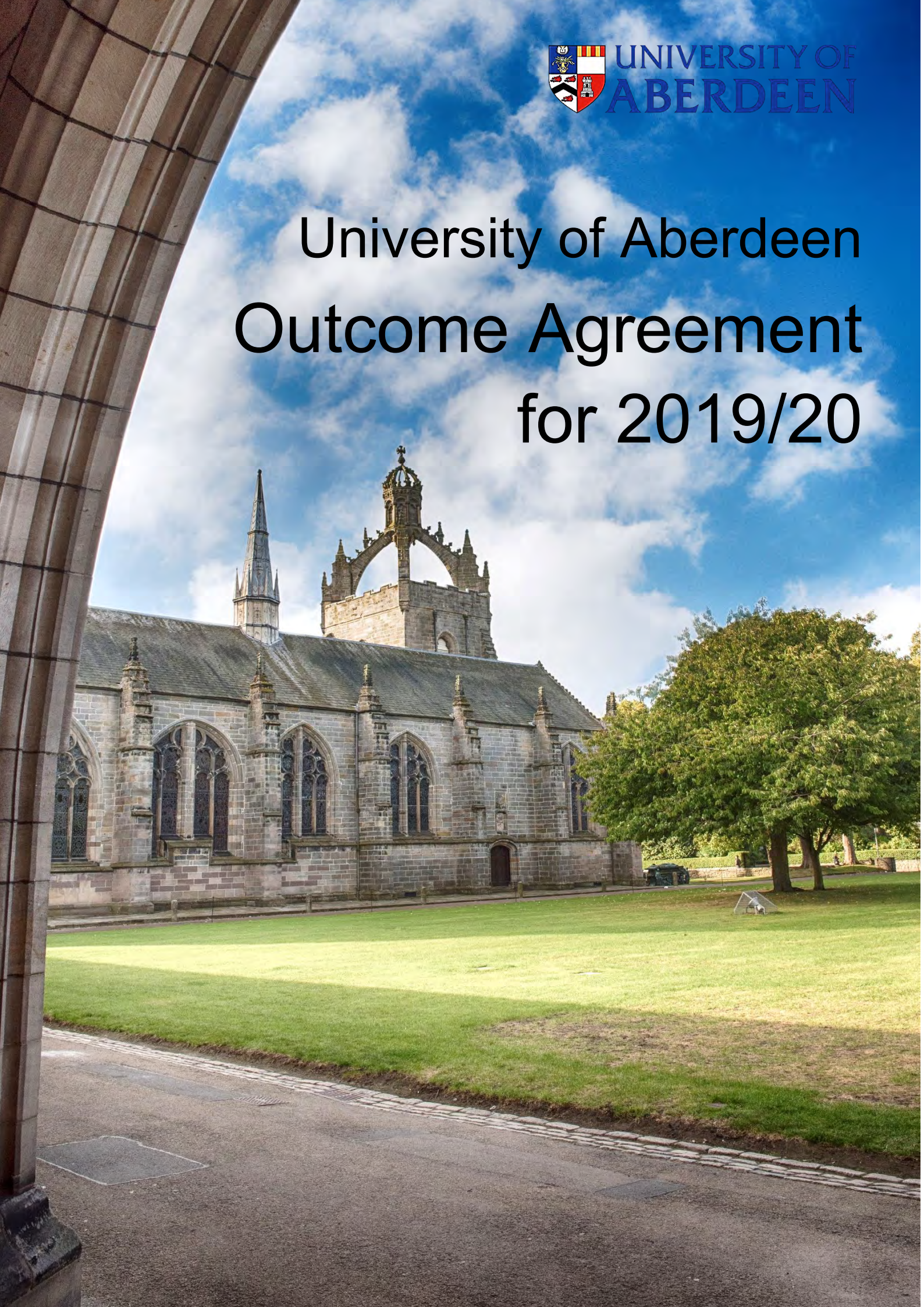University of Aberdeen

Outcome Agreement

for 2019/20

FOREWORD FROM THE PRINCIPAL

For more than five hundred years, the University of Aberdeen has been an institution rooted in its community and committed to bringing the benefits of global scholarship to Scotland and the north-east. This Outcome Agreement maintains that tradition of supporting our country and this hugely important region to thrive and succeed, to which the University's future is intrinsically linked.

The Scottish Government is rightly committed to widening access to the experience and opportunities that an excellent higher education can provide for people – and it is right to challenge universities to identify how they can do more to help more people from the most deprived areas of society to benefit from higher education. This is a complex issue that goes beyond any one sector's capacity to solve, but universities have a key role to play. A major part of this Outcome Agreement is therefore dedicated to how we are increasing our commitment to the challenge of widening access and how we will continue to work closely with the Further Education sector to enable greater numbers of students to articulate into university education at Aberdeen.

Of course, it is just as important that once students from disadvantaged or minority backgrounds come here, that they stay here and can succeed. All students have different support needs, but we recognise the importance of ensuring that we have the systems in place to identify and provide the right type of support, at the right time, which some widening access students may need to realise their potential.

Widening access is important, but so too is the quality of education that we are widening access to. It must be a student experience that is fulfilling, enjoyable, stretching while also supportive, and of a quality that can rival the very best anywhere in the world. More specifically, our students need to be equipped with a set of skills which will enable them to thrive and succeed in work and life. And in turn, we need to be aware of our role as a bridge between the individual and the workplace where the Scottish Government has highlighted the need for more to be done in increasing the uptake in STEM subjects and bringing the strengths of our research to business to grow innovation in the economy. Ultimately this is linked to the quality of our researchers, our teachers and our graduates, which is the most central contribution we can make to Scotland.

People is therefore a key strand to this Outcome Agreement and the University is an incredibly diverse community. Across the following pages we highlight examples of our commitment to supporting and celebrating the contribution that our people and the diversity of our community make to our success as an institution of learning. The Outcome Agreement sets out the actions we will take forward to address gender imbalances across our student and staff communities. It also reports on how, through the reform of our governing body, we have not only become one of the first universities in Scotland to implement the membership requirements of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act, but we have also transformed its gender balance to one of almost 50:50.

This Outcome Agreement, therefore, reflects the challenges which the Scottish Government has defined and asked higher education in Scotland to respond to. These are challenges which we welcome and which, as this document describes, we are committed to playing our part to help Scotland meet. I commend the document to all who have an interest in the University and the major contribution our academic achievements make to social justice and economic prosperity in Scotland.

Professor George Boyne
Principal and Vice-Chancellor
University of Aberdeen

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INTRODUCTION

This document supplements both the three-year Outcome Agreement (OA) the University of Aberdeen published in 2017 (available here), and the annual OA update published 2018/19, and should be read in conjunction with that document. The University presents its OA by aligning it to its Strategic Plan 2015-2020 (available here), and to the areas of strategic importance identified by the SFC. In this way, the University addresses the requirements set out in the SFC guidance for 2019/20 – 2021/22 (SFC/GD/21/2018).

As with its previous OA for 18/19, the University again places particular emphasis on those areas of strategic importance identified by the Scottish Government for prioritisation and enhanced focus, via the SFC guidance. These include: widening access to education; retention and enhanced outcomes for disadvantaged learners; enhanced alignment of skills provision with the needs of the economy; increased participation in STEM subjects; supporting enhanced business innovation; and addressing gender imbalances. The Agreement is designed to demonstrate the University's distinct contribution to delivering a positive return against the Scottish Government's strategic priority areas, as set out in the *Scottish Economic Strategy* and its programme for government for 2018-19, *Delivering for Today, Investing for Tomorrow*. It does so taking account of the Government's continuing commitment to *intensification* of the OA process, under which more ambitious demands and challenging targets have been set in specific areas, including widening access. In more general terms, this OA also provides a concise update on all other key commitments made in previous plans, against which the University has and continues to deliver strong performance.

As in the three-year OA published in 2017, and in the 2018 update, this document ties all SFC strategic priorities, including the areas identified for prioritisation and enhanced focus, to the key themes that form the basis of the University's Strategic Plan (2015-2020). These are:

- People;
- Teaching and Learning;
- Research and Knowledge Exchange

This demonstrates the direct alignment between the University's own strategic priorities and those set out by the Scottish Government.

It should also be noted that this document has been developed in consultation with key stakeholder groups across the University, at all levels, including: senior institutional management; management across different professional services functions; the Students' Association; students; staff and staff Trade Union representatives. While the Students' Association and Trade Union representatives are routinely involved in shaping University strategy via different committees and other such fora, each of these groups have had the opportunity to comment on and feed into development of this document. In particular, concerted efforts have been made to promote the OA to the wider student body via the University's dedicated student engagement team, with infographics, circulars and mechanisms given to provide feedback on key policy areas. It was also covered via an open session with the Principal, where feedback and input was again sought.

Finally, the University considers this document live and fluid; it reserves the right to revise this Agreement in response to changes from across the external environment which may adversely affect its ability to achieve the ambitions put forward or the targets set. This statement is made taking account of the great uncertainty currently affecting both the Scottish and UK higher education (HE) sectors, particularly in the context of Brexit and the range of impacts this might feasibly have across all areas considered strategically important, both by the University and by the Scottish Government.

Note: a summary of the University's milestones and targets for the period, as defined by the SFC under its list of "National Measures", was submitted with this document, and available via the SFC website.

1. **BREXIT AND MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF LEAVING THE EUROPEAN UNION**

The University opens this Outcome Agreement with a statement on Brexit. The University is proud to have built a strong international reputation in recent years, particularly so in the European Union. European recruitment continues to grow and in 2017/18 more than 20% of the total student population came from the EU. European students play an important part in making Aberdeen a truly international campus, supported by growing student mobility through Erasmus+ where the number of exchange students has increased year-on-year. The University also attracts significant research funds from the EU and employs a large number of European staff, equating to 17% of all staff, and 22% of all academic staff. The planned UK exit from the EU poses considerable risks to the University and could affect the student experience, staffing, research capacity, the viability of individual academic areas and student income. The University has, therefore, worked hard to develop mitigation strategies, and will continue to engage with the SFC, the Scottish and UK governments and sector bodies in an effort to minimise the impact on the University and the Scottish higher education sector. In particular, the University is developing mitigations for different scenarios linked to: a likely drop in the number of undergraduate EU students and the resultant financial impact; loss of access to exchange schemes with EU universities; a loss of access to European research funding schemes, and the likely impact this will have on established or future research partnerships; adverse impacts on EU staff recruitment and retention, and indeed, on the University's ability to attract and retain world class academic, professional services or support staff internationally.

2. **P**EOPLE

A central tenet of the University's Strategic Plan for 2015-20 is 'People', referring to the students, alumni and staff who underpin every success the University achieves. Institutional strategies under this theme broadly align with the following SFC priority area:

- **SFC Priority**: *Access to Education for People from the Widest Range of Backgrounds*

2.1. Widening Access to Education - Implementation of the COWA Recommendations

The University of Aberdeen is fully committed to supporting the Scottish Government in delivering its widening access agenda, as set out in the CoWA final report, *A Blueprint for Fairness*. The University has been working steadily to implement all recommendations set out in that report, where applicable, and is taking forward a range of initiatives, both strategically and at an operational level, designed to facilitate delivery of all current and future targets, including those set against COWA, SIMD20 and articulation. The following sets out how the University intends achieving its aims in these areas, and under the widening access umbrella more generally.

SIMD20 - Summary

The University is pleased to report that across 2017/18, it exceeded the target set by SFC for full-time first degree SDUEs from the 20% most deprived data zones (COWA measure), rising from 5.4% to 5.7% year on year. Similarly, the University also exceeded target for the SFC SIMD20 measure, which rose to 6% versus 5.4% the year previous. For 2018/19, early indications are positive; the University is again on course to exceed targets agreed with SFC for each of these metrics.

The University is fully committed to supporting the Scottish Government strategy to prioritise and enhance focus on widening access, in line with the *Blueprint for Fairness* report referenced above. As such, the University has made a strategic decision, in consultation with the Scottish Government, to take measures to markedly accelerate growth in its COWA and SIMD20 populations. In order to achieve these ambitions, it has thus raised targets previously set and agreed by the SFC, with a view to achieving an intake of 10% COWA/SIMD20 by 2019/20. In doing this, the University will now protect 10% of its SFC non-controlled funded places for these cohorts each year, in alignment with its set targets. However, it recognises that in order to deliver, there will be a need to increase the number of SIMD20 applications it receives each year, and to improve conversion rates. On this basis, the University is prepared to go into Clearing from 2019 onwards for all students categorised SIMD20 (using either COWA or SFC definitions).

In sum, these moves demonstrate the University's overarching belief and commitment to the principle of widening access, and come despite the unique socio-economic and geographical constraints it faces, relative to other institutions across the sector, which affect its ability to achieve targets set. For a full breakdown of targets, see the National Table of Measures for Aberdeen (published via the SFC website). In order to re-align and achieve these objectives, the University continues to review, develop and optimise its strategies, operations and resources on an ongoing basis. In particular, the University is willing to commit significant resource, in relative terms, to those areas or activities most likely to optimise increased recruitment and retention of SIMD20 students. In operational terms, the most notable initiatives in place, new or ongoing, are detailed in this section.

Free Accommodation to enhance Widening Access

The University continues to run its flagship offer of free accommodation to all SIMD20 students entering their first year of study, rolled out for the first time in 2017/18, with a commitment to continue the scheme to at least 2019/20. In line with COWA Recommendation 25, this initiative underlines in a tangible way, through the direct allocation of financial resource, the University's firm commitment to the widening access agenda. It is designed to attract and support SIMD20 students from across Scotland, and comes by way of response to the shortage of SIMD20 students within the University's immediate locality; noting that for financial reasons, students from lower income backgrounds tend to enrol in local universities to minimise living costs. In monetary terms, this initiative equated to an investment of approximately £200K by the University in accommodation costs in 17/18, with the expectation that this will increase going forward, as SIMD20 numbers rise in accordance with targets. It is notable that of those who took up the

offer in 17/18 (32 in total) there was a 100% rate of retention. Additionally, all feedback received from these students was positive, noting the free accommodation offer was seen as key to helping facilitate integration into the University environment. In 18/19, 42% of eligible applicants accepted the offer, and in future years, it is hoped that this number will rise, with more effective promotion of the offer planned at an earlier stage in the recruitment cycle. It should be noted that students sitting on the University's Transitional Summer Schools and the Summer School for Access are also offered free accommodation.

Care-Experienced Students

The University remains fully committed to widening access to learning for care-experienced students, and is delighted to note the number of care leavers entering the institution has more than trebled in 2018, based on early snapshot data; rising to 27, relative to eight in 2017. This increase will be in part due to a range of initiatives; for example since 2017, the University has been offering admission to all care-experienced applicants who meet the minimum entry requirements under its Contextualised Admissions policy, in line with COWA Recommendation 21 (as noted above), thereby enhancing ease of access for disadvantaged applicants with this background. In addition to this, and the activities listed in the previous Outcome Agreement, the following should also be noted:

- The University is now working in partnership with Aberdeen City Council regarding care-experienced school pupils, working in partnership to support local care-experienced school pupils both prior to and during the application process. As an example, approximately 20 University students will be volunteering in local primary schools over the coming year to help care-experienced pupils to develop their literacy skills.
- The University is now a full partner of the Scottish Wider Access Programme (SWAP), a partnership programme designed to support access to higher education for adults who may have missed the opportunity on leaving school, for any number of reasons, which could include care responsibilities. The University has taken a lead in supporting the Preparation for Higher Education unit, and has been involved in an advising capacity with the development of NESCOL's three new SWAP Programmes. The University will be providing study skills courses to these students as well as inviting them to an Articulation Day.

More information on support provided to care-experienced students is available via a [dedicated page](#) on the University's website. This includes a link to the University's [Corporate Parenting Plan](#).

Contextualised Admissions

As reported in the previous OA (please cross-refer), the University has in place a dedicated *Contextualised Admissions and Access Thresholds Policy*, reflecting its recognition that not all prospective students have the same opportunity to meet advertised entry requirements. In 2017/18 the University became one of the first in Scotland to publish Access Threshold Entry Qualifications in its Undergraduate Prospectus (both printed and online), and over that year, the policy was greatly expanded. It now includes more categories of students who can enter via contextualised standards, and it also includes the introduction of Access Thresholds for the majority of non-controlled undergraduate programmes, in line with COWA Recommendation 11; Aberdeen was one of the first Scottish institutions to take this step. Under this policy, the University will now consider making an adjusted or access threshold offer to all applicants who normally reside in an SIMD20 or SIMD40 Scottish postcode, applicants who have experience of being in care, and applicants who have an unpaid caring role, among others (please refer to the policy for more detail).

