

**STRATEGY**

**2019/20 – 2024/25**



# FOREWORD FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR



London Metropolitan University adds real social value to students, staff and communities. We give students the skills and opportunities to transform their lives and careers. We meet the needs of the London labour market, and our staff and students collaborate with city-wide partners on high-impact research and knowledge exchange initiatives which keep our city great.

We are also global. The education we provide prepares students to live and work anywhere in the world, from fast-paced cities to remote rural communities. We have valuable partnerships with education organisations worldwide, providing opportunities for students to access our high-quality provision in their own countries. We collaborate with a host of international organisations to support their aims, and our research has global impact.

We believe that every person in this country and across the globe deserves a chance to transform their own life and the lives of others through higher education. Education provides a catalyst for social equality. Students come to London Metropolitan University when they recognise that they are not prepared to settle for the life and opportunities that were determined for them at birth. The education we offer has changed the lives of so many of our students and, in doing so, we are helping to drive real social change and transformation in this country and beyond.

We also believe that our diversity is what makes London Metropolitan University so special. Our students come from over 140 different countries. They have different economic backgrounds, ages, family situations, ethnicities, religions, identities, abilities and disabilities. The richness of conversation and multiple perspectives that this diversity brings has an energy like no other. It delivers a truly cosmopolitan environment. It opens our minds to totally different experiences, cultures and viewpoints, challenging us all to think and to learn in new ways.

Our new strategy builds on our many strengths, but is also designed to take London Metropolitan University on a change journey of its own. Over the six years of our plan we will retain our commitment to social inclusion but we will also build a university that has academic achievement and financial sustainability at its heart. There is no doubt that this will be challenging, not least because we are operating in a highly uncertain external environment fuelled by our changing relationship with the European Union and constant shifts in government policy, regulation and funding. Achieving our goals will require determination and commitment from our whole University community. Every decision we make and every activity that we undertake must support our key priorities and make effective use of our resources. Through a sense of shared purpose, we will achieve success.

One year on from joining London Metropolitan University as its Vice-Chancellor, I feel privileged to lead this great University. We are on a new pathway that has real focus, energy, passion and momentum behind it and I strongly believe that the best is yet to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynn Dobbs". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Professor Lynn Dobbs  
October 2019

# OUR MISSION, OUR VISION, OUR VALUES

## Our mission

To transform lives through the power of education

### Our vision

By 2025 we will be making an even more significant contribution to our city, socially, culturally, environmentally and economically. We will be recognised locally and internationally for our commitment to lasting social change:

- **Our students** will come from our local communities and from across the globe. They will have an excellent experience with successful academic outcomes, and we will continue to celebrate that we are one of the most diverse, socially inclusive and transformative universities in the UK
- **Our graduates** will go out into the world of work as confident, values-driven and successful individuals, making a positive contribution to society and offering a constant flow of talent to support the global economy
- **Our students and staff** will be passionate about our University and recommend London Metropolitan University as a place to study and work, and they will give back to our city and contribute to its success
- **Our research** will drive real impact and change in London and beyond, and the work that we undertake with our London partners and stakeholders will be at the forefront of initiatives to keep the capital great
- **Our business** will be strong and sustainable. Our campuses and facilities will continue to improve, we will be delivering year-on-year surpluses to invest in our assets and we will have ensured stewardship for future generations.

### Our values

Our core values define us and provide a framework for the way that we will work to deliver our vision.

We are:

- **Ambitious:** We set the highest standards in everything we do. We take responsibility and are held accountable for our actions and promises, we have the discipline and rigour to ensure continuous improvement and we are determined to succeed
- **Inclusive:** We celebrate our diverse community, we see difference as a source of strength and we challenge exclusionary and discriminatory practice
- **Collaborative:** We work in partnership with our students, staff, alumni, institutions, communities, employers and educational providers across the globe to make a lasting difference
- **Creative:** We generate new ideas and opportunities. We put them into practice and we are innovative in finding new ways to advance knowledge and address global problems.

