

# Service to society

Demonstrating the public benefits  
of higher education

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER  
LEGAL ISSUES

HIGHER EDUCATION  
FUNDING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND

*hefce*



Universities UK

## Alternative formats

This publication can be downloaded from the HEFCE web-site ([www.hefce.ac.uk](http://www.hefce.ac.uk)) under Publications. For readers without access to the internet, we can also supply it on CD or in large print. For alternative format versions please call 0117 931 7431 or e-mail [publications@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:publications@hefce.ac.uk)

© HEFCE 2010

The copyright for this publication is held by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). The material may be copied or reproduced provided that the source is acknowledged and the material, wholly or in part, is not used for commercial gain. Use of the material for commercial gain requires the prior written permission of HEFCE.



PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO  
THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR  
OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

# Foreword

Melvyn Bragg

Chancellor, University of Leeds

Universities and the institutions of higher education have existed for getting on a millennium; the function of higher education in society and some of the specific organisations have lasted that long. Why – what are the purposes that have endured so long, despite the many great social, cultural economic and technological upheavals of these centuries?

We need to look beyond the specific and core activities of higher education – advanced scholarship, the development of learners and production of the qualified and the creation of knowledge – for an explanation, important though these are. Universities were created by leading citizens, communities and their societies with a larger vision of achieving goals of social and economic transformation. As an example, these words are taken from the founding document of the University of Aberdeen in 1495:

*'In the northern parts of the kingdom the people are ignorant and almost barbarous owing to their distance from a university. The city is near these places and suitable for a university, where all lawful faculties could be taught to both ecclesiastics and laymen, who would thus acquire the most precious pearl of knowledge, and so promote the well-being of the kingdom and the salvation of souls'* (see [www.newadvent.org/cathen/01042a.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01042a.htm) ).

Not that Aberdeen is barbarous now – indeed data from The Work Foundation demonstrate that Aberdeen now has the second highest percentage of employment in the creative industries in the UK. So we might suggest that the precious pearl of knowledge has indeed supported a city that achieved both its own economic well-being and the creativity of its people. Indeed the achievements of early Scottish education were a driver for the University of Leeds of which I am Chancellor. The origins of my own institution go back to the foundation in 1831 of the Leeds School of Medicine, set up in part so that medical students no longer needed to go to Scotland – or London – to study. To create the university, the medical school merged with the Yorkshire College of Science, which had been set up to drive new technological approaches given global competition in the wool and textile industries in the 19th century.

These drivers for higher education – pride of civic leaders and local communities, global technological competition and the support for the professions – resonate from the 15th century to today. It is important that we keep in the mind of our national and local policy-makers, our civil society organisations and local communities and wider society, the value that has been created by higher education, some of which is illustrated in this document. So that even in the present tough financial times we continue to cherish the global and local excellence of this country's university system, and recognise that, as in the 15th and 19th centuries, it holds the solutions to many of our present challenges.

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO  
THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR  
OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

# Foreword

**Chris Bonington**

**Chancellor, Lancaster University**

The origins of higher education go back nearly a millennium, but this document demonstrates why universities can expect even greater demands from global society in the future. Much emphasis has been placed recently on the potential of higher education to support knowledge-based global competitiveness and high-tech industries. These are vital contributions to tackle the economic challenges facing local communities and regions, our nation and the wider world. However, at local, regional, national and global levels, we also face significant societal challenges – as examples, health and well-being, peace and prosperity and climate change. This document sets out some of the ways in which our higher education institutions are responding to and supporting people and communities to tackle these societal challenges. A report from the United Nations on the contribution of universities to society gives a flavour of the high expectations that may be placed on our higher education system in the future:

*'University professors are the largest community of experts in any society' ... 'we may envision a university that anticipates social challenges; a university linked to the local that works in global networks; an independent, open, plural university that integrates society, contributing to the collective good' (Global University Network, 1999 UNESCO).*

The creation of Lancaster University, of which I am Chancellor, reflects this aspiration that higher education can contribute toward a better society of the future. (With some resonance with the Papal Bull establishing the University of Aberdeen, Lancaster's first Vice-Chancellor commented wryly at its inception that it was created to 'civilise the North'.) Lancaster was created as a response to some of the greatest social and economic challenges of the 20th century, the technological race and the expansion of population after the Second World War. The university accepted its first students in 1964 and Harold Wilson, reflecting on the white heat of technology, was one of its earliest honorary degree recipients. Marrying the economic and social, the colours of the university to this day are red and Quaker grey, reflecting the strong Quaker presence in the town and region.

I believe that we – cities, regions, societies, governments – need truly engaged 21st-century universities, that build on their roots into local civic life and communities and help us all go forward toward the social and economic transformations needed in the present day. These are tougher financial times and universities need to call themselves to account to their communities for the public benefits they provide. But I believe that the social and economic purposes for which higher education was created are just as resonate now, and this document illustrates just some of the ways in which higher education continues to give service to the people who created it.

# Introduction

**This publication shows how many of the things that higher education does are services to society – that is, to the people and communities who often created universities and colleges in the first place, and which are at the heart of the new government policy programmes of empowering local people and communities.**

Most news about universities and higher education is about the students they teach, or new discoveries they have made. Yet there are many interesting, even surprising, aspects of higher education that the general public hear little about. Some of these are part of the very nature of universities: their links to places and people; the purposes for which they were founded; and their core activities of developing learning in people and discovering ideas.

The first university in this country, and one of the first in the world, was founded in the 12th century. At the other end of the scale, the newest UK university was created in 2008. Universities have thrived where they have delivered concrete benefits, supporting society's needs.

