



ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY

OUTCOME AGREEMENT

2015/18

Introduction

RGU's mission is 'to transform people and communities'. It does this by ensuring that our discovery of knowledge and dissemination of scholarship have the greatest possible economic, social and cultural impact.

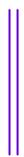
The university's vision to be recognised, in Scotland and beyond, as a distinctive university leading and shaping the debate on the future of higher education and placing students at the centre of the education it offers. The university will be known for the impact of its teaching, scholarship and translational research, the employability of its graduates, its influence in the region and nation, its growing global profile, and its strong interdisciplinary focus on a small number of key questions and issues of concern to the local and global community. The university will achieve its goals in partnership with academic, voluntary, public and business organisations that share its ideals and aspirations.

The university's strategy, *A Clear Future for a leading university in a new era* reflects on the university's achievements and aspirations for the future. It articulates a significant growth in commercial income and research revenues whilst maintaining the quality and reputation for our relevant and professional portfolio of courses.

The strategy will be implemented through eight strategic aims:

1. [Teaching and learning](#): to inspire all to achieve their maximum potential and excel in the world of tomorrow.
2. [Extending access to learning](#): to enable individuals to achieve their ambitions throughout life whatever their circumstances.
3. [Student experience](#): to support students and graduates to enjoy and prosper within a vibrant learning community.
4. [Research](#): to be recognised for our contribution to the growth of innovation through advancing internationally excellent translational research in our areas of strategic focus.
5. [Commercialisation](#): to harness our intellectual and physical assets so they generate value to the economy and are profitable to the university.
6. [The regional community](#): to contribute to and be an active leader in the development of the regional community.
7. [Partnerships](#): to secure strategic partnerships with a small number of globally recognised universities and companies that will support the university's key ambitions.
8. [Our university](#): to empower staff and students to develop a strong and engaged community.

The strategy of the university is complemented and extended through six associated strategic statements. These statements provide significant stakeholder groups of the university with information that contextualises the university's strategy for their particular area. The six current strategic statements are:



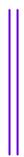
- Oil and gas;
- Health and wellbeing;
- Big data;
- Arts and creative industries;
- Employability plus; and
- RGU and the region.

The strategy and strategic statements are available on the university's website at: <http://www.rgu.ac.uk/about/planning-and-policy/strategy>.

This Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council provides examples of how the university's strategy is undertaking activity aligned to Scottish Government policy and objectives. These include:

- The university's commitment to seamless transition between further education and higher education as evidenced by the unique partnership arrangement between the university and the North East Scotland College as well as through the significant numbers of students entering university courses with advanced standing.
- The university's commitment to widening access, despite the small catchment of MD20 and MD40 students, through our comprehensive Access programme and engagement with SHEP schools, the Frank Buttle quality mark and the SFC-funded ACES initiative.
- The university's commitment to the employability of its graduates through a portfolio of professional relevant courses, pro-active engagement with business and industry in the design and delivery of the university's courses as well as a the significant number of placements or work-related projects embedded within courses. This has been reinforced through engagement with the SME sector through the SFC-funded Talent Exchange programme which aims to provide greater number of student placements and projects through finding solutions for SME's problems. The university is examining ways in which this programme of support can be enhanced through the greater use of Innovation Vouchers.
- The university's commitment to the educational and training needs of key economic sectors most notably the oil and gas sector demonstrated through the university's engagement and hosting of the Oil and Gas Academy Scotland (OGAS), the SFC-funded Innovation Centre and the university's own International Institute for Oil and Gas. The university is also developing with funding from SDS a pilot with the North East Scotland College to provide an advanced apprenticeship in Engineering based upon the principles of the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce.

The strategy is implemented through the university's planning process wherein an annual University Operating Plan (UOP) is developed. The Board of Governors monitors the achievement of the university's strategy through ten key performance indicators (KPIs) and the university's Strategic Planning and Resources Group monitors a basket of wider performance indicators (PIs) that are aligned to the aims of the strategy



and underpin the KPIs. The university's key performance indicators are available on the university's website at:

<http://www.rgu.ac.uk/about/planning-and-policy/strategy>.

A key stakeholder the university will work with to achieve its ambitions is the Scottish Funding Council for Further and Higher Education (SFC). The SFC has developed a framework of three year Outcome Agreements with institutions it funds with seven strategic aims with a set of twenty-two national performance measures (NPM) aligned to these aims.

The aims expressed by the Funding Council within its Outcome Agreement align with the strategic aims of the university (see the mapping below) and therefore, where appropriate, the university has proposed the use of its own KPIs as targets against some of the measures.



		Strategic aims contained within <i>A Clear Future for a leading university in a new era</i>							
		Teaching and learning	Extending access to learning	Student experience	Research	Commercialisation	The regional community	Partnerships	Our university
SFC Outcome Agreement Aims	Improve access to higher education	✓	✓				✓		✓
	Learner journeys are short	✓	✓	✓			✓		
	Right learning in the right place	✓					✓		
	A developed workforce	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
	A research base that is internationally competitive				✓			✓	
	Deliver a step change in the engagement of business and industry				✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Sustainable institutions					✓			✓

Aim 1: Widening access to people from the widest possible range of backgrounds

Introduction

The university's strategy provides a commitment to:

- motivate and facilitate individuals from under-represented groups in the North East; and
- advance an inclusive environment for our staff and students in which to work and study.

The university's work in this area has been aided significantly by the regional coherence funding that is provided by the SFC. This has enabled the acceleration of efforts to improve opportunities for under-represented groups. A key feature of the university's approach has been the development of partnerships at both a strategic and operation level with stakeholder organisations across the North East region, including local authorities. Further detail on the university's work within this area can be found in the sections below.

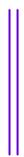
NPM 1: Articulation with advanced standing

The university has a longstanding commitment to articulation with advanced standing, working in partnership with colleges to develop and support individual articulation routes with guaranteed places for learners. Each route is detailed within a formal Course Level Agreement, which also specifies any relevant entry requirements. The university had a longstanding formal relationship with Aberdeen College, which was designated an Associate College of the university. This relationship has continued with the newly formed North East Scotland College. This formal agreement secures a planned, shared approach to articulation within the North East of Scotland. A Memorandum of Understanding also exists between the university and Dundee and Angus College.

The number of students who have entered the university with advanced standing has, due to the Associate College arrangement with the North East of Scotland College, increased year on year. Most notably, the university is pleased to report a 45% increase in full-time articulation with partners over the period 2011-2014. These partnerships have been enriched through the work of the North East Articulation Hub and the provision of 75 additional student places in successive years taught jointly by the university and college. The university has indicated its willingness, subject to continued funding, for this model to continue into 2017/18.

