



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Inspiring Futures, Shaping Societies

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures
Vision and Strategy, 2025–30

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Vision

The arts and humanities are, and always will be, central to the human condition. The critical issues facing the world cannot be solved without the intervention of our disciplines, working separately or in collaboration with others from right across the academy.



The Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures aims to produce world-leading research and a top-quality student educational experience, as well as sector-leading partnership activity. Its position, set within the University of Leeds on the one hand and the Leeds city region on the other, gives it immense resources for collaborative potential and the ability to make a real impact. Its consciously wide subject portfolio, which covers virtually the whole waterfront of the arts and humanities including the classic humanities disciplines, creative subjects, practice research, social science, and lab-based science, gives us a unique ability to do so.

Our vision is grounded in courage, hope and honesty. We work as a partnership of academics, students, professional services, and technical staff. We know that it is only through inclusivity that we can fully understand our disciplines, and this inclusive approach enables us to connect fully and effectively with our institutional, local, and international communities, delivering a positive civic and societal impact. We foster a reflective culture, creating opportunities for staff and students to flourish, building strong, open, and collaborative networks across the Faculty, the University, the global higher education sector, and with our multiple partners across numerous sectors in the UK and beyond. We work in full accordance with [Universal Values, Global Change: University of Leeds Strategy, 2020-2030](#), as well as closely aligning our strategy delivery plans with the [University Key Performance Indicators](#) to allow us to measure progress and success.

Themes



01

People and Culture

We will continue to build a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment that values diverse perspectives and fosters a culture of trust, kindness, and respect, enabling collaboration and providing a space where everyone can produce their best work.



02

Student Education

We will recruit a diverse student body into innovative, high-quality programmes that will prepare them to succeed both as students and after they have graduated, and to be advocates for their Leeds degree and the arts and humanities more broadly.



03

Research

We will support diverse knowledge creation, address global challenges through strong disciplines and collaboration, and leverage our unique arts, humanities, and regional strengths for impactful research.



04

International

We will attract and cultivate a global community of students and staff, by strengthening our national and international reputation, integrating international learning throughout the curriculum, and fostering a shared sense of belonging to deliver the University's International Strategy (2020–30).



05

Civic Responsibility

We will support and advance the University's civic role and ambitions by strengthening regional, national, and international partnerships and activities across sectors, and working with business, government and third sector bodies, as well as fostering community engagement in the arts and humanities.



06

Sustainability

We will embed sustainability across the Faculty's activities, securing a sound financial basis from which to grow and prioritise our environmental, social, and economic goals, in turn, supporting the University's Climate Plan and Pathway to Net Zero and contributing to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

01

People and Culture



Driven by our University values and aligning ourselves with the University **Wellbeing, Health and Safety Policy**, our Faculty will be a place where everyone feels safe, supported, valued, and listened to. Our commitment to delivering the **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy** is rooted in the understanding that different perspectives enrich our community. Our differences are key to our successes. We will attract and retain talented staff and students from diverse backgrounds and provide equality of opportunity for all. We want to create a caring culture of trust, kindness and mutual respect, prioritising time for staff and students to collaborate, supporting each other to achieve excellence and deliver our vision and strategy in an inclusive environment.

Priorities and actions

1.1

Celebrate and harness our differences through an inclusive working environment where every voice counts, and recognise that a supportive and open working culture is vital to the health, wellbeing, and success of our Faculty and everyone in it.

- Take time to celebrate our success and foster a culture which values diversity of expertise and opinion across our staff and students.
- Create more opportunities to work openly and collaboratively, sharing our ideas and best practice with colleagues and students and working in partnership to realise our academic vision.
- Strengthen mentorship arrangements for staff and students as part of the Faculty's wellbeing approach, which provides multiple contact points and routes to seek support.

1.2

Ensure that equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging are fundamental to everything we do, based on a shared purpose and a sense of community and belonging.

- Equip staff and students with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities necessary to incorporate Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), anti-discrimination and positive action into their everyday practices, and to become champions for EDI.
- Take positive action as appropriate to diversify our Faculty staff and student populations.
- Monitor and address intersectional inequalities in career opportunities, development, and outcomes across all of our staff and student groups.



