UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

OUTCOME AGREEMENT

2023-2024

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1.   **INTRODUCTION**

This is the University of Aberdeen's Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) for 2023-24. Its sets out the University's commitments to delivering outcomes prioritised by the Scottish Government via the SFC, relating to Fair Access and Transitions, Quality Learning and Transitions, Coherent Learning Provision, Work-based Learning and Skills, Net Zero and Environmental Sustainability Response and High-Quality Research and Innovation. The Outcome Agreement also includes an update on the University Innovation Fund plans.

This Outcome Agreement comes at a time when the University, as with the wider sector, focuses not just on furthering its post-pandemic recovery, but on mitigating an on-going cost of living crisis, driven by increases to inflation and rising costs. This document therefore outlines key measures taken by the University in response to these challenging environmental factors across the priority areas identified by the SFC, focusing not least on supporting the health, safety and wellbeing of the University community.

This ethos is underpinned by the University's [Aberdeen 2040 strategy](#) which was launched in February 2020. With its focus on Education and Research, and the four strategic themes of Inclusive, Interdisciplinary, International and Sustainable, it sets out 20, high-level commitments to be delivered over the coming years; providing a framework for longer-term contributions to society as every effort is made to collectively navigate these challenging times. In this regard, the University is pleased to note that despite the challenges faced in recent years. its ability to work towards its strategic commitments has remained unchanged; reflected in key measures like the National Student Survey (NSS) where it ranks 2nd in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland for student satisfaction, and also across different league tables, where it currently ranks inside the UK top 20 in two of the primary domestic measures - 13th in the UK in the Guardian University Guide 2023, and 19th in the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2023.

Taking account of this wider context, this Agreement focuses on how the University will continue to address the key areas and priority outcomes identified by the Scottish Government via the SFC, in line with its own strategic priorities. It covers the following areas:

- Fair Access and Transitions
- Quality Learning and Transitions
- Coherent Learning Provision
- Work-Based Learning and Skills
- Net Zero and Environmental Sustainability Response
- High-quality Research and Innovation

    o Effective use of SFC Core Research grants in AY 2023-24
    o Supporting sustainability and future research excellence
    o Enabling an excellent research environment and positive cultures

- University Innovation Fund (UIF)

It should be noted at the outset that whilst this document focuses primarily on the Scottish context, the strategies, actions, standards and services taken forward and provided by the University to staff and students, are also applied to staff and students studying as part of the University's provision in Qatar, and other TNE initiatives such as the University's partnership with South China Normal University (SCNU), where applicable. It should also be noted that University continues to work positively with the three recognised Trade Unions on campus, including through its Campus Planning Group.

Any queries in relation to this Outcome Agreement or the affiliated documentation should be directed to the University's Director of Planning & Governance or Head of Strategic Planning in the first instance, via planning@abdn.ac.uk.

2. FAIR ACCESS AND TRANSITIONS

The University of Aberdeen in AY 2023-24 will continue to champion, campaign for and actively support widening access to higher education. The University will do this by:

- Working with external stakeholders such as the Scottish Government, Scottish Funding Council and Local Government, to ensure that Widening Access metrics effectively support regional and national ambitions for widening access.
- Reviewing Scottish Government data in relation to the characteristics of secondary schools and their pupils in the local region on a yearly basis, to ensure that the University is informed and agile in its response.
- By continuing to engage proactively with sector-wide organisations, to influence the development of, and the available support for, policy and initiatives to enhance access to, and successful completion of Higher Education.

The University will continue to provide pre-entry support for students from all widening access backgrounds ensuring that they have awareness of the opportunities for access to Higher Education, of the support arrangements available, and of the experience of other students. Some examples of the work that will be undertaken in this area include:

- Enabling the University's Academic Schools, through the innovation and enthusiasm of its staff community, to engage in outreach activities that raise aspirations.
- Continue to implement the University's Contextualised Admissions Policy.
- To further progress opportunities for, and numbers of student progressing through, advanced standing articulation routes with FE partners, by increasing the efficacy of existing routes and exploring new routes, including in response to changes in qualifications frameworks.
- The University recognises Free School Meals (FSM) as one of its contextualised admissions metrics, but in November 2021, it decided to elevate the status of FSM to the same level as SIMD20. This approach better reflects the University's 2040 commitments, its wider commitments to the region, and to wider commitments to regional engagement. In AY 2023-24 the University will continue the implementation of this approach, adapting data capture, reporting lines, and promotional materials, among other measures.
- Continue to expand work to provide prospective students from widening access backgrounds and their supporters with information, advice and guidance to inform choice and support academic success.
- Implement enhanced Bridging Programmes to support access and transition to HE, across a wider range of discipline areas, and to augment the capacity of key initiatives such as Access Aberdeen, Articulate Aberdeen, and Reach (National Schools Programme).
- Work with SFC and stakeholders to develop the new National Schools Programme.

The University will continue to run, develop and evaluate the Reach Programme, part of the National Schools programme funded by the SFC. The Reach Programme provides information, advice and guidance on applying for professional degrees. The programme

hosted by the University offers support for Law and Medicine specifically. The project supports S4-S6 pupils who meet the eligibility criteria, from across Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Moray, Highlands, Orkney and Shetland.

The University will continue to provide scholarships and other means of support for students for whom tuition fees and other costs of study, direct and indirect, may be a barrier to entry, progression, and success. To do this, the University's Access and Articulation team actively works with the University's Development Trust, and possible providers of external funding, to develop a broad range of financial support for widening access students, including multi-year scholarships, within the framework of Access Aberdeen.

In AY 2023-24 the University will continue to implement its transitions strategy to support and prepare students at different stages of their student journey - from school to university, or from HNC to Year 2 - and for students with different needs, such as student carers. Please see a summary describing some of the activities and support that will be offered below:

- Delivery of an on-campus event for transitioning widening access and articulation students.
- Delivery of the Engineering Transitional Summer School for Advanced Entry Engineering Students.
- Introductory Ecology and Statistics online courses will be delivered for articulating Biological Science Students.