As the number of articulating entrants has increased, this has led to an increase in the overall number of HN entrants. Most positively, through the University's work in articulation, higher proportions of these entrants now benefit from full articulation, ensuring no loss of time for the learner and efficiency in the learner journey.

Bearing in mind the university's desire to continue its work in articulation and to manage numbers in the context of consolidation, a focus in 2014/15 will be to examine, within some subject areas, admissions criteria for non-partner colleges, as well as non-advanced HN entrants.



Notwithstanding this, in recognition of the increased demand for articulation, the university has increased targets for articulation from 315+75 in 2014/15 to 400+75 in each year 2015/16 – 2017/18. This is further evidence of the university's commitment in this strategically important area.

NPM 1: Articulation with advanced standing

Performance 2011/12 – 2014/15 and targets 2015/16 – 2017/18

	Academic session						
	Performance				Targets		
	2011/12 ¹	2012/13 ¹	2013/14 ²	2014/15 ³	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Scottish -domiciled Undergraduate Entrants (SDUE) articulating with advanced standing	292	347	427 + 75	456 + 75	400 + 75	400 + 75	400 + 75
Number of SDUE HN entrants	496	573	681	682 + 75	549 + 75	549 + 75	549+75
Proportion	58.9%	60.6%	62.7%	70.0%	76.1%	76.1%	76.1%

1. The source for data 2011/12 and 2012/13 is the SFC's National Articulation Database report. Numbers are full time and part time headcount
2. The source for data 2013/14 is drawn from the university's submitted, but as yet unpublished, HESA student return. This figure is likely to be marginally lower than that which will be eventually published in the NAD because the NAD merges 3 separate data sets (SQA database, Further Education Statistics (FES) database and institution's HESA data) to get a full figure.
3. The source data for 2014/15 is based on the university's performance as of 9th December 2014 and is drawn from the university's student records system. This figure will reduce marginally by final reporting to HESA due to in-year student withdrawal.

NPM 2: Engagement and recruitment of MD20 and MD40 students

ACCESS RGU

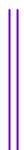
The pool of most deprived learners in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire is small. Nevertheless, as part of the regional coherence project, the university has made improvements in MD20 recruitment.

The key to this has been the establishment of stronger links with Aberdeen City Council and, in particular, the identification of partner schools with which the University works to improve access to higher education.

This work is delivered through the university's co-ordinated initiative, ACCESS RGU, which aims to:

- build ambition: raise aspirations and develop ambition to progress
- enable access: mitigate barriers and create student-centred access pathways, and
- support achievement: support the development of skills-enriched graduates with the confidence and capacity to achieve their ambitions, whatever their circumstances

The outreach activities delivered with schools and communities, under the banner of ACCESS RGU, include engagement in schools and on-campus with prospective students



and the provision of advice and guidance for applicants and enrolling students. Further details on ACCESS RGU activities can be found by visiting <http://www.rgu.ac.uk/future-students/access-rgu>.

S5/S6 Access Programmes

In addition to engagement with senior phase pupils, delivered primarily via a menu of interactive workshops tailored to school needs, the university has built on its local development of the SFC-supported Access to Creative Education Scotland (ACES) programme, expanding the model to a range of subject areas. These programmes offer a blend of practical subject focussed activities, alongside support sessions delivered by student advisors.

A key element of this work has been the expansion of the university's associate student scheme to young people within the Senior Phase. From an initial cohort of 25 in 2012/13, the university will support 140 young people in 2014/15, expanding the programmes to six subject areas. This will take participation to approximately 16% of Senior Phase pupils across the university's partner schools.

Contextualised Admissions

The introduction of contextualised admissions in 2013/14 is another strand of the university's approach to implementing its commitment to improve access to higher education. This work has provided increased opportunities for applicants from partner schools and those from MD20 and care leaver backgrounds. The University's approach to engaging colleagues across the institution in the development has been highlighted as a model of good practice by Supporting Professionalism in Admissions.

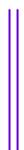
NPM 2: Engagement and recruitment of MD20 and MD40 students

Performance 2011/12 – 2014/15 and targets 2015/16 – 2017/18 (full time and part time headcount)

	Academic session						
	Performance				Targets		
	2011/12 ¹	2012/13 ¹	2013/14 ¹	2014/15 ²	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Number of MD20	142	154	149	162	166	169	169
Number of MD20 to MD40	216	258	238	226	242	258	282
Number of MD40	358	412	387	388	408	427	451
Total SDUE	2192	2332	2317	2203	2245	2245	2245
Proportion MD20	6.5%	6.6%	6.4%	7.4%	7.4%	7.5%	7.5%
Proportion MD20 to MD40	9.9%	11.1%	10.3%	10.3%	10.8%	11.5%	12.6%
Proportion MD40	16.3%	17.7%	16.7%	17.7%	18.2%	19.0%	20.1%

- 1 The source data for this table for the years 2011/12 to 2013/14 are from the HESA student return, which is then mapped by the SFC to their interpretation of the deprivation quintiles from the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).
- 2 The source data for 2014/15 are based on the university's performance as of 12th February 2015, drawn from the university's student records system. The final outturn for the year is likely to be marginally lower due to withdrawal of some students.

In this table, the SDUE is lower than in other tables due to the fact that a very small number of students without a recorded quintile are removed from the total figure.



NPM 3: Engagement with the Scottish Higher Education Programme (SHEP)

The university remains committed to supporting access for young people from SHEP schools.

As part of this, the university has engaged with pupils from the ASPIRENorth Schools for Higher Education Programme (SHEP) for a number of years. The university regularly hosts events on campus in support of the ASPIRENorth programme. At a strategic level, the university is pleased to participate in the ASPIRENorth Programme Management Group.

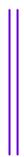
In a drive to enhance regional coherence in this area, the university established stronger partnerships with Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Councils in 2012/13. This led to the identification of a set of partner schools with which the university works to support attainment and access to higher education, including the four schools in the North East that are included within the SHEP.

More recently, the university has expanded the strategic basis of its long established partnership with the North East Scotland College to include schools engagement and joint marketing activity within low progression schools.

Regular dialogue with ASPIRENorth, the North East Scotland College, local authorities in the region and senior management teams in partner schools has been translated into a wide range of outcomes, including the implementation of tailored workshops, delivered by RGU in within the Senior Phase (35 sessions were held in 2013/14 and it is anticipated this will increase to 70 sessions in 2014/15). Alongside this, the new Northern Lights Programme (for S1/2 early pupil and parent engagement) will start in Northfield Academy, which is the secondary school with the lowest progression in the region to further or higher education. This will be delivered by RGU in partnership with the local authority and ASPIRENorth.

In addition to those entrants included by SFC within NPM 3, the university is cognisant that approximately 150 entrants from SHEP schools join the university having first studied within college. A well-established system of support is in place for this sizeable cohort.