# STARTING WITH OUR PEOPLE

**Our outstanding academics and professional service staff are at the heart of our strategy**



## Our goals

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**To build capacity and capability amongst all staff**

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**To drive confidence, ambition and pride across our institution**

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**To promote wellbeing and inclusion**

## We already have a committed and hard-working community

Over the last five years there has been huge change at London Met, with staff reductions and major shifts in organisational arrangements.

Despite the uncertainty and high workloads associated with this change, our staff have never wavered in their commitment to London Met, and they have worked tirelessly to support our students, unlock their potential and help them succeed.

They have continued to undertake high-quality research and to work hard to have a positive impact on the wider community, collaborating with partners to propel London forward and making us proud of staff achievements.

As we move into the next cycle of London Met's development, it is critical that we harness the power of our staff and engage them as we work together to build a community that is exciting, worthwhile and inclusive.

## Placing our staff at the heart of our strategy, we will:

- Strengthen our leadership and management arrangements across the University to demonstrate our values and deliver our strategy
- Create opportunities to ensure that all staff are appropriately developed, mentored and deployed to deliver our strategic priorities, and support their career aspirations
- Review our staff recruitment and progression procedures to ensure that we appoint, retain and reward high-quality academic and professional service staff
- Develop our approaches to workload planning and contracts to ensure that they are transparent, fair and consistent
- Engage with staff from across our University to enable their voices to be heard in decision-making and ensure that we seek feedback and act upon it
- Improve our internal communications to keep our whole University community informed about our latest developments, opportunities and successes
- Introduce new initiatives to support the health and wellbeing of our staff, including societies, clubs and events that provide a lively, dynamic and caring working and social environment for all staff
- Meet relevant standards in relation to Athena SWAN, the Race Equality Charter, Stonewall and Disability Confident to facilitate diversity in our staff community and ensure that everyone at London Met is valued and included.





# FOCUSING ON STUDENT SUCCESS

Our students are the fabric of our University. We are committed to improving every aspect of their university experience and we will work together to ensure our whole institution is built for student success, especially for those who are already facing barriers



## Our goals

**To engage all students as partners**

**To create a world-class academic offer that meets the evolving needs of our highly diverse student body**

**To strengthen the infrastructure that helps all of our students to succeed**

## We are dedicated to providing the best possible experience for our students

We have great courses, designed to meet the needs of London and the global labour market. They feature industry input and professional body accreditation, with 72 programmes accredited by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies, including the Health and Care Professions Council, Solicitors Regulation Authority and Royal Institute of British Architects. We have built a significant reputation for innovative teacher training apprenticeships, helping to fill a national shortfall. We are also the preferred supplier of social work for five London boroughs.

We have sector-leading subject areas. The 2020 *Guardian* university league tables ranked art third in London and seventh in the country, and economics was second in London and 15th in the country. Sixteen of our courses scored 90% or higher for overall satisfaction in the 2019 National Student Survey (NSS).

Our teaching is delivered by leading academics and practitioners. They include senior executives bringing valuable experience from blue chip companies in the finance sector and academics who have worked within the IT industry for organisations including British Telecom and The Wellcome Foundation. Our artists, architects and designers have received major awards including the Jerwood Drawing Prize and the RIBA Stirling Prize for Architecture. Many of our staff have extensive experience of working in London schools, the probation service and the National Health Service.

Our curricula and delivery frameworks have been designed to support our students' learning by ensuring they fully reflect the rich diversity of our students' lives and experiences. Students explore the challenges of multiculturalism, inequality and social inclusion, and examine social issues relating to housing, drugs, long-term unemployment and youth crime. They unearth matters of global importance that reflect the concerns of their generation, from climate change to war, conflict and poverty. They work on-site with disadvantaged communities in Sierra Leone and Nepal, and explore human health through innovations in drug delivery. They learn through practice and gain real-world experience in individual and collaborative projects, engaging with professionals, communities and companies.

The journey our students go on is transformational in terms of confidence and abilities. In 2018, 96.7% of our graduates were in employment or further study six months after graduating and 80.5% were in graduate-level employment. They go into amazing jobs in a huge range of areas, making an impact on communities in London and beyond, as human rights lawyers, business leaders, social workers, creatives, teachers, architects, politicians, scientists and more.

