

Kingston University
was established in 1899

and has a long history of technical, professional and creative expertise spanning sciences, nursing and the arts.





Town House Strategy

The Kingston University, London Town House Strategy is included in its full form.

‘Kingston University Town House is a theatre for life—a warehouse of ideas... In this highly original work of architecture, quiet reading, loud performance, research and learning, can delightfully co-exist. That is no mean feat. Education must be our future—and this must be the future of education.’

**RIBA Stirling Prize citation 2021, Norman Foster,
Baron Foster of Thames Bank**



The challenge

It is now beyond doubt that the dramatic technological and social transformations of the last few decades will continue to accelerate and impact how we live and work. Of particular relevance for universities' teaching, research and knowledge exchange are the ways in which we access information and conduct ourselves with others. This is now more distributed, circular, iterative and faster than it has been, as the ubiquity of platforms and networks as a means for operating in the world attest. We are more interconnected than we have ever been and arguably more isolated too.

This situation poses myriad challenges to society and therefore universities, particularly those designed on the English model, which, for students and academic staff, has successively narrowed exposure to a breadth of subjects and knowledge in favour of specialism and depth. This trajectory explains why universities are traditionally insular places of great expertise with the freedom to generate new knowledge and insights, which drives discovery and invention. This great strength, though, is also a weakness when the world is becoming more interconnected through technological innovations, the issues facing us are becoming more complex

70% of Kingston University's research is rated as 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent.'

Research Excellence Framework 2021

and the pace of societal change is accelerating. While employers in the UK value university degrees as a proxy for the capabilities of the person they are employing, universities still largely focus on the transmission of knowledge specific to a given discipline. The narrow, subject-specific depth and the attendant structures to deliver it are an obvious hindrance to understanding, learning, and benefiting from other means of making sense of and acting in, the world; of being able to work with other methods of inquiry and forms of knowledge than one's own.

It is the ability to work across forms of knowledge that will help facilitate creative problem solving and thereby

drive innovation. This is the need for businesses to meet the challenges of the future, and the attendant skills are confirmed by our Future Skills (2021, 2022) reports and the work of others. Kingston University will meet these challenges of how we must operate and work in the world of work to be successful by delivering a progressive new model of education, partnering with businesses and other external bodies to support innovation and generate and disseminate knowledge so that it has impact. To achieve this, we will enable staff to work collaboratively, innovatively, and effectively.

Our heritage

The Town House Strategy builds on our history and identity. Our origins lay in the establishment of Science, Arts and Technical Institutes in the late 19th century, founded on the conviction that teaching and researching these technical and professional areas together would provide the skills and innovation needed at another time of extreme industrial and societal change. The belief that these different ways of understanding the world are each valuable and could benefit each other recurs periodically even if generally subsumed by a dominant model of atomised and specialised learning described above.

Future Skills confirms that our commitment to a breadth of professional and technical education, research and practice that leads to novel and innovative approaches to problems is more needed now than ever. Successful businesses need both specialist expertise and varied ways of knowing, of doing, of people and their experiences to bring to bear on challenges. We will address that need by educating our students with the skills and personal attributes to prosper in the future; able to draw from specialist understanding and knowledge and to work collaboratively and imaginatively with each other and those outside the university. We will likewise focus our research, knowledge exchange and professional practice where it can have impact and facilitate innovation.

Kingston University

leads the capital in fashion and design, education, pharmacy, biosciences and nursing and midwifery.

Our purpose

Our purpose is to ensure that our graduates, our staff and the university itself are sought after. In other words: student applicants who seek Kingston University because it will help them get into higher education and to get on in life; staff who choose to work here because they can be effective, innovative and develop their careers; and businesses, organisations and government bodies that seek to partner with us for our approach, expertise and values.

This purpose will allow us to remain relevant and attractive in what is a competitive context for students and staff. It will make us notable in a crowded and largely undifferentiated higher education sector. It will enhance our reputation and reduce risk. It will allow us to grow income through increasing student numbers, research and knowledge exchange so that we can continue to invest and remain successful.