Despite this work, the university recognises that the change in definition of SHEP schools in 2015/16 means a reduction in the number of SHEP schools in the ASPIRENorth region from 16 to 10 and may result in a decline in entrants in future years. This also leads to significant uncertainty about predicting the numbers of entrants from SHEP schools. For this reason, the university has chosen not to establish targets in 2015/16, but will monitor the situation with a view to including well-founded targets in the Outcome Agreement for 2016/17 onwards.



**NPM 3: Engagement with the Scottish Higher Education Programme (SHEP)
Performance 2011/12 – 2014/15 (full time and part time headcount)**

	Academic session			
	Performance			
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Number of direct entrants from SHEP schools	106 ¹	106 ¹	111 ¹	109 ²
Number of SHEP entrants arriving via college	161 ³	150 ³	158 ³	149 ³
Total SHEP	267	256	269	258
Total SDUE	2197	2338	2333	2222
Proportion of direct entrants from SHEP schools	4.8%	4.5%	4.8%	4.9%
Proportion of SHEP entrants arriving via college	7.3%	6.4%	6.8%	6.7%
Overall proportion of SHEP entrants	12.2%	10.9%	11.5%	11.6%

- The source data for direct entrants for the years 2011/12 to 2013/14 are from the HESA student return, which counts entrants whose last institution was a SHEP school, as specified in Annex C of SFC's Outcome Agreement Guidance 2014-15.*
- The source data for direct entrants in 2014/15 are based on the university's performance as of 12th February 2015, drawn from the university's student records system. The final outturn for the year is likely to be marginally lower due to withdrawal of some students.*
- All source data for entrants from SHEP schools arriving via college are based on the university's performance as of 12th February 2015, drawn from the university's student records system. The final outturn for the year is likely to be marginally lower due to withdrawal of some students.*

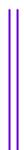
NPM 4: Entrants from protected characteristic groups and care leavers

Protected characteristic groups

As part of the university's annual monitoring of equalities data, the university examines the composition of its student body by the different protected characteristic groups. The figures regarding the proportion of Scottish domiciled undergraduate entrants by different protected characteristic groups suggest that the:

- proportions of entrants aged under 21 and 21 and over has broadly followed the Scottish HEI sector trend
- university's proportion of BME entrants has remained broadly static at 5.5%, which is considerably higher than the proportion of the BME population within the region
- proportion of disabled entrants has increased significantly from 6.3% in 2009/10 to 13.5% in 2013/14; this is significantly above the Scottish HEI sector average of 9.3% in 2012/13
- proportion of male and female entrants has remained broadly similar over a 5 year period, at around 36% and 64% female. As part of the university's Equality Outcomes, action at a School level is being taken to address some of the systemic gender imbalances that exist within the student population

The targets relating to the university's Equality Outcomes have been removed from the Outcome Agreement, due to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) having selected the university to re-develop its Outcomes. In light of this and in line with EHRC guidance, the Equality Outcomes no longer include specific targets around gender imbalance.



The university has monitored annually the recruitment of students from other protected characteristic groups (e.g. sexual orientation and gender identity). This has been done since 2013/14 for Home entrants and since 2014/15 for all entrants. It is difficult to ascertain whether any group is under-represented without comparative data for the wider population, since this information is not included within the most recent Census (2011).

The university has identified instances of gender imbalance within the undergraduate course portfolio. In response, the university's work in wider access will now include consideration of gender imbalances via outreach and support programmes. By way of example, a new S5/S6 programme in engineering, to be launched in September 2015, will include a focus on the under-representation of females in this subject area.

Care Leavers

The University remains committed to providing support for young people with a care leaver background.

Care leaver enrolment data shows this work is having an impact, with the number of care leaver entrants rising to 18 in 2014/15. As a result of this and the work outlined above, the university was delighted to have its Buttle UK Quality Mark confirmed for a further two years, for the period 2015-2017.

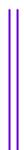
Early work in this area focused on the development and definition of a package of support which offers advice, guidance and financial assistance to this group from the point of application through to study on-course.

While the scope of the support evolved in light of delivery experience and student feedback, key elements include:

- 1-1 engagement and support, throughout the application process and on-course study, provided by the university's care leaver adviser
- travel support to attend the university's programme of open days, applicants days and selection visits
- inclusion within the university's widening access programme of activities, including eligibility to apply for wider access scholarships
- inclusion within contextualised admissions processes
- guaranteed 365 days university halls accommodation, with a discount in the first year
- an enrolment support pack, including support for travel and study materials
- a discretionary fund, working in tandem with other financial support schemes offered by the university and external organisations, enabling individuals to seek financial support for one-off and unforeseen issues

Key areas of focus during the period of the Outcome Agreement will be to:

- collate student feedback to inform the further development of student support
- continue to raise awareness of the support available through widening participation outreach activities and via the university's strategic partnership links with local authorities and the North East Scotland College
- develop pathway information to support prospective students to plan for higher education study



NPM4: Care leaver enrolment performance 2011/12-2014/15

	Academic session			
	2011/12 ²	2012/13 ²	2013/14	2014/15
Number of care leaver entrants ¹	9	6	12	18

- 1 Source data concerning care leavers are based on the university's performance as of 20th January 2015, drawn from the university's student records system. The final outturn for 2014/15 is likely to be marginally lower due to withdrawal of some students.
- 2 Source data for 2011/12 and 2012/13 are based on positive responses to the UCAS form's question "Have you ever been in care?"

NPM 5: Success rates amongst protected characteristic groups

This measure will be addressed amongst the commentary in the following section.



Aim 2: Learner journeys are as short, efficient and effective as possible and learners experience the highest quality of learning and teaching and achieve successful outcomes

Introduction

The university's strategy provides a commitment to:

- challenge the design of our teaching, learning and assessment to enable best use of learners' abilities and time.

The university endeavours to ensure that its provision is as efficient as possible through a variety of means:

- supporting and facilitating articulation of students from college directly into university courses (see Aim 1 above)
- offering, where possible given professional body accreditation requirements accelerated degree courses, e.g. the integrated Masters courses in both Engineering, Architecture and Pharmacy
- mechanisms to accredit prior experiential learning and qualifications from outside the UK, and
- a range of continuing professional development and bespoke courses

In the last Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR), which was undertaken in 2012, the university received confidence in the current and likely future management of academic standards and quality of the student learning experience. The university's annual monitoring of quality involves detailed analysis of learner feedback and performance.

NPM 6: Retention of students: the number and proportion of full-time, first year Scottish-domiciled undergraduate entrants returning to study in year two

The university participates in the SFC funded 'Back on Course' retention programme and has adapted its management information reporting to meet the needs of this programme.

The university monitors achievement rates of students returning to study through the annual course appraisal process and at the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee, a standing committee of Academic Council. The university has a record of high of retention rates, and in the last published data the university's retention rate was higher than both the Scottish sector average and the HESA benchmark for the university. The Board of Governors has approved a change of its KPI in this area to match the national measure.

