



# Annual academic and skills report to Council 2021-22

## Foreword

### Moving beyond coronavirus

As coronavirus restrictions came to an end, the University formalised its new working arrangements framework with many academic and support staff on campus 40-60% of the time, the remainder working from home. Feedback from staff and students has so far been largely positive, but the expectations of new cohorts arriving in autumn 2022 will be monitored closely.

We are pleased that despite the increases in the volume and complexity of complaints noted in previous reports, the 2019-20 and 2020-21 cohorts, which had been subject to so much disruption and adjustment to academic provision, have graduated with comparable academic outcomes to previous cohorts. The fact that concerns about significant refund and compensation payments did not materialise provides considerable assurance about the appropriateness of the adjustments made to delivery.

We were disappointed to witness a spike in academic misconduct cases arising from remote assessments which were trialled during the tail end of restrictions. Lessons have been learned and actions taken.

### Internal initiatives

In parallel with the development of the new Corporate Plan, the Education Strategy and Research Strategy were thoroughly revised following an extensive engagement process with staff. We expect these to direct our provision over the next five years. For research students, this will include a focus on research culture, individual development plans and networking opportunities. For taught students, we anticipate the enhancement of student employability and the exploitation of cross-School learning experiences.

We have continued to enhance safeguarding arrangements for our students and trainees this year: the HR and student welfare teams worked together to refresh safeguarding training and roll out to staff on an annual basis; the Safeguarding Group has established a safeguarding forum at which case discussions of students and trainees at risk can inform good practice, priority actions and reporting; investment is being made into the student and trainee Wellbeing and Disability Support team.

### Looking ahead and the environment

Senate will conduct its own effectiveness review in the coming academic year. The previous effectiveness review in 2017 produced recommendations leading *inter alia* to the focus on student experience and the transformation of annual reporting processes.

The Quality Assurance Agency has relinquished its role as the Designated Quality Body for the Office for Students (OfS), following a dispute between the bodies on priorities and implications for European accreditation. This introduces uncertainty for Cranfield and the sector as to the future of external quality assurance.

Cranfield will not be participating in the forthcoming round of the Teaching Excellence Framework. Under current OfS rules, it is anticipated that MK:U provision will trigger participation in four or five years time.

At time of writing, Cranfield is awaiting the formal outcome of its application to be recognised by OfS as a world leading specialist institution for its teaching and education.

**Professor Leon Terry (Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research)**

**Professor Sean Tyrrel (Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education)**

# Contents

## 1

### **Purpose and Introduction**

## 2

### **Report on assurance of quality and standards**

- 2.1 Regulatory overview
- 2.2 Reports from committees responsible for academic quality and standards
  - Senate
  - Education Committee
  - Research Committee
  - Apprenticeship Quality Group

## 3

### **Report on student experience and outcomes**

- 3.1 Experience
- 3.2 Outcomes and Demographics

## 4

### **Academic risks**

## 5

### **Actions plans**

- 5.1 2021-22 Action Plan Update
- 5.2 2022-23 Action Plan

Some material in this published report has been redacted where information might otherwise allow individuals to be identified and contravene data protection legislation, or where information is commercial-in-confidence.

# 1 Purpose and Introduction

## Purpose of Report

This report brings together material on Senate's oversight of academic quality and standards, the integrity of academic qualifications, and the management of specific academic risks, for example on academic partnerships. It supports the assurance process for Council that the University has robust and effective academic governance processes and procedures in place.

This report presents a view of the current regulatory landscape; key themes and highlights from the University's academic provision for the previous academic year (2021-22); student demographic and achievement data; and our students' experience.

In addition, governing bodies are also expected to consider the academic risks facing an institution, and the top academic risks currently facing the University are presented as part of this report.

This report also presents an Action Plan showing the key focuses for the University in developing its academic provision over the next academic year, which has been developed with reference to the new Corporate Plan and new Education, Research and Innovation, and International strategies.

## 2 Report on assurance of quality and standards

### 2.1

## Regulatory overview

The Office for Students (OfS) is the Regulator for Higher Education in England, and the University is required to comply with its regulations and conditions of registration.

As part of our apprenticeship provision, the University is required to meet the requirements of the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted), who are responsible for the inspection of all apprenticeship provision in England, and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), who, through the Apprenticeship Levy, manage the funding of apprenticeship students. In addition, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) have oversight of the External Quality Assurance (EQA) of apprenticeship End Point Assessments.

The University also works with a range of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) to accredit our taught courses, who may have institution- or course-level recommendations to be considered prior to any accreditation being agreed.

### The Office for Students (OfS)

Since 2018, the Office for Students has been the regulator for higher education in England, with the University a registered provider on the OfS Register. As part of the University's registration, it agrees to comply with the OfS's standard ongoing conditions of Registration.

During 2021-22, the OfS revised and re-issued their ongoing conditions of registration (Conditions B1-B5). These conditions relate to academic quality and standards, integrity of awards, resourcing, student experience and engagement. A small working group reviewed the amendments to these ongoing conditions and were assured that the University continued to meet these expectations.

The University is required by the OfS to publish a Student Protection Plan detailing the risks to a student's continuation of study and mitigation measures the University has in place to address these. During 2021-22, the University's plan was comprehensively updated following consultation with students and staff, taking into account: risks specific to apprenticeship students; an increase in the risk of being unable to deliver in or gain access to a particular country following the pandemic; the pilot delivery as MK:U; the relocation of CDS courses from Shrivenham to the Cranfield campus; and incorporating a new section on definitions of risk. The new Plan has been approved by the OfS and is published on the University website.

### Ofsted, ESFA and the QAA

The University's apprenticeship provision is monitored (in full or in part) by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted), the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).

Ofsted is responsible for the inspection of standards for all apprenticeship provision in England. These inspections are undertaken according to the guidance set out in the Education Inspection Framework and the Further Education and Skills Inspection Handbook.

The University is due an initial visit from Ofsted near the start of the 2022-23 academic year.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) is accountable for funding for the education and training sector, and monitors and administers payments that the University receives for apprentice students through the UK Government's Apprenticeship Levy. The University is required to adhere to ESFA rules and regulations for the management of apprentices, and monitors and adapts to changes in these rules, such as the recent change to the required minimum amount of off-the-job training an apprentice is required to undertake.

The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) is the Designated Quality Body for Higher Education in England, and are responsible for the External Quality Assurance of End Point Assessments (EPAs), which are undertaken by all apprentices at the end of their course to demonstrate their learning. A new quality assurance method for EPAs came into force in July 2022, and will be delivered by the QAA. The University has set up an End Point Assessment Working Group to ensure that the requirements of this new quality assurance method are recognised and put into place.

### Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)

85 (79%) of the University's 108 Postgraduate Taught Courses are accredited by one or more PSRB.

A number of accreditation visits took place during 2021-22, including:

- The Forensics Programme within Cranfield Defence and Security, which continues to be formally accredited by The Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences following a successful visit in 2021.
- SOM's AACSB and AMBA reaccreditations for five years each, which alongside the existing EQUIS accreditation re-confirmed the School's 'triple accredited' status.

2022-23 will see a number of accreditation visits to Cranfield Defence and Security to include the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET), Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE), Royal Aeronautical Society (RAeS) and a joint cross-School visit by BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT involving the School of Aerospace, Transport and Manufacturing.