The fact is that a very wide spectrum of public benefits emerge from higher education. People throughout the UK and around the world can access, enjoy and be inspired by our higher education institutions (HEIs). This publication seeks to describe these services to society around six themes:

- Developing people to make a contribution to society
- Innovating, informing and inspiring : opening up university knowledge, expertise and resources
- Engaging communities and working in partnership: helping community problem solving
- Informing public policy and the professions: helping communities engage with public policy, support civil society and deliver responsive public services
- Stimulating local economic and social development
- Building international connections: being anchors in the local that reach out to the global.

This publication originated from a recommendation of Professor Paul Wellings, Vice-Chancellor of Lancaster University, in 2009. He was asked to carry out a review for the Government on how intellectual property and the research benefits of HEIs contributed to the broader good. The review found that although HEIs were doing a lot of this type of work, it was under-reported. To address this, Professor Wellings recommended that HEIs draw up annual statements on the benefits of higher education for communities, society and the wider public.

This idea of reporting to the public on the benefits of higher education was taken forward by HEFCE and Universities UK, working in partnership with a number of volunteer universities and higher education colleges.

HEFCE has long supported the civic role of higher education through its development of policy and funding for business and community engagement.

Universities UK represents the heads of higher education institutions, who give civic service in their local areas and lead their institutions to contribute to wider social and economic development.

The HEIs participating in this exercise have made their own statements directly to their publics, as part of their ongoing civic and local dialogues. This report contains examples from just 21 (a list of all the institutions volunteering in this exercise is at the end of the document, with links to some of their statements). It summarises a small selection of the many activities and events being carried out to maximise the economic and social impact of higher education in their communities. Many other HEIs are carrying out similar work but have not been included in this pilot publication.

If you would like to feed back about this document or know more about how your local HEI is delivering public benefit, please contact Jenni Chambers (e-mail [servicetosociety@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:servicetosociety@hefce.ac.uk)).

# Developing people

**Universities develop and support people with a contribution to make; people who can innovate or inspire others and provide wider value for society. Some of these people are learners at the start of their careers, but higher education always seeks wider connections: with schools; with those who want to learn throughout life; and with volunteers, practitioners and academics who want to share ideas, knowledge and experience.**

University people represent a tremendous resource for the whole of society. Although young people come to university at the critical point in their lives when they start their transition to becoming an innovator or artist, an academic, a professional or an entrepreneur, people of all ages are now realising that they, too, can benefit from the vast resources their local university offers.

University academics and staff also increasingly engage with society as a source of inspiration and ideas, and to give service. Higher education presents an incredible opportunity for society, allowing people to interact at many points in their careers and lives; and to engage them so their knowledge, expertise and learning can shape social change.

## Shared culture

One of the social responsibilities of higher education is to develop a shared culture of learning: to establish why learning and knowledge are important; how they support society; and why people should participate in areas such as science and technology or the creative arts. As part of fulfilling this responsibility, HEIs work with schools and colleges, including mentoring young children to help them develop potential and seek the best from their lives.

## Social development

Another responsibility of higher education is to help develop learners into socially, as well as economically, productive people. That means the experience of learning in higher education must be linked with society. One way of doing this is to include volunteering in the higher education curriculum, or as an additional activity, for staff as well as students.

## Mutual benefit

Higher education benefits greatly from communities and organisations that will engage with volunteers: higher education can be more responsive to local communities,

### Lancaster University

#### Community-based projects

Lancaster University Volunteering Unit offers a range of innovative, community-based projects led by staff and student volunteers.

Hundreds of students volunteer every year, with projects including SAFE, a doorstep crime reduction initiative delivered with Lancashire Constabulary. In the Voltage programme, students help local sixth formers to develop their social entrepreneurship skills; and the FUSE initiative supports students who want to create their own volunteering initiatives.

Psychology student Penny Jackson says: 'Volunteering allowed me to give something back to the local community and Lancaster University. It made me realise how important it is to help young people realise their potential.'

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

develop teaching and research that meets their needs, and provide opportunities that fit with local aspirations. An example of this is in Exeter, as Councillor Paul Smith, Lord Mayor Of Exeter 2008-09, says: 'In many towns and cities, town and gown are noticeably different on a number of issues but in Exeter it has been recognised that the present and the future of both city and university are closely linked. Economic impact, student volunteering, publicity and profile, sport, leisure and culture, raising educational aspirations and the site itself bring tremendous benefits to residents, businesses, students and other stakeholders. Great steps have been made and we still have a journey to make together for the good of the city and the university, against a backcloth of history and the ever-changing uncertainties of the future.'

Students graduating into work and life can also inspire others to learn. There are many opportunities for contact. In some disciplines, academic staff are drawn from practising communities, such as business people, actors or designers. Universities also increasingly support entrepreneurs or practitioners in residence to bring society closer into their work.

## Nottingham Trent University Disseminating knowledge

Nottingham Trent University has a strong focus on communication, offering an up-to-date list of experts who can give expert opinions to the media and maintaining a news service of its own, with direct links to initiatives in progress.

A diverse array of events help to make the university's knowledge more widely available to the general public, often free of charge: they include exhibitions, music concerts, student theatre, workshops and lectures. The Distinguished Lecture Series has included talks by physical geographer Tim Burt from Durham University, Sir Liam Donaldson, Chief Medical Officer for England, and Queen's Bench High Court Judge the Honourable Mr Justice Beatson. A free event in 2010 focused on how not-for-profit, charity and/or community organisations can work together more effectively. The university also curates and promotes a nationally important lace archive.