The target set for the university is to meet or exceed its benchmark. The university accepts that with an increase in the entry grades of students this benchmark figure is likely to increase in the near future and the university will aim to increase retention rates for Scottish-domiciled undergraduates to 92% over the period of the Outcome Agreement.



The university recognises that the retention of MD40 learners is lower than the average for SDUE. Additional support has, therefore, been introduced for this group. Management information – reviewed through the annual course appraisal process – has also been updated to allow specific consideration of the achievement of this group at School/Department and institutional level.

The university monitors a wide range of information relating to the quality of the student learning experience. This are monitored through the Annual Appraisal Process, which operates successively at the levels of the course, the School/Department, the Faculty and, finally, the university as a whole.

At each level, the process identifies areas of strength and weakness and develops actions to address any shortcomings. The outcome of the process forms the basis of an annual report that the Board of Governors receive in December, which assures them of the steps being taken to enhance the student learning experience.

The university also uses a student achievement rate (SAR) to monitor year on year progress, repeats and withdrawals.

In addition, the university has a formal system of Institution Led Reviews, which covers all academic disciplines on a cyclical basis. The outcome of these reviews is reported by the Board to the SFC annually, as part of the Quality Enhancement Report.

The previous section of the Outcome Agreement (Aim 1) referred to the retention of students from particular backgrounds. The university monitors a range of equalities and diversity data annually at an institutional level through the Equalities and Diversity Advisory Group. The student profile is monitored through the characteristics of age, disability, gender, gender identity, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation. In addition student achievement (measured through the university's Student Achievement Rate), student satisfaction and employment destinations are monitored through the characteristics of age, disability, gender and race. These data are compared where relevant and appropriate with local census data and ECU comparative data. At a School/Department level, equality data is made available and through the annual appraisal process. Schools are invited to comment on any matters that they identify locally. Both the course-based appraisal and the institutional-level analysis are considered by the university's Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee.

NPM 6: Retention of students

Performance 2011/12 – 2012/13 and targets 2013/14 – 2017/18

First year SDUE returning in year two	Academic session						
	Performance		Targets				
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Number returned	1716	1770	1773	1773	1773	1773	1773
Number in previous year	1874	1927	1927	1927	1927	1927	1927
Proportion	91.6%	91.9%	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%

Data for 2011/12 and 2012/13 are sourced from the SFC. These are calculated from HESA student returns using the number returned into the following year from those who started their course in August of the previous year (note – these numbers include students who enter with



advanced standing who enter in year 3 and will return into year 4). The university's proxy for this calculation will always be marginally lower than the SFC's total because the SFC can track students who leave RGU and take up study in another institution.

NPM 7: Student satisfaction – the difference from the individual institution's UK benchmark figure for students satisfied with the overall quality of their course of study

The monitoring and enhancement of the quality of the student experience is embedded within the university's quality assurance system. The university's quality assurance systems ensure a system of monitoring based upon the individual course which involves analysing the results of the National Student Survey (NSS), the university's internal Student Experience Questionnaire and participation in various other national surveys (for example, the International Student Barometer).

The university's performance over the last 4 years in the overall satisfaction question within the NSS has been consistently high and has exceeded both its NSS benchmark and the Scottish average. It should be noted that the university anticipated that the disruption of the co-location of all academic subjects on the Garthdee campus might have, particularly given the target population of final year undergraduates, led to a decrease in satisfaction. In the light of the fact that such a decrease did NOT occur, the targets for future years have been increased in this year's Outcome Agreement compared to that of 2014/15.

Given the importance of the student experience to the university's strategy, the Board of Governors has included the NSS overall satisfaction rating as one of the university's KPIs. The target set for the university to achieve is at least 90% by the 2018/19 academic session. The university's focus for improving student satisfaction is around particular areas where benchmarking with other universities suggests that performance could be enhanced – these include Gray's School of Art, Computing and Digital Media and Nursing and Midwifery.

NPM 7: Student satisfaction

Performance 2011/12 – 2013/14 and targets 2014/15 – 2017/18

Student Satisfaction	Academic session						
	Performance			Targets			
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
The difference (+/-) from the individual institution benchmark figure for students satisfied with the overall quality of their course of study in the National Student Survey (RGU's benchmark is 84%)	+3%	+3%	+3%	+3%	+4%	+4%	+5%
Satisfaction score	87%	87%	87%	87%	88%	88%	89%

Source: NSS question 22 (released in August of the year following the survey i.e. 2014/15 survey outcome will be released in August 2015)



AIM 3: RIGHT LEARNING IN THE RIGHT PLACE

Secure coherent provision of higher education in Scotland in line with the SFC's statutory obligation

Introduction

The university's strategy contains specific objectives to:

- develop students' capabilities to thrive in an increasingly multi-disciplinary and fast changing world of work
- lead thinking in the development of professional practice and emerging professions and roles; and
- engage with employers and professions to develop workforce skills and capabilities to meet the needs of the economy and society

Responding to current and future skills requirements

The university is committed to providing the appropriate portfolio of courses for the region, the achievement of this is evidenced through:

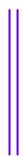
- high demand of the university's courses both by school-leavers and those articulating from college courses (see Aim 1)
- accreditation of such courses through professional and statutory bodies
- incorporation of work related experiences within the majority of the university's courses, which will be developed further through the funding the university has received for the *Talent Exchange* project (see Aim 4)

A significant feature of the university's course portfolio is the high demand for the university's graduates by employers. This is due to a number of features of the university's provision, including the:

- close engagement with employers in the design and approval of all courses;
- high priority given to the provision of work-related experiences (including formal placements) in all courses
- involvement of industry practitioners, including professional bodies, in course delivery and assessment
- provision of state-of-the-art training facilities
- development of key transferable skills through the teaching and assessment practices involved in course delivery, and
- provision of effective careers education and support

Gender balance within the curriculum

Following the identification of instances of gender imbalance within the undergraduate course portfolio by EDAG, the university has extended the role of the Wider Access team to incorporate gender, alongside access to those from the most disadvantaged areas. The first priority is to begin work to address the gender imbalance (in favour of males) in the intake to the engineering subject areas. The team and the School of Engineering are developing a specific programme to address this that will be launched in 2015/16.



Plans to respond to the strategic aims set out in *'Setting the Direction for Nursing and Midwifery Education in Scotland'*

The School of Nursing and Midwifery is cognisant of the six strategic aims contained within *'Setting the Direction for Nursing and Midwifery Education in Scotland'*. School staff have been committed fully to all the work streams in areas such as values, research, practice learning, pre-registration nursing and midwifery as well as postgraduate provision and CPD. It is leading on a mental health care network involving three other universities; Abertay, Dundee and Stirling; which will work with NHS Boards across the North and North East of Scotland to develop collaborative research and education programmes. The school works closely with all of its NHS partners to ensure programmes are fit for purpose and that they address the core NHS Scotland values both in selection of students and within the education programmes. It also works closely with those partners in supporting and developing clinical academic careers through CPD.

