The Empowering University:

Learning for Life implementation plan

Section 1:

Student-centred

We are committed to providing a student-centred inclusive learning environment that supports students at all stages of their careers to develop and fulfil their intellectual and personal potential.

- We are proud to have one of the most diverse student bodies of any university in the UK and we are committed to improving the representation, progression and success of underrepresented student groups through initiatives such as our Decolonising DMU programme and inclusive teaching practices.

- We will create a more inclusive university that enables stronger partnerships with employers by tackling important skills gaps in our local and regional economy through a focus on access, diversity and inclusion.

- We will work with local schools and colleges to increase opportunities for pupils and students to learn and to address attainment gaps.

- We will work with our students to enhance their experience. Strong student partnership will be a defining characteristic of all of our Learning for Life activity.

Flexible learning

This strategy brings to the fore the need for universities to adapt and change in response to unprecedented social, economic and environmental challenges driven by globalisation and technological developments. This will provide new opportunities for our entrepreneurial students, who are connected, and increasingly motivated, by financial security, meaningful social change, community and the planet.

Student learning is no longer defined by a simple online/on campus binary or ratio. At DMU our digital transformation will support all aspects of empowering learning and teaching. In the post-digital university, students and staff harness the digital to support learning for life.

- We will ensure that flexible and empowering learning for all – fostered by curiosity and the pursuit of knowledge – is at the heart of our academic offer and driven by our innovative Education 2030 transformation programme.

- All academic programmes will incorporate embedded employability, and both entrepreneurial and life skills, including wellbeing, which is increasingly important to employers.

- We will open up more opportunities for students, apprentices, alumni and employees to access short, flexible learning opportunities that are offered in a range of blended teaching modalities.

- We will establish a new model of partnership, working with employers to establish the university as a strategic hub at a regional and national level, so that students can build up learning and micro-credentials over their lifetime, choosing how and when they study to acquire new skills.

Creative approaches to teaching and learning

Over the lifetime of this strategy, we will ensure that we offer a balanced portfolio between undergraduate, postgraduate, research degrees and apprenticeship provision with a focus on building up the number of short accredited and non-accredited courses and micro-credential opportunities that offer more diverse ways to access learning at DMU. These courses will be delivered in a range of modalities that include distance learning, blended and fully on campus. We will increase opportunities to combine work and study.

We pride ourselves on being a university whose history is rooted in the forefront of educating generations of workers for developing skilled roles needed in local industries, and our research addresses global challenges and is applied in a range of contexts.

- We will consolidate/build upon the progress that we have undertaken with our ambitious Higher and Degree Apprenticeship programmes that enable students to combine work and study.

- We will develop/extend our distance learning provision which enables learners across the world to undertake study in a way that is most convenient to them and which is underpinned by an extensive range of resources and support.

- We will develop and embed our student-centred, practice-based teaching and learning approach, which empowers students to learn and helps them build resilience, so that they can thrive in the uncertainties of society and work post graduation.

- Employers and leaders in the region, nationally and internationally, will want to work with our alumni who will be known for their expertise, depth of learning and their 'can do' enterprising approach.

- We will develop a challenge-based education curriculum that is enriched by our research themes, which in turn will influence what we teach, the courses on offer and how we teach.

- Our Education 2030 programme will provide a sector-leading pedagogical provision that will develop and showcase our capability and capacity to deliver immersive block, practice-based learning and teaching.

- There will be a ladder of opportunities for staff who support teaching excellence (including digital education), at all career stages. CAITE (working in partnership with faculties and the DSU) will be a catalyst that supports and empowers teaching excellence within the context of a strong teaching career pathway.

Section 2:

Strategic priorities
Learning for Life

Priority 1: Teaching excellence

Success indicators	Targets	Current	Target
We will offer consistently high quality, inclusive practice-based teaching and learning that supports students' attainment, wider educational goals and mental health.	Advance HE UKSPF above sector benchmark for all levels of Fellowship (Associate Fellowship, Fellowship, Senior Fellowship and Principal Fellowship). Above sector benchmark for percentage of staff that have a teaching qualification.	71.3% (2021)	**87.5%** (2026)
We will offer sector-leading, inclusive, digitally-enhanced learning and teaching that combines on-campus and digital learning experiences that support students' education.	Top quartile for Teaching on my Course (NSS questions).	62.12 (2021)	**70.8%** (2026)
We will offer a strong teaching career pathway which focuses on the importance of teaching excellence at all career stages.	Materially above TEF benchmark for Assessment and Feedback (NSS questions).	65.45 (2022)	