The Engineering Council, which is the UK regulatory body for the engineering profession acts an umbrella organisation for all engineering based PSRBs, with individual PSRB accreditation requirements based on Engineering Council regulations. The Engineering Council's revised Accreditation of Higher Education Programmes (AHEP 4) came into effect in December 2021, which revised the expected learning outputs for students and the expected characteristics of accredited courses, as well as updating guidance on compensation and condonement and location of delivery. The University is working towards ensuring that accredited courses (or those seeking accreditation) meet the expected standards, particularly around the revised student learning outputs, which come into effect fully from September 2024.

## 2.2

# Reports from committees responsible for academic quality and standards

## Senate

Throughout the year, Senate met five times and focused discussions included coverage of: reflections on Research Excellence Framework; degree classification, awards and credit framework initiatives; educational aspects of MK:U delivery; and the progress of the new Education Strategy, and Research and innovation Strategies. In addition to the work delegated to its sub-committees, Senate approved the annual statement on research integrity and the report from the Research Ethics Committee.

## Education Committee

Education Committee is the Senate sub-committee that oversees the quality and standards of Cranfield's taught degrees. Its sub-committee (Student Experience Committee) reports quarterly. Education Committee currently has working groups reporting to it on EvaSys (a student feedback system), degree classification and credit frameworks, and on assessment and feedback.

Key issues arising in 2021-22 are summarised below.

### Covid-19

Like the previous two academic years, 2021-22 was affected by the pandemic, although the impacts were different as a result of the improving confidence arising from the vaccine rollout. Taught programmes generally returned to in-person delivery and access to physical facilities significantly improved. Cranfield retained a minimum 0.75m social distancing in lecture rooms until April 2022, which maintained biosecurity but created challenges for the provision of sufficient high-capacity space for large cohorts resulting in negative impacts around multiple cohort teaching. The remarkable commitment of all of our staff, innovations in learning, teaching and assessment, the first-class support provided by professional service colleagues, and the investment in teaching infrastructure improvements were notable successes. Education Committee did note that the slow return of staff to our sites had resulted in a less vibrant campus atmosphere and encouraged efforts to ensure that engagement with students returned at least to pre-pandemic levels.

### Degree classification and credit frameworks

Education Committee established a working group to make recommendations to Senate on whether to move from unclassified to classified PGT degrees and to consider whether Cranfield should align with sector norms on credit tariffs. Senate has provided in principle support on the recommendation to introduce classified degrees and awaits recommendations on credit frameworks. Once principles have been established, changes to Senate Regulations will need to be approved and an implementation plan agreed. Due to the magnitude of the change envisaged, the preparations for implementation are likely to extend over several academic years.

The group supported the School of Management to develop a proposal for a new 20 credit postgraduate award. This new award is designed to support innovative courses which will offer attractive options to learners undertaking executive education courses to translate them into academic awards. Education Committee endorsed the proposal and it has received Senate approval. The new award is available for all of Cranfield's Schools subject to the controls approved by Senate.

### Course Validation and Partnership Delivery Approval: Jiangsu University Cranfield Tech Futures Graduate Institute

Education Committees oversaw the validation of new postgraduate taught degree provision as part of a new joint partnership arrangement between the School of Water, Energy and Environment and Jiangsu University in China. The Joint Institute registered its first students in September 2021. Education Committee receives monthly updates on partnership progress and a Year One Partnership Review is scheduled for early 2023.

## MK:U

Education Committee established the Undergraduate Working Group more than two years ago to support the development of academic policy and course development at MK:U. With Tim Brewer (DoE SWEE) in the Chair, the Group has skilfully and efficiently supported the MK:U leadership team to get their pilot degree apprenticeship courses established this academic year. In view of the need to move from a set-up to an operational phase, the terms of reference of the group have been reviewed (becoming a Standing Group) and a link tutor role established to perform quality assurance duties that would normally be undertaken by a School's Director of Education. Tim Brewer acted as link tutor for this academic year to support Dr Ruth Massie (MK:U Academic Lead) in her work. Charles Wainwright (DoE SATM) will take over as Chair of the Standing Group in the 2022-23 academic year.

Education Committee previously approved a staged course validation process for undergraduate provision to enable the MK:U team to develop the detail of its Levels 4, 5 & 6 assessments (the core course frameworks and assessment principles having been approved at stage 1). Education Committee has now finalised this process and four degree apprenticeship courses are now fully approved. MK:U commenced the delivery of apprenticeship provision in September 2021, with a total of 67 apprentices enrolled on three Degree Apprenticeship programmes. MK:U is operating from Bouverie House in central Milton Keynes, which has been fitted out to high pedagogical standards with the latest in educational technology. Around 140-150 apprentices are expected to join MK:U in September 2022 for the 2022-23 academic year.

## Assessment and Feedback Working Group

Education Committee received a summary report from Professor Emma Sparks, the outgoing Chair of the Assessment and Feedback Working Group, on the projects completed and those still underway. The working group met in early 2022 to review priorities as part of the emerging Education Strategy and again in summer 2022 to propose new workstreams and a revised leadership model. The transformation of assessment at Cranfield is a major thread of the new Education Strategy and will focus on Assessment Design, Quality Feedback, and Academic Integrity.

## Assurance of Recognised Teachers

Education Committee is undertaking a review of the oversight of recognised teacher (RT) processes including: monitoring of RT cohorts, responsibility for approvals, sponsor responsibilities, and the specification and monitoring of inductions and training. In February 2021 Education Committee endorsed the establishment of a working group to commence the review and bring forward recommendations. In September 2021 Education Committee received a paper on RT oversight which included data on the RT cohort in each School. As a result of that discussion, the working group was invited to review the Senate handbooks and the RT appointment form to improve clarity and consistency and deal with concerns raised by DoEs. This work has been done, discussed by Education Committee, and following the completion of improvements and the endorsement of Research Committee, the revised handbooks and appointment form have been implemented.

## Lecture recording guidance

The recording of lectures became standard practice (where it was possible and appropriate) during the pandemic and is highly valued by our students. Guidance was created in 2020 covering aspects of performing rights, IP, copyright and data protection. The guidance was reviewed during the 2021-22 academic year in the light of recent experience and an updated document has been approved by Education Committee, Senate and the University Executive. This document will be regularly reviewed given the high level of interest from our staff, students and external stakeholders in the practice of lecture recording.

## Annual Reflective Review – 2020-21 academic year

At Cranfield, the Annual Reflective Review (ARR) is a cornerstone of the monitoring and evaluation of our courses. It provides the focal point for continuous improvement of courses through the work of Course Directors and the Directors of Education, who take a School-level view. At University level the ARR is considered by Education Committee and headlines are communicated to Senate and University Executive and fed back to course teams and directors of service units. Selected positives arising from the review of the 2020-21 academic year included: our pride in the way the University pulled together to deliver high quality education in the midst of the Covid pandemic; the significant enhancements to education arising from our new approach to the use of Canvas (our new virtual learning environment); and the wealth of evidence of our collective commitment to the creation of a culture of educational excellence and distinctiveness of provision through enhancing guest speakers, external webinar series, the development of personal tutoring schemes, alumni mentoring, company networking events, greater alumni interaction, and internships (in-company projects). Selected areas for consideration and improvement include: the accumulation of Covid fatigue amongst our staff; concern over a sense of disengagement by students resulting in lower participation rates in learning sessions, course events and feedback exercises such as EvaSys and PTES (also likely to be a Covid impact); the adverse impacts on staff and students of courses with high student numbers and the need for more large teaching rooms; and concerns around an increase in academic misconduct cases associated with a switch from in-person examination to alternative assessment methods during the pandemic. The PVC Education with the support of Senate's Education Committee is responsible for disseminating examples of best practice and for tackling identified areas of weakness.

