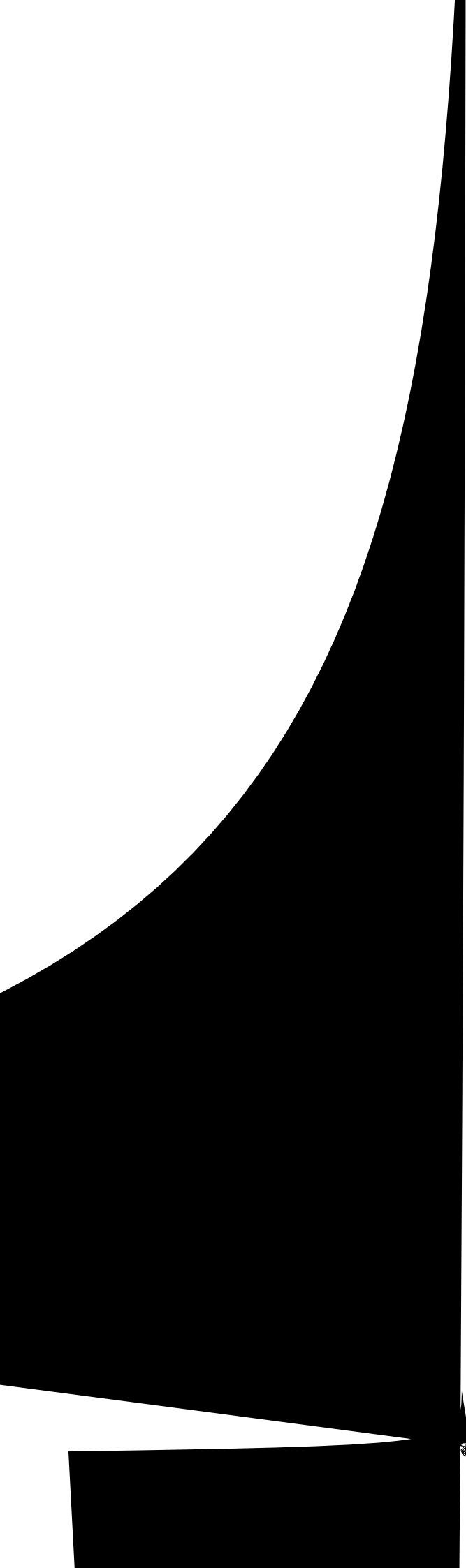






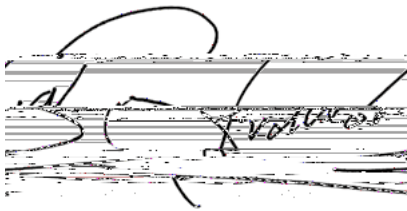


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That is why this strategy is unashamedly led by our values and principles. We need to move to a model of distributed leadership so that a broader range of people have the ability to shape the University activities that they know best, and take ownership of the quality of education and research. I see this strategy as a process rather than an end in itself. Consequently, I wish it to have a far greater emphasis on the way we work, with recurring themes on stronger governance, more involvement of students and staff at all levels, and working with partners outside the University. To succeed we must not only deliver on our aspirations, but do so in a way that is consistent with our principles.

My vision for the University of Reading in the years leading up to our centenary is, quite simply, that it transforms people's lives through the excellence of our education and research. Our shape has changed over the past decades, but our origins lie in a movement to improve society through education. Our ability to make change comes from our community holding true to our values. So let us keep sight of our core purpose, to challenge and transform the outlook of the students we educate, and improve the lives of our neighbours, the prospects for our country, and the future of our planet.



Professor Robert Van de Noort
Vice-Chancellor



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OUR PURPOSE

The University of Reading has a distinctive history, not least as the only university to be granted its Royal Charter between the two world wars, in 1926. Before this, our teaching emerged as a force for good in Reading, with the establishment of the Schools of Art and Science. In the late 1800s, these merged to form an extension college of the University of Oxford, part of a wider social movement to build a stronger future for the nation by increasing access to quality education.

Since then, the world of higher education has changed significantly. More people go to university than ever before and the impact of university teaching and research extends well beyond national boundaries. However, some of our original ethos – of learning and research as a way to help our region and better the world – has been lost or obscured by increasingly intense competition and the requirements of increased sector regulation. This regulation is important and necessary for good governance and accountability. Yet the massive growth of higher education, while extending access to more people, has created a new set of incentives



OUR FOUR PRINCIPLES

Reading's distinctiveness comes from how we deliver on the transformational promise in our strategy. Our four strategic principles will shape our actions and guide our decision-making and prioritisation. There are no hard lines between these principles. They merge and overlap – for example, our engagement with the world influences our sense of community, and our commitment to the environment can bring financial benefits – and there are tensions between the principles – for example, the need for financial sustainability will frequently slow the delivery of other aspirations.