We are working hard to ensure that we maintain our impressive graduate employment record, improve our continuation rates and overall NSS scores, and reduce the degree-awarding and graduate employment gaps for all underrepresented groups of students at our University.

## Working with our students, we will:

- Significantly strengthen the way that we involve our Students' Union and our students in our governance and decision-making, and introduce mechanisms to improve communication with students
- Establish a new sector-leading centre for equity and inclusion to enable and oversee inspirational and inclusive teaching practice, while closely monitoring and driving forward improved student outcomes
- Create a visible and vibrant University-wide taught postgraduate community
- Continuously review our curricula to ensure that all of our programmes are fully inclusive and highly engaging, especially for underrepresented groups
- Enable students, industry experts and practitioners to co-design and co-produce our courses
- Ensure our academic mentoring and student support services meet the needs of our diverse student body
- Provide flexible timetables to allow students to fit their studies around other commitments
- Provide every one of our students with the opportunity to undertake a work placement or to volunteer in a local organisation
- Offer clubs, societies and new extracurricular opportunities that improve students' experiences and help develop their social capital
- Establish new initiatives to support the wellbeing and mental health of all students
- Take forward new opportunities to capitalise on digital technologies.



# GROWING OUR RESEARCH AND IMPACT

Our research, and the impact that it has, is fundamental to our social mission. It is also the key to supporting our high-quality teaching portfolio



## Our goals

**To establish an improved infrastructure to support high-quality and high-impact research**

**To grow the volume of world-leading and internationally excellent research that we undertake**

**To improve the visibility of our research and the impact it has on some of the biggest challenges facing society today**

## Our research is already having an impact

Our research already makes a difference to some of the most pressing problems facing London and the wider world, signalling its value to practitioners, policy makers, partners, funders and the public.

Across our University our academic staff are using innovative methodologies to understand complex issues such as educational inequality, environmentally-friendly urban policy, ethical business practices and changing working lives.

Our researchers are at the heart of urgent debates such as youth violence and crime, and the legalisation of drugs. Our Child and Woman Abuse Studies Unit has a long and proud history of researching and challenging violence, working with organisations such as the United Nations and the World Bank, and contributing to the UK's Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse.



Our scientists and health practitioners are helping to address major nutrition and food-related issues that affect populations at local, national and global levels. They are also developing effective interventions to address human diseases and advancing research in biomedicine.

Our award-winning School of Art, Architecture and Design is researching the changing urban fabric of London and helping to drive the switch to a green economy, with the design of low-carbon buildings, biodiverse environments and products incorporating upcycled, recycled or repurposed materials.

Our cyber security staff are involved in cutting-edge innovation and training partnerships with, among others, Lloyds Bank, Cisco and Palo Alto Networks. Staff are also conducting high-quality research to tackle cybercrime within a large multi-national EU Horizon 2020 project.

In our Guildhall School of Business and Law, staff are researching international capital markets and the psychology of management, as well as sustainable and socially responsible corporate governance.

Our Translation, Interpreting and Applied Linguistics specialists are exploring how meaning is created through language and context. They trace gender in subtitling, research virtual communities of practice and compare languages and language uses.

## **But we want to build an even stronger research community, so we will:**

- Provide a supportive research environment to develop staff and student research capabilities across the full breadth of our disciplines
- Set up a new Research Office to support staff to achieve their ambitions
- Establish a Graduate School for research and professional doctorate students underpinned by excellent training and support
- Review and strengthen our research centres
- Embed impact and knowledge exchange within our research culture and exploit external relationships
- Take forward plans to tap into the full breadth of research funding
- Develop initiatives to build a strong PhD community
- Maximise the means to communicate the full range of our work to the widest possible audience.



# GIVING BACK TO OUR CITY

We are one of London's vital civic institutions, united with other key organisations in our localities and the wider capital in driving opportunity and prosperity for all



## Our goals

**To embrace the strategic priorities of our London partners and the concerns of our local communities to support the city's economy and address the social issues it faces**

**To provide opportunities for our staff and students to give back to our city and contribute to its success**

**To provide the capital with values-driven graduates who will support London's transformation in line with our mission**

## We already make a valuable contribution to London

Our programmes of study continuously evolve to meet the needs of employers across London, the UK and the rest of the world. We provide adaptable, open-minded and resilient graduates who are work-ready.

