

EDUCATION ACTION PLAN 2024-25

Our Education vision for 2028

“At Essex, student success is at the heart of our mission. We are proud to offer a transformational, research-led education. Our students are not defined or constrained by their past but welcomed on the basis of their potential. We support them to shape and fulfil their ambitions and to achieve outstanding outcomes. We offer consistently excellent learning opportunities, responsive to the needs and aspirations of our diverse student community.” (Education Strategy 2019- 2028)

The Education Plan Action sets out our priorities in 2024-25 for delivering the Education Strategy 2019-28. It includes the work that forms part of our Academic Infrastructure Development Programme, including proposed changes to our Academic Framework, and the creation of new education partnerships and TNE. It contributes to Essex 2025 and the continued development of our transformational curriculum, so that we respond to the needs of our student population however they choose to study with us, and for those students who choose campus-based study, that we continue to deliver a distinctive, predominantly residential, campus-based student experience. It will be implemented as part of broader activities that are contributing to the growth and development of the University and the delivery of institutional objectives.

Whilst the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) owns the Plan and is responsible for its delivery, it is an institutional document with leadership and input required from across the University; while each activity has an owner who is responsible for leading the activity and monitoring and reporting on progress, the plan includes other members of Education Committee who will have vital input to the

successful delivery. The plan is delivered in partnership with the Students' Union and all actions involve work with the Students' Union to varying degrees. In addition, other stakeholders and participants in the delivery include but are not limited to Executive Deans, Faculty Deans, Heads of Department, Directors of Education, Graduate Directors, Department Managers, and other Heads of Professional Services and their teams. In delivering the Plan there is an assumption of collective responsibility and partnership for all actions, with leadership provided through the owners identified in the Plan.

The Education Action Plan should be read alongside the Research Action Plan which contains objectives in support of our postgraduate research strategic priorities which have synergies with our education strategic priorities. Whilst the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) has responsibility for the Research Action Plan, the progress of which is monitored by Research Committee, Education Committee receives updates on matters relating to postgraduate research priorities, supported by the Dean PGRE. Equally the Education Action Plan contains objectives in support of our postgraduate education strategic priorities which have synergies with those in the Research Action Plan. As a member of both Education Committee and Research Committee, the Dean PGRE provides an important liaison function so that Education Committee has an opportunity to provide input into the development of the annual Research Action Plan and receive and comment on progress updates, so that opportunities and dependencies between taught and research education provision are identified and benefits realised.

In preparing the Education Action Plan, consultation takes place with each of the Supporting and Sub-Strategy leads to ensure coherence in action planning and that education-related objectives in these strategies are on track with appropriate oversight from Education Committee.

| KEY PRIORITIES FOR ACTION & STRATEGIC LINKS <i>What are our priorities and how do they contribute to the delivery of the Education Strategy?</i> | SUCCESS MEASURES <i>What will be the outcome?</i> | OWNERSHIP <i>Who is responsible for leading the activity¹</i> <i>Date of completion</i> <i>[other members of EC who are key contributors to success]</i> | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE, INNOVATION AND TRANSFORMATIONAL CURRICULUM: <i>Our research-led curriculum lies at the centre of our transformational education. We aim to ensure that our Academic Framework and structure, our curriculum and assessment are inclusive, innovative, impactful and supports innovation as a path to delivering our commitment to education excellence and the transformation of lives, and supports every student from every background to achieve outstanding outcomes</i> | | | | | | |
| Objective 1: Through the delivery of our new Academic Infrastructure Development Programme, ensure our academic offer is efficient to deliver, clear and compelling for prospective and existing students, which is evidence based and responsive to sector developments, and creates wide-ranging benefits to all members of our community. | | | | | | |
| 1.1 | Develop our Academic Framework, in line with what is agreed by Senate and Council, taking account of feedback from the institutional consultation, focused on ensuring that our education offer is clear and compelling to our applicants and students, supports the development of transnational education and flexible educational products, and prepares for the new Lifelong Learning Entitlement. [EO2; EO5; EO12; EO13; EO14; EO15; EO16; EO17; EO21; EO24; EO25] | <table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="958 708 1715 979"> Plans for implementation, monitoring and assessment of approved changes to our Academic Framework are in place in line with what is agreed by Senate, so that the benefits are fully realised. </td> <td data-bbox="1715 708 2092 979"> PVC E June 2025 [Dean UGE; Dean PGRE; Faculty Deans UG and PG; Director of Academic Services] </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="958 979 1715 1249"> Work to further streamline our courses, modules, and assessments progressed in support of approved changes to our academic framework. </td> <td data-bbox="1715 979 2092 1249"> PVC E June 2025 [Director of Academic Services; Dean UGE; Dean PGRE; Faculty Deans UG and PG] </td> </tr> </table> | Plans for implementation, monitoring and assessment of approved changes to our Academic Framework are in place in line with what is agreed by Senate, so that the benefits are fully realised. | PVC E June 2025 [Dean UGE; Dean PGRE; Faculty Deans UG and PG; Director of Academic Services] | Work to further streamline our courses, modules, and assessments progressed in support of approved changes to our academic framework. | PVC E June 2025 [Director of Academic Services; Dean UGE; Dean PGRE; Faculty Deans UG and PG] |
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¹ in partnership with stakeholders, monitoring and reporting on progress.