We should embrace this ambiguity as with it comes flexibility and creativity. But doing so requires judgement and leadership. It also requires trust. It requires a distributed model of leadership where we empower all our colleagues – across academic Schools and professional Functions – to take ownership of these principles, and accountability for their decisions, to deliver a set of shared and overarching aspirations.

The consultation process has demonstrated that these principles resonate with our students, colleagues, alumni, partners and stakeholders. They are all based on a fundamental truth about who we already are, and also create an aspiration for how we can improve.



PRINCIPLE 1: Community – putting our people first

- The University is, first and foremost, a diverse, inclusive and supportive community of people – students, staff and alumni.
- We provide students and colleagues with a fulfilling working and study setting that supports their development.
- We use our knowledge and skills, collectively and individually, to solve

KPI-1	Staff Survey: 'employer of choice' score (which brings together multiple measures including diversity and inclusion)	Third quartile (53rd percentile)	Top (fourth) quartile (i.e. 75th percentile or above)
KPI-2	National Student Survey: 'I feel part of a community of staff and students' (Question 21)	Second quartile (32nd percentile)	Top (fourth) quartile (i.e. 75th percentile or above)

Examples of where we are already putting this principle into practice:

PRINCIPLE 2: Excellence – aspiring

PRINCIPLE 3: Sustainability – managing our resources for today and tomorrow

- We work together to make the best use of our resources to ensure the sustainability of the University.
- We recognise that maintaining financial sustainability is a process that requires us to review what we do, how we work, and respond to changing circumstances in a planned and managed way.
- We are committed to play our part in tackling climate change and are recognised as a University that leads on global environmental sustainability.

We cannot achieve our goals if we do not have a solid financial base that we can maintain into the future. Ambition is useless if we cannot keep the lights on. The pressures currently facing the sector mean that financial sustainability requires greater strategic focus than might be required in more comfortable times. Casting our financial goals in terms of sustainability requires us to demonstrate value over time and not simply focus on short-term cost.

Responsible management of our resources, however, extends beyond our finances. How we power the lights is just as critical to our future. Our planet faces colossal threats and the choices we make today will have consequences well into the future. Our world-leading research strengths in climate change and environmental science are a critically important way we can deliver change in the world. We also have a long-standing commitment to align these research strengths with the management of our finances, our estate and our community. We have already made huge strides but we must be ambitious in our commitment to using our research strengths to inform our actions.

These two concepts – financial and environmental sustainability – are intrinsically linked. Explicitly bringing them together acknowledges the tensions that can exist and requires us to actively manage them. There is a financial cost to reducing our carbon footprint and enhancing our impact on the environment. We must find ways to manage these tensions effectively.

FINANCIAL

Our financial strategy is to ensure we are a financially sustainable organisation, with a focus on generating income through commercialisation and engagement with business.

University Executive Board-led priorities for the University:

- Undertake a review of changing student expectations and requirements, including overseas-based students, to ensure our structures and offerings allow us to deliver on current and future demands.
- Review our current offerings to ensure they meet demand and deliver on financial and strategic requirements.
- Develop a commercial strategy with a view to generating increased income through commercialisation and engagement with business.
- Strengthen international partnerships and support growth of trans-national education.
- Review and revise the strategic financing model for Henley Business School.
- Review the University's investment portfolio in light of changing operational context, including around climate change, and long term viability.
- Deliver improved return on investment through proactive and streamlined change management that considers the impact of change across the whole organisation.

KPI-5	Cash flow from operating activities as a percentage of income	7.9%	10%
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ENVIRONMENTAL

University Executive Board-led priorities for the University:

- Embed environmental impact as a critical component in change and project management.
- Develop an environmental strategy with clear targets, timeframes and measures, and adjust policies to drive environmentally sustainable action.
- Reduce electronic waste through effective recycling and reuse, including developing an 'IT Shack' to recycle computers for colleagues and students.
- Embed environmental sustainability across our curriculum and our staff training programme.
- Inset our carbon footprint by developing woodlands or other landscapes that sequester carbon, through an internal levy on air travel.
- Place sustainability and biodiversity at the heart of our community, including management of campuses and other landholdings.

