

# 2018 - 2021



# BUILDING ON STRENGTHS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

## TO SHAPE THE FUTURE

This Strategic Plan sets out our ambitions and intentions for the next three years and as Leeds Trinity University embarks on this next phase of its journey we are especially mindful of the evolving climate and backdrop in higher education. Despite the many challenges and pressures, Leeds Trinity University is well-placed to compete and move forward and this strategy is designed to ensure that we capitalise on our strengths.

In preparing the way for our new Strategic Plan we have consulted widely within the University, with our partners and with a range of other stakeholders. The common picture is that we are deeply admired and respected for our community culture (informed by our Catholic values) and the desire is for us to continue to maximise our strengths as a friendly, intimate and connected community providing a highly tailored and career-driven student experience.

The University was established in 1966 as two Catholic teacher training colleges. In December 2012 we were awarded University title and a key ambition of our first strategic plan (as a University) was to become more widely recognised as one of three (now four) universities in Leeds. We have achieved this and more including the expansion of our undergraduate and postgraduate portfolios and the strengthening of our reputation for educational excellence, applied

research and external partnership activities, widening participation, inclusivity and professional practice.

It is important to note how far we have come and how this informs our future. Key achievements in recent years include the following. We have:

- Invested significantly in our campus and University infrastructure. We have extended our provision of high quality teaching, learning, living, social and sporting spaces and upgraded our information systems.
- Diversified our undergraduate and postgraduate portfolios and offer a greater range of programmes. Our focus on co-development and co-delivery with businesses has extended to the validation of a Work-based Learning Framework which allows individuals to gain up to a Master's degree qualification based on the knowledge and skills obtained in the workplace (with such programmes delivered flexibly according to employer needs).
- Created a number of Degree Apprenticeships to allow employers to benefit from the apprenticeship levy introduced in April 2017. This means we are working hand-in-hand with employers to design and deliver tailored degrees for their employees.
- Supported more students year-on-year to attain first and upper second degree class awards.







For the last three years Leeds Trinity has been in the top ten universities for 'Value-Added' scores (The Guardian University Guide 2017, 2018 and 2019).

- Increased graduate employability by working closely with more than 3,000 employers to ensure we secured the best possible placement experiences for our students.
- Enhanced our research capacity, increased the number of staff engaged in research and applied partnership (or 'knowledge exchange') activities and broadened our research excellence base in preparation for the Research Excellence Framework

in 2021 and an application for our own Research Degree Awarding Powers in the future. The University is becoming renowned for research excellence, particularly in the Humanities, Media and Communications and Social Policy (where we scored highly on impact and outputs in the last Research Excellence Framework).

- Internationalised the campus, curriculum, outlook and experience of Leeds Trinity students by brokering partnerships with prestigious universities around the world for exchange, study abroad and work experience opportunities for our students.

While we continue to offer a range of subjects, our heritage in teacher training is especially strong. Our 50 years of successful teacher education is recognised by the scale and quality of our partnerships with schools. Our collaborative work with schools has also given us a broader understanding of how to work closely with those studying in local and regional schools to encourage their aspirations and to consider higher education as a platform for their advancement.

Leeds Trinity has always been, and will always be, a 'widening participation' university – encouraging students from less advantaged backgrounds and first generation entrants to higher education. As part of this we launched the Leeds Children's University (part of the nationwide Children's University Trust), designed to raise aspirations, boost achievement and foster a love of learning.

All the above activities, improvements and successes are based on working closely with education partners, communities and employers to deliver satisfaction and excellence in teaching students and to produce high quality, employable graduates. These are fundamental components of our past and our current academic strategy.

Leeds Trinity University is the sum of many parts. Our successes and achievements are the result of a tremendous team effort from our staff, students, our Students' Union, our governors and the many hundreds of employers, partners, collaborators and stakeholders who support us on a daily basis.

Recognising that our higher education experience is best delivered through a joined-up approach, with all the relevant parties working together to design, deliver and assess, is fundamental to our future success.

Therefore, over the coming years, we will address how we will further strengthen our partnership working (and collaborate to develop new types of programmes together), how we will ensure that students are presented with a wider range of experiences (in volunteering, use of technology, enhanced employer placements and continuing professional development), and how we will further exploit our academic expertise to help to address the problems that our external partners (schools, employers and public organisations) face.