2.1 THE UNIVERSITY'S OUTLINE OF HOW IT SUPPORTS THE SECTOR'S DELIVERY OF THE COWA TARGETS

The University continues in its efforts to meet the sector-wide target of 10% for Scottish-domiciled entrants from the 20% most deprived areas in the country. In 2022-23 provisional data indicates that the University performance in this area dropped slightly from 7.9% to 7.0%. While this means that the University remains short of the overarching SFC target, this result reflects the context in the sector and the region. The majority of SIMD20 students do not live in the North East of Scotland region and the cost-of-living crisis, which started in earnest in AY 2022-23, means that students were less willing to travel for study. The Commissioner for Widening Access has acknowledged that the current SIMD20 metrics applied across Scotland do not meet the needs of the local Aberdeen city and Shire catchment.

Notwithstanding these points, the University continues to work with the SFC to best support the widening access agenda, both locally and nationally, by continuing to enhance entry routes into Higher Education. As already highlighted in this document there are numerous policies to support fair access and transitions, which directly support the delivery of the COWA targets. These include:

- Continued free accommodation to first year SIMD20 students.
- Continued promotion of the Eligibility for Free School Meals alongside SIMD20 as a key widening access measure.
- Contextualised admissions, with applicants meeting widening access criteria guaranteed an adjusted offer.
- Targeted Scholarships.
- Ongoing partnerships and collaborations that work with target learners at schools and colleges through University-funded initiatives.

3. QUALITY LEARNING AND TEACHING

3.1 QUALITY AND STANDARDS

The University oversees standards of its learning experience through its Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), which is further developing work to enhance consistency, transparency and sharing of good practice. The relevant University policies and regulations are mapped to the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Quality Code, and this remains a live process.

In January 2023 the University established an Academic Policy and Regulations Group (APRG) to have responsibility for the development of new and existing policies and regulations, and for reviewing the mapping of institutional policies to the Quality Code (see above).

In AY 2023-24 the University will continue to complete, embed and reflect on work undertaken as part of the Resilient Learning Communities Enhancement Theme, particularly working to share practice and disseminate initiatives developed as part of the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Programme (LTEP) projects, and the sector-wide work around micro credentials.

Following the completion of the Enhancement Theme, the Resilient Learning Communities Community of Practice will be repurposed to focus on discussions and practice sharing around "embracing diversity", which will be a theme around which teaching and learning development work will be focused. This theme was also the focus of the University's Annual Academic Development symposium which took place in April 2023, and which included substantial student input. Some examples of this input include:

- All of the sessions (with the exception of the Keynote address) at the symposium included contributions from the University's students, representing all levels of study.
- Students were involved in the Enhancement Projects Showcase, which shared some of the innovative practice which has been funded through the University's Learning & Teaching Enhancement Programme, which also aligned with QAA Scotland's Enhancement Theme, Resilient Learning Communities.
- Several of the posters which were present at the Symposium involved students including Poster 1 - 'Enhancing Assessment and Feedback Practices: The Student Wishlist'; 5 - 'Collaborating with Students to Improve and Raise Awareness of Digital Accessibility' and 7 - 'Reasons Behind Contract Cheating: Investigation on students' views on academic integrity and contract cheating'. All of the posters from the symposium were made available on the University's website here.

The actions indicated in the Quality Enhancement and Standards Review (QESR) report are listed part of a University action plan and work will continue on resolving these actions moving forward in AY 2023-24. These actions specifically relate to external examiner reports and pastoral support provision for postgraduate students. The actions will help to improve student access to external examiner reports and pastoral support for this category of students. Please see a summary describing a selection of actions in the University's plan below:

- Communications will be issued to external examiners, academic schools and students to ensure that every party has the information that they need to deliver or access the examiner reports.
- Pastoral support for PGT students will be reviewed in order to enhance consistency of provision and enhance student awareness and access to appropriate support networks.

Plans are underway for the next phase of the QESR, with the Institutional Liaison Meeting (ILM) scheduled for January 2024.

3.2 STUDENT SUPPORT AND WELLBEING

The University is strategically focused on caring for the wellbeing, health and safety of its people – staff and students – and on providing development support to help people achieve their full potential. Examples of initiatives in place for AY 2023-24 include:

- Introduction of a triage-based duty service across student support services enabling same day support across the University's main Student Advice Team. This team provides advice and support to students with additional needs, disabilities and temporary impairments that may require additional support or adjustments within the learning environment.
- Introduction of a 24/7 student helpline that offers all students access to counselling and in the moment support, over and above its own internal counselling services - which operate with no waiting list - to support them through the difficult periods in the student lifecycle.
- The University's Student Support and Experience Committee has been reviewing a range of provisions, post pandemic, with a view to ensuring the University is able to meet the evolving demands of students with disabilities. Further work on this is planned for AY 2023-24, with an aim to simplifying this process and clarifying the options for support.

3.3 STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT IN THEIR EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

The University is committed to ensuring that students are able to contribute to their educational and wider experience through feedback, involvement with strategic initiatives and through committee membership. The following list details some key areas that will be further developed to enhance the opportunities for students to act in this regard:

- Students have been involved in all 21 LTEP projects during the Resilient Learning Communities Enhancement Theme, and are well represented on the Enhancement Theme Steering Group, Community of Practice and LTEP network.
- Following the positive impact these project experiences have had on student experiences, further LTEP plan to continue to emphasise the importance of students as co-creators on these projects.
- Students will be consulted on key academic issues through their membership of central committees e.g. the University Education Committee (UEC), and governance structures e.g. Senate, Court
- Students will continue to be integral to periodic review approaches, e.g. annual feedback cycles, internal teaching reviews.
- Students will continue to be a core part of the teams taking forward Institutional priorities e.g. decolonising the curriculum, academic integrity, TESTA*, National Student Survey engagement.
- Continuing to develop the Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) and provide annual updates detailing progress.
- Continuing to draw on the student voice from key measures such as the National Student Survey (NSS), and the 22/23 Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey and review of the Aberdeen Student Experience Surveys. These surveys inform School and Institutional action planning.

The following summary lists some of the key activities and developments that the University has undertaken, is continuing or is about to start as a result of feedback from students that

was submitted via the Aberdeen Student Experience Survey, student focus groups or through student engagement in committees:

- Peer support networks are being enhanced so as to include opportunities for all PGT students.
- Changes have been made to the University's Library as a result of feedback from student representatives on the Library Transformation Board; these have included but are not limited to: the introduction of new, different zones in the libraries (silent, quiet, collaborative) to help the community make better use of library spaces.
- The University will continue to offer four to six bite sized sessions to help students develop their digital skills. This is in addition to a digital skills session called Pathways to Success, which helps students to specifically develop digital skills for the workplace.