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| | | Student systems infrastructure developments underway through the Academic Systems Enhancement Programme in line with agreed timescales to support our underpinning academic framework, flexible product developments and the effective delivery of student outcomes with a focus on excellence and on supporting our students to reach their full potential. | Chief Information Officer June 2025 [Academic Registrar; Director of Academic Services] |
| 1.2 | Taking account of our current operating environment, and the objectives of our AID Programme, continue the review of our policies and procedures, to ensure appropriate oversight and locus of decision-making, ensuring effective implementation of changes, and evaluation of impact. [EO2; EO15; EO17; EO25] | Review of our policies and procedures complete and implementation in progress. Impact evaluation plan in place. | Faculty Dean UG Arts & Humanities (lead for reporting purposes) Director of Academic Services June 2025 |
| | | Changes to our Assessments and Marking Policy implemented and the impact monitored. | Director of Academic Services June 2025 [Faculty Deans UG and PG] |
| Objective 2: Ensure our approach to curriculum and assessment is inclusive, innovative, and impactful, including addressing key societal challenges such as social justice and the Climate and Ecological emergency, and supports innovation as a path to delivering our commitment to education excellence and the transformation of lives, and supports every student from every background to achieve outstanding outcomes. | | | |

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| 2.1 | Complete and evaluate the outcomes of our three-year curriculum review. [EO5, EO6, EO12, EO13, EO14, EO15, EO16, EO17, EO23, EO24] | <p>Outstanding Curriculum Review actions completed and monitored through ARCs</p> <p>Outcomes of Curriculum Review evaluated in the context of the Education Strategy, and approved changes to the Academic Framework, and further actions identified as appropriate.</p> | <p>Dean UGE</p> <p>June 2025</p> <p>[Director of Academic Services; Dean PGRE; Faculty Deans UG and PG]</p> |
| 2.2 | Continue to develop our approaches to assessment so that that our practices are inclusive, effective, and scalable, support student success, maintain academic integrity and ensure our students continue to be fairly and properly assessed, and support developments in new and transformational curriculum and innovation. [EO17, EO24] | Embedding of innovative assessment practices progressed that are inclusive, effective, and scalable, support student success, maintain academic integrity and ensure our students continue to be fairly and properly assessed. | <p>Director of Academic Services</p> <p>June 2025</p> <p>[Chief Information Officer; Director of Organisational Development; Dean UGE and PGRE; Faculty Deans UG and PG]</p> |
| 2.3 | Through our work to meet the requirements of our Access and Participation Plan (APP), develop interventions to support student success and achieve our strategic ambition to have no significant equality attainment gaps for measures of student success as set out in KPI-06. [EO2; EO7] | <p>Education deliverables against our Access and Participation Plan on track.</p> <p>Successful implementation and launch of educational interventions as developed through the APP. Measures of student success on track to achieve KPI-06.</p> | <p>PVC E</p> <p>[Dean UGE and PGRE; Faculty Deans UG and PG]</p> <p>June 2025</p> |