## Research Committee

Research Committee is the Senate sub-committee that oversees the quality and governance of research strategy and policy, including regulation of academic and administrative processes for research students.

Key issues arising in 2021-22 are summarised below.

## Research Excellence Framework (REF)

The University received the outcomes from REF 2021. REF is the national exercise carried out by Research England to review the quality of our research (outputs) our impact beyond academia and the environment that supports our research. On the basis of results, universities are allocated their annual block grant QR (quality of research) funding.

We had submitted to three Units of Assessment (UoAs) and we received strong results across all three UoAs:

- UoA 6 - Agriculture, Food and Veterinary Sciences – improved grade point average across outputs, impact and environment. 7th out of 25 submission for impact.
- UoA 12 – Engineering – 72% increase in the number of staff submitted and 7th in Research Power (FTE x Grade Point Average) out of 89 submission.
- UoA 17 – Business and Management Studies – in the top 27% of submissions and 7th out of impact for 108 submissions.

However, the REF results demonstrated that we need to improve the quality of our research outputs, improve our demonstrable impact outside of academia and build on our research environment strengths. These outcomes have informed the new Research and Innovation Strategy and Excellence in Scholarship programme.

## Research and Innovation (R&I) Strategy

The Committee drove the development of the new R&I strategy. This included R&I specific consultation meetings with research communities, School Directors of Research and Heads of Theme. The resulting strategy sets out priorities relating to:

- Scholarship with Purpose
- Championing the Research Student
- Diversity of Thought and People
- Partnerships and Place
- Innovation and Entrepreneurs

Strategic Implementation Oversight Groups have been established involving key academic and professional service unit staff across the University to develop operational plans for delivery of the strategy.

Key **KPIs** include:

- **Super KPI: Research Quality** - 25% increase in world class publications by 2027
- **Sub-KPIs:**
  - **Research Income** - 25% increase in total research income by 2027
  - **REF Ready (impact)** - 80% of impact case studies are world-class
  - **KEF Ready** - 25% increase in impact from Intellectual Property
  - **PRES** - 75% in PRES Research Culture score by 2027
  - **PGR**: 25% increase in net PGR students by 2027

## Excellence in Scholarship

Following the publication of the REF2021 results, the Excellence in Scholarship Review (EiSR) was launched in May 2022, a key activity to support the aims of the first pillar of the new Research and Innovation Strategy, Scholarship with Purpose and the University Research Quality KPI. The review will encompass an annual assessment of outputs, impact and environmental indicators from the preceding calendar year. A critical part of the review is feeding back scores and reviewer comments to individuals to enable a formative approach that supports staff to enhance the quality of future outputs and the impact of their research.

## HR Excellence in Research

At the end of 2021 the six year review report was submitted. Revisions were requested by Vitae and in June 2022 it was confirmed that Cranfield University had retained the HR Excellence in Research Award. A revised submission date for the 8-year review has been agreed with Vitae which will be submitted in November 2023. Vitae are moving to a 3-year review cycle with November 2023 therefore comprising a three year action plan.

## External review of research policies

Research Committee are responsible for the continuous review and update of key research related policies. In May 2022, an independent review of key research related policies was commissioned, including recommendations for updates, in light of regulatory changes and sector good practice. Sixteen policies and one related procedure were examined, and the overall state of the policies were deemed to be good with minor updates required. Full revision has been recommended for the 'Process for Implementing and Monitoring the Research Integrity Policy'. Substantive issues were recommended to be addressed for: Research Integrity Policy; Senate Handbook on Academic Misconduct; Open Access Policy for Publications and Associated Research Data; Responsible Research Evaluation Policy; Maternity and Paternity Policy for Research Students; UKRI International Fees Policy; and Intellectual Property Policy. The Research and Innovation Office will be working through the recommendations reporting into Research Committee.

## UKRI Open Access

On the 1st April 2022, UKRI introduced their new Open Access Policy which include changes regarding embargoes, licensing and financial support for hybrid journals. The policy aims to ensure that findings from research funded by the public through UKRI can be freely accessed, used and built on. New content was developed for the Library [Open Access web pages](#) as well as a communication plan to inform the academic community of the changes.

## Responsible Research Assessment and Metrics

There is widespread recognition that research assessment shapes research culture ([Global Research Council](#)) and that funders and research institutions have a responsibility to ensure that methods used to assess research are appropriate, robust and transparent. A particular focus in the sector over the last 10 years has been the responsible use of metrics and quantitative indicators, including an independent review on the role of metrics in research assessment for HEFCE (following REF2014), culminating in [The Metric Tide](#) report and the subsequent establishment of [The UK Forum for Responsible Research Metrics](#).

The [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#) was established in recognition of the need to improve the ways in which the output of scientific research is evaluated by funding agencies, academic institutions, and other parties. To date, 2,509 organisations in 158 countries have signed DORA. In the UK, 96 universities and research institutes (including all Russell Group Universities except LSE) and over 30 funders (including UKRI, the Royal Society and Wellcome Trust) are signatories to DORA. Moreover, compliance with the key principles of DORA has become part of funder expectations ([see UKRI statement on DORA](#)) and has been incorporated into the [2021-22 Terms and Conditions for Research England](#) funding (worth over £14 million annually to the University).

Cranfield became a signatory of DORA this year and work will be undertaken over the coming year to support Schools in moving away from using Impact Factors as a surrogate measure for output quality.

## Research Committee Terms of Reference

Research Committee approved an update to its terms of reference and membership (subject to Senate approval September 2022). In light of the new Research and Innovation Strategy, the revisions aim to: clarify membership; provide greater detail on the Committee's areas of business; ensure joined up institutional engagement with, and oversight of, the Research and Innovation remit. In addition, changes addressed EDI considerations and also representation from research career stage and job family.

## Research Ethics

Following an increase in requests for retrospective ethical approval during 2021 and an Academic Misconduct Review investigation, it was identified that in many cases the lack of ethical approval occurred where students had experienced a change in supervisory team. In November 2021, Research Committee approved a University-wide process for the handover of supervision responsibilities which will be documented in the Senate Handbook. The process includes a checklist which details who is responsible for each task and ensures that the supervision team and student are involved in the handover process.

## PhD by Portfolio

A new route was introduced in the 2021-22 academic year, PhD by Portfolio. The route allows individuals in industry to complete a PhD thesis using prior research completed as part of their professional practice. Before registering, candidates are required to undergo a preliminary evaluation which includes a review of the research data collected to date by the proposed supervision team.

## Thesis embargo

There had previously been a three year embargo on making e-copies of PhD theses available mainly due to the danger of infringing copyright (for papers already published) or hindering future publications (where papers appearing in PhD are to be published in future). Research funded by UKRI must be open access within a year of submission. Research Committee agreed that a six month embargo was more appropriate and would fit with current UKRI requirement, however there would still be the option for a longer embargo period if required.

## Changes in supervision team

Issues had been raised regarding the handover of supervision responsibility, typically in situations where the Supervisor had left or perhaps the working relationship had broken down. This could be disruptive for all parties and could be difficult for a supervisor to take on a new student without knowing their background or having the paperwork. A more formalized process was agreed by Research Committee to help ensure that all appropriate documentation is handed over to any new members of the supervision team. The new process will be documented in updated to the Senate Handbook for the 2022-23 intake.

## Working hours review

Concerns were raised regarding students taking on significant levels of additional work outside of their research degree programme. Whilst recognising that students may need to work in support of their personal financial circumstances, it is important to support students in maintaining satisfactory progress with their research programme. An additional work notification form for research students (along with guidance) was therefore included in the Senate Handbook. This issue will be further reviewed as we consider cost of living increase on research students and the outcome of UKRI 'new deal for PGR students' due later 2022.