National Gaelic Language Plan and Modern language provision

The university is currently not required to produce a Gaelic language plan but acknowledges its role in supporting current Gaelic speakers. The university has enhanced the 'My Career Toolkit' tool (see Aim 4) to provide a link to the BBC's modern language learning materials. This resource provides tuition in 40 languages, including Gaelic, for learners at all levels. This enhancement will go 'live' in March 2015.

Major changes to provision

There are no plans to make any major changes to the course portfolio.

Additional funded numbers for undergraduate and postgraduate skills

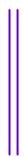
The university recognises the allocation of additional funded numbers to support its activities to provide graduates for specific areas of skills shortages, particularly in the sectors of engineering (undergraduate courses), IT for oil and gas (MSc IT for Oil and Gas and MSc Information and Network Security), oil and gas plus a wide range of public and private sector bodies (MSc Instrumental and Analytical Science) and creative industries (MSc Fashion Management).

NPM 8: STEM courses – the number and proportion of Scottish-domiciled undergraduate entrants to STEM courses

The university has a number of initiatives addressing the development of courses within STEM subjects, these include:

- participating in (and acting as host of) the Oil and Gas Academy Scotland. This partnership will facilitate the industry's access to further and higher education offers from colleges and universities and will allow the institutions to respond in a timely and effective manner to changing skills demands within the industry
- the additional funded places on the undergraduate Mechanical Engineering programme under the SFC's Skills for Growth programme

Given the fact that the university's portfolio is in strong demand, the university has no strategic plans to significantly alter the balance of its current provision. The university therefore sees the proportion of entrants to STEM subjects remaining stable over the period of the Outcome Agreement.



NPM 8 – STEM courses

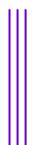
Performance 2009/10 – 2014/15 and targets 2015/16 to 2017/18 (FT and PT headcount)

	Academic session								
	Performance						Targets		
	09/10 ¹	10/11 ¹	11/12 ¹	12/13 ¹	13/14 ¹	14/15 ²	15/16	16/17	17/18
Number of SDUE on STEM courses	427	421	414	506	526	417	456	456	456
Total SDUE	2390	2110	2197	2342	2,337	2197	2245	2245	2245
Proportion	17.9%	20%	18.8%	21.6%	22.5%	19%	20.3%	20.3%	20.3%

1. The source of these data for the years 2011/12 – 2013/14 is the HESA student record.
2. The source of these data for 2014/15 is the university's student records system as at 9th December 2014. There will be a marginal increase due to Semester 2 intake, minus student withdrawals.

It should be noted that a number of subjects that would be included within other broader definitions of STEM subjects (for example Architecture and Nursing & Midwifery) are excluded from the one used by the SFC.

Equally, it should be noted that within the region the university serves many of the university's non-STEM graduates start employment within industries with a strong STEM element to them, for example the oil and gas industry. In 2012/13 of the university's Scottish domiciled graduates, 31.7% of the Business and Administrative graduates, 22.6% of Law graduates and 22.6% of the university's Architecture, Building and Planning Scottish domiciled graduates started their career in the oil and gas sector.



AIM 4: A DEVELOPED WORKFORCE

Learners who have the skills, knowledge and entrepreneurial spirit to get a job and progress their career; and institutions that respond to the skills needs of the economy locally and nationally

Introduction

The university's strategy, which aims to inspire all individuals to achieve their maximum potential and excel in the world of tomorrow, contains specific objectives to:

- develop students' capabilities to thrive in an increasingly multi-disciplinary and fast changing world of work
- motivate students to see themselves as contributors to changing global societies both while students and alumni
- help students to become well-rounded individuals capable of contributing to society, and
- enable students to enrich their personal and professional development through the provision of extensive extra- and co-curricular opportunities

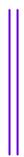
In response to the outcomes of the *Commission on Developing Scotland's Young Workforce*, the university will, together with North East Scotland College, explore the potential for an Advanced Apprenticeship in engineering. This development will build upon existing articulation pathways, extending these to include elements of work-based learning to the benefit of learners and employers within the North East.

One of the key strengths of the university over the past decade is the enviable record for graduate employability that has been earned. This has been a significant factor in the increasing recognition and status of the university, both nationally and internationally. As a direct consequence, there has been an increased demand from candidates seeking to study at the university and from employers targeting the university to recruit students.

Nevertheless, the university recognises that maintaining this record for graduate employability will require significant activity. The university's vision for employability (as stated in its strategic statement, entitled 'Employability Plus') is for its graduates to be recognised as the most fit-for-work, innovative, creative and engaged participants in the labour force and the economy and for the university to be recognised for its close engagement with employers. It will do this through:

- maintaining the features of its curriculum which have contributed to a high employability ranking (as specified in the previous section)
- a series of enhancements to be made to the student learning experience recognising that employers are becoming more demanding in what they seek from graduates (this initiative is called Employability Plus and is described below), and
- delivering the SFC-funded Talent Exchange project to deliver a greater number of work related experiences within regional SMEs and third sector organisations

The Employability Plus strategy has resulted in the implementation and development of a range of enhancements to current practices. These actions include:



- engaging with the SME and third sector to increase the number and range of work-related opportunities available, (see Talent Exchange, below)
- expanding formal and optional study abroad opportunities
- provision for all students, at the early stage of their courses, with the opportunity to assess their personal values, attributes and motivators, through the provision of a tailored online programme called 'My Career Toolkit' – this online tool went live to all students at the beginning of 2014/15 and is updated and enhanced regularly. Of particular value is the support from employers, which has allowed the information about employment practices and the practical exercises to prepare for these to be validated and has also allowed the university to increase the number of employer case studies within the tool. A recent enhancement of the Toolkit means that students will have access to free modern language courses, including Gaelic
- continuing to facilitate students to engage in enterprise, leadership, volunteering, cultural or sporting engagements and to reflect on and record the associated personal development through an 'employability passport/profile', and
- continuing to expand the range and provision of careers education and support to include international employment opportunities

Commission on Developing Scotland's Young Workforce (DYSF)

The university has considered the outcomes of the Commission on Developing Scotland's Young Workforce in conjunction with North East Scotland College.

As an early action, the university has agreed that it will work with the College and SDS to explore the potential for an Advanced Apprenticeship in Engineering.

