
**APPOINTMENT OF THE
EXECUTIVE DEAN : SCHOOL
OF DIGITAL, TECHNOLOGY,
INNOVATION AND BUSINESS**





WELCOME FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR



Professor Martin Jones

Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive

In 2021 I was delighted to be appointed as Vice Chancellor of Staffordshire University, following a rigorous external search. I was appointed on a mandate of both continuity and change – continuity in terms of our vision and our values, and change in terms of how we achieve this, particularly developing the research and enterprise ecosystem alongside internationalising the university.

In 2017 I was appointed as Deputy Vice-Chancellor as part of a new Executive Team led by the then recently appointed Vice Chancellor, Professor Liz Barnes CBE DL. At that point there were three priorities. The first was to address the performance of the University, the second to shape the strategic direction and the third was to engender a renewed feeling of pride within the institution.

Six years has gone so quickly. In that time, we have had a relentless focus on our performance. This is not to suggest that there was not great practice, but it was often in pockets or buried deep within the organisation. So, as we focused on our metrics, we shone a light on these staff, we redefined our performance ambitions and we ensured that our data returns were reflective of the quality we were delivering. This ‘foundation building’ has taken a number of years and there is still more to be done, but we really have transformed our performance since 2016.

During this time we saw notable changes in our league table positions, which in the last two years have retreated a little, based primarily on changing metrics within the league table methodology. This we will need to address, but I am confident that this is achievable. I am clear that Staffordshire University will consistently be in the top 50 of all UK universities, based on a consistent, first class, student experience.

Since I took up appointment in January 2022, I have been leading the development of the new Strategic Plan and the five-year business plans for the Schools and the supporting strategic priorities from the services. This is the beacon for our strategic direction, together with defining the level of ambition for the University and our impact. In order to support this we are now looking to appoint an Executive Dean of Digital, Technology, Innovation and Business.

Thank you for your interest in the exciting opportunity and we look forward to receiving your expression of interest in the role.

OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Staffordshire University is aiming to be the UK's foremost digital higher education institution. By 2030 we will lead the sector in hyper-personalised learning that will prepare students for the jobs of the future, some of which do not even exist yet.

The pace of change in UK higher education is the greatest it has ever been. An increasingly competitive market – combined with changing student demographics, the Office for Students as regulator, a more interventionist approach from central Government, post-pandemic reverberations and the increasing glare of public scrutiny – makes higher education a challenging environment. We believe that an innovative university, taking a business-driven approach to its fundamental contribution to the economy and society, could lead the field in this new world. We aim to be that university.

In 2016 we set out our Connected University strategic plan with a range of success measures, including three ambitious KPIs which provided significant challenge given our position at the time:

- In the **Top 50%** in the UK League Tables.
- **Gold standard** in the Teaching Excellence Framework.
- **Financially sustainable** in accordance with our Strategic Financial Plan.

Our strategic plan (2016-2021) was created, and became well embedded quickly within our University, due to simplicity of its messaging and appearance. We gave ourselves until 2021 to achieve our goals. In April 2019 we reached the top 50% of the main UK league tables, achieved TEF Gold in June 2019 and are financially sustainable.

By 2019-20, we had achieved 58th position in the Complete University Guide, 37th position in The Guardian league table and 53rd position in The Times and Sunday Times league table.

One of our greatest achievements within this period, and consistent with our ambitions, was the opening in September 2019 of Staffordshire University: London, our first campus outside the Midlands, delivering cyber, Esports and games design courses. This provided an exciting opportunity to extend our reach, nationally and internationally, in our flagship courses.

Since that time, we have continued to develop and in September 2021 we opened phase two of Staffordshire University: London. In January 2022 we opened our £42M Catalyst building, which supports our apprenticeship and Civic Community agenda and later in Spring 2022 our Centre for Health, Innovation at Stafford, showcasing the latest in immersive technology.

In 2023, we were awarded TEF Silver, under the new Teaching Excellence Framework.



STAFFORDSHIRE UNIVERSITY

THE UNIVERSITY'S NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

The new Strategic Plan was recently approved by the Board of Governors in April 2022. The 'Flywheel' Strategic Plan is represented on the opposite page and detailed below. You can watch the supporting video [HERE](#).

We are Staffordshire University. We are a 'catalyst for change'. We are a force for social good. We are here to transform the lives of people, who will transform our society and transform the places in which we live. This isn't a new mission. It has been in our DNA for over 100 years. In these turbulent times, where inequalities pervade, achieving our mission is more important than ever. People, societies and places, depend upon us. 'Catalyst for Change', positioned in the centre, therefore, beats like a heart for Staffordshire University.

We will be this catalyst for change through our four interdependent priorities: Next Generation Education, Next Generation Experience, Next Generation Engagement and Next Generation Environments. And the focus on 'next generation' is important – if we are going to be that catalyst for change, we need be different to what has gone before, be different from our competitors and lead the way in embracing technology in how we live, work and study. We are after all, a university who has led the field of digital education for over 60 years.

We will create and deliver next generation education. Our portfolio of awards will reflect the ever-changing needs of business and society, recognising the global shift in demand for new skills and knowledge, in a post pandemic age. Our awards will not only be shaped by the impact of digital innovations, they will be delivered with digital innovation at their core. Entrepreneurism, developing entrepreneurs and a focus on enterprise will equip our graduates with skills to transcend traditional career boundaries. And our increasing global attraction of staff and students will expand our global mindsets. In short, our graduates will be 'world ready', for the roles of the future, in careers that have yet to exist.

We will deliver this all through our next generation experience. We will tailor the delivery of our courses so that students can learn in a way that meets their needs, and develops both their subject knowledge and hones their life skills. Our learning will be through phenomena - building subject expertise and developing an academic mind set, through focusing on real world issues. We will deliver beyond the traditional confines of a subject, as we recognise that boundaries are historical and the future will be blurred and transdisciplinary. And with our digital credentials, it is unsurprising that the future of learning is immersive or simmersive even—using technology to enter environments that were previously unobtainable.

Next generation engagement increasingly matters. We are the connected university and have strong civic roots. This means we are committed to playing our role in transforming the regions in

which are based—Staffordshire and London. Our civic roots and our aspirations align perfectly with the Governments 'levelling up' agenda. We will continue to work with civic institutions, businesses and industries to regenerate our region and provide better opportunities for all, through the educational opportunities we provide. We will focus our innovative research, increasing its quality and quantity, so that it is applied to real world issues and delivers an impact for broader society. Our research, enterprise, innovative ecosystem will matter. We will work in partnership with the regions established businesses and industries, and support and nurture the growth of the new and emerging, so that all can flourish. No region is an island. As we do this, we must always face outwards, beyond our regions, which is why our focus on internationalisation is pivotal. By this, we mean that we will attract staff and students from across the world, to work and study with us, shape our thinking and our culture. Our focus is regional, but globally informed.

