



University of Brighton



**EDUCATION AND
THE STUDENT
EXPERIENCE
STRATEGIC PLAN**

2017-2021

FOREWORD



The University Strategy 'Practical Wisdom' puts 'Students at the heart of everything we do'. It recognises the huge opportunity we have in higher education to have a lasting impact – through our students and graduates – on our disciplines, our professions, our local community and society.

At Brighton we will encourage and support all students, irrespective of background, to be curious, think differently, experiment, research, challenge, and develop new ideas and approaches – characteristics which will give them the confidence to be successful and make a difference as active citizens and creative members of society. Our programmes will continue to evolve, harnessing the academic and professional strengths of Schools and staff at the forefront of their disciplines to deliver leading educational opportunities. Through the implementation of our strategy we will create with our students and staff a learning and living environment that will truly realise potential and shape futures.

In embarking on this education and student experience strategy, we build on strong academic and professional support foundations. The deliberate steps we have taken to deliver consistency in our assessment and quality processes, and the framework we are implementing for curriculum design, are direct responses to student and staff feedback and will support our education priorities. Planned governance changes will further strengthen and broaden this work through the newly created Education and Student Experience Committee.

The University's reputation and popularity will be built on strong partnerships with our students, creating increasingly personalised and student-centred learning and living experiences. With this understanding comes a confidence to innovate and experiment to create an enriching educational journey where our students will explore new knowledge and practice, experience interdependent learning, and be confident to push their personal development further.

This education and student experience strategic plan provides a framework and direction for Schools, Professional Services and the wider University community. Our staff are key to ensuring an excellent student experience; working together, our collective talent and energy will secure a sector-leading learning and living environment of which we can all be proud.

Stephen Denyer
Pro Vice Chancellor (Education and the Student Experience).

INTRODUCTION

The University of Brighton, with its roots in a distinctive and vibrant city, is a dynamic, diverse and creative community, built on a rich heritage of practice-based education and research. It delivers excellent, accessible educational opportunities to the broadest possible constituency, drawing on strong professional, social and community partnerships.

We are also an international university, drawing our students and staff from across the world, and shaping all experiences through our culturally-diverse community, international partnerships and student and staff exchange arrangements, curriculum design and research connections.

As our contemporary world develops, new skills are needed, disciplinary boundaries are shifting and becoming blurred, established careers and professions are changing, and success now demands the ability to anticipate and adapt. As an engaged university and a member of the University Alliance group of technical and professional universities, we are well placed to evaluate and interpret these changes, and to translate them into a dynamic and meaningful educational experience that equips our students to be independent learners, entrepreneurial and connected global citizens able to shape their future lives and careers with confidence.

The national context for higher education is changing rapidly and dramatically. The student educational experience and outcomes have been placed centre stage with a clear emphasis on better information to enable student choice, with surveys such as the National Student Satisfaction (NSS) Survey as important drivers of change. The introduction of a new model for quality assurance and enhancement as a gateway to the Teaching Excellence Framework explicitly links reputation and quality. At the same time, the student body is increasingly diverse as a wider range of people from increasingly varied backgrounds engage with higher education.

Whilst we celebrate the emphasis on teaching excellence, we also understand that educational and life experiences at University are often closely linked, and at Brighton we aim for them to be beneficially reinforcing. This brings with it significant responsibilities to understand and enhance those characteristics which lead to the best educational experience for our students. This strategic plan, built on a new University strategy which places students at the heart of everything we do, sets out the distinctive way by which we intend to achieve this.



GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

Successful Brighton graduates will need to stand out to secure the careers they aspire to: employers are looking for candidates who are highly engaged and have developed a rounded set of skills, experiences, abilities and ambitions. We aim to foster a culture of independent learning, critical thinking and enterprise, in which students are supported to become active and autonomous learners, articulate, creative, intellectually curious, self-aware and self-motivated.

Specifically, Brighton graduates will be:

- respectful and responsible citizens, with a global awareness and a commitment to ethical behaviours;
- capable communicators, establishing productive relationships and networks;
- effective team players, able to provide leadership and to encourage the development of others;
- creative and enterprising thinkers, accustomed to problem solving, researching and implementing ideas;
- able to work confidently in a range of environments and new situations by being organised, evaluative, adaptable and self-aware;
- proactive in identifying and addressing personal development needs, making realistic and informed career choices.