In line with this progress, the University will make further adjustments to this policy in 2019, to introduce adjusted entry requirements for two controlled subjects: Medicine and Education.

- **For Medicine**, the University has a long and proud history of contextualised admissions with its medical programme, with a reduced academic requirement for widening access applicants. This includes the offer of a guaranteed interview for widening access applicants who meet the academic criteria, and where their UCAT scores fall within the top 75% of scores for applicants to Aberdeen. By the end of 2019, the University will seek to further enhance its admissions policy for Medicine by publishing standard, minimum and adjusted entry qualifications.
- **For Education**, the University again continues its commitment to Widening Access and Contextualised Admissions for its undergraduate primary education programme. As with Medicine, Education will also enhance its admissions policy – specifically for the MA Primary

Education programme - by publishing standard, minimum and adjusted entry qualifications which will allow the institution to meet the current entry requirement commitments set out by the General Teaching Council for Scotland. As above, a revised Memorandum is expected to be issued by the summer of 2019.

In addition, it should also be noted that all care-experienced applicants will receive a conditional offer of admission if they meet the relevant entry requirement for any of its non-controlled subjects, in line with COWA Recommendation 21. Through the above policy, the University has sought to ensure they remain suitably robust while recognising potential, thereby setting thresholds at a level from which a high likelihood of success is expected. This has been done in line with the SFC commissioned report, *Mapping and evaluating the use of Contextual Data in Undergraduate Admissions in Scotland,* and meets the requirement of COWA Recommendation 5. The University reviews its contextualised admissions policy as a matter of course with a view to ensuring accessibility for the widest possible pool of disadvantaged students.

SIMD20 and Care-Experienced Students: Conversion Rates

For SIMD20 and Care-Experienced applicants, the conversion rates for applications to offers, and offers to acceptances are shown below. For SIMD20, there has been remarkable consistency over the past three years, with a latter application-offer rate of 72%, from which 17% accepted offers. For care-experienced students, the percentage to receive offers stood at 77% in 2018, of which 48% accepted; a rise on previous years.

Year	SIMD20		Care Experience	
	App-Offer	Offer-Acceptances	App-Offer	Offer-Acceptances
2016	70%	18%	90%	44%
2017	68%	17%	73%	40%
2018	72%	17%	77%	48%

The University has put considerable effort into enhancing conversion rates in recent times, as demonstrated via the free accommodation offer referred to above, along with the contextualised admissions policy just detailed. It is hoped that going forward, these policies, and other initiatives designed to enhance recruitment in these areas, will have an increasingly positive impact on the University's ability to achieve its objectives; for SIMD20, increasing conversation rates will be particularly important if challenging targets are to be met. Examples of other initiatives include:

- Providing coaches for SIMD20, care-Experienced and Articulating offer holders to attend events like Offer Holder Day (held in March each year). The buses will pick up and return offer holders in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee and are free.
- Writing to SIMD20 and care-Experienced offer holders to encourage applications for one of the University's Entrance Scholarships.
- Running FE college drop in clinics over the next few months, at which the University will speak directly with SIMD20 offer holders.

Articulation

The University retains its absolute commitment to meeting the objectives set by Scottish Government under the Articulation agenda, noting as last year that this remains a key area subject to enhanced focus and prioritisation by the SFC. Until recently, institutional strategies on Articulation focused primarily on increasing the number of HN students progressing from the FE sector; however, last year the University set ambitious targets to grow the number and proportion of Scottish-domiciled HN entrants from college articulating with advanced standing onto degree level courses, aiming to achieve 35% by 2020/21, from a baseline of 7% in 2016/17. Consequently, proactive measures have been put in place to improve performance, and based on early data for the 2018/19 student intake, these efforts have had a positive impact; 65 students articulated with advanced standing in 18/19, relative to 28 in 17/18, a rise from 10.7% to 26.5% - significant progress. Key activities designed to underpin this level of performance and growth going forward include, but are not limited to:

- **Articulation Working Group**: the University has established an Articulation Working Group with primary responsibility for the development, implementation and monitoring of the University's strategy and policy for articulation, in support of its recruitment and admissions objectives in this area. It works closely with Student Recruitment and Admissions Committee, the Widening Access Working Group and the Retention Task Force in ensuring that the University works towards meeting its SFC Outcome Agreement commitments and other related aims.
- **Articulation Routes**: the University has an offer of full credit routes with five college partners, covering science, arts and engineering disciplines. The University is committed to the ideal that Articulation Agreements are substantive arrangements, and in 19-20 will be setting out a minimum framework of visits for each route in a partner college to ensure students are given the opportunity to meet both recruitment and academic staff from the University during their time at College.
- **Admissions Process**: the University now has dedicated articulation and widening access admissions selectors, with a remit for priority offer-making. All eligible students now applying will be made an offer for the full credit route by way of default, meaning they will have to opt-out, whereas previously prospective students were not always aware, and would have to opt-in.
- **Articulation/Transitional Summer Schools**: these are geared towards articulating students, as a means of making the transition from college to university easier. The University has introduced a free Summer School, initially in Engineering, with one now planned for Accountancy, and early plans in place for similar schools in different sciences and social sciences. Free accommodation is also given for each School. These sessions are seen as key to bridging gaps for HN students and their intended year of entry at Aberdeen, while they also help the integration process.

More information on support provided to students progressing from college is available via a dedicated page on the University's website.

Promoting Widening Access to Schools

The University is proactive in the promotion of widening access to key stakeholder groups, including schools, pupils and parents. This includes the promotion of contextualised admissions policies where relevant, in line with COWA Recommendation 12. These efforts are underpinned by high profile initiatives, including (but not limited to):

- The Reach Programme: The Reach Programme provides information, advice and guidance on applying for professional degrees, including Law, Medicine, Accountancy and Finance, Computing Science, Engineering and Psychology. It is underpinned by regular school visits, and is targeted specifically at SIMD20 students, care-experienced students, and pupils from target, low-progression Schools across the Highlands and Islands and North East of Scotland; even if not SIMD20 per se, these are still cohorts with a historic rate of progression into higher education. All pupils who are eligible to participate in Reach programmes, are now in turn eligible for adjusted offers as per the University's contextualised admissions policy. This programme is part of a collaborative effort with partner institutions across Scotland to support widening access school pupils interested in professional degrees.

- Access Aberdeen: this programme (rebranded from Aim 4 Uni) also targets low-progression Schools, along with any prospective student from an SIMD20 catchment, or with a care-experienced background. The programme delivers a range of services, including: careers events; presentations for pupils, staff or parents covering all aspects of the student experience, including finance; UCAS application support; on campus activities, including tours and discipline visits; revision schools; and, support tailored to individuals. This programme is therefore important not just in widening access to the target student cohorts, like SIMD20, but also to enhancing support and retention rates for these students once they arrive.

- Principal's School Engagement Programme – Award for Excellence: the University's Principal will be visiting low progression schools across the North East over the coming year, to meet pupils and teachers, to promote access to the University, and to renew partnerships with different institutions. The University is also going to introduce a new "Principal's Award for Excellence" during the 2019-20 entry cycle which will hopefully help to both raise aspirations and attainment.

Use of Bridging Programmes

In line with COWA Recommendation 7, the University runs a number of bridging programmes to help facilitate the integration process for disadvantaged students, with the aim of increasing retention and delivering longer term successful outcomes. In addition to the Articulation Summer School referenced above, details on two further examples are given below.

- **Summer School for Access**: the Summer School for Access provides a route into Higher Education for those whose current qualifications do not reflect their potential for degree study. In particular, the Summer School is aimed at applicants who come from low progression schools, who live in SIMD 20/40 areas or those who have care experience. All Schools are held on campus for six weeks, with free accommodation provided. Students who successfully complete the Summer School and meet the conditions of their UCAS offer are normally guaranteed entry onto their chosen course. In 2018, a total of 50 students enrolled on the Summer School, 34 of which were from a widening participation target school. A total 30 went on to start a full degree programme, and of those, eight were from an SIMD20 postcode, and nine from and SIMD40 catchment.

- **Gateway to Medicine**: The Gateway to Medicine programme is open to students who are SIMD20, care-experienced, or meet a combination of other widening access characteristics. It is a one-year programme, shared with NESCOL, aimed at providing a route into Medicine for disadvantaged learners, attended by over 40 students this past two years. Full details are available here. The University is delighted to have secured funding to run this programme, in conjunction with NESCOL, for another 5 years.

Retention

The University has revised its target rates of retention for selected disadvantaged groups, in line with SFC expectations, with a view to achieving alignment with the wider SDUE population and the institutional norm. Consequently, a fixed target of 95% has been established for all students regardless of cohort. For a number of groups, this will require improvement; for example, in 2017/18 only 90.5% of SIMD20 entrants returned to study in Year 2, relative to 94.5% of the wider relevant population. On the whole the University prides itself on the extensive measures that have been implemented over the past five years to support the transition, retention and progression of all students; this has been steadily improving. Whilst recognising that it is vital to ensure support is available to students who are more inclined to require it, and therefore acceptable identification of such students is necessary, the University makes a concerted effort to ensure that all students have access to the highest levels of pastoral and non-academic support services. However, there are measures in place to support disadvantaged groups specifically, including SIMD20 students and care leavers; for example, the appointment of named contacts for the latter cohort, in addition to summer schools (as referenced above) which are designed to enhance the transition into study for articulating students, SIMD cohorts and other disadvantaged or vulnerable groups. The University is also considering other measures to enhance retention for these groups, including ensuring in-person introductions to personal tutors at the outset of study, and assignment of a buddy at the start of their student experience. Efforts to establish a clear strategy on retention of disadvantaged groups are underway. For more information on retention in general, refer to section 3.2.

Under Representation from Protected Characteristic and Socio-Economic Groups

The University has broadened its activities and policies to ensure that prospective students from other under-represented protected characteristic or socio-economic groups are also afforded widening access opportunities. This is reflected in the University's *Contextualised Admissions and Access Thresholds Policy*, addressed above, under which a range of different prospective student categories meet the widening access criteria. This includes applicants who are categorised:

- Estranged Students;
- Gypsy, Roma or Traveller background;
- Unpaid carers;
- British Military Veterans
- Refugees.

To give examples of the enhanced level of support offered to students across these categories, the University has developed a dedicated Student Carers Policy, designed to underpin an enhanced level of tailored support to all student carers, both during the application process and after arriving for study. This includes campus tours, finance and funding help and advice, and the assignment of a named contact to provide support throughout the duration of study. More information on services provided for student carers is available via a dedicated page on the University website.

For British Military Veterans, The University is fully committed to supporting the families of those serving in the British Military, veterans and early service leavers, along with applicants whose parents come under this category. In both cases, applicants may benefit from a contextualised or reduced offer of entry, while pre-registration, advice and support is available to students from the University's Marketing and Student Recruitment service. Also, in 2016 the University signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant, a commitment reflected in its admissions policy and practice.

2.2. Gender Equality and Athena SWAN

The University continues to prioritise gender as an area of enhanced focus, in line with Scottish Government and SFC priorities, under the ethos of intensification. It remains fully committed to enhancing gender equality, across both its staff and student populations, and in turn, it continues to ensure compliance with all regulatory or legal frameworks, as required; for example, the Public Sector Equality Duty. The University's ambitions for gender equality are outlined in its updated Gender Action Plan (GAP) - published in 2017 and revised in 2018 - and underpinned by its strong commitment to the Athena SWAN process, which spans all Schools and Institutes across the organisation. Targets set for achieving gender equality are included within the Table of Measures. It should be noted that the University actively engages its Students' Association and Trade Union representatives in dialogue around both gender and the wider equality and diversity agenda on an ongoing basis through different business-as-usual activities and fora. For example, both groups have the opportunity to inform policy formulation at an operational level via representation on different committees, such as the University's Partnership and Negotiation Consultative Committee (PNCC).

The Gender Balance – the Student Population

At institutional level, the University retains its aim of reaching an overarching gender balance of 45%/55% male/female split for Scottish-domiciled students by 2020/2021, albeit, the current trend is not favourable; in 2017/18 the split was 40.3% male versus 59.7%, and 2018/19, the early data snapshot shows a split of 39.6%/60.4%, a marginal shift from target. While this may be broadly reflective of sector-wide trends, the University will continue to take measures to achieve a greater balance. The University also retains its commitment to improving the gender balance in all subjects where there is an imbalance of 75%/25% or more, by a minimum 1% year-on-year.

The key framework against which the University seeks to meet these targets is its GAP, which proactively seek to redress imbalances at both institutional and subject level. Through this, the priority remains on improving the gender balance in four disciplines: Physics, Computing Science, Psychology and Education. These subjects were selected for various reasons, as follows:

- Based on internal data they commonly suffer the most consistent gender imbalances across the Scottish-domiciled population, though this does not apply to retention, where non-continuation rates are not markedly different for male or female students, or relative to other disciplines;
- The STEM-based subjects and Education are each SFC priorities;
- They were all subject to focus under the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) project *Attracting Diversity*, which has remit to improve gender inequality across the sector.

Initiatives outlined in the University's GAP include involvement in the Attracting Diversity project just referenced, and engagement in establishing and leading a Regional Gender Group to develop a regional response to gender inequality; it involves working with local partners like Robert Gordon University (RGU). The GAP also includes an extensive operational plan which is reviewed regularly by a designated Working Group, with actions designed to address gender issues in a range of areas,

including student recruitment and retention, among others. These are included in the Gender Action Plan (GAP); as above, please cross refer.

In addition to the GAP, the University has participated in the Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland (SPARQS) project on Student Engagement. Utilising the knowledge gained from this, strategies on how to support better student engagement will be implemented. Outwith that, the University continues undertaking a range of other measures beyond the GAP, to understand why gender based issues exist at subject level, as listed in its last OA, please cross-refer.

Athena Swan

The University continues its strong commitment to Athena SWAN, with extensive engagement across the institution. The University is delighted to report that 14 of its 16 constituent Schools or Institutes have received the Athena SWAN bronze award, signifying impressive progress over the last two years; when the three-year OA agreement was published in 2017, only two Schools had achieved bronze status. Of the two still to achieve Bronze, applications were submitted late 2018. At institutional level, the University successfully renewed its bronze award in November 2016 and is now taking forward plans to apply for Silver in 2020, providing at least one School or Institute achieves Silver first, the required prerequisite; Psychology are currently due to apply in April 2019. All Schools with Bronze status are currently implementing their actions plans, which are designed to enhance gender equality across the student population wherever imbalances exist. On the whole, it is hoped that by focusing on gender imbalances within School student populations, improvements made at subject level will have the collective effect of improving the overarching imbalance at institutional level.

Remuneration: Accredited Living Wage and Eliminating the Gender Pay Gap

The University is proud to be formally accredited as a living wage employer. The University has had this accreditation for a number of years, and is evidenced here.

In terms of gender equality and remuneration, the University published its mandatory Gender Pay Gap report in March 2018, and it continues to take forward initiatives to eliminate gender pay gaps at all levels where they exist. This includes ongoing work with our Remuneration Committee as well as initiatives such as:

- Revising promotion and progression procedures to provide greater transparency, to include continuation of a 'blind review' of applications to reduce the potential for unconscious bias;
- Reviewing the composition of promotions committees and influential committees;
- Recruitment and selection process for appointment of Professorial grade staff aims to ensure a gender balanced pool of candidates at the initial sifting phase;
- Ensuring females have the opportunity and ability to progress their careers within the University through talent management and ongoing personal development. This includes offering mentoring and coaching programmes to all staff, with a focus more on female members of staff;
- As part of institutional management courses, working one-to-one with delegates to help support their career planning. The University believes that this will have a positive impact and will be reflected in the increased number of female staff members applying for promotions and contribution awards.
- Advertising vacancies widely, including on specific diversity media, and instructing head hunters to be mindful of the need to achieve a gender balance.

It is hoped that combined, these mechanisms will help narrow the gender pay-gap further, and moreover, will enhance the University's ability to monitor the current status of the pay gap at any given time, thereby enabling greater understanding of progress, and enhanced ability to exert control.

