



K E E L E
UNIVERSITY

KEELE UNIVERSITY
STRATEGIC PLAN **2005-2010**

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2005-2010

REVISITING THE MISSION

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S FOREWORD

Keele is proud of its past record in many areas, and is planning for a future in which it continues to occupy a distinctive and valued place in the higher education sector. In response to the many changes in the external environment in which all UK Universities operate, in 2003 Keele embarked on a period of significant internal change. In the wake of a number of national policies (the HE Act 2004, the Government White Paper in 2003, the Roberts Review of the RAE and the OST Review of Dual Support and others), Keele along with most UK HEIs is assessing its place in the changing market place of British higher education. In October 2003, the University began a period of consultation to enable it to assess and adapt to developments in the sector. All sections of the University were involved in appraising not only Keele's strengths and its expected challenges, but also the future longer-term course the University intends to navigate. This change programme, called KEELE2006, has been a major influence on the way in which this Strategic Plan has been developed. The resulting document embodies well understood priorities and directions for Keele, within an overall framework which also is ambitious for the University's future.



Professor Janet Finch CBE DL AcSS

1 INTRODUCTION

MISSION STATEMENT

Keele University's distinctive mission is:
to be the UK's leading open, integrated, intellectual community.

1.1 AIMING TO BE DISTINCTIVE

1.1.1 Keele has always been regarded as a University with a unique identity, and in the future the University, whilst clearly having many features in common with other universities, aims to retain many distinctive features.

1.1.2 Founded as a bold educational experiment, Keele was the first completely new higher education institution established after the Second World War, gaining degree-giving powers in 1949, and University status in 1962. In a relatively short history, the University has forged a strong position within the higher education sector. Its founders espoused radical educational principles with an emphasis on achieving breadth in the undergraduate curriculum and multi-disciplinary scholarship. Development of a broad educational programme continues to be emphasised with around 80% of undergraduate students studying two subjects to honours level. Reflecting on the benefits of this approach, The Sunday Times University Guide for 2004 commented:

'Keele is proof that it pays to be different. Offering predominantly dual honours courses, it produces graduates with a more rounded education than is often the case. It's equally popular with students (whose dropout rate is half what the funding council expected) and employers (who keep Keele's graduate unemployment rate among the UK's lowest).'

1.1.3 As a result of its history and subsequent development, Keele is not easily categorised under any of the standard labels so often attributed to other universities. It is a pre-1992 University which, like others of a similar type:

- Demonstrates commitment to education and research, viewing each as being of equal (and complementary) importance
- Pursues high quality in educational programmes – for undergraduates, postgraduates and in professional studies
- Delivers research which is of national and international standing in defined areas, serving both regional and national needs
- Values the integration of living and studying which is a feature of campus Universities built on greenfield sites.

1.1.4 However, Keele has also retained or developed features which contrast with other pre-92 universities with which it might be compared. It has:

- Retained a strong commitment to breadth in the undergraduate curriculum
- Significantly expanded its involvement in health with the establishment of its own Medical School (and its associated links with local health organisations)
- Embraced wholeheartedly the widening access and participation agenda within higher education. It has been described in the press as one of a select group of “access elite” universities, where both quality, student support and high standards are maintained, whilst at the same time diversifying the community of learners achieving the highest levels of educational attainment
- Contributed to the development and regeneration of the sub-region and region, by effectively using its resources and assets to the benefit of the local and regional economy. With a turnover in excess of £70m and a total staff of some 1,700, the University generates around £70m of business in the region
- Maintained its position as the ‘ultimate’ campus University, with the UK’s largest integrated campus occupying a 617 acre estate. Keele is a residential University, with 70% of undergraduate students, along with a number of postgraduate students and uniquely a significant proportion of staff living on campus. This contributes to Keele having a strong community atmosphere
- Promoted and made best use of its estate to support a very successful conference business and a thriving Science Park.

1.1.5 Keele is an institution which maintains its own path whilst firmly securing for itself a strong place within the HE sector, and welcoming collaboration with others. Keele is a University which is difficult to ‘place’ in any standard categorisation of universities because it has a unique combination of features, and it seeks and embraces distinctiveness.

1.2 FOUNDING IDEALS AND MODERN VALUES

1.2.1 The University was founded when the UK operated an elite higher education system. Now, over fifty years on, the world is in many respects a different place. Higher education has become more diverse and inclusive. The Keele community of scholars reflects this more than ever before, resulting in a university that its founding members would find difficult to recognise. At the same time, the original Keele ethos of multidisciplinary study has been retained to a remarkable degree. The underlying values on which the University was developed are as vibrant and important today and are rooted in the strategic aims of this plan, even though the objectives and targets may have changed over time. The values the University espoused in the post-war period focused on delivering a broad-based undergraduate education. A primary aim of the institution was to create an environment where independent thinking, flexible and adaptable citizens were developed. These values remain as relevant today as they were in the initial phase of Keele’s development.

1.2.2 The challenges for a university choosing this course are becoming more complex than ever before with greater selectivity in research funding and a highly competitive environment for recruiting students. Given this context, the University must ensure that it responds proactively using evidence-based decisions, that it is efficient and provides value for money. Innovation, flexibility and responsiveness will characterise the University’s endeavours to maintain and improve the highest quality hallmark in its activities.

