

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER COLLABORATIVE STRATEGY 2010/11 – 2014/15

VISION

Our vision is to advance excellent learning opportunities through collaborative working

We will achieve this Vision through the following aims:

Strategic Aim 1

To widen participation and enhance opportunities for access to higher education within the region.

Strategic Aim 2

To develop innovative and vocationally relevant programmes which meet identified regional skills needs.

Strategic Aim 3

To provide modes of delivery and progression routes which facilitate life long learning.

Strategic Aim 4

To work with partners to continually enhance the quality of the student learning experience.

Strategic Aim 5

To engage with appropriate international partners to support achievement of the University's strategic objectives.

In taking forward these aims we will seek to ensure:

Cross Cutting Aim A

The adoption of a partnership working approach which is mutually beneficial, flexible, responsive and financially and academically sustainable.

Cross Cutting Aim B

The enhancement of the profile and reputation of the University and its partners regionally, nationally and internationally through excellence in programme design, delivery and management.

Strategic Aim 1 *To widen participation and enhance opportunities for access to higher education within the region.*

Key Supporting Objectives

- 1.1 Through the provision of high quality access courses in locations across the region to:**
- **Increase student aspiration and confidence**
 - **Develop independent learning and other skills relevant to third level study**
 - **Enable entry to a range of higher education courses**
 - **Promote development of key skills in literacy and numeracy**

The following objective will be delivered through actions taken under the Teaching and Learning Strategy:

- 1.2 To facilitate student transition to the University environment through effective induction processes (T&L Strategic Aim 2).**

The following objectives will be taken forward through the Widening Participation Strategy:

- 1.3 To recognise the specific needs of mature students, those with family and other care commitments and those in employment in the design, development and delivery of courses. (WP Strategic Aim 4 and Cross Cutting Support Aim 1);**
- 1.4 To promote awareness of opportunity through the provision of clear and accurate information about University courses and through targeted marketing activities and to consider how to incentivise students to progress to third level study. (WP Strategic aims 2 & 3).**

Strategic Aim 2 *To develop innovative and vocationally relevant programmes which meet identified regional skills needs.*

Key Supporting Objectives

- 2.1 To develop more robust methods of verifying effective demand for specific programmes.**
- 2.2 To increase the range of sustainable intermediate level awards including Fd programmes offered.**

The following objectives will be delivered through actions taken under the Teaching and Learning Strategy (Strategic Aim 4):

- 2.3 To work with a range of employers and public and private sector organisations to provide opportunities for students to enhance their employability through work based learning.**

- 2.4 To work with Sector Skills Councils, Foundation Degree Forward and other employer organisations to increase responsiveness to employer requirements.
- 2.5 Where possible to secure relevant professional and statutory body accreditations for courses.

Strategic Aim 3 To provide modes of delivery and progression routes which facilitate lifelong learning

Key Supporting Objectives

- 3.1 To ensure that consideration is given to clearly defined progression routes to Ulster programmes for all courses offered in collaboration with partner institutions.
- 3.2 To communicate clearly progression routes and entry requirements to students studying for Ulster awards in partner institutions.

The following objective will be delivered through actions taken under the Teaching and Learning Strategy (Strategic Aim 4):

- 3.3 To develop part-time and distance-learning opportunities for short-course and CPD provision in collaboration with local education providers and employers as appropriate.
- 3.4 To work with local colleges and employers to develop flexible methods of work-based learning in the part-time Foundation degree model.
- 3.5 To continue to implement the agreed model for Foundation degrees¹ in line with employer need and to finalise discussions regionally.

Strategic Aim 4 To work with partners to continually enhance the quality of the student learning experience

Key Supporting Objectives

- 4.1 To undertake and support development and dissemination activities with staff from partner institutions which:
 - promote understanding of the Academic Infrastructure and other aspects of HE level provision;
 - encourage a student-centred approach to teaching, learning and assessment reflecting current best practice in HE;
 - focus on assessment as a means of promoting student learning as well as providing evidence of that learning.
- 4.2 To promote the development of courses and programmes which are scholarship-informed, and taught and supervised by those engaged in scholarship.

¹ The current model is 2 (+ bridging) +1 where bridging may be nil or up to 120 credit points.

- 4.3 To ensure effective arrangements within partner institutions for student consultation and for obtaining student feedback.
- 4.4 To ensure regular and effective monitoring of the resources in place to support a high quality student learning experience on courses leading to awards of the University.
- 4.5 To develop effective methods of communication which ensure that the University's expectations are understood and met at all stages of curriculum design, delivery and monitoring and in relation to course management.

Strategic Aim 5 *To engage with appropriate international partners to support achievement of the University's strategic objectives*

Key Supporting Objectives

This section of the Strategy will have to be reviewed when the revised International Strategy is available to ensure complementarity but the following broad objectives are suggested. It is assumed these objectives will be achieved largely through International Strategy action plans and will be monitored through the associated reporting arrangements.

- 5.1 To enhance the University's international reputation through the development of links with selected partner institutions.
- 5.2 To identify and capitalise on emerging opportunities in the international market, including through the promotion of University courses at targeted marketing events and through articulation agreements with selected partners.
- 5.3 To enhance opportunities for staff exchange and development through links with international partner institutions.
- 5.4 To increase opportunities for student exchange with a range of European and international partners to enhance the student learning experience (T&L Strategic Aim 1).
- 5.5 To explore opportunities to further diversify income generation.
- 5.6 To enhance the opportunities for the development of research links with international collaborators.

Cross Cutting Aim A: *The adoption of a partnership working approach which is mutually beneficial, flexible, responsive and financially and academically sustainable.*

- A1** To continue to review the agreed models of collaboration to ensure these remain fit for purpose and are sufficiently flexible to accommodate stakeholder needs.
- A2** To develop and implement a revised costing model for collaborative provision which promotes good practice in terms of the development of viable courses.
- A3** To develop and maintain effective channels of communication with staff at all levels in partner institutions.

Cross Cutting Aim B: *The enhancement of the profile and reputation of the University and its partners regionally, nationally and internationally through excellence in programme design, delivery and management.*

- B1** To provide targeted staff development opportunities for University and partner institution staff which promote best practice in collaboration and partnership working.
- B2** To work with partner institutions to develop a distinctive brand for the partnership
- B3** Where appropriate, to engage in joint promotional activities with partner institutions and to review associated web links.
- B4** To ensure that arrangements for standards and quality monitoring are effective and, while assuring the standards of University awards and the quality of the student experience, do not place disproportionate burdens on the University as well as on partner institutions.