Gender Balance at Senior Staff and Academic Level

The University continues to pursue initiatives designed to enhance gender equality across its staff-base. For example, as reported in the last Agreement, it continues to operate a Senior Women's Network, which has a core function within its remit to support junior women in career progression, and it also continues to ensure representation of the Equality Networks on the Advisory Group on Equality and Diversity (AGED), providing an opportunity to engage and participate fully in policy development. The

University has also maintained its suite of family-friendly policies, designed at least in part to enhance career progression for women (available here).

At senior academic level, the University remains fully committed to enhancing gender equality. However, while there has been an upward trend in the past few years across all pay grades when looking at institutional career tracks (Teaching and Scholarship, Research, and Teaching and Research), it is acknowledged as previously that further work remains to be done to ensure the equal advance of women, notably within the research and teaching track across the institution, within the research track specifically, and in some STEM subjects. To this end, the University is and will continue to enhance gender equality across its academic functions by (among other initiatives): further supporting women through the promotions process; enhancing research mentoring and peer review initiatives to support women; developing new leadership programmes, such as the International Leadership Development Programme; and, full roll-out of unconscious bias training.

The University is also taking forward specific actions to recognise contribution and to start to address the gender pay gap in the Experienced Professor category, where a long-term gap persists. This will involve establishing and applying contribution criteria based on research, teaching and learning and citizenship. While it is difficult to project the impact of any one initiative, the University is confident that collectively, these initiatives will deliver greater gender balance among senior academics. In general, it is also notable that the University continues to pursue initiatives designed to enhance gender equality across its entire staff-base. Adding to those highlighted in the 2018 OA, these include:

- Holding its 5th International Women's Day Conference and using social media to run a series of researcher profiles;
- Hosting speed networking events and extending our 'Inspiring Women' exhibition beyond the Conference event to STEM University buildings, University Library, May Festival, TechFest and Aberdeen Science Centre.

The University was also central to establishing a Regional Gender Group, GENES, with local partners (HEIs, councils, Skills Development Scotland, Aspire North and Aberdeen Science Centre). This has included developing a series of events to promote gender equality, facilitated by the University to engage prospective students and their parents/carers. GENES has had a presence at the Scottish Careers event and at Aberdeen Science Centre during a recent Science Festival.

Gender Balance at Court and Senior Management Level

As noted in the University's previous Agreement, the University Court has a Statement of Intent on Diversity for its membership, established in 2014. This has been revised over the past year to ensure alignment with the *Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018*, and in part to enhance the diversity of Court beyond gender, recognising the benefits diverse skillsets and experience can bring. It also states an aim of achieving a gender split of 50% across all categories of its membership; as of 18/19, the gender split is 56% Male and 44% Female, relative to a previous benchmark of 71% Male and 29% Female (before changes were made prior to 17/18). However, the appointed independent membership is fully gender balanced and therefore compliant with the new Gender Representation Act referenced above; greater male representation collectively is the result of members appointed via electoral and nomination processes beyond the Court's control. However, nominating and electing constituencies are asked to take the Court's Statement of Intent on Diversity into account when making appointments, and the University regularly reviews and revises its recruitment and advertising procedures to encourage greater diversity of applications for vacancies on Court, done through its Governance and Nominations Committee.

Gender-Based Violence

The University strongly supports the Scottish Government Equally Safe strategy, and is fully committed to taking action on all forms of gender-based violence. On this basis, the University is actively taking forward the implementation of the Equally Safe in Higher Education Toolkit, overseen by a dedicated Working Group which will make recommendations as well as implement the toolkit across the University. This Working Group has developed a detailed implementation plan which demonstrates the substantial amount of work which has already been undertaken in relation to this important issue, with good progress made across the latter part of 2018 and early 2019. The following high level actions have been delivered:

- The University re-signed its joint Statement of Commitment on tackling gender-based violence with the Students' Association, with whom the institution has been working closely on this issue. This re-signing is a demonstration of the University's commitment to addressing these issues and was a key element of an awareness campaign which the University launched in February.
- The University launched a bespoke online reporting tool as part of the awareness campaign in February. The reporting tool is available online and will enable anonymous reporting as well as allowing individuals to contact a student or staff adviser if or where they have been victim of or witnessed any form of gender-based violence. The tool also links to key resources providing sources of support and guidance materials to all staff and students.
- The University has undertaken work to re-develop and improve its website and awareness raising materials on this issue, as evidenced here. All such improvements have been designed to ensure they incorporate key messages and links to the online reporting tool and supporting materials.
- The website includes policy related information and reporting guidance, though further work is ongoing on each, notably development of a new policy which is now underway, to be presented to the institutional Senior Management Team for approval in due course, and subsequently promoted across the University. All information will be made available via the dedicated webpages.
- The University will be taking part in a sector-wide research project which will generate data on gender-based violence. The project has the potential to contribute significantly to the national approach to preventing violence of this kind, and will also provide institutional data. This will also enable identification of the groups which may be at greater risk of gender-based violence, and the development of strategies for supporting those individuals.
- The University will also engage with Active Bystander training for staff and students, with the potential to use materials developed by Strathclyde University. Consideration is being given to training our own staff to be able to deliver this training to larger cohorts of our staff.

The following provides an overview of key actions or initiatives taken forward by the University, either recently or planned, under its strategy to address gender-based violence. This includes agreed timelines for delivery for each and is extracted from the Gender-Based Violence Implementation Plan referenced above:

Key Actions and Timelines for Tackling Gender-Based Violence

DESCRIPTION	SUGGESTED COMPLETION DATE	COMPLETE
Publish a joint statement of commitment by the University and AUSA endorsed by senior members of both organisations.	February 2019	✓
Launch a University-wide awareness/communication campaign	February 2019	✓
Develop and implement an online system for reporting, with the option to remain anonymous and publish clear policy and supporting procedures regarding the reporting of incidents and details of how appropriate action will be taken.	February 2019	✓
Design dedicated webpages for information regarding relevant policies and procedures.	February 2019	✓
Publish a new, comprehensive policy and accompanying procedure supporting the Statement of Commitment, enshrining its values into University policy.	Q3 2019	In progress
Build into policy the allowances for extensions on academic coursework while recovering from sexual violence and harassment. This will be done in consultation with Schools.	Q3 2019	In progress
Develop a framework for evaluating the success and impact of all work undertaken in this area, to align with evaluation of the University's Mental Health and Wellbeing strategy.	Q3 2019	In progress

Launch an online awareness course on consent issues targeted at students	September 2019, launch mandatory training at re-registration	Pending
Conduct first annual staff and student surveys regarding their experiences and perceptions of sexual violence and harassment at the University.	January 2020	Pending

2.3. Additional Areas of Strategic Importance under the People Theme

Equality and Diversity

The University's commitment to gender equality forms part of a wider commitment to the overarching Equality and Diversity (E&D) agenda. The University remains fully committed to meeting all legislative requirements articulated in the Equality Act 2010, and has developed stand-alone strategies accordingly; for example, the GAP referenced above. Moreover, in line with the Equality Act 2010, the University has published its Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report (2017) and in line with this, continues to progress its four key equality outcomes, which are:

- The principles of Equality and Diversity will be a day-to-day consideration within all of the University's activities, both strategically and operationally;
- Staff will have greater understanding of their responsibilities in Equality and Diversity and apply this in their practice to positively advance equality;
- The University will be an inclusive community where staff and students are able to fulfil their full potential in their work or studies;
- The diversity of the University community will be celebrated and recognised so that all staff and students feel respected and valued.

Underpinning this, the University has and will continue to take forward a range of initiatives, including:

- **Equality Impact Assessments**: the University was chosen to participate in an Advance HE Project on Equality Impact Assessments in Strategic Documents and this project will culminate in a new toolkit for sector-wide implementation.
- **Disability Confident Scheme**: the University has signed up to Level 1 of the Government's Disability Confident Scheme. This provides the opportunity to publicise and strengthen its commitment to recruiting and supporting disabled people.
- **Equality and Diversity Research Group**: the University has established this Group which is based in our School of Psychology to develop an evidence-based approach to diversity initiatives. Early work has focused on areas of key interest to universities, such as NSS, REF, and student recruitment and student retention.
- **Equality and Diversity Training**: this continues to be mandatory for staff and training for Year 1 students has also been introduced, along with unconscious bias training for Heads of School;
- **University Equality Networks**: the Networks have established mechanisms for self-management and this has proved an effective means for creating networks which have the capacity to introduce change and provide fresh direction. The Networks now formally report into the Equality and Diversity Governance Structure within the University.

Ethnicity

The University is working with campus trades union colleagues to develop a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Network, and has put four calls out to date with limited success. However, having sought advice on this externally, it retains an ambition to establish a network and begin meeting in 2019. A previous Race Short-Life Working Group had started the process of looking at mechanisms for increasing the number of BME academic staff in place at the University which is relatively low, particularly at the professorial level, and to address retention for this cohort.

The University is also committed to working towards applying to the Race Charter Mark and engages with the Scottish Race Equality Network (SREN), and it responded positively to the government's consultation on the ethnicity pay gap reporting proposal. The University works to ensure that it complies fully with all such initiatives.

Disability

The University continues in its commitment to enhance the student experience for students under all protected characteristic groups, including *Disability*. It acknowledges the Scottish Parliament's Equalities and Human Rights Committee report, *Universities and Disabilities*, and is working to ensure that it meets all outlined recommendations. In demonstrating its commitment to this area, the following should be noted:

- **Prospective students** are made several offers to discuss their impairment with the University in advance of registering, as part of the application and admissions process, with specialist advisers on hand in Student Support. This is designed not just to ensure the correct support is given to the relevant students on arrival, but also, that they are reassured of that fact in advance. This is a key measure in enhancing the intake of these learners.
- **Registered students** can discuss disability issues with a range of staff while here, including their Personal Tutor. The availability of all Student Support services is flagged to all students as part of the admissions, registration and induction processes. Moreover, *reasonable adjustment* requirements are made on request for students who require any such provision, overseen with the support of School Disability Coordinators.
- **In relation to staffing**, the University has signed up to the Scottish Government's Disability Confident scheme, reflecting a commitment to continuing its pursuit of excellence in disability equality, and the recruitment and retention of disabled people. Linked to this, the University will continue to offer a guaranteed interview to disabled candidates who meet the minimum requirements for any post. Its Disability Network Group also continues to thrive and attract new members, noting one member is the Vice Chair of the National Association of Disabled Staff Networks; it is hoped that from this, the University will be learning from and sharing experiences with Networks from across the sector. More generally, the following initiatives have recently been introduced and will be ongoing over the coming year:

  - Continued implementation of the *Disabled Go* contract for buildings' accessibility which included a complete review of new and refurbished buildings on campus in July 2017.
  - Introduction of advanced tools for making recordings of lectures more accessible for students
  - Delivery of a new project which seeks to mainstream accessibility arrangements for students. The University is aware of current inconsistencies in practice across the institution.
  - Proliferating use of Blackboard Ally, recently implemented - an enhancement of the University's Virtual Learning Environment, which improves accessibility through multi-format translation.

Trans and Gender Diverse People

The University is fully committed to supporting all Trans and gender diverse applicants, students and staff, and over the coming year will be developing both staff and student policies on transgender issues. These policies will be developed in consultation with all key stakeholder groups, including staff, the Scottish Transgender Alliance (STA) and in accordance with the TransEDU Scotland project. They will cover key areas like enhanced provision of support during the application and registration processes, to ensure seamless integration into the University community.

In general, there is a growing understanding of transgender issues across the institution, and different measures have been taken forward in response; for example, the provision of gender-neutral toilets across campuses where possible. Moreover, different sections like Human Resources, Student Support and the Accommodation Office are now looking proactively to support both transgender staff and students, to ensure they are treat fairly and equally.

It should be noted that, whilst not specifically included in the contextualised admissions policy, the University does not underestimate its responsibility in supporting transgender students; if an applicant states that their education has been negatively impacted as a consequence of their trans status then this would be considered as an extenuating circumstance under the terms of that policy.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

The University strongly believes that safeguarding the mental and physical wellbeing of its staff and students is of paramount importance. On this basis, it has had in place since 2016 both a Mental Health

Strategy, and an aligned Mental Health Policy, each applicable to both staff and students. In support of its strategy, the University has put structures and different mechanisms in place to ensure not just delivery, but ongoing refinement and review, as a means of optimising the mental health support services it delivers across the wider institutional community. These include:

- Establishment of a Mental Health Working Group;
- Investment to appoint a Mental Health Adviser. In addition to managing a caseload, the Adviser has given advice and guidance to colleagues in Student Support, other support services in the University, academic staff and those who support students in the Halls of Residence;
- The appointment of Mental Health Champions across different functions in the University; they promote good mental health, mental health support services and provide a direct link to the Mental Health Advisor;
- The roll out of Mental Health First Aid training to staff to ensure as many staff as possible are in a position to help identify signs of difficulty that indicate that a fellow member of staff or student may require mental health and wellbeing support;
- The provision of counselling for staff and students experiencing mental health issues, including access to free online support via the Big White Wall.
- Crises support, notably for students who may be suicidal;
- Hosting an annual University-wide Mental Health Day, with a view to promoting mental health and wellbeing strategies and the initiatives which are available to staff and students.

The University also collaborates with a range of external organisations on mental health, such as Police Scotland, NHS acute care services, SAMH (Scottish Association for Mental Health), NHS Health Scotland's ChooseLife and Aberdeen Sports Village, among others. These organisations are invited to participate and contribute during University-led wellbeing events. Moreover, the University is also working closely with the Aberdeen University Students' Association (AUSA) on mental health, with key initiatives including: development of a Student Health Agreement; delivering Mental Health First aid to training AUSA officers (among others, as above); and, working to improve student mental health literacy through shorter introductory mental health courses. Furthermore, the University has successfully retained it Silver Award in the Healthy Working Lives programme, and employee mental health and wellbeing is one of the key criteria.

As a means of monitoring its performance in supporting mental health, the University collects anonymised usage statistics for various mental health support services. It also collects feedback from users to help target and improve services. More information is available on mental health services provided for students on this dedicated webpage. Further information on staff support is available here.

Diet and Healthy Weight

The University is fully committed to working towards the Scottish Government's Diet and Healthy Weight Delivery Plan; this is ongoing. It recognises the importance of supporting staff and students to maintain positive physical and mental wellbeing, noting the two are often interlinked. Key measures taken by the University to improve staff diet and promote healthy eating include:

- The active promotion of healthy eating across campus at all food outlets;
- Access for all staff and students to world-class sporting and aqua facilities via the flagship Aberdeen Sports Village, noting all staff are given free off-peak membership, and student afforded discounted rates;
- The delivery of successful Health and Wellbeing Days for staff and students, which incorporate activities such as healthy cooking displays, opportunities to try new exercises and undertake health checks;
- The provision of nutritional advice to support groups such as the Menopause Network, which has also had the opportunity to engage Fitness Consultants, to explore exercise and fitness.
- The appointment of 15 staff members as Staff Wellbeing Coordinators, with training provided. Their role is to be a 'listening ear' for staff with a wide range of wellbeing issues (including bullying, harassment, work-life balance, stress, physical health and mental health) and can signpost staff to appropriate guidance in relation to diet and weight management. The University is delighted that the Wellbeing Coordinators are now available, on a pilot basis, to PGR students.
- The offer of Health Coaching to a limited number of staff which provides longer term weight management guidance and support.

Society and Culture

The University remains committed to being a leading contributor to the cultural life of Aberdeen and the wider North East of Scotland. In line with the UK Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research, and commitments made in its Strategic Plan (2015-2020), the University retains its high-level strategic commitment to engage and empower local communities through research. As reported in its last OA, it hosts a diverse range of events, exhibitions and activities throughout the local region, led primarily through its Public Engagement with Research Unit (PERU). These events include talks, workshops, debates, activities in the city centre, interactive tours and events such as the Discover strand of the University's May Festival, which provides the public with the opportunity to gain insights into the cutting-edge research going on at the University.

2017/18 saw the launch of 'Cellblock Science', a Wellcome funded project aimed at delivering science learning to prisons in Scotland. The benefits of the project include encouragement of learning in prison and the introduction of University to an audience who may never have considered going to University or been exposed to the way that University research impacts on society. The project continues for a further year into 2018/19 and it is hoped that additional projects with HMP Grampian will be developed.

