

Goldsmiths Strategy 2018 to 2023

Introduction from the Warden

Goldsmiths, University of London's reputation is distinctive among universities. Our teaching and our research create new and interdisciplinary approaches. We nurture new thinking.

From our campus in south east London we have built a worldwide reputation for rigorous and innovative academic work.

We are a close-knit community. Our current and former students and staff, and our partners throughout London, the UK and overseas, all take pride in their bond with Goldsmiths.

We are rightly proud of who we are and what we have achieved.

In the face of a changing world it is more important than ever that Goldsmiths continues to be a beacon for a better future, a space for students and staff to continue to explore and challenge ideas.

With Higher Education experiencing rapid change, Goldsmiths' distinctive message needs to be heard loud and clear amongst the noise of an increasingly competitive sector.

To continue to succeed we must respond to the new environment with clarity and focus. Not least, we must demonstrate that we understand and are responding to the changing expectations of students.

We face pressure to change, and some changes are necessary, but amid these adjustments we will always maintain what is special about Goldsmiths.

This Strategy has been developed to ensure that in transitional times Goldsmiths will continue to be relevant, inventive and challenging.

Goldsmiths' Mission

We offer a transformative experience, generating knowledge and stimulating self-discovery through creative, radical and intellectually rigorous thinking and practice.

Goldsmiths' Values

Achieving academic excellence

- Pursuing intellectual curiosity
- Encouraging the highest standards of research and practice
- Building on our diverse strengths through interdisciplinary imagination
- Maximising the interaction of teaching and research

Radical and innovative thinking

- Cultivating a unique and creative approach to all our subjects
- Daring to think differently and to challenge the norms
- Embracing new ideas with energy and reflection

Respecting the individual

- Encouraging individuality and nurturing talent
- Enabling freedom of thought and expression
- Nurturing an environment of openness and tolerance

Promoting access and diversity

- Enabling a wide range of people to benefit from our learning opportunities
- Recruiting students and staff from all backgrounds and experiences
- Strengthening our local connections as we extend our international reach

Supporting our students and staff

- Creating a responsive and collaborative learning environment
- Providing inspiring opportunities for personal and social development
- Enhancing the life skills of employable and enterprising global citizens

Creating change, locally and globally

- Being socially aware and socially engaged
- Actively promoting sustainability
- Fostering a social and intellectual community within, and beyond, Goldsmiths

Our Strategy in Context

Our response to changing times

Since the publication of our last strategy the sector has undergone significant change, and Goldsmiths has responded positively to ensure our ongoing success and sustainability:

- We have introduced a range of new undergraduate and postgraduate provision in new disciplinary areas, increasing Goldsmiths' academic footprint and welcoming more students and staff into the Goldsmiths community;
- There has been growth in student numbers on existing programmes where this has been both feasible and desirable;
- We have accompanied student number growth with additional resource for teaching, maintaining our student/staff ratio in the top quartile of the sector;
- There has been significant investment in our facilities and resources; teaching and social spaces have been refurbished, AV in central teaching spaces has been replaced, and access to online resources has been improved;
- We have extended the public reach of our academic work: the Goldsmiths calendar is punctuated by events such as the Pure Gold music festival and The Goldsmiths Prize literary award, which are rooted in academic departments whilst contributing to our broader reputation;
- We are creating a cultural hub on campus, including the Curzon Goldsmiths cinema and the Goldsmiths Centre for Contemporary Art, which further embodies our ambition to make links between our academic work and the cultural and social world beyond.

On-going strategic challenges

The higher education sector in the UK is under-going the greatest amount of change in a generation:

- UK demographics will see a drop in the number of 18-year-olds over the period of this Strategy;
- The political and policy agenda promises seismic change - some known, some unpredictable - with the introduction of a new regulatory framework for Higher Education, the entrance to the sector of alternative providers and more options for students, the debate over the balance of cost to be met by the state and the individual student, and the impact of Brexit and on-going debate over immigration
- Goldsmiths' traditional subjects such as arts and social sciences have an opportunity to place themselves at the very heart of public understanding and economic development. A new public discourse around 'STEAM', encompassing 'Arts' in its broadest form, is replacing that of the old 'STEM'.

