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This Strategic Plan embraces every part of the University and all our activities. However, throughout this complexity runs a simple implicit theme: we are going to compete successfully with the traditional “elite” universities not because we are the same as them but because we are different.

We share with other leading universities an emphasis on the highest quality of research, but also prioritise maintaining a balance between excellent research and teaching, driving social mobility, and making an extensive economic, social and health impact throughout the region and beyond. We care about our students, preparing them for both a good career and a good life. We also care about using our research and scholarship to make an impact on the world.

We have become an agile, effective and confident University. We are proud of our distinctive strengths and determined to set our own agendas.

This is the fourth phase of our ambitious “Strategic Directions” strategy launched in 2004. Through the exceptional performance of colleagues across the University, we have achieved a transformation in quality and scale which is being noticed and is having a significant effect on our global reputation. We will approach our Centenary Year in 2020 with pride in what has been achieved and the realistic determination to maintain this heady rate of progress. The Strategic Plan to 2020 outlines how this will be done.

The Plan has been refined through a series of engagement events with staff and students. It represents our motivations and ambitions with a strong sense of a community working together with common purpose. We can all be assured that Swansea University has the energy, commitment and drive for the next phase of its development.

Professor Richard B. Davies
Vice-Chancellor
Together, we will transform lives and futures by providing an outstanding academic environment with a balance of excellence between world-class teaching and research, driving impact that is enabled by effective regional and global collaborations.
MISSION

Ever true to the vision of its industrial founders in 1920, Swansea University will:

- Deliver an outstanding student experience, with research-led and practice-driven teaching of the highest quality that produces global graduates educated and equipped for distinguished personal and professional achievement;

- Provide an environment of research excellence, with research that is world-leading, globally collaborative, and internationally recognised;

- Use our teaching and research strengths, collaboration with industry, and global reach to drive economic growth, foster prosperity, enrich the community and cultural life of Wales, as well as contribute to the health, leisure, and wellbeing of its citizens.
Together, we will transform lives and futures by providing an outstanding academic environment with a balance of excellence between world-class teaching and research, driving impact that is enabled by effective regional and global collaborations.

By 2020, Swansea will have further enhanced its reputation within the UK and globally.

**STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

To deliver an inspirational student experience

**01**

*We will deliver inspirational teaching, enhanced and informed by world-class research and professional practice*

**02**

*We will increase the participation of students from under-represented groups and communities, and provide the quality of support needed to enable their success*

**03**

*We will respect and value our students as partners*

**04**

*We will create a supportive and enriching learning environment for all our students*

**05**

*We will provide exciting opportunities for students to enhance their skills, global knowledge, and cultural agility*

**06**

*We will support our students to achieve the highest personal, academic, and employment outcomes*
RESEARCH

To deliver world-class research

07
We will publish research of the highest quality

08
We will attract scholars with global reputations and foster partnerships with leading organisations from around the world

09
We will provide a world-class research environment

10
We will deliver global and local impact from our research

INNOVATION AND ENGAGEMENT

World-class teaching and research, driving economic growth and societal impact

11
We will contribute to driving economic growth, productivity, and prosperity in the region, Wales, and the UK

12
We will create and enhance global and local partnerships that deliver benefits for our students, staff, and the wider economy, society, and community

13
We will contribute to an international community of learning, scholarship, and research that benefits society

14
We will deliver a range of cultural and arts activities and work to enrich the Welsh culture and language

STRATEGIC ENABLERS

Critical success factors that will drive the delivery of the University Strategy

15
We will provide a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment that upholds our commitment to improving diversity and enables people to fulfil their potential

16
We will recruit, develop, and retain diverse, high quality academic and professional staff who share our ambitions and values

17
We will ensure our alumni, friends, and supporters are proud ambassadors of Swansea University

18
We will continually improve our business systems and processes, exploiting technological innovations in service delivery

19
We will ensure that the quality of our physical and digital estate, facilities, and infrastructure enables our strategic ambitions