Priority 1: Teaching excellence

Strategic objective	Activity	Timing		Owner
		Start	**End**	
We will ensure that we employ lecturers who can demonstrate teaching excellence at point of recruitment.	Identify examples at DMU (or externally) where shortlisted applicants have to do a mini teaching slot in front of students. Summarise approach and best practice, and pilot in each faculty for wider embedding in next academic year.	Feb 2023	Embedding 2023	**PVC** **RASD** **POD**
	Clarify role of probation teaching observations and ensure these are carried out for all salaried lecturer appointments.	Dec 2022	Deliver Jan 2023	**PVC E**
	Ensure that all new lecturers are offered a strong academic induction linked to their probation and that routes to fellowship are clear.	Dec 2022	Deliver Jan 2023	**APVC E** **Deans**
Deliver and evaluate Peer Observation of Teaching and Learning (POLT) scheme across the university.	Top quartile for Teaching on my Course (NSS questions).	Year 22/23 50% compliance		**PVC** **RASD**
	No baseline data for peer observation engagement: target - 80% engagement for salaried teaching staff.	Year 23/24 80% compliance		**ADAs** **CAITE**
Ladder of CPD opportunities to enhance inclusive practice-based teaching and learning.	Refresh PgCert and develop MA with a range of optional modules. Ensure the offer has a clear focus on empowering education, EDI, digitally-enhanced learning and teaching, education for sustainable development and practice-based learning.	Complete and launch Sep 2023		**CAITE** **PVC E**
	Evaluate and update non-accredited CPD offer to align with empowering education strategic objectives.	Mar 2023		**PVC E**
	As part of the digital strategy we will offer high quality, digitally-enhanced learning and teaching that supports the development of students' digital capabilities and skills.	Jun 2023		**CAITE**

Strategic objective	Activity	Timing		Owner
		Start	**End**	
Coherent teaching and learning promotions route from lecturer to professor aligned to UKPSF that offers equivalency to research career framework.	Refresh educational sabbatical route.	Dec 2022	Jun 2023	**PVC RASD**
	Evaluate teaching promotions route and numbers progressing to identify barriers and make adaptations where needed.			**PVC E**
	Develop and offer a teaching promotions route support workshops to support progression on this track.			**CAITE**
The 'Learn' domain of the University Mental Health Charter will set out expectations in relation to approaches to transition into university, learning, teaching, assessment and progression. All programmes are to embed approaches to mental wellbeing in the curriculum.	Review programmes for existing mental wellbeing in the curriculum content and devise implementation plans where further content would be beneficial to the student experience.	Jun 2023	Jul 2025	**ADA CEM**
Support in place to support all students through all stages of the learning journey (from pre-applicant through to alumni).	Enhance the staff training and development offer to ensure mental wellbeing considerations are included in all sessions related to the learning journey.	Jan 2023	Jun 2024	
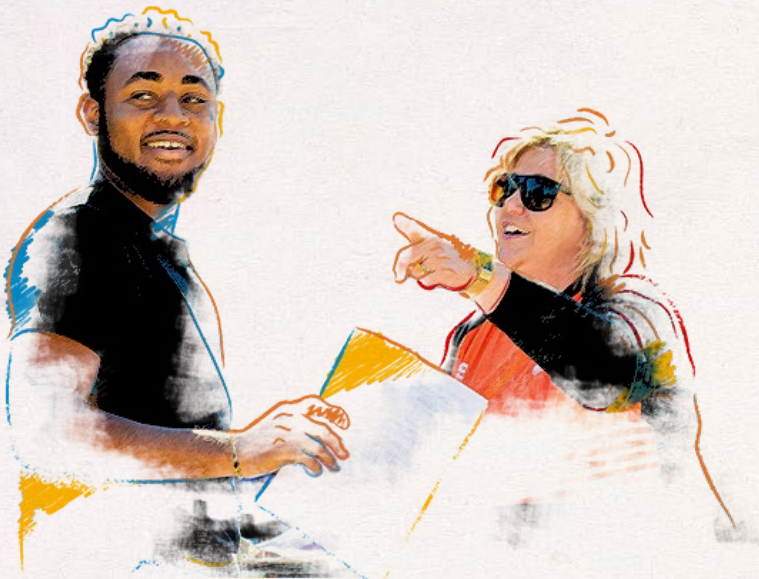
Priority 2: Student Success for All: Developing a quality enhancement framework

Success indicators	Targets	Current	Target
A rigorous and embedded data-led approach to quality enhancement that supports continuous improvement towards our academic KPTs and successful student outcomes.	Above benchmark TEF data (with a focus on continuation).	[Baseline value]	[Target value]
	Meeting APP targets (current and future APP plan). Elimination of awarding gap for Black, Asian and minoratised ethnic students (on track for APP targets). Awarding gap for mature students.	-13.8% (2019/20)	0% (Mar 2027)
		-8.5% (2019/20)	0% (Mar 2027)

Strategic objective	Activity	Timing		Owner
		Start	End	
We will create a governance structure that supports quality enhancement.	Create a new Education Committee which replaces current ULTC to extend remit and terms of reference to include all stages of student life cycle.	Mar 2023	Dec 2023	**PVC E**
	Work with DSU to establish an annual enhancement theme.			**PVC HLS ARCS**
	Create and implement a supportive and enhanced monitoring approach for courses below benchmark.			**DSU**
	Develop evaluation capacity to support enhancement of evaluation activity.			
	Revise and relaunch PSAR and QIP approach across the university that aligns with SPS Performance Review.			**DAQ CAITE**
	Educational gain – develop and deliver an evidence-led, robust approach to measuring educational gain and track progress every six months at Academic Board.			

