

# TOWARDS THE NEXT 150 YEARS

Aberystwyth University  
Strategic Plan  
2018-2023

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# FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the University's strategy for the next five years.

The plan has been drawn up after consultation with staff and students and sets out our vision, our values and our high level objectives.

It is both ambitious and realistic; emphasising our commitment to excellent education, student experience and research with impact.

We will use this document to inform our decisions and to measure our progress towards our aims as well as prioritising our actions. More detail is given in our sub-strategies for each of our key areas of work as well as our enabling strategy.

Having a defined strategic document enables the whole University to navigate a clear course in the current challenging higher education environment.

As we move towards our 150th anniversary and beyond, we will work together as a community to achieve our aims, realise our ambitions and aspirations, and ensure the sustained success of this very special University.

Professor Elizabeth Treasure  
Vice-Chancellor



# OUR MISSION

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To deliver inspirational education and research in a supportive, creative and exceptional environment in Wales.

# OUR VISION

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Building on our historical strengths and our reputation for excellence, we will contribute to society in Wales and the wider world by applying our knowledge to local and global challenges. Working within a supportive, welcoming and bilingual community, we will use our expertise to cultivate critical thinking, independent questioning and skills that equip our learners for lives of success.



# OUR VALUES

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## **Transformational**

We develop enduring personal strengths that facilitate people's future success.

Our community of staff and students drive positive change by addressing local and global challenges.

We encourage innovation from new ideas and actions, within an entrepreneurial context. We strive to unlock individual potential.

## **Creative and innovative**

We encourage imaginative, free and critical thinking.

We generate unique outcomes by drawing on our distinct Welsh culture, history, exceptional environment and facilities.

We foster the ingenuity of staff and students in problem solving, adaptation and versatility.

## **Inclusive**

We promote openness and generosity of spirit and cherish the strong sense of community that exists across the University, Aberystwyth and our wider world.

We listen and respond to each other's honest opinions with respect.

We take pride in the richness of the diversity of cultures, opinions and backgrounds of our staff and students.

## **Ambitious**

We work to enhance our global reputation in discovery, educational quality and innovation.

We are committed to excellence in research, teaching and engagement.

We celebrate the attainments, achievements and contributions of our staff, students and alumni.

## **Collaborative**

Our academic community is engaged externally, contributing to civic debate, the promotion of the Welsh language and culture, and to the local and wider economy.

We work with our students, as individuals and collectively, to ensure the continuous improvement of the student experience and learning environment at Aberystwyth.

We communicate the work and worth of the University to the wider world and engage people in the delivery of our vision.