Our people will work and study in next generation environments. We will transform our campus, building by building, to reflect the learning and teaching and working environments of tomorrow. We will be more sustainable and work actively to reduce our carbon footprint. We will harness all that digital developments have to offer, using new smart technologies, to ensure that we work and study in the most impactful ways. We will deliver together a strong, customer centric approach that places our students at the heart of all that we do. We will continue to promote diversity in all its forms, respecting and celebrating differences, and ensuring we are inclusive to all. We will promote and safeguard academic freedom of speech. We will all flourish in a healthy, creative and empowering place to work and study. In short, we will be known as one of the most innovative, vibrant and exciting places to work and study in the UK.

The only way we can achieve all of this, is through our people— attracting the most talented to work and study with us. This is why our values are so important. [Pause, accentuate the values ring]. Our values shape who we are and how we act. So we want all of our staff and our students to be fair and inclusive, curious and daring, innovative and enterprising and ambitious and inspirational, every day. And it's a given, that every student and every member of staff, should always be 'Proud to be Staffs'.

If we focus on these priority areas, giving our best, living our values we will achieve our central purpose of transforming people, transforming society and transforming places.

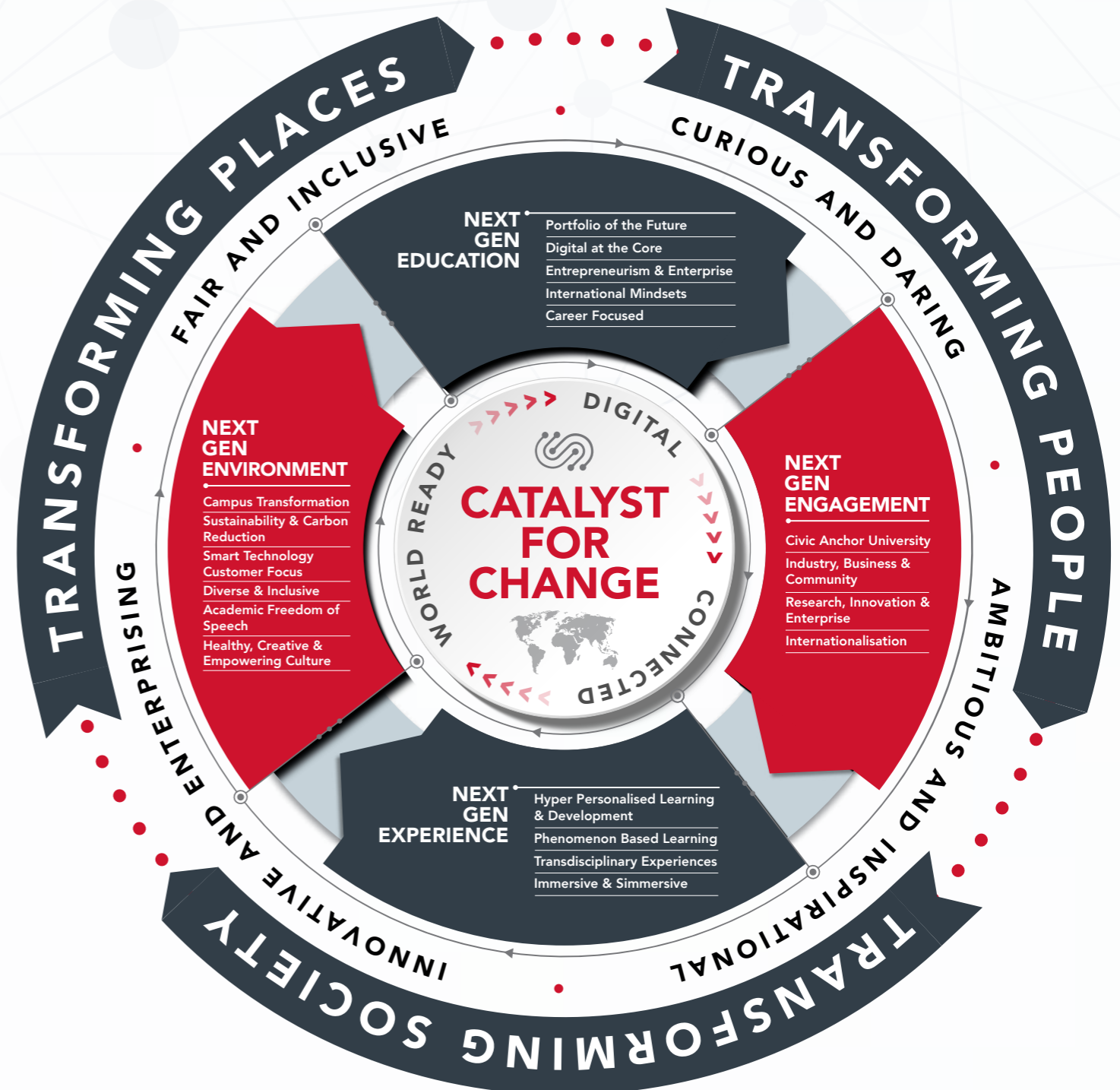
And what will the University look like by the end of this strategic plan?

We will have achieved sustained growth in our undergraduate student numbers, reflecting gains in regional, national and international numbers. Our apprenticeship numbers will continue to be an important part of our provision, maintaining our apprenticeship numbers year on year, following our rapid growth during the last strategic plan. We will also increase our postgraduate student numbers, significantly in the taught provision together with modest growth in the research provision.

Our finances will be stronger still, boosted by our growth trajectory in our student numbers, together with increased revenues from our growing research profile and growing enterprise activities.

Our reputation within and beyond the sector will be cemented as the consistently best modern University, with strong academic, research and enterprise credentials, pivotal in leading the development of regions in which we are based.

This is who we are. This is what we are about. Together we can make it happen, for us and for everyone.



OUR PEOPLE

The University employs circa 1,600 staff across our campuses at Stoke-on-Trent, Stafford, Shrewsbury and London.

The organogram opposite explains the portfolio areas of the members of Executive, 'senior postholders' as determined by the Articles and Instrument of Governance. The boundaries between Executive portfolios have always been deliberately blurred and this has been a major contributor to the successes the University has enjoyed.

The Vice-Chancellor and Executive report to the Board of Governors and its sub committees.

University Executive Board is the main decision making body for the University, which comprises of Executive, Executive Deans of School, Executive Director of Student and Academic Services, Executive Director of Marketing, Public Relations and Communications,

Executive Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions, the Director of Estates and Commercial Services and the Executive Director of Business Engagement. This group meets fortnightly.