1.3 KEELE2006 – MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME FOR CHANGE

1.3.1 This opportunity to review our strategic plan coincides with the progress of a significant change-management programme underway at the University. This programme is called KEELE2006. The core aim is to consolidate and develop the University's position so that it will continue to grow with distinctive characteristics across a wide range of teaching and research activities. 2006 was selected because it gives a three-year horizon, and because by 2006 the implementation of many key government policies and sector changes will be well under way.

1.3.2 In the initial phase of KEELE2006, the University undertook a process of self-evaluation. This involved University-wide consultation and assessment of the University's strengths and weaknesses, and considered how these may be affected by changes in the external higher education environment. The evaluation attempted to define what the University would be like in 2010. It concluded that Keele would exhibit the following traits:

- Remain an autonomous institution
- Deliver educational programmes that are informed by research
- Generate high quality research outputs in selective areas
- Make effective utilisation of the estate
- Pursue an active role in the region and sub-region.

1.3.3 The University recognises the need to revise and invest in its management structures, the result of which has been the creation of larger academic units. The aim is to:

- Produce greater flexibility in the management of resources
- Separate the management of educational programmes from research and enterprise
- Devolve more responsibility for local determination and decision making.

These changes have led to:

- Fewer, larger schools that manage educational programmes
- Research Institutes that focus, develop and promote high quality research and enterprise activities at Keele
- Fewer faculties (three), with greater responsibilities supported by enhanced leadership and management.

1.3.4 Whilst the changes will produce greater transparency in the financial management of educational activities and research they will not separate the intellectual and scholarly link between teaching and research.

1.3.5 The changes in academic structures will be complemented by changes in central service departments. There will be a shift towards a more customer-focused, flexible, collaborative structure that embraces change as a way of life. This will be facilitated through enhanced staff development, adopting flexible working practices that build on the benefits afforded by technology and will be managed through a more professional unitary structure by the Secretary and Registrar.

2 KEY STRATEGIC DRIVERS AND CROSS CUTTING THEMES

2.1 KEELE2006

2.1.1 KEELE2006 will strengthen the University against external competition, enhance our profile and provide greater flexibility to respond to external changes. Teaching programmes will be organised and delivered in a more co-ordinated and flexible way so that Keele can respond to the change in student demand, whilst maintaining its high standards. It will mean that some courses that are unviable and unsustainable will be discontinued in order to enable investment to be transferred into new and refurbished programmes that quickly respond to the changes in market demand and support longer term strategic development of the University. By 2006 the University will also have put in place the infrastructure, through its Research Institutes, to enable it to actively promote and support its strongest research groups more effectively in a highly competitive environment.

2.1.2 KEELE2006 will deliver this change:

- To produce a strong and vibrant 'mixed mode' University, with significant research strengths in targeted areas
- To consolidate Keele's position as a distinctive player within higher education
- To grow activity and income despite a less promising environment for HEFCE funded student numbers
- To develop new research income streams from a variety of sources and, at minimum, protect the existing levels of QR funding
- To generate an attractive academic programme in which all courses are of high quality and are appropriately resourced
- To produce a flexible workforce that allows staff to move between different roles in a manner sufficiently flexible to serve the University's needs but which also provides a rewarding career structure
- To provide a supportive learning environment for students
- To provide a more secure financial base that will facilitate investment, in a volatile climate.

2.2 FINANCIAL DRIVERS

2.2.1 As with the majority of universities in the UK, the University is experiencing financial pressure in an environment of finite resources and central funding. Keele will need to continue to actively manage its cost-base, particularly in areas of declining demand, in order to ensure that it remains competitive in an increasingly volatile and market-driven climate. It also needs to ensure it is able to invest in those new areas which have growth potential. To further increase resources and the range of income streams, in order not to over rely on one area of income, the University intends to continue to diversify and grow its activities.

2.2.2 The ability to respond quickly and flexibly will remain core to Keele. The University will need to respond to changes in student demand, by developing programmes to build on its interdisciplinary mix (e.g. recent programmes in Forensic Science, Media Communications & Culture), whilst seeking to preserve a balanced curriculum.

2.2.3 The growth of student numbers will remain a key objective. Recognising the constraints of the government's policy on HEFCE-funded student number expansion, the University intends to achieve much of its growth through promoting a distinctive academic programme (see section 4).

2.3 DEVELOPING PUBLIC SECTOR PROVISION

2.3.1 Keele is committed to expanding work with professionals and organisations working within the public sector. Activities grouped under this heading include programmes directed at business and management, health and social care, and education (including science education). Keele is a leading international, national and regional provider in these areas and has established a strong reputation for delivering innovative, high quality courses. The University has had a long-standing involvement in delivering courses in social work, and this area is set to expand with the delivery of undergraduate provision alongside its postgraduate work. Business and management has also been an important area of activity, with further expansion planned in marketing and business leadership.

2.3.2 Building on this growing expertise, the University is developing a strategy to address directly the training needs of aspiring and qualified public sector professionals. To realise this ambition, Keele will host targeted events which are informative, provide opportunities for networking and attract high-profile decision-makers in the public sector from the West Midlands region and beyond. This strategy will support the development and re-profiling of the academic curriculum, offering new opportunities for continuing professional development courses, whilst further raising Keele's reputation in academic subjects and research allied to the public sector.