A range of other events are also planned for the year ahead, building on the previous year's successful series and festivals, and the PERU have been successful in their funding application to the European Commission for European Researchers Night 2018/2019. This project involves partners in Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and St Andrews providing an extravaganza of research related events for the public across Scotland in the last weekend of September. Moreover, PERU's work with a variety of community partners across the city is ongoing and will continue into 2018/19. For example; the Youth Media Team at SHMU Community Radio, comprising secondary school age children from the regeneration areas of the city, will complete 'Curiosity', a film making collaboration about science.

The University continues to value and recognise academic staff for their involvement in public engagement – the annual Principal's Prize for Public Engagement with Research celebrates the quality and creativity of engagement by staff and students, recognising individuals who make outstanding contribution in the field of research-led public engagement. In 2017/18 members of the public were included on the judging panel for the first time, further extending the University's links in the community. The University enables staff and student participation through training where required, and through support structures in place throughout the research lifecycle, from grant development to reporting and impact planning. In addition, to ensure ongoing best practice, the University also undertakes regular reviews of its public engagement activities, taking account of both its own programmes, and also those of the wider sector. This is enabled through sector-wide engagement via different networks, for example: we work closely with the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) and are part of the ScotPEN public engagement network. More information on PERU is available via its website.

Governance

The University remains fully committed to achieving the highest standards of corporate governance. The overarching governance arrangements outlined in the last OA remain in place (please cross refer); however, since publication of that document, the Court has implemented a number of enhancements to its governance. These include:

- The reform of the Court's composition to comply with the requirements of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act, while reducing its overall size to 25 members, increasing the proportion of non-executive staff and student members, and providing for a majority of independent members;
- Improvements in the diversity of Court membership, in line with the new Gender Representation on Public Bodies Act, covered above.
- Reviewing and revising the Court's Statement of Intent on Diversity to seek to enhance Court's diversity in areas beyond gender, again, as above;
- Undertaking an independent effectiveness review and implementing changes to ensure greater clarity in the respective roles of the Court and the Operating Board
- Reviewing its compliance with the new 2017 Scottish Code of Good HE Governance and implementing changes to procedures to accord with the new requirements;

In addition, in 2019 the Court will take forward arrangements to elect its Senior Governor in line with the requirements of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act.

Sustainability

The University continues to place emphasis on Sustainability as an institutional strategic priority, and during 2017/18, continued to make excellent progress against the institutional targets set in its current Carbon Management Plan (CMP). Having set a target to reduce emissions by 20% over the five-year period from 2016-2021, the University is delighted that this target has been achieved after only two years. At the end of the second full-year of its CMP, headline gross emissions have fallen by 22.41% to 24,455 tonnes (from a baseline of 31,520 tonnes in 2015/16).

In terms of energy-related emissions, the major shift has seen Scope 2 emissions from electricity use fall from 6927 to 5180 tonnes. Emissions from natural gas use were down 384 tonnes to 12,535 tonnes. While some of this progress is attributable to the greening of the energy grid (in particular electricity), the University's continued efforts to identify and implement dozens of energy efficiency and energy reduction projects has had a significant impact on energy use. These projects are focused on emphasising energy fundamentals and prioritising efficiency ahead of investment in renewable technologies, and there is confidence that further progress can be achieved to 2021. In relation to its broader efforts around Sustainability, the following should be noted:

- As part of its overall foot-printing effort, the University will continue to monitor and include Scope 3 emissions related to business travel, and it will continue in its efforts to make progress in reducing emissions related to waste disposal. The University's collaborative exercise with Robert Gordon University, referenced in last year's OA has transformed how waste is managed, with virtually no waste now landfilled.
- The University will continue to report comprehensively on progress against emissions and climate change commitments through the *Public Bodies Climate Change Duties* reporting regime in adherence with the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. The 'Wider Influence' section of this also now includes details of a range of regional and sectoral initiatives in which the University is involved. These include local and national forums in which best practice is shared and collaborative initiatives are identified.
- The Rocking Horse Nursery building (opened in 2015) was recognised by EAUC Scotland as one of a handful of 'Decade Highlight' projects at its 2018 conference. The event served to showcase the sustainability activity of the sector in the ten years since EAUC established a Scotland office – but also to plan for the challenges of the future. As part of that process, colleagues from the University's Estates & Facilities team have been invited to contribute to the sustainability themed sub-group of Universities Scotland's 'Efficiencies Taskforce' going forward.
- Elsewhere, University representation from its Research & Innovation section have undertaken work alongside academic colleagues to begin the process of mapping research against the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). This is timely in light of the emergent Times Higher Education's 'Impact Rankings' and its use of the SDGs as a framework for assessing institutional 'impact'; The University is considering how best to respond to the opportunity this provides.
- Given the renewed focus on sustainability issues, the opportunity presented by the SDGs, and following the wake-up call in the form of the most recent IPCC report, the University intends to review its structures and resourcing around sustainability. A working group is being established by the new Principal with a view to making recommendations later in the year.

Value for Money in the Use of Public Funds

The University is proactive in taking action wherever possible to ensure value for money is delivered in its use of public funding. This means improving efficiencies where possible, use of shared services and more effective procurement. To illustrate, various examples are given below:

- In terms of **procurement**, the University's overarching objective is to obtain value for money in all of its transactions. In conducting daily business, the University considers the wider responsibilities in terms of legal, moral, social, economic and environmental impact, and in this, all procurement activity is carried out in line with the University of Aberdeen Procurement Policy & Procedures, in compliance with the terms of the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015, the Public

Contracts (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2016, the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 and European Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU.

- The University optimises use of national, sectoral, local or regional **collaborative contracts** and frameworks whenever possible. As well as bringing leverage-based savings (by consolidating spend and supplies), the burdens of risk, contract and supplier management are shared and the number of resource-intensive formal local tenders that need to take place, is reduced significantly. In the last reporting period, 38% of University regulated spend went through collaborative agreements. The University is presently **making use of over 80 collaborative agreements** as well as the local agreements we have in place. These include a Travel Management Service Contract shared between Robert Gordon University, North East Scotland College and University of Aberdeen with a **joint value of approximately £1.9m per annum**.

- A Financial Authorities Structure is in place to ensure that procurement of goods and services is overseen by staff at an appropriate level. Orders and contracts must be authorised in accordance with the Financial Regulations and is embedded within the approval process of the University's Finance System.

- Under Digital and Information Services, the University has a **shared data centre model** in operation with Robert Gordon University and North East Scotland College. This ground-breaking initiative has and continues to provide **significant savings** through a highly efficient infrastructure, utilising significantly less space and power than the previous models. These savings, over the lifetime of the initiative, are measured in **millions of pounds**.

- Via its library, the University makes **extensive use of the JISC Collections and other relevant APUC agreements**, to ensure it takes best advantage of these valuable procurement vehicles.

- The University is also **a founder member of the HEFESTIS Shared CISO initiative**; as part of that, the University Chief Information Officer is now chair of the HEFESTIS board. HEFESTIS provides cost effective access to a highly qualified group of cyber security staff, as well as helping to build an important community of practice which can be utilised by Government in **driving a key strategic objective for Scotland**.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING

The delivery of excellent research-led teaching, as part of a world class teaching and learning environment that provides the basis for all students to achieve their potential, is one of the key themes central to the University's Strategic Plan (2015-2020). This aligns to the SFC priority:

- *SFC Priority: High quality learning in a system which is seamlessly connected for the learner.*

3.1. STEM

The University remains fully committed to increasing the recruitment and retention of students to STEM-based subjects, in line with the prioritisation of STEM by the Scottish Government, reflected in its STEM Education and Training Strategy, 2017. The University shares the Government and sector-wide view that increased recruitment to STEM-based disciplines is a crucial component of servicing the future needs of the Scottish economy. Following a review of its targets in this area last year, the University has an ambitious aim to recruit 45% of SDUEs to STEM-based subjects by 2021, with annual increases to that point. For 2018/19, the percentage of students entering STEM-based disciplines increased to 32.4% based on early data, just short of the 35% target. The University recognises that that the target to achieve 40% in 2019/20 will be challenging, but similarly, notes that there has been scope to increase its STEM numbers in recent years. With a view to achieving the level of growth planned, the University will be taking forward a range of measures which, in addition to those highlighted in its 18/19 agreement (please cross-refer) includes, but is not limited to:

- **Investment in a £37million Science Teaching Hub**, with construction under way, due for completion in 2021. This is expected to have a significant impact on STEM recruitment and retention.

- **Institutional STEM Strategy**: development of an institutional strategy will be taken forward in 2019, to align with the [Scottish Government STEM Education and Training Strategy](#), where applicable. This strategy will focus on delivering excellence in STEM education, closing the equity gap in STEM participation and attainment, inspiring update in STEM through outreach, and looking to connect STEM curricula to labour market needs;
- **Sector Engagement**: to inform strategy development, the University now has representation on both the Education Scotland Higher Education and Industry STEM Coordination Group, and the North East Scotland Regional STEM Hub. This will enhance the University's regional and national links, in turn, enhancing its capacity to deliver the sought outcomes.
- **STEM Employability**: more effectively promoting career prospects to STEM students, particularly important following the downturn affecting the oil and gas sector;
- **Diversifying STEM Provision**: continuing to diversify the University's STEM offerings at programme level, notably in areas like Engineering and Geosciences, where the oil and gas downturn has adversely affected student numbers;
- **STEM Conversion Rates**: ongoing work to improve conversion rates for STEM applicants; this rose in 2018 relative to 2017, and a push for further improvement is planned;
- **Outreach Work**: ongoing outreach work within the local community ranging from interaction with the early years group all the way through to engagement with senior year secondary pupils. This includes a range of initiatives, such as S6 days where advanced higher students in chemistry, biology, physics and engineering do practical classes they would not otherwise receive in Schools;
- **STEM Progression Routes to Teacher Training**: taking forward plans to increase **progression routes for STEM students into teacher training**. This includes raising awareness, potential new degree programmes to enhance STEM teacher training for both articulating and existing science students, with different pathways considered. For example, the feasibility of degree programmes in natural or computing sciences "with Education" is being explored.

The University is keen to highlight that despite the challenges it faces in meeting its STEM targets, it is extremely proud of its engagement and outreach activities that help contribute to the access and provision of STEM subjects. The commitment and effort the University has invested in the local area, and further afield, cannot be quantified by the number of registered students alone at the University of Aberdeen. The University sees it as its civic and corporate responsibility to enhance provision and access to STEM, regardless of the institution in which the prospective student may choose to study.

3.2. Student Retention

The University reaffirms its commitment to maintaining and where possible, increasing its excellent rates of student retention as an institutional priority, in line with Scottish Government and SFC strategic priorities; non-continuation remains a key metrics within the University's strategic planning process. The University has made marginal amendments to the high-level targets it had in place over the coming three years for the percentage of SDUEs returning to study in year two; they are now set at a flat rate of 95% for every student cohort, including all Protected Characteristic groups, meaning if targets are met, each of these groups will align with the institutional norm, in line with the SFC objective. These commitments are made on the back of more excellent retention rates in 2017/18, including: 94.5% of all full time first year SDUEs returned to study in Year 2, including 95.8% of all females, 94.6% of under 21s, and 95.2% of the proportion of students suffering a disability.

The University's approach to retention is overseen centrally by a Retention Taskforce (RTF) and various initiatives it rolls out are the result of a variety of initiatives aimed at identifying and supporting students at critical periods during their studies. The University will continue to develop and implement new and enhanced retention strategies to address and reach the widest possible range of students, with a particular focus on new student orientation, early intervention, and wider student support services. As the proportion of entrants from further education, disadvantaged backgrounds or SIMD postcodes increases, there is also a need to continue to develop, implement and review processes to ensure they are fit for purpose, as stated earlier. In addition to the extensive list of measures outlined in the previous Agreement ([please cross-refer](#)), the following are tangible examples of measures in place or planned to underpin continuation of excellent retention rates:

- **Induction Programmes**: at School level, comprehensive student induction programmes are now routinely provided to help new and returning students transition into their studies. This has been overseen, in-part, by a "Welcome Week Working Group", looking to standardise induction where

possible. These are designed to focus on key challenges faced by individual student populations, notably those entering from further education and those entering from disadvantaged backgrounds. The RTF has overseen sharing of best-practice across the institution. These have helped to enhance retention rates at all levels, but most notably for students in Years 1 and 2.

- **Personal Tutors**: additionally, Schools are now extremely proactive in supporting students via the allocation of Personal Tutors, and through early intervention; attendance and performance is monitored closely, and support routinely offered where there are early indications of underlying issues. Development of good practice in areas of automated data gathering and analysis are ongoing and such approaches are increasingly more widely used.

- **Learner Analytics**: the University is currently developing a policy for the use of student data for learning analytics, which will underpin the collection and use of data touch points, as a means of analysing student engagement. Such data may include attendance at lectures, viewing lecture recordings, library access and is designed to highlight changes in student behaviour that may indicate disengagement with their studies. This facilitates intervention at an earlier point than has previously been available; the RTF is currently overseeing the development of intervention strategies and activities to enhance the impact of early interventions. The new policy will be taken forward for approval in January 2019. Concurrently, the University has been in a proof of concept process with a learning analytics solution provider to establish data compatibility and accuracy of the engagement scores.

- **Clearing Support**: with numbers of clearing students increasing, additional support is to be offered to those entering through clearing by existing students who have entered through clearing in a previous year. This mentoring programme will specifically support clearing students. In addition, there are plans underway to try and connect alumni who entered through clearing with incoming clearing students as a means of inspiring those students in the early and vulnerable stages of their Aberdeen experience. A similar scheme for students entering from further education is also planned.

3.3. Developing the Young Workforce and Employer Engagement

The University remains fully committed to developing the young workforce with the skill sets required to meet the needs of industry and employers, and to filling skills gaps in the economy where they exist. To this end, it fully supports, and is committed to aiding implementation of the Scottish Government's *15-24 Learner Journey* strategy, its *Developing the Young Workforce* strategy, and its strategy on *Skills Alignment*, noting these three strategies are closely interlinked.

Aberdeen's high-level commitment to skills development is reflected via its Strategic Plan, which places emphasis on employability, and under which it actively monitors positive destinations as a key performance indicator, reporting on this metric to the University Court bi-annually. The University has performed strongly in this area in recent times; in 2017/18, just under 95% of its Scottish-domiciled graduates moved on to a positive destination, which is an excellent return. Over the coming period to 2022, the University has fixed this target at 96% on an annual basis and, while ambitious, this is in line with the excellent results it has delivered in recent years. To achieve these targets and to help fulfil the ambition of the three strategies referenced above, the University will continue to work closely with different stakeholder groups, including Schools, its Careers Service and employers, to ensure that the curriculum aligns to student and employer needs across a range of disciplines, covering different sectors. A selection of the key initiatives undertaken to support development of the young workforce, and to enhance employer engagement, is given below, noting these add to those listed in the University's last Agreement (please cross refer):

- **Foundation Apprenticeships and Graduate Apprenticeships**: the University recognises the value of developing Graduate Apprenticeship programmes, particularly in practical vocational subject areas, noting this is an important scheme for helping to develop individuals and to address potential skills gaps in the wider Scottish economy. The University is working with Skills Development Scotland and other relevant agencies to develop how it recognises Foundation Apprenticeships through its admissions process. The University is also actively exploring options to offer Graduate Apprenticeships with the relevant agencies and employers. In addition, in late 2018 the University was awarded 20 funded places by Skills Development Scotland, to provide a Level 10 BEng Civil Engineering Graduate Apprenticeship programme; this was an excellent outcome for the institution, and is now being taken forward.

- **Positive Outcomes Taskforce**: the University's Positive Outcomes Task Force, which provides a vital channel for the Careers Service to connect with employability champions at School and discipline level, has worked with Schools to establish how their careers/employability provision aligns with the University's Minimum Undergraduate Careers Framework (MUCF). This has helped to identify innovative, curriculum-based best practice at School-level to enhance career prospects and general employability across the student population. It has also given a mechanism for sharing effective employability practice University-wide, and this will be ongoing over the year ahead and beyond. Of particular focus this year, will be a need to better understand the varied ways that the University engages with the local community and how the range of collaborations in place yields rewards for students which they can document and use to enhance their employability.