Alternating between these meetings is the Senior Leadership Team, which comprises University Executive Board and additional leadership roles from across the University.

Wider engagement and ownership of decision making is gained through the Creating Connections weekly meeting, comprising of the senior managers, professors and academic leadership roles, comprising approximately 120 individuals.

UNISON and UCU are the recognised trade unions, who represent staff on employment matters.

The University has a strong partnership working relationship with both unions.

SHORTLISTED FOR
UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR

Times Higher Education Awards 2020

MIDLANDS UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR

Midlands Business Awards 2020

TOP 250 YOUNG UNIVERSITY

Times Higher Education Young University Rankings 2020



PROFESSOR MARTIN JONES
VICE-CHANCELLOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE



The Vice Chancellor also leads the Staffordshire University Academy Trust (SUAT)

The University also has a number of wholly owned subsidiaries. These include:

- Unitemps (a subsidiary working as a franchised model of operation, sourcing employment opportunities for current students, alumni and our region more broadly)
- Staffordshire University Services Ltd (a subsidiary which employs all Grades One to Six Professional Support Staff and new academic and professional support staff)



Appointment of the Executive Dean : School of Digital, Technology, Innovation and Business

OUR ACADEMIC SCHOOLS

SCHOOL OF DIGITAL, TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION AND BUSINESS

The School of Digital, Technology, Innovation and Business operates from our Stoke on Trent campus and Staffordshire University: London campus. The academic portfolio is designed to develop the next generation of graduates across our creative, digital and entrepreneurial offer in subjects ranging from computing, games, and engineering, to fine art, fashion, product design, architecture and illustration to business and entrepreneurship. The School's research activities are focused around research centres in engineering, computing, business and regions, media and cultural industries. Significant external funding supports enterprise and knowledge exchange work with local companies including through a number of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships. The School's impact in learning, research and enterprise is felt directly in how people live and the environment they live in. Across all the School's activities, partners are key to shaping the student experience and maximising the impact of research. The School's academics work with a wide range of regional, national and international partners including the V&A, BAFTA, Epic Games, local and national governments, various leading international universities, and a Royal Academy of Engineering visiting professor.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, POLICING AND SCIENCES

The School of Health, Education, Policing and Sciences operates from our Stoke-on-Trent campus and the Stafford Centre for Health Innovation. The academic portfolio includes courses in the areas of health, psychology, education, sport and exercise, biological sciences, law, policing, forensics, international relations, social welfare and archaeology. The School is pioneering the way it uses "immersible" learning, with a simulation suite now operational at Stoke-on-Trent campus and a larger state of the art simulation suite recently opened in Spring 2022 at the Centre for Health Innovation, Stafford. The School also contains the Institute of Policing, which delivers a major apprenticeship contract for three West Midlands Police Forces. Partnerships exist with a wide range of NHS, private and voluntary health and social care organisations across Staffordshire, Shropshire and the surrounding counties. Partnerships also exist with Staffordshire Police Forensics Unit, the Forensic Capability Network, Locate International, Merlin Group, the Ministry of Defence, West Mercia, Staffordshire and Warwickshire Police Forces, Bentley Motors and many more. The School has strong academic relationships with a wide range of partner colleges in the region. The School is required to work closely with a significant number of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies including the Nursing and Midwifery Council, Health and Care Professions Council, British Psychological Society and Social Work England. With regard to research, the School has close links to the Staffordshire Centre of Learning and Pedagogic Practice (SCoLPP) and contains our new Woodlands Nursery and Forest School.

We also have international partnerships with the United States (Alabama), the Middle East, Sri Lanka, China, Hong Kong, Vietnam and Malaysia.

A full overview of the academic portfolio for the University is available through our [Undergraduate Prospectus 2024](#)



8799*

FULL-TIME
UNDERGRADUATE ON
CAMPUS STUDENTS

2661*

FULL-TIME
POSTGRADUATE ON
CAMPUS STUDENTS

9089^

FULL-TIME
UNDERGRADUATE
PARTNERSHIP
STUDENTS
(UK AND INTERNATIONAL)

1060^

FULL-TIME
POSTGRADUATE
PARTNERSHIP
STUDENTS
(UK AND INTERNATIONAL)

Definitions

* All Staffordshire Delivery methods, UG/PGT/PGCE/PGR mainstream students, continuing and new entrants for 2022/23, Fulltime (Inc. Sandwich) from enrolment report

^ All UK partner Delivery methods (Inc. Validation & DL) UG/PGT/PGCE/PGR mainstream students, continuing and new entrants for 2022/23, Fulltime (Inc. Sandwich) from enrolment report + Aggregate offshore return student numbers excluding Distance learning.

OUR LEARNING AND TEACHING

A NEW ACADEMIC STRATEGY

The development of our new academic strategy continued apace during the last academic year, with a core focus on shaping methodologies that will benefit students both during their studies and after they graduate.

Phenomenon-based learning sits at the core of this strategy. By enabling students and staff to work both within their own disciplines and interdepartmentally to address important, real-world issues, we aim to expand upon the traditional subject-focused approach to teaching and learning, encouraging holistic and pragmatic thinking around contemporary topics and concepts.

Our new academic strategy is designed to empower our students to learn through problem-solving. For instance, an interdisciplinary group may be presented with a plastic water bottle and tasked with improving its design. Learners might be invited to address questions such as the advantages and disadvantages of using a different material in the object's production. Would this increase the cost? Would it make it more difficult to manufacture? Is the manufacturing process sustainable?

In turn, students' conclusions will be challenged both by their peers and academics, and they will go on to create 'learning artifices' that evidence what they have achieved, or which extend their learning to other related purposes.

By adopting a phenomenon-based approach to teaching and learning, we aim to shift the focus of students' efforts from subject-specific content to the central challenge, thus increasing their capacity to deal with volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. It also prepares our students for the lifelong learning which will be a key component of their lives after graduation. In addition to a more exciting student experience, this approach will enable our University to further personalise delivery whilst giving students the skills and confidence necessary to develop their own 'learning game'.

CONNECTED CURRICULUM CONTINUUM (C3)

Our Connected Curriculum Continuum (C3) is designed to help our students become the leaders and disruptors of tomorrow. Through C3, we aim to skill,

enable and empower our students to pursue their own path to learning and development, providing them with the tools they need to operate autonomously as independent thinkers.

This approach recognises that students bring different skills and experiences into higher education, and it is vital we capitalise on our students' backgrounds to help them achieve their full potential. C3 also allows us to cultivate high-quality enquiry, research and dissemination to bring talented graduates into our workforce where appropriate.