2.3.3 Health and health-related teaching and research will continue to develop and remain a vital and expanding part of Keele's portfolio of activities. The support of local NHS Trusts has been critical to this success, and Keele will continue to work collaboratively with partners in the NHS to develop these relationships further, in order to respond positively to future opportunities. The University will strengthen its relationships with the local NHS workforce development directorate in order that it can actively respond to the wider health and social care training needs of the region. More than a quarter of Keele students are studying in health-related areas, and this will grow when the Undergraduate Medical School meets its projected targets of over 600 students by 2010. The University intends to further develop and enhance its range of health-related programmes ensuring that new developments occur across all faculties, for example, health-related science or medical ethics programmes.

2.3.4 This development will complement Keele's growing and successful profile in working with public and non-public sector organisations and social enterprise, a track record confirmed by the success of Keele's solo bid to the Higher Education Innovation Fund in 2004, which will enable work with both public and private sector organisations to be consolidated and developed. Those developments will complement the high quality research being undertaken in these areas.

2.4 SUPPORTING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REGENERATION WITHIN THE WEST MIDLANDS

2.4.1 Keele is a major contributor to its local economy. As well as being a large local employer, the University's academic and commercial activities generate business and attract inward investment to the local area, both of which have a significant economic impact. With the University's growth potential and ambitions to strengthen and enhance both of these activities, it follows that the sub-region and region stand to benefit considerably. In its regional role, the University and its staff have developed many working partnerships with other organisations and businesses in the region, including health and social services, educational organisations, Advantage West Midlands, Staffordshire and Shropshire County Councils, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council. These key alliances are of utmost importance to Keele and will continue to be one of the University's main priorities, to nurture further opportunities for collaborations and partnerships.

2.4.2 Increasingly, the University will focus emphasis on applied research and knowledge transfer, and transferring its knowledge base through the rapidly growing Science Park and Innovation Centres on the Keele Campus. The Regional Development Agency's Regeneration Zone has identified Keele as a priority investment site for the emerging MedTech cluster in the sub-region and the Science Park is now situated in a premier location which attracts University spin-off companies, start up companies and businesses choosing to relocate in the West Midlands.

2.4.3 The University, through its wide range of widening participation (WP) activities, will continue to significantly contribute to raising aspirations and awareness of higher education within the sub-region, region and nationally, particularly to those from backgrounds not traditionally represented in higher education. The University is committed to working collaboratively under the Partnerships for Progression initiative. The HE Full Circle project is one example where Keele has embraced the national agenda and applied this to the benefit of the sub-region. The development of interactive technologies, such as UniWorld, and campus events such as the Higher Education Summer Schools will continue to be important elements of the University's innovative and challenging WP programmes which aim to, and succeed in, encouraging students to consider Higher Education, whether it be at Keele or elsewhere.

2.4.4 Keele has also secured partnerships with other higher education institutions and will continue to do so where they are of mutual benefit. Keele has a particular interest in supporting the development of a University presence in Shropshire and along the Welsh Borders. This will complement existing collaboration with the Shrewsbury & Telford Hospitals Trust, a teaching hospital associated with the University's Medical School.

2.5 CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

Growth

2.5.1 Keele must continue to expand both income and volume across a range of activities. KEELE2006 aims to create the conditions for achieving this. Growth is needed for a variety of reasons; to maximise research performance in the next RAE, as well as research and enterprise income; to achieve economies of scale, in terms of infrastructure and to run efficiently; to improve financial health and to grow commercial income.

Distinctiveness

2.5.2 One of the core objectives for KEELE2006 is to consolidate Keele's distinctive place in UK Higher Education.

Underpinned by Financial Security

2.5.3 Managing the University's finances effectively and growing income is essential to underpinning Keele's financial security. The University recognises the need to build up cash reserves for investment purposes in order to remain competitive.

2.5.4 The need to manage and transfer current resources between areas of decline and future growth will remain, and resources to facilitate this will be needed. Keele's financial position has been supported in recent years by commercial income which supports core activities, academic and commercial.

2.5.5 Changes associated with KEELE2006 will increase financial transparency and accountability within the University. Cross subsidy between activities will be identifiable and more directly linked to strategic priorities. The University must continue to enhance financial discipline, developing internal systems in ways that achieve maximum efficiency and allow the institution to operate flexibly. The managed rebalancing programme supports financial stability by moving staff resources into areas which are growing and reducing them in areas which are not. Equally, programmes will be offered only where they can be properly supported, and restructured and discontinued where they cannot.

2.5.6 Structure of Keele University Strategic Plan

Core Strategic Aims	3. Enhancing the Student Experience	4. Promoting a Distinctive Academic Programme	5. Supporting Quality Research and Knowledge Exchange	6. Capitalise on Opportunities for Partnerships	7. Optimising the Contributions of Our Staff	8. Maximising Organisational Effectiveness	9. Making the Most of Our Assets
Cross Cutting Themes	Growth						
	Distinctiveness						
	Underpinned by Financial Security						

The following seven sections detail each of Keele University's Core Strategic Aims. Each of these ensuing sections is structured in the same way:

- Aim – giving further detail of the high level strategic outcomes towards which Keele University is working throughout and beyond the life of this plan
- Objectives – the strategic objectives that Keele University seeks to achieve within the plan period
- Context – background information
- Performance indicators – how Keele University intends to achieve its objectives. These benchmarks will indicate success.
- Risks and Dependencies – the significant threats to achieving the aims and objectives.