DRAFT STRATEGY FOR CONSULTATION

Grasping the opportunity to put the contribution that these disciplines make to society and the economy at the heart of our research and engagement is a strategic imperative.

- In addition to these factors, the expectations and demands of students are changing. We must be responsive to expectations of teaching provision, facilities and digital resources, learning support, and extra-curricular opportunities. Partnership with students can help us respond appropriately and better fulfil our role in preparing our graduates to succeed in their aspirations.
- At the same time, our ongoing financial sustainability poses its own challenges. We need to build on our long-term ability to invest by strengthening our financial position. We will need to make wise investment choices during the period of this Strategy.

DRAFT

Goldsmiths' Strategic Vision for 2023

Goldsmiths' distinctive curriculum, teaching and research will be more widely recognised and influential locally, nationally and internationally. We will attract the very best staff and students into our community, and enable creativity, resilience and optimism.

Overarching Objectives

- Shape our portfolio of academic programmes and range of research to build on Goldsmiths' reputation as relevant, challenging and distinctive
- Respond to the full range of students' needs and expectations through innovative delivery of excellent teaching and learning and everything that supports it
- Equip graduates with the flexibility, skills and confidence needed to achieve their ambitions and aspire to make a difference to the world around them
- Support research excellence that informs local, national and global challenges

Achieving the Vision and Objectives

These overarching objectives will guide our work over the period of this Strategy, informing choices about priorities and investment options.

To provide structure for our work towards the objectives, a series of strategic themes are identified and described below. Work within the themes will be focussed directly on achieving the overarching objectives. Each theme will contribute across the range of objectives. We will regularly review and refresh the work of each theme as progress against the objectives is made.

Strategic Theme 1: Shaping our distinctive academic portfolio

Context

Goldsmiths' distinctive reputation is in large part due to the range and content of our academic work, both our taught programmes and the research we undertake. Our programmes and research frequently challenge traditional thinking, embrace interdisciplinarity, and nurture creative approaches.

We know that course content is one of the primary factors that potential students consider when applying to university, and we believe that our offer stands out and attracts students looking for a different academic experience. Maintaining our competitive edge and continuing to attract students to Goldsmiths is critical.

More than ever, students have a real awareness of what they want from their time at university and their expectations have shifted from those of the past. Many students expect university to provide a broad experience with direct relevance to their career aspirations, including learning opportunities that have practical application and support the development of a broad range of skills and knowledge.

With recruitment to standard three year, campus-based degree programmes expected to become more challenging we must look to new ways to deliver our distinctive academic offer. New modes and locations of delivery will help us reach new audiences and grow our reputation further.

Our Response

- We will continue to evolve our curriculum, exploring further opportunities to expand our offering and develop new and original programmes at the forefront of research and disciplinary developments.
- We will continue to refresh current programmes so that our curriculum remains contemporary and relevant, includes explicit engagement with theory, research and practice, and provides direct bearing to graduate success.
- Our students will continue to have a voice in developing and diversifying our curriculum and we will continue to engage with the Goldsmiths Students Union's 'Liberate My Degree' campaign, ensuring that programme developments are informed by a range of voices, experiences and global perspectives.
- We will explore how we can create access for more students to broader, cross-disciplinary learning opportunities beyond their degree programmes and academically rigorous but flexible routes through their studies.
- We will enable students to access learning opportunities outside the classroom. Enabling access to opportunities such as work placements and enterprise support will broaden students' learning experience and provide opportunities to gain further skills and knowledge.

DRAFT STRATEGY FOR CONSULTATION

- We will also explore new ways of delivering our academic offer, such as through short courses, online or blended learning, or through partnerships with other institutions, and make a Goldsmiths' education more accessible to broader audiences in the UK and overseas.
- We will ensure that all of these developments and decisions are built on the foundations of demand and need, evidenced by feedback from students and market research.