## University of Manchester Widening participation

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

The University of Manchester has ambitious targets for ensuring continual improvement in its services to society. By 2015 it aims to establish at least 100,000 hours of student volunteering each year, and at least 1 million annual visits to the university from the wider community.

One example of an initiative is the Gateways Plus Mentoring Scheme, which links undergraduates with local school pupils who are interested in a healthcare career.

Simone Yinka Teniola, a current medicine undergraduate (pictured) was mentored under the scheme herself and remembers the second-year medic who helped her to realise her ambitions: 'He was very lively, down to earth, and the mentoring sessions enabled me to develop a bond with someone who was in the same position I wanted to be in. The scheme gave me that extra push that enabled the admissions tutor to recognise that I did have the potential and motivation to shine at Manchester.'

University of Surrey  
Learning from an early age

Brunel University  
Improving pupils' life chances

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

The learning journey doesn't start at 18. A passion for a subject, and a belief that accessing post-school education is possible, must be cultivated at a much earlier age.

The University of Surrey regularly takes educational programmes into local schools and welcomes hundreds of young people onto campus for many fun events.

The institution also runs Surrey Science Circus (pictured), an annual event open to adults and children. It features a variety of lectures, exhibits, demonstrations and hands-on activities. On the arts side, The Balloon Debate is run each year for Year 12 English Literature students. Pupils from different schools have to debate which of several well-known authors should be saved from a rapidly descending hot air balloon.

Brunel University's Urban Scholars programme typifies the institution's enthusiasm for marrying world-class research with strong social and community impact.

A nationally recognised initiative, now in its sixth year, Urban Scholars targets gifted pupils who may not have previously thought about higher education, giving them a four-year programme of monthly university classes in areas such as critical thinking and problem solving.

A strong analytical element feeds into research that has been praised by Government and the schools sector. Topics include self-motivation, retention and changes in aspirations and attitudes.



# Innovating, informing and inspiring

Universities and higher education colleges seek to open up their campuses, resources and facilities to be shared assets with communities. Culture, health, well-being and sport are obvious areas where there are clear opportunities to share – and there are many others. University academics and staff have much to offer to society in terms of ideas, knowledge and creative practice. These can be shared through the media or via events or festivals. And higher education can support communities in their own intellectual, artistic or entrepreneurial practices.

## Geographical reach

Many cities and major towns have a university within their boundaries. In fact there are often several HEIs, each with different societal contributions.

Many universities were created by citizens or communities who felt that higher education could make a difference to their societies, either economically or through social development and culture. Many regions and rural areas include a university or higher education college in their landscape. Universities are defined by and anchored in their locations, although of course they also reach out more broadly into the world. Their purposes and missions include services to widely dispersed places, as well as to society as a whole.

Universities want their spaces to feel welcoming – for communities to benefit from their knowledge, expertise and assets, for example the development of Manchester Metropolitan University's Birley Fields Campus (see page 10). Innovation and experimentation are at the heart of what higher education offers society. What communities can gain from higher education is access to the new, and insights into how new ideas can be discovered.

## Cultural heritage

The cultural contribution of higher education is a very important part of its accessibility to society. Universities have museums, galleries and theatres, as well as links to many local, regional, national and global arts organisations. Higher education goes beyond entertaining the public. It supports the exploration of creativity – of hubs, spaces and laboratories for new works and creative participation. It also seeks to increase understanding of the heritage, significance and social impact of culture.

All of this helps our country to understand and maintain its intellectual and cultural heritage over the long term, and is important for present economic and social development.

## Sharing with the community

Universities and colleges also use their specialist resources and expertise, such as sports or community medicine facilities, for the public good. For example, research by De Montfort University's School of Nursing and Midwifery into alcohol education and infection control in surgical sites led to changes in policy and working methods in Leicester. Such sharing also brings value back, in turn, to higher education: this can be seen at, for example, the Brunel Institute for Ageing Studies, which is working closely with local elderly people on a range of issues.

Universities inspire people more broadly within knowledge and learning by acting as sources of innovation and motivation. As the case studies in this document show, universities provide a wide range of public engagement activities from setting up or leading festivals of ideas, science and music, to providing public

## Number of attendees at events for the external community in 2008-09

	Free events	Chargeable events
Public lectures	752,410	136,637
Performance arts (music, dance, drama etc)	439,634	1,653,590
Exhibitions (galleries, museums etc)	5,926,479	735,605
Museum education	407,427	263,029

Source: Higher Education-Business and Community Interaction Table 5: Regeneration and development programmes 2008-09 (available at [www.hesa.ac.uk](http://www.hesa.ac.uk))

lectures, seminars and exhibitions. This all raises awareness of how new discoveries are changing the world, and how the public can engage with new ideas, using them to achieve socially valuable purposes. Ideas and expertise do not always in themselves lead to benefits for society. They must first be shaped by people and communities. The Heinz Wolff Fellowships in Public Engagement at Brunel University reflect this, awarded to encourage academics to promote their work more actively to a wider audience.

## Individual and collective talents

University researchers and teachers often contribute individually to the intellectual life of the nation. They inform and comment on latest developments, using their knowledge and understanding of society's problems and explaining their ideas on TV, in the media or by publishing accessibly.

Academics are often practitioners or entrepreneurs themselves, contributing to society as artists, designers, scientists and creators. Universities often support very directly community intellectual, artistic or creative practices – for example creative writing courses, or the work with young audiences done by the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. They also make rare and historic literature and works accessible, by curating museums or archiving historic or church manuscripts. In this way, universities support society in making the most of history and culture, inspiring love of learning and facilitating new insights.

