

MINUTES OF MEETING



Academic Assembly

Tuesday 30 April at 1.15 pm

Virtual meeting via TEAMS

Present:

Professor Alan Hayes, Chair and 48 attendees

In attendance:

Hannah South, Head of Library Academic Services

Helen Rhodes, School of Management Librarian

Jason Harper, Head of Library Research Services

Secretariat

Katie Anderton, Secretary

Introductory items

793 - Welcome and Quorum

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting, they extended a particular welcome to the Vice Chancellor, Professor Ian White and Professor Jane White, Vice-President (Community & Inclusion).

794 - Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

795 – Membership and Terms of Reference

The membership and Terms of Reference of the Assembly were noted.

Members were reminded that the Terms of Reference for Academic Assembly were available on the web: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/statutory-bodies-committees/academic/index.html>

796 - Minutes of the Previous Meeting - AA23/24-05

The minutes of the previous meeting of Academic Assembly held on 25 October 2023 were approved.

797 - Actions and Matters Arising - AA23/24-06

The Action Log was noted.

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Part I

798 – Relevant Decisions of Senate

It was noted that the minutes of meetings of Senate may be viewed at:

<https://www.bath.ac.au/publications/?f.Type%7CY=Minutes&f.Department+or+group%7CX=Senate>

There had been four meetings of Senate since the last meeting of the Assembly including an additional meeting in January 2024 to recommend to Council the appointment of the new Vice-Chancellor.

The following Senate approvals were brought to the attention of members:

NOVEMBER 2023

- Recommended the Degree Outcomes Statement to Council.
- Approval of the Academic Quality & Standards Policy.
- Supported University alignment with the principles on the use of Generative AI in education published by the Russell Group.
- Approved amendments to a number of Student Safeguarding Policies including:
 - The Fitness to Study Policy (now renamed the Health, Wellbeing and Support for Study Policy)
 - The Student Discipline Policy (Regulation 7)
 - The Student Complaints Policy
- Approved amendments to the Terms of Reference and membership of the University Doctoral Studies Committee and the Doctoral Board of Studies.
- Course approvals as recommended by the Courses and Partnerships Approval Committee.
 - Full-time and part-time MRes Sociotechnical Future & Digital Methods Course
 - Full-time and part-time MRes Global Challenges Course

JANUARY 2024

- Recommendation to Council for the appointment of the new Vice-Chancellor.
- Approval of the academic year chart for 2025/26.
- Approved amendments to the Student Apprenticeship regulations to mirror the changes to Student Safeguarding Policies approved in November.
- Approved amendments to the Student Appeals Policy to mirror changes to Student Safeguarding policies approved in November.
- Recommended to Council the proposed Student Appeals Panel Terms of Reference.
- Approved the appointment of two Deputy Independent Advisors.
- Course approvals as recommended by the Courses and Partnerships Approval Committee.
 - MSc Artificial Intelligence for Engineering & Design

APRIL 2024

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- Support for work being carried out by colleagues in Academic Registry regarding the delivery of digital, in-person examinations.
- Approved alteration to the Easter holiday dates in 2024/25 to better reflect BANES dates.
- Approved the Calendar of meetings for 2024/25.
- Approved in year changes to Regulation 17 relating to Academic Appeals to add clarity for students.
- Approved amendments to the membership of the Education Quality and Standards Committee.

799– Vice-Chancellor's Statutory Address

The Vice-Chancellor thanked the Assembly for the invitation to deliver their statutory address. As it was to be their final statutory address as Vice-Chancellor it had been requested they provided the Assembly with an overview of the past five years of their tenure.

The University had been in a challenging position when they joined in 2019 and they were grateful for the kindness they received from colleagues when they assumed the role. These challenges came from across the University and so the first step had been to carry out an analysis to identify the main challenges and what could be done to address these. Based on this analysis they had made the decision to focus on student experience, rebalancing the research income and output to comparable institutions and strengthening the University community.

Following this initial analysis, a large engagement activity had been carried out with contribution from staff, students and alumni in order to build the current University strategy. From this activity there was a clear emphasis on fostering an inclusive University community and maintaining excellence. This pathed the way for the current four pillars of the strategy: driving excellence, high impact research, inclusive community and fostering partnerships. The aim for these pillars was not to act in isolation but to work cyclically to generate positivity in all areas.

The Vice-Chancellor noted that the intention had been to use the strategy to enhance the standard business of the institution as well as the University's performance in the TEF, REF and KEF however there had been number of challenging events across their tenure which had had large impacts on the institution, including Brexit, the COVID-19 pandemic, regulatory interventions and periods of industrial action. They extended their thanks to the local trade unions for their collaboration with the University during times of industrial action and paid tribute to the colleagues for the roles they played during these difficult times.

When the Vice-Chancellor started in post, the University was ranked 59th in the NSS Annual Survey, with this performance greatly improving in recent years. There had also been an improvement in staff engagement including the introduction of regular pulse surveys, all of which contributed to a more inclusive community. The Vice-Chancellor extended their thanks to the previous Vice-President (Community & Inclusion) for their work over their

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tenure, including the work which had been done in collaboration with colleagues in achieving Athena SWAN awards across all academic departments.

When looking at improving education at the University, the key metrics had been student satisfaction and the employability of students. The Vice-Chancellor noted their gratitude to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Global) and their colleagues for the work they had done which had resulted in the University rating highly in the most recent TEF submission. The University had had to make the difficult call to ensure the quality of education was maintained during a difficult financial time for the sector, however this was proving to be the correct policy for the institution. The Vice-Chancellor took the opportunity to highlight some individual successes which had been achieved by students over recent years, including the sporting success students have achieved, winning 286 major international medals since July 2021. They paid tribute to the work of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students Experience) for their work in integrating sport and education, as well as the work of other colleagues to ensure that students had access to a holistic student experience with engagement in sports, the arts and enterprise activities.

The University had performed strongly in the last REF and seen a significant increase in its research grant income. It was noted that while work was still ongoing in this area, the national and international impact of research from Bath was starting to be seen.

The Vice-Chancellor noted that significant work had been carried out in their tenure to improve the relationship between the University and the city of Bath and the Bath and Northeast Somerset (BANES) Council. Since they started in the role the University's relationship with the city had evolved and there were a number of ongoing collaborative projects with the City Council ongoing.

In recent years the University had expanded its reach, no longer being an institution based only in Bath. These projects included research ventures such as IAAPS in Bristol and ICAST in Swindon, and education programs such as the MPharm hosted at Plymouth University, all of which contributed to the University's regional profile. Universities across the sector were currently struggling with recruitment of both international and home students however the number of applications had increased at Bath. The Vice-Chancellor noted that despite this the University would need to be vigilant moving forward, as there was always uncertainty what could be next for the sector, as much of it was dependent on the current government. Another ongoing priority noted by the Vice-Chancellor was to look at the infrastructure of the campus. They were acutely aware that a number of buildings on campus required careful attention to tackle end of life issues. There was an action plan to tackle this, created by the Chief Operational Officer however it would need to remain a priority moving forward.

The Vice-Chancellor thanked the Chair for inviting them to give their statutory address and extended their congratulations and thanks to all members of the Assembly for all they had achieved over the past five years. They noted that there had been some difficult times for the institution and that not every decision they had made was the correct one. They wished every success to the incoming Vice-Chancellor in the role.

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The Chair thanked the Vice-Chancellor for the support they had provided to them as the Chair of Academic Assembly as well all they had done for the University. The Vice-Chancellor had noted a number of challenging times the University had undergone during their tenure and the Chair congratulated them for all the work they had done. The Chair wished the Vice-Chancellor luck in their future endeavours.

800 – Introduction to the Vice-President (Community & Inclusion)

The Vice-President (Community & Inclusion) thanked the Chair for the invitation to speak to the Assembly, to have an opportunity to speak to colleagues about the role of Vice-President and what opportunities they were looking at going forwards.

They explained that the Vice-President (C&I) role was a majority staff focused role, working with colleagues in Human Resources, as well as across the Faculties and School, to look at the cultural aspects of workload, talent, pay and reward. This included acting as Chair for a number of committees within the governance structure, including Academic Staff Committee, Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Staff Experience Advisory Board.

Within the short time they had been in the role they had been looking at the structures and mechanisms which were in place within the institution which would allow work done within the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, Community and Culture (EDICC) space to have the most impact across the University. They were continuing to drive work in existing charters, such as the Athena SWAN awards, as well as looking to begin work in charters for other protected characteristics, such as the Race Equality Charter. This work would feed into the achievement of the institutional equality objectives which were published in 2023.