- **The University Employer Board**: this group continues to meet on a quarterly basis with 16 employers who represent a range of employment sectors. The Board has a responsive agenda, and contributes ideas and constructive feedback in support of Careers Service activities, encouraging innovative responses to external demands and changes, to ensure students are equipped with the skills required to meet a range of industry needs. Topics explored by the Board in 2017-18 included: the implementation of Digital Badges to accredit students' skills development, the Santander SME Internship Scheme, the University's development of online education and an employer-led session on Making the Most of the Digital World. Going forward over the coming year, the Board will be reviewing and providing feedback on development plans for the Leadership Academy and the newly launched Scottish Institute for Enterprise (SIE) Scottish Innovative Student Award.

- **Online Professional Skills Courses**: to ensure provision of a minimum level careers support to all UG students, a suite of online professional skills courses have been rolled out, targeted for Level 1 to Level 3 students. The Level 1 course has been prescribed for all undergraduate students, and in 2017-18, was undertaken by 86% of the population. The qualitative feedback received on these courses demonstrates positive impact, with students citing enhanced confidence, knowledge and skills, which combine to underpin personal development and longer term career prospects.

- **Work-Related Learning**: in recent years, the University has markedly enhanced its portfolio of work-based learning courses in the curriculum, and these now include: Learning from Work, Career Development; Find Your Direction, Working Together; Employability for Arts & Social Sciences; Engineering Work Experience; City Labs and Work Experience; Employability Skills Development. These courses allow the University to provide degree programmes with differing forms of external engagement, and offer students access to work-related learning opportunities during their studies. For example:

  - The Level 3 Work Experience: Employability Skills Development course being run in Biological Sciences, Psychology and Divinity, History and Philosophy, is an outcome of research undertaken by the University Career Service. It has students secure their own School-approved placement, part-time work or personal development project, encourages them to reflect on their personal and professional development and to make connections between their studies and the world of work. This addresses the ambitions of Universities Scotland *Making it Happen* report.
  - A Working Together: Employability for Arts & Social Sciences module run via the School of Education builds consultancy-style projects into the curriculum, exposing students to real work tasks and providing opportunities to apply their transferable skills such as team work, project management, problem-solving and communication in a different environment. The success of this initiative has led to its adoption by Engineering who have embedded such work experience into level 2 of their curriculum and presented at the University's 2018 Academic Symposium, ultimately supporting both employability and retention of students.

- **Work Placements and Internships**: the co-curriculum continues to complement the academic curriculum and provides opportunities for students to develop their skills and attributes. Several Integrated Masters programmes are offered across Life Sciences and Physical Sciences, providing students with the opportunity to undertake 6 or 12 month industry placements, contributing to the award of their Degree. Additionally, courses such as Learning from Work allow students to formally recognise a work placement or voluntary post towards their degree. Specifically in relation to PGT studies, an ongoing review into PGT provision is underway to evaluate the efficiency of the portfolio

and the relevance of programme offerings in the context of future skills needs. One aspect of the review has seen the collation of information relating to employability opportunities within the current provision, and in parallel to explore opportunities to develop new programmes, or modify existing programmes to embed work experience opportunities. The survey sent to Schools aligns with the University of Aberdeen's Employability Development Framework and the outcome of which is intended to help inform new strategy development to ensure the University is meeting skills needs nationally and internationally, and that programmes are attractive to the most talented students from across the world.

In total, 17% of the University's undergraduate student population undertook some form of work-based learning in 2017/18, equating to 2017 students (by headcount). This includes students undertaking: 6-12 month paid placements (worth 120 credits); Go Abroad paid placements; activity less than 6 months, with placement linked to the curriculum; and, activity less than 6 months, with work-based projects linked to the curriculum. This reflects the broad range of opportunities provided by the University for students looking to undertake different work-related learning activities across the full breadth of its curriculum. This is illustrated in visual form overleaf via a diagram which categorises different work-related learning activities by type.

Work-Related Learning at Aberdeen
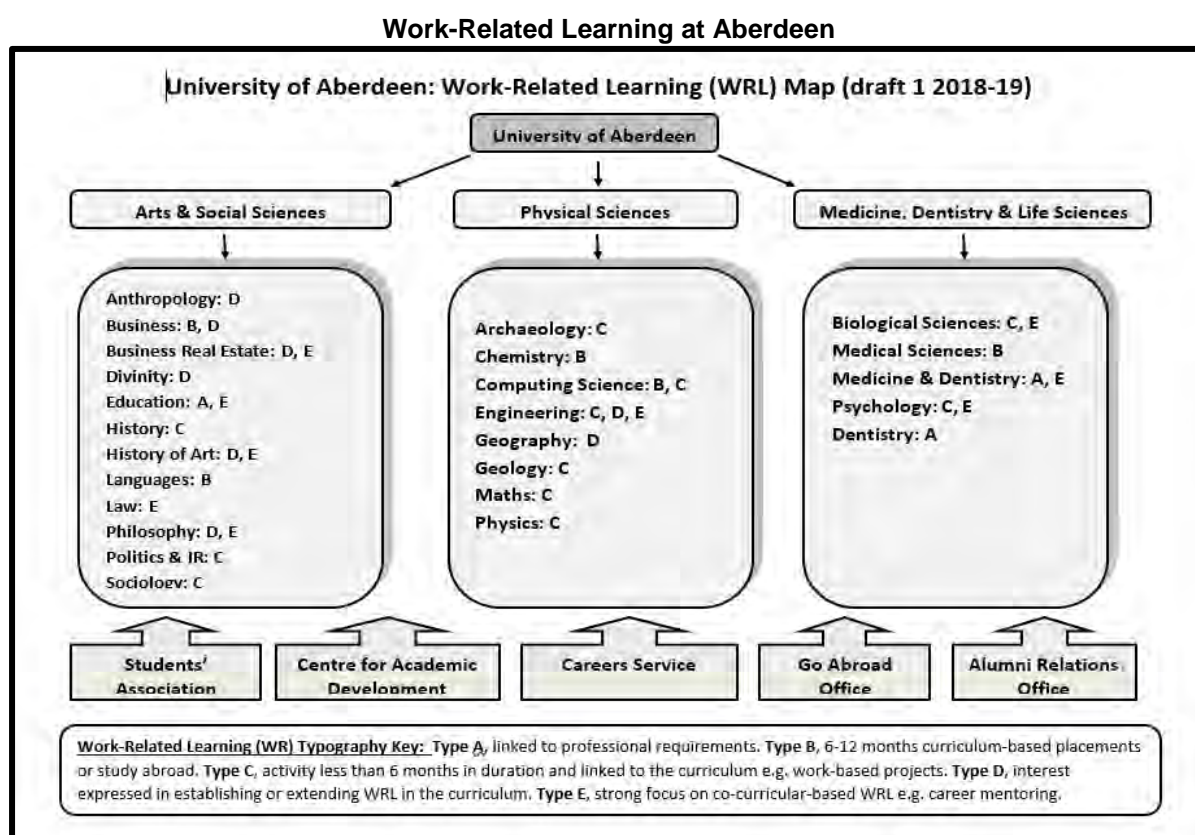
As a general point, it should be noted that the University also responds flexibly to changes in the wider external environment, and in particular, the changing needs of industry to ensure that curriculum content and programme provision is reviewed, adjusted and refreshed on an ongoing basis to meet evolving sector demands. This is well illustrated by two examples:

- First, the University's response to the decline in the oil and gas sector, which resulted in a decline in uptake across a range of programmes within Engineering and Geosciences in particular. By way of response, both Schools sought to diversify their programme offerings, with a notable example the University's new MSc in Decommissioning, which was established as a consequence of changing focus within the oil and gas sector. In relation, the University also launched the new National Decommissioning Centre as a partner with the Oil and Gas Technology Sector in early 2019.
- Second, the University responded to teaching training shortages in Scotland, and particularly in the north east, by developing its Distance Learning Initial Teacher Education (DLITE) Primary programme. This programme provides flexible and blended learning opportunities over an 18

month period, to enhance access to teaching training, and to improve uptake, ultimately with a view to supporting growth in teacher numbers in support of the sector.

3.4. Uptake of Controlled Places in Teacher Education

The University has taken forward a range of measures to improve the uptake of controlled places in teacher education, particularly in those subject areas with low student demand. It has also taken steps to achieve significant growth in early learning and childcare (ECL) provision. As above, the University recognises the importance of developing the young workforce to address skills shortages.

The University's MA Education and PDGE Primary ITE programmes continue to attract high student numbers, with controlled population targets achieved. The additional places allocated to Aberdeen in 2018/19 for the MA Primary, following the withdrawal of the Edinburgh programme, have been filled. However, continued demand does pose a financial challenge to Aberdeen; the University continues to provide funding to support the cost of student placements, and this can be expensive given Aberdeen's geographical location. The University also continues to work in partnership with local authorities across the North East to offer the DLITE Primary programme, referenced above. As above, this makes use of blended learning opportunities to allow students to complete the PGDE Qualification. As will be detailed below, the successful model has been expanded to include a DLITE PGDE Secondary option.

In relation to the PGDE Secondary, it remains a challenge to fill the allocated places, particularly in subject areas that are generally less popular across the sector. However, a range of activities are undertaken to support delivery of targets, including:

- A Skills Development Scotland (SDS) supported bursary of £20K per year, targeted at Oil and Gas workers at risk of redundancy, was offered by the School of Education in 2018-19 "Into STEM Teaching" Energy PGDE (iSTEP);
- Secondary Subject Tutors are participating in recruitment events (both within Aberdeen, locally and nationally);
- Facebook marketing campaigns specifically to target Secondary PGDE;
- The launch of the Scottish Government Funded Distance Learning Initial Teacher Education (DLITE) Secondary. In 2017/18, the programme recruited to Business Education, Technological Education, and Physics. For January 2019 entry, recruitment is open to Home Economics, Chemistry, Maths, Computing, and Technological Education. It is expected that the intake to the DLITE will help improve the number of students registered overall for the PGDE Secondary.
- From session 2018/19, the student recruitment team has been enlarged – splitting Primary and Secondary PGDE recruitment in order to support delivery of targets.

In addition, for **secondary teaching**, work is underway to develop appropriate pathways for students studying programmes within the School of Natural and Computing Science to complete their teacher training, **increasing the number of students in the harder to fill STEM subject areas** of Maths, Physics, Chemistry and Computing Science. Discussions are in their early stages and the SFC and THE General Teaching Council (GTC) will be informed of the development of the delivery method and programme proposal.

More generally, Education also runs **Online Access programmes in English and Maths**, which are now supporting prospective student teachers nationally to meet the GTC Memorandum entry standards to enable access to teaching. It is also notable, in relation to widening access, that more than 10% of applicants to this course were from SIMD20 catchments in 2018/19.

For BMus Education, there remain significant challenges, with the University under enrolling again in 18/19. Work is ongoing with the School to address this, with potential actions including:

- Development of recruitment posters for secondary schools;
- Develop a marketing campaign, including social media and video content;
- Interviewing students who on paper fall short of the Grade 8 Instrumental minimum requirement;
- Consider bridging programme options to support students in improving their instrumental ability.

Finally, the University has risen to the challenge of meeting the SFC targets in relation to the delivery of **early learning and childcare (ELC)** provision through the BA Childhood Practice. The University has significantly increased its intake targets in accordance with the SFC, and ensured resources are in place to support the increased delivery. Given the part time nature of the University's programme it can be challenging to guarantee a specified number of graduates at any given time; however the University is confident in the steps taken to enhance its provision to meet SFC targets, for example, increased marketing and targeted social media campaigns.

3.5. Health Outcomes

The University is fully committed to delivering the health-related outcomes set by the SFC in 2018 and is taking a range of measures to help facilitate improved performance against key outcomes. Performance relevant to different outcomes is covered below.

In terms of the percentage of Medicine graduates going specifically into GP training on completion of their foundation programme, based on data available via the most recent Foundation Programme Careers Destination Report (2018), 9.7% of Aberdeen respondents entered into specialty training in General Practice.

For the percentage of clinical placements delivered in community and GP settings, the University estimates that approximately 28% of its teaching across the curriculum is either GP-based or led, though some students will receive more depending on what optional parts of the curriculum are selected. This figure reflects concerted efforts by the University to maximise opportunities for students to engage with General Practitioners. Details of how this figure was calculated are available on request.

In terms of the number and percentage of Scottish domiciled applicants each year applying to Medicine at Aberdeen, 42% were Scottish domiciled in 2019, relative to 38% the year previous. This improvement reflects in part a range of outreach activities undertaken by the institution to increase applications from Scottish domiciled entrants, including targeting areas and Schools where progression into subjects like Medicine has been traditionally low.

3.6. Additional Areas of Strategic Importance under the Teaching and Learning Theme

Language Skills, Gaelic and British Sign Language

Language Skills

Growth in language skill provision continues at the University, and is integral to the institutional internationalisation strategy and in particular, plans to grow its international student population over the coming years in key areas. As a consequence of this, the University's Language Centre has and will continue to expand rapidly, partly to support growth in the international student base, and to provide enhanced support to existing international students. The institutional commitment to English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is therefore directly linked to its overarching strategic objectives, and thus seen as a key component of future success. Notable initiatives in place or planned to enhance language provision going forward include:

- The University's **MSc in TESOL**, which continues to recruit strongly, tapping into diverse markets like China and others in eastern Asia;
- A **new joint honours undergraduate programme in Modern Languages-Translation & Interpreting**, which will be recruiting its first cohort of students in **2019/20**. The aim of the programme is to provide training in the theory and practice of translation and interpreting, opening up professional and vocational routes for Modern Languages students.
- The organisation of **language outreach schemes**, such as *Language Ambassador* and *Primary Placement*, which are now into their fourth year of operation. The Primary Placement scheme involves engaging primary schools in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, helping to support the delivery of the 1+2 Modern Languages initiative through a ten-week placement.
- For the first time this year, **working with Aberdeen City Council to recruit students for the city International Youth Group Summer Camp**. This runs in collaboration with Aberdeen's twinned cities of Clermont-Ferrand and Regensburg.

- Over the coming year, the University is investigating how it can incorporate **credit-based recognition of work-based placement activities**, linked to the compulsory year abroad between Level 2 and Level 3 of the existing Modern Language degrees in French, German and Spanish & Latin American Studies. The new ML-Translation & Interpreting programme (four years) also has an overseas placement option built into Level 3 of the programme, when students go abroad.

Gaelic

The University's first Gaelic Language Plan (2013-2018) which sets out the University's commitment to the national effort to ensure that Gaelic has a sustainable future, is approaching its end. The University has prepared a second Gaelic Language Plan and it is anticipated that this will be formally approved in early 2019. The second plan sets out a number of priorities which directly map onto the National Gaelic Language Plan aims. These are: to continue to increase the number of students learning Gaelic; to improve the Gaelic-experience for staff and students and embed Gaelic activities into routine processes; and delivering high-quality Gaelic events in partnership with other agencies.

British Sign Language (BSL)

In response to the BSL National Plan, the University is proud to have published its first British Sign Language Plan in August 2018, available here. The Plan sets out actions the University will take to 2024 to review and improve access to its services to BSL users, and is framed around the same long-term goals as the national plan, where these are relevant to the work of the University. The plan has four key aims:

- To improve access to information and services on campus for BSL users;
- Engaging with local and national partners to increase training and support for BSL interpreters;
- Engaging with school pupils and their families to ascertain support required;
- Ensuring the views of BSL users inform the development and review of the Plan.

The University already supports BSL users on campus, by meeting the needs of individual students, with steps such as interpreting graduation ceremonies into BSL. The University is also in the process of having its Action Plan interpreted into BSL, and has identified colleagues and students with some BSL training.

Internationalisation

The University continues to develop its strategies for internationalisation, with a growing international student base. Following the October 2018 intake, 44% of its PGT and 47% of its PGR populations were made up of international students, and going forward, there are ambitions for further growth across these cohorts. The University also continues to enhance its offering for international outward mobility to students studying in Aberdeen, and it retains its ambitions to grow its international footprint, with Transnational Education (TNE) activities starting to proliferate. Of particular note:

- In terms of outward mobility, the University increased the number of students participating in either the Erasmus (255) or International Exchange Programme (126), rising to a projection of 381 in total in 2018/19 relative to 2017/18, despite a smaller pooler of eligible students this year. The University is and will continue working hard to increase numbers in this area, as a means of improving the wider student experience, with a number of notable initiatives, including:

  - ✓ An expanded Go Abroad Student Ambassador team, working on promotional initiatives that target underrepresented groups to encourage outward mobility. These groups range from disabled students to STEM students.
  - ✓ Highlighting short-term mobility options, including traineeships and summer schools, as a means of widening access to mobility opportunities
  - ✓ Increasing exchange destinations, to include institutions like Stellenbosch University in South Africa, and deepening relationships with key strategic partners, for example the Aurora Network partners and the Curtin University Alliance.