Over the last 16 years we have helped thousands of small businesses and entrepreneurs through Accelerator, our business incubator in the heart of Tech City. Its Big Idea Challenge nurtures the enterprise skills of young people across London.

Our Refugee Advice and Guidance Unit, which is part of the Building Bridges Programme funded by the NHS, provides specialist careers advice and guidance as well as employability training for refugee health professionals.



The Social Integration Design Lab, delivered by Snook, New Economics Foundation and London Met, supports the Mayor's strategy for social integration and local regeneration by bringing 17 boroughs together with social design experts, public sector innovators and citizens.

We work with Islington Council to deliver Upward Bound, an educational programme funded by the Dame Alice Owen Foundation, which raises the attainment and aspirations of Islington secondary school pupils.

Our Centre for Life Writing and Oral History is widening participation and engaging diverse communities by capturing the life stories and experiences of local people in an inclusive and empowering way.

Our staff and students give expertise and time to support the voluntary sector. Journalism students publicise the work of local charities including Arsenal in the Community, Freightliners Farm, the Margins Project at Union Chapel and the Estorick Gallery. Architecture students construct full-size structures to support community charity Mudchute, social sciences students support Islington Council's work with older people and law students offer free legal advice to the community.

## **But we want to play an even bigger part in our city's success, so we will:**

- Engage with London partners, local education providers and alumni to co-design solutions to the challenges facing London
- Contribute to the governance of London's institutions and organisations
- Develop lasting and meaningful engagement with our communities to help deliver what they need and want
- Draw on funding opportunities from the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) and other funding providers to support collaboration between London Met and our partners, supporting our shared agendas
- Embed the principles of social justice and social inclusion into our curriculum, with a specific emphasis on the challenges facing London
- Undertake research and impact work to support the key priorities of our partners
- Involve our students and staff in local community initiatives, community development projects and volunteering initiatives.



# MANAGED GROWTH AND DIVERSIFICATION

The ongoing success of our University depends on us growing student numbers and diversifying our business. This will allow us to strengthen our financial position and reduce our reliance on any one recruitment channel



## Our goals

**To provide an attractive and highly distinctive course portfolio**

**To broaden the reach of our recruitment strategies locally, nationally and internationally**

**To make our education more accessible to a greater number of prospective students**

## Our University is built on solid foundations

We have an attractive course offer based around 14 professional career pathways, giving our students a clear route into employment on graduation.

We have built a significant reputation for innovative teacher training apprenticeships and we are helping to fill a national shortfall.

In line with many other post-92 institutions in London, our enrolments fell following the removal of student number controls between 2012 and 2016. However, we are now receiving healthy numbers of applications from home, EU and international students.

We have over 5,500 students studying on London Met programmes that are taught by our partners across the UK, Spain, Germany, the Republic of Ireland, Russia, Sri Lanka, Nepal, China, Vietnam and Trinidad.

We know that competition is strong but we are confident that, in line with our plan, we can win a greater share of home and overseas students over the next six years.



## But we want to strengthen our business, so we will:

- Continually review our course portfolio to ensure it continues to be responsive to the needs of students and employers
- Develop mutually beneficial partnerships with colleges and schools across London
- Build study abroad and full-degree recruitment in international markets
- Strengthen our collaborative partnership network to enable more students to study for one of our degrees in their home country, ultimately improving their prospects
- Undertake sector-leading marketing and conversion work
- Offer more part-time and evening/weekend opportunities for study
- Provide affordable and high-quality student housing in partnership with other organisations.



# VIBRANT CAMPUSES AND CUTTING-EDGE FACILITIES

Our physical infrastructure is the foundation of our strategy



## Our goals

**To maintain and renovate our estate, IT and digital infrastructure to support our strategic priorities**

**To ensure that we provide high-quality learning resources and facilities to support student success**

**To continue taking steps to reduce our carbon footprint and demonstrate leadership on environmental sustainability**

## We have many great assets

London Met is situated in the heart of central London, with enviable locations in Islington, Aldgate and Shoreditch.