We will enable our students to acquire these attributes through their participation in stretching and challenging programmes and unique development opportunities. Our postgraduate students, building on research and prior experiences, will be supported to realise their leadership ambitions. In this complex and changing world the universal relevance of our core values of inclusivity, sustainability, creativity and partnership become even more important, values which we will actively encourage in our students and graduates.

It is our hope and expectation that, armed with these attributes and characteristics, our graduates will not only succeed in their chosen careers but will also be prepared more broadly for their future.

Here's what some of our alumni say about us.



The teaching is exemplary, especially due to the staffs firsthand experience, and the atmosphere perfect for developing new talent.

GREG ROSE, SPORTS JOURNALISM GRADUATE -
HEAD OF CONTENT, VIRGIN GROUP



Brighton was a life-changing experience for me: I felt so ready and excited to become a teacher by the time I finished the course.

STEPHEN FEENEY, PRIMARY EDUCATION
(5-11 YEARS) GRADUATE - TEACHER



The University of Brighton is perfect for creating entrepreneurs as it pushes you to voice your own opinions and focuses you towards learning about your passions.

EVAN MACKRILL, SPORTS PRODUCT DESIGN
WITH PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE GRADUATE -
FOUNDER AND CEO, CROWN HOCKEY



My experience at the University of Brighton made me confident, ambitious, self-assured and passionate about addressing inequality.

SARAH DICKINSON, SOCIAL SCIENCE GRADUATE -
HEAD OF EQUALITY CHARTERS, ATHENA SWAN



I had the opportunity to be part of a university that always helps people set themselves up superbly for careers beyond their studies.

CHRIS SHAMROCK, SPORTS SCIENCE BSC(HONS)
AND SPORTS PSYCHOLOGY PHD - DIRECTOR
K2 PERFORMANCE SYSTEMS AND TEAM
PSYCHOLOGIST FOR GB ROWING



The University of Brighton gave me amazing practical experience and the drive to be a dedicated and enthusiastic nurse.

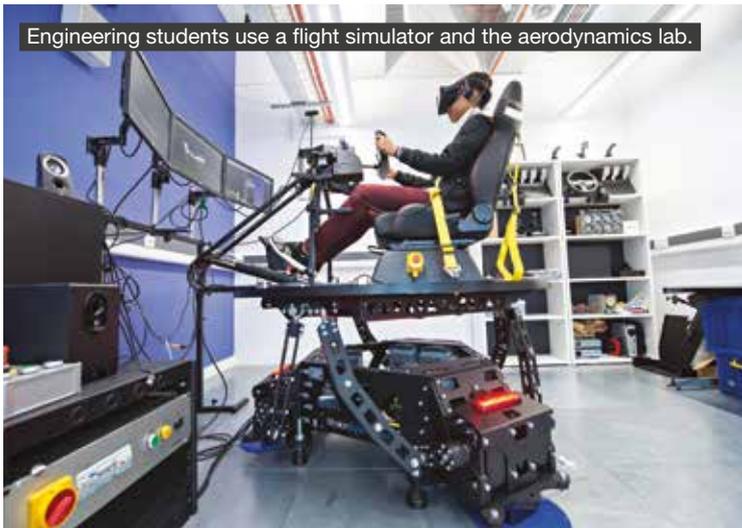
KATIE LEDGER, ADULT NURSING GRADUATE -
STAFF NURSE, ROYAL SUSSEX COUNTY HOSPITAL

PRINCIPLES

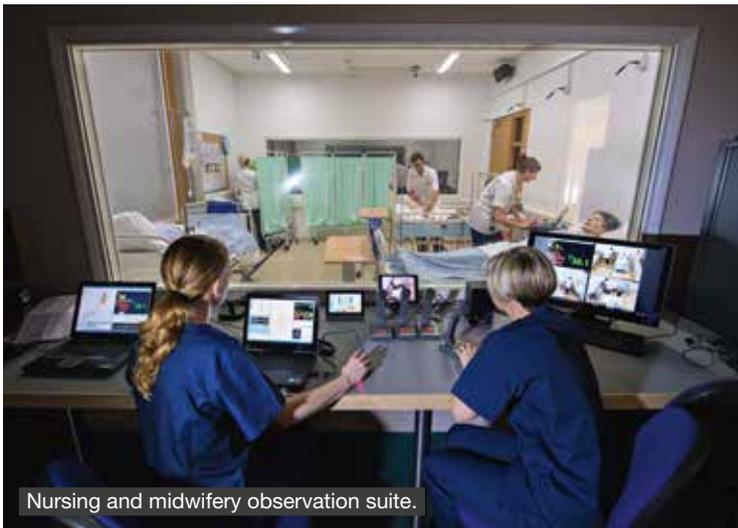
Our students are at the heart of everything we do. Together, our staff and students create a diverse and inclusive community which enables our students to realise their potential, flourish as individuals in their time with us and go on to make a positive contribution in their future world.

