

# **Student Success Strategy**

## **Overview**

There are three components covered within this strategy which are all designed to enhance student outcomes for success: from transition into, through and out of the University.

However, whilst there may be three distinctive areas, there are substantial linkages between each one. For example, interactions with enquirers and applicants will help to shape their time with us and may help to inform their aspirations for their future career; and the successes that our students ultimately demonstrate will influence the choices made by the next generation of students.

Therefore, they cannot be considered in isolation and so the plans have been developed alongside one another and are presented as facets within this single strategy.

## **Vision**

We want our students to achieve their best possible outcome, recognising that success for each individual will relate to their own particular circumstances.

Students are at the heart of everything we do, we are committed to supporting students to enable them to thrive and achieve success, by delivering co-created initiatives and services beyond the academic experience that have a transformative effect.

We seek to ensure our students feel a sense of belonging within our University community, to help them explore their aims and aspirations and to realise their potential. We will support their transition to higher education and through their student journey with us. Our desire is for our students to achieve the success that they deserve and which will equip them for their future life as successful global citizens, including, where appropriate to their own particular situation, having the life skills to secure professional outcomes such as graduate-level employment and to prepare them for their future career.

## **Relationship to Other Strategies**

Early work on this strategy incorporated discussion on the Learning Teaching and Assessment Sub-Strategy, as a Learning Life component. This was designed to ensure we provide a learning experience that engages our students and helps them achieve successful academic outcomes. It encompassed transformational and inclusive curriculum; transitions that build upon the curriculum; academic mentoring / coaching / tutoring to support a structured approach to managing feedback and the diverse range of learning environments.

It is recognised as essential that we have complementary approaches to meeting the academic, pastoral, and professional rigours that are required for personal development, successful employment or further study; together with providing the right information, guidance, support and opportunities to ensure students are able to make the right choices, to overcome non-academic obstacles during the time of their programme and to develop their professional character. Such opportunities and support are tailored and personalised to meet the individual needs of students' particular circumstances, concerns and aspirations.

The academic aspects of this are now being taken forward within Campus Plus, which reflects a vision for a new model of teaching and learning that provides a flexible framework for managing our distinctive version of research informed intensive teaching. This Student Success Strategy thus focuses upon the non-academic support that students require to ensure they achieve the success they deserve. Both are aligned under the new Academic Strategy.

The three components are described below within the strategy map diagrams (supporting the transition to higher education; supporting the student journey; and supporting the transition to students' futures). A range of detailed operational plans will be in place to deliver these outcomes.

The University's Access and Participation Plan (APP), a requirement of registration with the Office for Students, is concerned with equality of outcomes in retention, degree outcomes and progression to graduate-level destinations. The interventions described in that plan thus intersect and align with the approaches covered within this document.

The Students' Union is independent from the University, with its own Strategic Plan and annual Operating Plan. However, the two organisations work in partnership, to the collective benefit of the student body. Consultation with the SU and with individual students is an intrinsic part of the formulation process for this strategy, and there is appropriate alignment between the plans of the University and the SU.

### **Key objectives and supporting activities**

The three strategy maps included below identify how we will:

- Recruit students who have an appropriate fit with the University, building their aspiration and starting to prepare them for both their programme with us and their eventual progression to their future career
- Work with students, supporting them through the transition into the University, providing them with tailored support to help them succeed, and through their input, ensuring that the student experience improves further to benefit other current and future students
- Prepare our students for their future, able to make informed career decisions and to develop those graduate skills and attributes which allow them to secure the type of sustainable graduate employment, business start-up or further study they want.