Over the last five years we have spent £58m on new and improved facilities across our campuses.

We have completed the move from Moorgate and students studying business and law are now benefitting from state-of-the-art facilities, including an internationally acclaimed interpreting suite, a mock courtroom and flexible teaching areas, on Holloway Road.

Our Roding building, which opened in spring 2018, is a world-class facility consisting of 11 event rooms with accompanying breakout spaces across three floors with cutting-edge classroom technology and informal study spaces.

Our School of Art, Architecture and Design, situated in Aldgate, offers wonderful studio spaces at the heart of London's creative district. We have state-of-the-art studios and workshops, and our buildings provide event spaces to host exhibitions, conferences, fashion shows and performances.



Designed by the internationally acclaimed architect Daniel Libeskind, our University's Graduate Centre is the focal point of our Holloway campus and has won many accolades including a RIBA Prize and a special Jeu d'Esprit Prize from the Royal Fine Art Commission Trust.

Our Science Centre on Holloway Road is home to an outstanding Superlab and – with 280 individual workstations – is one of the largest and most advanced science teaching facilities in Europe.

Opened in 2018, our newly refurbished Harglenis building is a dedicated home for our Students' Union, providing social and office space, and a studio for Verve, our student-run radio station.

We have two fantastic libraries with more than 350,000 books, e-books and e-journals as well as a range of special collections, including the Trades Union Congress Library Archive, the Frederick Parker Collection of Furniture, the Atkins/Atcraft Archive and the Archive of the Irish in Britain.

We have a range of high-quality catering outlets and coffee shops, as well as event venues such as our student bar and Great Hall.

## **But we want to continue to enhance our infrastructure, so we will:**

- Keep our estate in good order
- Invest to ensure that all of our teaching facilities are at industry standard
- Evolve our library and special collections to further support student learning and our research goals
- Put environmental issues at the heart of everything we do
- Undertake detailed work to establish priorities for future investment.



# SUSTAINABLE FINANCES

Over the course of this strategic plan, we will align investment with our KPIs and targets for improvement



## Our goals

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**To grow and diversify our income**

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**To continue making significant improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of our operations**

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**To closely monitor our financial health, taking account of the impact of the external environment on our University**

## We are already in a strong position

Over the last five years, our University has been fundamentally reshaped and this has strengthened our financial position.

As a result of that work we have significant cash reserves, putting us in a better position than many other universities in London and elsewhere.

Our University has no borrowings and this will remain the case for the foreseeable future.

We have plans in place to move into operating surplus and guarantee stewardship for future generations.



## **But we want to be even stronger, so we will:**

- Grow our income in our core areas of business
- Diversify our activities to reduce our reliance on any single income stream
- Reduce the administrative burden for our students and staff, and redeploy resources to achieve the best possible results
- Target staffing investments to build academic excellence and support areas of business growth
- Manage capital and other investment projects within a framework of affordability
- Develop a robust set of data and financial information to understand business performance
- Maintain a financial model that will allow the University to make informed decisions and ensure it can respond at pace to changes in the external environment.



# OUR TARGETS

## By the end of 2024/25

1. We will continue to be one of the most socially inclusive universities in the UK
2. Over three-quarters of our staff will recommend our University as a good place to work
3. We will have been awarded Athena SWAN Silver and Race Equality Bronze. We will be in the top 25% of the Stonewall Index and we will be a Disability Confident Leader
4. Over 90% of our students will continue with their studies after their first year of entry
5. We will be the top modern university in London for National Student Survey scores
6. Our graduate-level employment indicators will be ahead of benchmark
7. We will have significantly reduced the degree-awarding gap for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students and those coming from areas of high socio-economic deprivation, as well as the gap relating to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic progression to highly-skilled employment or further study
8. Over half of our academic staff will be producing internationally excellent and world-leading research, and this figure will be growing year-on-year
9. We will be working with over 250 partners to make a real difference to London
10. We will have over 10,000 students on campus and we will have a strong collaborative partnership network
11. We will have reduced our carbon footprint to be one of the best-performing universities in London
12. We will be delivering year-on-year surpluses and we will have significant cash reserves to invest in our University