20
We will operate on a resilient, compliant, and sustainable basis
SETTING SWANSEA UNIVERSITY APART

KEY STRENGTHS AND ACHIEVEMENTS ENABLED BY THE INDIVIDUAL STRENGTHS AND HIGH LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE OF STAFF AND STUDENTS

- Ranked within the top 300 institutions in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2018
- Engaged students who are involved in decision making
- A UK top-20 position for world-class research impact, delivered through productive partnerships
- Long standing synergistic collaboration with industry, business, commerce, the public and third sectors
- Teaching Excellence Framework – Silver award
Enriching cultural and arts activities for the entire community

A flexible and agile response to emerging opportunities

Co-location, shared facilities, and secondments to encourage people to transition between business and academia

An enhanced mission for driving regional, Welsh, and UK economic growth

Attainment of the Athena Swan Silver Award, demonstrating our ongoing commitment to the advancement of gender equality, diversity and inclusivity

15th in the UK for ‘outstanding graduate employment outcomes or further study’ for our students*

Ranked 36th best University in the UK*

An innovative and dynamic approach with high quality multi-sector and cross disciplinary working

Professional, well managed delivery of our ambitious agendas

Inspiring, enriching, and enabling a knowledge-led society

Investment in facilities for research and development at high Technology Readiness Levels

* The Times / Sunday Times Good University Guide 2018
A progressive and productive community united in a common purpose

Outstanding growth in quality, scale and global reputation

A commitment to the achievement of excellence in both teaching and research

Relevant and market-orientated courses that are attractive to undergraduate and postgraduate students

A rich, character-enhancing student experience

A longstanding commitment to inclusivity, widening access, and social mobility

A diverse, international community with an open, outward-facing approach

A progressive and productive community united in a common purpose

Extensive science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine (STEMM) provision

Continued financial stability and sustainability

An ambitious programme of investment in our estate, facilities, and infrastructure that aligns with our strategic objectives

A leap to 23rd in the UK for Research Excellence, up from 52nd in RAE 2008**

Excellent staff who embrace our ambitions and our values

** Excluding specialised medical research institutions
STRATEGIC THEME
TO DELIVER AN INSPIRATIONAL
STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Swansea University will enhance an already distinguished reputation for excellence in learning and teaching, and the consistent delivery of an inspirational student experience that prepares all our students for personal and professional success.

We have six Centenary Commitments within this theme:

01
We will deliver inspirational teaching enhanced and informed by world-class research and professional practice

02
We will increase the participation of students from under-represented groups and communities, and provide the quality of support needed to enable their success

03
We will respect and value our students as partners

04
We will create a supportive and enriching learning environment for all our students

05
We will provide exciting opportunities for students to enhance their skills, global knowledge, and cultural agility

06
We will support our students to achieve the highest personal, academic, and employment outcomes
The University is committed to excellence in teaching. We must achieve the same high levels of performance across both teaching and research. The effective integration of these activities is critical in underpinning the delivery of an inspirational and enriching student experience at Swansea.

Our learning and teaching and the wider student experience at Swansea will continue to enable a large proportion of our students to secure highly skilled employment or opportunities for further study, maintaining our top-20 position in all UK league tables for this goal. We will achieve this while maintaining our commitment to inclusivity, widening access, and social mobility.

On-going quality enhancement across the University will be achieved through engagement with students and staff. We will continue to develop our balanced portfolio of academic career pathways with recognition and reward for excellence in teaching and research. Extensive employer and key partner engagement in the design, delivery, and review of programmes will heighten quality and relevance.

The University will put a Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Programme in place to drive transformational change in key aspects of the student experience that will ensure Swansea remains one of the UK’s leading universities for the achievement of excellent outcomes for all students, regardless of background or qualifications on entry. The TEF Programme will coordinate a range of projects and initiatives with effective governance and extensive engagement with University staff and students. This will provide wider ownership of the development and delivery of the Swansea student experience vision.

Our success will be measured within the Higher Education sector by our results in the National Students Survey, degree results, and graduate employment outcomes. A top-20 position across these goals will support the University in progressing from its current Teaching Excellence Silver Award to a Gold Award.

