

UNIVERSITY OF HULL

**Graduate Employability and Success Strategy**

2021-2026

**The vision**

Hull’s vision is to continue to advance its sector place and reputation for outstanding graduate employability; regionally, nationally and internationally. Building upon our excellence in education, research, innovation and student support.

Motivated by society’s challenges and inspired by the power of our global community, we’re shaping a fairer, brighter, carbon neutral future. We place great importance upon supporting students with the acquisition of exceptional graduate competencies and attributes in readiness for their future. Empowering our graduates to determine and achieve their own personal and professional successes.

To continue to provide our local region with a pipeline of graduate talent, and in doing so ensure our graduates are equipped to continue to help shape and contribute to local economies.

**The Goal**

Hull graduates are already known as leaders, innovators and industry disruptors, who have made significant contributions across many sectors – regionally, nationally and internationally. The University remains committed to ensuring this legacy endures and that it continues to meet the social, cultural and professional challenges of the fourth industrial age and evolving sectors; including emerging ‘Society 5.0’ developments. We are unapologetic in our efforts and continue to be ambitious and driven in order to maximise opportunities for our students and graduates to define their own success and navigate and manage their own (lifelong) progression.

This will be achieved by placing our students at the heart of all of our delivery, with increased importance placed upon competencies, attributes and self-awareness; which, underpins self-efficacy, self-confidence and therefore positively impacts upon readiness for progression. Allowing them to define their own success.

The University will develop three strategic areas:

* ***Employer and Partner Collaborations***
* ***On-programme Delivery***
* ***Wider Employability Support***

**Who is this document for and how should it be used?**

The Employability and Success Strategy sets out the University’s interconnected priorities, objectives and metrics for achieving graduate progression and success; creating a joint focus across academic and professional service areas. With this in mind, the university recognises that it cannot ignore the intrinsic link between academic knowledge with employability enhancing activities and projects. Therefore, this strategy is closely aligned with the University’s Education, Student Experience, Knowledge Exchange, Research and International Strategies.

As a whole institution approach to the development of graduate employability and success, this strategy should be considered by academic and professional service teams across the whole institution. The strategy identifies three strategic areas of focus, each with a defined strategic aim. Subsequently, each aim is followed up with statements of intent to help aid the progression and

evolution of each strategic area. In doing so, all departments can start to consider areas for development; internally to them or as part of a wider (central) working party/group.

Content is written in a manner which will encourage and facilitate further conversation, development of service provision and positively impact upon consistency of approach across all departments; supporting effective action planning and developments. Furthermore, enabling all staff to consider their impact on the student journey and how best to enhance their contribution to graduate success, progression and employability.

For external stakeholders, this document will serve as a reference point, identifying what the University, as the region’s anchor institution, is trying to achieve in terms of ensuring graduates are ready for their next steps and continue to help shape and contribute to the local economy and beyond.

It is hopeful that in reading this document external stakeholders will also be able to consider ways in which they can engage with the institution, provide support and take advantage of the University’s efforts and approaches to developing graduate employability and success.

**What do we mean by ‘Employability’?**

The University recognises that employability is a complex and multifaceted discourse, which will continue to adapt to a wide variety of drivers, including national policy developments and employer and graduate needs. As such the University will continue to evolve its approach to delivering employability outcomes and commit to an institution wide approach. The University defines employability as:

*‘Embedding academic learning with a set of competencies, attributes,*

*skills and behaviours to enable all graduates to be competitive in the*

*graduate labour market. Equipping them with the ability and ‘tools’*

*to make informed decisions and successfully navigate lifelong career journeys*

*(and personal success) as defined by them as individuals.’*

It is essential to the success of this strategy that all staff have a good understanding of employability and what it means for their delivery and support of students. Taking a lead from this current definition, all staff will be supported by the central Student Futures team, who will provide ongoing workshops to discuss current employability trends and implications for us as an institution.

**What do we mean by ‘Society 5.0’?**

Society 5.0 can be defined as a human-centred society that balances economic and technological advancement to solve society’s problems with super-smart AI data systems. It represents a new vision for a smarter society where humans, nature and technology create a sustainable balance which is enhanced by data. Consequently, it has become more important that all of our graduates, regardless of discipline, are equipped with the necessary agency, knowledge and skills to progress through rapidly evolving and complex and solution focussed labour market.