## Guildhall School of Music and Drama

### Encouraging young audiences

Bringing cultural experiences to new people is important for the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, which opens its doors to everyone for nearly 400 performances each year, most of them free.

Matinee shows allow younger age groups to attend and up to 30,000 young people every year enjoy music tuition, workshops and taster sessions via the award-winning Connect scheme, Junior Guildhall and the Centre for Young Musicians.

Many programmes are delivered through a partnership with the London Symphony Orchestra and the Barbican Centre, thanks to the orchestra's Discovery strand, the Centre for Orchestra and a joint Barbican/Guildhall Creative Learning division.

## University of Oxford

### Sharing resources

The University of Oxford and its colleges play a key role in sustaining a vibrant artistic and cultural environment for the wider public. One example is Oxford Playhouse (pictured), which has been transformed, with major financial support from the university, from the university theatre to a theatre for everyone with a flourishing community education programme.

The sheer breadth of interaction with the community includes music societies offering everything from niche performances through to internationally renowned artists – and the university also supports the annual Oxford May Music Festival.

The Sheldonian Theatre, designed by Sir Christopher Wren, is open to the public for many performances and Oxford's output extends as far as shows staged at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

A thriving CommUniSports scheme offers coaching and other sports projects in the local community, including many local schools, and many of the university's sports facilities are made available to Oxford residents.

The students themselves represent a vital community resource: 3,200 students are part of Oxford Hub, a student-run organisation that creates charitable projects across a wide range of community needs.

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

# Engaging communities and working in partnership

**Communities and their representatives have their own challenges to solve and their own research projects or evidence-based enquiries to pursue. Universities frequently provide support for community-led agendas, by creating public spaces for debate or simply by providing their knowledge, expertise and assets.**

Developing specific skills in people is an area where universities excel. They show individuals how to approach critical problem solving and the use of evidence and rational debate – vital when resolving issues and building understanding or developing theoretical/conceptual knowledge that can be replicated.

Many universities provide public spaces or opportunities for public dialogue. It means that communities can come together, draw on higher education expertise, and explore and resolve issues in many different ways. It may involve

support for the debates and decision-making of political or civil society bodies: for example Nottingham Trent University provides an extensive and easily accessible directory of academic expertise, and the Inspiring Leaders programme developed at Manchester Metropolitan University empowers voluntary, public and community organisations to become more effective and influential. Or it may mean providing expertise or facilities to civil bodies, such as research and evaluation skills or libraries.

Some universities undertake specific research projects and programmes with communities. The Human Rights research carried out by the University of Essex is an excellent example of the way staff, and sometimes learners, can be involved; another example is ‘Interchange’ at the University of Liverpool, where academics work alongside community organisations to translate the research needs of the community into action.

## Teesside University

### Working with rural communities

The Digital Villages Network research project ([www.digitalvillage.org.uk](http://www.digitalvillage.org.uk)) is a major study into the use of information and communication technologies by rural and coastal communities.

The three-year project is a partnership between Teesside University and East Cleveland Community Development Group, in north-east England. It involves many different groups and areas, all engaged in a diverse range of activities, from community media clubs to local history and environmental projects, including this digital photography session at Saltburn Beach.

The research process itself is helping to empower communities: the virtual and real-world network of residents, practitioners and researchers it has created is developing a self-help approach to learning, reducing isolation and inspiring confident dialogue about regeneration.

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

## Manchester Metropolitan University

### Developing the very best

Manchester Metropolitan University is a 'situated' university with a strong sense of civic and social purpose. This is in due no small part to its origins as a teaching college for the local textile industry.

The connections run deep: teaching and research have both been shaped by ongoing interaction with local people over a long period.

When the new £120 million Birley Fields community campus project began, in the Hulme area of Manchester, genuine consultation with the community was therefore a top priority. Alongside an aspiration to be the greenest campus in the UK, a driving force has been the wish to develop the very best community facilities and student accommodation.

The university's approach to the consultation process has been widely praised for going well beyond the usual scope of university-community engagement. It included a web-site that received more than 20,000 visits, plus 13,000 leaflets and questionnaires, three newsletters and 43 consultation events over 12 weeks, reaching an estimated 11,000 people.

There were 835 responses to the consultation, with 79 per cent of respondents agreeing that the scheme is a positive development and 58 per cent of respondents interested in enrolling in a course.

One local person is very clear about what is being achieved: 'It will help to develop community cohesion, increase community spirit, more diverse and positive business activities in the area.'

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

# Informing public policy and the professions

The representatives that communities choose to develop policies and regulate society include national and local government. They also include civil society bodies such as faith groups or charities. Universities help all of these representative organisations with their knowledge and expertise, supporting public policy development. Higher education also plays a critical role in developing the professionals who will carry out public policy: whether doctors, nurses, engineers, architects or others.

Universities inevitably play an important role in public policy development. Academic experts provide knowledge and insights that help politicians decide on matters of critical social importance: climate change and health are just two obvious areas where university academics contribute. For example, academics from De Montfort University offered briefings to ministers from the Department of Communities and Local Government on how to develop community empowerment strategies, advice that was incorporated into a subsequent White Paper.

Universities frequently provide specialist training for health professionals, tailored to local demands and issues. Nottingham Trent University, for example, houses a specialist Emergency Services Research Unit. In the area of climate change many universities are working to further our understanding and to develop innovative carbon reduction solutions and alternative fuel sources. An example of this is the new Centre for Low-carbon Futures, a collaborative venture by the research universities of Yorkshire.

Public policy interactions extend well beyond headline issues, including support from academics for policy development and evaluation at national, regional and local level, such as in education, social work or arts policy.