Priority 3: Employability, entrepreneurship and enterprise in the curriculum

Success indicators	Targets	Current	Target
Students will access discipline, relevant employability and enterprise education that supports positive outcomes across our diverse student body.	Sector average for graduates in highly skilled employment of further study (as per Graduate Outcomes survey).	64.5% (2018/19)	**75.3% (2026)**
	Reduce the progression gap into highly skilled employments or further study among mixed ethnicity students.	Current: 5.6%	Target 0% - (2026)

Strategic objective	Activity	Timing		Owner
		Start	**End**	
All students have opportunities to develop and track their employability.	DMU Graduate Attributes refreshed in partnership with SU. Tracking and monitoring approaches agreed. New framework clearly communicated to staff and students.	Jun 2023	Dec 2023	**PVC E**
Live project and placement opportunities available for all students.	Educational gain work (see above) clearly aligned to graduate attributes framework.	Dec 2023		**Head of Careers**
	Placement offer, live projects, real-world learning and alumni input connected to establish and articulate coherent placement/ live project offer for students. This is with a focus on increasing the number of students taking up placement opportunities (need to establish baseline data).		Jun 2024	**PVC SE**
	Develop authentic assessment CPD opportunities for staff to align our assessment practices with our educational strategy.			

Priority 4: DMU Skills: Diversifying DMU curriculum portfolio and supporting school attainment

Success indicators	Targets	Current	Target
Diverse pathways into and through higher education through expansion of flexible Level 4 and 5 courses and degree apprenticeships. DMU Skills launched as a hub to lead and develop this work. 'T Degrees' and HTQs developed and delivered in partnership with college partners and employers. Successful partnerships with schools that raise attainment.	Increased apprenticeship numbers and success indicators. Student numbers on short courses (establish baseline). Positive OFSTED outcome. DL student numbers increased. Successful partnerships with schools that raise attainment.	[Baseline value] TBC	[Target value] TBC

| Strategic objective | Activity | Timing | | Owner |
		Start	End	
Step off, step on learning opportunities for students that are offered in DL, blended and face-to-face modalities. Strong partnerships with employers and FE colleges that support skills development. Agile and scaled-up DMU apprenticeship portfolio that aligns to regional priorities.	Scope and establish DMU Skills as a hub to manage development HTQs and manage strategic development of apprenticeship provision (align with Partnerships with purpose objective: develop a targeted approach to securing regional development funding and address the skills gap in the city with a focus on digital literacy).	Sep 2023	Mar 2024	**PVC E** **RASD** **POD**
	Scope potential for the development of 'T Degrees' that offer clear progression routes for students studying T level, provision at school or college, or those looking for technical degrees.			**PVC** **RBI**
	Develop new OFS APP that addresses priorities for diverse pathways for learners.			**DVC** **PVC E**
	Evaluate current DL provision and scope partnership opportunities to scale up this work.			**DVC**

Strategic objective	Activity	Timing		Owner
		Start	End	
Academic/vocational portfolio that maximises student and employee learning opportunities.	Carry out strategic gap analysis on curriculum portfolio and create academic governance that supports strategic curriculum planning.	Jan 2022	Apr 2023	**DVC/ PVC** **Deans**
Flexible credentialing approach that rewards engagement across non-accredited offer.	Micro-credentials explored as a means to support employer and employee engagement with short courses.	Jan 2023	Mar 2023	**PVC E** **PVC** **RBI**
Raising attainment in schools (APP).	We will support attainment in disadvantaged schools in the Leicester region (disadvantage measured through Free School Meals (30%) and Ever6 (40%) indicators) through the establishment of a partnership with IntoUniversity and the University of Leicester. IntoLeicester will offer a range of targeted activities to support attainment to eight primary cohorts, providing academic support, focus, mentoring and careers support activities. December 2022: Signing of collaboration agreement. January 2023: Identification of KPIs. June-September 2023: Identification of schools October-November 2023: Centre opens November 2023 onwards: Delivery of attainment activities.	See progress map in text		**ARCS**

Glossary:

Job titles

Acronym:	Title:
PVC	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
ARCS	Academic Registrar and Company Secretary
PVCE	Pro Vice-Chancellor Education
PVC RBI	Pro Vice-Chancellor Regional Business and Innovation
PVC RASD	Pro Vice-Chancellor Research and Academic Development
PVC SE	Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience
PVC HLS	Pro Vice-Chancellor Health and Life Sciences
ADA CEM	Associate Dean Academic Computing Engineering and Media
APVC A	Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic
CAITE	Centre for Academic Innovation and Teaching Excellence
DSU	De Montfort Students' Union
DAQ	Department of Academic Quality
POD	People and Organisational Development