(*TESTA stands for Transforming the Experience of Students Through Assessments. It is a method of reviewing the assessment and feedback practices of a University at a programme-level to identify areas of enhancement and effective practice in higher education. Since its inception, TESTA and its methodologies have been implemented across a wide range of UK universities.)

3.4 ENHANCING STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The University has active plans to continue to enhance the experience of its students, which takes account of the evidence for enhancement. The following are some examples of the work and activities that will either take place during or will continue in AY 2023/24:

- In Phase II of the TESTA pilot, the University is advancing the implementation of the protocol in three additional schools, while also exploring its applicability with postgraduate taught students (PGTs). The evaluation of Phase I has revealed that a majority of the courses involved have made subsequent modifications to their learning outcomes, assessment practices, and feedback methods. By the end of the upcoming year, the University will assess whether these changes have indeed led to an improvement in the overall student experience.
- The University is currently engaged in comprehensive research in collaboration with students, aimed at exploring the topic of academic integrity. Specifically, this research focuses on identifying the barriers and facilitators that influence student engagement with contract cheating services, as well as understanding student attitudes towards the utilisation of generative AI in assessment practices. Both of these studies aim to gain insights into student attitudes and experiences, enabling the university to develop appropriate support and training mechanisms to enhance their overall academic experience.
- Enhanced student monitoring processes allow identification of a lack of engagement with learning and triggers a process by which academic and pastoral support is provided proactively. A review of the approach to monitoring student engagement has been completed which has resulted in significant financial investment to enhance IT services over 2023/24. In addition, regular community of practice meetings brings staff together to ensure that monitoring processes continue to remain effective.
- The University is currently undertaking the EmilyTest Charter to ensure that students have the best possible environment in which to move forward and be successful following an instance of gender based violence.
- The University will complete its review of the Pastoral Support provision in September 2023, which was conducted to revise existing personal tutoring practices and to ensure that appropriate pastoral support is provided for all students. Pastoral support is now

provided to all students (UG/PGT) both on campus (Aberdeen, Qatar and South China Normal University (SCNU)) and for online students. Pastoral support webpages have been fully revised, and enhanced staff-training is now provided to support staff in their pastoral roles.

4. COHERENT LEARNING PROVISION

The University is committed to the delivery of coherent learning provision that meets the needs of students, industry and other stakeholders.

4.1 ENTERPRISE AND INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The University's Employability & Entrepreneurship Committee, Enterprise & Innovation Committee and Discipline specific Employer Boards provide an opportunity for the University to engage with relevant external stakeholders to inform both institutional strategy (via Aberdeen 2040) and discipline-level approaches its educational offering, thereby making sure that the University is making informed decisions on the future of our education and industry engagement.

The University's Academic Schools have positive working relationships with industry which help to inform curriculum design and support programme and course delivery. Some examples include:

- The School of Social Science has a long-standing relation with Enterprise Rent a Car regarding one of the Schools undergraduate employability courses. This course has benefitted from an annual stipend from Enterprise Rent a Car, which has been used to fund Belbin self-assessments for students and gives direct linkages between the business and the course delivery team to support delivery of the course's objectives.
- The School of Natural and Computing Sciences periodically collaborates with Arria in the Natural Language Generation course as part of the MSc in Artificial Intelligence. Arria is a leading company in the area of Natural Language Generation, and it contributes with realistic case studies for discussion in the lectures, practical sessions and assessments of the course.
- The School of Education has ongoing partnership with all of the Local Authorities with whom the University places students for School Experience as part of all of the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes. Meetings are held throughout the year, with colleagues from the Local Authorities, to discuss how the requirements of the placements and the work undertaken whilst on campus is preparing the students for life in the classroom. Staff from the Academic School meet regularly primary and secondary school staff and other relevant stakeholders to seek their input on assessments, courses content and structure. The General Teaching Council of Scotland's re-accreditation process also requires the School of Education to work with stakeholders as the programme is developed and changed as we move forward.

4.2 ENTREPRENEURIAL CAMPUS

With the recent publication of the [Scottish Government's Entrepreneurial Campus Report](#), the University is undertaking work to map its existing activities and to design future provision. This will support the University's ambitions as part of the Aberdeen 2040 strategy while also aligning its activity to the ambitions of the wider entrepreneurial ecosystem in in the region and nationally. Collaboration with key partners at regional and national levels will be fundamental.

4.3 REGIONAL LEARNING AND SKILLS PARTNERSHIP

The University is an active member of a group that is working on a new Skills Action Plan for the region, aligned to the new Regional Economic Strategy. The University has attended and participated in workshops led by Skills Development Scotland that seek to inform this new action plan. Key partners in this work include:

- Tertiary and higher education providers in the Northeast of Scotland (Robert Gordon University, Scotland's Rural College, North East Scotland College, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Developing the Young Workforce North East).
- Sector and skills organisations (Scottish Funding Council, Scottish Enterprise, Opportunity North East, Skills Development Scotland, Grampian Regional Equality Council).

The overarching aim of this partnership is to inform regional provision, to identify skills gaps and to provide opportunities for collaboration between key partners for the people and communities in and around Aberdeen and North East of Scotland.

4.4 NE REGIONAL PATHFINDERS PROJECTS

The University continues to participate in the delivery of a series of pilot projects as part of the NE Regional Pathfinder, one of which is being delivered with the National Energy Skills Accelerator (NESA) to develop an interactive tool to help learners understand the pathways through education providers in the region, into renewable energy roles. Delivery of the prototype is expected in early 2024. The 'Simulation-Based Education' Pathfinder pilot project is progressing an exercise to map the relevant health and social-care simulation resources available in the NE of Scotland. It is also developing a better understanding of the unmet needs and challenges surrounding access to such technologies to support training and education.

4.5 CURRICULUM PLANNING & COHERENT LEARNING PROVISION

The University's planning process for academic programme commissioning and portfolio management is responsive, flexible and informed by local, regional and national developments and needs. Academic Schools when developing new programmes and making amendments to the other degrees in their portfolio, consult with and are informed by their Employer Boards, the Employability & Entrepreneurship Committee, the Enterprise & Innovation Committee and their own extensive networks to ensure that their curriculum offer meets the needs of key stakeholders and skills demands. The University's Marketing team also work with the Academic Schools to ensure that academic programmes meet the needs and demands of the many different markets served by the University.