This approach is in keeping with our commitments as the Civic University, focusing on how we can use people, place and society to make positive contributions to our local communities. It will enable us to identify the skills our students bring with them and how they can better connect with other members of society. C3 allows us to focus on the fundamentals that need to be in place for our students to build networks beyond our campuses, engage with local stakeholders and change our communities for the better.

STAFFORDSHIRE CENTRE OF LEARNING AND PEDAGOGIC PRACTICE (SCoLPP)

Our new academic strategy and Connected Curriculum Continuum set out our ambitions and future direction within the arena of teaching and learning, with the Staffordshire Centre of Learning and Pedagogic Practice (SCoLPP) as the entity that will realise our vision, as part of our School of Education.

This new centre, located in the Catalyst Building, will build on our academic strategy to develop an evaluative mindset within our University community. Informed by our commitment to social mobility, SCoLPP will provide an environment in which students, academics and professional services staff can come together and conduct both conventional and non-traditional research.

Through its disruptive and sector-leading approach, SCoLPP will enable our University to break down historical barriers within academia, blurring the lines between who should conduct research and harnessing the collective skills and experiences of our entire University community.



108TH IN THE COMPLETE UNIVERSITY GUIDE (2023)

63RD GUARDIAN LEAGUE TABLES 2023

93RD IN THE TIMES AND SUNDAY TIMES GUIDE 2023

71ST DAILY MAIL UNIVERSITY GUIDE (2023)

UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR

Edufuturist Awards 2021

601-800 RANKING TIMES HIGHER EDUCATION IMPACT RANKINGS

OUR RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIPS

In May 2022, the results of the Research Excellence Framework (REF 2021) were published.

The REF is carried out every 6 to 7 years to assess the quality of research across UK universities, shows the quality and output of research and shows the impact research has on the academic environment and our society.

Since the previous REF in 2014, Staffordshire University has made a substantial improvement in our research performance. Overall, 68% of Staffordshire University's research was recognised as three star and four star, which is 'internationally excellent' and 'world leading' respectively. This is an increase from 37% in 2014, when the last REF results were announced. In addition, 87% of the University's research impact has been rated as three star ('very considerable') or four star ('outstanding').

In the Times Higher league table we have moved to joint 86th from 108th, which is a rise of 22 places and a great achievement.

Our analysis shows that we could be 4th most improved for impact and in the top ten universities most improved University overall.

In total, 109 members of staff and 244 research outputs were submitted into REF 2021. Staffordshire University entered seven Units of Assessment: Allied Health; Engineering; Archaeology; Business and Management; Social Work and Social Policy; Art and Design and Communication and Cultural Studies.

Each unit had research which has been recognised as "world leading." The University was rated most highly for Art and Design where 91% of its research was recognised as 'internationally excellent' or 'world leading' and 100% of research impact was judged to be 'very considerable' (three star) or 'outstanding' (four star). This puts us in the top quartile for this Unit of Assessment overall.

The full summary of REF 20212 performance is outlined below:

Allied Health

- 100% of research impact is recognised as four star or three star
- 73% of research outputs are rated four star or three star

Engineering

- 75% of research impact is recognised as three star or four star
- 87% of research outputs are rated three star or four star

Archaeology

- 100% of research impact is recognised as four star or three star

Business and Management

- 100% of research impact is recognised as four star or three star
- 71% of research overall is four star or three star

Social Work Social Policy

- 64% of research outputs are rated four star or three star

Art and Design

- 100% of research impact is recognised as four star or three star
- 91% of research overall is rated four star or three star

Communication and Cultural studies

- 100% of research impact is recognised as four star or three star

The results from this REF assessment will inform the development of our narrative around our research strengths where we can help bring about real-world benefits to business and society and improve the quality of life for people living in our communities.

Longer term, REF2021 will be used to inform strategic decision making, understand sector wide trends, attract researchers and postgraduate students and secure further funding to improve our research environment as a key part of the new Strategic Plan.

86th
OVERALL
TIMES HIGHER RANKING

70th
OVERALL FOR
RESEARCH IMPACT
TIMES HIGHER RANKING

68% OF OUR
RESEARCH OVERALL
IS RECOGNISED AS
INTERNATIONALLY
EXCELLENT OR
WORLD LEADING

REF2021
Research
Excellence
Framework

87% OF OUR
RESEARCH IMPACT
IS RECOGNISED AS
VERY CONSIDERABLE
OR
OUTSTANDING

REF2021
Research
Excellence
Framework

OUR ROLE AS A CIVIC UNIVERSITY

Staffordshire University plays an important role in its local and regional economies.

As one of the first institutions to sign up to the Civic University Commission's recommendation to develop a Civic University Agreement (CUA), civic engagement has been at the forefront of our strategic approach for some time. Our University aims to be an 'intellectual hub' for the communities it serves.

Civic engagement, broadly defined, is well embedded in our strategic plan, recognising the communities we serve and how we can work in partnership to face and overcome established and fundamental socioeconomic challenges. Our Connected Communities Framework translates this strategy into a set of themes and priorities.

As the largest university in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire by student numbers, Staffordshire University has a significant economic footprint both locally and across our region, supporting an estimated 2,750 FTE jobs and £120 million gross value added (GVA) across the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SSLEP) area. This is a result of our University's role as a large local employer, purchaser and attractor of students and visitors to the area. While much of this added value is concentrated in the city of Stoke-on-Trent, it is also driven by our other campuses and locations in Stafford, Lichfield, Shrewsbury and now London.

Social Mobility

Social mobility is a pressing regional concern in Stoke-on-Trent, which has the third lowest youth mobility rate of 324 local authority areas in England. The city has

been designated as an Educational Opportunity Area by the UK Department for Education (DfE), with only 17% of poorer young people progressing into higher education.

Staffordshire University recognises the critical role it can play in addressing these challenges, especially given its mix of on-campus, full-time, undergraduate and postgraduate students: 33% are local, 70% are commuter students and 59% are mature students. We have developed an ambitious, evidence-based Access and Participation Plan to support our distinctive student body and specific target groups, prioritising student access and success, with our network of local and regional partnerships with schools and colleges being critical to these ambitions.

Noteworthy interventions in this area include:

- Signed up to the **Social Mobility Pledge**: Championed by former Secretary of State for Education, Rt Hon Justine Greening.
- Our Passport to Success scheme: a flagship programme that engages with able KS3 and KS4 students who face barriers to applying for university, including issues around social capital, self-confidence and aspiration. Our University works with 46 schools and other partners per year.
- The NCOP Higher Horizons+ Hub: a collaborative network of 11 universities and colleges, which work together on outreach to schools with disadvantaged young people.
- Step Up to HE: a part-time academic programme for mature students who have been out of education for some time and have a range of other work-related and personal commitments.
- The DRIVER project: an initiative that applies data science to help support disadvantaged students.