In delivering our commitments we will:

- Deliver consistently high standards of learning and teaching across the University
- Collaborate with employers in the design, delivery and review of programmes
- Increase opportunities for professional practice, years in industry, and work placements in our programme design
- Increase international study and work opportunities for students through the University’s growing network of global partnerships
- Enhance our Student experience within the learning and teaching arena by investing in digital technology, increasing the use of technology-enhanced learning and, more widely, through social and welfare support across our Campuses
- Develop and increase the impact of our engagement with schools and further education colleges in the region to support improvement in educational standards and progression pathways into HE. This will promote fair admissions and increase flexible learning opportunities including part-time study, workplace learning, and technology-enhanced learning.
STRATEGIC THEME
TO DELIVER WORLD-CLASS RESEARCH

Swansea University will continue to grow the quality, scale, and impact of its world-class research.

We have four Centenary Commitments within this theme:

07
We will publish research of the highest quality

08
We will attract scholars with global reputations and foster partnerships with leading organisations around the world

09
We will provide a world-class research environment

10
We will deliver global and local impact from our research
In 2014 we achieved our ambition to become a top-30 research University, climbing to 23rd place in the UK* in the most recent Research Excellence Framework (REF). We also demonstrated that Swansea has an enhanced mission for research impact, delivering important economic and societal impacts through our long established and productive partnerships with industry, business, commerce, and the public and third sectors. Ninety per cent of Swansea’s research was judged to be internationally excellent in its impact in the REF 2014, placing Swansea 19th in the UK and thus demonstrating our contribution to the City Region, the Welsh and UK economies, and internationally. Swansea also sits in the upper quartile of UK universities for the scale of our income from research grants and contracts, averaging around £45m/year over the last three years.

We will continue this momentum and drive for research excellence across the broad spectrum of our academic disciplines and continue to invest strategically in our research infrastructure and staff. This will help us maintain and improve our position as a leading, research-intensive institution.

We will maximise the level of funding secured from research grants and contracts; strengthening our ability to deliver increased research capacity and impact. We will increase our community of postgraduate research students who will contribute significantly to the University’s academic environment and research agendas.

The University’s international reputation and research networks will be further advanced by our global partnerships with leading businesses and higher education institutions.

We will continue to foster our world-leading research community and expand existing areas of University research excellence by further developing our research clusters, enabled by our successful capture of research grant income. These clusters bring together distinguished academics, early career researchers, and postgraduate research students in well-equipped facilities. This approach will enable innovative cross-disciplinary, collaborative, and internationally engaged research that delivers high levels of impact.

Our success within the Higher Education sector will be measured by our capture of research grants and contracts; the number of successful postgraduate research student completions; citations of our research; a top-20 position in the next Research Excellence Framework; and the quality of the organisations who want to work in partnership with us.

In delivering our commitments we will:

- Maintain and enhance research publications performance across all the University’s units of assessment
- Collaborate with research users to deliver research that has impact
- Provide support for early career researchers
- Grow our research income from a broader range of sources, including the Research Councils UK, Government Ministries, charities, industry, and EU Horizon 2020 up to Brexit
- Grow and enable the success of our vibrant postgraduate research student community
- Grow collaboration with research partners globally
- Further invest in world-leading facilities, infrastructure, and equipment.

*After removing specialised medical research institutions with no undergraduate provision
Swansea University will further establish its position within the Swansea Bay City Region, as a University that has the quality and scale of teaching and research to facilitate the powerful strategic collaborations needed to drive economic growth and societal impact both locally and nationally.

**We have four Centenary Commitments within this theme:**

11. We will contribute to driving economic growth, productivity, and prosperity in the region, Wales, and the UK

12. We will create and enhance global and local partnerships that deliver benefits for our students, staff, and the wider economy, society, and community

13. We will contribute to an international community of learning, scholarship, and research that benefits society

14. We will deliver a range of cultural and arts activities and work to enrich the Welsh culture and language
Swansea will continue to sit at the heart of strategic collaborations between universities, government funding bodies, large companies, and their SME supply chains that deliver transformational economic and social benefits both within the Swansea Bay City Region and nationally.