The University's Academic Schools receive regular updates with data and intelligence, from a variety of sources, which then inform their curriculum planning process. For example, the University's Academic School regularly commission marketing and feasibility reports from a range of companies and organisations and these then feed into the academic curriculum planning process. The University also works with national professional bodies, many of whom accredit some of the degrees offered by the University, to ensure that the University's academic offering is up to date and meeting the requirements of industry. The University's actively attends conferences and local industry events (e.g., Offshore Europe) to network, form new partnerships and open new pathways of communication with stakeholders. The University sends a variety of staff, and where appropriate students, to attend conferences and events. For example, academics attend conferences where they can learn about the latest developments in their subject areas and often how they relate to industry and other national

or regional needs. These insights can then inform their teaching. Members of professional services staff, who are involved in curriculum planning, development and implementation regularly attend events where they can learn firsthand about what sort of skills are required by different sectors.

In AY 2023-24 The University will continue, as part of its commitment to the Pathfinders Programme, to actively work as part of a small group of Scottish HEIs and the SFC to build on the wider sectors understanding of the curriculum planning process and how it contributes to Coherent Learning Provision. As part of this endeavour the University will share good practice on curriculum planning and employer engagement.

5. WORK-BASED LEARNING AND SKILLS

The University is committed to providing quality work-based learning (WBL) provision and skills development opportunities.

5.1 WORK BASED LEARNING (WBL)

The University's Aberdeen 2040 strategy Education commitment states: *"We will provide more work-based learning, through placements and volunteering".* Subsequent to the launch of the Aberdeen 2040 strategy, the University has now agreed an institutional vision that: *"All undergraduate and postgraduate taught University of Aberdeen students will have the option to gain experience via a flexible menu of work-based and work-related learning opportunities."*

A five-year plan is now being actively implemented to deliver this vision. This plan will enable the University to establish the infrastructure, systems, and processes to manage the upscaling of work-based learning delivery. The University is currently working on the development of an Experiential Learning Platform to facilities WBL delivery from September 2024.

In addition, a work-based learning hub is being established by the University to centrally provide the staff resource required to support the growth of WBL. The following are some examples of work and activities already in place to support students with work-based learning and skills:

- Placements are currently available in the curriculum within a range of disciplines, such as Psychology, Computing Science, Biological Science, Museum Studies and Medical Sciences, and range from shorter placements for one semester, up to one-year placements.
- Work-based projects as a credit-bearing alternative to a dissertation or research is already an option in some PGT programmes, and is being considered within some UG programmes, including from the Business School and the School of Engineering.
- Work-related learning, taken as a credit-bearing course, is available to a range of undergraduate and postgraduate students. Developing more employer-led projects in courses is a current priority as an effective and accessible way to scale up engagement.
- A wide range of co-curricular part-time term and full-time vacation internship programmes and opportunities are being developed to enable greater numbers of students to gain valuable experience alongside their studies. Established programmes include the Third Sector Internships programmes, support by the Wood Foundation, the Aberdeen internship and Intern+ programmes and the Virtual Summer Team Internships programme.

5.2 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

As detailed in section 4.1 the University, through the aforementioned Employability & Entrepreneurship Committee, Enterprise & Innovation Committee and Discipline-specific Employer boards engages with the relevant external stakeholders to inform both institutional strategy (via Aberdeen 2040) and disciple-level approaches to its educational offering, thereby making sure that the University is making informed decisions on the future of its education and industry engagement, and that its students will have the skills that they need.

In addition, as detailed in section 4.3 the University is also, through the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership, working on a new Skills Action Plan for the region, which will be aligned to the Regional Economic Strategy.

In AY 2023/24 the University will continue to develop its portfolio of skills-based learning opportunities. Please see the summary of key points and information related to this area of work below:

- In AY 2022/23 the University offered a total of 592 fee waivers with 560 registrations across 50 short courses.
- The University has seen an increase in the demand for courses in meta skills and as such will be working to create additional capacity in this area. Four new short courses focussing on leadership skills and change management will be launched in AY 2023-24 in response to feedback from applicants and discussions with industry partners.
- The University will continue to develop its short course route to full programme study option. This route allows students without the typical entry requirements to take two short courses to prove their capability of attaining a degree at Masters level. On successful completion of 30 credits, students can apply for a transfer to a suitable Masters programme. More of these opportunities are due to come on stream in the next academic year.
- Related to the point above, AY 2023-24 will also see the launch of the University's degree scheduler software. This will allow students to build their degrees to suit their requirements using flexible course options.
- In AY 2023-24 the University will have an increased focus on supporting skills gaps in the Energy industry through its work with the National Energy Skills Accelerator (NESA). This work will see a minimum of 135 fee waivers in short courses in various topics including engineering, leadership and project management.

The University continues to be involved in a wide range of regional groups allowing the University to respond to the current and prospective skills needs of all individuals at a regional level. The University's collaborative partnership under the National Energy Skills Accelerator (NESA) continues, and Academic Year 2023/24 will see two phases of provision delivered utilising the Just Transition Funding (JTF) that NESA is in receipt of, to respond to the skills demand required in the region as the North East transitions to renewable energies. As the project has progressed, each partner institution has been allocated a proportion of the JTF award to deliver relevant upskilling and reskilling provision to address the outcomes and recommendations from the project which have been formed following significant engagement with the energy industry. The initial outcomes and recommendations informed phase one delivery, with the final report due in the late autumn of 2023.

As referenced in the Coherent Learning Provision section, the University continues to participate in the delivery of a series of pilot projects as part of the NE Regional Pathfinder. Ongoing participation in the Pathfinder projects will give the University, through interactions with employers and other stakeholders, a better understanding off the skills needs of the region, which in turn will be reflected in the University's curriculum offer.

6.   NET ZERO AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY RESPONSE

6.1   CLIMATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND SUSTAINABILITY

The University is committed to achieving Net zero, sustainability and responding to the Climate Emergency. This is reflected in the University Aberdeen 2040 strategy in which *Sustainable* is a key strand. The following list of actions, activities and work, which will delivered throughout AY 2023-24 and some case beyond, will help the University to meet these commitments.