## Local roots, wider connections

Higher education works with a broad range of civil society bodies that express and support community wishes and needs. Although publicly funded, universities are not formally public services. They were established as bodies that served an over-arching public purpose of creating and transmitting knowledge and learning for the long term. Universities are therefore very well placed to work with organisations representing all facets of society, from faith groups, charities and foundations through to community and neighbourhood groups.

All universities and colleges have roots in the places they support, but they have wider, public connections, too, upon which they can draw to benefit local communities. Universities such as De Montfort, Essex and Liverpool

## University of Exeter

### Addressing climate change

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

A growing hub for climate research, the University of Exeter has added 14 new academics to its world-leading interdisciplinary team for 2010. The institution's work on climate change involves close partnership with the Met Office, which moved to Exeter in 2003 and brought with it the world-renowned Hadley Centre for Climate Prediction and Research.

Five years of this collaboration has included a number of groundbreaking research projects, and Exeter is now working on 20 projects worth over £6 million with the Met Office. The university has also hosted several key events, including a major international climate change conference in 2008. A planned science park will help to cement Exeter's role as a centre of climate change excellence.

offer pro bono community law clinics providing free advice to individuals and community groups.

Sometimes academic experts give evidence or insights publicly, such as to Parliament or in the press and media or provide events or opportunities specifically for the public to engage in public policy matters: for example Coventry University holds Coventry Conversations where public figures host discussions for the communities in the city. And at Brunel University the Magna Carta Institute researches and debates some of the key political, legal and social issues of our time, analysing how best to create

and maintain just societies that fairly balance personal freedom and authority with the rights and responsibilities of individuals and society. Activity such as this helps people to engage with critical issues, perhaps assisting with local community action or with electing and calling to account their representatives. In this way, universities help to create a more participatory and responsible public policy culture for Government, citizens and civil society.

## Supporting professionals

Public policy decisions need to be translated into services or activities, and universities have long played a central role in creating the curriculum and developing professionals. That starts with defining the skills, knowledge and values needed by key professionals and extends to keeping them updated throughout their working life. This makes universities pivotal for the professions, including those rooted firmly in their locale such as social work and local government.

Higher education is also involved in standards-setting and developing professionals in economic life, including people such as accountants and engineers, so that industry and trade can be conducted professionally, with no risk to health or safety.

## University of Central Lancashire Engaging communities in developing their local services

In 2005 the Metropolitan Police asked the International School of Communities, Rights and Inclusion (ISCRI) at the University of Central Lancashire to help develop policing methods that would build community confidence and prevent crime.

ISCRI helped the police break the 'identify a problem/consult on a solution' mould and, instead, trained and supported researchers from local community organisations to ask more than 1,000 people what they thought were the issues for themselves and their communities.

In its role as an independent facilitator, ISCRI helped build a dialogue between the police force and its communities in a situation where trust and confidence were low. This work has been accepted by terrorism experts as being significant in how local authorities and police should plan and deliver their services. It has also changed the way in which the force polices London. The work has been further developed, particularly in the area of radicalisation and extremism.

## Coventry University Spreading the net

Coventry University offers a range of environmental and social sustainability initiatives. Many green projects are under way, including CABLED (Coventry and Birmingham Low Emission Demonstrator), the largest low-carbon vehicle trial of its kind, and close collaboration with the city on low-carbon social housing.

CABLED is the largest low-carbon vehicle trial of its kind and is part of a £25 million government investment in low-carbon vehicle trials. It will examine the impact of operating electric, hybrid and hydrogen-fuelled cars (for which Coventry University has installed its own hydrogen filling station) within a city environment and help manufacturers to understand the market. The CABLED consortium comprises Coventry University and industry and local government partners including Coventry City Council, Arup, E.ON, Jaguar Land Rover, Tata, Mitsubishi, LTI, Smart and Microcab.

Also at Coventry University, internationally recognised work on social issues, peace and reconciliation is led by the Institute of Community Cohesion, the Applied Research Centre for Sustainable Regeneration and the Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies. These organisations work with many partners, small and large, to tackle issues such as conflict resolution, segregation in schools, sustainable regeneration and churches' contribution to economic and social welfare.

An Active Volunteers Scheme extends the university's reach still further, ensuring that students give vital support to local community sporting events.

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

## University of Liverpool

### A 'laboratory' for the community

Residents of the Liverpool City region are one-third more likely to die from cancer compared to England as a whole, and twice as likely to die from chronic liver disease. The University of Liverpool is helping to tackle this, offering an enormous range of measures designed to enhance the health and well-being of its local community.

A Health is Wealth Commission was set up in 2007, in which experts looked closely at the growing disparity between a fast-growing economy and poor long-term health. Radical solutions followed:

- a co-ordinated approach to health improvement, targeting the main drivers of ill health
- a Workplace Well-being Charter, a set of standards for employers, outlining good business practice
- safe outdoor spaces for communities
- a dedicated institute for research into health inequalities (a UK first) with a particular focus on those conditions and illnesses that are caused or accelerated by inequality and deprivation.

University staff are working with the NHS and the public to create direct social benefits through the new Liverpool Institute for Health Inequalities Research, in which Liverpool will effectively become a 'laboratory' (and hopefully a model) for other regions.

## Manchester Metropolitan University

### Public dialogue

As a partner in the Beacons for Public Engagement initiative, Manchester Metropolitan University led on a public dialogue event called Comixed: a Networked Conversation. As part of the Manchester Science Festival, academics and local people came together to explore some of the UK's key research priorities.

Discussions were tracked in real time on blogs and Twitter, allowing participants to explore in different ways themes including the digital economy, climate change, food security and ageing.



