



## **EDUCATION STRATEGY**

2016–2020

### **INTRODUCTION**

We delight in creating, sharing and applying knowledge to make a difference to individuals and society.

This Education Strategy builds on the vision described in the University Strategy:

It is ambitious in promoting and encouraging creativity and innovation, developing partnerships and supporting staff and students to achieve their potential. It is responsible through insisting that we uphold the highest academic and professional standards, and that we celebrate diversity and equality of opportunity. It is open in recognising and promoting the importance of a collegial learning community of staff and students.

It provides a framework and direction for faculties, professional services, the Students' Union and the wider University community to deliver the best experience for all students on University of Portsmouth taught programmes.

It complements and is aligned with both the Research and Innovation Strategy and the Global Engagement Strategy.

Paul Hayes  
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience)

### **STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES**

Through the implementation of this Education Strategy, we will support all our students to engage proactively and reflectively in enriched learning, and we will enable our staff to deliver this. Our Education Strategy is underpinned by the following six strategic principles.

We will:

- Provide intellectual challenge, enhance skills acquisition and embody academic excellence through courses that are practice-informed and that engage students in research and innovation.

- Ensure that every student participates in career-enhancing activities to learn through experience and to strengthen their personal development.
- Develop, deliver and enhance pedagogic practice and innovation through engaged and passionate staff, who are recognised and rewarded for their achievement and creativity.
- Support the delivery of an excellent student experience through continuous investment in high-quality learning resources and flexible, adaptable and innovative spaces.
- Provide a vibrant, supportive, collegial learning community of staff and students.
- Raise educational expectations and create high-quality, relevant, lifelong education opportunities through working in partnership with schools, colleges, employers, alumni and others.

## **THE HALLMARKS OF A PORTSMOUTH GRADUATE**

Portsmouth graduates will be knowledgeable, informed, intellectually curious, responsible, self-aware and self-motivated, independent learners set for success in their future careers. We will support our students to acquire these Hallmarks of a Portsmouth Graduate through their engagement in courses that adhere to our strategic principles, and in the wider student experience.

More specifically, Portsmouth graduates will:

- Have a critical and reflective knowledge and understanding of their subject, with both the ability and readiness to question its principles, practices and boundaries.
- Think independently, analytically and creatively, and engage imaginatively with new areas of investigation within and across discipline boundaries.
- Be able to synthesise new and existing knowledge to generate ideas and develop creative solutions of benefit to the economy and society.
- Be intellectually curious, embrace challenges and seize opportunities for development.
- Be able to locate, access and critically engage with information, using current and emerging digital technologies.
- Be informed citizens, with a sense of responsibility allied to a commitment to ethical practice and social justice issues, such as equality, respect and sustainability.
- Be effective team players, able to provide leadership and to support the success of others.
- Be able to communicate clearly and effectively, in a range of forms and to different audiences.
- Have an enterprising spirit, bringing innovation and productivity to the groups and communities to which they belong.
- Be able to work in a range of environments, responding positively to new situations by being aware, flexible, adaptable and realistic in their expectations.
- Be proactive in recognising and addressing personal development needs, and able to make informed career decisions.

## STRATEGIC ACTIONS

A number of strategic actions underpin each of the six principles. Faculty, professional services, programme and subject teams will implement these in ways that are appropriate and relevant to their specific academic disciplines and remit.

We will provide intellectual challenge, enhance skills acquisition and embody academic excellence through courses that are practice-informed and that engage students in research and innovation.

Our programmes will be inclusive and accessible, and both designed and assessed to ensure that our students attain the Hallmarks of a Portsmouth Graduate.

All programmes will:

- Draw on relevant research and professional practice, and will inspire students through subject content and pedagogic techniques that facilitate engaged and interactive learning.
- Demonstrate a global perspective, fostering informed citizenship and promoting diversity and respect.
- Be reviewed over a three-year cycle to ensure they remain dynamic, innovative, grounded on synergies between teaching, research, innovation and professional practice, and contemporary for the changing needs of local and global economies and communities.

We will ensure that every student participates in career-enhancing activities to learn through experience and to strengthen their personal developments.

We will:

- Provide career-enhancing opportunities that contribute to developing the Hallmarks of a Portsmouth Graduate. Such opportunities will include work-experience, internships and placements, real or 'live' projects, enterprise, research and volunteering, embedding identifiable skills development within and across the curriculum.
- Build partnerships with the variety of organisations that employ our students and ensure that, where relevant, all our programmes are accredited by the appropriate statutory bodies and institutions.
- Encourage the development of global awareness through activities such as studying or working abroad, acquiring or augmenting languages, working or volunteering in relevant communities.
- Support our students to reflect upon their personal development and to plan for their futures.
- Ensure that staff are equipped and supported to advise and assist students in the development of their academic and transferable skills.

We will develop, deliver and enhance pedagogic practice and innovation through engaged and passionate staff who are recognised and rewarded for their achievement and creativity.

Staff will be supported and expected to develop, disseminate and incorporate best pedagogic practice in an engaging, relevant and challenging curriculum.

- Staff will engage in a supportive and developmental system of review and reflection, spreading and sharing good practice in learning and teaching.