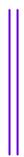
This development will build upon existing articulation pathways, extending these to include elements of work-based learning to the benefit of learners and employers. Funded by SDS as a national pathfinder project, this work will provide an important opportunity for the university to shape the development of advanced apprenticeships whilst in turn supporting better skill acquisition in engineering across the region. A key element of the project will be partnership working with the other national pathfinder projects to maximise impact and learning across Scotland.

Entrepreneurship

The university's Centre for Entrepreneurship is a centre of excellence for research and teaching in enterprise, entrepreneurship, innovation and small business management. Staff deliver a mix of core and elective modules on under-graduate and post-graduate courses across the university. In addition to assisting students who wish to start up their own companies, these modules help all students to acquire knowledge and skills that equip them to make a valuable contribution to the sectors that they find employment within.

The opportunities for students across RGU to participate in enterprise activity include the annual ABsoft lecture series and the more recent development of the 'Enterprise Workout' extra-curricular club (a weekly gathering of students comprising interactive sessions on aspects of enterprise and entrepreneurship familiarisation and training).

The Centre works closely with the Scottish Institute for Entrepreneurship (SIE). SIE runs a number of business idea/venture creations competitions each year and information about these is disseminated across the university. A cross-Faculty team of



students won the Young Innovators' Challenge in 2014 and two students have progressed to the national round of this year's ideas competition.

The SIE Regional Business Advisor runs regular surgeries on campus to advise students on their start up ideas. SIE report that they have seen around 60 students in these surgeries. The Advisor also participates in some of the Centre's modules and has delivered sessions and the new Enterprise Workout.

The university is involved heavily in SCOTGrad and has been a key partner in the project since its inception as Talent Scotland. This project is supported financially by the SFC, amongst others. One of the conditions of the SFC's grant is that the partnership considers the sustainability of the training and networking elements of the project and the way in which these can be embedded in HEIs.

With regard to sustainability, the university has initiated a number of partnership workshops and discussions to explore possibilities. The first of these was hosted by Paul McKelvie, the second by John Kemp. This process will continue with the objective of developing a plan for the sustainability of the project.

The university itself has recognised the benefit of elements of the training and networking programme within SCOTGrad and has taken the following steps to embed these into mainstream activity:

- Module BS3166 (Business Practice in the Creative Industries) delivered on the Commercial Photography course has been re-designed using training materials developed for ScotGrad to enable students to focus on key skills for setting up as freelancers. These include a focus on networking, pitching, market analysis, professional development and financial management.
- Module BS3936 (Creating a Business Opportunity) is delivered online to the BA (Hons) Business management students. This module is based on an innovative design using creative thinking techniques which allows students to develop their business ideas at their own pace using relevant (real-world) business support resources. The design and approach is again based on training materials that were developed and piloted in the ScotGrad and TalentScotland projects. The module has been very well received, and some of the students have been able to take their business propositions or business growth/diversification ideas to their employers and have seen them implemented. A new feature of the module is a one-day workshop on idea generation and testing which is run along the same lines as the ScotGrad training, incorporating student activities, pitching, and team work. The success of the module has been recognised and is now being delivered on the Dundee and Angus College programme in place of the former BS3201 module.
- Other aspects of the ScotGrad training and networking are being incorporated into the extra-curricular Enterprise Workout programme, including pitching opportunities, training in networking, and discussions with small business owners.
- The ScotGrad idea generation and testing training materials were recently adapted and used on the Access to Management Programme (schools programme), and again were very well received. Pupils worked over a period of several weeks to generate and develop a business idea and then pitch it to a panel. In the process, the pupils were given a flavour of management thinking and decision making.



Placements and work-related experiences

The university prides itself on the high number of formal placements that exist within its Faculties. The placements provide students with a means of gaining real-life work experience and to contribute their learning to a relevant public sector organisation, business or third sector organisation. They vary in duration and many courses have more than one placement. The majority of undergraduate courses within Aberdeen Business School contain a 1 year placement. The majority of courses within the Faculty of Health and Social Care have a statutory requirement for placements with health or social care providers.

Given that the university starts from a high base in the provision of placements, any increase to these opportunities will be marginal and the university will seek to enhance the quality of its placement provision. There may be opportunities through Talent Exchange and national initiatives such as E-Placement Scotland to increase the range of placements available, although it is recognised that the placement model can be intimidating to business, particularly to small and micro enterprises. This is the reason that the Employability Plus strategic statement includes the Talent Exchange project (funded by the SFC), which aims to increase the range and number of work-related experiences that students can access, particularly with SMEs and third sector enterprises.

Talent Exchange

The Talent Exchange project entered into its implementation phase at the start of the 2014/15 academic year. The project aims to increase the number and range of work-related opportunities available to students, including postgraduate students, enhancing the current high level of formal placements within the university's courses.

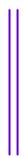
The Steering Group meets regularly and includes the 3 Faculty Deans, membership from the SFC and from the 3 external partners who are involved in the project i.e. Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses and the Scottish Council for Development and Industry. It has guided the development of the project and receives regular reports on the delivery of objectives.

Internationalisation of the student experience through study abroad opportunities

As noted above, the university is committed to extending the number of opportunities available to students to study abroad. The current level of opportunities that have been taken up reached 170 in 2014/15, including Erasmus (study and work) and international exchanges. The university has allocated additional resource for the promotion and administration of these opportunities and has an action plan to increase the number of students participating in such experiences, which includes tackling the real and perceived barriers to taking up such opportunities.

NPM 9: Student employability

Given the strategic and reputational importance of graduate employability to the university, the university uses the HESA performance indicator of the percentage of all full-time, first degree UK domiciled students in full-time employment or further study six months after graduation as its KPI. The target that has been set is that by 2018/19 the university will maintain its current high performance in both the Scottish and UK rankings of universities as reported on heidi. The university stands at top of the Scottish and UK institutions (excluding specialist institutions within the UK). It is



estimated that this equates to a figure of at least 97% over the period of the Outcome Agreement.

NPM 9: Student employability

Performance 2011/12 – 2013/14 and targets 2014/15 – 2017/18

	Academic session						
	Performance			Targets			
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
HESA Employability PI	97.1%	97.7%	97.7%	97%	97%	97%	97%
Position in Scotland	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Position in UK	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Source: *heidi (Destination of Leavers in Higher Education survey 2012/13)*

The proportion of graduates entering non-professional ('non-graduate') occupations

The university's DELHE data for the most recent year available (2012/13) shows that 80.5% of graduates enter professional ('graduate level') occupations or further study. The proportion of students who enter non-professional occupations is, therefore very small and RGU has the lowest such proportion of all HEIs in Scotland.



Aim 5: A research base that is internationally competitive and improving its reputation and standing in the world

Introduction

The university's strategy aim is to be recognised for our contribution to the growth of innovation through advancing internationally excellent translational research in our areas of strategic focus.