As always, guided by our core purpose as a Catholic faith foundation university, we remain committed to educating and developing both the next generation, and those whose careers are already in progress, so that they can make positive, lifetime contributions that will also benefit society as a whole.

**Professor Margaret A House OBE**  
*Vice-Chancellor, Leeds Trinity University*



## LEEDS TRINITY UNIVERSITY'S DISTINCTIVENESS

**Care for our students, our staff, partners and the wider community lies at the heart of our culture and is the demonstration of our values in action.**

We believe that we are a truly distinctive university – and we must continue to ensure that we protect our distinctiveness and that we become more widely known and respected for what we offer and for the way we operate. Our analysis shows we have a special culture and a rare set of conditions (in our campus setting, location and history) that makes us extremely attractive in a world where students, staff and partners want a fulfilling, productive and personal experience.



Leeds Trinity is one of the UK's smaller universities and, as such, offers many advantages: we are agile, able to be 'fleet of foot' in responding to opportunities as they arise, and able to provide our students and staff with a unique environment which focuses on the individual and ensures that all are welcomed and valued.



## OUR DISTINCTIVENESS: COMMUNITY AND PERSONAL APPROACH

Students at Leeds Trinity have a sense of belonging. All of our students are known personally and valued individually. We provide flexible, person-centred learning which builds confidence and encourages enquiry and ethical thinking.

Students study in a genuinely supportive environment with a firm sense of community. They are supported to reach their full potential - whatever that might be - and Leeds Trinity offers a life transforming experience that is both personal and distinctive.

Underpinned by the values of our Catholic foundation, graduates from Leeds Trinity take with them the Leeds Trinity experience, and our values of caring for others, collaboration, integrity, inclusivity, and excellence in all that they do. We are inclusive and our doors are open to students and staff whatever their faith background or belief. We support and value free



speech and promote academic freedom and academic enquiry.

Our staff, whilst all having their different specialisms, have a common aim to support our students, to provide them with the best possible experience and to transform their lives. They are committed to delivering an outstanding student experience and outcomes, and are supported to do this through their own personal and professional development. Their research, knowledge exchange and scholarship activities underpin our programmes of study and provide unique opportunities for our students to gain experience on projects that are at the cutting edge of their chosen field of study, in an inspiring and challenging learning environment.



Through this approach our students discover how to learn, problem-solve and work both independently and collaboratively. They become used to applying their learning in real-world contexts, making them adaptable, flexible and ready for the ever-changing world of work.





## OUR DISTINCTIVENESS: UNIQUE APPROACH TO PLACEMENTS AND PARTNERSHIP

In addition to offering academic challenge, Leeds Trinity has more than 50 years' experience of providing placements to all students on all undergraduate programmes via a dedicated team which supports them in exploring their career ambitions.



Our unique and innovative approach to placements ensures that all students leave Leeds Trinity with not only a degree but also market-relevant work experience.

Leeds Trinity is also a socially engaged university. We encourage students to be active citizens in a range of ways including volunteering in the local community.

We have long-standing, trust-based relationships with partners from the public, private and third sectors which are second to none. Employer involvement



in the development and delivery of our programmes ensures our students are highly employable and gain the skills and expertise that employers need now and in the future. By enabling such high quality student development and employment, and through the professional development and research and knowledge exchange activities of our staff, we deliver significant social and economic benefits locally, regionally, nationally and globally.



# OUR MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

## OUR MISSION

Leeds Trinity University transforms lives by providing a unique and rich combination of academic, professional and personal development in an inclusive and nurturing university community. The University is here to make a difference to the people, the professions and the places that we serve. We provide unique educational experiences that are focused on the individual and informed by our Catholic faith foundation. We actively promote the principles of dignity, respect, social justice, equality and inclusion to support the social and economic health and wellbeing of each and every person in our University community.

## OUR VISION

By 2021 we will be renowned for developing well-rounded and experienced graduates equipped to build fulfilling futures and as a leading university for student, staff, partner and community engagement.

## OUR VALUES

Our actions and behaviours are guided by our values of:

**Care** - we want everyone we work with to feel that we genuinely have their interests at heart and that they are constantly and consistently valued and supported by us.

