the world, is internationally recognised and informs our teaching.
- We are progressive and questioning. Many of our achievements are ground-breaking, yet we are also compassionate and caring.
- Our spirit reflects our location at the heart of a world city which is home to diverse communities and which has global reach.

## OUR PURPOSE

We provide grounded, holistic education with wide horizons and opportunities so that people from every background can realise their true potential, contributing to a richer, happier society.

## OUR MISSION

To help students from different backgrounds fulfil their potential.

## OUR VALUES SUPPORT THIS PURPOSE

### PROGRESSIVE

We look forwards, anticipate what's changing and embrace the new with energy and imagination.

### COMPASSIONATE

We are thoughtful and sensitive, supportive and encouraging, making time to talk, especially when the pressure is on. As a University community we are inclusive and united, careful to consider what enables each and every one of us to play our part.

### RESPONSIBLE

Individually and collectively, we take responsibility for our actions, work to the highest ethical standards and help each other to always do the right thing.



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## EXTERNAL CONTEXT



# These are the areas of change and challenge we need to engage with:

## BREXIT AND INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

Following BREXIT we could potentially see a **reduction of nearly 75,000 EU students in England**, or 80% of the present number.

**75,000**  
EU STUDENTS



Outside the EU a projected increase in the middle classes in developing countries to over 1 billion provides huge opportunities for international recruitment and Trans National Education.

## DEMOGRAPHICS



**23.6%**  
of the population will be of a pensionable age by 2035.



The numbers of people of working age are projected to grow with a **3.2 million growth in UK workforce numbers**.



## LONGER WORKING LIVES

As the pensionable age rises and the length of working lives extends a greater focus will be needed on secondary education and re-training the existing workforce.

## GROWING MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS AND STRESS-RELATED ILLNESSES



In the past 10 years there has been a **500% increase in the proportion of students who disclose a mental health condition to their university.**

**500%**

In 2015/16, **15,395 UK-domiciled first-year students** disclosed a mental health condition – almost five times the number in 2006/07.

**15,395**

**92% of students in counselling** identified themselves as **having problems with their academic work**. Learning and wellbeing are closely linked.

**92%**

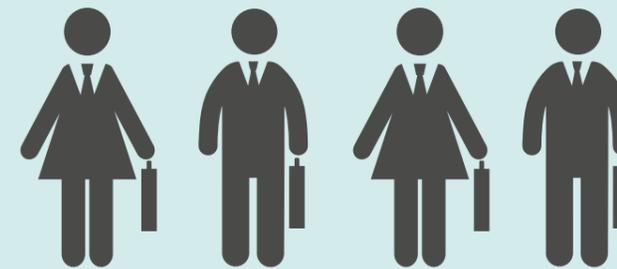
## GREATER NEED FOR WORK-READY GRADUATES

**65%**

of primary school students will work in jobs and functions that **don't currently exist**.

**50%**

of the subject knowledge acquired during **the first year** of a four-year technical degree is **outdated by the time students graduate**.



Future demand will require a spread / combinations of subjects.

## FLUCTUATING POLITICS AND FUNDING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

New regulator – the Office for Students (OFS).

Increased media scrutiny on the cost of a university degree; vice-chancellor pay and benefits.

## INCREASING COMPETITION FROM ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION MODELS AND FORMATS

112 'alternative providers' offering higher education nationally.



## GROWING EXPECTATIONS FROM DISCERNING STUDENTS



**26%**

of jobs in 2012 required a degree, compared with just 10% in 1986.



**35%**

of students in England cite good value for money from their Education.

## DIGITAL DISRUPTION IN EVERY SECTOR OF INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS

60% of occupations have at least 30% of activities which could be automated.

**60%**

On average, low wage jobs have five times the technical potential to be automated compared with high paid jobs. The occupations with the highest estimated automatability typically only require basic to low level of education. At the other end of the spectrum, the least automatable occupations almost all require professional training and /or tertiary education.