NPM 10: Submission to the Research Excellence Framework (REF)

The outcome of the university's participation in REF2014 across the 9 units of assessment was as follows:

Unit of assessment	Submitted Scotland	Rank GPA Scotland	Rank Power Scotland
Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing & Pharmacy	10	6=	7
Computer Sciences & Informatics	12	12	9
General Engineering	9	6	7
Architecture, Built Environment & Planning	9	9	7
Business & Management Studies	12	8	12
Law	8	7	7
Politics & International Studies	7	5=	7
Art & Design, History, Practice & Theory	7	7	7
Communication, Cultural & Media Studies; and Library & Information Management	7	4	5

Naturally, the university is deeply disappointed with these results. Prior to the announcement, a review of the university's research strategy had commenced and the results have emphasised the need to re-consider the institution's approach and the infrastructure available to support the strategy.

The details of the research review are being finalised currently. It is clear, however, that the university's support for research will need to become more focused. In selecting the areas of priority, the university will invest in areas aligned with its strategic priorities, i.e. Oil and Gas, Big Data and Health and Wellbeing.

At this point, the precise plans for each of these themes are at different stages of development. The most advanced theme is that of Oil and Gas, where the university has defined demand-led topics identified by the region's industrial base.

A key element of the review of the research strategy will be the re-examination of the previous forecasts of research income.

NPM 11: Number of research students

A key part of the university's enhancement of research quality has focused on increasing the university's PhD completion rates which have improved from 53% for the student cohort starting 2001/02 to 83% for the cohort starting 2008/09. Alongside this actions have been taken, including preparation of a re-application for the Athena SWAN bronze award, to ensure that early-career researchers are supported and



developed effectively so that this vital element of the future of high quality research is secured.

NPM 11 – Number of research students

Performance 2011/12 to 2013/14 and targets 2014/15 – 2017/18

	Academic session						
	Performance			Target			
	2011/12 ¹	2012/13 ¹	2013/14 ²	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Research students (FTE)	161	189	182.2	180	180	200	220

1. Source of these data for 2011/12 and 2012/13 is the HESA Student/HE Students/Full-time equivalent/Level of Study (6 detailed)/Higher degree (research) table from heidi. Data for 2013/14 will be published on heidi in April 2015.
2. Source of these data for 2013/14 is the university's HESA check documentation (Item 14 - cost centre breakdown by level and fundcode)

NPM 12: Research income – research councils, charities and EU

The university has continued to increase the amount of income secured from Research Councils and other publicly funded bodies, but this remains a small percentage of the income won overall for research. The university has planned a strategy of developing research links with industry in targeted areas and growing income from the European Framework programmes, particularly Horizon 2020, and has already secured the lead in a substantial project affiliated with the offshore renewables institute.

The university's translational research ambitions are more likely to be driven by industry sponsored research rather than speculative generation of IP. For this reason, whilst licensing or spinout company activity is not precluded, it will not feature in the step change targets. The university will seek to grow the number of knowledge transfer programmes in collaboration with key SME partners. A wider focus on KTPs and with Innovation Vouchers (see targets related to Aim 6, below) is seen as a significant area of growth. This will enhance our position as one of Scotland's most successful institutions in securing funding in this key collaborative translational research programme.

NPM 12: Research income – European Commission

Performance 2011/12 – 2013/14 and targets 2014/15 – 2016/17

Sources of research income	Academic session						
	Performance			Target			
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
European Commission	£296k	£187k	£292	£320k	£800k	£1M	1.5M

AIM 6: UNIVERSITY-INDUSTRY COLLABORATION

Deliver a step change in the engagement of business and industry with universities, removing any barriers to the exploitation of research for economic and wider societal benefit

Introduction

The university's alignment with industry will be realised through two distinct strands of activity:

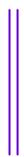
- the commitment to graduate employability and student experience, focusing on collaboration in course design and delivery as well as student projects and placements. There will be a strong focus of engagement with SMEs in this strand which will be taken forward through KTP projects and Talent Exchange, and
- through the Commercialisation Strategy, which the university has defined as 'harnessing all our intellectual and physical assets so that they generate value for the economy and are profitable to the university'.

The university is on a journey towards realising intent of the aim and recognises the scale of challenge and change required to contribute to the step-change anticipated by the Cabinet Secretary and Funding Council. The scale of the projected step-change is reflected in the target against the university's KPI for financial income, contribution and surplus for non-publicly funded activity which anticipates an increase in income and contribution to generate a surplus of £6M before tax annually by 2018/19. Over recent years the university has:

- developed a Commercialisation Strategy, which was approved by the Board of Governors in June 2013
- delivered successfully a broad range of projects which have built positive relationships with local businesses, including SMEs, and increased understanding of the key criteria for successful university-business interaction. Examples include C4di, DePict and the *Maximising the impact of skills in the oil and gas industry* project
- increased its activities in relation to knowledge transfer (RGU had the second highest number of KTPs in Scotland in 2012/13) and in relation to contracts with local, national and international businesses, particularly in the area of CPD, and
- launched three new strategic priorities in Oil & Gas; Big Data and Health & Wellbeing

Planned actions, which are dependent on our ability to secure initial investment from industry, funding bodies and/or philanthropic fundraising, over the next years include:

- grow our support for the oil and gas workforce and all levels of skills development nationally and internationally, including developments such as the Oil and Gas Academy of Scotland (OGAS) and the university's own International Institute of Oil and Gas
- build on our existing research base in environmental technologies, renewable energy, project management and oil and gas finance and economics
- build our expertise in asset integrity, enhanced oil recovery and big data analytics
- establish a commercial offering, RGU:Wellness, to support a healthy workforce
- build on our research expertise in remote healthcare



- develop models of sustained innovation for companies through design, developing the framework established as part of the Design in Action hub
- build on innovative training and development programmes to support CPD in our priority sectors, for example the recent establishment of a DART[®] simulator facility with KCA Deutag within the Riverside East building at the Garthdee campus; and
- engagement with initiatives that encourage collaboration across the academic community and with industry such as existing and emerging Innovation Centres, Innovation Scotland, Interface and Easy Access IP

Innovation Centres

The university is a partner in a number of innovation centres including Innovation Centre for Sensor and Imaging Systems, the Oil & Gas Innovation Centre, Construction Scotland Innovation Centre and SICSA and it hosts the Aberdeen hub for the Data Lab. The university engages actively with all of the Innovation Centres where their calls align with our research expertise.

NPM 13: Performance against Knowledge Transfer indicators

The focus on our priority sectors within the university's Commercialisation Strategy means that, with the exception of the Arts & Creative Industries, our industrial engagement is likely to have a bias towards larger and international entities. This may mean that there is a mis-alignment with the Funding Council's chosen national performance measures. Equally, initiatives with involving SMEs rarely result in direct revenue generation to the university, so there will be little evidence of them in the national performance measures.