**Strategic Areas: Aims and Intent**

***Enhancing employer and partner collaborations:***

*To continue to develop a broad range of sector (HE) leading employer and partner collaborations. With the purpose of enhancing the personal, professional development and career readiness of our graduates and therefore meeting future workforce needs.*

We will do this by:

* Continuing to engage with stakeholders (including the Local Enterprise Partnership, NHS Trusts and local authorities) and employers to ensure course design, delivery and outcomes continue to maintain their currency and relevance to industry; ensuring future workforce needs are analysed and reflected in our provision.
* Ensuring all students have the opportunity to undertake a period of work-based learning (placements- which includes international opportunities, yearlong industry experiences and shorter, bespoke placements and internship opportunities) throughout the duration of their programme of study.
* Ensuring all programmes of study include multiple opportunities to engage with local, regional and national employers; through project setting, insight events and collaborative provision delivery; thus, developing critical Knowledge Exchange skills.
* Maximising existing and new employer partnerships to leverage opportunities for students and graduates to undertake a period of work-based learning outside of their programme of study (vacation internships, volunteering etc.).
* Continuing to seek and explore external funding opportunities to engage with and support regional employers; with a view to leveraging that support to develop work-based learning opportunities for students and graduates.
* Working in partnership with colleagues from HUSU and local authorities to consolidate and develop the coordination of existing volunteering and ‘casual’ jobs processes; therefore, increasing opportunities for part time work for students and graduates.
* Developing an institution wide Client Relationship Management (CRM) system and processes to aid accurate, efficient and coherent management of employer and partner relationships.
* Continue to regularly communicate and work with Alumnus to identify and strengthen links with industries, sectors and employers (of all sizes).

***Enhancing on-programme delivery:***

*To continue to enhance, innovate and develop our academic portfolio into sector leading provision, which is centred on a competency-based approach and places the employability of students and graduates at its core*

We will do this by:

* Ensuring employability and the development of both generic and industry relevant skills, attributes and behaviours is seen as high profile and are visible across all programmes of study
* Ensuring links between academic learning and employability development (and/or indicative industry skills), are made explicit across all programmes of study (e.g. Knowledge Exchange skills).
* Consistently linking the relevance of academic digital literacies skills, gained through academic learning, with career management, progression and employability.
* Ensuring professionally focused assessment design within programmes, from which specific workplace roles do not naturally extend, e.g. philosophy, mathematics, history or literature (Advanced HE, 2021).
* Ensuring programmes of study effectively accommodate wider professional development interests of students who wish to consider roles alternative to those which may ‘naturally extend’ (Advanced HE, 2021).
* Guaranteeing ‘authentic assessments’ (real world task/practice in context) are routinely and consistently embedded across all programmes of study and are utilised as a key part of module assessments.
* Ensuring all students have the opportunity to undertake subject specific, employability enrichment activities, including study abroad and field trips
* Promoting and helping to embed the Knowledge Exchange Student Skills Framework, recognising that it is relevant for all students irrespective of their career pathways.
* Creating opportunities for all students (including PG) to engage with and complete the Hull Employability Award as part of, or alongside, their programme of study.
* Offering a desirable, contemporary portfolio of post graduate (taught and research) courses aligned to employer needs across all programmes of study. And ensure undergraduates have access to the support, information, advice and guidance they require to make informed decisions about academic progression.
* Creating a culture across all student cohorts of self-awareness, self- development and motivation by recognising and making explicit the importance of taking personal responsibility for their own development and success.
* Recognising and continuing to promote enterprising activities, skills and starting up a business as a career option of equal value to employment. Working with specialist support services, internal and external, to maximise success, support and graduate opportunities.