- We will invest in and provide a range of programmes that offer innovative and flexible structures and ways of learning, designed to meet the needs of our diverse and international student population and helping all to succeed.
- Our students will be challenged to become creators and knowledge makers by curricula informed by professions, practitioners, experts and employers.
- We will actively involve our students, listening to what they say about their experience while working with them and the Students' Union to co-develop what we do.
- We will all be part of a learning community built on mutual respect amongst students and staff. It will be supported by a physical and digital environment designed to focus on our students and how they choose to learn and live.
- We will actively support our students throughout their time with us, providing opportunities for connected peer, academic and professional support through clear and evident pastoral care arrangements.
- Teaching excellence will have parity with research excellence as a professional practice the institution values.
- We will engage with, and influence, sector developments in educational practice, and establish a reputation for enhancing student achievements through a distinctive and inclusive experience.

Engineering students use a flight simulator and the aerodynamics lab.



Nursing and midwifery observation suite.



Digital Music and Sound Arts students have access to specialist equipment and facilities.



Biomedical science students gain practical experience in the histopathology lab.



Sport and exercise scientists use the Bod Pod to determine body composition.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

OBJECTIVE 1: DESTINATION OF CHOICE

To extend our attractiveness as an inclusive university offering comprehensive future-defining educational opportunities to all who have the ability and curiosity to benefit.

ACTIONS

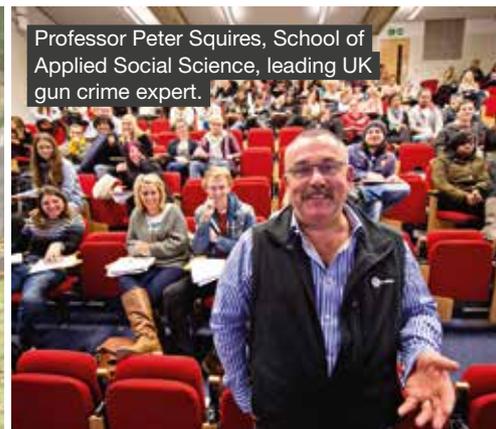
We will achieve this by the following actions:

- review our programme portfolio regularly to ensure it reflects future needs, discipline and professional developments, subject relevance and currency of practice;
- raise educational expectations and opportunities, through outreach partnerships with schools, our academies, colleges and employers;
- provide defined progression pathways to the University, productively engaging with colleges and employers in the region, particularly in relation to Degree Apprenticeships;
- welcome our students into an international community which broadens personal and cultural horizons and celebrates difference.

Dr Dawn Scott, School of Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Sciences, regular contributor to BBC TV natural history programming.



Professor Peter Squires, School of Applied Social Science, leading UK gun crime expert.



Alice Fox, School of Arts, Times Higher Education Excellence and Innovation in the Arts award winner.



OBJECTIVE 2: ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION

To design flexible, exciting provision offering enquiry-led, application-focused, learning with embedded opportunities for active participation in research at all levels.

ACTIONS

We will achieve this by the following actions:

- establish modern degree apprenticeship routes at the leading edge of employer and subject expectations;
- curricula co-constructed, where appropriate, through association or partnership with potential employers, practitioners, students, alumni and professional bodies to ensure relevance and currency;
- provide an inclusive, coherent and progressive framework for learning, where students are welcomed and supported in their transition into, and passage through, higher education facilitated by accessible curriculum arrangements;
- inspire students through intellectually and practically challenging programmes of study, which are informed by leading-edge practice, interdisciplinary perspectives, research and scholarship and where a direct authentic experience of research is embedded from the earliest levels of study;
- progressively expose our students to world-leading ideas which challenge accustomed thinking;
- develop explicit routes of progression into postgraduate studies and research from all of our undergraduate programmes.

EDUCATION AND THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE
STRATEGIC PLAN 2017–2021

**OBJECTIVE 3:
LEARNING FOR
PURPOSEFUL
APPLICATION**

To ensure that all students can develop employability and enterprise skills within their programmes of study, with access to further curricular and extracurricular opportunities to apply and develop what they have learned.