02

Student Education



To deliver the University's Student Education Strategy 2020-30 and Digital Transformation Strategy 2020-30, we will recruit a diverse student community onto high-quality, innovative programmes, and support those students to be successful in their studies and in their future professional, personal, and other ambitions. Student Education will be grounded in sustainable, stimulating, and globally orientated programmes and opportunities led by innovative educators and prizing intellectual diversity and debate. Our graduates will recognise, and be able to articulate positively, the value of their Leeds degree, and of the arts and humanities more broadly, as they progress in the world after university.

Priorities and actions

2.1

Guided by the University's Curriculum Re-defined Programme, we will maximise the quality and impact of student education and opportunities through the development and continuous review of a portfolio of relevant, innovative, and financially sustainable undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

- Engage proactively with academic, professional, and technical staff and students as partners and co-creators in curriculum design and the development of our educational experience, to ensure that the student voice is heard and to create opportunities for staff to engage in the development of a variety of programmes within, between, and across disciplines.
- Promote scholarship, the continual development of pedagogic research, and the effective use of data to support student education developments including decolonisation, global civic responsibility, and social justice, ensuring that all students are exposed to new and diverse perspectives during their time at Leeds, and seeing new technologies as an opportunity to be critically engaged with, rather than a threat.
- Provide sustained support and opportunities for students from all backgrounds and with any and all protected characteristics to enter and succeed in the Faculty, delivering the Access and Student Success Strategy.
- Develop opportunities for fully online and hybrid delivery in response to the changing needs and location of our students.

2.2

Develop our interdisciplinary, student research, and civic strengths by actively enabling collaboration with both academic and external partners for students and staff.

- Work with industry, the third sector, and the creative sector to deliver programmes and opportunities which benefit students and the local, national, and international community.
- Enable our graduates to realise their potential through personal development and the joy of learning, combined with opportunities to develop the skills necessary for future employability.
- Support the development of a vibrant alumni community which continues to support graduates into the future.

03

Research



To deliver the University's **Research and Innovation Strategy 2020–30**, we will value and support all forms of knowledge creation and address complex issues facing the world. Our research and scholarship are grounded in strong disciplines which are developing innovative methods both within the arts and humanities and in interdisciplinary dialogue with academic and external partners. Our success is enabled and supported by our inclusive, equitable and diverse research environment. It is underpinned by a strong research culture in each of our schools, and brought together by the **Leeds Arts and Humanities Research Institute** (LAHRI), the **Leeds Institute for Societal Futures** (LISF), and a multiplicity of other collaborative ventures. In pursuit of research success and impact, we seek to leverage our unique combination of arts and humanities disciplines, our dynamic combination of critical and creative approaches, the strength and breadth of our practice research, and the multiplicity of opportunities presented by the geographical location and sheer diversity of our city region.

Priorities and actions

3.1

Maximise the quality and impact of research and scholarship, developing our portfolio of activity to deliver sustainable academic excellence. Developing our interdisciplinary strengths, we will collaborate closely with both academic and external partners and create a supportive, inclusive, equitable research environment which allows colleagues to flourish.

- Support a strong submission to REF 2029 which reflects the vibrant, supportive research culture of the Faculty.
- Advocate fair and sustainable funding, influencing policy in support of the value and significance of arts and humanities research.
- Create opportunities for staff and students to engage with research across disciplines and engage with institution-wide interdisciplinary structures.
- Take positive action and initiatives to address systemic inequities in research in ways which reflect our EDI commitments, providing support and mentoring for all career stages from ECR onwards.
- Recognise and celebrate the contribution of our professional, technical, and non-research academic colleagues to the overall success of our research efforts.

3.2

Ensure that our research excellence enhances the AHC student experience, creates opportunities for taught and postgraduate research students, and supports strong and productive international partnerships.