## Academic and Research Misconduct

Following a review of the Academic and Research Misconduct Handbook by a working group a recommendation was made to Research Committee for a number of changes including clarity regarding the sanctions and penalties that could be applied to student committing academic misconduct. All new research students now have a training session as part of their induction covering plagiarism.

## Doctoral community activity contributing to research culture

Over the last 12 months, two Three Minute Thesis competitions have taken place online, with students engaging from all themes across the University. The Cranfield Doctoral Network Annual Conference took place over two days in October 2021, this year focusing on COP26.

## Research student web profiles

All research students are encouraged, as part of the induction programme, and their initial review to create a web profile. CRIS profile workshops are held regularly to support research students in creating their web profile with 441 profiles now live on the Cranfield website.

## Best practice in PGR Support

As part of the University's new Corporate Plan, we aim to develop our research culture and our support for PhD students. A series of workshops were held during May and June 2022 for research students to give the University a more in-depth insight into the experiences that current PhD students have of doing a PhD at Cranfield; consider our PhD support and provision in comparison to sector recommendations and best practice; develop recommendations for developing and enhancing our PhD student support and provision. A report will be written based on the project. This will outline the experiences and views expressed through the focus groups. It will consider how current provision compares with sector best practice in PhD student support and will make recommendations for improvements.

## Student webinars

Online live webinars have been held over the last 12 months, these are an opportunity to update research students on latest information, which was primarily focused around the ever changing landscape with Covid but also offered research students the opportunity to pose directly questions to senior members of staff.

## Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation student drop-ins

Regular student drop-in sessions are scheduled for research students should they wish to speak with the PVC R&I and raise any concerns.

## Academic Partnership with Jiangsu University

Cranfield entered into a joint partnership with Jiangsu University (JSU) to deliver both dual award and Cranfield-only degrees with JSU. 2021-22 was the first year of the partnership, and saw students register on three PhD programmes and four MSc and MSc by Research awards.

The partnership is managed by a Joint Academic Committee, made up of members of both Universities, as provided for in the partnership agreement. The partnership has presented a number of challenges during the academic year, including supervisory capacity and operational delivery within governance frameworks. The partnership is a standing item under 'reserved business' on the Research Committee agenda. A report is reviewed at each meeting with particular focus on research governance.

## Apprenticeship Steering Group

The Apprenticeships Steering Group (ASG) aims to embed apprenticeships within the organisational structures, systems and processes of the University in order to deliver high quality training provision. The ASG provides authoritative information and advice to the University Executive and thence to Council in matters of apprenticeship risk, resourcing and investment needs. ASG has one sub-committee, the Apprenticeship Quality Group (AQG), which focuses on the quality of apprenticeship provision.

Key issues arising in 2021-22 are summarised below.

## Apprenticeships terminology

Cranfield adopted and trademarked the term Mastership in 2017 to describe its level 7 apprenticeship training. This terminology served us well as we quickly established our position as a market leader specialising in masters degree apprenticeships. We have begun a process of adopting "apprenticeship" as a general term where appropriate, for example Apprenticeships Office, Apprenticeships Quality Group, and Apprenticeships Forum. The term Mastership is retained to describe our level 7 apprenticeships as needed.

## Apprenticeship Portfolio Director and Apprenticeship Forum

Neil Wilson was appointed to the additional role of Apprenticeship Portfolio Director in December 2021 to champion the continuous development of the quality of our apprenticeship training provision, to ensure a consistent approach across the University; and to lead on future organisational requirements including apprenticeship systems. Neil co-designed the Apprenticeship Forum with colleagues from the Apprenticeships Office. It brings together Apprenticeship Tutors and other key stakeholders on a monthly basis to discuss the apprenticeship journey and to ensure good practice is developed and shared across Cranfield University and MK:U.

## Ofsted

Ofsted (The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) became responsible for regulating the quality of apprenticeship provision at Levels 6 and 7 (undergraduate and post-graduate) on the 1st of April 2021. All training providers offering such programmes are expected to be inspected within 18 months of this date. The initial inspection is termed a monitoring visit. We will receive 48 hours' notice of an impending inspection and the inspection may span 2 working days. A full inspection will follow within 18 months of the publication of the monitoring visit report. The monitoring visit will focus on progress leaders have made in: (i) the delivery of all the requirements of successful apprenticeship provision; (ii) ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for the apprentice; and (iii) ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place. Preparations for inspection have been made by an Ofsted planning team led by Sean Tyrrel (Pro Vice Chancellor - Education) and Neil Wilson (Director of Finance and Operations, Cranfield School of Management and Apprenticeship Portfolio Director, Cranfield University). Sean Tyrrel is the inspection nominee and Neil Wilson is the deputy inspection nominee.

## Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan

We review our training provision regularly with a commitment to continuous improvement. Reflective review is captured in a Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and priorities for action in a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). First developed in 2021, AQG and ASG recently reviewed these documents and new versions were produced and approved in 2022.

## Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) required all registered training providers to re-register by January 31st 2022. Our re-registration was led by the Apprenticeships Office and was successful.

## External Quality Assurance (EQA) of End Point Assessments (EPA)

End point assessment (EPA) is the mechanism which tests whether an apprentice is capable of doing the job their training is designed to prepare them for. Bodies established and registered as end point assessment organisations (EPAOs) are subject to external quality assurance (EQA) from QAA. QAA contacted Cranfield University in December 2021 to indicate that the quality assurance process will begin in 2022. In 2021 we established an End Point Assessment Organisation Working Group with Charles Wainwright (Director of Education, SATM) as Chair to advise AQG on quality issues surrounding EPAOs. This work is ongoing.

## Apprenticeship Management System

The establishment and growth of Cranfield's apprenticeships provision has necessitated the creation of new systems and processes to manage apprentice onboarding, employer relationships, reporting to the funder, apprentice progress monitoring, and apprentice portfolio development amongst others. An ecosystem of bespoke and proprietary systems has emerged with varying degrees of manual and automated operation and integration with existing finance and student record systems. An integrated and streamlined apprenticeship management system (AMS) has been commissioned to drive efficiency, provide assurance that we are compliant with the expectations of our funders and regulators, and provide the quality of service to employers and apprentices that they expect and we aspire to. The first phase of the Maytas AMS went live in February 2022 to interface data from the Student Records System (SITS), improve levy funding returns (known as individualised learner records - ILRs) each month and provide a stable platform for future development. Future improvements are likely to include automated communications, digitally signed Commitment Statements and additional data collected directly into the system via digital forms.

# 3 Report on student experience and outcomes

## 3.1

### Student Engagement and Experience

Student engagement levels were variable in 2021-22 in regard to feedback mechanisms. Student Voice activities, such as, Q&A forums, drop-ins and surveys ran in line with previous years, but with further focus on providing opportunities for specific student groups, including evening feedback sessions for part time students. The Student Experience Committee met quarterly, co-chaired by CSA President and Dir. Student Experience. The matters raised at Student Experience Committee are a mix of operational and academic issues, that are escalated accordingly.

The University continued to work closely with the Cranfield Student Association and ensure the CSA Officers and University Course Representatives were engaged with regularly, both through the governance structure and more informal discussions, including consultation on aspects of the new Education and Research & Innovation Strategies.