- In support of the University's 'whole institution' approach to sustainability, a Net Zero strategy with associated targets is currently being developed. The aim is to complete this strategy by end of calendar year 2023 (Please see section 6.2 for more info).
- The University is currently developing a staff training module to provide baseline sustainability learning for all categories of staff. This training module should be delivered by late 2023.
- Establishment of a programme of climate assemblies to engage the University's community in co-creating responses to suitability challenges. This will be an ongoing programme of one assembly per semester.
- The University will continue to prioritise its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS) including through participation in the [Times Higher Education Impact Rankings](#) and the publication of a stand-alone [SDG report](#).
- As part of the journey to reducing the University's energy related emissions, a number of projects and programmes are underway. A Sustainable Heating Programme Board has been established to consider immediate and longer-term approaches to the eventual decarbonisation of heat sources. The University has also initiated a rolling programme of heat centre upgrades for this year and next that will improve the level of hearing control it has across its facilities and will help prepare the institution's heat distribution network for a lower temperature future.
- In conjunction with the programme described in the point above, the University has endorsed a programme of energy saving measures that consist of behavioural, policy and control measures designed to assist with energy management, reduced demand and support behaviour change.
- The district heating network upgrade at the University's Hillhead student village is ongoing, with funding partially provided via the Scottish Funding Council's Financial Transactions scheme. This upgrade work will improve the stability of the network, whilst also preparing the site for the transition to a low carbon hear source, as part of our long-term heat decarbonisation ambition.

The University's approach to the aforementioned UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the wider embedding of sustainability thinking on its campuses continues to evolve. As well as compiling the annual SDG Reports and being assessed as part of the Times Higher Education Impact Ranking, other key indicators include:

- Routine mapping of research outputs against the SDGs.
- Embedding of active citizenship and sustainability as core component of the emerging graduate attributes framework.
- Initial assessment of the curriculum to reflect sustainability and SDG-related content.

6.2   NET ZERO STRATEGY

The University, as an integral part of its Aberdeen 2040 strategy, is committed to reaching Net Zero. To articulate this ambition fully, the University has established a Net Zero Strategies and

Targets Working Group to lead the development of its Net Zero Strategy. The strategy will include decarbonisation pathways and associated targets across several key activities and emission sources including decarbonised heat, sustainable laboratories, biodiversity, behaviour change, sustainable IT, and sustainable procurement among others. Although a major undertaking, the Group aims to have this work complete by the end of 2023.

The University's Net Zero Strategies and Targets Working Group has also developed an improved reporting baseline, endorsed an approach that utilises a Science Based Targets methodology and is currently developing the pathways linking these to the relevant SDGs. As part of an effort to enhance the University's understanding of the breadth and scale of Scope 2 emission, AY 2022/23 saw it incorporate additional Scope 3 emissions in its Public Bodies Climate Change Duties (PBCCD) report for the first time. The University has taken steps to further develop its understanding of Scope 3 emissions sources through a successful internship that saw the University develop a calculation methodology for the emissions associated with domestic and international student travel to study. This tool has enabled the University to understand its emissions from this source but has also been developed as a sector-wide tool that is being promoted via the EAUC and is now available for all institutions to use.

In conjunction with the Net Zero strategy, the University has begun to populate a 'live' Net Zero Project Register to identify all types of intervention to assist in its decarbonisation journey. Initially focussing on energy and estates related projects, the register aims to provide details of possible projects, as well as criteria for prioritisation.

As part of the University's shift towards longer term Net Zero thinking, and to reflect changes in reporting expectations, AY 2022-23 has seen the institution enhance its understanding of Scope 3 emissions. For our AY 2021-22 PBCCD report the University included Procurement emissions for the first time and, following developments this year, the institution will further enhance its AY 2022-23 report with evidence-based estimations of other travel related emissions, notably staff and student commuting and student travel to study in Aberdeen.

The University has also taken the opportunity to retrospectively reviews its AY 2015-16 emissions baseline. As reported via PBBCD in 2016-17, our 2015-16 baseline at that time consisted of 31,520 tCO2e emissions i.e., Scope 1 = 13,095 tCO2e, Scope 2 = 12,568 tCO2e, and Scope 3 = 5,958 tCO2e. Those Scope 3 totals included business travel and waste emissions, with business travel accounting for 5,705 tCO2e of the Scope 3 total.

With an improved understanding of methodology and the retrospective additions and correction of emissions associated with other Scope 3 categories, the University now estimates that our AY 2015-16 baseline consisted of some 92,556 tCO2e (i.e., Scope 1 = 13,332 tCO2e, Scope 2 = 11,319 tCO2e, Scope 3 = 67,905 tCO2e). This considerable increase in Scope 3 emissions reflects the addition of significant volumes of emissions associated with procurement, staff and student commuting, and domestic & international student travel to study. The University's full Public Bodies emissions reporting is available on here, on its website.

7. HIGH-QUALITY RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

7.1 EFFECTIVE USE OF SFC CORE RESEARCH GRANTS IN AY 2023-24

Internal Research Excellence Grant (REG) allocations are generated by the University using the SFC funding formula and weighting and then passed onto the relevant Academic Schools. There is a pro rata 'charge' to the Academic Schools for central support provision. REG supports the following, among other work and activities:

At the Academic School level:

- Contribution to staff costs.
- Academic School managed funds for conference attendance, networking, travel, pump priming, open access and more.
- Academic School managed funds for research leave (this varies among the different Schools).
- Co-funding for external research grants where required and postgraduate research studentships.
- Research facilities.
- Support for Early Career researchers and new academic appointments.

At the institutional level:

- Support for interdisciplinary themes, leaders, research fellows and studentships, as part of the University's investment in research capacity and sustainability of the research base.
- Research excellence – pump priming, support for research pilots, idea generation, grant writing, impact support, internal and external review of research outputs.
- Researcher development, EDI monitoring, focused interventions in line with identified development needs.
- Central funds for research leave (up to 100 x 6 months sabbaticals each year), visiting scholar scheme, conference and networking funds; part of a major investment programme in research and impact quality.
- Implementation of concordats and voluntary instruments, including the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA).
- Open access/dissemination infrastructure and processes; Aberdeen University Press.
- Research ethics and governance; compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements.