- Work proactively to seek opportunities to align research and scholarship activities with student opportunity at all stages of the student journey.
- Develop sustainable support for PGRs, ensuring the best possible environment for postgraduate research which supports the cross-fertilisation of ideas, in full recognition of the contribution that postgraduate researchers make to (and gain from) the research and innovation portfolio across the Faculty.
- Build meaningful and durable research partnerships which align with the Faculty's international strategy.

04

International



We will attract students and staff from all over the world, thanks to our excellent national and international reputation. All our students should have international learning opportunities, and international learning will be integrated throughout our curriculum. The city of Leeds' global and diverse community enables all our staff and students to feel at home, while celebrating our common university heritage together. We will further develop our global community of staff and students in a shared sense of belonging to deliver the University's [International Strategy 2020-30](#).

Priorities and actions

4.1

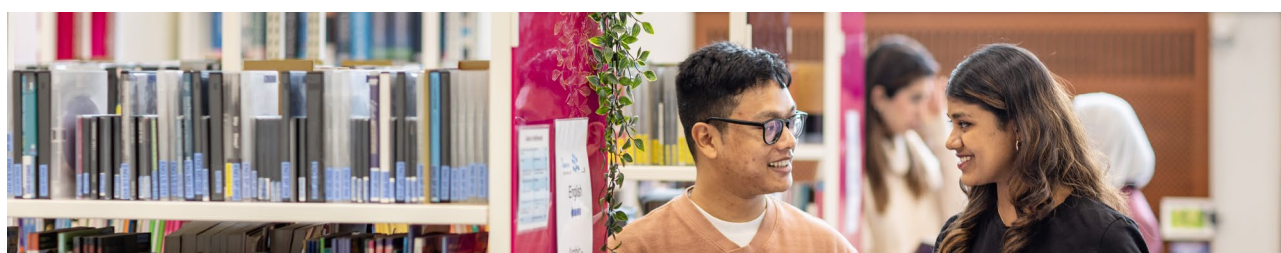
Build our inclusive global community, attracting a diverse mix of staff and students who will ensure our Faculty feels international, diverse, and welcoming, and integrate internationalisation across our activities to enhance our global reputation.

- Take the lead in developing a truly international culture for the University of Leeds which is grounded in mutual respect and profound commitments to developing cultural competence, offering training for staff and students to enhance intercultural awareness.
- Use and enhance our extensive and excellent language support services, including the [Language Centre](#), to accommodate and develop diverse linguistic backgrounds.
- Expand orientation and mentoring programmes and develop a more holistic approach which offers practical support to staff and students before, during, and after their arrival in Leeds.
- Highlight the inherent value of internationalisation and how this promotes fresh perspectives, making students more globally and intellectually aware, and enhancing the quality, value, and applicability of their research.

4.2

Develop international collaborations to ensure that our teaching and research excellence has international impact including partnerships and joint initiatives/exchanges with universities in the Global Majority.

- Integrate sustainability considerations into the design of international partnerships, developing and implementing strategies to reduce the Faculty's carbon footprint.
- Deepen our relationships with partners so they are mutually beneficial and meaningful, ensuring our partnerships are resilient and sustainable.
- Develop our partnerships strategically so there are multiple strands to our approach, in ways appropriate to each school.



05

Civic Responsibility



We will take advantage of our regional, national and international position to develop ever-stronger links with educational, industrial, commercial, and cultural and creative partners. We will create space for community engagement with the arts and humanities, building on the impact of our research and pedagogic strengths to create new learning and external development opportunities. In so doing, we recognise the ethical considerations of civic responsibility and the paramount need for mutual respect. We will embrace the potential transformative impact that cultural, community-based, and business enterprise approaches have within the academy and in the local regional, national, and global context.

Priorities and actions

5.1

Co-create and collaborate to develop sustainable business and corporate partnerships that feed into curriculum development, research priorities, and impact, taking particular advantage of the multilingual, multicultural, and diverse local context in a global setting.