In December 2021 a pulse survey was conducted to further understand research students experience in regard to the University's new working arrangements. Although the participation rate of this survey was disappointing, at 10%, the verbatim comments were particularly insightful in regard to student mood and localised issues that could be resolved. The results, alongside other insight from student service teams, were discussed with University Executive in January 2022, enabling priority areas to be identified linked to the post-covid campus experience.

The Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) were open to students between March-May 2022.

**PRES participation rate: 42.2%**      **PTES participation rate: 41.3%**

The results of these surveys were tested in July 2022, with the benchmarking and sector wide results then available in August 2022. The results were disseminated internally in September 2022. PRES showed an increase in satisfaction in all the main categories, but Research Culture continued to score under 4 (3.58). PTES improved its scores in 7 of the 8 areas. Assessment and Feedback and Organisation and Management both scored under 4. The new Education and Research Strategies both address the recurring issues identified in PTES and PRES. Assessment and Feedback and Research Culture continue to be the challenging categories for the sector as a whole, which is evident from benchmarking data.

**Table 1 PRES results**

PRES category	2019	2021	2022	Change (21 to 22)
Supervision	4.29	4.35	4.47	+0.12
Resources	4.19	4.10	4.31	+0.21
Research Culture	3.42	3.33	3.58*	+0.25
Progress and Assessment	4.20	4.22	4.28	+0.06
Responsibilities	4.07	4.08	4.16	+0.08
Research Skills	4.25	4.32	4.40	+0.08
Professional Development	4.07	3.96	4.15	+0.19
Opportunities	3.78	3.89	4.24	+0.35
Overall Experience		3.94	4.03	+0.09
Support		3.91	4.05	+0.14

\*Category scoring <4

**Table 2 PTES results**

PTES category	2019	2021	2022	Change since 2021
Teaching and Learning	4.06	4.11	4.19#	+0.08
Engagement	4.10	4.07	4.18#	+0.14
Assessment and Feedback	3.68	3.84	3.85*	+0.01
Dissertation or Major Project	4.19	4.27	4.20#	-0.07
Organisation and Management	3.86	3.89	3.92*	+0.03
Resources	4.36	3.99	4.39	+0.40
Skills Development	4.15	4.16	4.26#	+0.10
Support	New category	4.01	4.16#	+0.15

\*Category scoring <4

#≥ Russell Group score

Nb. For consistency with previous years' figures these data exclude AP contract students and include apprentices.

## Student Wellbeing and Learning Support

Student wellbeing continues as a dominant topic across the Higher Education sector. At Cranfield the Student Wellbeing and Disability Support service is a central point of contact where Advisors offer information and support on a wide range of academic, welfare and personal issues, and referral to university counselling services. The service also centrally co-ordinate reasonable adjustments to support students with disabilities, physical and mobility impairments, specific learning difficulties and mental and physical health conditions.

## Student Wellbeing and Disability Support service engagement

A steep upward trend in the number of students engaging with the service continues. In line with the sector, there has been a significant increase in students presenting with mental health concerns and an increase in reports of harassments and bullying.

**Table 3 Engagement with services**

Presenting issue	Number of students				
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Bullying / harassment	<5	5	7	18	24
Mental health	46	63	95	147	267*
Student of concern / suicidal ideation / safeguarding	10	27	33	36	71
<b>Engagement with services</b>					
Total number of engagements by students	416	493	859	950	1012

\*Shows students presenting to SWaDS with mental health issue. This is different to those that declared a mental health issue, which is reflected in Table 8

## Counselling service engagement

The university offers short-term counselling services (up to six sessions), in line the sector norm. Services are delivered through three externally contracted counsellors.

**Table 4 Counselling service engagement**

Student use of Counselling services	Number of students	Number of sessions
2017-18	134	697
2018-19	127	792
2019-20	132	911
2020-21	161	904
2021-22	153	826

## Service development in line with Sector focus and trends

The 'Student Advice Centre' has been renamed 'Student Wellbeing and Disability Support' to more accurately reflect the range of services offered. The Wellbeing and Support webpages have been re-branded, and new content added, raising the visibility of key areas of focus in the sector, including bullying and harassment. Partnership working with the CSA officers continues with the aim of understanding the barriers student face in reporting harassment and bullying.

Partnership working with NHS services has improved this year with SWaDS now able to make direct referrals to the CRISIS team to escalate urgent cases requiring professional assessment.

Our Safeguarding webpage and intranet content has expanded with new guidance on reporting a concern, escalation flowchart, and updated reporting form.

A Safeguarding Forum has been set-up where the Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Leads review cases, decision making process, and external referrals to the local authority. SWaDS helped support delivery of a new workshop on the Prevent duty and British values to MKU apprenticeship students.

## Student complaints, appeals and academic misconduct cases

The University has in place formal processes which govern the management of student complaints, academic appeals and allegations of academic misconduct. These processes are set out in Senate Handbooks, which are regularly reviewed to take account of casework experience and external regulatory changes.

During 2021-22 the University received 27 formal complaints from students, down from 36 in the previous academic year, and which was more in line with the typical number of complaints received from students pre-Covid (24 in 2019-20, 23 in 2018-19). Of these 27 complaints, just 6 were upheld or partially upheld, with a small number of cases still pending an outcome. The number of complaints received was reasonably consistent across the four Schools, with no more than 0.45% of students making a complaint in each school.

34 academic appeals were received by the University during 2021-22, of which the vast majority were from taught students. This was down from 50 received in 2020-21, but slightly higher than the 26 received in 2019-20. Of these appeals, 13 were upheld, with the outcome of a small number still pending.

Complaints about Higher Education Institutions in England are reviewed by an independent body, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). During 2021-22 the OIA received seven complaints made against the University (down from eight in 2020-21), where the students were dissatisfied with the University's investigation or response to their complaint.

This academic year saw a large increase in the number of Academic Misconduct cases against students, mostly arising from remote assessments which were trialled in response to the Covid-19 pandemic in place of in-person examinations. Overall, there were 310 formal Academic Misconduct cases, of which four involve research students. This compared to 90 cases in 2020-21 and 69 cases in 2019-20. Of the 310 cases this year, 174 have been upheld, with 60 still pending an outcome. The large increase in cases has been attributed to the assessment methods trialled and involved cases of both plagiarism and collusion. In response, guidance and signposting for students around academic misconduct has been improved for the next academic year, and due consideration will be given to the potential for academic misconduct to occur when designing assessments, based on the experience of this last year.

## Student Demographics and Outcomes

Table 5 Student demographic data

Students								
	Research		Taught			% Apprentices of Taught Total	Grand Total	Grand Total as %
Gender	FT	PT	FT	PT non-Apprentice	PT Apprentice			
SATM						6%		34%
Female	61	23	331	48	32		495	18%
Male	346	86	1487	302	109		2330	82%
Other	<5				<5		<5	0.07%
SOM						43%		34%
Female	26	26	481	124	445		1102	38%
Male	22	62	663	299	715		1761	62%
SWEE						1%		12%
Female	110	7	177	62	<5		360	37%
Male	141	16	306	135	<5		601	63%
CDS						3%		19%
Female	21	19	101	154	29		324	20%
Male	37	63	145	1001	21		1267	80%
Other			<5	<5			<10	0.30%
MK:U						100%		1%
Female					30		30	38%
Male					50		50	62%
<b>TOTALS</b>						<b>20%</b>		
Female	218	75	1090	388	540		2311	28%
Male	546	227	2601	1737	898		6009	72%
Other	<5		<5	<5	<5		<10	0.08%

The table shows the split by course type and gender. In SOM there is a high proportion of students funded by the Apprenticeship Levy when compared with other Cranfield schools. For MK:U all students are apprentices in line with the focus of the MK:U Pilot and the links with employers. Overall, 20% of Cranfield students were funded via the Apprenticeship Levy.