***Enhancing wider employability support:***

*To remain focused on achieving innovative, accessible and current student support, resulting in sector leading careers and employability service provision across all programmes of study.*

We will do this by:

* Continuing to review and develop the central Student Futures support and resource base to ensure currency of quality careers information, advice and guidance (on and post programme); including the use of current labour market intelligence to inform guidance
* Ensuring our most disadvantaged cohorts have equitable access to employability-based provision and also benefit from quality, evidence based and differentiated activities/projects and support to aid their progression and lower progression gaps.
* Committing to the formulation of service level agreements between the central Student Futures resource and programmes of study; outlining service provision, expectations, responsibilities and accountability
* Ensuring all Personal Supervisors have the necessary ‘tools’ to actively engage in positive success and progression conversations with their caseloads.
* Recognising and continuing to promote enterprising activities, skills and starting up a business as a career option of equal value to employment, and working with specialist support services, internal and external, to maximise success, support and graduate opportunities.
* Establish a uniformed, consistent and coherent ‘careers registration’ and ‘careers exit’ data strategy and routine data capture at key transition points. This data will ensure the adequate management of internal resource and ensure individual and cohort needs are being met.
* Ensuring employability metrics, destination data and engagement data are analysed and utilised to inform, develop and evolve employability provision and activity across the institution (including aforementioned registration and exit data).
* Placing an increased emphasis on continuous improvement, by establishing and undertaking regular quality assurance activities and processes with student led evaluations of employability activities and projects.
* Creating a culture within which all faculties, programmes of study and departments continue to develop opportunities to enhance the employability of students and graduates (ambassadorial roles, internal internships etc.)
* Guaranteeing that all students and graduates have access to self-help and development support and resources which aid their development and are individualised to enable them to meet their specific needs.
* Ensuring there is a consistent approach to the CPD of all staff engaged in employability-based provision, activities or support.

**Monitoring and KPIs**

It is tempting to solely focus on the Graduate Outcome Survey in order to measure impact and set KPIs for this strategy. However, the University recognises that the changes made to the methodology of the outcome survey equates to a significant delay in the publication of this data.  Consequently, it is now increasingly more difficult to infer trends, manage current and future resource and revise plans and strategies, against what is effectively retrospective data.  In addition, due to the metric’s ‘lag’ it is also difficult to measure any impact of actions brought about by this Strategy.

With this in mind, the impact of this Strategy will be monitored and measured by a variety of indicators, utilising both qualitative and quantitative data gathered from a range of sources such as national surveys and internal surveys and evaluations. Therefore, the following metrics and surveys will be regularly reviewed and analysed to determine the impact and success of the Employability and Success Strategy:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Metric/Data Set** | **Key Performance Indicators (KPI)** |
| Graduate Outcome Survey (GOS) | 1. To be within the top 30% nationally for students in employment or further study and Graduate Progression. 2. To remain largely in line with the metric outcomes of regional and aspirational competitors (within a target of 3%) 3. To continue to meet the Graduate Progression benchmark (75% benchmark compared with 75.2% Graduate Progression 17/18) and to incrementally increase the difference between the benchmark and Graduate Progression by 0.2%. 4. To meet the Graduate Progression benchmark of 75% across all subject areas with an emphasis on eight of the priority subject areas: Engineering, SHES, Criminology, Screen, Business and Management, Biological Sciences and Psychology (currently at least 2% below benchmark) 5. Reduction in the progression gaps between identified WP cohorts and peers 6. Continue to support and develop opportunities for regional Graduate Employment to at least 65% of known UK Employment |
| Longitudinal Earnings/Employment Outcomes (LEO) | 1. Salary outcomes to remain comparable to contextualised median salary weighted for local and regional averages (per programme of study and sector). 2. To increase rank for weighted salary nationally from 65th by improved Graduate level employment. (lag expected as data is 3 years after graduation). |
| National Student Survey (NSS) | 1. Annual increase in the satisfaction points across:    1. Assessment and Feedback    2. Organisation and Management    3. Overall satisfactions    4. Support    5. (Open comments - careers and employability related) |
| ‘Pre’ and ‘Exit’ Careers Registration | 1. Completion Rates (entry and exit):    1. Year 1 – 65%    2. Year 2 – 75%    3. Year 3 – 85% 2. Reduction in the gap between students (continuing) completing structured graduate level work experience compared to those without structured graduate level work experience. 3. Increase by 3% in the percentage of graduates securing graduate level employment prior to graduation ceremonies. 4. Increase in the percentage of students taking part in employability focussed enrichment activities (on and off programme) 5. Increase in ‘confidence’ and skill development markers upon year ‘exit’ across all year groups. 6. No significant difference in the increase in ‘confidence’ and skill development markers upon year ‘exit’ between WP groups and their peers |
| Retention Data | 1. To meet the OfS benchmarks for degree completion and the overall PROCEED metric. |