# Stimulating local economic and social development

Universities help to transform the social and economic development of their locale and of the wider world. Many universities are particularly engaged with regional and local partners in poorer areas, where collective community activity can make a real difference in people's lives. This can involve links with businesses, Government and public services, and with other civil society bodies.

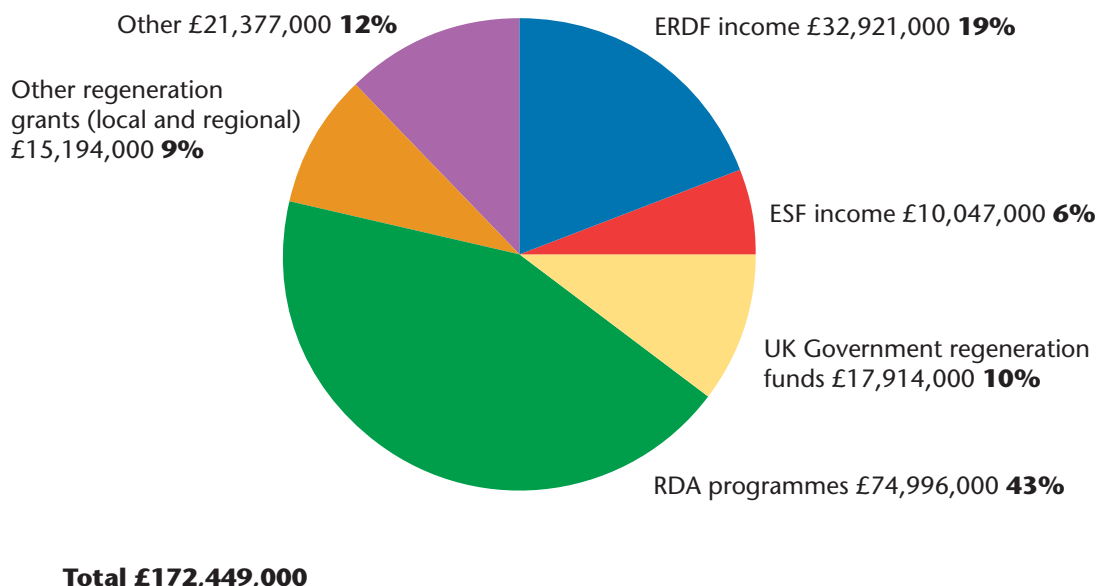
Universities often contribute through skills development or innovation in regeneration programmes, and participate in partnerships with their cities or regional development bodies.

Science Cities show the vital role higher education can play in developing cities through their knowledge, skills and creativity. For example, the University of York was instrumental in creating England's first Science City, and has seen a flourishing range of new businesses especially in biotechnology, IT and creative technologies.

## Open innovation

Universities support innovation in communities and wider society with expertise and knowledge. Increasingly, all kinds of organisations and individuals pursue 'open innovation': they seek the widest range of inputs from clients and customers, supply chains and experts. This is invaluable in solving problems and creating opportunities. Universities help both as providers of expertise and as places to support open innovations. Higher education institutions work in partnership with local government and civil society bodies to explore the possibilities for social innovation and innovation in public services. They also work with Regional Development Agencies and other bodies to support the competitiveness of local firms and to bring businesses to their local areas and to the UK as a whole. A prime example of this is the development of The Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus, which brings together partners including the North West Development Agency,

## UK higher education regeneration funding 2008-09



Source: Higher Education-Business and Community Interaction Table 3: Regeneration and development programmes 2008-09 (available at [www.hesa.ac.uk](http://www.hesa.ac.uk))



the Science and Technology Funding Council, Halton Borough Council and the Universities of Liverpool, Lancaster and Manchester to provide a world-class location for high-tech business and leading-edge science. Similar examples can be found across the country.

Of course universities are themselves economic actors, buying services in their areas and employing many people; a report<sup>1</sup> for Universities UK found that: 'Around 670,000 jobs [are] being created throughout the economy in 2007-08. Of these some 372,000 people were directly employed by universities and colleges. Personal off-campus expenditure of students amounted to £2.3 billion in 2007-08.'

Universities also produce new businesses, emerging directly from innovative ideas (spin-offs), and they actively encourage support staff and students to be entrepreneurs, including social entrepreneurs (start-ups).

2008-09	Number established	Number older than 3 years
Spin-offs with some HEI ownership	157	822
Formal spin-offs, not HEI-owned	34	160
Staff start-ups	53	164
Graduate start-ups	2,045	1,667

## Social Entrepreneurship Awards

As part of supporting higher education to serve society, HEFCE is working with social enterprise charity UnLtd to support and explore the potential of social enterprise activities, and to raise the profile of this work throughout universities and colleges. We are doing this through a programme that aims to encourage staff and students at higher education institutions who have entrepreneurial solutions to social problems. The programme runs over an 18-month period and gives individuals and groups an opportunity to apply for two levels of funding:

- **Catalyst awards:** These will be for small sums (on average around £2,500 up to a maximum of £5,000). These are for early-stage development of entrepreneurial solutions to social problems.
- **Development awards:** We will fund approximately 10 larger projects with a value of up to £15,000. These will typically be for projects that have already developed some track record of achievement in addressing an identified social problem.

In addition, HEFCE is working with UnLtd to provide capacity building support to HEIs to help embed social entrepreneurship within their wider engagement with society. This includes: a network of social enterprise ambassadors in institutions; a series of workshops to provide information and advice both to social entrepreneurs within universities and to those who might provide support and advice to potential social entrepreneurs (for example in university knowledge transfer offices); and a toolkit that social entrepreneurs can use to help them develop their ideas.