In all school's there are more male students than female, with the difference being particularly evident in SATM and CDS. Overall, 28% of Cranfield students were female.

**Table 6 Intended PGR awards**

	PhD	DBA	MPhil	MSc by Research
SATM	488		<5	25
FT	392		<5	13
PT	96		<5	12
SOM	86	50		
FT	48			
PT	38	50		
SWEE	252		<5	19
FT	230		<5	18
PT	22			<5
CDS	127		<5	12
FT	55			<5
PT	72		<5	9

**Table 7 Age on entry**

	18-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65 and over
SATM										
FT	1459	513	153	61	17	14	7	<5	<5	
PT non-Apprentices	46	113	74	84	52	45	32	10	<5	
PT Apprentices	43	31	22	16	13	6	7	<5	<5	
SOM										
FT	688	321	102	45	22	6	<5	<5	<5	
PT non-Apprentices	7	65	122	111	105	63	20	17		<5
PT Apprentices	20	152	267	291	203	152	59	16		
SWEE										
FT	320	210	92	59	29	11	7	5		<5
PT non-Apprentices	87	45	23	25	16	9	6	7	<5	<5
PT Apprentices	<5	<5	<5	<5			<5			
CDS										
FT	131	78	43	28	14	6	<5	<5		
PT non-Apprentices	56	218	391	267	151	86	55	11	<5	<5
PT Apprentices	<5	7	8	12	9	7	<5	<5	<5	
MK:U										
PT Apprentices	32	11	13	8	6	8	<5			

The majority of Cranfield students are within the first 3 age range brackets, 18-24, 25-29 and 30-34. The students in the age bracket 35+ upwards are more likely to be part time students. For example in bracket 35-39, 79% of students were studying on a part time basis, (excluding MK:U data) and for the age bracket 45-49, 89% of students were part time (excluding MK:U data). There are differences within each school. For MK:U, although smaller scale, the highest proportion of students were 18-24, which is line with what was expected, based on level of delivery.

**Table 8 Student disability status**

	CDS	SATM	SOM	SWEE	MK:U	% of all Students
A long standing condition (e.g. cancer, diabetes)	15	22	16	9	<5	0.8%
Blind or a serious visual difficulty		<5	<5	<5		0.1%
Communication difficulty (e.g. Asperger's, autism)	7		<5	<5	<5	0.1%
Deaf or a serious hearing difficulty	<5	6	6	<5	<5	0.2%
Learning difficulty (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia, AD(H)D)	113	43	88	30	<5	3.3%
Mental health condition (e.g. depression, anxiety)	27	22	16	15	<5	1%
Multiple Disabilities	7	6	<5	<5		0.2%
Other Disability not listed above	8	8	14	<5		0.4%
Physical or mobility difficulty	<5	<5	10	<5		0.2%

Overall, 6.3% of students presented with a disability status. The Learning difficulty category continues to have the highest proportion of students (52%), in line with previous years. Although CDS has far fewer students overall than SATM and SOM, the number of CDS students declaring a disability is far higher than in any other school. This may be explained by the high percentage of UK students at CDS, who are able to access Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) funding and who may be more familiar with the support a UK university can offer.

**Table 9 Student ethnicity**

	CDS	SATM	SOM	SWEE	MK:U
Arab		<5		<5	
Asian or Asian British	96	1189	1093	362	6
Black or Black British	48	117	176	184	<5
Mixed	39	122	56	37	<5
White	1363	1249	1442	317	70
Other ethnic background	20	112	67	43	
Information refused	29	34	29	15	
Not Known	<5	<5			

The ethnicity of students shows that Asian or Asian British continues to be the 2nd highest ethnicity of our students. However within this it should be noted that the nationality of those students has changed, with an increasing interest from the Indian market, and decreasing from the Chinese market.

**Table 10 Student religious belief or non-belief**

	CDS	SATM	SOM	SWEE	MK:U
Buddhist	7	24	24	5	<5
Christian	476	679	748	274	24
Hindu	28	398	409	94	<5
Jewish	<5	<5	10	<5	<5
Muslim	35	318	102	135	<5
Sikh	5	17	20	<5	<5
Spiritual	6	12	25	8	<5
Any other religion or belief	17	26	26	10	<5
No religion	460	1031	1168	249	41
Information refused	84	110	107	38	<5
Not known	474	208	224	141	6

The table shows the range of religious beliefs held by Cranfield students, and 35% that state 'no religion.' The different beliefs of the students continue to show the importance of having a range of networks and places of worship available as part of the experience offered at Cranfield.

**Table 11 Student declared sexuality**

	CDS	SATM	SOM	SWEE	MK:U
Bisexual	35	83	89	38	<5
Gay man	8	10	24	7	<5
Gay woman/lesbian	<5	5	9	5	<5
Heterosexual	593	1712	1588	506	62
Other	13	68	44	28	<5
Information refused	86	160	131	53	5
Not available	858	789	978	324	5

The University began collecting data on student sexuality in 2021-22 as required for its annual return of student information to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). For 41% of students, data on declared sexuality was not available or refused. Heterosexual was declared by 53% of students, with 6% of student's declaring under the remaining 4 categories. The data now available regarding student sexuality is important in the University's ED&I agenda and understanding the differing ways in which we can support our students.

**Table 12 Apprenticeship students by course**

	Gender		
	Female	Male	Other
<b>SATM</b>			
Engineering Competence (MSc)		<5	
Engineering Competence (PgDip)	8	32	<5
Operations Excellence (MSc)	<5	22	
Through-life System Sustainment (MSc)	9	35	
Aviation Safety Management, Risk and Regulation (MSc)	9	9	
Manufacturing Technology and Management (MSc)	<5	7	
<b>SOM</b>			
Executive MBA Programme	93	224	
Business Administration leading to an Exec MBA (PgDip)	32	96	
Business and Strategic Leadership (MSc)	77	137	
Executive Logistics and Supply Chain Management (MSc)	12	24	
Executive Logistics and Supply Chain Management (PgDip)	<5	6	
Management and Leadership (MSc)	113	87	
Management and Leadership (PgDip)	19	21	
Retail and Digital Banking (MSc)	35	68	
Marketing and Leadership (MSc)	6	<5	
Marketing and Leadership (PgDip)	15	6	
Sustainability (MSc)	23	17	
Senior Leader Executive Programme	19	25	
<b>SWEE</b>			
Applied Bioinformatics (MSc)	<5	<5	
<b>CDS</b>			
Systems Engineering (MSc)	7	8	
Systems Engineering for Defence Capability (MSc)	<5	<5	
Systems Engineering for Defence Capability (PgDip)	<5	<5	
Systems Thinking Practice (PgDip)	20	11	
<b>MK:U</b>			
Business and Management (BSc)	22	23	
Data Scientist (BSc)	<5	8	
Digital and Technology Solutions (BSc)	7	19	

The total number of apprentices continues to increase, with 81% of apprentices being on courses in School of Management. As evident from the table, the portfolio of courses delivered under the Apprenticeship Levy is expanding and covering a range of subject areas in line with Cranfield's expertise.

**Table 13 All taught student achievement by ethnicity**

Ethnicity	High Pass	Pass	Fail
Arab	100%		
Asian or Asian British	38%	61%	1%
Black or Black British	35%	64%	1%
Mixed	46%	51%	3%
White	57%	42%	1%
Other ethnic background	44%	56%	
Information refused	50%	50%	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>1%</b>

The split between high pass and pass at University level is very balanced. A higher proportion of white students obtained a high pass, 11% ahead of Mixed.