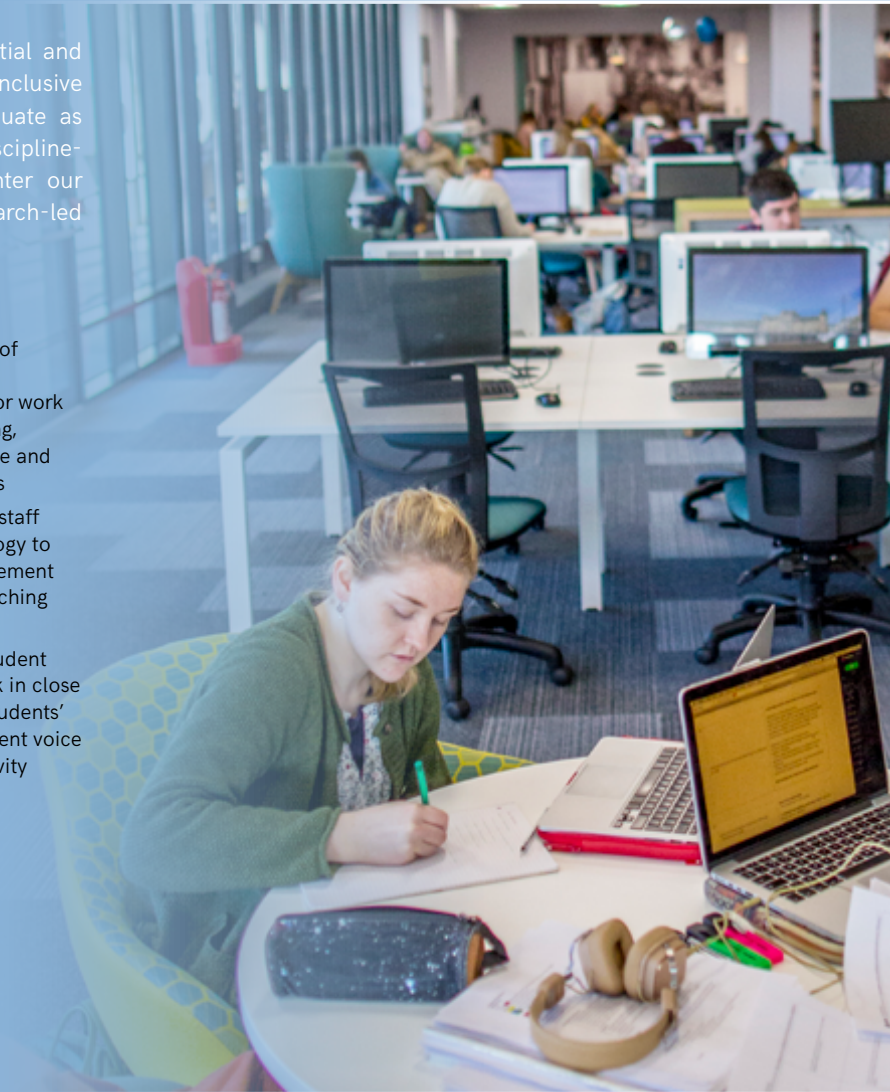
# OUR CORE OBJECTIVES

## Education and student experience

We will empower students to unlock their own potential and to develop as independent learners in a supportive, inclusive and creative bilingual community. Students will graduate as independent critical and free thinkers with both discipline-specific and transferable skills. Students will encounter our excellent research through practical projects and research-led teaching.

Our objectives are to:

- Continually develop our undergraduate provision to ensure attractive, high-quality courses which lead to graduate-level employment
- Nurture innovative teaching and learning (including flexible learning) that is recognised as a sector benchmark of best practice in Welsh and English
- Enrich our curricula with distinct research undertaken within the University
- Develop targeted postgraduate provision that delivers rigorous programmes which are attractive to home and international students
- Embed employability skills across our range of programmes, including further opportunities for work experience, volunteering, international experience and other transferable skills
- Promote and facilitate staff development in pedagogy to drive continual improvement in our learning and teaching experience
- Further improve the student experience and to work in close partnership with the Students' Union to keep the student voice at the heart of our activity



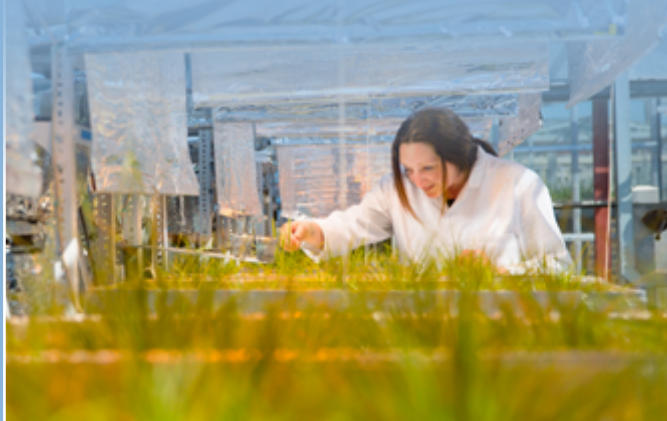
## Research and innovation with impact

As a bilingual, research-led institution, we will support and develop researchers to undertake research with impact of world-leading quality. We will build on our historic strengths to tackle contemporary challenges facing Wales and the world in the 21st century. Our research deliverables will lead to innovation in industry and public policy, and will contribute to the growth of our local and wider economy.

Our objectives are to:

- Further grow the critical mass of research teams in defined areas of excellence including interdisciplinary research producing work of the highest quality
- Develop the number of excellent leaders of research across the University including training and mentoring at every career stage
- Encourage researchers to collaborate and widen their experience
- Develop the research potential of all staff
- Grow research income aiming for a diversity of sources as well as an increase in funding from Research Councils UK's Global Challenges Research Fund
- Increase the number of research students particularly in areas of research strength and work through Doctoral Training Centres
- Invest in the development of both the impact of our research and the entrepreneurial skills of our researchers
- Expand and develop links with appropriate industrial, commercial and cultural partners, growing our contribution toward the local and wider economy

*Grasses being screened for their nitrogen use efficiency under low nitrogen conditions*



## Contribution to society

We are a bilingual university rooted in Wales and open to the world. We have always made a significant contribution to Wales and beyond, benefitting our communities and society as a whole through the impact of our research, education and the achievements of our staff, students and alumni. We instil our graduates with an academic training and the values of a global and national citizenship. We understand our responsibility and our accountability to society. We want to be accessible, relevant and engaged with our communities and stakeholders. Above all, we must be a source of inspiration. We will strengthen and better communicate this dimension of our work over the next five years.