**Collaboration** - we are driven by mutual respect, teamwork and effective partnerships.

**Integrity** - we are honest, open, ethical and fair. People trust us to adhere to our word.

**Excellence** - we aspire to be the best, to deliver to the highest standards and to continuously improve on our performance.

**Inclusivity** - everyone at Leeds Trinity University is valued, respected and encouraged to contribute, and everyone has the same rights, status and opportunities.



# STRATEGIC THEMES

There are three broad strategic themes for Leeds Trinity University to achieve by 2021:

## Building our community and bringing about greater inclusivity

Strengthen our community and our approach to inclusivity so that we have even more productive partnerships and an exceptionally attractive culture that acts as a powerful magnet drawing people to 'experience' more from our University.

## Ensuring sustainability

Deepen foundations for our long-term success and sustainability so that we continue to be financially robust, provide education programmes and other services that offer the best value, channel our resources to ensure they are effective and efficient, and invest wisely in our campus and new areas of activity. Part of this objective is also to ensure we act as a responsible organisation for the benefit of our community, for society and for the environment.

## Delivering quality and impact

Focus on the quality of our work, continually raising standards and exceeding expectations, while also making a greater difference to (and having a significant impact on) all those that we serve and the community of which we are a part.



Priorities under each of these themes are outlined – and each of these is positioned alongside how they will impact our three experiences: the academic, the professional and the personal.





## THEME 1

**BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY AND  
BRINGING ABOUT GREATER INCLUSIVITY**

Leeds Trinity University is founded on strong principles of 'community' with a rich multitude of partnerships and collaborations enabling us to deliver our distinctive offer.

Our reach is extended, via our Leeds Children's University, to children as young as seven years old and supports the development of their dreams and aspirations.

We seek to be diverse and inclusive – supporting individuals and groups to fulfil their potential. We highly value our school and business relationships and seek to further strengthen these partnerships.

In doing so, we strive to be outward-looking, welcoming, open to new ideas and harness different viewpoints and perspectives which benefit individual and community wellbeing and enrich our research and scholarship.

Our staff are seen as role models. They engage with local, regional, national and international communities of learning, professional practice, scholarship and research and bring these communities into the student experience.



## THEME 1

Our **building community and inclusivity** priorities are:

### Academic



- Building even stronger partnerships between students and staff to inform and co-create innovative interdisciplinary programmes which deliver high levels of student satisfaction and academic attainment.
- Providing new opportunities for graduates to study postgraduate taught or research provision at Leeds Trinity.
- Broadening our offer, approaches to delivery and assessment, and our options for study to attract and enable students from all backgrounds and ages to succeed and progress.
- Leading and participating in successful research and knowledge exchange partnerships to deliver positive social and economic impact.

### Professional



- Collaborating with school and business partners to develop and deliver market-relevant, innovative programmes which meet the needs of employers and include opportunities for students to gain experience and qualifications relevant to their future professional career.
- Engaging positively with a diverse network of schools and employers to provide placements and other learning opportunities for all students to enhance practice and strengthen employability.
- Working with professional communities to achieve their objectives and provide them with professional development, research and knowledge exchange which addresses their challenges.

### Personal



- Ensuring an inclusive and diverse community of students, staff and partners that is enriched by that diversity and in which everyone is valued.
- Preparing Leeds Trinity graduates for active global citizenship including cultural and ethical awareness, giving students a positive and inclusive world view.
- Providing a wealth of personal development and community engagement opportunities for students and staff through outreach in the most deprived areas of our local community, working with schools and businesses, volunteering opportunities and life changing study abroad experiences.
- Creating a welcoming and vibrant campus community outside of the classroom for both students and the wider community.



## THEME 2

# ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY

The world of higher education is fast-moving and our ability to be flexible, responsive and innovative and to make best use of our resources is crucial.

In maintaining our distinctiveness we depend on great staff; an excellent offer for our students, staff and partners; state of the art technology and facilities; the creation of a sustainable campus environment; and robust financial health.

Whilst continuing to enhance the quality of our core teaching provision and delivering value for money, we will continue to develop our emerging portfolio of work-based learning programmes and apprenticeships. We will do so in ways which are

financially sustainable, meet the needs of employers to upskill their workforce and attract new talent, have measurable economic impact, and provide opportunities for individuals to access university education and professional and managerial occupations via alternative routes.