**Table 14 Taught student achievement (All taught students)**

	High Pass	Pass	Fail
SATM			
FT	55%	44%	1%
PT	53%	47%	
SOM			
FT	48%	52%	
PT	50%	50%	
SWEE			
FT	48%	48%	4%
PT	44%	56%	
CDS			
FT	41%	58%	1%
PT	34%	66%	
<b>University Total</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>1%</b>
FT	49.5%	49.5%	1%
PT	48%	52%	

Overall, mode of study does not impact on students' achievement. This does differ slightly across Schools but not significantly.

**Table 15 All taught student achievement by disability**

Disability	High Pass	Pass	Fail
A long standing condition (e.g. cancer, diabetes)	43%	57%	
Blind or a serious visual difficulty	100%		
Communication difficulty (e.g. Asperger's, autism)	67%	33%	
Deaf or a serious hearing difficulty	50%	50%	
Learning difficulty (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia, AD(H)D)	48%	52%	
Mental health condition (e.g. depression, anxiety)	63%	32%	5%
Multiple Disabilities	20%	80%	
Other Disability not listed above	42%	58%	
Physical or mobility difficulty	80%	20%	
No Known Disability	49%	50%	1%

Overall 56% of taught students with a declared disability achieved a high pass. The comparative figure for taught students in total was 47%. Therefore having a disability did not impact achievement overall, but there are evident differences in the categories, for example those declaring multiple disabilities.

**Table 16 Apprentice achievement by age on entry**

Age On Entry	High Pass	Pass
20-24	89%	11%
25-29	70%	30%
30-34	68%	32%
35-39	59%	41%
40-44	61%	39%
45-49	42%	58%
50-54	67%	33%

65% of apprentices achieved a high pass, which is 18% higher than non-apprentice students. In regard to age, the most significant difference is seen in 45-49, with significantly fewer students achieving a high pass (42%) for that age bracket.

Research students are limited to a pass or fail outcome, without a numerical score. The University is required to report to UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) the numbers of PhD students successfully completing their award within four years.

Table 17 shows the outcomes for PhD students completing their studies within the last academic year. Where a student has withdrawn, this may be as a result of the outcome of a Review meeting or to work towards a lower award.

**Table 17 PhD Student Achievement**

Outcome		Number
Successful Completion	Within 4 years	58
	More than 4 years	92
Completed (results not yet known)		142
Withdrawn		44

## 4 Academic risks

Risk descriptor	Consequence	Mitigation	Monitoring	Owner
Apprenticeship provision does not meet Cranfield and Ofsted expectations	Potential threat to registration as a training provider. Reputational and financial consequences.	Apprenticeship quality process enhancement and implementation of Quality Improvement Plan.	Apprenticeships Quality Group and Education Committee.	PVC-E.
Failure of an academic partnership	Reputational and associated financial consequences.	Partnership establishment governance, quality assurance processes, partnership resource management.	University and School Executives. Senate's committees.	PVCs I, E, R and relevant PVC-S.
Academic process and system inefficiency	Poor student experience. Lack of capacity for innovation and change. Low staff morale leading to high staff turnover rates.	Greater investment in academic systems.	IT Strategy Committee. Budgeting processes. Senate's committees. Professional Service Executive.	Director of IT, PVCs E&R, COO, Director of Finance, Directors of Education Services and Student Experience.
Breach in ethical approvals for research	Reputational and associated financial consequences.	Active oversight through CURES.	RAPS and Research Committee.	PVC-R.

# 5 Actions plans

## 5.1

### 2021-22 Action Plan update

This plan sets out headline activities commencing in 2021-22 to support the academic aims of the University.

Action No.	Action	Purpose	Progress
1	Education Strategy refresh.	Sets out the University's educational goals and how they will be achieved.	<b>Complete.</b> Launched with Corporate Plan (Sept 2022).
2	Digital learning strategy embedded within Education Strategy.	To embed digital learning within the Education Strategy and align with the IT Strategy with the aim of advancing Cranfield's blended and online-only provision and learner experience.	<b>Complete.</b> Embedded in 'Environment theme' of Education Strategy and 'Learning and Teaching' theme of IT Strategy.
3	Plan for efficient use and development of teaching estate.	In tandem with the New Working Arrangements Framework, plan for how our estate can best support education in the post-Covid world, including the planned review of the Beacon project.	<b>Complete.</b> This is embedded in the 'Environment' pillar of Education Strategy. The Beacon consultation is re-initiated and therefore 'ongoing.'
4	MK:U course development.	To allow delivery of undergraduate apprenticeship courses.	<b>Complete.</b> Pilot courses launched in line with planned timeline. Stage 3 validation panels carried out.
5	Development of Academic Charter.	To provide students with a more flexible way of learning and networking to be inclusive of part-time students and those studying abroad; and to align with the principles of the Researcher Concordat.	<b>Ongoing.</b> The Charter is embedded in both the new Research and Education Strategies. Development of Charter will now follow in 2022-23.
6	Apprenticeships quality processes.	Integrate degree apprenticeship quality processes with existing quality assurance and enhancement processes for award-bearing courses and establish complementary processes for non-award-bearing apprenticeships.	<b>Complete.</b> A new apprenticeships function embedded in Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team. A non-award bearing apprenticeship handbook has been developed. Significant Senate handbook updates made driven by needs of apprenticeships provision. Further enhancement in this area will be ongoing, as would be expected.
7	Postgraduate degree classification and credit framework.	Undertake reviews with a view to the introduction of degree classification and rationalisation of credit frameworks.	Reviews of classification and credit frameworks <b>complete.</b> Recommendations on degree classification have been made to Senate. Recommendations on credit frameworks will come in next academic year. Preparations for implementation will span several academic years.
8	Annual portfolio review.	Build on the Cranfield Learner Framework process established in 2021 to create an efficient and high value annual review of course offer and opportunities for and barriers to growth.	<b>Ongoing.</b> This is embedded in the 'Enhancement' theme of the Education Strategy. Establishing new process will continue into 2022-23.

Action No.	Action	Purpose	Progress
9	<b>Research Strategy refresh.</b>	Sets out the University's research goals and how they will be achieved. It will focus on quality, research culture and scholarship and take account of lessons learned from REF 2021, outputs from PRES and extensive staff consultation.	<b>Complete.</b> Launched with Corporate Plan (Sept 2022).
10	<b>Review the 75th Anniversary Fellowship scheme and propose next steps.</b>	The first cohort of three 75th Anniversary Fellows began their fellowships in October 2020; one further Fellow will join the cohort in October 2022. The researcher development programme to support them has begun. 2021-22 will be the final year of recruitment to the agreed pilot programme so it is timely to review and consider the continuation of the programme.	<b>Complete.</b> The document has been re-written and changes reflected in the scheme. Now looking ahead to possible extension into EDI agenda.
11	<b>Develop and implement a programme to support early career researchers in building their research CVs.</b>	Target to increase the number of externally funded research fellows from prestigious sources such as RAEng and UKRI Future Leaders by providing focused development and targeted support from senior academics including pitch panels and feedback sessions.	<b>Complete.</b> An enhanced programme of support has been put in place including winning our first UKRI Future Leader Fellowship award. This process is being embedded as part of the new Research and Innovation Strategy.
12	<b>Improve visibility of research culture in Cranfield.</b>	Raising the profile of research culture will be taken forward as part of the Research Strategy refresh and addressing the issues raised through PRES and the Government's new People and Culture Strategy. RIO and Student Experience will be running consultation workshops for staff and students.	<b>Complete.</b> Workshops were held during 2021-22 and informed the new Research and Innovation Strategy. Research Culture is embedded in the new Research and Innovation strategy and will continue into 2022-23.
13	<b>Review research degree portfolio and develop new offerings based on user demand.</b>	Aim to develop consolidated offerings, e.g. for industry-focused research degrees and international partners; review and refresh marketing for research degrees to ensure a clear and attractive research degree offering to attract UK, international and industry stakeholders.	<b>Ongoing.</b> This has not made expected progress in 2021-22 but approach now being scoped out.
14	<b>Review and refresh marketing plan to increase applications for research degrees.</b>	Aim to increase uptake of research degree opportunities; to promote Cranfield as a place of positive equality, diversity and inclusion taking account of the post-pandemic environment, international strategy, new degree offerings.	<b>Complete.</b> Enhanced PGR marketing plan developed for 2022-23. Development will continue into 2022-23.