Our objectives are to:

- Focus on addressing contemporary challenges through our research and the development of evidence-informed debate in Wales and more widely
- Use our expertise to foster economic development locally and further afield
- Create a pan-disciplinary offer for all students, including the local community, to debate wider issues and be stretched beyond their own curriculum
- Contribute to the region's infrastructure by sharing facilities with the community
- Impact on the politics, culture, economy and public services of Wales through our knowledge and expertise

Specifically, we are committed to improving access to higher education and will continue to encourage participation and collaborative activities through extensive partnerships.

Our objectives are to:

- Work with schools, FE colleges and employers enhancing 14 to 19 cross-curricula learning across Wales
- Transform Old College into an outstanding facility for the University, the community and visitors alike
- Continue to encourage participation in wide-ranging opportunities through our Arts Centre, Sports Centre and other departments
- Strengthen working between town and gown through further developing partnerships and activities including student volunteering

## International engagement

Aberystwyth is a leading university in Wales with an excellent global reputation. We will be an international destination of choice for students who want to study in our unique environment. We will cultivate agreements which encourage our students to spend time studying abroad. We will be a desirable partner for international institutions who share our aims and aspirations.

Our objectives are to:

- Review all education and research agreements to develop mutually beneficial, focused education and research partnerships with international institutions
- Maintain the vibrant diversity of our community by offering an international experience for all while increasing the number of international students
- Develop quality postgraduate cohort recruitment and build on the prestige of our Professional Doctorate programmes
- Evaluate existing and new opportunities for trans-national education
- Support the enhancement of language skills and ensure that our international students are confident members of our safe, inclusive community



*The National Eisteddfod 2017 Chair is the work of Aberystwyth University graduate, Rhodri Owen, who studied Fine Art at the School of Art.*

## Welsh language and culture

Aberystwyth University has a strong and proud history of delivering education and research through the medium of Welsh. We remain committed to promoting the language and culture of our country, as well as contributing towards a greater understanding of the socio-economic needs of Wales. We will continue to improve and enhance Welsh-medium opportunities for our staff, students and visitors.

Our objectives are to:

- Promote the development of Welsh-medium academic provision including the discipline of Welsh
- Ensure an environment that enables students to choose to live and learn through the medium of Welsh
- Reopen Neuadd Pantycelyn as first-class accommodation for Welsh-speaking students and learners
- Ensure Welsh language opportunities in areas such as employment placements and industrial years
- Encourage the use of Welsh in the workplace and encourage staff and students alike to take up Welsh language learning opportunities and improve their Welsh
- Act as a catalyst for increasing cultural awareness, understanding and integration in relation to Wales and the world

# MAKING IT HAPPEN

## Our people

Our people are our greatest asset and a skilled, healthy and engaged workforce is critical to the delivery of our strategy. We value our academics, our administrators and all members of staff who contribute to the success of this University. We are committed to building staff satisfaction, motivation and morale, and to creating a supportive and inspirational place to work.

Our objectives are to:

- Ensure every staff member fully understands their role, responsibilities and accountabilities and participates in the annual Effective Contribution Scheme
- Provide staff across the University with opportunities for suitable training and development for their roles and ensure they understand the contribution they are making to the delivery of the University's objectives
- Implement a new programme of staff development to enable enhanced performance as well as individual and team development
- Eliminate the gender pay gap
- Promote the wellbeing and health of staff and students
- Achieve appropriate charter marks such as Athena Swan and Stonewall which indicate the University's commitment to diversity and equal opportunities for all
- Proactively manage short-term and long-term sickness of staff and support their return to work

## Governance

Effective, efficient and accountable governance is a hallmark of the University. Our governance is ethical, flexible and enabling whilst ensuring all legal and statutory duties are met.

Our objectives are to:

- Ensure the structure and operation of the University is focused on and facilitates the delivery of academic functions
- Streamline inclusive processes whilst ensuring quality and compliance
- Enable effective and efficient decision making at appropriate levels of the institution
- Be accountable to our communities
- Ensure the principles of academic freedom are promoted
- Support staff and students

## Finance and infrastructure

Delivery of the academic mission of the University is underpinned by a robust financial strategy that delivers financial sustainability and enables planned investment in the estate and infrastructure improving the experience of students and staff.

Our objectives are to:

- Deliver the Sustainability Implementation Plan
- Develop plans to allow for investment in support of academic functions by the delivery of an annual financial surplus
- Work to ensure that staff costs as a proportion are at the benchmark average
- Implement an integrated and branded commercial strategy
- Develop a revised costed estates strategy with a realistic implementation plan
- Develop a virtual infrastructure and digital strategy with a realistic implementation plan
- Develop philanthropy and fundraising initiatives in support of strategic priorities

## Contact us

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