3 ENHANCING THE KEELE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

3.1 AIM

To ensure that students are supported to make the most of the distinctive and broad based learning opportunities provided to them in a unique Keele experience.

3.2 OBJECTIVES

- a To actively support widening participation and access activities and opportunities
- b To support an increasingly diverse student population
- c To provide students with a fair, supportive environment with high quality facilities
- d To provide a variety of routes for student voices to be effectively integrated into University decision making, planning and priorities
- e To ensure that the student experience is effectively resourced
- f To enhance the student experience and employability skills, by providing a range of opportunities for students' development
- g To enhance the student learning experience by investment in enhancement of teaching.

3.3 CONTEXT

3.3.1 Keele University is undoubtedly one of the most attractive places in the UK for students to study and live. The University has the dual benefit of easy access to urban facilities and of being part of a unique rural setting.

3.3.2 Its location and environment support Keele as a national, international and regional recruiter of high quality students. In 2003/04 the University had over 7,000 students, with 20% of the student population studying on postgraduate programmes and 8% of the population recruited from overseas (EU and non-EU). Throughout higher education, the student population is becoming increasingly diverse and the student population at Keele is reflecting this, with increasing numbers of students from backgrounds not traditionally represented in higher education.

3.3.3 The University has a strong commitment to maintaining diversity in its student population. It has actively embraced the Government's agenda for widening access and will continue to make a significant contribution to aspiration and awareness raising through its widening participation activities (the majority of which are funded externally through partnerships). In parallel, it will also continue with its flexible and inclusive approach to students from backgrounds where progression into higher education is rare and to students for whom there might be practical difficulties in their progression. Appropriate recruitment, guidance and supportive admissions policies will remain a priority, along with the work of the academic and student support services.

3.3.4 Providing students with a fair, supportive environment with high quality facilities is critical to ensuring that students enjoy and gain maximum benefit from their time at Keele. The majority of students take advantage of the campus atmosphere, with many living on the main campus. The University provides excellent standards in accommodation, academic and social facilities for students, as well as student support services; the latter include learning and academic guidance, financial and residential support, and also a counselling service. These services contribute to the students' learning environment, provide a range of professional welfare support and positively encourage student retention. The student learning environment will be enhanced by further development of e-learning opportunities which will support and facilitate the delivery of teaching and student study. The University remains committed to maintaining and developing facilities and services further, to meet the requirements of a changing student population.

3.3.5 It is important that students make a contribution to the University's development and this has been enhanced through the creation of the position of Pro Vice-Chancellor with responsibilities for staff and students, along with the pro-active work of Student Union Presidents and their fellow sabbatical officers. This, coupled with the Keele Postgraduate Association, Keele University Students Union and student liaison committees has had, and will continue to have, a constructive impact on provision for students in respect of both facilities and academic life.

3.3.6 Providing opportunities for all students to develop their employability skills, as well as their personal and social skills, is an essential additional part of the development of Keele students. Undergraduate students experience the unique dual honours system and have opportunities to acquire employability skills through involvement with personal development planning and voluntary work experience. The quality of the postgraduate student experience will also be enhanced through the development of the new Graduate School. This will assure the quality of the Postgraduate Research (PGR) experience and seek to facilitate a supportive environment for PGRs. The current review of the experience of International Students at Keele will identify further improvements in provision for this expanding cohort.

3.3.7 The University will continue to invest in the enhancement of teaching, IT and other important resources for students, to ensure that the student experience is effectively supported. The imminent introduction of enhanced/increased tuition fees has initiated work within the University to determine how it can maximise the benefits of bursaries, to ensure that financial support is given to the students for whom it is most needed.

3.3.8 The University recognises the importance of students' views of their University experience on other (potential) students. Enhancement of the Keele student experience will ensure effective marketing of Keele by the students.

3.4 RISKS AND DEPENDENCIES

- Ability to recruit a diverse student population
- Investment in the infrastructure to support students
- Ensuring quality and equitable standards.

4 PROMOTING A DISTINCTIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAMME

4.1 AIM

To sustain and develop Keele's distinctive approach to lifelong learning providing fair access to:

- **undergraduate** education which is broad based
- **flexible postgraduate** curriculum

within a high quality, appropriately resourced learning environment that equips graduates with flexible skills that will enable them to respond creatively to the changing requirements of the modern world.

4.2 OBJECTIVES

- To develop and provide an attractive range of high quality programmes, which will underpin continued growth in student numbers and meet the needs of student and employer demand
- To develop undergraduate programmes which widen access and contribute to the broad based curriculum
- To develop programmes at postgraduate level to meet the needs of employers, particularly those related to public sector organisations
- To expand Continuing Professional Development programmes designed to meet the professional and development needs of managerial and professional staff
- To advance the organisation and delivery of high quality learning and teaching
- To create the capacity and environment to foster and invest in a continuous programme of academic development, withdrawing from areas which are unsustainable.

