

The UK's European university

University of  
**Kent**

UNIVERSITY  
OF KENT  
STRATEGY 2025





# OUR VISION – BY 2025

We will be delivering one of the best education and student experiences among UK universities that enables and inspires our students. We will be internationally known for a transformative student experience and employability outcomes regardless of background. Our discoveries and research will emphasise existing and new signature areas, where we match the best in the world. Our education and research, and the talents of our staff and students, will support social, economic, cultural, intellectual and public life in ways that will make us one of the leading civic universities. We will have a balanced portfolio of programmes having deepened our science and engineering base, grown our cultural, creative and digital offer, and opened the new Kent and Medway Medical School. We will remain distinctive amongst our peers in operating with a major stake in continental Europe, with a strong European dimension in our academic activity. We will be delivering education in a variety of ways face-to-face, online and through alternative routes in particular higher and degree apprenticeships.

# OUR VALUES

Our values are enduring. We have always been a university that equally values education and research, believing that one enhances the other. We work as a community, based on collegiality. Freedom of speech within the law and freedom of inquiry are fundamental. We are outward looking, we embrace change and are willing to do things differently and see things differently. We value excellence and we support potential, wherever it may be found. Our university is based on equality, diversity, respect and we value each other. We are international in outlook.



# AMBITIONS AND ACTIONS

To deliver this vision we have re-stated our ambitions and actions in relation to our core activity of Education, Research and Engagement and identified a set of strategic priority areas to focus on. These are set out below:

## **Education and student experience**

We will offer one of the best education and student experiences in the UK

## **Research and innovation**

We will undertake research and innovation that is of the highest standards judged by international comparators

## **Engagement, impact and civic mission**

We will be a leading civic university



# EDUCATION AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE

In order to become one of the very best universities in the country for education and student experience, we will take the following actions:

- Review our portfolio of programmes and modules, aligned with work to set out the size and shape of the University over the next five years. In particular, we will grow and expand science, engineering, medicine, and creative, cultural and digital programmes. We will ensure our portfolio is viable and reflects the diverse needs and best interests of our students.
- Reward and share great teaching practice and innovation to help flexible and creative delivery that develops independent learners and develop a coherent and rewarding career pathway for excellent educators to achieve their full potential.
- Embed our best practice in access and widening participation, supporting student attainment, providing mental health support and enabling employability.
- Embed our graduate attributes of Confidence, Creativity and Innovation, Critical Reflection, Global/Cultural Awareness, Integrity and Accountability, Intellectual Curiosity and Resilience into our courses and wider University experience.
- Enhance pathways through education by expanding the number of programmes that offer an intercalated year, opportunities for a year in industry or abroad, Higher and Degree Apprenticeships, work-based learning and online learning.
- Enable students to contribute to their curricular and co-curricular experience through co-production – building a sense of being part of an academic community enhancing student voice and engagement.
- Raise our profile and student recruitment in and beyond London and the South East. Make use of key partnerships and geographies in our international recruitment and increase the proportion of international students. We will refocus our marketing and recruitment practices to respond to the rapidly changing environment.





# RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

In order to raise all our research to the level of our best, increase research intensity and our reputation and profile, we will take the following actions:

- Identify and invest in a number of signature research areas and themes that represent the very best of our work, address global challenges and can be used to raise the profile of Kent and research and innovation at Kent.
- Adopt a 'researcher developer' approach, to identify and support individuals and research groups to deliver significantly high quality outputs and impact and generate income with the potential to be the next signature area.
- Increase our external income for research and innovation. While recognising disciplinary differences, we will intensify support to increase our external research income generation to at least that of our peer group.
- We will ensure successful delivery of our two research 'super centres' which support our ambitions to grow and deepen our science base – the Institute for Biotechnology and Molecular Medicine (IBaMM) and the Centre for Studies in Cyber Security and Conflict (SoCyETAL).
- Focus support for building excellent research across the university, supporting careers and professional development across the academic life-cycle, from postgraduate to professor.
- Expand and grow our community of Postgraduate Researchers.
- Support and incentivise international collaborations and networks.