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| 2.4 | In the context of planned changes to our Academic Framework and informed by our Technology Supporting Strategy, continue to develop our learning environment for the next generation of learners. The future learning environment will remain pedagogically led and both reflect and respond to innovation in education practices, learning spaces, and learning technologies. [EO15, EO18, EO19, EO25] | <p>Recommendations made for the required development of our learning environment to support approved changes to our Academic Framework. These will be informed by the Blended Learning Task & Finish Group, Library Supporting Strategy, Technology Supporting Strategy, and Campus Environments Supporting Strategy.</p> <p>Guidance on the use of AI in learning and teaching design and assessment developed and integrated in support for educators.</p> | <p>Director of Organisational Development; Chief Information Officer; Director of Library and Cultural Services</p> <p>June 2025</p> <p>[Dean UGE and PGRE; Faculty Deans UG and PG]</p> |
| Objective 3: Support and enable accelerated growth in apprenticeships, flexible product, TNE and other partnerships and develop our approach to our global reputation for teaching. | | | |
| 3.1 | Expansion of flexible product, apprenticeship provision in line with growth plan, including consideration of the feedback from the January 2024 Ofsted inspection of apprenticeship provision. [EO15, EO16] | <p>Apprenticeship provision expanded in a context where high quality and standards and compliance rules continue to be met. Actions arising from January 2024 Ofsted Inspection implemented.</p> <p>Flexible product developed and implemented, supported by policies and practice. To include linkages into the Knowledge Gateway and Innovation Centre, employers, and schools to support and enable partnership in innovation.</p> | <p>Director of Academic Services</p> <p>June 2025</p> <p>[Dean of Partnerships (Education); Dean UGE and PGRE]</p> |
| 3.2 | Implementation of the education focussed objectives and deliverables of the TNE Taskforce and Partnerships Sub-Strategy and expansion of | Education focussed objectives and deliverables of the TNE Taskforce and Partnerships Sub-Strategy implemented in line with agreed timescales International | Dean of Partnerships (Education) |

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| | our links internationally and in Europe through YERUN and YUFE [EO16, EO23] [see also RAP 5.1; 5.2; 6.4] | links maintained and expanded, and in Europe through continued successful work with YUFE partners. International joint PhD partnerships are developed strategically. | June 2025 [Director of Academic Services] |
| 3.3 | Increase the visibility and impact of our transformational education, building our global reputation and expanding opportunities for international collaboration. [EO10; EO21; EO23] | Implementation of our global reputation for teaching plan underway. Progress monitored and impact evaluated. | PVC E June 2025 [Dean UGE; Dean PGRE; Dean of Partnerships (Education); Director of Organisational Development] |
| STUDENT SUCCESS: <i>Student success remains at the heart of our mission. Focus this year will be on developing our approach to student belonging and support, student services delivery, and developing skills and opportunities.</i> | | | |
| Objective 4: Develop our approach to transitions into the University and belonging at all levels of study | | | |
| 4.1 | Develop our inclusive education practice in support of our diverse student population, providing a transformational education journey, with opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and experience in big-world issues. [EO2; EO22] | Intelligence through our student recruitment and pre-arrivals work (including our outreach and School's Membership programmes, the Essex Preparation Programme, and our work with agents) and the work of our TNE Taskforce effectively used to inform our inclusive education practice so that we are responsive to all our students' needs. | Dean UGE Dean PGRE June 2025 [Director of Student Life; Director of Partnerships (Education); Faculty] |

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| | | | Deans UG and PG; Director of Inclusion] |
| | | Essex for All formally launched with student registered and student engagement streams in place in line with programme timescales. | PVC E June 2025 [Director of Academic Services; Director of Student Life] |
| 4.2 | Following the completion of both phases of the PGR Review, implement actions identified. [EO2, EO6, EO29] [see also RAP action 1.2; 3.3; 6.3] | Implementation plan in place with progress against timelines monitored and impact evaluated. Increased numbers of applications for PGR study. Consistent excellent performance in KPI 7a and KPI 7b across the departments, steady growth in PGR numbers Enhanced communications and promotion of PGR initiatives both internally and externally. New PGR offer developed in relevant areas and across disciplines. Pan-university projects, initiatives and resource in place to bring together the PGR community and further develop research-learning communities on Campus | Dean PGRE June 2025 [Director of Academic Services; Director of Student Life; Director of Organisational Development; Faculty Deans PG] |