DRAFT

Strategic Theme 2: Enhancing our academic delivery

Context

The delivery of teaching and learning is at the core of our Mission and drives much of our day-to-day activities. The majority of our financial income is from tuition fees. Continuous enhancement of teaching and learning at Goldsmiths critical for our future success.

Comprehensive support and development opportunities for teaching staff and recognition of good practice and individual excellence is important for a culture of on-going enhancement.

Shifting student expectations anticipate the use of technology to access resources and to support innovative pedagogical practices as standard for those who grew up in the digital age. Expectations with regard to contact with academic staff, of group learning as well as independent study are also shifting.

It is important that Goldsmiths acknowledges and responds in determined and consistent ways to the range of student feedback that we receive. Collaborating directly with students will help us to understand expectations and support needs and better communicate throughout their studies. Successful engagement with student satisfaction should have the additional benefit of being reflected in external measures of excellence.

Graduate outcomes are increasingly a means of assessing the success or otherwise of learning. Engaging with this agenda not only recognises the external drivers but also the needs and ambitions of our students. Expanding and focussing employability support and advice for students will better enable our graduates' future success.

Our Response

- We will form an in-depth understanding of student expectations and experiences using a full spectrum of channels, from collaboration with student representatives, to commissioning our own research, to external surveys. This will enable us to define and implement a real step-change in our delivery of teaching and learning and other academic and support services.
- We will develop, within disciplinary constraints, consistent and student-focussed approaches to the processes and practices that support teaching and learning, including meaningful and personalised feedback, the provision of academic advice and guidance, and programme and module communication and organisation.
- We will articulate Goldsmiths' "educational philosophy" to articulate the distinctiveness of Goldsmiths' curriculum and pedagogic approaches. Our educational philosophy will be informed by good practices in our range of disciplines, and will reflect how interdisciplinarity and teaching and learning with practical and real-world application lies at the heart of what we do.

DRAFT STRATEGY FOR CONSULTATION

- We will ensure our staff have appropriate opportunities to engage in pedagogic reflection and training and to explore and innovative practices. Sharing best practice and sectoral developments will be a central part of our professional development approach.
- We will listen to students and staff to continually enhance our infrastructure in line with changing pedagogic and learning practices, in particular with regard to flexible spaces, technology, library facilities and online resources.

DRAFT

Strategic Theme 3: Making a difference through our research and knowledge exchange

Context

The changing research funding environment is positive for Goldsmiths. The opening statements of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) on, not STEM, but STEAM means that the Arts (and humanities and social sciences) return to their proper place as integral to the development of science and technology, industry and society.

We have an opportunity to develop a fuller engagement with society and the economy. Our research engages with real-world issues and our researchers work with NGOs, business and government at local and global levels. It finds its relevance in grappling with substantive social, cultural, and technological challenges.

The scale of the challenges – environmental sustainability, food shortages, population change, artificial intelligence, energy security, war and crime, poverty, sexual, gender and racial inequality – often demand large-scale research projects and collaboration between a range of partners and disciplines.

It is important that Goldsmiths recognises how to meet those challenges and matches action with good intention. Our ability to grasp the funding opportunities that are available will be dependent on our recognition of our strengths and on demonstrating those strengths to others. Now is not the moment to look inwards; now is our time to influence.

We must scale-up, collaborate and communicate more widely about our work. A clear, determined, strategic approach to this over the coming years will also support our ambitions in the next REF to secure greater recognition of our research.

Making the most of the links between research and enterprise and commercial activities will generate new partnerships and audiences as well as new income streams. Reviewing how we support both research and enterprise will ensure services in this area are focussed and operate well.

Our Response

- We will develop our support for departments across all disciplines to achieve their potential in building and nurturing a culture and practice supportive of excellent research, and we will sustain our research centres and units, recognising that they provide hubs for research activity.
- We will offer assistance to all in bids for grant funding and bring together researchers across Goldsmiths to build interdisciplinary, large scale propositions.
- We will continue to invest in and promote our Research Themes, using these to help galvanise potential partners and investment in Goldsmiths.