High quality multi-sector and cross-disciplinary working alongside the co-location/secondments of academics and industry professionals enables a flexible and agile response to emerging opportunities and the needs of key partner organisations.

The University will support improvements in the competitiveness of business and industry. The knowledge generated by our research base and our high-technology, knowledge-based clusters creates the right environment for new and existing enterprises to thrive, and attract inward investment from global companies. Scientific and technological discovery is commercialised through collaborative and contract research; research consortia; start-up firm incubators; and consultancy services.

The University will work in collaboration to build, attract, and retain a workforce with the higher-level skills required to meet employers’ needs and to deliver increased economic productivity. We will increase capacity and raise performance within SMEs and larger organisations by providing accredited, business-focused programmes, training, and support to equip leaders, business owners, and managers with high quality leadership and management skills.

Through collaboration with UK and Welsh Governments, Local Authorities, and Health Boards, we will make a valuable contribution to evidenced-based public policy making, generating ideas that have clarity of purpose and long-term value.

We are a custodian of the arts, culture, and heritage within the region and Wales, with a wide selection of cultural resources that are accessible and widely used. The University’s contribution to the Welsh language and culture will be managed through Academi Hywel Teifi.

**In delivering our commitments we will:**

- Develop professionally informed strategic relationships with key businesses
- Provide high-quality support for industry innovation and business development, world-class facilities, and research and development for effective technology transfer. This will enable the University to deliver commercially relevant output with an increased capacity for working further along the Technology Readiness Level Spectrum
- Develop knowledge and enable commercialisation of intellectual property through Swansea Innovations
- Work in partnership with employers and further education colleges through the College University Skills Partnership (CUSP) to deliver innovative courses that meet the needs for higher-level skills with a particular focus on meeting skills shortages in priority sectors that depend on STEMM, management, and health related subjects
- Expand access to cultural resources through worldwide collaboration and the digitisation of archives
- Increase the opportunities to use the Welsh language and strengthen the University’s image in Wales as a bilingual institution
- Support the development and delivery of the City Deal in the Swansea Bay City Region
STRATEGIC ENABLERS

Our strategic enablers highlight the key critical success factors that will drive the delivery of the University Strategy.

We have six Centenary Commitments within this theme:

15
We will provide a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment that upholds our commitment to improving diversity and enables people to fulfil their potential.

16
We will recruit, develop, and retain diverse, high-quality academic and professional staff who share our ambitions and values.

17
We will ensure our alumni, friends, and supporters are proud ambassadors of Swansea University.

18
We will continually improve our business systems and processes, exploiting technological innovations in service delivery.

19
We will ensure that the quality of our physical and digital estate, facilities, and infrastructure enables our strategic ambitions.

20
We will operate on a resilient, compliant, and sustainable basis.
OUR HIGH-QUALITY STAFF ACTING WITH COMMON PURPOSE

The University’s success will be enabled by the contribution and energy of our excellent and diverse staff. Their continued contribution and support will be critical to achieving our future aspirations.

Engagement across the University community to inform the development of the Strategic Plan 2020 has provided strong messages about motivations and ambitions for a shared future.

We are ambitious and want to make a difference to the lives and futures of our students and the wider community, society, and economy by working with:

• Students as key partners
• Colleagues in a cross-disciplinary approach to education and research
• Educational partners in other universities, colleges, and schools within the UK and globally
• Partners from other sectors

We take pride in our ability to reach out and establish meaningful and lasting global partnerships. Our increasing global reputation connects us with people and organisations worldwide and is critical in establishing the position of Wales within the world.

We are innovative and dynamic, and committed to providing leadership for regional and global challenges.

We have a shared sense of common purpose and operate as a connected ‘community of communities’, built on trust and personal accountability.

We value inclusivity and diversity and provide a safe, caring, and collegiate environment where everyone feels welcome and valued.