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| Objective 5: Meaningful and transformational support for our students, framed around their needs and ambitions enabling them to have confidence, resilience, skills, knowledge, and support to progress successfully to the next stage of their lives | | | |
| 5.1 | Building on learning from our personal tutoring pilots, provide meaningful and transformational support for all our students through an effective student-centred, data-informed, sustainable, and scalable system of personal tutoring that supports student welcome and induction and promotes belonging. [EO2, EO3, EO4, EO22] | Sustainable and scalable model for personal tutoring developed for all departments with implementation and engagement plan in place and progress and impact monitored. | Dean UGE June 2025 [Dean PGRE; Director of Organisational Development; Faculty Deans UG and PG] |
| 5.2 | Build on our work to implement our vision and approach to deliver successful employability and further study outcomes for all our graduates, ensuring a 'one University' approach and the development of core skills and competencies within the curriculum. [EO3, EO5, EO6, EO16, EO22, EO23, EO29] | Implementation of the Student Development and Departmental Employability Action Plans in full, focused on the enhancement of our Preparation Programmes, delivery of career registration activity, identification of priority students through targeted and enhanced use of data, work-based and work-related learning and extracted employability, and by drawing on opportunities | Director of Student Life June 2025 [Dean UGE; Dean PGRE; Faculty Deans UG and |

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| | | emerging through our apprenticeships growth plan, developments in entrepreneurship and enterprise education, and new knowledge exchange partnership activities. | PG; Director of Academic Services] |
| Objective 6: Progress our work in promoting and embedding a cultural shift in the physical and mental wellbeing across our community | | | |
| 6.1 | Implementation of actions in response to the outcome of the University's application to the University Mental Health Charter. [EO26, EO27] | Mental Health Charter Action Plan in place with actions underway. Progress monitored and impact evaluated. | Director Student Life (students) Director of Organisational Development (staff) June 2025 [Dean UGE; Dean PGRE; Faculty Deans UG and PG] |
| 6.2 | Continue work on external benchmarks to support and develop our inclusive environment. [EO2, EO7, EO22, EO25] | External benchmarking for our inclusive environment continues through: (i) Continuing to implement our five-year Race Equality Charter Action Plan to 2028 (ii) Delivering our three-year University of Sanctuary action plan and renewal and awarding UoS scholarships. (iii) Institutional Athena Swan award Bronze renewal (submitted 31 January 2024) and implementing our five-year Institutional Athena Swan action plan. | Director of Inclusion June 2025 |

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| | | (iv) Eligible departments awarded or submitting for an Athena Swan Bronze Award. | |
| SUPPORTING EDUCATORS: <i>Delivering high quality teaching, supervision and research and a transformational and inclusive education to all our students requires skills, professional knowledge, and expertise</i> | | | |
| Objective 7: In the context of any changes to our Academic Framework, develop effective and inclusive educational practices across the whole career trajectory through our leadership and development of skills, professional knowledge, and expertise | | | |
| 7.1 | Review our educator support needs in the context of changes to our Academic Framework and sector developments such as LLE and generative AI. Implement changes to our Educator Development Framework to ensure educators have relevant skills, including active, problem, project and experiential learning pedagogies and competency-based assessment. [EO2; EO7; EO8; EO11; EO15; EO18] | Educator Development Framework revised and updated to include active, problem, project and experiential learning pedagogies and competency-based assessment, in the context of approved changes to our Academic Framework and sector developments, including but not limited to LLE and generative AI. | Director of Organisational Development June 2025 |
| 7.2 | Extend professional development pathways to external audiences providing qualification, recognition and short course programmes, and increased opportunities for collaboration at early career and experienced educators. [EO21; EO23] | CPD pathways for educators at each career stage defined and operational. Professional recognition and qualification pathways fully operational through Global Cadenza, PGCHP and Short Course programmes. | Director of Organisational Development June 2025 |