Whilst the university will continue to provide the Funding Council with activity in the Knowledge Transfer Grant (KTG), a subset of the return which best aligns to the university's overall commercialisation strategy has been selected for the targets in the current Outcome Agreement. The university is aware that the consultation in relation to the Knowledge Transfer Grant has completed and awaits the SFC's decision regarding any changes to the return. If the proposal to utilise the HESA Business and Community Interaction survey is agreed, the targets below will be revised to match the appropriate definitions of activity.

NPM 13: Performance against Knowledge Transfer Grant indicators Performance 2011/12 – 2013/14 and targets 2014/15 – 2017/18

Selected Knowledge Transfer metrics	Academic session						
	Performance			Targets			
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Revenue from external research grants from industry, commerce and public corporations	£787k	£778k	£660k	£700k	£780k	£850k	930k
Income in CPD from organisations	£2.2M	£2.2M	£2.27M	£2.5M	£2.75M	£3M	£3.25M
Income arising from the KTP programme	£392K	£564k	617k	£500k	£550k	£600k	£600k



NPM 14: Participation in the Innovation Vouchers scheme

The university has focussed its work on the development of the KTP programme, with significant success. The use of Innovation Vouchers is not as well established. The university has responded to calls for vouchers via Interface but the conversion rates have been very low, despite the significant amount of work that is required to complete a submission.

Following advice from the SFC, the university will investigate the potential to widen the use of IVs to include relevant work done by students (rather than academic staff) with businesses. If it is practical to move forward in this way, it is expected that the university would be able to make extensive use of the IV scheme.

For this reason, the university has not set a target for IVs for future years at this point in time. The targets will be reviewed as part of the process of drafting the Outcome Agreement for 2016/17, taking into account the outcome of the work being done to assess the viability of the shift to using IVs to fund students' work with business.

NPM 14: Participation in the Innovation Vouchers scheme Performance 2011/12 – 2013/14

	Academic session		
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Innovation vouchers awarded	3	2	0

AIM 7: SUSTAINABLE INSTITUTIONS

Ensure high quality of governance and management for institutions delivering long-term and financially and environmentally sustainable interactions

Introduction

The university currently meets all but one of the principles of good governance set out in the Scottish Code of HE Governance. The one exception is the requirement to undertake an external review of the Board's effectiveness every five years, procedures for which are currently been developed.

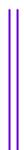
Through the approval of the university's strategy, associated strategic statements (which outline the university's ambitions around particular themes) as well as the development of a business plan linked to the financial forecast which provides details on how the university will implement the university's strategy the Board of Governors have clear ownership of institutional sustainability. The strategy of the university is measured through ten key performance indicators, against which an annual report of progress is compiled. As of December 2014, the Board will uses five national performance measures within their suite of key performance indicators (student success, proportion of SDUE from MD20/40 backgrounds, student satisfaction retention of students and student destinations).

An update on progress against the major milestones and their associated actions within the business plan is considered by the Board at each of their meetings. The Board also receives information about progress against the university's operating plan, which contains detail on activities to achieve specific milestones.

A procedure that will allow RGU Estates to invest in energy and carbon reduction projects using funding provided by the Scottish and UK Governments has been approved by the senior management team. This funding is in the form of loans to be paid back from the savings generated through a reduction in energy consumption. The Estates department is driving forward this initiative and has identified two initial projects that have the potential to reduce RGU's carbon footprint by 266 tonnes every year.

A number of campaigns have been undertaken and are underway as part of the university's ongoing commitment to carbon reduction/energy efficiency, many of which have been developed jointly with the Students' Association. These have included:

- poster campaigns across the university
- hosting a 'Green Fair' to promote sustainability and demonstrate what the university and local organisations are doing to help the environment. Exhibitors included the Edinburgh Bicycle Co-operative, which came with a bike that used pedal power to make smoothies. There was also advice and information on hand from RGU's sustainability team, the RGU: Union Climate Change Team (see below), Aberdeen City Council Waste team and Getabout
- the annual halls of residence energy challenge (monitors installed in all flats with the challenge to have the lowest energy usage during the year), promoted by RGU: Union as part of its Go Green initiative (see below)



- staff and student transport initiatives (car share scheme with reduced permit charges and dedicated parking spaces in all car parks, reduced fares on public transport, bike to work, cycling initiatives on site)
- on-going energy reduction initiatives ("Turn it off" campaign, management of building temperature settings)
- development and implementation of a Recycling Policy in order to ensure that the furnishing and fittings from the recently divested buildings in the city centre are disposed of appropriately. This has included taking furniture apart to sort into wooden and metal components, and
- a regular electronic publication for staff and students, 'The Green Times' to raise awareness of green events and methods of saving energy and acting sustainably

The Estates Department is also working with the Student Union on their Energy Challenge and has committed resources in support of this. RGU: Union's Go Green initiative aims to provide students and staff with the opportunity to significantly reduce the environmental impact of the University whilst gaining valuable experience and qualifications. To achieve this goal, Go Green is running four projects:

- the Bike Hire Scheme will offer a low-carbon link between the city centre and campus. The Halls Energy Challenge will support and inspire students in reducing their domestic energy consumption
- the Community Allotment will facilitate local growing, engaging students and staff with the environment, and
- the Energy Ambassadors Scheme will train students to carry out energy audits for local groups, organisations and companies that will result in buildings becoming more energy efficient, whilst gaining valuable work experience and qualifications

In addition, the new Riverside East building has a renewable energy resource (ground source heat pump) which provides 15% of the building's energy. The university is not involved in any of the 3 HE Carbon Reduction Programmes.

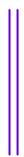
NPM 15: Sustainable institutions - carbon footprint

NPM 15: Sustainable institutions – carbon footprint

Performance 2011/12 – 2013/14 and targets 2014/15 – 2017/18

	3 year period ending						
	Performance			Targets			
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Gross carbon footprint – tonnes (3 year period)	8838t	9368t	9400t	9153t	8988t	8538t	8110t

Source: HESA Estates Management Statistics (EMS) return. The actual figure for 2013/14 will be reported via the EMS in March 2015. The estimate given in the table below includes an increase from the figure in 2012/13 because an additional building was added to the estate, prior to older, vacant buildings being divested. These vacant buildings were heated to maintain the building fabric prior to sale.



NPM 16: Sustainable institutions – annual capital and maintenance spend

NPM 16: Sustainable institutions – annual capital and maintenance spend
 Performance 2011/12 – 2013/14 and targets 2014/15 – 2017/18

	Academic session						
	Performance			Targets			
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Annual capital and maintenance spend on estates as a proportion of value of estate	-	12%	5.9%	4.3%	7.9%	7.7%	6.5%

The source of data for 2011/12 – 2013/14 and for the targets is the Finance return to the SFC (June 2014)