ACTIONS

We will achieve this by the following actions:

- ensure every student has the opportunity to participate in employability-enhancing activities such as work experience, placements, live briefs, research, volunteering and public exhibitions and demonstrations;
- encourage development of a wider cultural and global awareness through the use of globally-relevant course materials or opportunities for study abroad, working or volunteering in relevant communities;
- development of skills through extracurricular work, community and recreational activities which will be encouraged and appropriately recognised and integrated into the learning experience;
- build on an established enterprise support scheme, every student will have the opportunity to develop their ideas, establish a business or social enterprise, or participate in an authentic enterprise experience;
- all postgraduate research students will have access to a researcher development programme that includes placement and internship opportunities where appropriate;
- postgraduate provision will develop new flexible specialist and continuing professional development opportunities responsive to changing workforce needs.

**OBJECTIVE 4:
ENHANCING STUDENT
OPPORTUNITIES
THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS**

To build and maintain strong and sustainable partnerships which offer new opportunities and experiences for students and applicants.

ACTIONS

We will achieve this by the following actions:

- in partnership with the Students' Union, offering a rich seam of community, social and recreational/sporting opportunities for personal development contributing to the holistic education and learning experience the University provides;
- extend Further Education College partnerships to establish a local educational infrastructure intended to facilitate progression and one-stop connections with employers, particularly in developing a suite of apprenticeships;
- through strategic international partnerships, develop exchange and UK study opportunities for international students;
- ensure the highest possible quality and standards in all our collaborative activities.



Experimental river basin simulates processes occurring in river, coastal and estuarine environments.



3D Design and Craft students using the raku firing kiln.



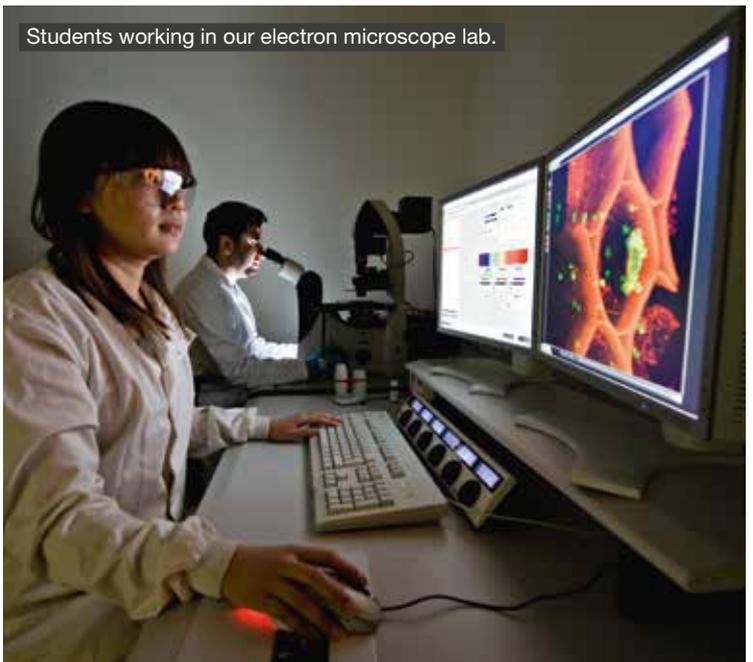
The Faro laser scanner extracts digital information from a physical object to create a computer model.



Brighton Business School trading room.



Creative writing workshop at contemporary art gallery Fabrica in Brighton.



Students working in our electron microscope lab.

OBJECTIVE 5: LISTENING TO, AND ENGAGING WITH, OUR STUDENTS

To work systematically and co-operatively to improve students' satisfaction with their university experience.

ACTIONS

We will achieve this by the following actions:

- collaboration with the Students' Union to strengthen ways of working with our students as part of a wider engagement plan, building on the most effective sector practices;
- encourage partnership between student groups and academic and professional staff in the co-development and support of learning and teaching initiatives;
- employ and respond to student feedback to better ensure uniformly high-quality student experience across the institution;
- review and enhance our use of learning analytics and demographic information, including measures of student engagement and learning gain, to support retention and to highlight the value of our degrees;
- support the Students' Union in their celebration of successes and student life.

OBJECTIVE 6: SUPPORTING AND CELEBRATING TEACHING EXCELLENCE

To recognise explicitly effective teaching and facilitation of learning, expecting and supporting all academic staff to achieve and maintain professional recognition.