7.2 UTILIZATION OF THE RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE GRANT IN AY 2023-24.

In AY 2023-24 the entirety of the Research Postgraduate Grant (RPG) will be allocated by the University to individual Academic Schools (pro rata based on PGR numbers and weighted by discipline). Each of the University's Academic Schools will define the activities to which the funding contributes. The funding will provide support for a wide range of activities including co-funding/contribution to full the economic costs for National Graduate Schools and Doctoral Training Partnerships; discipline-specific and interdisciplinary postgraduate researcher (PGR) training; PGR professional development and employability activities; contributions to institutional doctoral and research development infrastructure and individual PGR studentship awards.

7.3 SUPPORTING SUSTAINABILITY AND FUTURE RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

The University is committed to sustainable growth of research capacity and research income. Some of the ways in which the University will take forward this commitment in AY 2023-24 are as follows:

- **Focus on quality** – early intervention and peer support in the research cycle, co-creation and stakeholder engagement to facilitate impact, support for domestic and international collaborations and networking.
- **Grow a health portfolio of research income** – applications and grant support for a diversified portfolio, provision of co-funding where required.
- **Ensuring time to focus on research** – School and institutional research leave schemes, review of workload model and implementation of newly agreed promotions criteria.

- **Open and inclusive research culture** – focused support for researchers who are female, part-time, of ethnic minority background, early and mid-career, as indicated by analyses of research outcomes and REF Equality Impact Assessments. Strengthening of support for academic leadership through initiatives around responsible research & innovation and responsible leadership in research. Complete implementation of new open access processes; continued participation in UK the Reproducibility network and monitoring of the DORA implantation.
- **Increased support for researchers at key transition stages (PGR, early-careers, mid-career)** – provision of career stage specific development initiatives that ensure individuals are enabled and prepared to move to the next stage of their career and ensuring researcher skills meet funder, user and employer expectations.
- **Review and revise governance structures to support culture change**: through review and development of policy and process to embed open and inclusive culture aspirations.

7.4 ENABLING AN EXCELLENT RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT AND POSITIVE CULTURES

In AY 2023-24 the University will continue the work and activities which are designed to enable an excellent research environment and positive research culture within the institution. Please see some information on examples of related work below:

Implementation of the recommendations of the Research Culture Task and Finish Group: The University has established an oversight group to monitor the implementation of its Research Culture Task and Finish Group and to ensure that this work complements the measures in place under other Concordats. The monitoring includes representatives from a variety of professional backgrounds and at various career stages. The recommendations are being implemented alongside the actions to which we have committed under the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and those of the University's HR Excellence Plan.

Increased engagement with research stakeholders through the University's Enterprise and Innovations Networks: The University is focusing on increased engagement with research stakeholders through its Enterprise and Innovations networks, working through the Vice Principal for Regional Engagement and the newly appointed Dean for Enterprise and Innovation. The University has changed its promotions criteria to reward engagement and impact related work and is looking to increase co-creation of research and the larger variety of outputs that this may create. Where, appropriate, the University is encouraging the use of CREDIT and SCOPE Guidelines to ensure that contributions to research outputs by all levels and variety of staff are properly recognised. The University continues to be an active member of the UK Reproducibility Network.

Revised open access processes: The University's revised open access processes enable researchers to retain the rights to their work and to make it publicly accessible in our repository form the point of publication. The University will be promoting open access pathways and monitor the open access compliance for longer form outputs.

Pan-Scotland Research Culture Network: The University will be participating in the nascent pan-Scotland Research Culture Network to share good practice and resources with others in the sector.

7.5 RESEARCH GOVERNANCE & INTEGRITY AND CONCORDATS

The following is a link to University Court on Research Governance and Integrity. This report contains updates on the University's research concordat commitments:

[Annual Research Gov Statement 2122.pdf (abdn.ac.uk)](#)

The annual report for AY 2022-23 will be published once it has been approved by University Court later in the year.

8.   **UNIVERSITY INNOVATION FUND (UIF)**

Please see Appendix 3 for a copy of the University Innovation Plan.

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITIES INNOVATION FUND (UIF) PLAN 2023/24

The University of Aberdeen's knowledge exchange and innovation activities continue to be closely aligned to the commitments from our Aberdeen 2040 strategy.

The University of Aberdeen will use its Outcome Grant to deliver a programme of activities to meet the seven agreed UIF Outcomes. The University will continue to work collaboratively with other HEIs, with regional and national partners and with industry to deliver these objectives. The University confirms its ability to utilise and match the Platform Grant.

Scotland's National Innovation Strategy (June 2023) states "We will design a new Research Commercialisation Framework for Scotland". The University of Aberdeen will work closely with the Universities Scotland Research and Commercialisation Directors' Group (RCDG) to develop our detailed proposals for research commercialisation and welcome the opportunity to inform the detail and implementation of this strategy in collaboration via RCDG.

The University of Aberdeen confirms that it will use its UIF funding (including the 23/24 UIF Uplift) to work towards delivery of the National Innovation Strategy and the Entrepreneurial Campus Strategy and commits to continue to engage at a sector-wide and regional level on the utilisation of the UIF uplift to support the delivery of Entrepreneurial Campus. In this plan, activities have been marked where appropriate as relevant to Entrepreneurial Campus (EC), National Innovation Strategy (NIS) and UIF uplift (UIF+ where the uplift has allowed us to expand activity or UIF+new where the activity is new).

The appointment of a Vice-Principal for Regional Engagement with the responsibility for leading the University's strategy to make a comprehensive and effective contribution to the economic, social and cultural activity of the region reflects institutional commitment. Key elements of delivery include: enhancing the capability and capacity for enterprise and innovation activities; enhanced collaboration with regional partners in developing and delivering support for innovation driven entrepreneurship; working with regional partners to secure Investment Zone status and delivering a programme of activity under the Just Transition Fund; implementing new academic promotions' criteria to support enterprise, impact and innovation.

The University works collaboratively with other institutions through RCDG and with the UIF Collaboration Manager, and as an active participant in clusters, workshops, and other collaborative activities.

Outcome 1 - Demand Stimulation

- The University of Aberdeen has enhanced its collaboration with its partners in the North East Scotland Innovation clusters focussed on energy transition, life sciences, food, drink and agriculture and digital economy (NIS), through the Directors of our Interdisciplinary Challenge areas and leadership roles within each of the regional industry boards.