The HEFCE/UnLtd Higher Education Social Entrepreneurship Awards were launched in London and Birmingham on 19 November 2009 and a total of almost £1 million has been made available to about 200 individuals and informal groups within England's higher education institutions.

The Social Entrepreneurship Awards web-site, [http://culturegroup.co.uk/hefce\\_web-site](http://culturegroup.co.uk/hefce_web-site), provides more information.

### University of Leeds

#### The most successful company

A company created at the University of Leeds has proved to be the most successful company yet to emerge from a UK university.

Based on Emeritus Professor David Rhodes' work on microwave filters, Filtronic is the world's leading supplier of microwave frequency electronic components for the telecommunications and aerospace industries. The company has also successfully moved into mobile phone base station components and is estimated to have created around 3,000 jobs across the globe.

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

<sup>1</sup> [www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Documents/EconomicImpact4Full.pdf](http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Documents/EconomicImpact4Full.pdf)

## Loughborough University

### Sharing and profiting

Loughborough University is well known for its active engagement with business, industry, government departments, charities and the NHS.

It also has a strong track record of research commercialisation. Tests of a recent innovation, the Zephyr cooled ceiling tiles system (pictured), showed it reduces energy use by 40-50 per cent when used with conventional air conditioning and up to 90 per cent when used on its own.

Zephyr uses special ceiling tiles to draw up warm air from the room, which passes over a moist surface enclosed within the tile, evaporating the liquid. This instantly cools the surface of the tile, in turn lowering the room's temperature.

The University's Enterprise Office is seeking commercial partners for the system.

## University of Lincoln

### Nurturing enterprise

A highly innovative central department called Enterprise@Lincoln drives the provision of new opportunities, job vacancies, knowledge exchange and business incubation at the University of Lincoln.

Resources include a gateway building (pictured), designed to maximise interactions between students, staff and businesses.

An internal innovation fund has been established, priming activity across all departments. The fund supports student placements, funding assistance, marketing and more.

Enterprise@Lincoln also offers high-tech incubation facilities designed to support academic entrepreneurship, including spin-outs from the university.

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

## Cranfield University

### Open innovation with Boeing

When Boeing wanted to create a centre of excellence in Integrated Vehicle Health Management, it chose Cranfield University after considering potential partners and locations all over the world.

A commitment to open innovation was important, where diverse users of the technologies under development all play important roles in reaching the best possible solution.

BAE Systems, Rolls-Royce, Meggitt and Thales have now all joined Boeing as strategic partners at Cranfield, with support from the East of England Development Agency.

'Cranfield is the only global facility in Integrated Vehicle Health Management. We are proud to be part of such a distinguished team,' says Sir Roger Bone, President of Boeing UK.

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

## De Montfort University Conference for ethnic minority businesses

De Montfort University has hosted the 13th Annual Ethnic Minority Business Conference. Widely regarded as the UK's most important international conference for ethnic minority businesses, it was organised by the university's Centre for Research in Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship (CREME) in association with the East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA).

The annual conference presents cutting-edge research and policy initiatives. It addressed key themes such as national developments in ethnic minority entrepreneurship, advancing ethnic minority entrepreneurship, regional business support and supply chain opportunities.

Mike Carr, Executive Director of Business Services at EMDA, was clear on the event's importance: 'Ethnic minority businesses make an important contribution to the region's economy. We have been working closely with CREME and Minority Supplier Development UK to ensure that entrepreneurs in the ethnic minority community receive the support they require to develop their businesses. The conference is key in terms of both highlighting best practice and identifying issues faced by ethnic minority businesses.'

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

## University of Salford Reaching out to businesses

A £1.9 million project has seen the University of Salford delivering a range of postgraduate courses and Knowledge Transfer Partnerships that allow businesses in the North West to access training for their employees.

A variety of schemes linked postgraduate research and training activities, and the university tailored activities to meet emerging business requirements.

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

The Collaborative Training Account project included a £7,000 award to one exceptional student, who was enabled to take a master's course in Operational Research and Applied Statistics. Tom Liptrot, pictured (right) receiving his award from Professor Ghassan Aouad, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation), has now secured a job and says: 'Everything I studied is now being applied in my new job, so it has really paid off.'

# Building international connections

**Universities are rooted in their places, but they also reach out to the wider world. They contribute to global challenges and make global connections.**

Universities enjoy a truly global reach, helping to address challenges such as climate change or poverty. In doing so they forge new connections around the world and draw interesting people to their locales – people who inspire and engage with communities. For example, as well as being home to many gold medal hopefuls, Brunel University's facilities are part of the fabric of the 2012 Olympics and last year provided the summer training camp for the world's fastest man, Usain Bolt.

They also produce extraordinary people who act as ambassadors for our creativity and culture, both in terms of fine art and in popular entertainment. For example, actors who developed at the Guildhall include Daniel Craig, who has gone round the world as James Bond, and Ewan Macgregor who has gone round the universe as Obi-Wan Kenobi in 'Star Wars'.

Britain's world-renowned universities and colleges spread our ideas, innovation, creativity and culture throughout the world. By forging and maintaining connections between us and societies everywhere, they make an immeasurable contribution to the UK's role in the 'global village' of today and the future, benefiting not just the people of today but the generations to come.

## University of Essex

### Global human rights

For more than 25 years, the University of Essex has worked with organisations around the world to pioneer human rights. University staff have held key positions in the United Nations and investigated issues including torture, children in armed conflict, and the right to health. Their work ranges from supporting refugees and survivors of political violence to advising governments and international organisations.