DRAFT STRATEGY FOR CONSULTATION

- We will seek and engage with enterprise collaborations and broader opportunities for knowledge exchange, leveraging the financial benefits of these for sustaining and developing our range of activities.
- We will develop a more outward-looking, public-facing approach to communicating about our research, taking outwards the work undertaken at Goldsmiths to new publics and generating new and different impact and value.

DRAFT

Strategic Theme 4: Extending our international reach and influence

Context

Goldsmiths' distinctive international reputation reflects our twin commitments to growing a diverse, inclusive and multi-cultural community of staff, students and alumni and to fostering a social, cultural and intellectual perspective which is global.

We can extend this reputation further through courses that enable graduates to achieve their ambitions in the international workplace and to become successful global citizens. We can also grow content and opportunity, through teaching and research partnerships with other leading international institutions with shared ambitions and values.

A stronger global reach will attract the best students and staff from across the world to Goldsmiths while delivery of online courses and programmes, collaborative provision and transnational education will ensure that our pedagogy can be enjoyed by greater number of students worldwide.

It is critical that efforts are effectively directed towards supporting academic work that increases our international profile and enhances the international experience of our staff and students. We must seek relationships and focus on activities that, through their scale and significance, will deliver the most benefit.

We have a particular reputation for interdisciplinary research and teaching that has interacted with the development of the creative industries in London. As it becomes more widely acknowledged that the Creative Industries are critical to the leading and emerging economies, Goldsmiths has a clear opportunity to extend our reach and reputation and take our expertise to broader audiences.

Our Response

- We aim to attract greater numbers of international students and staff to enrich our culture, research and teaching.
- We will make curriculum available to an increased number of students around the globe through new modes of delivery including distance-learning, international summer schools and collaborative teaching partnerships.
- We will equip our students with the necessary skills and expertise to succeed in the international workplace.
- We will identify and nurture new research collaborations and generate greater numbers of internationally co-authored outputs and research proposals which include international investigators.
- We will develop strong partnerships with internationally focused institutions that share our values, reputation and ambition.

Strategic Theme 5: Embodying Civic Engagement: recognising our responsibility and social conscience

Context

Goldsmiths is a civic university committed to active engagement with our local communities within south & east London, as well as London as a whole, in a spirit of openness, collaboration and connection.

There are many opportunities to continue deepening the positive social, economic, physical, creative, cultural and educational contributions we make. We are able to harness global knowledge, economic and social capital to work for the best interests of our local communities and the local economy. Being a partner of choice for other organisations which share our values and ambition is extremely important to us, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

London is a very successful world city but one with many challenges: maintaining sustainable growth, addressing widening inequalities, tackling pollution and creating high-value jobs, trade links and wealth for the wider UK, particularly through the creative and digital economy. Goldsmiths' reach and reputation mean we are particularly well placed to work with London authorities and communities to tackle the capital's challenges.

We believe in the power of education to regenerate communities and help with the economic, social and material development of those areas. In contrast to the many parts of the UK, London has an especially young population. There is a real opportunity for Goldsmiths to extend its reach through continuing to forge strong relationships with schools and colleges across London.

Many Goldsmiths students are active volunteers in the local community and many of our graduates choose to put down roots in south east London. We are proud that our people become a vital part of the public service and professional workforce as well as contributing to the thriving local cultural and creative economy.

Our Response

- We will form strategic partnerships with anchor institutions in our local communities to maximise our impact and create economic and social value through our own employment, procurement and development activity.
- Where it will bring benefit to our students, staff or local community we will look to form partnerships with other London universities to deliver access to more opportunities and improved support infrastructures.
- We will continue to embed ourselves as an integral part of the local education and skills infrastructure. We will continue to build aspiration and raise achievement so that local young people and adults are equipped to progress to Goldsmiths or other higher education providers. We will deepen our focus on recruiting more students from London boroughs.

DRAFT STRATEGY FOR CONSULTATION

- We will seek out and form partnerships with local enterprise hubs and create opportunities for our students and graduates to be entrepreneurs and business creators in the local community.
- We will create more opportunities for our students and alumni to be active contributors to our local community.
- Through public engagement with our research, our range of short courses, our public lectures and events programme and our library and archives, we will make our knowledge and learning accessible to the widest community.