- The appointment of a dedicated Dean for Enterprise and Innovation, 12 school based Enterprise and Innovation Champions and the creation of a new committee to support and facilitate engagement with industry, enterprise and entrepreneurship will enhance institutional capacity to increase demand stimulation (NIS, EC, UIF+new).

- The enhanced capacity will enable the University to enhance its engagement with Opportunity North East, Net Zero Technology Centre and the two local councils to meet its City Deal objectives and deliver the refreshed Regional Economic Strategy.

- We are enhancing our engagement with other regional partners such as the Net Zero Technology Centre (NZTC), CodeBase and ONE Tech Hub, the Energy Transition Zone (ETZ), Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce to facilitate engagement of researchers with business.

- The National Decommissioning Centre, a joint initiative between the University and NZTC continues to provide a focal point to transform decommissioning for the energy sector with 22 projects currently underway. Increased investment in its facilities has provided new industry opportunities within the renewable sector (UIF+).

- The University provides leaders and operational support for the National Energy Skills Accelerator (NESA), a collaborative partnership to develop the skills of the existing and future energy workforce, supporting the SFC Pathfinder and Scottish Government Transition Fund initiatives (UIF+).

- The University currently has three Entrepreneurs in Residence (EiRs) funded by the Royal Society, working with Engineering, Computing Science and Medical Sciences. We intend to continue to engage with these EiRs, and to expand their number and scope in 23/24, e.g. by appointing a Creative Industries Entrepreneur in Residence (EC; UIF+new).

- The University will work with regional partners to design a series of interventions aligned with the recently announced Aberdeen & North East Scotland Investment Zone (UIF+).
- The University of Aberdeen participates in ScotHERD (the practitioners' arm of Universities Scotland Researcher Development & Culture Committee) and will support the work underway to better understand the role that Researcher Developers play in feeding the KE&I pipeline in our institutions.

Outcome 2 - Simplification / Commercialisation

- The University of Aberdeen has undertaken a review of its support for enterprise and innovation. Several initiatives have resulted from this review, as follows:
  - A new External Business Advisory Group comprising industry sector representatives, entrepreneurs, finance/VC experts have been established to act as a critical friend to the University (UIF+new).
  - The Enterprise & Innovation Committee comprises each of the University's 12 academic schools provides an Enterprise & Innovation Champion to promote engagement with business and other stakeholders (NIS, UIF+).
  - Strategic KPIs and associated targets have been set for engagement and entrepreneurship with all academic schools expected to contribute.
  - The University will review and revise key policies (Intellectual Property Exploitation and Revenue Sharing; Consultancy; Continuing Professional Development) in 23/24 (EC, NIS, UIF+).
  - To increase capacity for business engagement, the University is recruiting into a number of new posts in this area in 23/24 (UIF+new).
- To enhance industry engagement, the University of Aberdeen leased co-working space within ONE TechHub in 23/24 to enable co-location of provide business development (UIF+new); a more consistent approach to stakeholder engagement through the implementation of an institutional CRM platform; showcasing events to industry (including attendance at major industry events and conferences such as Offshore Europe (September 2023) (UIF+).
- In 22/23, the University won a Capacity Building KTP project and delivered a well-received training programme for academic and research staff on how to engage with industry. This training programme will be delivered again in 23/24 (NIS, UIF+).
- The University is finalising a Strategic Corporate Partnership offer to nurture long-term university-business partnership with relationship management (UIF+new).
- The University will continue to participate in the IP Commercialisation Peer Network to share resources and good practice, collaborate on sector-specific approaches and on responses to national strategies such as the NIS and NSET.

Outcome 3 - Simplification/ Greater Innovation

- The University is a key contributor to the Innovation strand in North East Scotland's new Regional Economic Strategy (refreshed for 2023).
- The University will continue to seek funding from Innovate UK, enhancing its support for Knowledge Transfer Partnerships through the newly created leadership and school champion roles and other schemes to increase its engagement with industry and to apply innovation to the economy (NIS).
- In 23/24, we will continue to collaborate with other Scottish HEIs on mission-led funding through the Challenge Fund Network of Research/Business Development Managers which meets on a regular basis to enable peer-to-peer support, initiate new collaborations, engage with funders (including Innovate UK), and facilitate horizon scanning.
- On 6 September 2023, the Challenge Fund Network held a collaborative workshop with Scotland's Innovation Centres, with a focus on Collaborative R&D funding (UKRI or other), specifically exploring the role Innovation Centres do or could play in capacity building between researchers and industry, influencing funders on next big opportunities and developing competitive collaborative bids. The University will continue such engagement.
- On an institutional basis and through RCDG, we will actively engage with Interface as they evolve their delivery model, moving towards supporting more strategic engagement between academia and industry. This has potential to increase the demand and quality of engagement from businesses and the public sector for university services, and we are keen to exploit this opportunity with our colleagues in Interface. The University continues to support Interface at their board level.

- We will encourage academic engagement with the funding opportunities made available by Interface, including Innovation Vouchers (Student Placement, Standard and Advanced), Inward Investment Catalyst Fund, and Healthier Products for Innovation Fund for Scotland, and explore more strategic initiatives when opportunities arise.
- The indication is that the next generation Innovation Centres (as 'infrastructure investments') will be strategically closer to HEIs, and this has the potential to increase the demand and quality of engagement from businesses and the public sector for university services. In an institutional capacity and through UIF collaborative groups, we will actively engage with Innovation Centres to influence more coherent relationships over the course of the next academic year.