Outside of the institution they acted as the Chair of the University of Sanctuary Committee, for which the institution had recently submitted their re-accreditation. Through this process they had been made aware of the remarkable work done by colleagues across the University to support refugees and asylum seekers.

The current [institutional equality objectives](#) covered five distinct areas; high aspirations for all students but particularly those from underrepresented groups, to foster an environment of dignity and respect, to ensure the University is an accessible environment, to foster a culture of inclusion through contribution to charters and, to ensure staff feel welcomed.

Looking forward they were looking to identify where work relating to EDICC concerns were being carried out throughout the institution. This would involve input from departmental leads and staff networks. It was noted there was a lot of activity being carried out within the EDICC space at the University and it was within their role to find ways to harness instances of best practice and disseminate these throughout the institution.

They shared a number of their current priorities and projects with the Assembly, including the Tell Us Once gender identification programme, the Digital Accessibility project for which there was an upcoming workshop, and looking into the creation of more staff social spaces. They aimed to run a series of 'Open Houses' throughout the summer to give colleagues a forum through which to discuss issues relating to EDICC.

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They felt the role of Vice-President (C&I) was about doing what could be done to help the University community be as strong as it can be to support each other in relation to EDICC and that this would come from the input and support of all staff and students.

Discussion covered the following points:

- It was felt the summer 'Open Houses' would be a positive initiative to take forward. Assembly members were encouraged to bring forward other ideas they may have which could create positive impact.

The Chair thanked the Vice-President (C&I) for attending the meeting of the Assembly and for their update.

801 – Chair of Academic Assembly

It was noted that Professor Alan Hayes' term of office as Chair of Academic Assembly would be coming to an end in July 2024. A call for nominations had been sent to all members of the Assembly requesting expressions of interest by Friday 10 May 2024. Members of the Assembly were encouraged to apply for the position.

Part 2

802 – Elections 2023/24 – AA23/24 - 07

The Assembly noted the elections being run in 2023/24 for which Assembly members were eligible to stand in.

803 – Update on Implementation of Review Recommendations – AA23/24 - 08

Academic Assembly noted the update.

804 – Programme of Meetings for 2024/25

Academic Assembly noted the programme of meetings for the 2024/25 Academic Year.

- Wednesday 30 October 2024 at 1.15pm.
- Tuesday 29 April 2025 at 12.30pm, to include the Vice-Chancellor's Statutory Address

805 – Any Other Business

It was noted that this was the last formal meeting of Professor Alan Hayes' as Chair of Academic Assembly. The Assembly extended their thanks to Professor Hayes for the work they had done in extending the reach of the Assembly and ensuring its continued existence within the University's governance structure. It was noted that moving forward work was needed to maintain and further improve the work of Academic Assembly.

The meeting closed at 14.23

Please contact the Governance Team if you require any further assistance regarding this meeting.

Academic Assembly – 30th March 2024

Professor Ian White

Vice-Chancellor & President



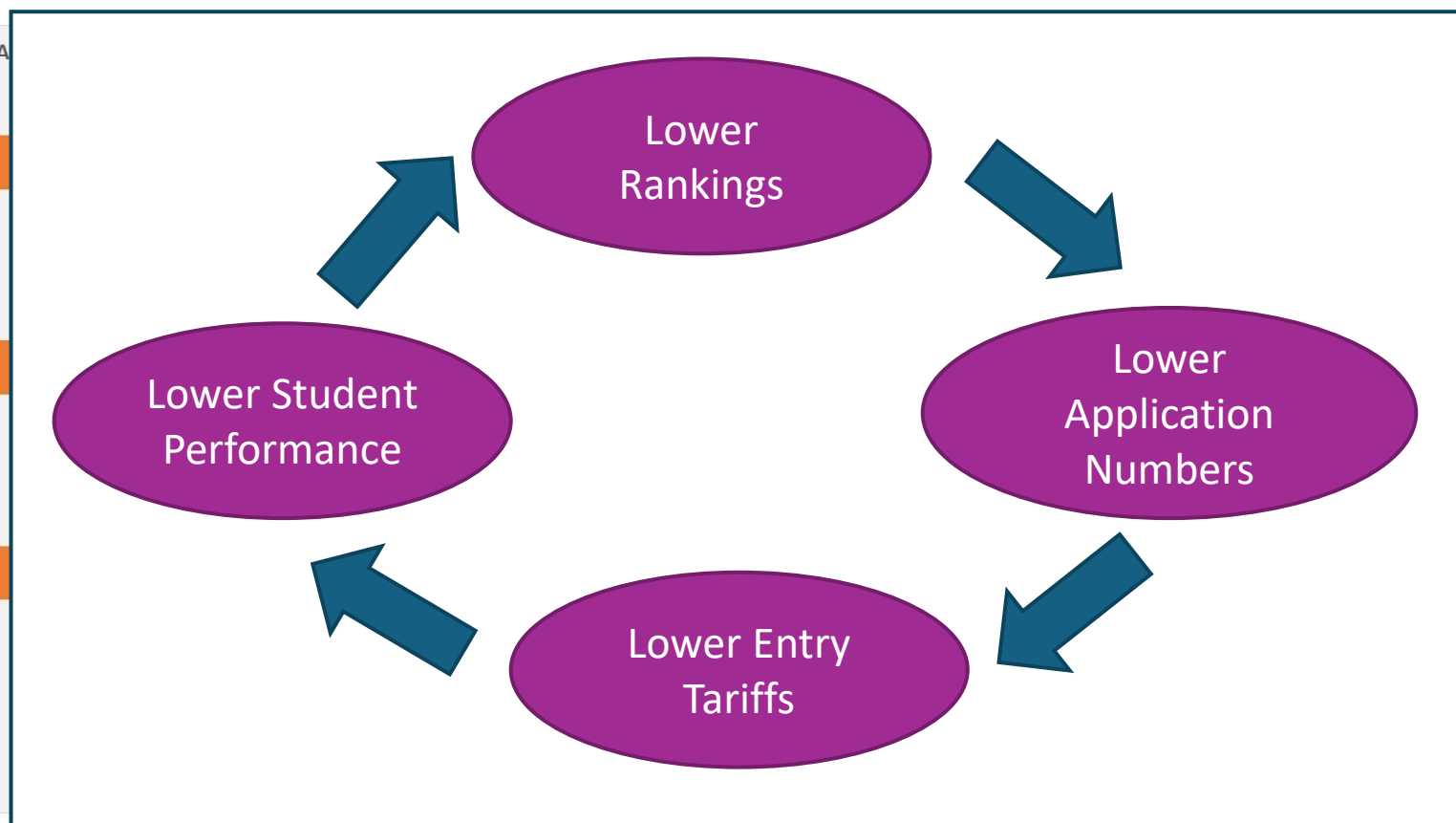
UNIVERSITY OF
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Outline

The Past: Early Journey from 2019

The Present (and Near Future)

~2019/20: The Early Education/Student Experience Issues- Falling Applications, Rankings and Mixed NSS Results => the Vicious Circle