# ENGAGEMENT, IMPACT AND CIVIC MISSION

In order to give enhanced emphasis to our civic mission, delivering social, educational, cultural, public and economic benefits across Kent and Medway, we will take the following actions:

- Build on recent civic initiatives such as the Kent and Medway Medical School, the Institute for Cultural and Creative Industries and the Centre for Higher and Degree Apprenticeships and use them as exemplars of regional contribution and impact.
- Profile our sponsorship of secondary schools and student and staff volunteering as demonstrable ways in which we make a difference to our local communities.
- Work in partnership with organisations in Kent and Medway to support activity which brings resources into the region, enables economic growth and contributes to long term sustainability and quality of life in Kent.
- Work with disadvantaged groups across the region in order to promote access to the university.
- Actively promote access to our campuses and resources, facilities, research and international expertise, open lectures and archives and building a sense of community and engagement with the university.
- Embed sustainability through building the UN Sustainable Development Goals into our research, education, leadership, operations, administration and engagement.
- Refresh our alumni relations strategy and deliver a fundraising campaign that supports our strategic ambitions.



# STRATEGIC PROJECTS

The priority areas below are specific projects we need to take forward over the next 5-7 years in order to achieve our core ambitions and our vision for 2025.

## **An exciting vision for Medway**

The University has been offering higher education in Medway for over 20 years, since 2005 as part of the 'Universities at Medway' initiative, with a mission to provide access to Higher Education in an area of disadvantage. Over this period the university has played an important role in the Medway locality working with partner universities, Medway Council and the Historic Dockyard to bring about significant change and regeneration to the area. However, we now need a fresh and exciting vision for our Medway campus activity which addresses current student recruitment challenges and staff and student experiences as well as our wider civic mission within the Medway region. In particular, we need to build identity and purpose that is distinct from our Canterbury campus, offer and student experience under the umbrella of the University of Kent overall mission. We have identified core strengths, and associated demand, in creative and digital industries, health and well-being, in innovation and business oriented programmes, as well as expertise in supporting further and higher degree apprenticeships and work based learning. We will foster an approach to delivery which emphasises agility, creativity and innovation and to creating a student experience which responds to the changing demographic of students. We need to be more engaged with and open to the local Medway community and work in partnership with the historic Dockyard and Medway Council.

## **Institute for Creative and Cultural Industries**

The creative industries are the fastest growing sector of the UK economy contributing £91.8bn to the economy in 2016. The government has recognised that the creative industries could be worth £128.4 billion to the economy by 2025 and help to create up to 1 million new jobs by 2030. Our proximity to London provides exciting opportunities for Medway, not least in terms of the proposed Thames Estuary Production Corridor.

The University has longstanding strengths in creative and cultural industries. These include our academic programmes in architecture, history, design, drama, media, digital arts and music technology and our cultural offer through Gulbenkian and Colyer Fergusson programming activities in innovative live performance, visual arts and film. We hold National Portfolio Organisation status with Arts Council England (ACE) and have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with ACE to work together to develop the creative economy in Medway. Our vision is for the University to work as a key partner in Medway's strategic repositioning as a Creative City, so that Medway plays the leading role in the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) in the South-East.

To promote and co-ordinate all this activity we will establish an Institute for Cultural and Creative Industries (ICCI) as a home for our creative industries' activity at Medway and as a vehicle for connecting, promoting and branding all University of Kent CCI activity regardless of location. ICCI will provide a focus for the Creative Industries embedding business, digital and innovation in our courses to equip our students to be exceptional candidates for employment and for self-employment - to invent the jobs of the future. Working in close partnership with industry and national strategic bodies such as the Creative Industries Federation and Nesta, Kent will be acknowledged as a leading university for the CCI.

## STRATEGIC PROJECTS (CONT)

### **Kent and Medway Medical School (KMMS)**

We have secured funding for 100 medical school places to establish the first medical school in the County of Kent with our partner Canterbury Christ Church University. Kent and Medway faces significant and well documented challenges in developing and maintaining its clinical workforce. These challenges are compounded by a population that is ageing, growing, and is in places, particularly along the coast, among the most deprived in England. Our new Medical School will directly address the key challenges to the local health economy: playing a unique and transformative role for the patients and users of services. Our vision for Kent and Medway Medical School is that it will be inclusive and accessible. It will be a beacon for first class medical education and research, drawing on the distinctive strengths of both universities across arts, humanities, social science and science and will be the first choice for all those aspiring to achieve excellence in person-centered medical care in the UK. By providing distinctive, socially diverse and insightful graduates KMMS will enable, influence and drive changes within the clinical workforce to deliver high quality healthcare and outcomes across Kent and Medway. We have a unique opportunity to do things differently and influence the education of the future medical workforce and future health care delivery and health outcomes in our region as well as grow exciting research activity that spans the bench to the bedside. The School must be ready for its first intake in 2020 with its first graduates in 2025.