Outcome 4 - Entrepreneurialism

- As noted above, the University is reviewing and revising its policy for Intellectual Property Exploitation and Revenue Sharing with a view to encouraging and enabling staff entrepreneurship and removing any perceived barriers (EC, UIF+).
- Our Deans for Enterprise and Innovation, and for Employability and Entrepreneurship are developing an Action Plan in response to the recently published Entrepreneurial Campus report (EC, UIF+).
- A task and finish group will work to develop a model for the entrepreneurial curriculum across undergraduate and taught postgraduate education at the University (EC).
- We will continue to support and engage fully with Converge, including continuing to host one of the Converge Enterprise Executives at the University, and providing support at their board level. We value the role Converge plays in creating a community and providing opportunity to our spinouts and start-ups, while also putting a spotlight on the enterprise creation in Scottish HEIs. We will continue to actively support and take advantage of Converge throughout this year.
- As noted above, the University will be seeking to increase the number and range of its Entrepreneurs in Residence (EC, UIF+new).
- We will work closely with Opportunity North East (ONE) to increase the number of Innovation Driven Enterprises (IDEs) and Innovation Entrepreneurs (IEs) in the North East of Scotland. There are two key routes: providing support for key University staff and entrepreneurs to participate in MIT's EDP (UIF+new), and working with ONE, RGU and SE to deliver a pilot of the Venture Mentoring Service (VMS) licensed from MIT (all EC).
- The University will continue to provide support for staff and student start ups including microfinance for student start-ups and financial support for students participating in the Academic Accelerator run by Elevator. A new programme of Innovation Masterclasses and Innovation Challenges will culminate in our annual Lightbulb competition for student business ideas (EC; UIF+new).
- We have launched a series of popular monthly drop in sessions (StartHere! Breakfasts) for students and staff considering innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship which will continue throughout 23/24. The StartHere! events are also supported through the regional entrepreneurship network, with partners including Techscaler, NZTC's TechX, ETZ and ONE (UIF+).
- Our current pipeline of 13 potential spin outs will be supported through a mini-accelerator programme based on the 24-step Disciplined Entrepreneurship model (UIF+new), following the University's participation in MIT EDP cohort development supported by ONE. Our strategic intent is to increase the number of spin outs in this pipeline (EC, UIF+).
- We are planning an expansion of ABVenture Zone, our networking and incubation space for student and staff entrepreneurs at the University of Aberdeen. Following this expansion, the University will consider making this space open to local businesses.
- Session 23/24 will see new academic promotions criteria in operation; these formally recognise activities such as industry engagement, knowledge exchange and entrepreneurship.
- We will continue to participate in Enterprise Support Group (ESG), a formal subgroup of RCDG, meeting quarterly to share best practice, deliver collaborative initiatives, and engage with the latest strategy and policy from Scottish and UK governments.
- In the coming year, Enterprise Support Group aims to identify opportunities for alignment between HEIs and the Scottish Government's Techscaler programme. We will explore ways to collaborate with other HEIs, colleges and Codebase (as the Techscaler delivery partner) to co-design and co-deliver new collaborative initiatives, where these may have a regional or sectoral focus.

Outcome 5 - International

- The University of Aberdeen is part of a strategic tripartite alliance with Curtin University (Perth, Australia) and the University of Calgary (Canada) to develop innovative solutions to tackle key global issues currently focussing on climate change and energy transition and to be expanded to AI and health.
- The University will continue to engage with the Connected Places Catapult to explore a range of place-based innovation opportunities, including a potential UK-Australia Innovation Twins pilot.
- The University continues to support the World Energy Cities Partnership (WECP), through the membership of Aberdeen City Council; both Calgary and Perth are also WECP cities.
- The University's International Leadership Development Programme supported learning visits to Universities of Bergen and Vermont, where their best practice in entrepreneurship is informing our Entrepreneurial Campus action plan.
- The Vice-Principal Regional Engagement is a member of the North East Scotland Regional Inward Investment Forum, with the University supporting local authorities and other regional partners to attract inward investment (UIF+).
- Through RCDG, we will influence the new Research Commercialisation Framework for Scotland, as proposed in Scottish Government's Innovation Strategy (June 2023), which: 'will include exploring options for developing consistent approaches to, and guidance for, handling the intellectual property that arises from both publicly funded research and inward investment, as set out in our Inward Investment Plan (2020).'

Outcome 6 - Inclusive Growth and Social Impact

- As noted above, the University is a key contributor to the new North East Scotland Regional Economic Strategy which has an emphasis on just transition and the wellbeing economy.
- As noted above, we are widening the scope of our Entrepreneurs in Residence to include Creative Industries, plan to host a number of Creatives in Residence, and will continue our support for Culture Aberdeen.
- The University ranked 70th in the world, and 18th in the UK for the Time Higher Impact Rankings, in supporting the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, 1st in the UK and 4th in world for Partnerships for the Goals (SDG17). We will continue to identify best practice in support inclusive growth and social impact. Our public engagement programme is aligned to SDGs for 23/24.
- At a regional level we continue to be an active participant in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, particularly in relation to projects supporting prosperous economy, prosperous people and children, aimed at reducing inequalities across communities.
- In addition to engaging with ONE, we engage with other HEIs through the City Region & Growth Deal HEI Network which shares experience under common themes. In AY2023-24, the workshop themes include benefits realization, regional economic strategies, and community engagement. Learnings are intended to develop more productive interactions and improve outcomes for our local communities and economy.
- The University will support Aberdeen City Council's anti-poverty and Inequality agenda through the Health Determinants Research Collaboration, which addresses immediate issues around poverty, deprivation, health and wellbeing, in addition to advising on broader economic developments, thereby providing direct input into City Council policy.
- The University's Just Transition Lab is also contributing in terms of outputs and advice around just transition indicators, mapping potential scenarios with respect to the energy transition and pathways to a successful, sustainable and more equitable regional economy.
- We will continue to support social entrepreneurship through our Outcome 4 activities.

Outcome 7 - Equality and Diversity

- Through each of the sector's collaborative activities under UIF, we benefit from the diversity of our HEIs, including the diversity of individuals involved.
- The University is a signatory to the Advance HE's Race Equality Charter and have committed at a strategic level to improve inclusivity at all levels, appointing race champions throughout the university, providing new training and online toolkit materials, overseen by the Race Equality Strategy Group.

- The University is working with NHSG and Patient and Public Participation groups to enhance inclusion and diversity for clinical research studies, and use of data-driven analytics to improve health and social outcomes.
- We are particularly aware of the skewed gender balance for entrepreneurship activities which we propose to address through StartHER events for female entrepreneurs. We will also ensure that there are no barriers created through timings and locations of events and training (UIF+new).

Outcome Agreement between the University of Aberdeen and the Scottish Funding Council for AY 2023-24

On behalf of the University of Aberdeen:

Signed:

Print name: GEORGE BOYNE

Position: Principal and Vice-Chancellor

Date: 21 November 2023

Signed:

Print name: JULIE ASHWORTH

Position: Chair

Date: 21 November 2023

On behalf of the Scottish Funding Council:

Signed:

Print name: Karen Watt

Position: Chief Executive

Date: 15 January 2024