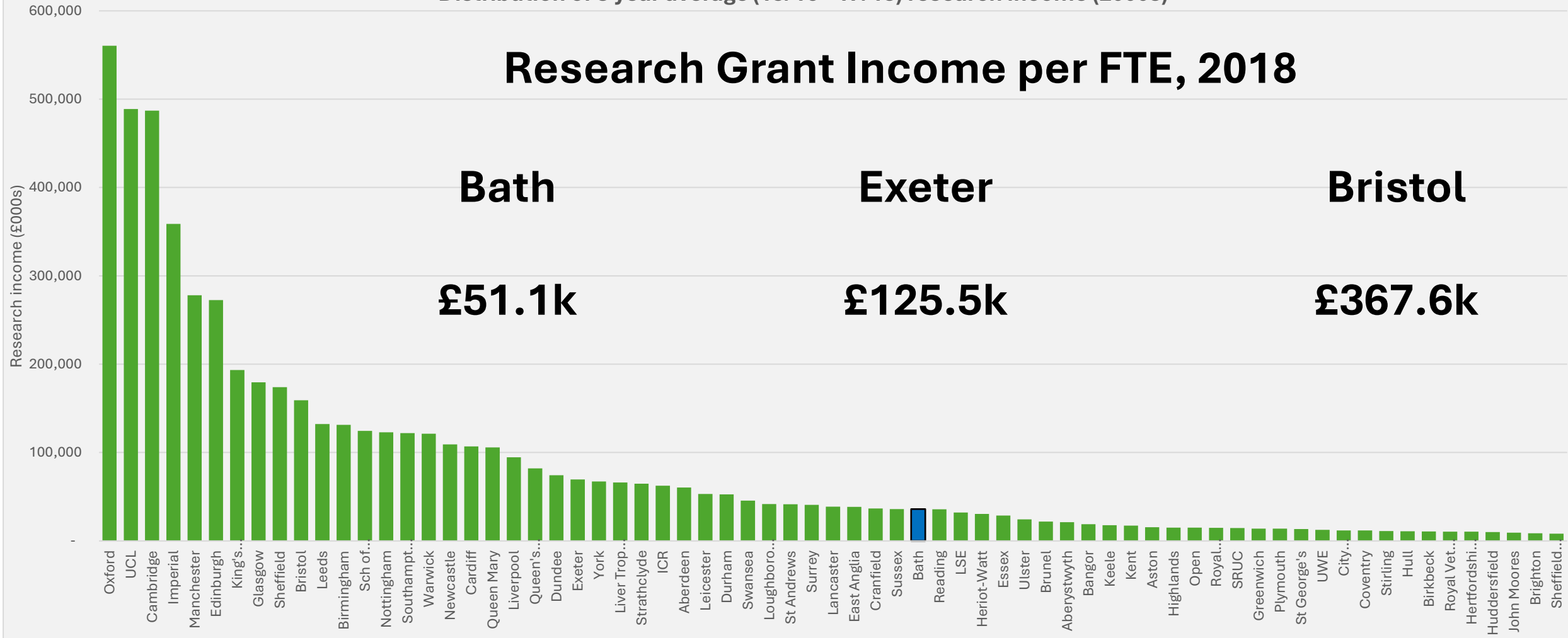


Bath		
Times	Complete	Guardian
62	63	57
12	11	12
5	5	4
10	10	
3	3	
		8
		5
24	12	
	37	
	59	
15		
77		
		28
		31
		95
44		30
	32	
	80	

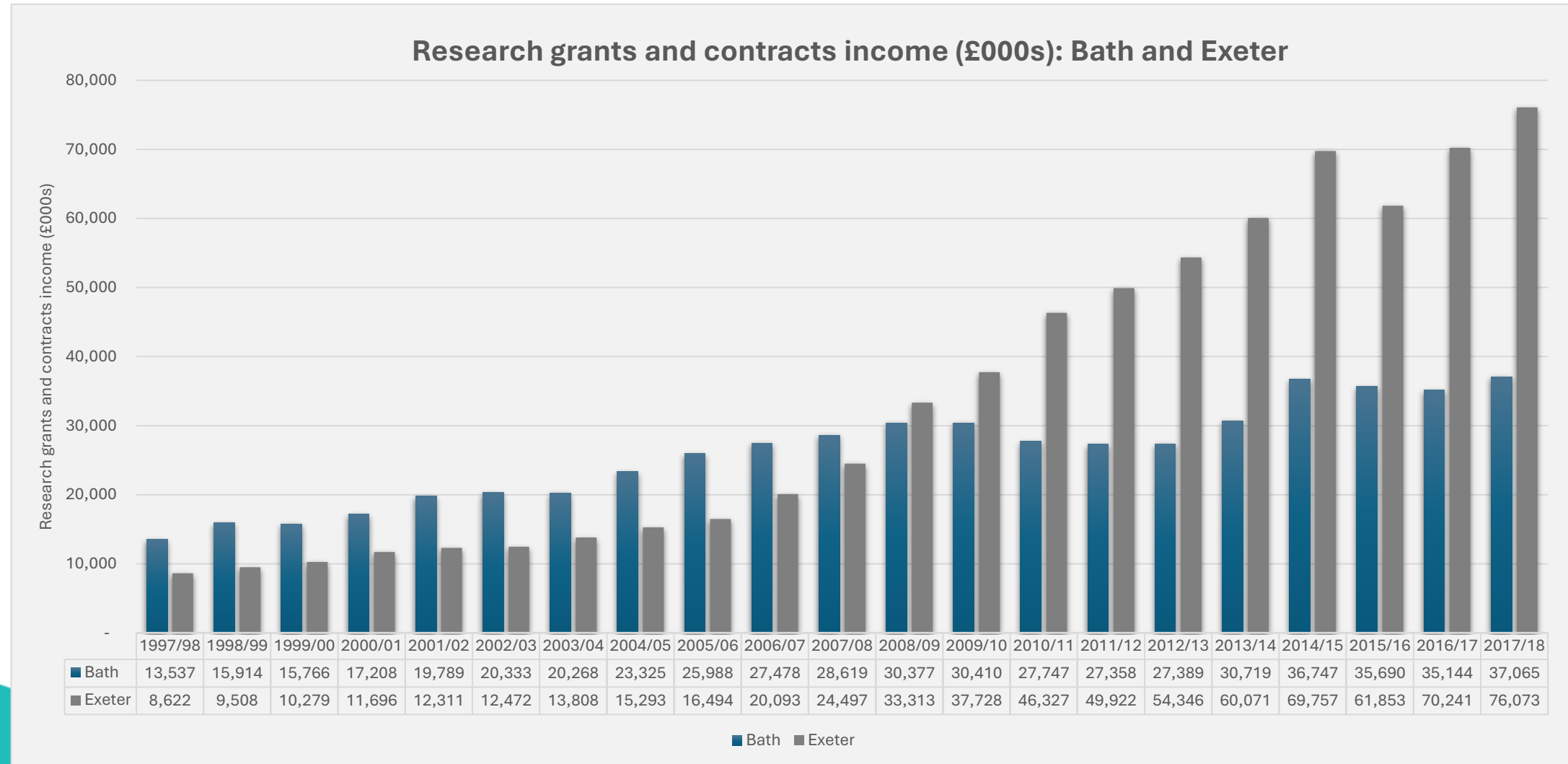
Early Research Issues: Research Grant Income

Distribution of 3 year average (15/16 - 17/18) research income (£000s)