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**OUR VISION FOR 2023**



# // WE ARE BUILT TO LAST

- We are respected as leaders in teaching, research and engagement with industry, employers and the professions in the development of work-ready graduates in our chosen areas of strength.
- We are a UK University that plays a leading and unique role in helping students from different backgrounds, communities and groups from all around the world realise their full potential.
- We are a high-performing learning organisation and a community of educational endeavour where individuals, students and colleagues are able and encouraged to pursue what they love.

As a result, by 2023, we will be making more of a difference than ever before...

We will be helping more individuals develop in ways they value more highly through our learning and teaching activities.



We will be making a stronger contribution to the world's learning and wellbeing through our research.

We will be making a bigger difference to organisations and society through our knowledge exchange endeavours.



And the changes we will have made to Westminster to lead to these achievements will have deep roots – we are built to last.



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OUR OBJECTIVES



We have four objectives that will be our focus for the next five years:

1

## LEARNING AND TEACHING

**To be a leading, high performing and transformative learning organisation which excels in providing an exceptional student experience and exceeds sector benchmarks for student satisfaction; to continually review and improve our portfolio of courses, and to be a TEF Silver with over 70% of our students in subject areas at Silver or Gold.**

We will raise the quality and effectiveness of our teaching and improve the ways in which we help our students learn. By 2023, their experience and evaluation of our teaching quality, in particular for assessment and feedback, academic support and the way we organise and manage our courses will become significantly ahead of benchmarks. Flexible timetabling will support the learning experience. We will adapt our portfolio of courses, our overall offer and the way we communicate so we are seen as an internationally leading place to learn. Our offering will be informed by market, employer and societal insight and will reflect our academic and interdisciplinary strengths.



2

## RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

**To develop our research activity and its impact in our areas of excellence to double income from research grants and ensure that 70% of all REF outputs are at 3\*/4\* level.**

This is a critical part of our endeavour, focused on areas of research and knowledge exchange where we make a difference and where that difference is valued for the impact it makes. We will develop a unified, interdisciplinary community of researchers with a vibrant body of PhD students at its heart. Our success will be achieved by researchers and those supporting research working in a seamless partnership. We aim to double our funded research activity, with high and consistent quality in our outputs and increased impact on business, industry and the wider society.

3

## EMPLOYABILITY

**To offer opportunities for employability enhancing learning and engagement with employers and industry to all our undergraduate students.**

We are committed to providing employability, related learning, opportunities for engagement with employers, and industry-informed courses that unlock our students' true potential. Our goal is that every one of our students is able to benefit from this approach. Employers will see our students as motivated, bright and work-ready, and our organisation as a source of a diverse mix of people that is right for the needs of a contemporary workforce. We will strengthen our valued relationships with employers, industry partners, professional bodies and institutions.



4

## INTERNATIONAL

**To raise the international reputation and reach of the university, such that the percentage of overseas fee paying undergraduates rises to 30% and postgraduates to 50% of the total number of students taught.**

This will continue to grow as an area of success at Westminster. We are already a highly internationalised community, with students from across the globe, and we will build on this further. We will ensure that our overseas students enjoy an excellent beginning-to-end learning journey in a university environment at the heart of London that is welcoming, inclusive and full of opportunity. At the same time, we will reach out beyond the UK to form rich and long-lasting international partnerships which enhance our teaching, learning and research, and the experience of our students and colleagues.



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**OUR FOCUS AND  
OUR OUTCOMES**



# What we will be focusing on to achieve our objectives

# 1

## PEOPLE, CULTURE AND INCLUSION

**To create a positive place and culture so all our people are supported and encouraged to realise their ambition.**

Our people and the way we work together are the foundations of our institution. We will support and inspire so that colleagues achieve their ambitions, our students realise their potential and our alumni are our loyal and engaged ambassadors. We will take the wellbeing of our colleagues seriously and provide a safe working environment. We will offer development pathways and flexible working for our colleagues as well as responsive, committed academic and pastoral support for our students. Our leadership will be positive and proactive, serving our whole community openly, honestly and with accountability.