4.3 CONTEXT

- 4.3.1 The philosophy of the University is built around a commitment to breadth of education and experience within a strong campus-based community. The University aims to provide high quality courses – academic as well as vocational – able to serve an increasingly diverse student body, which equip students with flexible skills that enable them to respond creatively to the changing requirements of the modern world.

4.3.2 The University's strategy for curriculum development has been highly successful in delivering strong growth in student numbers. Expansion has been built around:

- Developing new undergraduate programmes
- Increasing the total number of postgraduate students
- Securing increases in the number of international students.

4.3.3 The University will continue to maintain its distinctive Undergraduate Dual Honours (two principal subjects) programmes that can attract students through their potential for choice, flexibility and employability. At the same time, single honours courses are also likely to increase, especially in the natural sciences and in health-related areas, with many having an interdisciplinary flavour.

4.3.4 As part of Keele's broad based and multidisciplinary approach to learning, the *Complementary Studies Programme* was successfully launched in 2003 and will be further developed as an integral part of the student experience. This programme provides first year students with opportunities to practise and develop their skills and supports the development of these practical, transferable skills to work environment. Employers tell us that these additional studies really make a significant difference to Keele graduates and gives them a distinct advantage over graduates from other universities.

4.3.5 Development of the portfolio of Foundation Year/year zero programmes will continue to build on Keele's historic experience in this area. These programmes allow transfer between academic and vocational education pathways. In the Keele tradition, these programmes contribute to widening access by providing pathways for academic progression for those without the necessary A-levels or equivalent qualifications.

4.3.6 *Postgraduate provision* will remain a focus of attention in delivering an expansion in student numbers. Emphasis will be on identifying courses in the health and social sciences, particularly those programmes tailored to the needs of public sector professionals.

4.3.7 *Continuing Professional Development* will also be targeted for growth with courses designed to meet the professional and development needs of managerial and professional staff. Continuing Education will also be maintained as an important dimension of the University's work within the local region.

4.3.8 The student learning experience is underpinned by a robust Learning & Teaching strategy. This articulates the University's commitment to promoting intellectual, personal and professional development in its students and how it aims to equip students with skills valuable for their future lives and work. It recognises the fundamental importance of good teaching practice, which will enable students at all levels to achieve their educational aims by the acquisition of knowledge and skills through active, independent and reflective learning.

4.3.9 Achieving further *growth* represents a significant challenge in the context of the introduction of tuition fees and pressures from competing institutions, domestically as well as overseas. Securing expansion in student numbers will require the University to carefully assess the changing market place of Higher Education to ensure that Keele responds effectively to student, employer and government needs. The quality of the student environment and facilities will have to be continually improved (see section 3) and collaborative activity across schools and faculties must be facilitated (see section 6). The University will continue to constantly review all its activities with a view to developing new programmes, as well as withdrawing from areas that are unsustainable and unviable or cannot provide an appropriate quality learning experience.

4.3.10 The framework for delivering programmes is being substantially revised within the context of KEELE2006. The benefits of this change management programme for academic developments will include:

- **Strengthening** of inter-disciplinary teaching through larger schools and shared academic programmes
- **Flexibility** in course delivery to meet new areas of market demand
- **Transparency** in the resources available to support high quality teaching.

4.4 RISKS AND DEPENDENCIES

- A change in the patterns of student demand
- Change in Government or Government policy for higher education funding
- Responding to the changing needs of employers
- Resourcing which enables quality learning and teaching to be delivered
- Maintaining academic quality and standards.

5 SUPPORTING HIGH QUALITY RESEARCH & KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

5.1 AIM

To promote a vibrant academic research community which nurtures and supports Keele's signature research themes, facilitates research of national and international importance and underpins a 'blue chip' enterprise agenda which ensures the effective delivery of relevant outputs to beneficiaries.

5.2 OBJECTIVES

- a To maintain and enhance the quality of Keele's research through robust resource management
- b To provide the infrastructure for internationally competitive sustainable research and enterprise activities
- c To create the conditions to encourage, facilitate and support strategic research collaborations
- d To ensure that research continues to underpin the development of educational programmes
- e To promote and raise awareness of Keele's distinctive research programmes and their contribution to society
- f To develop and capitalise on the knowledge capital and knowledge transfer potential of high quality, curiosity-driven research
- g To nurture, mentor and develop research careers through the provision of appropriate training and mentoring.

5.3 CONTEXT

5.3.1 Keele has secured for itself international recognition in several key research areas and has developed the necessary structures for identifying and growing new relevant research themes as they emerge. Key external reviews (RAE 2001, HEIF 2) and policy briefs (Roberts, Lambert, OST Dual Support/Research Sustainability, 2003 White paper Higher Education) have informed the institutional planning decisions which aim to secure for Keele the relevant academic environment within which to nurture the continuing development of this successful strategy in an increasingly competitive climate. This approach demands that Keele adopts a more strategically focused research agenda which more effectively links strong areas of multi-disciplinary research; equally, it means that the University will have to withdraw from some areas of research where the aggregate of activity is below a critical, sustainable threshold. In order to facilitate delivery of these objectives, under KEELE2006 further department-based research groups have been restructured into several distinctive Research and Enterprise Institutes.