Research Grant Income per FTE, 2018

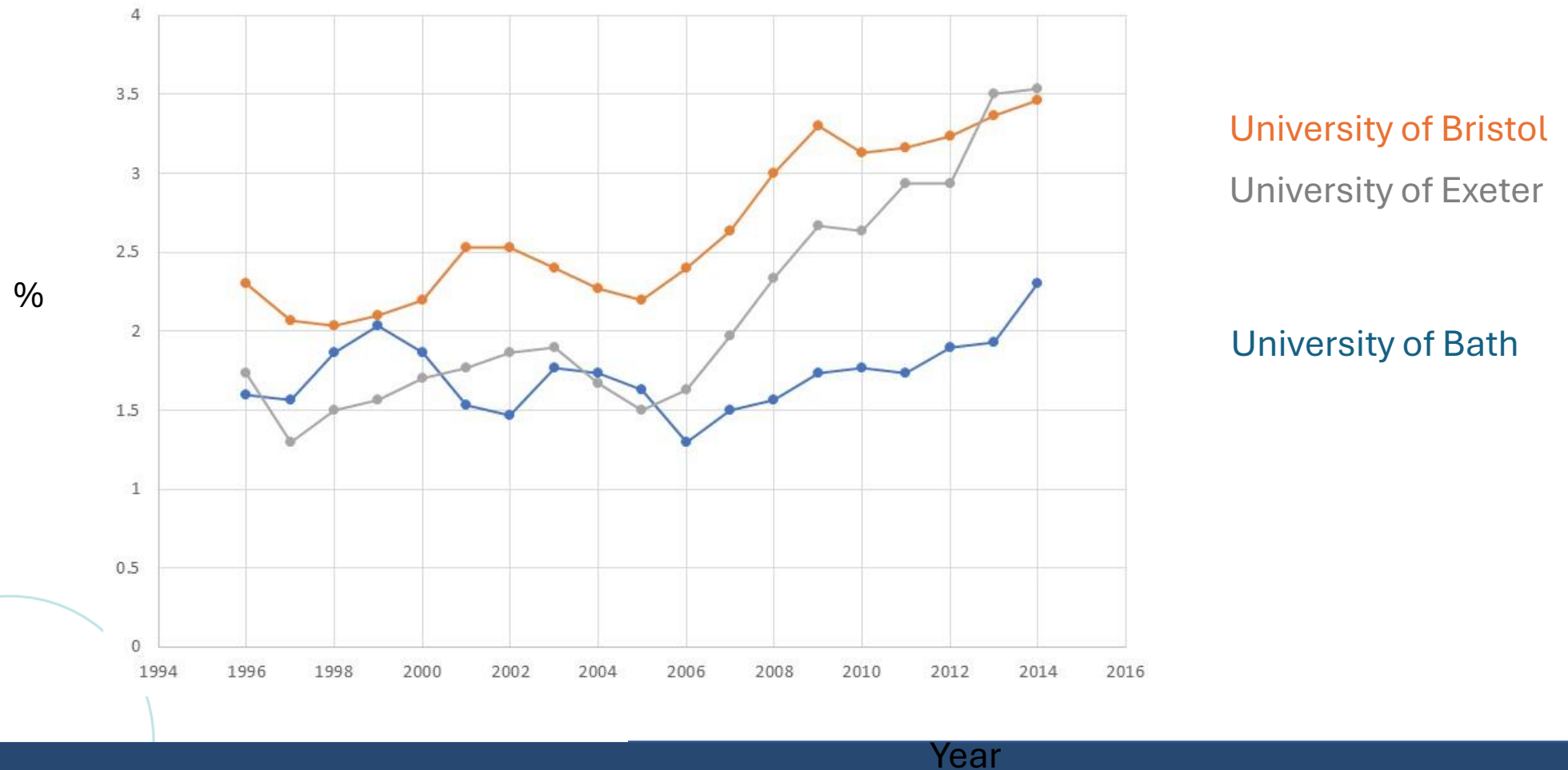


Early Research Issues: Research Grant Income



Early Research Issues: Research Outputs

Percentage of Output in Top 1% Citation Percentiles (field-weighted) (3 year average)



Our Rapid Response

Drill Down on NSS:

- Drive up student engagement
- Greater use of SSLCs to target areas of weakness
- Instigation of more regular pulse surveys (during pandemic)

Student Experience:

- Strengthen leadership and prioritise

Research:

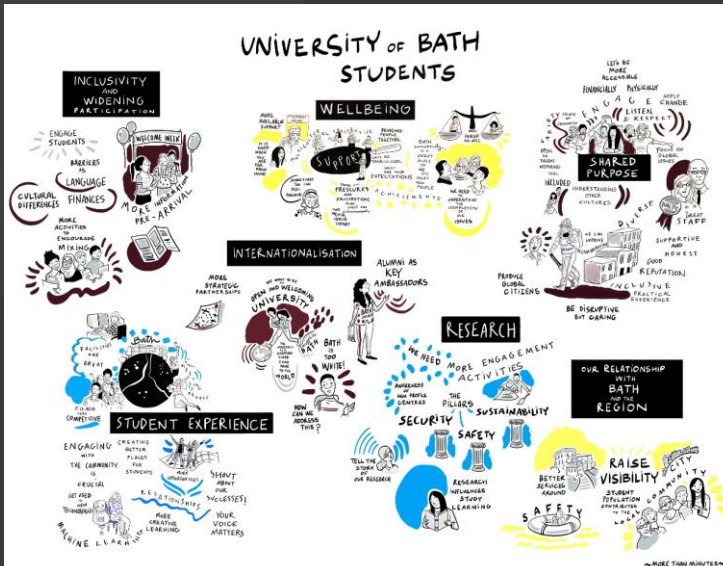
- Rebalance by driving scale (at high quality)

AND

Strengthening Community

University Strategy 2021-2026 – A Culture Change in Approach

Reminder: how we engaged



Six world café events, with 3,368 pieces of feedback

372 students and staff signed up to the cafés

5 weeks of gallery walk and 317 comment cards

1,422 survey responses and 1,420 visits to the microsite

Our University Strategy 2021-2026

Our Vision is to be an outstanding and inclusive University community, characterised by excellence in education, research, and innovation, working in partnership with others for the advancement of knowledge, in support of the global common good.

Our University Strategy 2021-2026

Our Values and how we work

Values are at the heart of our strategy for advancement, growth and impact, defining our characteristics as a community, namely:



Delivering quality and excellence, whilst being quick to listen and learn



Nurturing high aspirations, for the benefit of all



Aspiring to the highest standards of scientific, ethical and professional integrity, whilst supporting the freedom to challenge received wisdom



Supporting a sustainable community and adopting best environmental practice



Fostering inclusion, equality, diversity and accessibility where the unique value of each individual is recognised as we build a community of trust and care by treating each other with respect



Our University
Our Future:
Connected



UNIVERSITY OF
BATH

Our University Strategy 2021-2026

The Strategy expresses our ambitions across four key pillars:

Fostering an outstanding and inclusive community

Driving excellence in education

Driving high impact research

Enhancing strategic partnerships

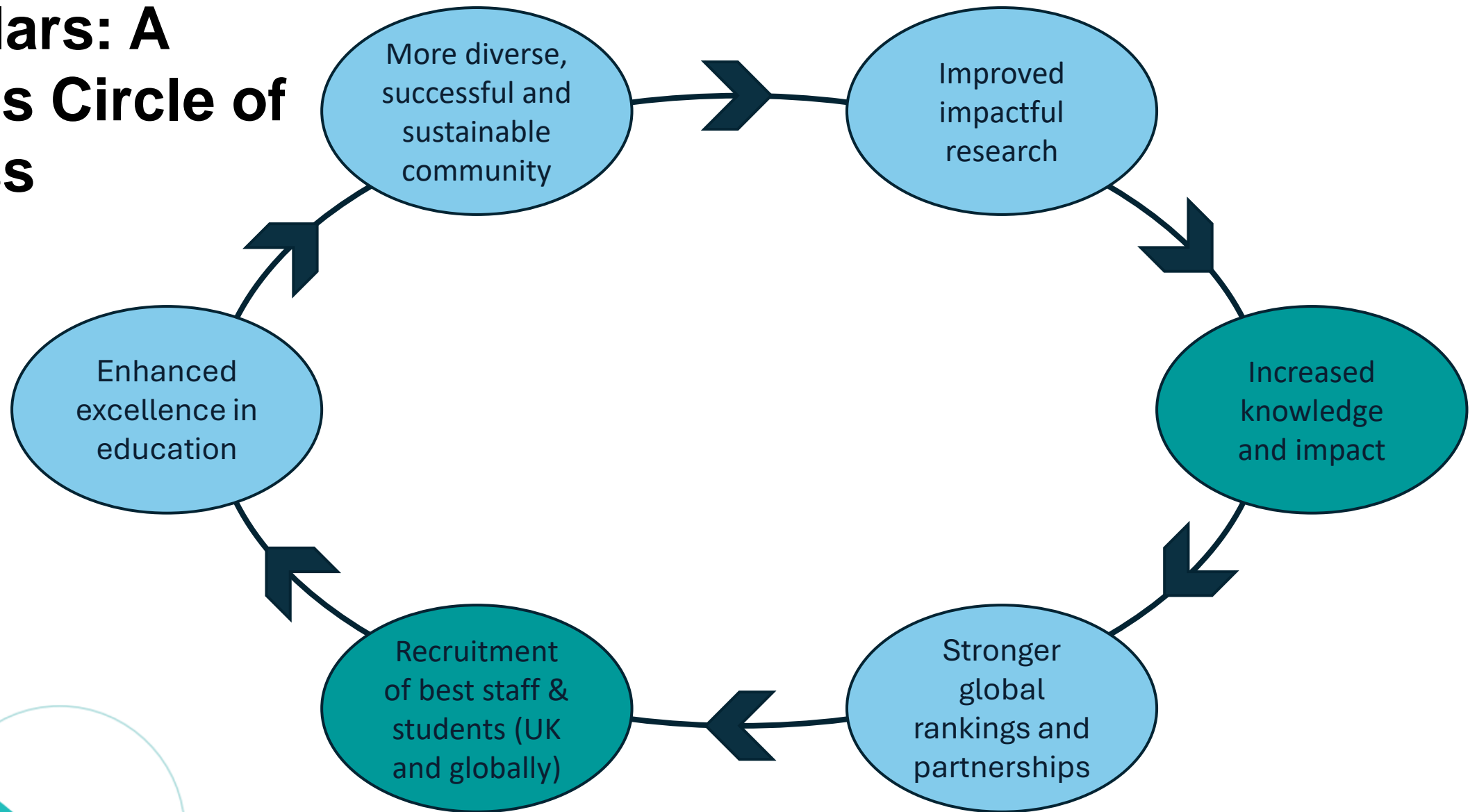


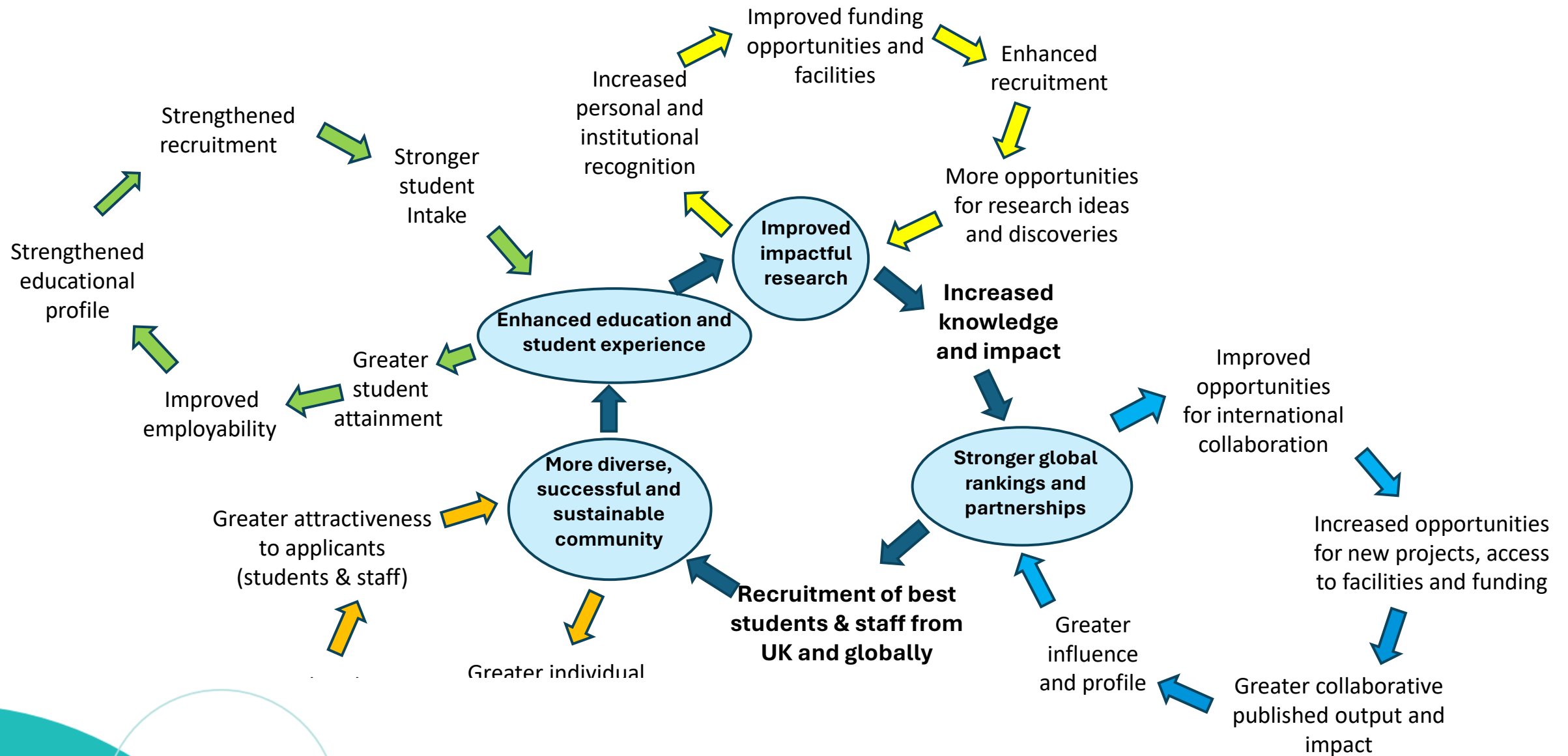
Our University
Our Future:
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The Pillars: A Virtuous Circle of Success





BUT Life was not to prove quite that straightforward

Our management focus was hoped to be on:

- Business as usual activities
- Targeted external (TEF, REF, KEF) and internal reviews and reordering
- Strategic planning

But in the Challenging Times: (Industrial Action, Buses, Chile/Hong Kong, Augar, Brexit, Pandemic, Regulatory Interventions, Cyber Attacks, Ukraine, Inflation, Cost of Living, National Security, Gaza, International Student Policies...)

- Business Continuity
- Dynamic Risk Management
- Emergency Management Responses

Fostering an outstanding and inclusive community



Excellent student satisfaction

- Dramatic growth of community activities since the pandemic

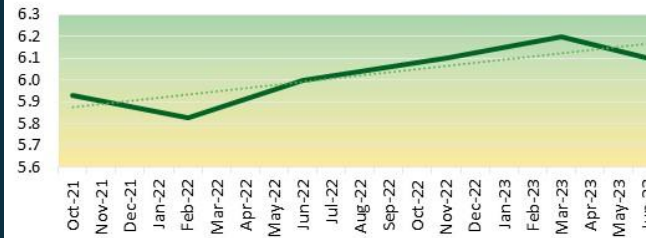


Clear improvement in staff engagement

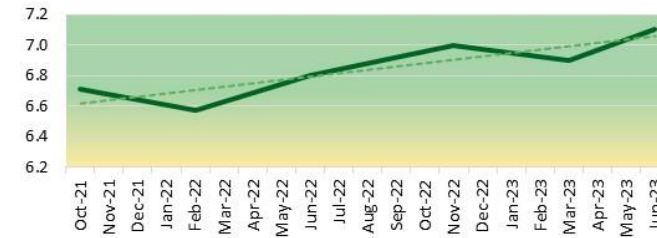
Complete set of Departmental Athena SWAN Awards



To what extent do you feel part of a community of staff and students?



To what extent do you feel proud to work for the University?



To what extent are you satisfied with your current work-life balance?



Engagement index



- Final 2026 goal reached already

Driving excellence in education

Excellent education, particularly in terms of satisfaction and progression



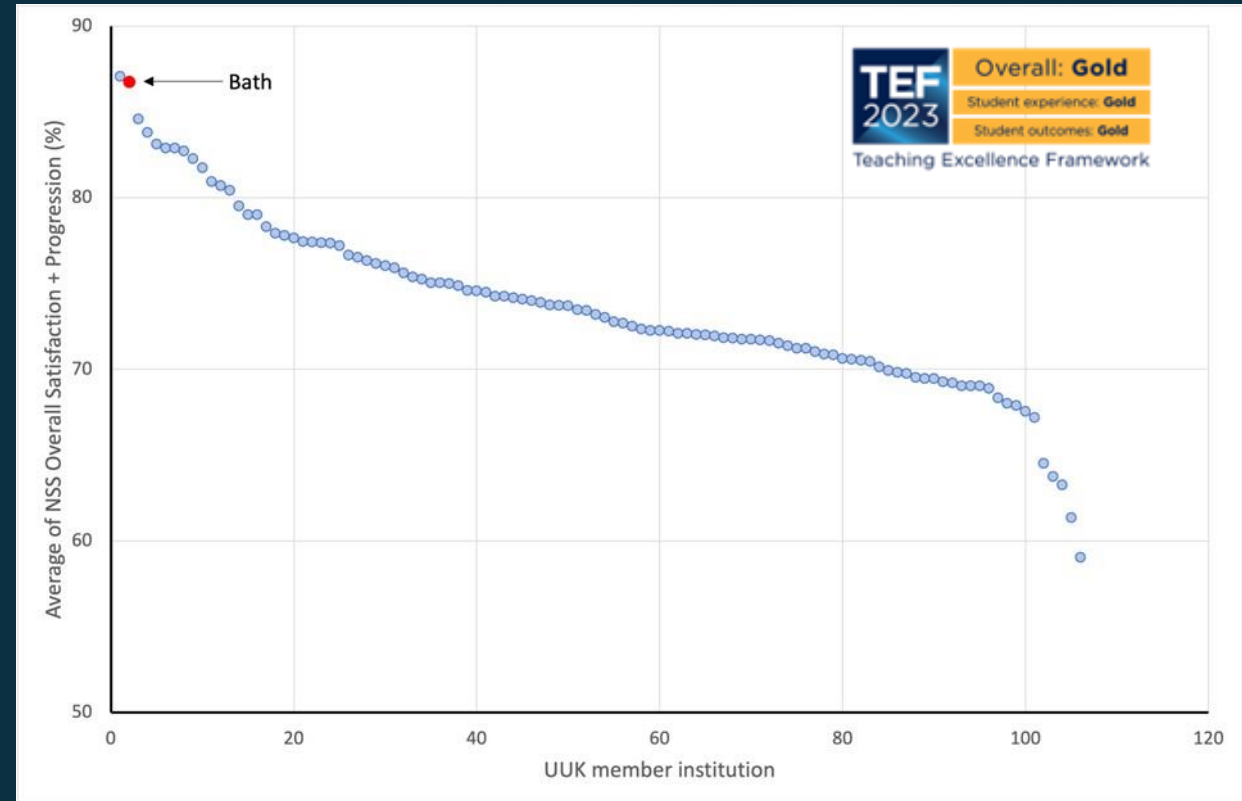
Complete
University
Guide



- ❖ 5th in the UK in CUG 2024
- ❖ 28 subjects in the top 10

UoB MPharm @ Plymouth

Curriculum Transformation rolling out



Letter quotations following the Times and Sunday Times award

"This is extremely great news for us all,... comforting
ambience for us to perform excellently and enhance our
students' Bath experience. More wins ahead...!"