There is also a widening productivity gap in our region, with evidence of a low-skills, low-wage equilibrium. Skills represent a critical driver in addressing this challenge, and our University's contribution is distinctive in this respect. We recognise that we can have a positive impact on both the supply of higher-level skills and demand for these skills among employers.

In particular, our actions include:

- Embedding our Connected Curriculum, which is designed to align skills with employer need and is complemented by the establishment of Industry Advisory Boards, which include significant local employers such as Amazon, IBM and bet365. Approximately 75% of students are enrolled on courses that show strong alignment with SSLEP's priority sectors.
- Developing strategic relationships with key employers, including the development of a Higher Degree and Apprenticeships scheme, with more than 90 local employers and over 1,200 apprentices.
- Constructing the Catalyst, our state-of-the-art apprenticeships and digital skills hub, which will support 6,500 new apprenticeships over the next 10 years. This project also includes a £5 million funding pot for the design and delivery of new apprenticeships to meet the needs of 21st century employers, offering continuing professional development (CPD) to local employers and individuals.
- Stimulating demand for graduate-level skills among employers via our Employer Partnerships service, showcasing benefits such as increased productivity, innovation and retention through a series of educational events, open sessions, breakfasts and seminars. These include two annual events: GradEX and the Art and Design Degree Show.

Innovation and Enterprise

There is a regional deficit in innovation and enterprise. Business expenditure on research and development (R&D) in the SSLEP area is approximately half that of the average for England, and the business start-up rate in Stoke-on-Trent is 40% below the country's average. Nevertheless, there are areas of strength and opportunity in our area – for example, in the fields of digital, advanced materials and energy – which are highlighted in the Local Industrial Strategy and other LEP strategies.

Staffordshire University is committed at a strategic level to helping to deliver on the ambitions of the Local Industrial Strategy, and has been heavily involved in its development.

Developments include:

- Securing University Enterprise Zone (UEZ) status, has brought together a range of regional and national businesses involving research collaboration, knowledge exchange, innovation and skills development including Staffordshire Advanced Manufacturing, Prototyping, and Innovation Demonstrator (SAMPID) supporting 45 regional SMEs with product design, development, and prototyping through mini-KTP type projects and access to a new advanced manufacturing facility in the University; Staffordshire Advanced Materials Incubation and Accelerator Centre (SAMIAC) providing business incubation space, a new research, prototyping, and innovation laboratory for materials characterisation and testing, and an academy to develop innovation and entrepreneurship; Staffordshire Digital Innovation Partnerships (SDIPs) to transform 36 regional SMEs through digital innovation; Staffordshire Connected & Intelligent

CIVIC
UNIVERSITY
AGREEMENT

AWARDED
UNIVERSITY
ENTERPRISE ZONE
STATUS (2019)

3RD HIGHEST
GRADUATE START
UP – RATE IN WEST
MIDLANDS

TOP 15 FOR
SOCIAL INCLUSION
The Times and The Sunday
Times Good University
Guide 2021

WINNER BEST
UNDERGRADUATE
STUDENT RECRUITMENT
CAMPAIGN
Heist Awards 2020

WINNER OUTSTANDING
MARKETING/
COMMUNICATIONS
TEAM
THE Awards 2020

TOP 5%
NATIONALLY FOR
SCALE OF MULTI
ACADEMY TRUST

BEST UNIVERSITY
EMPLOYABILITY
STRATEGY
Target Jobs Awards 2020

OUR ROLE AS A CIVIC UNIVERSITY

Mobility Innovation Accelerator supporting 45 SMEs to deliver innovation in connected and intelligent mobility and the Enterprise Collaboratory, to develop dedicated space for ideation and brainstorming for new start-ups and local SMEs. The space will empower our existing students (including PhD students) to commercialise their work.

- Targeted enterprise support and education. For example, the ERDF-funded Be Inspired Programme has supported three start-up cohorts since 2016, contributing to our university achieving the third highest graduate start-up rate in the West Midlands.
- The provision of consultancy support to local organisations through our academics.
- Delivering the Staffordshire Digital Innovation Partnerships Programme, which supports SMEs with specialist academic support, in conjunction with Staffordshire County Council.

Contributing to Local Communities

Staffordshire University recognises that HEIs have a responsibility to contribute to their local communities, both by listening to the views and concerns of the public and working collaboratively to solve problems together.

Together, we are working to:

- Play an active, engaged and ever-increasing role in our local communities through a partnership approach. Our Connected Communities Strategy is at the forefront of this agenda.
- Lead participatory research projects into major local issues. For example, Get Talking Hardship – an initiative commissioned by the Hardship Commission of Stoke-on-Trent – generated new insights into hardship and poverty across the city, as well as policy recommendations. Forty-three local community researchers were recruited to help deliver the research, experiencing significant benefits such as being engaged in work. Subsequently, we introduced a new Civic Fellow title to recognise the contributions of staff and local community members in this field.
- Deliver volunteering opportunities and placements, with more than 470 community partnerships and 1,200 students active in volunteering per annum.

In collaboration with our students, staff and local communities, we are working to deliver world-class facilities in a context-sensitive manner by engaging with strategic partners across our campuses in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire, the West Midlands and our Staffordshire University: London. Many parts of our Stoke-on-Trent campus are already used by the community, with over 37,000 visits to public lectures, performance arts, exhibitions and community engagement events in 2018-19. Assets open to the community also include a cinema, gym and other sports facilities.

By continuing to widen community and public access to our broad range of facilities, as well as conducting related activities that promote placemaking and identity, we aim to develop a Staffordshire University masterplan that anchors our institution in place and facilitates the further development of long-term relationships with our surrounding communities.

Staffordshire University is also the sponsor of Staffordshire University Academies Trust (SUAT). SUAT is a Multi Academy Trust of twenty schools which are all located in Staffordshire (19 primary/first schools and one high school). The academy trust is in the top 5% nationally in terms of size, as measured by the number of schools, of which there are 3771 pupils and over 750 staff. Unlike many MATs, SUAT is financially strong and has excellent links to our academic schools within the University, particularly Education and Sports Science.