5.3.2 Through this institute model, Keele aims to develop integrated structures which fully embrace integrated disciplinary and multi-disciplinary research and enterprise in Humanities, Social Sciences, Physical and Environmental Sciences and in Health. The key themes will be:

- Humanities research encompassing strong inter-disciplinary areas focused around: history, music and music technology, languages, literature, and systems of thought and belief of human societies past and present.
- Research exploring the intersections between law, society and ethics; politics and international relations; and crime, security and justice.
- Research which explores a range of health and social concerns through the "life course" from childhood through to old age.
- Research to inform public policy and management, including formulation, delivery and evaluation; workings and management of public, private and voluntary organisations; regulation and governance of economic and social institutions; and international and comparative aspects of all the above.
- Multi- and inter- disciplinary research applied to environmental issues. Including complementary research into the dynamics and acoustics of gases, fluids and solids; statistical and deterministic modelling in biological and health sciences; and software engineering and the mathematics-computing interface.
- Basic and applied science applied to the development of diagnostic and therapeutic applications in medicine with strong underpinning from the engineering field.
- Primary Care & Health Sciences research which informs clinical decision-making and improvements in health, and establishes more effective primary care management of common painful conditions.

5.3.3 It is anticipated that the formation of thematically distinct Research Institutes will also be the catalyst for new *portfolio* initiatives which promote and capitalise on research strengths through new educational programmes (e.g. CPD for public sector professionals), and a range of enterprise activities (e.g. entrepreneurship training for undergraduates, technological development & commercial exploitation of IP). The rationalisation of our research structures within Research Institutes will also facilitate the more effective *costing* and *pricing* of all research-focused activities thereby ensuring the full recovery of costs on all projects. Of equal importance will be the role of the Institutes in providing an intellectually robust mentoring environment for young researchers (including postgraduates, research fellows and career young academic staff).

5.3.4 The external promotion of Keele's research and enterprise through themed Research Institutes will also underpin Keele's unique footprint as a key supporter of the regional framework for economic and social regeneration and innovation in North Staffordshire. In this context, the formation of the Research Institutes with a strong thematic identity also evidences Keele's strategic commitment to:

- a The national agenda for the prioritisation of research which is internationally competitive
- b A strategy for the effective use of knowledge transfer to underpin capacity and capability building in the UK economy
- c The cultivation of a robust entrepreneurship culture.

5.3.5 The ability to increase postgraduate research activity within the University is a priority, and Keele is already committed to this through the development of Graduate School to quality assure the PGR experience and to provide a distinctive voice for this community of students. Infrastructure investment to support this activity will be provided in part by HEFCE SRIF funds which will be used to develop a facility to co-locate researchers within Humanities and Social Sciences.

5.4 RISKS AND DEPENDENCIES

- Resourcing the core research infrastructure
- Maintaining reputation and profile
- Research leadership and mentorship
- Impact of local, regional and national developments.

6 CAPITALISE ON OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTNERSHIPS

6.1 AIM

To obtain maximum institutional benefit from partnerships and collaboration.

6.2 OBJECTIVES

- a To create an adaptive and flexible environment which is responsive to collaboration
- b To proactively seek external opportunities for collaboration
- c To optimise opportunities to collaborate with other educational organisations
- d To secure effective commercial development partners
- e To work effectively with key national organisations
- f To promote Keele's profile regionally and nationally
- g To work proactively with Keele's international partner universities to maximise staff and student mobility.

6.3 CONTEXT

6.3.1 Keele University has a distinctive position in higher education, and has sought to use this creatively and productively when engaging in partnerships and collaboration. The University recognised the emphasis placed on collaboration within the Government's White Paper on HE (2003) and will continue to actively progress opportunities for collaboration where there is mutual benefit to partners. Keele's location at the centre of the UK, on the cusp of three government regions, means that it is uniquely placed to collaborate with a range of partners in education, the wider public sector and industry.

6.3.2 In the increasingly competitive world of higher education, both in research and student recruitment, the University recognises the need to consolidate and focus on its strengths in research, knowledge transfer and teaching, whilst also identifying new areas for growth to meet national and regional needs. Keele is thus positioning itself to become the partner of choice in distinctive areas. To enable the University to achieve this goal, the KEELE2006 change management programme aims to create the institutional environment that is adaptive and flexible to opportunities for collaboration both within the University and with external partners.

6.3.3 The University has continually developed good working relationships with a range of external partners in the region. Recently, Keele has increased significantly its engagement with the health sector through NHS organisations and the location of health-related companies in the Science Park on the campus. Collaborations across the University are a key feature of Keele's response to new opportunities in the health sector. As health and related areas plus the University's regional role become increasingly important strategic drivers, so too will these working relationships. Working with other organisations and businesses, particularly in the public sector, is important to the University's development. Partnerships, such as those with other educational organisations, the regional development agency and local councils will continue to be actively promoted.

6.3.4 Collaboration with other Higher Education institutions can generate benefits for all institutions involved. Keele has recently been successful in its joint bid to the Higher Education Innovation Fund, which will enable work with both public and private sector organisations to be consolidated and developed. A wide range of partnerships already exist: from research collaborations to joint staff appointments, widening access and participation events to developing joint educational programmes. The University also has a particular interest in supporting a joint development of Higher Education presence in Shropshire, by working with others to build on and develop some of Keele's existing strengths.