"The news of the rankings is ... a true
testament to the focus and hard work of
all the executive and staff at the
University."

"The award is a vindication of
... keeping the standards up
throughout the pandemic."

"Many congratulations... wonderful to see the University at the
top of the table... back to where we should be!"

**"Well done indeed but on to greater things. It is vital to
our success to pursue the highest quality. No
compromise."**

Highlights: Student Successes



Clare Borradaile (MA Interpreting & Translating) – United Nations St Jerome Translation Contest



Nav Sawhney (MSc Humanitarianism, Conflict & Development graduate) – ‘Points of Light’ award from the Prime Minister

Thomas Finn (Mathematical Sciences PhD) – first Royal Statistical Society PhD Competition in Applied Probability winner

Sarah Warbis (PhD in Psychology) – Vitae 2023 Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition winner

Team Bath Heart – winners of the grand final of the first-ever Heart Hackathon (October 2023)



Exceptional Distinctive Graduates – THIS REALLY IS BATH'S USP IN EDUCATION

Well taught -
ambitious achievements

Team Bath Heart, Bath Hydrogen, Bath University
Model United Nations

Well qualified -
prestigious degrees

Daily Mail University of the Year for Graduate
Employment 2024

Well experienced -
applied knowledge

Excellent Placement Engagement - >60% involved

Well rounded -
holistic development

2000 significantly involved in Arts, 10000 heavily involved
in Sports with record levels of achievement

Well grounded -
appreciating community

Strong recovery of societies and charitable activities



Highlights: Sporting Successes

- Tokyo 2020: **21 medals – 11 of them gold** for UoB-based athletes
- **286 major international medals** since July 2021
- Bill Whiteley Sporting Scholar **Kate Shortman** and **Izzy Thorpe** won GB's first-ever World Duet medals (2024 World Aquatics Championships)
- Double Olympic Champion and sporting scholar **Tom Dean** is Team England's most decorated athlete ever at a Commonwealth Games (7 medals)
- Outstanding **SU sports success** – regularly ranked in BUCS top 6
- UoB, with Pentathlon GB, UK Sport and B&NES Council, hosted the **UIPM Modern Pentathlon and Laser Run World Championships** in August 2023
- Bath and Edinburgh have been awarded a new **International Olympic Committee Research Centre**



Driving high impact research

Strong growth in REF power (8th of post-92s)
- Leading to strong rise in QR funding

Very strong growth in research awards
- Led by large grants/beacons/institutes



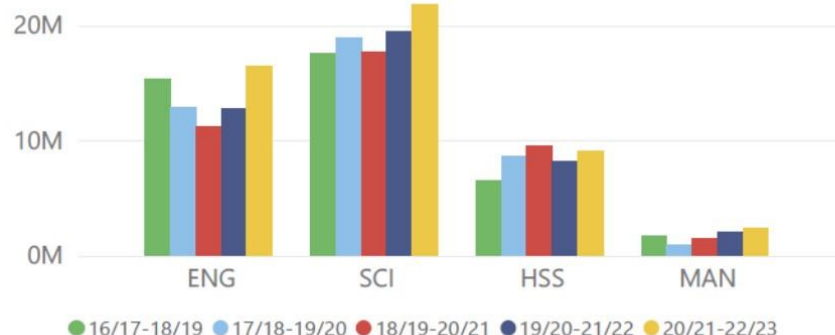
16th out of 100 in 2023



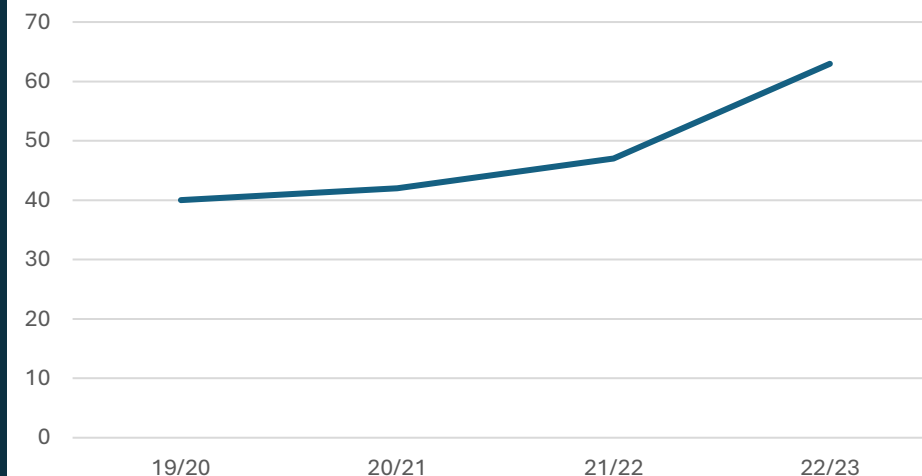
5th in the UK in CUG 2024
28 subjects in the top 10

University Research awards - £63M (c.f. £40M, £42M, £48M previously)!

Research Awards 3 Year Rolling Average



Research Awards £M



Importance of building critical mass of excellence in research:

- Research portfolio increased by over £10 million during 2022/23
- Portfolio value = £185,226,088 (Jan 2024)
- Significant funding bids:
 - ✓ £13.7 million EPSRC grant to lead UK-HyRES
 - ✓ Three prestigious EPSRC Prosperity Partnership grants (combined value over £19 million)
 - ✓ £12 million project on revolutionising food production
 - ✓ £13 million for a new Centre of Excellence in Water-Based Early Warning Systems for health protection – WBE@Bath
- Bath Beacons thriving – some developing into Institutes or Research Centres



Enhancing strategic partnerships

Summary of Partnership Strategy

Partnership Category	Centrally-Managed	Specialist-Centre-level led	Led by Individuals/Small Groups	Advance in 2019?	Advance now
Local	Mixed Relationship iSTART, SCP	Significant in places - STV	Significant Engagement	Yes	Yes
Regional	Moderately engaged Strengths - GW4	Clear examples - IAAPS	Less awareness	Yes	Yes
National	Modest	Opportunities - IAAPS/loC	Individuals in clear roles	No	Yes
International	Modest	Unclear	Non-Strategic engagement	No	Yes cautiously (Horizon? Geopolitics)

Enhancing strategic partnerships

Transformation in local engagement and trust



"...have made such a positive difference to working relationships across the city and wider area.....

"the University [is] on a positive path and strengthened its position as a cornerstone of our community. This has had an impact far beyond your campus.

...the University in a very strong position and from an external interested party's point of view, you have restored the University to the position of a trusted partner.... The university is an extremely powerful force in the economy of the region and the UK

"I can see a much closer relationship between the city and the university, in recent years, ... the barriers are down and the people of Somerset now see themselves as the home of one of the most prestigious universities in our country which is, now, available to them.

Restoration of relations internationally with alumni – 50% increase in endowment this year!