Working in collaboration with the Department for Education, our University has developed a mentoring programme enabling students and graduates to act as mentors to pupils in secondary schools across Staffordshire. With a specific lens on re-engaging disadvantaged young people following the recent disruption to their learning, arising from the Covid-19, our aim is to guide Y10 and Y11 students to successfully navigate the transition back into full-time school, making the right choices for their future. Through close contact with the five secondary schools identified, we have trained 50 students and graduates to act as mentors, who will be offering a broad range of support, including developing positive habits of work and learning, wellbeing and careers coaching and pastoral support.

INCLUSION

In 2018 we reframed our equality and diversity work to be more focused on inclusion. We collaborated with students and staff on a Strategic Framework for Inclusion that reflects our values as an inclusive organisation and sets out our ambitions for both students and staff inclusion. We focus on inclusion to ensure equality of opportunity for all our people and to demonstrate our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Human Rights. We have some significant inclusion challenges that we are addressing, in both our staff and student experience.

Inclusion is one of the University's values and appears in a number of our university Key Performance Indicators (KPI), which we aim to deliver within the next five years. These are:

- o Staff demographic profile that mirrors the regional profile (with an aim of 17% of our staff profile to be drawn from ethnic minorities by 2026-2027)
- o Student demographic profile that mirrors the post-19 sector norms (with an aim to reach 29% of our student profile to be drawn from ethnic minorities by 2026-2027)
- o Reduction in the awarding gaps to be less than 10%, (with a particular focus upon our black students by 2026-2027)
- o 5% of Staffordshire young people progressing into Higher Education at Staffordshire University
- o Meet our commitments for access and participation to increase equality of opportunity for all diverse students, as outlined in our Access and Participation Plan.

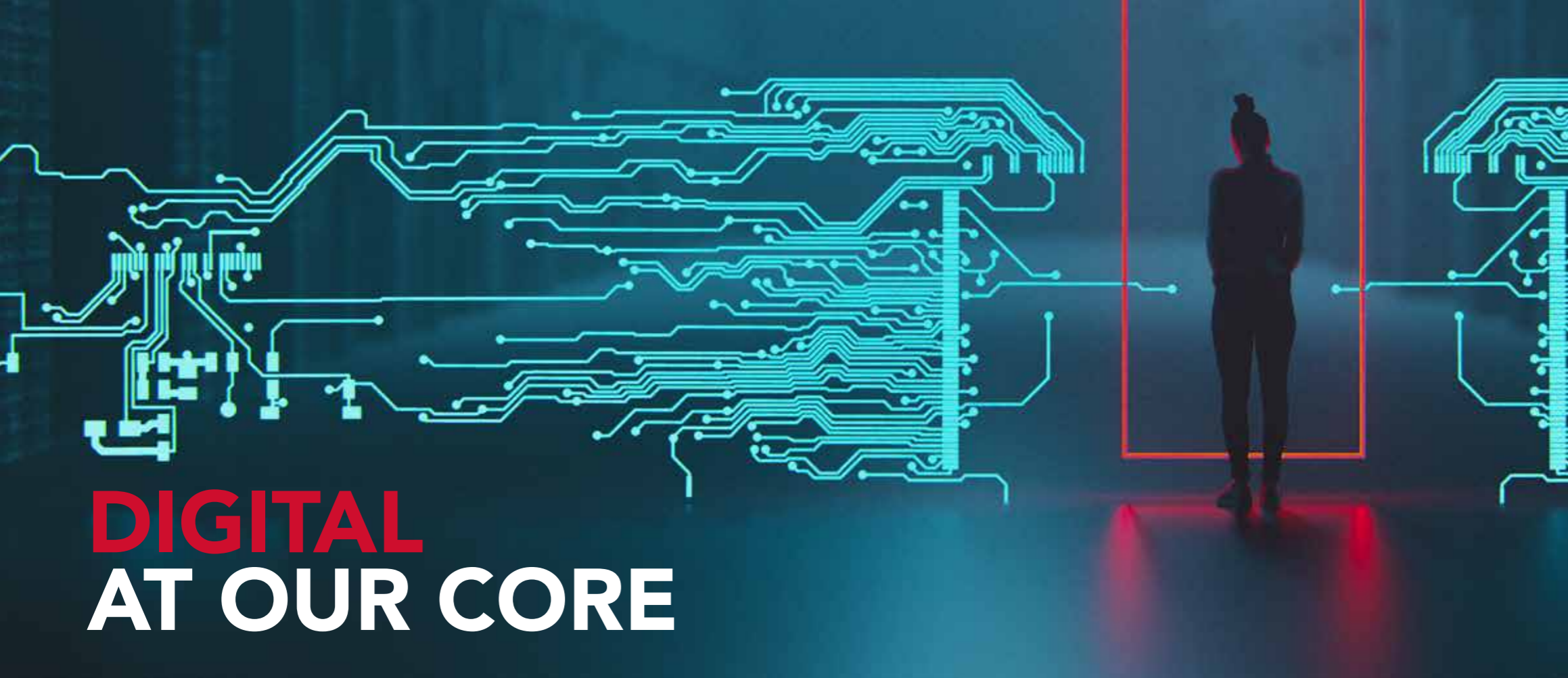
If we are to make a step change in the delivery of our inclusion agenda, this will mean more than detailed analysis of our metrics and the establishment of targeted actions to address deficiencies. It will require a step change in the way the University thinks inclusively and acts inclusively – and for this we will need to deliver a change in our culture and ensure that inclusion is owned and embedded in every part and at every level of our university. We have started this journey.



7.8%
GENDER PAY GAP
(March 2023)

-1.9%
ETHNICITY PAY GAP
(March 2023)

5.29%
DISABILITY PAY GAP
(March 2023)



DIGITAL AT OUR CORE

Digital has been part of our institution's DNA for more than half a century. We were the first UK university to launch a computing degree in the 1960s and we have never looked back. More recently, we became the first UK university to move to the cloud, we were the first to introduce an AI-powered digital assistant for our students in the form of Beacon, and we were first to market with both undergraduate and postgraduate esports courses. Inaugurated at the beginning of the 2019/20 academic year, Staffordshire University: London has further strengthened our digitally enabled Estates Masterplan, winning the 'Innovation in Teaching and Learning' category at the Education Estates Awards; the latest in a long list of milestones on our journey to becoming the UK's foremost Digital University.

In line with Staffordshire University's commitment to act as a guardian of its own environment and surrounding areas, sustainability remains a core consideration throughout all our digital activities, from scoping and planning through to implementation and operations. As the first university to migrate to the cloud, we do not host large, energy-intensive data centres, helping us to minimise our impact on our local environment.

In line with our vision to become the foremost Digital University, the identification, development and implementation of innovations and technologies that enhance pedagogic delivery and the student experience have long since represented a priority for our institution. Whilst the global coronavirus pandemic posed many challenges for the sector, Staffordshire University was well placed to expedite the deployment of digital tools to facilitate blended teaching and learning.