We will:

- Adopt a personalised approach, exploring individuals' potential and providing the information, guidance and support they need to make informed choices throughout their journey with us and to gain successful outcomes
- Deliver inspiring and engaging outreach, nurture our applicants and provide comprehensive onboarding that commences pre-enrolment and continues through arrival and induction, empowering students to take ownership of their student journey and creating a sense of belonging and community
- Work in partnership with students, empowering them to co-create environments and services, and providing access to targeted initiatives and tailored on-to-one support with seamless referrals to enable them to be confident and resilient learners

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing, providing a supportive place of study together with accessible support, and also creating peer-led initiatives to facilitate a culture shift to greater wellbeing
- Ensure graduate skills and attributes are embedded in the curriculum and provide a range of complementary extra-curricular opportunities to build students' confidence, resilience, adaptability, experience and overall profile
- Continue to support recent graduates and utilise alumni successes to inform current students and inspire potential future applicants

### **Key measures of success**

The activities outlined in this strategy, together with our academic interventions, will collectively contribute to achievement of the University's core metrics. These relate to enrolments, non-continuation, student satisfaction and graduate employment. The specific targets for each of these measures will be set in other broader University strategic documents.

The Graduate Outcomes Survey is still classed as experimental; longer-term targets will be set in due course as this new measure of student outcomes becomes more established. However, for the 2020-21 survey collection, the aim is to move the highly skilled metric to 80%.

The 'Proceed' measure is currently another experimental indicator although is gaining traction. It has been developed by the OfS and combines retention and employment outcomes to give an indication of the proportion of starters that end in a good job. A minimum expectation is that this should be over 50%; in the calculation using 2018-19 full-time first-degree starters who are projected to eventually obtain a degree multiplied by the percentage of the 2017-18 positive destinations, the University only achieved 47.2% with the lowest subject area at 32.4%.

We will utilise a platform for gathering student feedback to test the impact of our measures and will seek opportunities, both formally and informally, to gain input to our ongoing plans.

The APP identifies that the gaps in outcomes must be closed between student groups with different characteristics. In particular, it aims to:

- Remove the gap in Continuation by 2025-26, with current target groups in particular being Black and White, and Asian and White
- Reduce the gaps in Degree Outcomes by 2025-26, to 4% for measures of deprivation (POLAR4 and IMD Quintiles 1 & 5), and for Black and White, and 2% for Asian and White; and to eliminate the absolute gap (caused by both structural and unexplained factors) by 2030-31.
- Reduce the gaps in graduate-level employment or further study by 2025-26 (targets to be reviewed following release of additional GOS data) and to eliminate the absolute gap (caused by both structural and unexplained factors) by 2032-33.

The three strategy maps below also include explicit reference to other measures of success, all of which will contribute towards achievement of the core institutional metrics.

# STUDENT SUCCESS STRATEGY – 2022–2027

## Supporting the transition to Higher Education

Students are at the heart of everything we do, we are committed to supporting students to achieve success, by delivering co-created initiatives and services that transform our students beyond the academic experience<sup>1</sup>

### Raising aspirations and improving attainment

Delivering an inspiring and engaging outreach programme with schools, colleges and community groups and supporting national objectives on access and participation.

- Building relationships with priority schools and colleges
- Working with community groups and mature learners
- Develop and deliver an annual programme of outreach activity to raise aspirations
- Supporting learners to improve attainment
- Contributing to the regional UniConnect project (GM Higher)
- Meeting UoB 'access' targets and commitments for key groups

### Providing quality information, advice and guidance

to support pathway and subject choice and help learners to understand long-term career implications.

- Delivering an annual programme of on and off-campus events
- Offering information, advice and guidance to individuals, schools, colleges and community groups (in-person and online)
- Providing accessible information through digital platforms and range of media
- Supporting the application process

### Supporting the applicant journey

by providing information, advice and guidance and opportunities to engage with UoB from application through to enrolment.

- Delivering a three stage applicant nurture journey using CRM
- Opportunities to visit the campus and meet with staff and students
- Providing clear and accessible information throughout the journey, signposting to student support services throughout
- Encouraging proactive connections with academic teams
- Facilitating digital connections with other applicants and current students

### Comprehensive onboarding programme

to smooth the transition into the university, reduce anxiety and encourage retention

- Providing opportunities to access student services and resources prior to enrolment
- Preparing students for academic life through 'get ahead' resources
- Delivering pre-arrival events and briefings to students
- Comprehensive online information, social media and 3rd party app solutions
- Access to enrolment 'helpline' and physical support
- Bespoke interventions for specific groups