# 2

## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

**To create a physical place that inspires learning, and that meets current and future needs.**

Our place is the city we work in and the buildings we occupy. We will ensure that our environment is highly accessible and intelligently used. It will reflect our heritage through our historic buildings and provide safety, comfort and inspiration. We will ensure it meets our practical needs in the way it has been developed and continues to evolve. We will make the most of our presence in London as an international city with global connections. We will focus on and build on our community engagement, external partnerships, events and communications to position the University of Westminster as a place that people love to inhabit and experience.

# 3

## DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

**To take full advantage of the opportunities the digital environment offers in driving the education and learning of all our students and the working experience of our colleagues.**

This will be a key strength. We will embrace new technologies and learn from that experience. We will evolve new and better ways of using and being part of a digital environment. That journey will mean partnering, experimenting and keeping an open mind about what might work as technologies mature. We will continue in this spirit so that we keep being proactive around the flow of new technology.



## OUR OUTCOMES

**What we will see when we achieve our objectives**

## REPUTATION

**With focused work through our people, place and technology we will grow our already distinctive reputation so that we are widely respected as a strong university, recognised for what we do and our commitment to making a difference.**

As London's first polytechnic institution we are established as pioneers, with a sustained and embedded approach to practice-based education. We have the creativity and breadth that comes from a highly diverse student and staff population and an inclusive environment. The immense contribution of all our colleagues and students, and our location at the heart of an international city, will weave through every aspect of university life and be evidenced in our Westminster stories.

## FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

**Our financial sustainability that meets current and future investment needs is achieved through the delivery of our objectives, creating an inclusive, inspiring and high-performing learning environment that attracts students to study here and colleagues to work here.**

We have well established robust controls, good discipline and well evidenced decision making and planning processes so that our day-to-day finances are well managed and our long term outlook is healthy. This will enable us to plan for and make some transformational investments in the digital and physical estate and these will have a positive impact on recruitment and retention of students. These investments will underpin a refresh of the University portfolio, ensuring that it remains contemporary and relevant and enables us to attract greater numbers of students. This will positively impact on the revenue we generate.



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HOW WE ARE SET UP  
TO DELIVER THIS



Over the past year we have reorganised our University



**Over the past year we have reorganised our University, creating a new and distinctive academic structure that speaks to Westminster's strengths.**

We have always been pioneers. Our new structure reflects that spirit, pushing disciplinary boundaries and creating new academic allegiances.

Our interconnected structure is built to deliver an enhanced learning environment, stronger and broader industrial, international and professional connections and pioneering and impactful research.

## Our structure

### **WESTMINSTER BUSINESS SCHOOL**

School of Organisations, Economy and Society

School of Finance and Accounting

School of Applied Management

School of Management and Marketing

### **DESIGN, CREATIVE AND DIGITAL INDUSTRIES**

School of Architecture and Cities

School of Arts

School of Computing and Engineering

School of Media and Communication

### **PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

### **LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES**

School of Social Sciences

Westminster Law School

School of Humanities

School of Life Sciences



## OUR PROMISE TO OUR STUDENTS:

We help you develop your **confidence, resilience and individuality**, so that you are able to make the very most of your learning at Westminster, and go on to find fulfilling work and richly contribute to society.

## OUR PROMISE TO OUR COLLEAGUES:

We enjoy being part of an **educational community** where all of us – teachers, researchers and members of Professional Services – make a worthwhile difference.

We help you do your **best work** with groups of students who are challenging, interested and keen to learn.

We provide **opportunities that support your own learning**, through interaction with colleagues and partners and through smart, evolving technology.

We provide an **environment where you can grow** – personally and professionally – and feel safe and supported.

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## OUR PROMISES