Strong national leadership being shown in large grants, networks and corporate partnerships



Clear international recognition leading to new partnership opportunities



- ❖ 148th in QS World University Rankings 2024 (top 10% of universities globally)
- ❖ Top 100 in the QS Graduate Employability Rankings



Major Research & Innovation Partnerships



GW-Shift – UoB leading a new £2.5 million project to develop a supercluster of hydrogen expertise (with Exeter, Bristol, Cardiff, Swansea, South Wales and Plymouth as well as civic organisations and industry partners)



Major partnership with GKN in aerospace applications for hydrogen



UoB was the official partner for the ESRC's Festival of Social Science (Oct–Nov 2023)



FWD project (formerly ISTART) with Bath Spa, Bath College and B&NES has recruited its first Health businesses into its accelerator (UoB Innovation Centre)



70% increase in student entrepreneurial activities in the past two years

Outline

The Past: Early Journey from 2019

The Present (and Near Future)

20,311 students, with 32% from outside the UK, representing **153** nationalities

- **14,481** undergraduates
- **5,830** postgraduates

Approximately **62%** of graduates in 2021/22 completed a placement or study year abroad

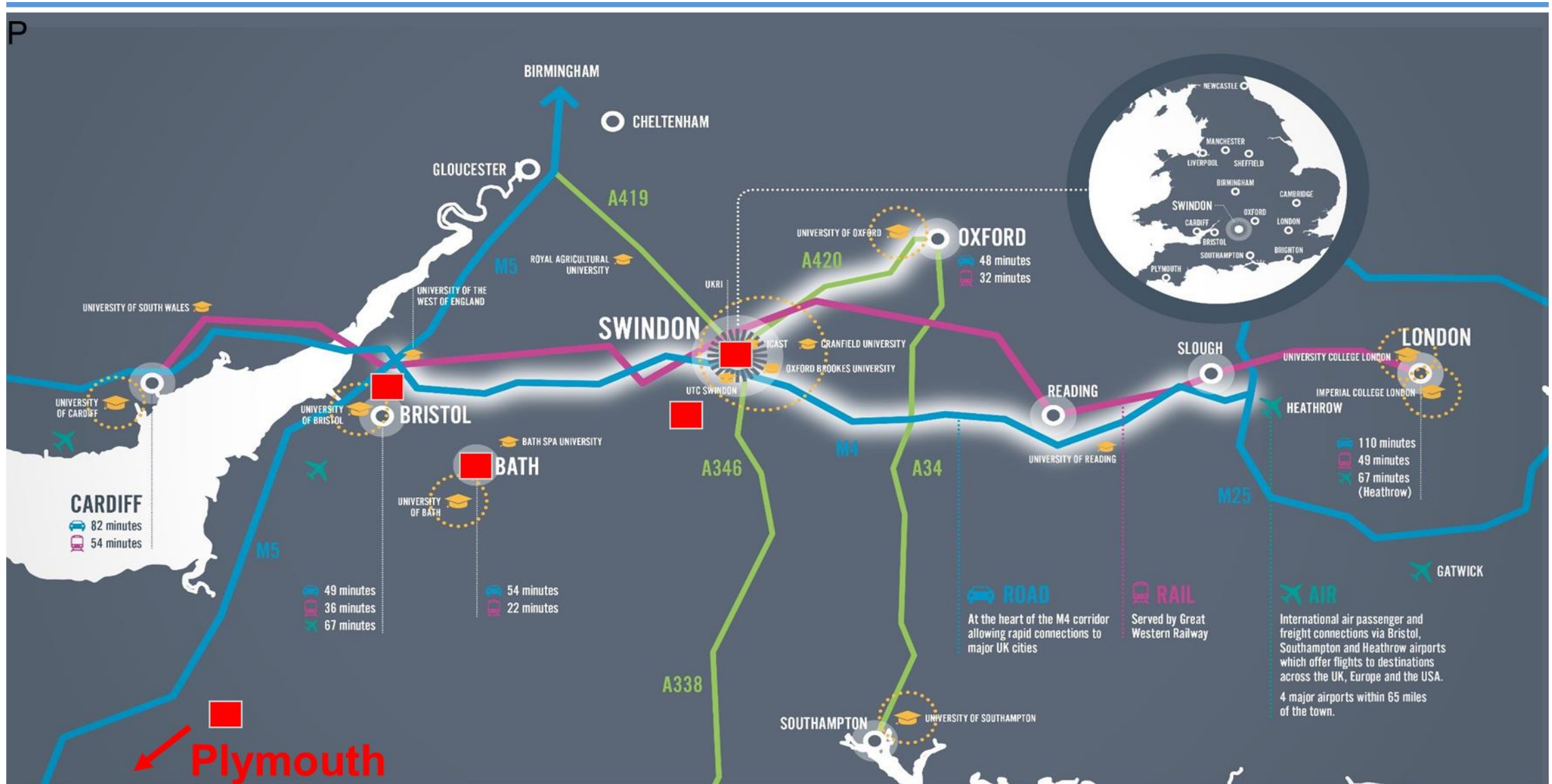
92.5% of our full-time UK-based graduates were in high-skilled employment 15 months after leaving university (median figure is 73.6% for University UK members)

Over **150,000** alumni living and working in more than **170** countries around the world

Over **3,500** members of staff representing **87** nationalities



University of Bath Sites

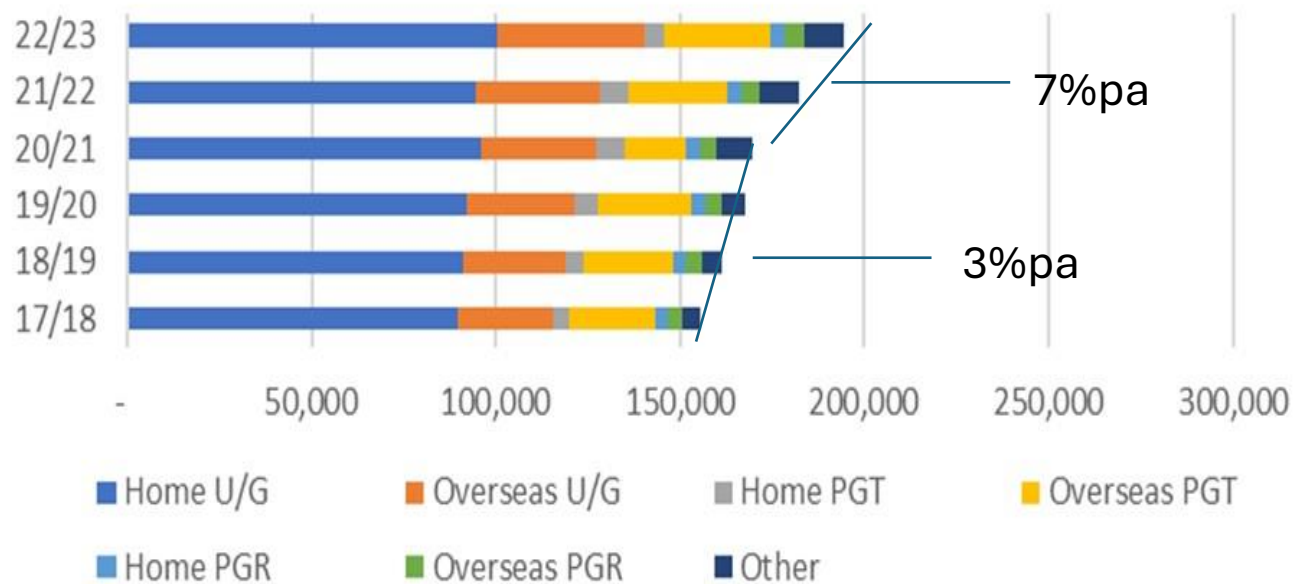


Future Ambition Civic Agreement

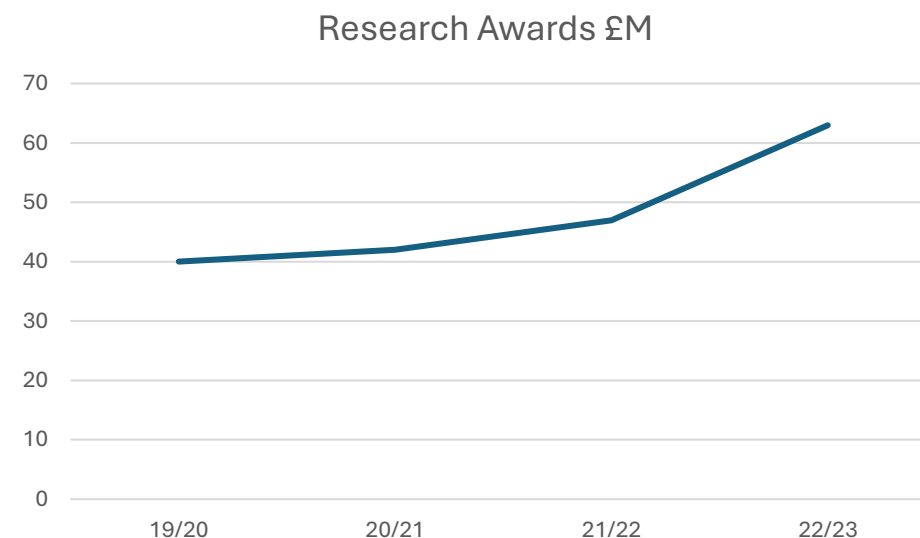
The *Future Ambition Civic Agreement* forms a partnership between the University of Bath, Bath Spa University, Bath & North East Somerset Council and Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust. This agreement is a statement of intent which formalises the collaborative work established during Covid-19, with the Future Ambition Board as the delivery mechanism.