- Staff who teach or otherwise facilitate student learning will engage in an effective and inspiring professional development programme that supports excellence and innovation in the leadership, management and delivery of education.
- Staff who teach or support student learning will be expected to achieve formal recognition for their teaching skills, notably through meeting the descriptors in the UK Professional Standards Framework and other qualifications underpinning high quality teaching, scholarship and research.
- We will use promotion, performance-related awards and University Awards to celebrate and reward excellence in teaching, research and innovation.
- A Centre for Learning Enhancement and Innovation will be established to encourage and support the student experience through the engagement of staff in pedagogic research and innovation.

We will support the delivery of an excellent student experience through continuous investment in high-quality learning resources and flexible, adaptable and innovative spaces.

- Investment in our physical estate, and in both equipment and software, will support the provision of a consistently high-quality educational experience to all our students.
- We will promote the wider and more creative use of enhanced Virtual Learning Environments, simulation facilities and other learning technologies to provide efficient and effective support for an integrated, streamlined and dynamic learning experience, irrespective of whether students are on or off campus.
- Our course portfolio will include extensive blended and distance learning provision underpinned by responsive, agile and user-friendly central systems.
- We will enhance and maintain excellent learning, teaching and social spaces to ensure they facilitate the delivery of diverse learning approaches and activities.
- Staff and students will be supported and guided in the development and effective use of digital tools through appropriate and abundant professional development opportunities.

We will provide a vibrant, supportive, collegial learning community of staff and students.

We will:

- Empower students as partners in a community of learning where staff, students, practising professionals and employers can work together to learn, create, research and solve problems.
- Promote, develop and foster a culture of co-creation and partnership, and extend the opportunities for students to engage in peer and inter-cohort training and mentoring programmes.
- Encourage feedback from our students and act upon it.
- Engage with our students, including through working in partnership with the Students' Union, to ensure that their voice is heard in discussions and decisions that impact on their education or the wider student experience.

We will raise educational expectations and create high-quality, relevant, lifelong education opportunities through working in partnership with schools, colleges, employers, alumni and others.

We will:

- Make a positive, clear and significant contribution to encouraging, extending and sustaining the engagement of learners, and to inspiring and enabling their access to and success in higher education.
- Continue and extend our commitment to a partnership approach to outreach activities, including through student ambassadors, and our role in raising educational aspirations in our city and region.
- Develop, promote and deliver a broader and more flexible range of routes for entry to the University, both for individuals, and via strategic, purposeful partnerships with educational institutions and employers, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Develop a variety of flexible learning programmes, including Degree Apprenticeships, in partnership with a network of associate colleges, employers and, where appropriate, professional and statutory bodies, as a key means to both grow and diversify our student community.
- Develop and deliver an enhanced offer of continuous and flexible professional development courses, including named awards achieved through credit accumulation.

DELIVERING THE STRATEGY

## HOW WE WILL DELIVER THE STRATEGY

**As we move through the strategic planning period, our plans for action will inevitably evolve, but early areas for action include:**

- Creating the strategic leadership capacity to deliver our ambitions, through the appointment of two Associate Pro Vice-Chancellors, one focused on educational partnerships and the other on the student experience.
- Completing a review of our current portfolio of taught programmes to ensure that they recruit strongly and deliver the outcomes expected by both students and employers.
- Reviewing our taught programmes to ensure that they support the delivery of the Hallmarks of a Portsmouth Graduate through the curriculum.
- Developing more timely and effective methods to collect feedback from our students, including through revised unit questionnaires and the use of an online forum.
- Enhancing the use of peer-to-peer observation and mentoring to facilitate the development of good practice in teaching.
- Producing effective promotional materials and processes, such as inter-cohort mentoring and alumni networks, to motivate students to engage in the opportunities that we make available to them, including career-enhancing activities such as placements, exchanges and volunteering.
- Introducing a recognition scheme and fully adopting the Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR), to encourage students to draw together and reflect upon all career enhancing activities, including prior experience, paid employment and extra-curricular activities.
- Working with industry, business and other education providers, both within the UK and globally, to establish a more diverse and balanced educational portfolio by expanding

Transnational Education (TNE) partnerships, flexible delivery, Continuing Professional Development (CPD), Degree Apprenticeships and bespoke programmes.

- Offering education opportunities that are aligned to and associated with the University's new Thematic Areas, actively engaging students in our research and innovation activities.
- Creating a Centre for Learning Enhancement and Innovation to drive forward the development of innovation in Higher Education learning and teaching, and to provide a focus for promoting our excellence in this area.
- Extending and enhancing the use of digital learning resources (either alone and/or in partnership with a commercial provider), simulation facilities and other technologies and techniques to better support student learning and inclusivity.
- Revising our curriculum framework and the structure of the academic year, to include consideration of multiple start points, the inclusion of reading/consolidation periods throughout the year and the adoption of differentiated structures at each level of study, with a particular focus on the induction period and the transition to Higher Education.
- Revising our quality assurance policies and procedures to ensure that they are risk-based, fit for purpose, proportionate to the benefits delivered and compliant with expectations of external agencies.
- Creating productive collaborative partnerships with local Further Education colleges and schools that provide defined pathways for progression to the University, raise expectation and coordinate engagement with employers in the region, particularly in relation to Degree Apprenticeships.
- Implementing the use of smart systems that both facilitate the delivery of appropriate analytics, including the metrics that will inform the Teaching Excellence Framework, and that minimise the time spent on necessary bureaucracy.