- Under TNE, the University's first overseas campus in Doha, Qatar, is now entering its second year of operation with a total of 309 undergraduate students studying across three levels in October 2018. Programme offerings have expanded further to postgraduate with 45 MBA and 20 International Business Students also enrolling in October 2018. Preparations continue for the second phase of campus expansion with land made available by the Qatari Government for this. Such campuses offer scope for students at the main Aberdeen campus to travel and experience life and study at the remote campus whilst also potentially giving students at the remote campus the opportunity to spend time in Aberdeen itself.

- The University remains committed to expanding its transnational reach through strategic growth in overseas operations, and presently has interests in Sri Lanka where it hopes to launch "the University of Aberdeen Sri Lanka Medical Pathway". Students will be awarded Bachelor of Clinical Medical Science (B Clin Med Sci) on completion of Years 1 – 3 in Aberdeen. This allows entry to the Year 4 and 5 Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB) delivered in Sri Lanka. This programme will be subject to recognition by the General Medical Council (GMC) as a transnational arm of our existing MBChB.

- The alliance established with Curtin University goes from strength to strength, with c24 joint PhD and two joint Masters students currently enrolled across the two institutions, with a further 11, at least, expected to enrol in 2018. The framework for the joint MSc in Subsea Engineering is being used to create new opportunities, and there are rapidly growing collaborations between the partners in areas like student recruitment and staff mobility.

4. RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

The University's Strategic Plan (2015-2020) identifies Research and Knowledge Exchange as the third of its key strategic themes to support the University's commitment, as a research intensive University, to deliver world class research. This commitment directly aligns with the following SFC priorities:

- SFC Priority: Internationally competitive and impactful research
- SFC Priority: Effective knowledge exchange and innovation

4.1. Internationally Competitive and Impactful Research

In line with the University's strong tradition of excellence, research quality has been recognised externally by the award of Scottish University of the Year 2019 by the Sunday Times Good University Guide; the rise in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings (up 27 places to 158th) and the nomination for the Times Higher DataPoints Merits Award. The nominations and improvement in rankings are based largely on citation performance. The University was also awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize for excellence in our health services research. Additionally, over the last five years, the University has published almost 1,400 books, monographs and book chapters and more than 10,000 journal articles. The percentage of highly cited papers has grown from 3 times the global baseline to 5 times,[1] all of which give rise to Aberdeen's position as an internationally competitive and impactful research institution.

Growth in Research Income

The University has set ambitious targets to deliver growth in research income, both through its institutional Strategic Plan for 2015-2020, and through milestones set via the OA. The University retains its longer term aim to increase research income from all sources to £67m by 2021/22, and in parallel, to increase income from Research Councils UK (RCUK) to just under £14m within the same period (please refer to the University's National Table of Measures. This is an incremental approach which takes account of different environmental factors that have put pressure on performance; in particular, the drop in number of academics at the University in recent years, at least in part as a consequence of restructuring, making it more difficult to achieve the overarching totals. As part of the wider strategy to

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[1] Source: Web of Science up to 2017. The percentage of highly cited papers on Web of Science for the University of Aberdeen for 2017 was 2.99% (70 out of 2,344 publications). The global average for 2017 was 0.61%, that of the UK 1.38% and of Scotland 2.01%. Among our benchmark group, the University of Aberdeen percentage of highly cited papers in 2017 was highest, average was 2.3%.

improve and grow research performance and income, and in line with REF2021 preparations the University is focusing on the following strategies;

- Continued and enhanced institutional engagement with Global Challenges Research Fund – the University's portfolio here has grown to over £min 25 countries, with recent awards demonstrating effective collaboration and interdisciplinary working to address global challenges;
- Facilitating and supporting impact;
- Build and nurture interdisciplinary and/or international collaboration and partnerships;
- Providing open access to research outputs;
- Review and enhance institutional processes around research governance, integrity and research data management.

Additionally, REG funding is being utilised to leverage additional research funding via the GCRF to support networking events, to facilitate interdisciplinary working within the University and to assist with the cost of establishing and maintaining close working relationships with stakeholders in DAC countries.

The University continues to engage with international partners, including those in the AURORA network, to explore the opportunities offered by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, which are underpinned by major international research funding programmes. Through the additional ODA related funds received from the SFC, the University is currently creating a dedicated post to support researchers working towards ODA objectives who are already in receipt of granted GCRF funds and managing the providing pump priming funds.

The main opportunities for growth of quality activity and income for research and knowledge exchange continue to arise from changes in the external funding landscape and development of external partnership, such as the City Deal and opportunities arising from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), discussed further below. This, together with the stronger emphasis on interdisciplinary research recommended by Sir Nicholas Stern in his review of the Research Excellence Framework, will create funding opportunities for institutions whose research strengths and knowledge exchange activities are well aligned with government priorities.

Research Excellence Framework Preparations

Throughout the REF2021 assessment period, the University has focused on enabling and supporting excellent and impactful research, knowledge exchange and researcher development through a variety of means. Much of this activity is supported via institutional core grants, supplemented by external enabling funds. From these efforts, the University aims to deliver an enhanced institutional performance in the REF2021 as part of an ongoing drive for continuous improvement. Following the publication of the REF guidance, an intensified process of identifying excellent research outputs and impacts was implemented. This has been underpinned by establishing strong governance, management and support structures by Unit of Assessment, and through robust quality appraisal exercises, including internal and external peer review of selected outputs. Through such initiatives, the University aims to optimise the strength of its submission across each Unit to which it submits, looking to achieve critical mass and to maximise performance. However, it should be noted that the last planning period has seen significant restructuring and refocusing of teaching and research activities, and the number of REF eligible researchers has reduced. Over the next year, the University will be investing strategically in key research areas with a view to making appointments that will improve the University's capacity to participate and compete in challenge-led research and add to the ability to support partnership working.

Research Impact

The REF2014 recognised 85% of the University's non-academic research impact as either 4* (world-leading) or 3* (internationally excellent). The drive to deliver world class non-academic impact is central to both the University's research environment and its institutional research support arrangements. Researchers have access to support and advice about ways of engaging with research users, collaborating with non-academic partners and designing projects that are capable of delivering impact. Impact training and awareness is delivered through the Grants Academy which provides general as well as project specific impact support. The University has provided enabling funds for both developing and maximising impact through a University-wide competitive process, providing additional examples to undertake a range of showcasing events. The University's strategies for achieving impact are embedded in its priority research activities over the next five years. The University will continue to work

closely with health authorities in clinical and health care research; work with industry through the City Deal to support regional economic growth, engaging with industry parties to access Innovate UK funding and further strengthen our partnerships with charities, local and national government to inform policy and decision making. The University's research is internationally focused, with the majority of research publications co-authored with international partners. The University has a strong track record of attracting overseas industrial income through a number of long standing industrial partnerships.

Enhanced Research Collaboration

The Grants Academy provides support and networking opportunities for researchers, some of which are focused on GCRF and ISCF, and others that support and enable impactful interdisciplinary research regardless of funding source. REG funding is used to provide pump priming funds, studentships and research facilities vouchers to facilitate pilot work, feasibility studies and research in developing new research areas. Within the research support team led by the Vice-Principal for Research, the Dean for Interdisciplinarity and Impact is responsible for a programme of activity delivered through the Grants Academy that encourages and enables interdisciplinary and challenge-led research.

The University plays a major role in a number of pooling initiatives and works closely with a number of UK partners, such as the Research Institutes, Scottish Government, James Hutton Institute, Marine Laboratory and Health Science Scotland. The University is working to strengthen these relationships and explore the potential for further collaboration offered by UKRI and SFC's initiatives, as well as those offered by other important funders.

Thanks to challenge-led research working towards achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals under GCRF, the University now has in-country collaborators and delivery partners in 25 ODA compliant countries. The University has demonstrated its commitment to facilitating international collaboration, mobility and engagement with new partners as follows:

- **AURORA network**; the University is exploring with European partners the potential for further multi-national projects supporting the achievement of the SDGs;
- **Curtin University Partnership**; collaboration on energy-related projects, particularly around decommissioning, the University is currently exploring joint research projects with a partner institution in Sri Lanka. To expand the opportunities with Curtin, a staff mobility scheme across the institutions has been launched to be inclusive across disciplines and professional staff.
- **Creation of a Joint Research Institute with Wuhan University**; investment has facilitated mobility of staff and students, created new collaborations and broadening from the original thematic areas;
- **Ministry of Energy in Mexico relationship**; which will be further enhanced through participation in a capacity building initiative with a number of Mexican partners, who will benefit from the University's significant experience in subsea and energy law research and teaching programmes.

The University is committed to the National Branding Strategy of Scotland is Now. It seeks to promote its international collaborations and success through adding to the wealth of case studies exemplifying the strengths of Scotland's research base.

Use of REG Funding

REG funding is fundamentally important to the University and its ability to deliver excellence in research, including high quality non-academic impacts which benefit wider society, both locally and internationally. REG funding underpins the University's research excellence agenda in a number of ways. It provides resource to support the University in meeting its aims and objectives under open access; it supports researcher development for all career stages; match funding for research infrastructure projects and co-funding arrangements with external partners; resource to develop and enhance international and interdisciplinary collaborations; to deepen and enhance engagement with industry and research users; it enables ongoing public engagement; supports emerging new research areas and allows the University to bridge the funding gap where external funders do not cover the full economic cost of research. To illustrate how REG funding is used with tangible examples, Appendix 1 contains three case studies; please cross refer.

Research Environment

The Schools, Research and Innovation (R&I) and the Postgraduate Research (PGR) School are instrumental in providing the high-quality environment for training and development necessary for researchers to thrive. Research-active staff across all career stages and disciplines are supported strategically by a suite of strategies, policies and an associated action plan which positively impacts the career and professional development support and opportunities for researchers. The wider context for researchers is drawn from the institutional Strategic Plan 2015-2020 and companion strategies for People, Research and Knowledge Exchange, Athena SWAN and Teaching and Learning.

Researcher Development (RD) (Staff, PGR Students and Supervisors)

Institutional support for researchers is provided within Schools and disciplines and across Professional Services. Dedicated support, including training and professional development activities, for research students, research-only (postdocs) and academic staff is provided by R&I and the PGR School (based within R&I). Activity supports early career researchers and academic staff to maximise their research, teaching capacity and career development through training and development opportunities.

The PGR School has reviewed and enhanced supervisor training to ensure consistent high standards across all disciplines. It holds monthly drop in sessions for supervisors to ask questions, raise issues and find out how the PGR School is supporting students. This approach will enable supervisors to gain the information and knowledge they need to best support students, ensuring a consistent message and student experience.

Programmes for academic staff provide University-wide development opportunities, designed to enhance personal and professional development through a variety of open and bespoke courses, workshops and individual interventions. Training programmes and courses are designed for all levels of academic and research-only research staff and align with our strategic objectives providing research-related leadership development including funding, knowledge exchange, impact and engagement. Thus academic staff to make strategic career decisions based on internal and external funding landscape, global challenges and research focus.

The University also recognises that not all researchers will remain in an academic role. Therefore training also covers, for example, enterprise, entrepreneurship, creativity and commercialisation, teaching and self-management. The importance of engaging in skills development in a variety of ways and the importance of building a portfolio of evidence of skills and learning is promoted widely.

Support for Postgraduate Research Students

The University-wide PGR School provides strategic and operational leadership for research degrees, research student experience, research training and development for students and academic supervisors. The PGR School supports PGR students and supervisors throughout the entire PhD journey from recruitment to alumni relations, researcher/personal skills development, and with a strong emphasis on generic skills, employability, practitioner engagement and entrepreneurship. The PGR Schools supports supervisors through clearly signposted support services and articulated expectations, complemented by a programme of supervisor training as discussed above. The Dean for the Postgraduate Research School provides the strategic academic leadership for all matters relating to PGR student management.

The PGR School has a "Living a Life you Believe to be of Value", underpinned by three pillars relating to engagement, skills and wellbeing. The cornerstone of this vision is that all PGRs feel supported and that the value of their PhD research is defined and shared. The PGR School has a new physical location to provide a vibrant hub for independent, collaborative working and social activities. PGR students will be integrated into research Centres/units (virtual and physical) research unit and their research and research-related skills will be nurtured at each stage.

Through training and support, PGR students are encouraged to identify stakeholders, including industry, public, 3rd sector, cultural and engage with them, using the enthusiasm of early career researchers to highlight the impact of our research on society. Capitalising on this engagement will ensure that the city, country and beyond recognise the value of research by postgraduate community. This will enhance student experience, increase attractiveness to national and international research

students, and provide increased growth via an expanding international postgraduate alumni. To support students in achieving their potential and to ensure a positive student experience, students are supported academically and pastorally. The PGR School works in partnership with associated Professional Services, such as Student Support, Counselling Service and Health and Safety, to provide tailored support for emotional, physical and mental wellbeing (counselling services referenced above). PGR students are to be supported via the Staff Wellbeing Coordinator scheme, and currently have access to online Health, Safety and Wellbeing modules and bespoke workshops on resilience. Support for PGR wellbeing and mental health will also be embedded in supervisor training programmes.

The University has seen promising growth in the PGR population, with the collective PGR student population increasing by an overall growth of 6.5% year on year to October 2018. The University aims to have in place more than 1,100 PGRs by 2020**.**

Diversity in Research

Adding to the information given above on gender and equality, it should be noted that the University continues to take forward measures to improve diversity in its research staff population. For example, the Athena SWAN action plans have a focus on ensuring gender balances where possible, including across research staff cohorts. This is a particular focus for STEM based subjects, notably those where there were significant gender imbalances in the REF2014 submission. Initiatives like Athena SWAN are complemented by the HR Excellence in Research Award, given by the European Commission (achieved in 2010, and successfully retained 2012, 2014 and 2016 – 2018 result still pending). This recognises the University's commitment to the principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and aligns with alignment with the European Charter and Code for the Recruitment and Management of Researchers. The Employee Engagement Strategy and Action Plan (available here), outlines a commitment to adhere to the values of trust, integrity, respect and inclusion. Within a REF context, the University expects to develop an institutional code of practice for the selection of outputs, taking care to ensure that the impact of selection decisions on all groups protected by the Equalities Act is monitored, with appropriate action taken where necessary to ensure that there is no disadvantage to those groups; this is pending confirmation via the guidance.

Universities UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity

The University has in place a comprehensive Research Governance Handbook available here. The Handbook details institutional expectations and policies around research integrity and governance, and was designed in-part to meet the principals set out in the UUK Concordat to Support Research Integrity. In 2017, the Handbook was subject to major review as part of an ongoing continuous improvement process. It was updated in the light of changes made to organisational structures, and to take account of changes in the external research environment, including PREVENT, the Nagoya Protocol, funders' open access mandates. Over the coming period, the University will be working towards further improving and streamlining its processes around ethical approval of research applications and related governance arrangements, looking to ensure a robust and transparent institutional approach.

Concordat on Open Research Data

The University recognises that effective dissemination is the first step towards academic and non-academic impact; compliance with open access mandates stands at more than 90%. For 2017, 65% of all journal articles were publicly available at point of publication or at the earliest point permitted by publishers (60% in 2016). The University continues to advocate open access for research publications, and to encourage the publication of underpinning data where possible. The University is currently exploring options to extend open access to longer form publications, where publishers agree.

The University will review and update guidance relating to data management, and will provide training to researchers on a regular basis. The current high level policy on research data management was put in place in 2012 and was reviewed in the light of the publication of the RCUK Concordat on Open Research Data in 2015. Over the coming year, this will be reviewed as part of a wider review of the University's Research Governance Handbook. This review will also consider advocacy and training requirements under the data management policy, with enhanced monitoring to be implemented to support advocacy.

The University is also considering carefully the implications of the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee Report on Research Integrity which was published earlier this year and has put in place a short term working group to prepare the institutional response.