Educational Income – Dominant Source of Core Income



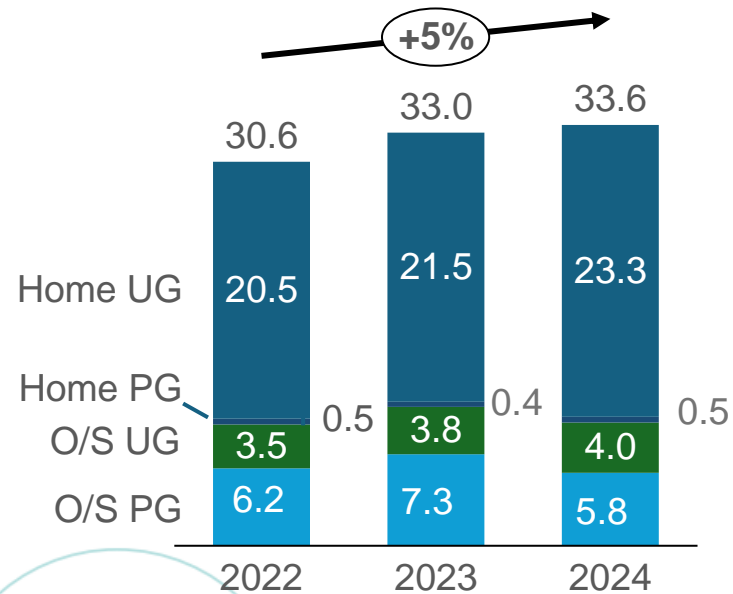
**So What Now? – III:
Recognise that strong
action taken in recent
years to increase income**



Sustainability has been key to our decisions

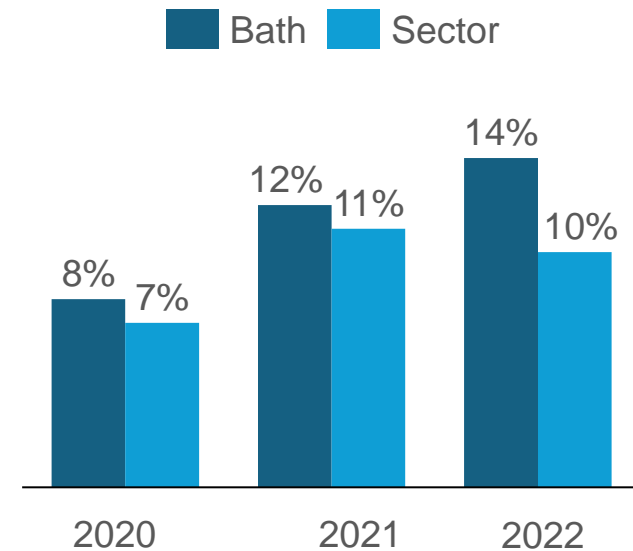
CONTINUING APPLICATION GROWTH

Bath Applications ('000),
as at 6 Feb, 2022-2024



STRONG FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Net Cash Inflow from
Operating Activities
(% Income), Bath vs. Sector



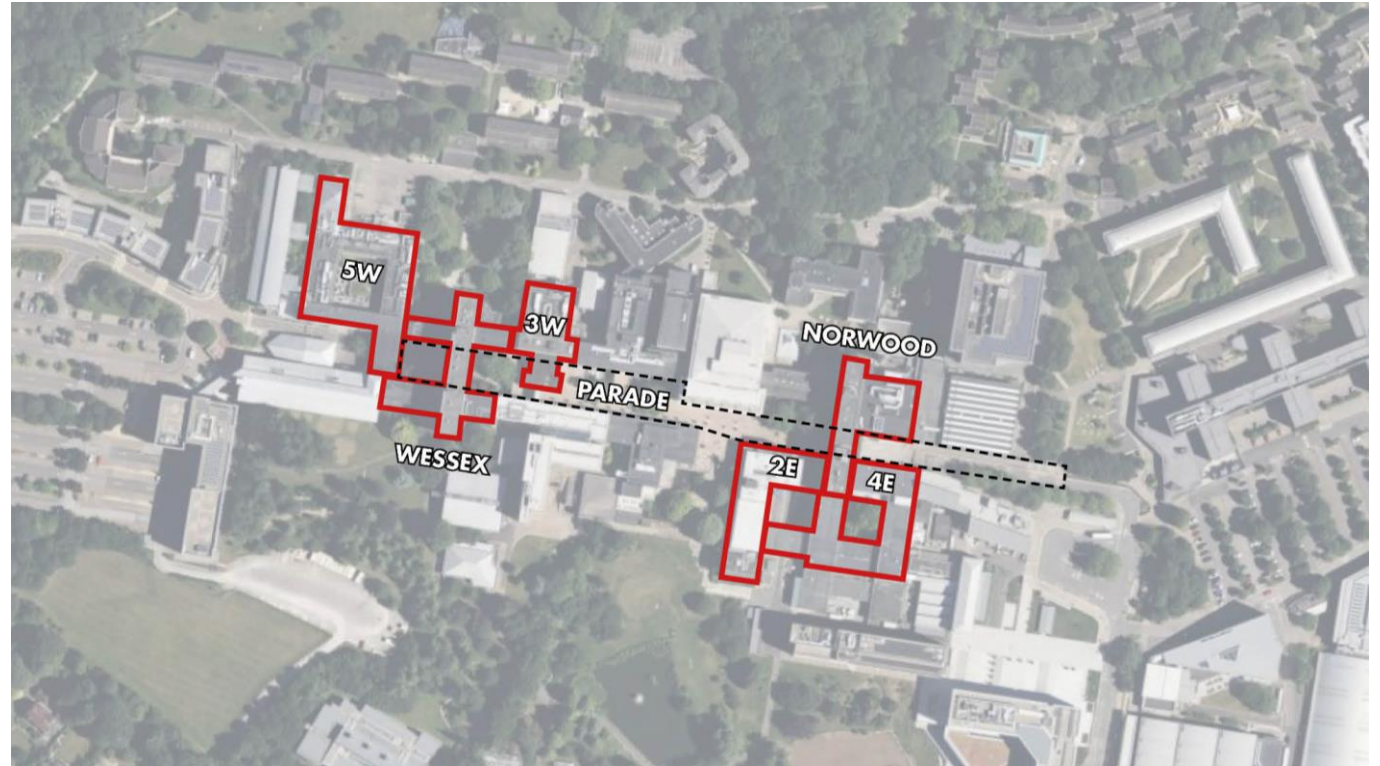
What about Campus?

– Need to catch-up on Maintenance and address End-of-Life issues

Chapter 1 provides a high-level assessment of 6 high risk buildings on the University of Bath Claverton campus.

1. Norwood House,
2. Wessex House
3. 4 East
4. 2 East
5. 5 West
6. 3 West

The building assessments focus on keeping the facilities in safe operation for a period of 15 years and do not target any improvements on the current arrangements. The focus is on health and safety / legislation compliance alongside water tightness.



Rankings and Reputation

International and National Rankings



- ❖ 5th in the UK in CUG 2024
- ❖ 28 subjects in the top 10



- ❖ 148th in QS World University Rankings 2024 (top 10% of unis globally)
- ❖ Top 100 in the QS Graduate Employability Rankings 2022
- ❖ Top 100 in QS Sustainability Rankings 2024

- ❖ The Times & Sunday Times 'University of the Year 2023'
- ❖ 8th overall for 2024
- ❖ Top university in the South West
- ❖ 15 subjects in the top 10



- ❖ Daily Mail 'University of the Year 2024 for Graduate Jobs'



- ❖ 6th in the UK in The Guardian University Guide 2024
- ❖ 10 subjects in the top 5



- ❖ 1st in England and 3rd in UK (of comparative universities e.g. those listed in Guardian/Times)



Research England Knowledge exchange framework

KEF 2

- ❖ Top quintile for two of the seven perspectives ("IP and Commercialisation" and "Working with business") and in the second-top quintile for a further 3



- ❖ 2 Queen's Anniversary Prizes

REF2021 Research Excellence Framework

- ❖ 92% of our research rated as 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent'

Thank you



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