We will maximise the use of our location and facilities, creating attractive and purposeful physical and virtual spaces for students, staff and partners - making best use of our resources that, through their development, take into account our environment and sustainability commitments.



## THEME 2

Our **ensuring sustainability** priorities are:

### Academic



- Innovating in learning, teaching and assessment while embracing changes in technology and learner expectations and ensuring efficiency of delivery with enhanced student choice.
- Refreshing our portfolio regularly to ensure that it reflects regional, national and international educational and development priorities and remains relevant for our students and the economy.
- Developing a sustainable and resilient research environment and working towards a successful outcome in assessments of research quality.
- Developing franchise models of delivery with key partners nationally and internationally.
- Modelling environmental responsibility for our students and instilling sustainable values in our graduates.

### Professional



- Extending relationships in both the public and private sectors beyond the provision of placements to form deep, long-term, mutually beneficial partnerships, creating opportunities for up-skilling (e.g. via CPD, apprenticeships and work-based learning routes) in line with local, regional and national higher level skills priorities.
- Supporting local growth as an important employer and economic contributor in Horsforth and Leeds and building on the region's strengths and potential.
- Increasing our research and knowledge exchange activity with organisations regionally and nationally, delivering tangible impact and raising our institutional profile and reputation.
- Maintaining strong links with alumni and continuing to support them in professional practice throughout their working lives, and enabling our current students to benefit from our strong alumni relationships.

### Personal



- Nurturing the physical and mental health, development and wellbeing of our students and staff across the curriculum, campus and workplace - delivering standards of care commensurate with our values.
- Facilitating the development of our students' potential and resilience to thrive across a range of employment opportunities through a balanced mix of vocational, academic and research-led educational experiences.
- Attracting, developing and deploying a flexible staff team with outstanding capabilities, working in roles and on contracts which play to strengths and deliver our distinctive offer.



## THEME 3

# DELIVERING QUALITY AND IMPACT

In all that we do our attention is on quality and impact to ensure that our distinctive offer is being delivered in practice and we are fulfilling our mission, vision and values. The foundation of this approach is our team, working together to standards of excellence and holding each other to account, with highly constructive support and encouragement.

Leeds Trinity is an employer of choice attracting and retaining first class staff wholly committed to our vision for transforming individual lives and to working together for the benefit of the wider community.

We provide continuous development as part of our uniquely supportive student experience, which facilitates choice and empowerment for our graduates across a range of fulfilling and rewarding professional career pathways. Involvement in our research, postgraduate study programmes and professional practice activities will create socially impactful, highly employable graduates.



## THEME 3

Our **delivering quality and impact** priorities are:

### Academic



- To be recognised as one of the best teaching intensive universities by pushing the boundaries of our teaching excellence through continuous improvement and development for all academic areas, our staff and our students.
- Underpinning the delivery of all our programmes with enquiry, investigation and discovery through research-informed teaching, scholarship and leading-edge professional practice.
- Focussing our research and knowledge exchange capacity to maximise regional, national and international impact, alongside a particular emphasis on optimising the student experience.

### Professional



- Shaping leading-edge professional practice through dialogue, debate, consultancy and research with businesses, schools, professional bodies and other partners and being positioned as a professional development 'provider of choice'.
- Influencing regional and national bodies and identifying and engaging with high-impact social and economic development opportunities.
- Generating and delivering knowledge exchange activities which achieve evidence-based social and economic impact.

### Personal



- Setting challenging goals and raising the expectations and confidence of our students, staff and partners to achieve remarkable outcomes.
- Recruiting staff who are wholeheartedly committed to the University's values and delivery of our distinctive offer to students.
- Celebrating the success of our students and our staff and rewarding and recognising excellence.



## FURTHER

## ENGAGEMENT

This strategy will evolve over time as our environment and operating conditions are continually changing and we need to adapt constantly. We will assess our progress and our performance frequently (and in line with the Key Performance Indicators) and we will make necessary changes to meet our strategic intentions.

### Enabling Strategies

A number of enabling strategies will support the delivery of the Strategic Plan and the associated themes. These will cover people planning, marketing and recruitment, community engagement, estates, finance, academic activity, student experience, research, knowledge exchange, international activity and information systems.



Your feedback on the Strategic Plan is welcomed – whether you are a student, prospective student, alumni, member of staff, partner or other stakeholder.

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