4.2. Knowledge Exchange (KE) – Contribution to Greater Innovation in the Economy

The delivery of excellent non-academic research impact is one of the two specific goals articulated in the University's institutional Strategic Plan (2015-2020). The University remains fully committed to contributing to economic development through greater innovation, with targets for Innovation Vouchers (IVs) and Follow-on IVs in place; incremental increases are targeted to 2020/21 for both.

The University is seeking to continue to strengthen the culture in which impact from excellent research is obtained through engagement with industry, business, the public sector, policy makers and other stakeholders. Support for knowledge exchange is embedded within our Grants Academy and enabling funds for knowledge exchange are available from our UIF allocation. In order to achieve the targets set, the University has undertaken a range of initiatives and activities, including:

- **Innovation Landscape:** The University will continue to engage proactively with Interface and the Innovation Centres. There has been an increase in the number of Innovation Vouchers won by researchers over the past two years and, as evidenced by the targets for AY19/20, the aim is to continue this increase. There is good engagement with all of the Innovation Centres and this will continue as the Innovation Centres transition into their phase 2 business plans. The University remains a committed supporter of the North East KTP Centre and is actively seeking to increase its number of KTP projects through a programme of promotion to academics and to companies.
- **UIF Outcomes:** The University's plan for delivering the agreed UIF outcomes individually and collaboratively is covered in more detail in the UIF plan, submitted alongside this document to SFC. Please cross refer for more information. The University confirms that it will match the UIF Platform Grant of £250k in support of its delivery.
- **Commercialisation outcomes**: Currently being refreshed is the strategy for engaging with industry. Key pillars of the strategy will include Employability & Skills, Research & Development and Innovation & Entrepreneurship. The over-arching aim of the strategy will be to increase engagement with industry across all activities; however, a key aim will be to increase funding from industry and particularly from sources such as ISCF and Innovate UK that require industry-led bids. Working with the Innovation Scotland Forum Action Plan, the University continues engagement to work to achieve the aims of the Innovation Action Plan.
- **Supporting entrepreneurial thinking; business start-up, growth and scale:** The UIF plan outlines support for business start-up from students and staff. The Converge Challenge Business Competition continues to be supported, and there is proactive engagement with SIE, Elevator and Opportunity North East. Entrepreneurs who wish to work with the University as Royal Society of Edinburgh Enterprise Fellows and through Unlocking Ambition Fellowships, or similar opportunities will continue to be supported. The ABVenture Zone start up incubator is available to staff and students who wish to start or incubate a business, and the aim is to maintain the current occupancy level of about 10 businesses at various stages of development and to grow this number through support programmes. The University offers and works with others to provide access to 'ideation' or 'research ventures' workshops to staff and students to encourage entrepreneurial thinking about outcomes and impact from research as well as opportunities for business creation.
- **City Deal:** The University is a key stakeholder in the Aberdeen Region City Deal (ACRD) along with the Councils, Robert Gordon University, Scottish Enterprise, and Opportunity North East (ONE). The Innovation strand of ACRD includes the Oil and Gas Technology Centre (OGTC), and Innovation Hubs for Biopharmaceuticals, Agri-Food & Drink and Digital & Entrepreneurship. The University continues to participate in ONE Boards for each of the Innovation strands with plans to participate in arising opportunities managed at senior level. The University has launched the National Decommissioning Centre (NDC) with OGTC which is based at the University's former Oceanlab facility aimed at tackling current and future challenges. The University will continue to work with OGTC and other stakeholders to build on the early successes and act as a focal point for industry. The Centre will be industry-led, focusing on current challenges such as facilities clean-up and removal and well plugging and abandonment. It will also explore opportunities to optimise future design for recycling and reuse, including the use of new materials. The University is also participating in the other three Innovation stands of the ACRD. There will

be active participation in the planning and development of the Biotherapeutics Hub including developing potential spin outs and start-up companies to be hosted in the physical hub. Ideation sessions will be organised and hosted and boot camps supported and accelerator programmes from ONE in addition to others. The University will engage with the Entrepreneurship and Digital theme within ONE, in particular with ONE CodeBase in Schoolhill which will also provide accelerator programmes. Work will continue with the Entrepreneurship and Digital strand of ONE to explore prospects for developing commercial opportunities as well as accessing skills through the MSc programmes in computing sciences.

- **State Aid compliance:** the University will continue to ensure that the University's research and innovation activity is state aid compliant.

The University will build on the partnerships established through the ACRD and existing partnerships with research users and industry in medical research, health services and economics research, nutrition, energy, artificial intelligence, climate change and many others. Engagement with networking and sandpit events to explore the opportunities offered by GCRF and ISCF is facilitated through a structured framework, the Grants Academy, which supports researchers throughout the lifecycle of a research project.

USE OF REG FUNDING – CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDIES

Levering funds and strengthening research excellence

The University of Aberdeen used REG income between March 2016 and July 2018 to provide £464,000 of match-funding needed to secure a Discovery Award from the Medical Research Council (MRC). This combined funding supported new and integrated approaches to obesity research, by extending the understanding of the signals in the brain which regulate body weight. Aberdeen's REG contribution provided targeted proof-of-concept funding for new technologies in this field, with the aim of advancing current thinking. Alongside the research funding, the award allowed the appointment of two Discovery Fellows, building capacity within the university and complementing an area of excellence in nutrition and health. To promote both the University of Aberdeen's and Scotland's reputation in obesity related research, REG and the MRC funding was used to launch a new conference and networking event aimed at international collaboration and early career researchers .   In the longer term, it is anticipated that this funding will lead to the development of excellent research outputs, and high quality research impact.

Supporting talent and research careers using REG

The University also used REG funding to provide a broad range of career support to researchers, advancing strategic research priorities including regenerative medicine and the molecular basis of obesity. Since 2014, the university has invested over £1.1 million to secure access to matched funding from Wellcome's Institutional Strategic Support Fund (most recent award of £1.5m). This combined investment has supported staff returning from career breaks, provided researchers with seed-corn funding to trial new projects, funded activities to embed and expand a culture of public engagement within research, and provided career development schemes for talented junior staff on their way to becoming independent researchers. The University has also been able to offer an International Partnership fund, which supports collaborative seed projects and exploratory work. As above, all of this activity was enabled by REG funding, and has ultimately underpinned an enhanced research environment, promoted equality and diversity opportunities which in turn will enhance research excellence and impact delivery.

Research excellence underpinning innovation and economic impact

RAB Microfluidics is a start-up company developing novel oil condition monitoring technology for use with heavy machinery used by multiple industries including maritime and renewables. The company was founded by Dr Rotimi Alabi, who recognised an opportunity that could be developed commercially during his PhD research in the University's School of Geosciences.

REG funding was used to provide support for the underpinning monitoring technology developed from research funded by an EPSRC award and University funding for Dr Alabi's PhD scholarship developing techniques for crude oil analysis within the School. The development of the idea benefitted from the University's researcher development programme through its enterprise training and the provision of incubator start up infrastructure.

Subsequently, Dr Alabi identified an opportunity to revolutionise petroleum testing and analysis services by making conventional laboratory procedures mobile, rapid and routine. Conventionally, testing and analysis of petroleum fluid has been carried out in a commercial laboratory using wet chemistry techniques. RAB-Microfluidics is developing Lab-On-A-Chip technology that offers chemical assays in real-time using microfluidic technology, resulting in an expansion of areas of application, with the aim of permitting point-of-need measurements, aiding rapid decision-making, enhancing process-efficiency and provides cost savings for industry from avoiding equipment failure. The company's use of a combination of chemical selectivity with physical sensing is a consequence of the underpinning research

Dr Alabi founded RAB Microfluidics in 2017 and won a NERC Royal Society of Edinburgh Enterprise Fellowship, where REG support enabled Aberdeen to host the Fellowship. RAB Microfluidics continued to work with the School of Geosciences on projects match-funded by the Oil and Gas Innovation Centre

and the Energy Technology Partnership to develop breadboard demonstrations for key technologies and future applications in the area of lubricating oil analysis. RAB Microfluidics has been successful in raising private investment and securing grant funding for the company including from Innovate UK. The company was selected by the Oil and Gas Technology Centre to participate in its first TechX accelerator, and RAB Microfluidics was awarded the BP Technology Prize. Dr Roy Bitrus, a co-founder of the company, is currently the recipient of an RSE Unlocking Ambition Fellowship.

RAB Microfluidics is currently working with potential customers, developing prototype devices and carrying out further development while it seeks further investment. The company's development has benefitted from over a decade of research activity within the School of Geosciences underpinned by REG supporting academic research, funding PhD programmes, researcher development, hosting enterprise fellowships and supporting ongoing industry collaborations.

<div align="right">APPENDIX 2</div>

<div align="center">

UNIVERSITY INNOVATION FUND – 2019/20

Update Report

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1. INTRODUCTION

The University of Aberdeen's Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) has already set out the University's commitment to deliver its strategic objectives in line with the Scottish Government priorities detailed in the Scottish Economic Strategy and annual Programme for Governments in return for public investment. The process is intended to complement and support the University's strategic ambitions.

We confirm our ability to utilise and match the Platform Grant (PG) to support our programmes of:
Commercialisation and business incubation;
Knowledge exchange;
Regional economic development and industrial engagement;
Student Enterprise;
Entrepreneurship education and training;
Public engagement;
Culture and societal engagement.

The details of the activities we will deliver through our support in these areas are included within our draft Outcome Agreement for 2019-20.

2. UIF OUTCOME GRANT

The University of Aberdeen will continue to contribute to the development of the UIF Outcomes Grant and its priorities in collaboration with the HEI sector in Scotland and other stakeholders.

3. COMMITMENT TO COLLABORATION ACROSS THE SECTOR VIA UNIVERSITIES SCOTLAND RCDG

In discussion with SFC, Universities Scotland has agreed that the best mechanism to work at a sector level to deliver the national outcomes is to undertake to work together to:

Analyse current activity and identify best practice
On the basis of this, where appropriate, devise and execute (a) pilot programme(s)
If successful, develop/initiate a sector-wide programme

Through Universities Scotland Research and Commercialisation Directors' Group (RCDG) each institution has agreed to contribute to various outcomes. Each institution notes and acknowledges the importance of each of the outcomes but for the best use of resource each institution will be involved with a different combination of work. Aberdeen will continue to work with the UIF Collaboration Manager to develop and use the framework for monitoring collaborative activity.

Aberdeen has committed to contributing to all outcomes. Following the May 2018 RCDG meeting on collaborative activity under UIF and the subsequent grouping of outcomes, Aberdeen has specific responsibility for leading the Innovation cluster of collaborative activities (in partnership with UHI and UWS). The main activities under the Innovation cluster relate to outcomes 1 – 4, encompassing increasing engagement and collaborative bids around ISCF calls, stimulating demand from SMEs for innovation, and developing researchers' skills for engaging with industry. Aberdeen will continue to lead on the ISCF and skills elements of the Innovation cluster, working in partnership with UHI on the SME demand stimulation activities and with the UIF Collaboration Manager, other HEIs, Interface, Innovation Centres, the Enterprise Agencies and other partners to deliver the objectives of this cluster of activities.

Aberdeen will continue to be an active participant in the other collaborative clusters (Internationalisation, Entrepreneurship, Inclusive Growth and Equality & Diversity – Inclusive Scotland) and will contribute to workshops and other collaborative activities. As current chair of RCDG, Aberdeen has led the stakeholders' forum for the last 2 annual meetings, which included enterprise agencies, Interface,

Scottish Government and SFC. A summary of progress made or key developments against each of the individual outcomes is given below.

- **Outcome 1 - Demand Stimulation: "Working with enterprise agencies, SG, Business networks, Interface and others… help increase the demand and quality of engagement from businesses and the public sector for university services".**

  The University is a founding partner of the Aberdeen Region City Deal (ARCD) and provides senior leadership and engagement to ARCD through board membership. In collaboration with all the ARCD partners (Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, the Robert Gordon University, Scottish Enterprise and Opportunity North East (ONE) (providing sector industry leadership)), the implementation strategy has been developed in response to the industry demand. The ARCD is providing opportunities for industrial engagement through projects that address industry needs and seeks to contribute to the economic development of the region through new job and company creation, particularly within the Innovation Theme of ARCD. The current five strands of Innovation include Oil and Gas, Life Sciences, Food, Drink and Agriculture, Tourism and Digital. Each strand includes activities around promoting and supporting entrepreneurship through accelerator programmes, which the University of Aberdeen is contributing to at various levels throughout the institution. City deal structures provide models of good practice for regional development, and where innovation is key to the strategy close cooperation amongst the academic, public and industry partners is essential. The Oil and Gas Technology Centre (OGTC) is now well-established and Aberdeen is in regular dialogue with OGTC Solution Centre Managers regarding project development and responding to thematic calls. Two projects are underway with eight others in preparation or under review. Additionally, we provide leadership at board level and academic expertise on OGTC review panels, The National Decommissioning Centre (NDC), a partnership between the University of Aberdeen and OGTC was launched in 2018 with its formal opening in January 2019. This Centre of Excellence will allow our academic researchers to work alongside industrial partners to create solutions that will establish the NDC at the heart of this important industry. The University was able to commit resources to this nationally important initiative through our UIF, but also the strategic investment fund awarded from the SFC. Working closely with OGTC, the NDC will enhance the interface between industry, researchers and regulators to provide each with opportunities to contribute to the development of the NDC research programme and to access the extensive facilities within the NDC.

  Aberdeen will continue to work with ARCD partners and in particular ONE for the implementation of their business support programmes for the regional life sciences community, leading on activities such as bespoke boot-camps and accelerators for life scientists, and as a partner in the development of the Biotherapeutics Hub – an innovation hub set to double the number of life sciences businesses in the North-East - and planned to open in March 2021.

  As a member of the Santander Universities Network, we are able to offer opportunities for businesses through our SME Internship Programme. On the back of its success over the last 4 years, we have built up a network of SMEs now accessing interns who previously may not have collaborated with universities. In collaboration with Santander and the wider network we are able to access, we use examples of the Internships to showcase the opportunities to access academic expertise and our highly skilled graduates. We have welcomed the shift in focus of the Network from 2019 towards inclusivity and widening participation.

  We will continue our partnership approach with the Innovation Centres, Interface, and Knowledge Transfer Partnerships to enhance the demand from industry. Aberdeen will refresh and relaunch its Energy Institute in 2019, providing a 'one stop shop' and academic leadership for the energy industry and for addressing energy transitions, across a range of disciplines and providing training solutions.

- **Outcome 2 - Simplification / Commercialisation: "In partnership with enterprise agencies and Interface…demonstrably simplified business access to the knowledge and expertise in Scottish universities".**

  The outputs from the collaborative workshop led by Aberdeen held in 17/18 have fed into the development of the Innovation cluster of collaborative activities. A key aspect of the collaborative activity which complements our activity under Outcome 2 relates to engagement with industry particularly around ISCF opportunities. Aberdeen intends to appoint an Industry Partnership Officer

focussing on ISCF to build relationships with businesses seeking to develop new products and services under ISCF funding.

Aberdeen has refreshed its Industrial Engagement Strategy, concentrating on three main themes: Skills & Employability, Research & Development and Entrepreneurship & Innovation, with each of these themes providing goals to enhance our engagement with industry. In particular, the goals of Research & Development theme are aimed at developing strategic and long-term relationships with industry.

We are continuing the shift from transactional to partnership interactions with industry, with an emphasis on developing more strategic relationships with shared goals, and demonstrating to businesses the long term benefits of partnership. Working within the ARCD partners, this partnership approach enhances post project referral for further interactions and provides a model for regional collaboration. We will continue to provide a programme of training for researchers focused on the collaborative competencies to enhance engagement with businesses.

Aberdeen has been a strong supporter of simplifying processes and promoting efficient commercialisation, as demonstrated by our commitment to using standard templates wherever possible and our track record in commercialisation. Aberdeen is a member of the Universities Scotland RCDG Contracts Sub-Group which has already provided a range of commonly used contracts (promoted on Interface's website) supporting simplification and harmonisation of the process for businesses to access knowledge within all universities. We will continue to promote good practice and knowledge within our partnership with the ARCD and other multi party collaborations.

As current chair of RCDG's sub-group to support and promote good practice for spin-outs, we also continue to promote the agreed common principles within our institutional policies.