We have continued to invest and implement the latest virtual platforms – powered by cloud technology – to ensure those studying more technologically demanding subjects such as esports and games design could continue to engage remotely.

In addition, we have worked hard to assist our students experiencing 'digital poverty' and have provided our students with access to an outstanding range of support, with all Student Services available online, ensuring that our students could continue to access the guidance and assistance they needed whether on campus or remotely. In addition to enabling Staffordshire University to maintain an excellent student experience despite all the obstacles posed by a global pandemic, we are confident the progress we have made in the digital arena has left us well placed to deliver a more flexible, resilient and engaging provision in the longer term.

Moving forwards, we will continue to build upon our existing digital credentials. Our Connected Curriculum academic strategy places digital skills front and centre, and our commitment in this area goes beyond traditional education. Our new Centre for Health Innovation opened in Spring 2022 will cement our position as sector-leaders in the use of simulation and immersion technology as part of our innovative teaching and learning.



1ST UK UNIVERSITY
to launch a computing degree in 1960s

1ST UK UNIVERSITY
to move to the cloud for all IT systems

1ST UK UNIVERSITY
to introduce an AI powered digital assistant for students

1ST UK UNIVERSITY
to introduce Games' courses into the portfolio and remain market leader since that time

1ST UK UNIVERSITY
to introduce an 'esports' undergraduate and post graduate award

LARGEST
UK UNIVERSITY
in games courses by student numbers

WINNER
OF INNOVATION IN TEACHING AND LEARNING
Education Estates Awards 2020

WINNER
BEST 'NOT FOR PROFIT' PROJECT
Digital Technology Leaders Award 2019

WINNER
BEST EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION
TIGA Industry Awards 2020

WINNER
BEST EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION FOR GAMES
Grads In Games Awards 2020

WINNER
AMAZON WEB SERVICES EDUCATE CHALLENGE
AWS Challenge Cup 2020

13TH GLOBALLY
ROOKIES INTERNATIONAL RANKINGS OF BEST GAMES DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT
University or College 2020

1ST FOR UK GAMES DEVELOPMENT
ROOKIES 2023 RANKINGS

OUR FINANCES

The University's medium-term financial sustainability is built on growing income from increasingly diverse sources in order to generate annual operating surpluses of at least 5% of income per annum, as well as investing in facilities and projects, which will contribute to the longer-term financial sustainability of the institution.

Between 2017/18 and 2022/23 the University's income grew from £114.9m to £168.1m, an increase of 46% in five years. The most significant area of growth in those years was our apprenticeships provision.

The operating surplus for the years 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 exceeded the target of 5% of income in each year, having only been at 2.4% in 2017/18.

The University generated £16.4m of operating cash in 2022/23 (£24.8m in 2021/22). On 31 July 2023, the University held £36.9m in short term cash investments, targeted to fund future capital investments.

During the last five years, the University invested significantly in estates and facilities including the £43m Catalyst building, the £5.9m development within the Centre for Health Innovation in Stafford, and the creation of a new £4.5m Nursery and Forest School in Stoke-on-Trent. The latter is the University's first Carbon Neutral building.

A project to build a low carbon 'student village' set within a biodiverse landscape on the Stoke-on-Trent campus, which will be externally funded, was initiated in 2022.

RESULTS FOR 2022/23

The inclusion of non-cash pension adjustments and capital disposals within the surplus, which have been required since the introduction of FRS102 in 2015, present a challenge in terms of understanding the University's underlying operating performance year on year. The non-cash pension adjustments arise from the annual restatement of the long-term pension liability. These items have been isolated within the following table in order to present the underlying operating surplus of the University more clearly.



	2022-23 Operating Activities £'000	2022-23 Pensions Adjustment £'000	2022-23 Capital Disposals / Revaluations £'000	2022-23 Total £'000	2021-22 Total £'000
Total Income	168,075	0	0	168,075	150,461
Total Expenditure	154,713	(1,810)	0	152,903	138,568
Operating surplus for the year	13,362	1,810	0	15,172	11,893
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	0	0	(2,953)	(2,953)	(20)
Unrealised (loss) on revaluation of investment properties	0	0	(515)	(515)	0
Actuarial (loss)/gain in respect of pension schemes net of pension asset restriction	0	(1,810)	0	(1,810)	104,618
Total comprehensive income and expenditure for the year	13,362	0	(3,468)	9,894	116,491

Follow this link to view our [2023-financial-statements.pdf \(staffs.ac.uk\)](https://staffs.ac.uk/2023-financial-statements.pdf).



YOUR ROLE

Executive Dean – School of Digital, Technology, Innovation and Business

As Executive Dean, the successful candidate will be responsible for the strategic leadership and management of the School. Reporting to the Executive and a member of UEB, the Executive Dean will lead the process of defining, differentiating and shaping the campus during its next phase of development. Staffordshire University has already proven its flexibility and adaptability by establishing itself in a fast-moving and highly competitive higher education sector. It is now well placed to improve its position by building on its excellence in teaching, enterprise, innovation and research, whilst delivering the stated aims of student growth and financial success. As Staffordshire University seeks to further enhance its position as the leading Digital University, and to deliver additional impact across our regions as a Civic University, it is critical that our Executive Dean is a visionary, strategic thinker who inspires confidence and is highly influential within and beyond the University.

Key responsibilities:

- Providing inspirational leadership in the communication, implementation and delivery of the Strategic Plan and supporting strategies across the School.
- Leading the development, implementation and on-going evaluation of the School Business Plan specifically aligned to the strategic objectives set out in the University Strategic Plan.
- Transforming and supporting the working practices of staff to introduce a culture of focused entrepreneurship that spans teaching, research, enterprise and civic engagement and engages the majority of staff in both subject specific and cross-portfolio initiatives.
- Delivering an ambassadorial role for the University in a range of external environments ensuring that the University is positively portrayed at all times, in order to grow the reputation of the School and develop a platform on which our success can be celebrated, with a particular focus upon the capitals Higher Education, civic and employment ecosystems.
- Ensuring the School is managed with a corporate approach in accordance with all relevant University policies and procedures, including the University's financial management rules and regulations, student rules and regulations and all staff employment policies, procedures and working practice.
- Ensuring effective communication of the University's strategies priorities and major programmes of work throughout the School, via effective dialogue, and appropriate provision of opportunities for staff engagement around decisions and their implementation, and that information, ideas and challenges are shared with Executive.
- Developing and managing the School budget to ensure that the finances are run well in terms of the annual budget, and its medium to long-term financial sustainability.
- Representing the School at University committees and meetings as required and chair cross University and other working groups as appropriate.
- Ensuring that the School is able to respond to the changing external environment through a thorough understanding of the political, regulatory and policy landscape and its potential impact.