Action No.	Action	Purpose	Progress
15	<b>Review and refresh doctoral researcher development offering (DRCD).</b>	Aim to co-develop with student body a new and vibrant Doctoral Researcher Core Development programme, in line with requirements of the Researcher Development Concordat, KE concordat and guidance from UKRI.	<b>Ongoing.</b> A review project has been initiated and will be progressed during 2022-23.
16	<b>Develop and implement a programme to reward academic scholarship.</b>	Aim to improve scholarship within the University. We will refresh the doctoral publishing award for doctoral students and expand to all academics.	<b>Complete.</b> This has been included in the new Research and Innovation strategy and is addressed in the new promotion framework. Additional rewards will be considered as part of the strategy roll-out.
17	<b>Develop and implement an action plan to address issues raised in 2021 Postgraduate Research Experience Survey.</b>	Aim to address issues raised in recent PRES and feedback to students. Will take account of staff and student consultation of PRES outcomes.	<b>Complete.</b> In Dec 2022 a survey on research student mood was conducted and results discussed at Exec, with agreed actions and focus. Longer term issues remain ongoing.
18	<b>Extend ED&amp;I principles to student body.</b>	Aim to ensure ED&I principles are embedded in everything we do.	<b>Complete.</b> The EDI module has been rolled out to enhance training. The ToRs at RC have been reviewed to factor in diversity and representation. EDI overall remains a focus in multiple areas.
19	<b>Formalise and consolidate strategic international research partnerships.</b>	In line with development of new international strategy, aim to consolidate research offerings and processes associated with them to simplify access to an international audience.	<b>Ongoing.</b> Academic custodians being appointed for all strategic partnerships, with reporting through International Committee. Lessons being learnt on joint PhD and cotutelle agreements for future ease.
20	<b>Develop and implement a plan to provide more networking opportunities for research degree students.</b>	Aim to involve students in student-led activities including Cranfield Doctoral Network, Doctoral Communities, Global Challenges, Communities of Practice and public engagement. To provide more networking and development opportunities and to raise the research culture provision.	<b>Complete.</b> Focused discussion and planning has taken place. A core area in research strategy.
21	<b>International Strategy refresh.</b>	To set our the University's approach to international partnerships.	<b>Complete.</b> Launched with Corporate Plan (Sept 2022)
22	<b>Enhanced systems/processes linked to Stakeholder engagement.</b>	Increase International Impact.	<b>Ongoing.</b> Good progress has been made, with some specifics being, review of enquiry email and changes to external listing sites.
23	<b>Increased applicant engagement activities.</b>	Enhanced visibility for our global reputation.	<b>Complete.</b> Increased student recruitment meeting with academics and PSU staff. Application guide has been finalised and published in June 2022. Enhancements made to web pages regarding specific guidance.
24	<b>Further scope out the International Student Experience project to include key areas in the early experience of enquirer/applicant.</b>	A first-class international student experience.	<b>Ongoing.</b> Enquirer/applicant experience focus established across IPSR, including some quick wins. Enhancements to Student Ambassador activity (Gecko Call System) and training.

## 2022-23 Action Plan

This plan sets out headline activities commencing in 2022-23 to support the academic aims of the University.

Action No.	Theme	Action	To be taken forwards by	Timelines
1	Education Strategy - Expertise theme	<b>Phase 1 of Academic Charter. Charter drafted, consulted upon and approved by University Executive.</b>	PVC-E and PVC-R (with HR)	July 2023
2	Education Strategy - Expertise theme	<b>Discussion paper on academic training oversight (including recognised teachers) considered by Senate's committees and University Executive and next steps agreed.</b>	PVC-E (with PVC-R and HR)	First draft through Senate's Committees July 2023
3	Education Strategy - Expertise theme	<b>Specify workstreams for "Transform Assessment" project and delivery plan through reformed Assessment and Feedback Working group.</b>	PVC-E	July 2023
4	Education Strategy - Experience theme	<b>Levelling up plan - every student gets the best of what the whole of Cranfield has to offer.</b>	PVC-E and Director of Student Experience	July 2023
5	Education Strategy - Experience theme	<b>New student engagement plan consulted upon and agreed.</b>	Director of Student Experience	July 2023
6	Education Strategy - Enhancement theme	<b>Senate approval of degree classification and credit framework proposals.</b>	PVC-E	June 2023
7	Education Strategy - Enhancement theme	<b>Executive approval for a portfolio review process.</b>	PVC-E, COO, Director of Finance	July 2023
8	Education Strategy - Enhancement theme	<b>Action plan established in response to Ofsted initial monitoring visit.</b>	PVC-E and Apprenticeships Portfolio Director	January 2023
9	Education Strategy - Environment theme	<b>Establish Educational Technology Steering Group as critical vehicle for driving digital education innovation and capability.</b>	PVC-E and Director of IT	December 2023

Action No.	Action	Purpose	To be taken forwards by	Timelines
10	Education Strategy - Environment theme	<b>Re-establish Beacon project and in parallel agree large lecture room requirement.</b>	PVC-E, COO, Director of Finance, Director of Facilities	December 2023
11	Research and Innovation Strategy – Pillars 1 and 2	<b>Develop and implement an Academic and a Research Student Charter, to support individual researchers and research students in the development and delivery of high quality research and research career development.</b>	PVC-R	July 2023
12	Research and Innovation Strategy – Pillars 2 and 3	<b>Strategic review and revision of research student personal development and supervisor training, to enhance research student experience, provide support and personal development and ensure research integrity.</b>	PVC-R	July 2023
13	Research and Innovation Strategy – Delivery	<b>Effectiveness Review – Research Policy, PGR Admissions, Pre-Award Research Management, to provide compliant and efficient professional practices to underpin R&amp;I strategy delivery.</b>	PVC-R	July 2023
14	International Strategy - Quality enhancement for transnational education (TNE) provision	<b>A clean audit of international partnership governance and risk management, as evidenced by a successful internal audit of arrangements, satisfactory Senate Reviews of strategic overseas partnerships, and through participation in external audits of transnational education provision.</b>	PVC International	July 2023
15	International Strategy - Diversified mix of student population	<b>Demonstrable progress in the development of new cohorts beyond our dominant student recruitment markets, to re-balance the student nationality mix without compromising net fee revenue.</b>	PVC International	2022-23
16	International Strategy - Strategic academic partnerships	<b>A 5% increase in our annual partnership revenue from a core set of well-maintained strategic academic partnerships.</b>	PVC International	July 2023