### Measures of Success ↓

- Delivering 50 outreach activities per term from Spring '22
- Developing 15 strategic partnerships with schools and colleges by end 23/24 and a further 5 by 26/27
- Delivering a fortnightly webinar series for schools, colleges and influencer groups from Spring '22
- Meeting our APP objectives
- Developing a full academic enrichment programme to run from Spring '22
- Achieving customer service excellence by end calendar year 2022.
- Embedding feedback mechanisms for enquirers and applicants
- Improving web traffic, bounce rates, social media engagement etc
- Meeting objectives and obligations of GM Higher project
- Improved customer journey by continuous improvement of CRM solutions
- Enhancing open and visit day experience
- Improved attrition rates at enrolment and retention rates in first semester

### Partnership working



Bolton College and UCS	Key Schools and Colleges	Priority Community Groups
Student Services	Student Life	Learning Life
Faculties and Schools	Student Union	GM Higher (UniConnect Project)

<sup>1</sup> A set of strategic targets and measures will be monitored and refined using data, evidence and analytics to signpost classes, performance across all key objectives

# STUDENT SUCCESS STRATEGY – 2022–2027

## Supporting the student journey

Students are at the heart of everything we do, we are committed to supporting students to achieve success, by delivering co-created initiatives and services that transform our students beyond the academic experience<sup>1</sup>

### Working in partnership with students

Reaching out to students and transforming the student journey and reshaping their student experience

- Enriching the student experience and enhancing the non-academic activities and sport and recreational activities provision for students
- Delivering value added services and driving continuous improvement
- Digital first approach
- Raising awareness of student satisfaction, retention & employment initiatives and interventions
- Empowering students to co-create environments and services

### Connecting and Preparing students

Transforming the transition to University by creating a peer learning environment to improve student satisfaction

- Deliver multi-blended approach to induction
- Targetted transitional support for student
- Empowering students to take ownership of their student journey
- Supporting, mentoring and connecting students on arrival
- Foster a sense of belonging and community
- Create a contemporary peer learning environment

### Engaging and Empowering students

Providing access to targetted initiatives and tailored one-to-one support with seamless referrals to improve retention

- Delivering seamless student support referrals
- Supporting students through effective and impactful personal academic tutoring
- Providing data informed and driven accessible student support
- Develop a model of integrated, engaging and co-created support and initiatives
- Investing in resources and systems that enable learners to be confident and resilient

### Supporting Students

Adopting a university wide approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing and creating student centred services

- Reducing Stigma and providing a supportive place of study
- Delivering effective interventions to support the diverse student community
- Provide accessible support and reducing barriers of engagement
- Deliver outstanding coordinated student support
- Creating peer led initiatives to facilitate a culture shift to greater wellbeing.
- Establish bespoke interventions for specific groups of students

### Measures of Success

- Embedded Faculty Peer support schemes in each by September 2023
- Increase in NSS participation rate to 70% in 2023.
- Increase NSS student satisfaction and academic support to 88%
- Maintain and develop APP benchmarks
- Maintain accreditation of Customer Service Excellence
- Students thriving and high levels of student engagement throughout the student journey
- Excellent student outcomes and Increase overall institutional student retention rates by 6%
- Low levels of student complaints
- Increase in the number of students needing support who engage with support services
- Enhancing the Induction and summer school experience
- Increase in students successfully transitioning between semesters