KPI-6	UK People and Planet University League ranking	29th (1st class award)	Top 5
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Examples of where we are already putting this principle into practice:

MORE THAN

REDUCTION
IN CARBON EMISSIONS

PRINCIPLE 4: Engaged University – impact beyond our campuses

- We work with partners in a coordinated way to play a positive role in the social, cultural, environmental and economic life of our local communities.
- We use our global links to benefit the towns and regions in which we operate and use these local connections to strengthen our work around the world.
- Public engagement and consultation, including in research, is a valued part of how we live and work, for both our staff and students.

While our first principle of Community focuses on our University community of students, colleagues and alumni, our community does not stop at the boundaries of our campuses. Both principles are inherently based in respecting and celebrating the communities in which we operate. There is no sharp distinction between our University community and our local region. Many of our colleagues are also our neighbours. A significant proportion of our alumni go on to make their home in the region. And our students too are an integral part of that community while they study with us.

The University is a major economic and cultural contributor to Reading, Wokingham and the Thames Valley. Our presence has an impact on the people who live around us, and sometimes that impact can be negative. Some universities have lost this connection with their local community as they have grown and focused on their international connections, and this has led to renewed discussion in the university sector about the need to revive local connections and redefine the meaning of a 'civic university'.

This principle represents our commitment to be a University for Reading as well as of Reading. We will engage with the world on our doorstep – from supporting our staff to volunteer for good local causes in work time, to opening up our superb sporting facilities to local clubs and athletes and using our research strengths to support local and regional improvement. Being a good neighbour means we listen to those who live and work around us, involve them in our decision-making, and better co-ordinate our regional engagement. It also means we are honest about any negative impacts and work with our staff, students, alumni and neighbours to create solutions to these problems together.

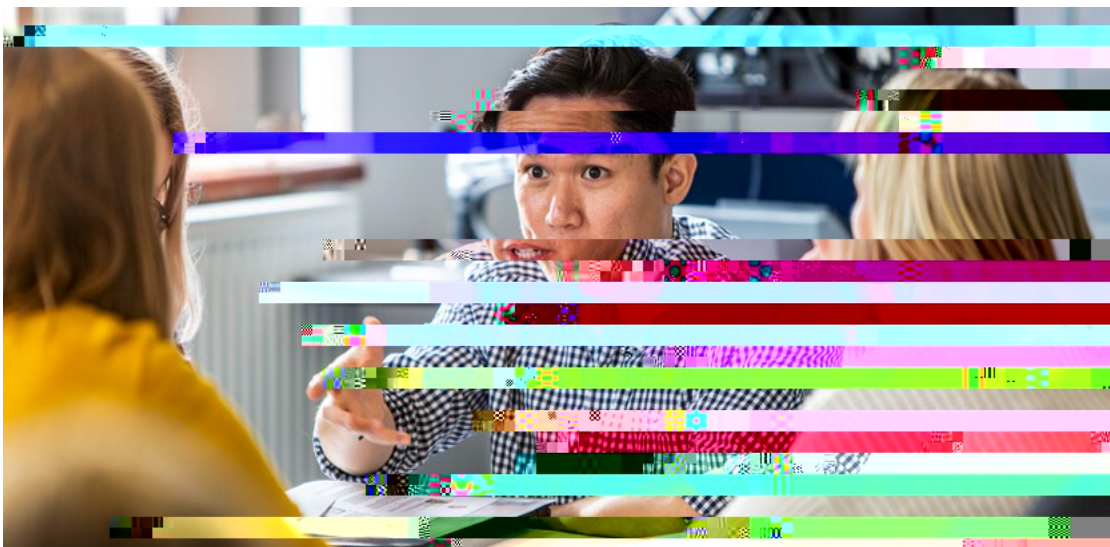
This in no way diminishes our emphasis on wider UK and global engagement, which remains vital to our academic, reputational and financial success. Indeed, these are more important than ever, and our national and international reach brings important economic and cultural benefits to our local region. We have partnerships, campuses and relationships in almost every part of the country and the world. As the UK negotiates its place in the international community, we must continue to

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University Executive Board-led priorities for the University:

- Enhance local partnership working, including creating a clear ‘front door’ to the University, so that external stakeholders can access University knowledge and services.
 - Create a life-long learning programme for Reading based on a clear understanding of local needs.
 - Strengthen our position as a global university in education and research.
 - Link University expertise on environment and sustainability with local partners and stakeholders.
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KPI-7	Knowledge Exchange Framework metrics		To be determined
KPI-8	THE World University Rankings international outlook – UK universities	Top (fourth) quartile (75th percentile)	Top (fourth) quartile (i.e. 75th percentile or above)
KPI-9	Economic impact on UK economy (Gross Value Added)	£0.8 billion	£1.0 billion



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