6.3.5 Keele has actively developed exchange agreements for the mobility of students and staff and now maintains agreements with nearly 100 universities world-wide. It aims to send a maximum number of students and staff abroad each year, making use of the full range of its partners. As part of its European Policy it actively promotes staff mobility to partner institutions where student mobility may be more difficult. It plans to develop additional activities with a small number of existing partners to make the most of these relationships.

6.3.6 Keele has worked effectively with partners to develop the Science Park (and its enterprise and knowledge transfer activities), which is the Regional Development Agency's priority investment site for Medical Technology in the sub-region. Keele will continue to seek development partners for the further development stages of the commercial site, which will benefit both the University and the region and sub-region through economic regeneration.

6.3.7 Principally through its senior staff, Keele is also increasing its engagement with national organisations within and beyond higher education, to actively engage and contribute to their activities whilst also promoting the University's profile at regional and national level.

6.4 RISKS AND DEPENDENCIES

- Government policy
- Identifying appropriate opportunities and partners.

7 OPTIMISING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF OUR STAFF

7.1 AIM

To ensure that each individual member of staff understands their importance to Keele's ongoing achievements and is valued and recognised for the role they play in the success of the University's various activities.

7.2 OBJECTIVES

- a To provide effective management and motivation of staff
- b To provide transparent and effective management structures
- c To plan flexible staff resources
- d To provide effective staff development training and programmes to support all staff in the delivery of their role
- e To actively support and encourage diversity and equality through all levels of the organisation
- f To provide a safe, fair, supportive and stimulating working environment
- g To operate appropriate communication mechanisms that allow staff to function effectively in their roles.

7.3 CONTEXT

7.3.1 The University is committed to recruiting and developing high quality and motivated staff, working in an environment where they are valued and treated in a fair and reasonable manner. Actively supporting diversity and equality is central to the achievement of this mission, which applies equally to academic, administrative, commercial and other staff. The University's Human Resources strategy aims to ensure that staff are able to undertake diverse and changing roles that enable them to develop and respond creatively to external pressures that come from the student body, HEFCE, the Government and industry. The implementation of the HR strategy and the effective utilisation of 'rewarding and developing staff' funds, can only be achieved through an effectively-managed institution, which through its proficient leadership can plan flexible staff resourcing. This underpins the changes associated with KEELE2006.

7.3.2 Given that well-prepared and motivated staff are essential to the delivery of the mission, the University also seeks to provide effective staff development and training programmes for all levels of staff. Staff development provides a flexible range of opportunities which aim to develop transferable skills via a blend of face-to-face and new technologies, which contribute to ensuring that all staff are supported and well-prepared for their roles and can respond and adapt to change.

7.3.3 All staff at Keele University are supported, and will continue to be supported, by a range of services and policies. These services range from occupational health and staff counselling to leisure and nursery facilities. The University has developed policies that support staff in their role, such as equal opportunities, race equality, harassment, grievances, appeals, and family-friendly policies and will continue to ensure their proper implementation and monitoring.

7.3.4 To enable staff to operate effectively, the University also recognises the importance of transparent communication mechanisms, as well as effective management structures. With this in mind, the KEELE2006 change management programme and the parallel review of central administration are of central importance to the long-term future of staff. The new structures of Research Institutes and large multi-disciplinary Schools, along with a more professional administration, will provide greater transparency of research and teaching activities and more effectively focus staff resources in areas of strategic priority. KEELE2006 will also provide staff with more development opportunities as well as a more dynamic environment for all staff to work in.

7.3.5 Keele was commended in the 2004 QAA Institutional Audit for its policy on promotion of career teaching staff. Keele's commitment to ensure all staff are appropriately rewarded for their activities will be maintained and promotions criteria will be developed to reflect changes. The recent award from the HEFCE Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund will support the ongoing development of the criteria.

7.4 RISKS AND DEPENDENCIES

- Effective leadership, management and communication
- Supportive staff training and development.

8 MAXIMISING ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

8.1 AIM

To operate an efficient, open and supportive system of governance and management which provides best value to the University, its constituents and partners.

8.2 OBJECTIVES

- a To effectively operate a system of governance which supports a robust and adaptive University structure and policy
- b To effectively manage the organisation to create maximum value
- c To make best use of Information Technology to effectively support the University's functions
- d To advance the provision of management information
- e To utilise the University's resources through prudent financial management
- f To communicate effectively through all levels of the organisation, both internally and externally
- g To operate appropriate Health and Safety policies and procedures.

8.3 CONTEXT

8.3.1 The University remains committed to upholding and operating to the highest standards of governance in all its decision making, responding to relevant external directives, including those set by Nolan & Lambert. The governing body, Council, is actively engaged in all strategic decisions, working closely with the University's executive management team. Council embarked on a review of its effectiveness in 2004, and has committed to ongoing periodic review to assure itself that it meets the appropriate standards set.

8.3.2 KEELE2006 has enabled the University to review its internal structures to provide more efficient, effective and transparent organisational management. This has resulted in the devolution of a wider range of responsibilities for leadership and management to Deans and Faculties, along with a unitary Head to a more professionalised and developed administrative support service. These changes have been and will continue to be supported through active staff development, where appropriate, building on existing strengths.