ACTIONS

We will achieve this by the following actions:

- work in supportive communities to ensure effective and inspiring professional development opportunities for staff who teach or facilitate student learning, including enhancement of digital skills where needed;
- use promotion and professorial recognition alongside University Excellence Awards to celebrate and reward leaders in inspirational and innovative teaching, learning and assessment and exceptional facilitators in student support;
- enable our staff to experiment with innovative learning and teaching practices, in partnership with students and supported by relevant digital and physical facilities, sharing these improvements across the University and more widely;
- ensure our learning and teaching practices are research-informed and, where appropriate, work with external experts to help develop and implement new ideas.

EDUCATION AND THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE STRATEGIC PLAN 2017–2021

OBJECTIVE 7: A GREAT PLACE TO LEARN

To ensure learning takes place in a supportive and conducive environment.

ACTIONS

We will achieve this by the following actions:

- facilitate an excellent student experience through continuous investment in our virtual and physical spaces, enriched with access to extensive online and physical library and archival resources, overlaid with intuitive discovery tools;
- thoroughly understand the student journey and the digital needs of students at any point along that journey to deliver, where possible, a single point of access for these needs;
- with an increasing focus on blended and distance learning delivery, design our student support materials and tools to enable learning and teaching to take place away from the University;
- further develop our personal tutor and student guidance framework to ensure it delivers inclusive, well-informed and consistent high-level academic support and pastoral care across all of our provision;
- build and use our alumni connections to sustain and develop an extended and life-long community for our past and present students.

OBJECTIVE 8: A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

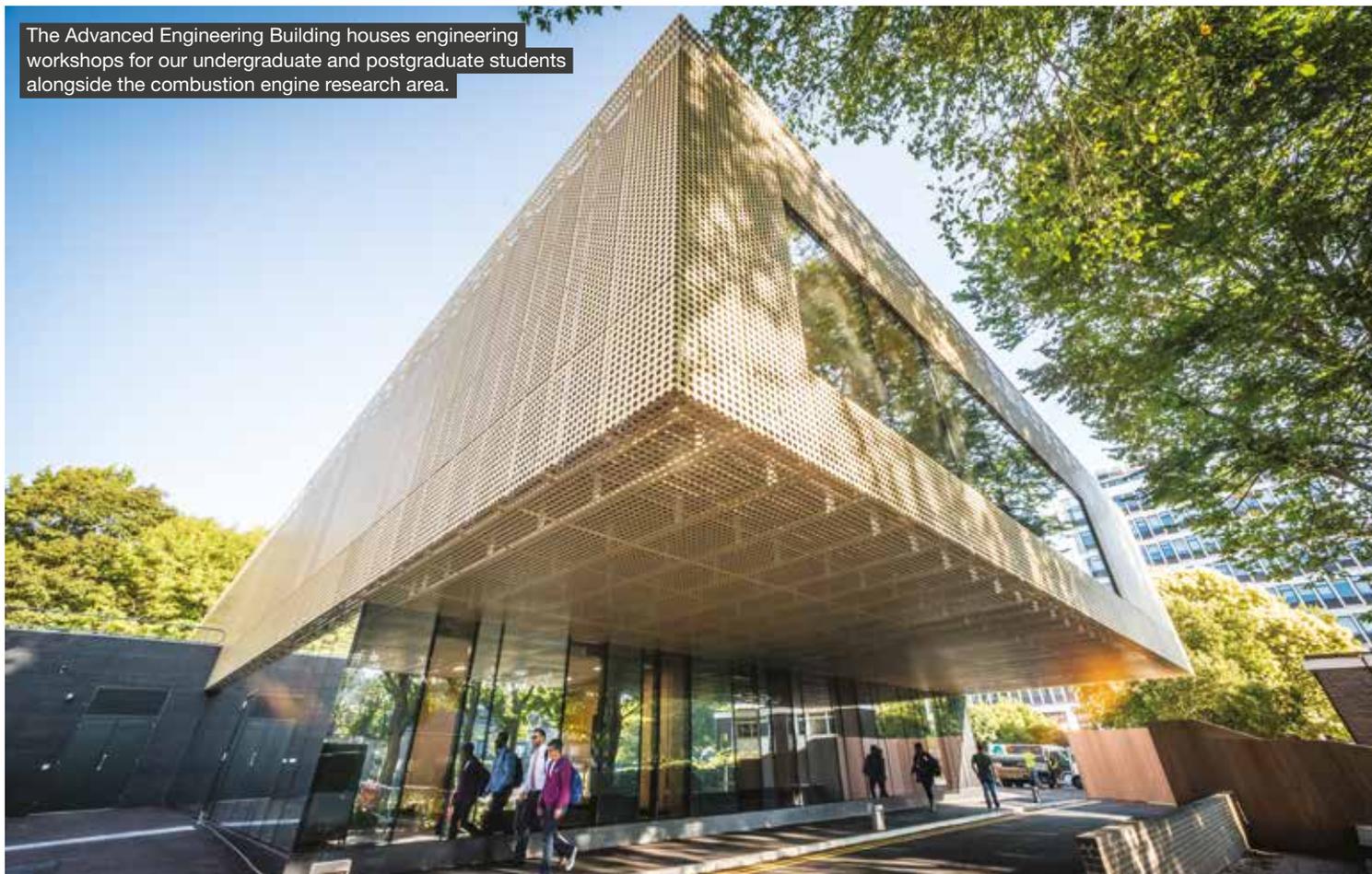
To build on our established social and professional network to support community and personal wellbeing.