Essex is at the forefront of an initiative preventing and resolving conflict by diplomacy. It has brought Tamil-speaking political leaders from Sri Lanka to the negotiating table in Switzerland, helped bring sides

together in Kosovo, and worked with the United Nations Centre for Preventative Diplomacy in central Asia.

In 2009 the university was awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize for its legal and practical work in promoting and protecting human rights across the globe. The Human Rights Centre has trained more than 1,500 students from 100 countries.

Pictured is Professor Paul Hunt of the University of Essex School of Law and Human Rights Centre (right) visiting Lebanon in 2006, when he was the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health, with Miloon Kothari, then the UN's Special Rapporteur on Housing.

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

## University of York

### Understanding Afghanistan

Professor Sultan Barakat, Director of the University of York's Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit (PRDU), has led a six-person team to conduct the most comprehensive strategic conflict assessment of Afghanistan to date.

Interviews with Afghan security forces, former Taliban members, diplomats and many others uncovered a tendency to blame all violence on the Taliban, hindering military and humanitarian aid.

The team showed how long-standing disputes were actually behind many violent incidents, and the study dispelled many common myths about current conflict, including the idea that Al-Qaeda is playing a leading role.

PRDU emerged from the York Charter for the reconstruction of human settlements and it runs a masters in Post-War Recovery Studies, welcoming students from across the globe.

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES



# Further information

'Service to Society' highlights case study information from the 21 universities that participated in the pilot exercise to describe the wider public benefits of higher education. To find more information on these institutions and the documents they produced, please refer to their web-sites:

<b>University</b>	<b>Web-site address</b>
Brunel	<a href="http://www.brunel.ac.uk/research/news">www.brunel.ac.uk/research/news</a>
Central Lancashire	<a href="http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/business/public_sector.php">www.uclan.ac.uk/information/business/public_sector.php</a>
Coventry	<a href="http://www.coventry.ac.uk/researchnet">www.coventry.ac.uk/researchnet</a>
Cranfield	<a href="http://www.cranfield.ac.uk/about/brochure/index.html">www.cranfield.ac.uk/about/brochure/index.html</a>
De Montfort	<a href="http://www.dmu.ac.uk">www.dmu.ac.uk</a>
Essex	<a href="http://www.essex.ac.uk/community">www.essex.ac.uk/community</a>
Exeter	<a href="http://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/corporateresponsibility/pdfs/csr_brochure.pdf">www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/corporateresponsibility/pdfs/csr_brochure.pdf</a>
Guildhall School of Music and Drama	<a href="http://www.gsmd.ac.uk/events">www.gsmd.ac.uk/events</a>
Lancaster	<a href="http://www.lancs.ac.uk/researchenterprise/lancasteruniversityinyourworld.html">www.lancs.ac.uk/researchenterprise/lancasteruniversityinyourworld.html</a>
Leeds	<a href="http://www.leeds.ac.uk/research-and-innovation">www.leeds.ac.uk/research-and-innovation</a>
Lincoln	<a href="http://www.lincoln.ac.uk/home/vc/">www.lincoln.ac.uk/home/vc/</a>
Liverpool	<a href="http://www.liv.ac.uk/businessgateway/how-we-can-help/public-engagement">www.liv.ac.uk/businessgateway/how-we-can-help/public-engagement</a>
Loughborough	<a href="http://www.lboro.ac.uk/makingadifference">www.lboro.ac.uk/makingadifference</a>
Manchester Metropolitan	<a href="http://www.mmu.ac.uk/community">www.mmu.ac.uk/community</a>
Manchester	<a href="http://www.manchester.ac.uk">www.manchester.ac.uk</a>
Nottingham Trent	<a href="http://www.ntu.ac.uk">www.ntu.ac.uk</a>
Oxford	<a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/oxfordimpacts">www.ox.ac.uk/oxfordimpacts</a>
Salford	<a href="http://www.research.salford.ac.uk/cms/resources/uploads/File/Wellings%20Final.pdf">www.research.salford.ac.uk/cms/resources/uploads/File/Wellings%20Final.pdf</a>
Surrey	<a href="http://www.surrey.ac.uk/about/community">www.surrey.ac.uk/about/community</a>
Teesside	<a href="http://www.tees.ac.uk/digitalcommunities">www.tees.ac.uk/digitalcommunities</a>
York	<a href="http://www.york.ac.uk/media/communications/corporatepublications/Changing-and-challenging-our-futures.pdf">www.york.ac.uk/media/communications/corporatepublications/Changing-and-challenging-our-futures.pdf</a>

Further information on the UK higher education sector generally can be found at the web-sites of Universities UK, [www.universitiesuk.ac.uk](http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk), and HEFCE, [www.hefce.ac.uk](http://www.hefce.ac.uk).

This summary was compiled with the pilot HEIs by:

## **HEFCE**

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) was established under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 as a non-departmental public body operating within a policy and funding context set by Government. The Council assumed responsibility for funding higher education in England on 1 April 1993. The Council's main function is to administer grant provided by the Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills. The Council funds education, research and associated activities at universities and other higher education institutions in England.

## **Universities UK**

Universities UK is the major representative body and membership organisation for the higher education sector. Universities UK members are the executive heads of UK universities. Together with Higher Education Wales and Universities Scotland, Universities UK works to advance the interests of universities and to spread good practice throughout the higher education sector.

Higher Education Funding Council for England  
Northavon House  
Coldharbour Lane  
BRISTOL  
BS16 1QD

tel 0117 931 7317  
fax 0117 931 7203  
[www.hefce.ac.uk](http://www.hefce.ac.uk)

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR  
OTHER LEGAL ISSUES