Academic Development:

Leading and managing the School in the achievement of the following core responsibilities:

- Working with the School senior management team to provide the student recruitment requirements through a vibrant, modern, market led, product portfolio.
- Working with the School senior management team provide a high-quality learning experience for students as measured through student satisfaction indicators, progression, retention and achievement outcomes.
- Enhancing the quality and quantity of research outcomes in liaison with Research Centres and Groups.
- Working with the Heads of Department, provide academic leadership for the School, ensuring that all aspects of the provision are innovative and meet the needs of students, employers and customers more generally.
- Working with the School senior management team, ensure the School is well run, in accordance with quality and regulatory requirements dictated both internally and externally.
- Working collaboratively and effectively with other Schools to grow synergy and develop opportunities across the product portfolio and business processes.
- Ensuring that the School is well informed about national policy and developments relevant to the work of the School and its academic disciplines.

People and Resource Management:

- Developing an annual budget which is consistent with the School Business Plan and University Strategic Priorities and delivering against that budget. Working with the Finance Business Partner to monitor monthly financial results and assisting with the preparation of a quarterly re-forecast.
- Working with Estates and Commercial Service senior management to ensure that capital projects are delivered effectively and to budget within the specific constraints of the site and in a way which does not detract from the wider student experience.
- Liaising with Estates and Facilities and Digital and Technical Services to ensure that facilities and equipment remain fit for purpose and support the wider student experience.
- Providing leadership and line management to the School senior management team, and other appropriate managers or academics, setting targets and performance managing these individuals and their teams.
- Managing the procurement of goods and services within the University's procurement regulations and frameworks.
- Recruiting, motivating and developing staff within the School in order to provide professional and flexible staff capable of meeting defined performance and business objectives.
- Working with University services to ensure appropriate service levels are provided for the wider student experience.
- Maintaining a safe and healthy work environment within the School as lead accountable individual, including ensuring compliance with health and safety legislation and university policies and procedures.
- Ensuring that equality issues within the School are addressed in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty and embracing the University's approach to 'consciously inclusive'.
- Ensuring all staff within the School are aware of, and take responsibility for, full compliance with the University's Right to Work Policy.

YOUR PROFILE

SELECTION CRITERIA DESCRIPTION

Staffordshire University is seeking to appoint an outstanding individual to build on our existing strengths and take us to the next level of performance in terms of impact and achievement for teaching, innovation and research. The successful candidate will provide both academic and operational leadership, will have a confident, clear and consultative style, and will have the ability to inspire and motivate our academic community. They will have a deep commitment to Staffordshire University, its value and its strengths. We are seeking candidates who demonstrate an appropriate mix of skills and experience to enable them to take on this high profile and distinctive position.

Essential Criteria

- Educated to Postgraduate level (ideally at PhD level or working towards the qualification).
- Member of the HEA ideally at Senior or Principal Fellow level.
- An academic track record in a related discipline to the School.
- A research/practice track record in a related discipline to the School, ideally with a significant reputation.
- A strong understanding of the global context or higher education and an equally strong understanding of the UK higher education sector and its developmental direction.
- A strong understanding and experience of networking and profile raising in Higher Education, civic and employment communities.
- A successful track record of transformative leadership within a respected higher education institution.
- Successful track record of the leadership and management of learning and teaching and student experience in the Higher Education sector with the ability to operate in a leadership role at this level.
- Successful leadership and management experience of relevant scale in a change environment, with regards to people and financial resources and evidence of delivering balanced budgets.
- A proven track record in building strong teams and achieving targets in a competitive environment.
- Proven track record in the management of quality and standards within an academic area.
- Successful track record of positively influencing key performance metrics regarding the student experience including retention, progression, achievement, employability and student satisfaction as measured by internal and external benchmarks and comparative data.
- Successful track record of fostering strong external working relationships.

Skills, Abilities and Behaviours:

- Strong leadership qualities and the skills appropriate to a senior management position including the management, development and motivation of both teams and individuals to inspire and secure high performance.
 - Strongly self-motivated bringing gravitas, credibility, energy, resilience and commitment.
 - High level communication skills both oral and written with and ability to act as a representative of a themed area and the University more broadly, in a wide range of situations, both internally and externally, nationally and internationally.
 - High level negotiation, influencing and enabling skills to ensure priorities are met.
 - Proven networking and interpersonal skills, with the capability to be an effective, persuasive and credible ambassador for the University, nationally and internationally.
 - Ability to work at pace, think differently, solution focused and manage risk.
 - A positive 'can do' attitude and approach.
 - Proven aptitude for developing effective and inclusive professional working relationships with a diverse board, and with a core senior management team.
 - Ability to identify opportunities to develop new income streams and respond proactively to external conditions.
 - Successful track record in the continuous review of the academic portfolio to ensure that provision is market led and attractive to students, in order to grow and develop the provision of an academic area.
-

Personal Qualities:

- Integrity, sound acumen and judgement, and a strong belief in the public good delivered by higher education.
- Commitment to Staffordshire University's strategic objectives and values, including the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- An esteemed academic track-record and the capability to lead a community of scholars.
- In-depth understanding of the conditions necessary to support research and scholarship.
- Capacity for high-level, strategic thinking, combined with an ability to ensure the effective delivery of the University's goals and objectives.
- Sound financial acumen and judgement with an appropriate appetite for risk.
- Personally stable, unflappable, sense of perspective, ability to lead situations characterised by ambiguity, uncertainty and tension.
- A leadership style that encourages a culture of openness, transparency and empowerment throughout the School community.

HOW TO APPLY

APPOINTMENT OF EXECUTIVE DEAN: SCHOOL OF DIGITAL, TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION AND BUSINESS

Dixon Walter have been retained by Staffordshire University to provide executive search and advisory services. Should you wish to have an informal discussion about this role then please contact **Emma Wilkins** on **emma@dixonwalter.co.uk**

Your application should include on separate documents:

- a letter of application setting out your interest in the role and details of how you match the requirements in the Person Specification
- a comprehensive curriculum vitae
- details of three referees and your notice period (referees will not be contacted without your permission)
- a completed Personal Details Form (available from the website below)

Applications should be sent to **emma@dixonwalter.co.uk**

Further details are available at: <https://www.dixonwalter.co.uk/opportunities/staffs-exec-dean-dtib/>

Closing date: **Wednesday, 27 March**

2ND

**IN THE UK FOR
QUALITY EDUCATION**

Sustainable Development Goal 4
THE Impact Rankings 2023