### Partnership working

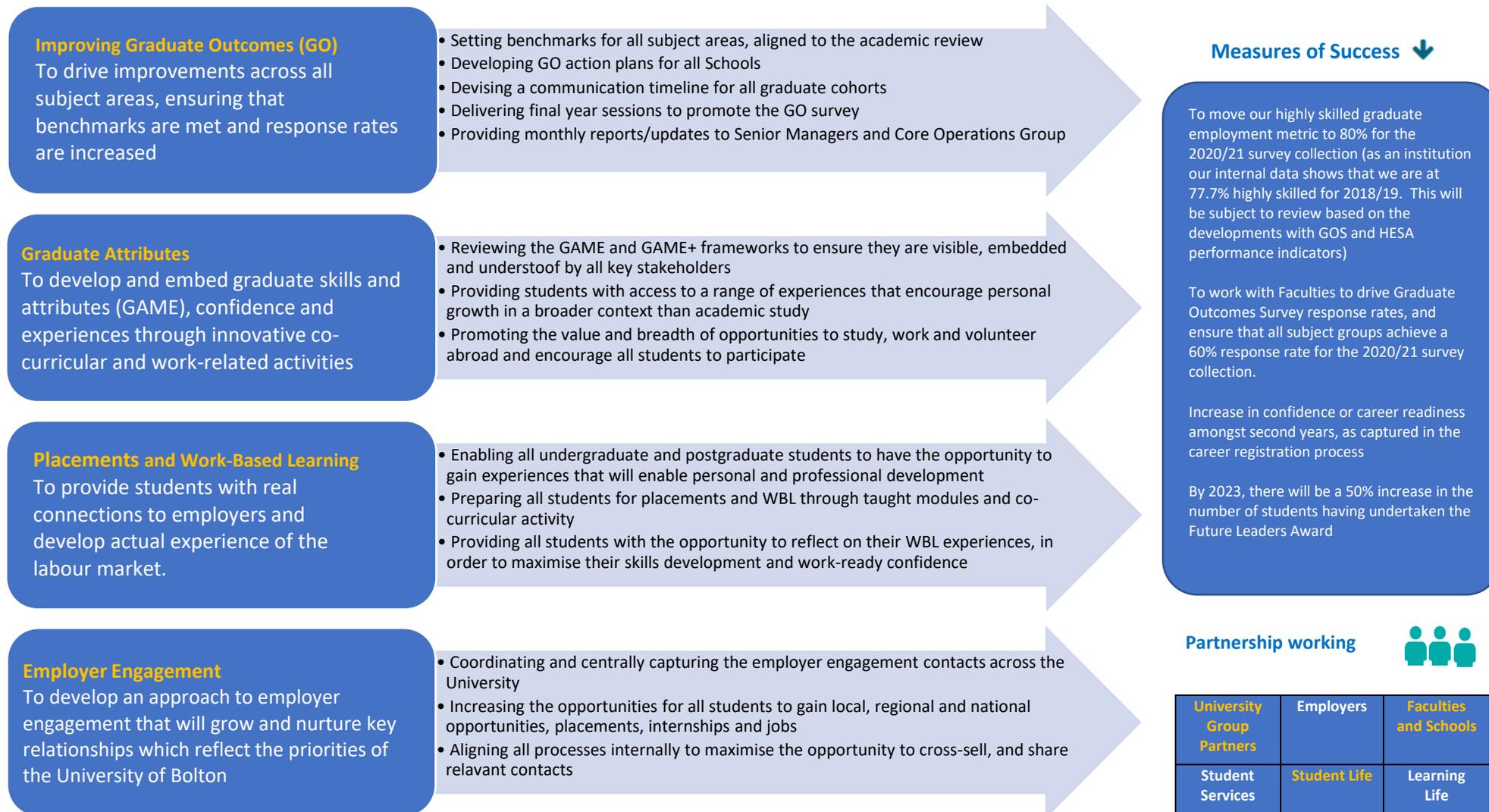
Students' Union	Jobs for Students	External Support Services
Library & Student Services	Student Life	Learning Life
Faculties and Schools	Recruitment & Admissions	Faculties & Off Campus

<sup>1</sup> A set of strategic targets and measures will be used to track and drive using data, evidence, and analytics to design and assess performance across all key objectives

# STUDENT SUCCESS STRATEGY – 2022-2027

## Supporting the transition to Graduate Employment

To provide our students with the opportunities to gain experiences and skills that will prepare them for graduate-level employment and further study.



### Partnership working



<b>University Group Partners</b>	<b>Employers</b>	<b>Faculties and Schools</b>
<b>Student Services</b>	<b>Student Life</b>	<b>Learning Life</b>
<b>Recruitment and Admissions</b>	<b>Student Union</b>	<b>Marketing</b>