DRAFT

Strategic Theme 6: Supporting the Goldsmiths community of students, staff and alumni

Context

A university is the sum of its people: the academic staff who pursue and produce knowledge; the students attracted by the courses and other opportunities on offer; the professional staff who provide the administration and support services and operational management.

There is a strong sense of community on our campus and a sense of pride in our shared identity. The range and distinctiveness of Goldsmiths' academic portfolio attracts people with a sense of social justice, a creative drive and ambitions to make a difference. The community is an important part of what attracts students and staff to Goldsmiths, and of their experience once here.

Our collective endeavour is a source of strength. It is important that we nurture our community and ensure it continues to draw people in, support and connect them.

It is important that Goldsmiths is a great place to work. Attracting, retaining and supporting excellent staff lies behind our on-going success. Student satisfaction and success is nurtured by fulfilled and engaged staff.

A broader community, encompassing more and closer networks with alumni and academic partners, will bring additional benefits and opportunities to influence more widely through the teaching and research that Goldsmiths' generates.

Our Response

- We will continue to enhance our approach to working with students as partners, responding to student-led projects and student input to address expectations, needs and priorities and engaging students with the breadth of our work and to understand challenging approaches.
- We will improve approaches to recruiting and developing staff, with clear progression routes that recognise a range of contributions and a range of development opportunities. We will support students and staff in understanding and responding positively to change.
- We will nurture stronger alumni relationships, providing on-going support and facilitating networking and learning between graduates, current students and staff.
- We will work to enhance communication among the community, between staff to share knowledge, ideas and good practice and with students to gain input and share information.
- We will continue to advance and progress equality, diversity and inclusion, demonstrated through a vibrant campus and community that welcomes and benefits from different perspectives and backgrounds.

Strategic Theme 7: Building an efficient and effective infrastructure

Context

Efficient and effective management of our resources is essential. For the here and now, we must ensure that as much as possible of our limited resources are directed towards supporting academic work and enhancing the student experience.

For the future we have a responsibility to ensure that Goldsmiths sustains and that our reach widens in order to benefit society for generations to come.

Robust and freely available data to inform judgements and decision-making are critical for effective management. Increased transparency, including over our finances, will support shared accountability for and understanding of the consequences of the decisions we take.

Our students and staff deserve an efficient and highly professional support infrastructure which meets their needs as effectively as possible. Streamlining our processes will free up staff and student time to focus on academic priorities. Improving our efficiency will contribute to reducing costs and achieving financial sustainability.

Responding to these challenges will require commitment from across the Goldsmiths community. We will support our staff to develop the tools they need to do their jobs effectively, including through training programmes and clearer career progression opportunities.

Our Response

- We will develop our resource allocation processes to further improve transparency and accountability. We will do this by building on the recently introduced 'Contribution Model' that commits academic departments to a defined level of 'contribution' and professional services to a fixed level of cost.
- We will develop our long-term planning and forecasting processes. This will include ensuring that more robust management information is available to managers at all levels to support decision-making and assure Council that the College is operating on a sustainable basis.
- We will address the efficiency and effectiveness of our structure, processes and systems and make changes where necessary. Standardisation of practice and the common implementation of policy will be expected. This will improve the student and staff experience, and enable growth in areas of strong demand without significantly increasing our administrative overheads.

Implementation approach

This strategy sets out a vision for our institution, outlining our ambitions and goals for the medium-term.

In implementing the strategy, we will need to be adaptable and ready to address any further challenges and opportunities that the external environment presents. We must work within the constraints of our financial and other resource capacities. Implementation will therefore need to be regularly reviewed and activities will be subject to prioritisation and decisions about timing and phasing.

Regular review and prioritisation will be managed through the annual planning and budgeting process. Priorities and progress measures for each Strategic Theme will be articulated in an annual Operational Plan. Progress against the Overarching Objectives and associated Key Performance Indicators will be reported annually.

DRAFT