ACTIONS

We will achieve this by the following actions:

- support from an accessible, compassionate and knowledgeable team to help students secure and settle in suitable accommodation;
- ensure the importance of early experience is reflected in our welcome and arrivals arrangements;
- provide a caring, safe and understanding community, building a strong sense of relationship with our students through effective and connected academic and professional services aligned to student needs operating locally through Student Centres;
- support the retention, participation, development and wellbeing of all our undergraduate and postgraduate students as members of a wider inclusive University community, where opportunities for peer, academic and professional support and engagement are actively provided within a clear and evident pastoral care pathway;
- with our Students' Union, we will create the best possible all-round university experience, enabling our students to have fun whilst generating a sense of belonging and inspiring them to grow personally and professionally as well as academically.

The Advanced Engineering Building houses engineering workshops for our undergraduate and postgraduate students alongside the combustion engine research area.



OBJECTIVE 9: MEETING THE CHALLENGE

To be a university whose students and staff will make a positive impact in higher education.

ACTIONS

We will achieve this by the following actions:

- provide a data-informed environment where we can evaluate and validate our successes and respond effectively to initiatives and opportunities;
- informed by emerging sector research, extend our institutional learning analytics platform to provide both rich self-service data for student learning and personal development and comprehensive data to support staff decision-making relating to inclusive practices, retention, wellbeing and improving academic performance;
- develop a reputation for re-imagining our learning environment and challenging current learning and teaching practices through research, innovation and experimentation;
- enable the responsive, proportionate and rapid development of programmes;
- revise our quality assurance and enhancement procedures to ensure that they are evidence-informed, fit for purpose, proportionate to our needs and meet external expectations;
- position ourselves for strong outcomes in the national quality assessment processes and the teaching excellence framework.

EDUCATION AND THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE
STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2021

INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

Our strategic plan is supported by continuous and extensive investments in place and people.

From our planned £63m development of the Moulsecomb estate as a locus for residential accommodation and enhanced academic facilities through to our local Student Centre campus developments, the University shapes its environment and its future. Recent investments include: refurbishment of buildings on our Brighton City (£19.6m) and Moulsecomb sites (£31.9m); our new £14m Advanced Engineering Building which opened in June 2017; an ongoing modernisation of teaching spaces as part of an £8m programme, and substantial research investments which enhance the undergraduate and postgraduate learning facilities such as psychology and advanced biomics laboratories supporting the social and health sciences, respectively. In recent partnership with our students, we have co-designed and built award-winning student informal learning facilities at Moulsecomb and the Waste House on our City campus, constructed almost entirely from discarded material as a 'living' ecological design laboratory.

At the person level, we promote innovative teaching initiatives through scholarship funding, encourage and support achievement amongst our teachers with guidance from our Centre for Learning and Teaching, and provide undergraduate research and employment internships. Our Momentum employer-supported student mentoring programme, the Peer-assisted Study Sessions scheme, and our Community-University Partnership Programme which engages student learning through partnership projects are all sector-leading student development and support activities which arose through innovation and are sustained through investment.

The Big Build at Moulsecomb (artist rendition) will bring student accommodation, alongside a new home for our Business School, learning and teaching spaces, multi-storey car park, and gym and Students' Union facilities.