- Develop innovative models of interdisciplinary thinking that position the Faculty as clearly distinctive in national and international terms, raising the profile and importance of the arts and humanities, and enhancing our visibility and connectivity with other HE institutions.
- Support and encourage colleagues to apply for funding to enable us to develop our profile across the whole spectrum of activity in this area.
- Work with professional services colleagues, and in dialogue with the city, to develop and tell our collective stories through histories, collections and resources, capitalising on the infrastructure and resources available to the Faculty, including special collections, archives, galleries, and maker spaces.

5.2

Work in partnership with industry, the third sector, and the creative and cultural industries to deliver opportunities for staff and students, and to develop a compelling offer around professional training.

- Work closely with the University's Cultural Engagement Strategy and, where appropriate, the Cultural Institute, to partner with cultural and arts organisations which share our values, and work with local authorities, drawing on our expertise as a repository of knowledge and as an engaged and learning partner.
- Work in line with the University's Business Engagement and Enterprise Strategy to ensure that we develop and exploit commercial opportunities as appropriate.
- Ensure that we are outward facing, realistic, and current, connecting the impact of our research, our offer of professional development, and advanced skills training through the establishment of a Faculty Industrial Advisory Board and a Faculty hub for external engagement activity.
- Set up pop-up creative exchanges around particular themes or areas of research that can feed into curriculum design, research, impact and external development opportunities, allowing us to share best practice and use cases across schools.

06

Sustainability



We will weave sustainability as a thread right through the Faculty's activities. Financial sustainability is essential. We will curate our budgets carefully, investing where we can, optimising income, and carefully controlling costs and expenditure. Environmental, social, and economic sustainability are fundamental to all our aspirations. Academically, we will contribute to major initiatives and debates, through both criticality and creativity. Globally, we are fully committed to the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#); locally, we look to fulfil the ambitions of the University's [Climate Plan](#) and [Pathway to Net Zero](#).

Priorities and actions

6.1

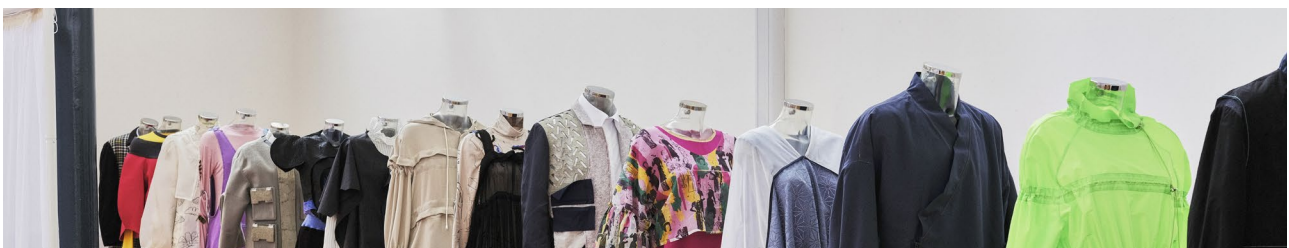
Act as advocates for sustainability, with a clear sense of the benefits it brings to our health, our economy, and our future.

- Ensure that our graduates leave Leeds with an enhanced awareness of, and capacity to address, global sustainability challenges, with all of our programmes including core content on sustainability.
- Promote impactful intellectual leadership in the area of environmental sustainability, for example, in terms of the fashion industry through the work of the Leeds Institute of Textiles and Colour and the Future Fashion Factory, or in the area of ethics through Centre for Interdisciplinary Ethics Applied (IDEA).
- Adopt a cost-benefit approach across all our activities when considering the need to travel, and promote the use of online alternatives where feasible and appropriate.

6.2

Our buildings and other spaces will be fit for purpose, safe, inviting, and inclusive.

- We will ensure that our spaces have a look and feel reflecting the Faculty's values, and which are consciously inclusive of our whole community. Our historic buildings are an asset, but need to be fully accessible and much more energy efficient.
- Working with the University, we will use our estate to optimum capacity, creating sustainable, inviting, and comfortable shared spaces which promote a good working environment and the exploration of new approaches.
- Working with our students, we will ensure our spaces are fit for purpose and accessible to all.





UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Cultures

University of Leeds
Leeds, United Kingdom

LS2 9JT

0113 243 1751
www.leeds.ac.uk

Designed by
PACE