In delivering our commitments we will:
• Manage with fairness
• Improve the quality of our inclusive leadership to ensure that it inspires excellence through example, communication, and transparency, that will enable progressive change
• Recruit and retain high quality academic and professional services staff
• Provide staff with opportunities for high quality training and development
• Work to retain and enhance the University’s sense of community as we grow in scale
• Ensure we offer equal opportunities to all our staff and students through on-going University equality projects including the Athena SWAN Charter, the Workplace Equality Index, the Race Charter Mark, and the Stonewall University Guide.
We are proud of our growing international community of alumni and friends, building close and lasting relationships with them as individuals and in national and international alumni networks and Chapters. Swansea alumni have gone on to achieve great things and develop successful careers in a wide variety of areas, and work at every level in industry, commerce, sport and the public sector. The University will continue to seek the help and guidance of our alumni, friends, and supporters to achieve our strategic ambitions.

In delivering our commitments we will:

- Engage and interact with alumni, friends, and supporters, both within the UK and internationally, to encourage them to act as our ambassadors, attend our events and celebrations, and provide support for students through mentoring and internships
- Deliver a Centenary Fundraising Campaign to enable investment in the University and create life changing opportunities for our students and staff.
We will continue to build a more focused and better managed institution where cross-campus collaborative working provides an enhanced capacity and capability for delivery.

Our support service functions are becoming more customer-focused through the adoption of a broad-based and robust professional skillset. Professional Services at Swansea University have developed and embedded professional service and leadership values – We are Professional, We Work Together and We Care – through close collaboration and engagement with staff and students.

The University will continue to evolve and adapt in order to remain competitive. We will continue to challenge existing business processes and ways of working to drive continual improvements in our efficiency and effectiveness, exploiting technological innovations where possible. We will embrace transformational change and challenge enabled by our agile and effective management of both opportunities and risks.

The University will continue to pursue its ambitious programme of investment in its estate, facilities and infrastructure aligned with our strategic objectives. University funding and borrowing facilities are supplemented with major competitive funding awards secured from a range of sources including European Structural Funds, Research Councils UK, Welsh and UK Governments, Innovate UK, and the private sector.

This combined investment funds the physical and digital estate, facilities, and infrastructure necessary to provide an outstanding and enriching student experience, world-class research, and to promote major growth in the regional and national economy.

In delivering our commitments we will:

- Continue to work in partnership with our staff and students to enhance and transform the culture and delivery of our Professional Service functions. This will help ensure that they operate seamlessly across all locations; are consistently professional with fit-for-purpose policies, business processes, and systems that work together effectively; and also care about every customer interaction.

- Effectively focus and manage our strategic priorities and enable delivery through best practice in portfolio, project, and change management.

- Be innovative in our use of technology to support the operation of efficient and effective systems.

- Continue to improve the quality of our management information to support effective decision making.

In delivering our commitments we will:

- Deliver Phase Two of the University’s Campus Development Programme with major initiatives on the Bay and Singleton Park Campuses.

- Develop an effective and strategic cross-university approach to the development of our digital capabilities that can improve the quality of learning and teaching and address changing student expectations, relieve the pressure on our physical estate, and enable the growth of student numbers from home and overseas.

- Provide improved social, learning, and study facilities for students including more space for student groups and societies.

- Further invest in the physical and digital estate with greater emphasis on serving the student community.
The University is committed to embedding sustainability within our teaching. We will work with the Students’ Union and other partners to raise awareness and promote environmentally responsible behaviours to prepare our students for sustainable living and employment as global citizens in the 21st century.

We will run a range of activities and projects such as sustainable travel and improved waste management, including re-use, recycling, and recovery. We will promote biological diversity on sites that we manage, promote the prevention of pollution and environmental damage, and consider sustainability when procuring goods and services.

In delivering our commitments we will:

• Continue to manage University operations on a sustainable basis as part of our Environmental Management System
• Minimise greenhouse gas emissions and reduce the consumption of primary raw materials
• Encourage and demonstrate sustainable approaches in our building projects.