Our Future Skills 2022

report shows that the ability to communicate, analyse, adapt, problem-solve and think creatively are the key skills that businesses need.



Our Vision

Our university will be sought after by students and staff as a place to further their ambitions and to have impact on our communities. Our students and staff will be sought after for their skills, knowledge and ability to innovate.

Our Mission

To enhance students' life chances, support staff's ambitions and strengthen the university's impact on our locality, industry, policy and the professions to enable a sustainable future socially, economically and environmentally.

Our Values

Inclusive: to value the diversity of students and staff, treating them respectfully.

Innovative: to apply new methods or ideas to facilitate progress.

Ambitious: to pursue excellence for oneself, the university and our communities.

Enterprising: to recognise and act on opportunities.

Our response

**The core of the
Town House
Strategy is
society's need for
future skills** which
will be supported
through the following
four themes:

Theme 1

Drive a progressive new model of education, combining subject-specific knowledge with the future skills and higher-level attributes most needed by employers.

This new pattern of work is characterised by the transformation of employment from a career path that has been linear to one that resembles a portfolio, with people moving within or between professions, some of which will be redefining themselves; some of which do not yet exist. The business imperative for future skills, or higher cognitive skills, is emphatic and will continue to be so. This puts two demands on educating students. The first is to equip graduates with the ability to learn continually and adapt their knowledge to different circumstances. The second is to ensure that Kingston University graduates are known for having the future skills that employers have identified and can articulate and demonstrate.

In educating students, therefore, Kingston University will deliver not just subject specific knowledge, but also future skills as defined in our report of that name. We have translated those skills that have been identified to be a successful employee or entrepreneur

into Kingston University graduate attributes that we will explicitly develop in every student to help them succeed in his or her studies and employment.

What we will do:

- Embed the development of future skills throughout every year of every programme
- Use design thinking and project-based learning to imbue future skills while also allowing students to personalise their acquisition
- Develop and maintain a relevant and sustainable portfolio with diverse modes of delivery that is also financially sustainable

Theme 2

Partner with industry to develop our students' sought-after skills as well as engage government bodies and organisations with our ideas and expertise in future skills to further debate and influence policy.



We will bring our innovation and authority to policy discussions that effect Kingston University as well as the success and reputation of English higher education

What we will do:

- Actively involve employers and organisations with the delivery of future skills to our students.
- Foster our own students' considerable ambitions in entrepreneurship and start-ups.
- Actively engage in governmental and sector fora and our mission group as a thought leader on inclusive, progressive higher education and research.
- Use our knowledge and expertise as a civically engaged university to support the Royal Borough of Kingston and the region's economic, cultural, and educational vibrancy.

Theme 3

Have impact in research, knowledge exchange and professional practice by concentrating our efforts where we can be credible and authoritative.

A university, by definition, generates ideas, knowledge and expertise that it develops and shares with others. As a university with a professional and technical focus business engagement, knowledge exchange and professional practice are at the heart of our identity. We will further debate and have impact where the knowledge we produce and the expertise we expound is credible and authoritative. We will therefore marshal support to existing areas that are world-class and bring together expertise and innovation in multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary ways to address existing and emerging issues.

What we will do:

- Create Knowledge Exchange and Research Institutes (KERIs) around areas of excellence with ambitious targets for both.
- Encourage KERIs to be cross-disciplinary in order better to address complex problems.
- Work with employers to respond to rapidly changing industry and individual needs by developing their employees' future skills.

Theme 4

Provide a collaborative, innovative and high-performing working environment for our staff so that we are an effective and attractive place to work.

It is our academic, professional and support services staff who will deliver the university for the future and their diversity is a huge asset if we are a place that is fair, open to ideas and experiences, fosters working collaboratively, relishes a challenge, responds creatively and gets things done.

What we will do:

- Make performance our focus as we develop our policies and processes for staff, with equality, diversity and inclusion a thread running through everything.
- Foster the career development and ambitions of our staff by using academic domains and developing career pathways for professional and technical staff.