- **Outcome 3 - Simplification/ Greater Innovation: "In partnership with Enterprise Agencies and Interface… at a national level made use of their sectoral knowledge to promote greater innovation in the economy (including beyond non-STEM)".**

Aberdeen will participate fully in the SME Demand Stimulation Innovation cluster collaborative activities led by UHI. A workshop hosted by Aberdeen focussed on mechanisms to drive greater innovation in SMEs, with HEIs working in partnership with Interface, Innovation Centres and enterprise agencies. We also worked with Edinburgh and Glasgow on the highly successful ESRC-funded Business Booster project, aimed at engaging industry with social scientists.

Aberdeen has evidenced our commitment to engaging and collaborating with other universities and the enterprise agencies through our partnership approach in ARCD, but also our ongoing commitment to the long standing partnership of the North East of Scotland Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) centre. The KTP centre which is hosted between Aberdeen and RGU now includes the James Hutton Institute, Abertay University, Universities of Dundee and Highlands and Islands and SRUC. The demand for KTPs from both industry and university partners has risen significantly across all sectors, requiring an expansion of the team. The North East KTP bid and won the opportunity to host the National KTP Centre, which will take place in November 2019 in the new Aberdeen Conference and Exhibition Centre (TECA). Aberdeen's Professional Conference Organisation will support this conference.

We will continue our staff development activities, providing in-house training to staff and extending to external training and conferences as required. We welcome the opportunity afforded by our leadership of the Researcher Skills theme of the Innovation cluster to examine best practice in training researchers for engagement with industry and other stakeholders, and will adopt training that complements and enhances our current activities.

- **Outcome 4 - Entrepreneurialism: "(The) sector will have made significant positive change in the way entrepreneurial opportunities are promoted and delivered to students, HEI staff and businesses".**

Aberdeen will continue to support its ABVenture Zone incubator for entrepreneurs pre-incorporation and for micro-SMEs. We will also continue to host carefully selected non-student start-ups to ensure

a creative mix of entrepreneurs in the incubator. We will also provide a hosting opportunity for student entrepreneurs applying for RSE Enterprise Fellowships.

We will continue with our Lightbulb business ideas competition which has so far expanded year on year, supported by an Intern funded by the University. Focussed on developing early stage ideas and supported by student entrepreneurs, Lightbulb promotes entrepreneurial thinking. The University will work with Elevator and accelerator programmes offered by ONE to channel entrepreneurial staff and students into relevant accelerator programmes.

Aberdeen is an active and successful participant in the Converge Challenge competition, with a number of past finalists and winners. We will run internal workshops and business plan competitions to raise awareness, encourage entrepreneurship and provide support for promising early-stage start-ups with the aim of funnelling these into other opportunities.

Following on from our successful pilot 4-week summer accelerator programme for students, we aim to work again with Elevator to deliver an extended 8-week accelerator for student entrepreneurs, with bursaries for participants to support inclusive growth and social enterprises as part of our ABVenture Zone facility.

We will work with the University of Strathclyde which (with Stirling) leads the Entrepreneurship cluster of collaborative activities to ensure that programmes supporting entrepreneurship create a cohesive system for support to entrepreneurs. In particular, we are keen to provide leadership for a North East base to continue entrepreneurial support to students through an extension of the Enterprise Campus project, working with other HEI partners for its delivery. Aberdeen previously provided leadership for the North Hub of Enterprise Campus (ECN), which resulted in enhanced post-graduate student entrepreneurial activity over its 3 year term with ECN supporting the incorporation of 12 student business out of a total of 56 across Scotland, in line with the proportion of postgraduate students in ECN.

Aberdeen will contribute to the ongoing development of Scottish Enterprise's High Growth Spin out Programme, promoting to our potential spin-outs where appropriate.

- **Outcome 5 - International: "in partnership with SDI, Connected Scotland others…pooled knowledge and networks and shared good practice to promote and engaged Scotland internationally".**

Linked to our internationalisation strategy, networks are being used to enhance collaborative opportunities for our researchers. Examples include our status as a founding member of the new European Network, AURORA, our renewed commitment to the Confucius Centre, a global Alliance with Curtin University and the multiple partnerships supported by the Newton Fund and Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF). We use the AURORA Network to provide a platform for enhanced collaboration and to seek new opportunities for research and knowledge exchange across Europe, particularly around sustainability, social inclusion and promoting mobility. We continue to share our experiences and good practice in Responsible Research and Innovation arising from various networks across the sector and with business; and in particular with European partners, funded by the NUCLEUS award.

We are progressing with the projects funded through GCRF and have used SFC funding for GCRF activities to appoint a specialist GCRF Business Development Officer and enable a pump priming fund to accelerate future applications. We will promote the UK Science and Innovation Network to our researchers and business contacts and enhance our use of Research management information to promote the sharing of networks.

We are undertaking a range of collaborative approaches in international projects. Notably, we are partnering with the Al Faleh Group for Education and Academic Services to open a £100M campus in Qatar, expanding the range of programmes offered by the University in Qatar to include STEM subjects, medical sciences, law, and politics and international relations. Aberdeen continues to support the University Innovations from Scotland project which is currently funded by a number of Scottish universities and is run out SDI's US East Coast office. We commit to using the Scotland is now branding where appropriate and contributing to the Connected Scotland project.

- **Outcome 6 - Inclusive Growth and Social Impact: building on current and good practice, Scottish HEIs will have scaled up their support of the Scottish Government's ambitions for inclusive growth**

  Public engagement remains a priority – the University of Aberdeen's Public Engagement with Research Unit (PERU) maintains a calendar of popular events which include Explorathon, British Science Week and the successful lecture series Café Scientifique and Café Med. The Aberdeen-led *EXPLORATHON (European Researchers' Night, Scotland)* project, in collaboration with the universities of Glasgow, Strathclyde, St Andrews and the Edinburgh Beltane Public Engagement was renewed in 2018. Many of the tools and approaches are now being used across other collaborative training networks funded by the EC.

  The Wellcome Trust's Institutional Strategic Support Fund continues to provide enhanced opportunities for collaborative public engagement and we are engaged in the new Wellcome-funded ScotPEN Wellcome Engagement Award. We will deliver training programmes for researchers as part of these initiatives and also from our *Grants Academy* to support impact and working with industry. Our involvement with the St Andrews-led Cell Block Science project has resulted in opportunities for our researchers to engage with hard-to-reach audiences of prisoners and their families. Our work with SHMU (Station House Media Unit) in Aberdeen also promotes engagement with disadvantaged communities, supporting Aberdeen's goals in widening participation. The University of Aberdeen was the largest contributor of buildings to Doors Open day in Aberdeen in 2018 and will support this event in 2019. Aimed at a broad range of the public, a total of 3710 visitors took the opportunity to visit eight University buildings, where staff and volunteers provided tours of labs and facilities.

  Our public research portal provides an enhanced approached to digital communication of our research activities, with access to the institutional repository of publications and, in addition, delivers researcher fingerprinting technology enabling identification of expertise. It also allows researchers, research users, business and members of the public to explore expertise and publications across all research areas within the University of Aberdeen.

- **Outcome 7 - Equality and Diversity: building on current and good practice, HEIs will have ensured positive promotion of equality and diversity in staff and all who are affected by the use of the UIF**

  We will continue to ensure positive promotion of equality and diversity in staff and all who are affected by the use of UIF. We will continue to participate in the Heriot-Watt led Equality & Diversity collaborative cluster. Aberdeen has led the formation of an RCDG subgroup on Responsible Innovation, a forum which will have equality, diversity, inclusion and sustainable innovation as key themes. Sharing of best practice and information from these groups will inform activities and projects supported by UIF.

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

Outcome Agreement for 2019/20

Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment – Initial Screening

Title of Policy, Procedure or Function: Outcome Agreement 2019/2020	
School/Department: Planning	
Author/Position: Hulda Sveinsdottir, Director of Planning, and Iain Grant, Head of Strategic Planning	**Date created:** 25/04/2019

1. Aims and purpose of Policy, Procedure or Function:
To provide an annual update for 2019/20 on the University's three-year Outcome Agreement. This outlines how the University of Aberdeen intends to address Scottish Government areas of strategic importance for academic years 2019/20-2021/22, as outlined by the Scottish Funding Council. The three-year Outcome Agreement outlines the University's commitments to Equality and Diversity and highlights a number of specific actions planned over the period covered to embed that commitment across the work of the University.
2. Key Stakeholders:
Scottish Government Scottish Funding Council University of Aberdeen, including all staff and students
3. Consultation/Involvement
A comprehensive consultation exercise has taken place. This included staff from key stakeholder groups across the University, the wider staff population, AUSA, the wider student population, all main staff unions, along with the Scottish Funding Council. The document was also considered by the University's Senior Management Team over the course of its development. The final version was approved by University Court.

a) Brief summary of results of consultation indicating how this has affected the Policy, Procedure or Function
All feedback and inputs received during the development of the document have been considered and/or incorporated into the document

Policy, Procedure or Function (delete as appropriate)	Relevance to promotion of equality of opportunity, elimination of discrimination and promotion of good relations between people of with different protected characteristics								
Equality	**Race**	**Disability**	**Gender**	**Age**	**Sexual Orientation**	**Religion or Belief**	**Gender Reassign ment**	**Pregnancy or Maternity**	**Marriage or Civil Partnership**
1. Does the policy, procedure or function impact directly on the public or (for internal issues) students/staff regarding:	Yes, positively	Yes, positively	Yes, positively	Yes, positiv ely	Yes, positively	Yes, positively	Yes, positively	Yes, positively	Yes, positively
2. Is there any evidence or reason to believe that someone could be affected differently (either individually or as a group) on his or her race, ethnic origin, religion, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation or gender reassignment regarding:	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
3. Is there evidence that the above mentioned groups are being affected differently regarding:	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
4. Is there public/political concern that the policy, procedure or function is operated in a discriminatory manner regarding:	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
5. Does this policy, procedure or function involve the use or discretionary use of statutory powers or authority regarding:	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
6. Does this policy, procedure or function present opportunity to improve community relations regarding:	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No

Policy, Procedure or Function (delete as appropriate)	Relevance to promotion of equality of opportunity, elimination of discrimination and promotion of good relations between people of with different protected characteristics								
Equality	**Race**	**Disability**	**Gender**	**Age**	**Sexual Orientation**	**Religion or Belief**	**Gender Reassign ment**	**Pregnancy or Maternity**	**Marriage or Civil Partnership**
7. Does this policy, procedure or function concern equality of opportunity for students/staff regarding:	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Impact on <u>individual</u> equality strands i.e. Race, **Religion etc.: Score - High (7-5), Medium (4-3), Low (2-1), N/A (0)**	3	3	3	3	3	0	3	3	0

Note – Completion of the template requires each strand to be examined individually. The final relevance score is obtained by totalling vertically the number of equality questions that are answered yes in each strand. The highest relevance score will determine the impact of the policy, procedure or function irrespective of diversity strand.

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4. Impact of policy, procedure or function on equality						
High	☐	Medium	✓	Low	☐	N/A ☐

5. Publication
a) Provide details of arrangements to publish initial screening: EIA will be published alongside the Outcome Agreement on the University's website.

6. Review Date:

Author (Name and Position): Iain Grant, Head of Strategic Planning
Authors signature: by email

Annex A: SFC Outcome Agreement Targets for 2019-20 to 2021-22

*   denotes priority measure

**   denotes retention figures where the underlying proportion is likely less than 50, meaning projections are subject to greater change

	2017-18 baseline	2019-20 Projection	2020-21 Projection	2021-22 Projection	
Scottish Government strategic priority: Access to education for people from the widest range of backgrounds, including implementation of the recommendations of the CoWA and addressing gender balance					
Measure 1: Articulation - The number and proportion of Scotland-domiciled learners articulating from college to degree level courses with advanced standing					
Proportion of Scotland-domiciled HN entrants articulating with Advanced Standing	15.5%	25.0%	35.0%	45.0%	*
Measure 2: Deprivation - The proportion of Scotland-domiciled undergraduate entrants from the 20% and 40% most deprived postcodes					
2a: Proportion of SDUEs from 20% most deprived postcodes	6.2%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	*
2b: Proportion of SDUEs from 40% most deprived postcode	17.2%	17.0%	18.0%	18.0%	
2c: Additional CoWA target: proportion of full-time first degree SDUEs entrants from the 20% most deprived data zones	6.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	
Measure 3: SHEP Schools - The proportion of Scotland-domiciled undergraduate entrants from the SHEP schools (i.e. schools with consistently low rates of progression to higher education)					
Proportion of SDUE from SHEP Schools	3.9%	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%	
Measure 4: Protected Characteristics - The proportion of Scotland-domiciled undergraduate entrants by different protected characteristic groups and care leavers					
Male Proportion	40.9%	42.0%	43.5%	45.0%	
Female Proportion	59.1%	58.0%	56.5%	55.0%	
Under 21 Proportion	78.2%	78.0%	78.0%	78.0%	
21 and over Proportion	21.8%	22.0%	22.0%	22.0%	
Proportion – BME	8.9%	9.0%	9.0%	9.0%	
Proportion – Disability	15.1%	15.5%	16.0%	16.0%	
Proportion - Care Experience**	0.8%	2.2%	2.2%	2.2%	*
Measure 5: Retention by Protected Characteristics - The proportion of full-time first year Scotland-domiciled entrants from different characteristic groups returning to study in year two					
Proportion MD20 retained	89.5%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	*
Proportion MD20/40 retained	87.2%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	
Proportion of Males retained	94.1%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	
Proportion of Females retained	95.8%	96.0%	96.0%	96.0%	
Proportion of Under 21s retained	95.9%	96.0%	96.0%	96.0%	
Proportion of 21 and over retained	90.9%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	
Proportion retained – BME	93.4%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	
Proportion retained – Disability	94.6%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	
Proportion retained - Care Experience**	100.0%	97.5%	97.5%	97.5%	*

Scottish Government strategic priority: High quality learning in a learning system which is seamlessly connected for the learner, including learning which prepares people well for the world of work, prioritising provision that meets known skills gaps in the economy				
Measure 6: Retention - The proportion of full-time first year Scotland-domiciled undergraduate entrants returning to study in year two				
Proportion retained	95.1%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%
Measure 7: Satisfaction - students satisfied with the overall quality of their course of study in the National Student Survey				
% Satisfaction	86.0%	89.0%	89.5%	89.5%
Measure 8: STEM - The proportion of Scotland-domiciled undergraduate entrants to STEM courses				
Proportion of SDUE to STEM courses	31.3%	35.0%	37.0%	40.0%
Measure 9a: Graduate Destinations - The proportion of Scotland-domiciled graduates entering positive destinations				
Proportion of graduates in positive destinations	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Measure 9b: Graduate Destinations - The proportion of Scotland-domiciled full-time first degree respondents entering professional occupations				
Proportion of FT first degree respondents in professional occupations	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Scottish government priority: internationally competitive and impactful research				
Measure 10: The number of research postgraduate students				
RPG students	860	903	967	1,016
Measure 11: Total income from the UK Research Councils				
RCUK income	£11,563K	£11,800k	£13,100k	£13,900k
Measure 12: Total research income from all sources				
Research income	£56,079K	£57,000k	£63,000k	£67,000k
Scottish Government priority: effective knowledge exchange and innovation including excellent collaboration between universities and industry				
Measure 13: IVs - The number of SFC innovation Vouchers (IVs), Follow-on IVs				
Innovation Vouchers (IVs)	6	7	8	8
Follow-on IVs	0	1	2	2
Scottish Government priority: ensuring provision of quality learning in Scottish higher education institutions, i.e. HE strategic futures, Quality Assurance and HE governance				
Measure 14: Carbon - Gross carbon footprint				
Tonnes CO2e	24,455	26,477	25,216	24,015

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Outcome Agreement between the University of Aberdeen and the Scottish Funding Council for AY 2019-20

On behalf of the University of Aberdeen:

Signed:

Print name: GEORGE BOYNE

Position: Principal and Vice-Chancellor

Date: 19/07/19

Signed: Esther A Roberte

Print name: ESTHER A ROBERTON

Position: Chair / SENIOR GOVERNOR

Date: 23 July 2019

On behalf of the Scottish Funding Council:

Signed: KWatt

Print name: Karen Watt

Position: Chief Executive

Date: 16 July 2019