8.3.3 Emphasis will continue to be focused on timely, evidence-informed decision-making which will require continual development of appropriate, relevant management information. The University will also seek to utilise the benefits that external benchmarking and the introduction of quality standards frameworks can bring to an organisation to reduce duplication and improve efficiency. All this will be underpinned by appropriate risk management at all levels.

8.3.4 Keele also intends to maximise the benefits which technology can bring to improving organisational effectiveness, and will continue to invest in areas where technology can achieve this. Investment will continue in Health and Safety to provide an appropriate working environment that supports all members of the University in contributing to delivering the University's strategic objectives.

8.3.5 Organisational effectiveness will be facilitated by maintaining effective communication with all stakeholders; students, staff, external collaborative partners, and the University will continue to develop relevant methods to support this. Underpinning the above, the University will continue to operate and develop robust financial management procedures, which will also enable the University to derive maximum benefit from its assets.

8.4 RISKS AND DEPENDENCIES

- Government policy and legislative requirements
- Utilisation of new technologies
- Improved management information.

9 MAKING THE MOST OF OUR ASSETS

9.1 AIM

To support the core business of the University by deriving maximum benefits from Keele's distinctive integrated academic, commercial and residential campus.

9.2 OBJECTIVES

- a To review and improve the University's estate for the benefits of students, staff and visitors
- b To capitalise on the University's distinctive estate, to further advance commercial income
- c To make a positive contribution to the regional agenda
- d To make the best use of the University's assets to generate other/alternative sources of income.

9.3 CONTEXT

9.3.1 The University recognises the need to use its assets effectively to respond to the wider cultural, social and financial challenges facing higher education, in particular addressing proactively the opportunities that arise through income generation in its broadest sense. The changing nature of future funding arrangements for undergraduate students will require the University to review its investment strategies to ensure that the physical assets continue to extend opportunity and promote diversity within its student population whilst retaining Keele's distinctive mission, based around a campus-based learning experience.

9.3.2 Keele has a unique history in effectively exploiting its estate to generate substantial commercial income that can be invested into the organisation to help deliver all its objectives. The University will seek continual development of its professional commercial services and facilities across all activities, engaging academic and non-academic staff, and supporting regional regeneration aspirations. It will also continue to identify value for money solutions, recognising the need to redeploy resources away from areas of decline to those which offer new potential and opportunity and where necessary will seek to provide reasonable support to underpin these changes.

9.3.3 The University has used a number of innovative vehicles to maximise the benefits from its physical assets. These involve collaborations and partnerships with a variety of external partners, delivering benefits on and off campus. It will continue to explore how these can be developed to effect new collaborations and partnerships that support the development of the University and achievement of the strategic objectives within this plan.

9.3.4 The University is also putting in place a new approach to fund-raising, following the successful campaign to raise £3M to build a research facility for Primary Care Sciences. The new approach pre-dates the publication of the Thomas report on voluntary giving, and sees fund-raising as a broader activity than simply raising donations. In this new approach fund-raising is seen as a mainstream activity, in which the University identifies projects for which it needs to secure resources from a range of sources including public funding, and then puts in place a project team to support each initiative, drawing on staff, alumni, lay supporters and students as appropriate. The first set of projects is being identified and targets set during 2004-05.

9.4 RISKS AND DEPENDENCIES

- Investment in the estate and infrastructure
- Diversification of income
- Government and regional policies
- Profile within the commercial marketplace.

10 MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 10.1 It is recognised that this plan will evolve and develop over the planning period. Monitoring and reviewing the University's performance against its aims and objectives is a crucial part of assessing the University's progress in its development.
- 10.2 In parallel to developing this plan the University will review its current risk register to reflect the strategic priorities set out in this plan and mitigating actions will be reported monthly through the risk register monitoring. All of the performance indicators (and therefore progress against aims and objectives) will be reported in the annual monitoring statements and corporate planning statement.
- 10.3 The University's Strategic Planning Committee, a sub-group of Council, will be responsible for the continual monitoring of performance against the plan.

ANNEX A

University policies, which relate to sections 3-9

Sections 3 to 9 provide the main academic part of the plan, the core strategic aims. These encompass the existing University strategies previously approved by Council and Senate, highlighted in the table below.

Section	Strategy/areas covered
1 Introduction	Mission Statement
2 Key Strategic Drivers and Cross Cutting Themes	External and internal drivers, includes KEELE2006
3 Enhancing the Student Experience	Widening Participation and Access Learning and Student Support Employability Skills
4 Promoting a Distinctive Academic Programme	Teaching & Learning Strategy Growth Targets
5 Supporting Quality Research & Knowledge Exchange	Delivering enterprise through HEIF, as well as research performance
6 Capitalise on Opportunities for Partnerships	Regional collaboration Science Park Regeneration agenda University for the Marches
7 Optimising the Contributions of Our Staff	HR Strategy Staff Development Strategy Equal Opportunities Policy Race Equality Policy
8 Maximising Organisational Effectiveness	Governance IT Strategy Financial Strategy Health and Safety
9 Making the Most of Our Assets	Estates Commercial Strategy



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