



Queen Margaret University  
EDINBURGH



Our Strategic Plan:  
**QM150**



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*a university of ideas  
and influence*



# Queen Margaret University: Vision, Mission and Values

## Vision

*Our **vision** is to be a university of ideas and influence.*

## Mission

*Our **mission** is to foster intellectual capital with both a theoretical and practical focus, giving students and staff the confidence to make a real difference to the world around them.*

*We are known not only for excellent, relevant teaching, research and knowledge exchange but also for the care and respect we give our students, staff and partners. As a thriving campus university we strive to create a community without borders, helping to improve people's lives locally, nationally and internationally. We are ambitious and enterprising, and, in everything we do, we are committed to social justice.*

## Values

*In pursuit of our vision and mission, we will aspire to be:*

- *Ambitious, confident and inspiring to instil staff and students with a sense of belonging to the QMU community.*
- *Committed to social justice, recognising equality and diversity in all that we do.*
- *Excellent in research, teaching and knowledge exchange.*
- *Supportive and enterprising.*
- *Focused on meeting the needs of students, staff, employers and our communities.*
- *Committed to all forms of sustainability.*
- *A university without borders that embraces partnership working with the local, national and international communities.*

# Fulfilling our Potential as a University of Ideas and Influence: Introduction to QM150

This QM150 Strategy is designed to enable us to fulfil our potential as a university of ideas and influence. The strategy covers the period of time leading up to 2025, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our foundation.

From its beginnings back in 1875, the institution that is now Queen Margaret University has consistently addressed society's needs and facilitated positive social change.

Our QM150 Strategy holds true to the principles and values on which this institution was founded. This is reflected in the strategy's focus on supporting students, serving the community, creating meaningful partnerships, promoting impactful knowledge exchange and enshrining social justice.

Inspired by our strong record of achieving ambitious goals throughout our history, from addressing 19<sup>th</sup> century social problems to creating the first new Scottish university campus of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, our new strategy sets out how we will reach beyond our current horizons. Underpinning this is a new emphasis on institutional confidence.

Our QM150 Strategy builds on our already well established track record in research. Research is an essential element of our mission to foster intellectual capital with both a theoretical and practical focus. We see research, teaching and knowledge exchange as a 'virtuous circle', with each of these three elements informing the other two. Our latest REF results confirm that our research is world-leading and that it has real practical impact. Through our QM150 Strategy, we will strengthen our research culture further, focusing on research centres

aligned to our flagship areas of expertise.

We will develop our existing academic flagships in health and rehabilitation, creativity and culture, and sustainable business. We will reflect on the evolving nature of our flagships taking account of the changing external environment. We will also develop new flagships, based on our niche specialisms, such as the area of food and drink. By aligning our activities through this focused approach, we will excel in research, teaching, knowledge exchange, outreach, internationalism and entrepreneurship without any of these elements being sacrificed to allow a focus on others.

Our QM150 Strategy enthusiastically embraces the concept of a broad community: we aim to be a 'University without borders'. Working with partners, we will create the critical mass and cross-pollination required to ensure a vibrant, inspiring environment on and around our campus. We will cultivate a real sense of 'belonging' amongst all those who form part of the QMU community, in Scotland and across the world.

Indeed, as well as being a 'community without borders', we will be a 'community without barriers'. We will build on our existing success in widening participation to ensure that we fulfil people's potential, whatever their background.



Our new strategy includes a heightened emphasis on entrepreneurialism that will ensure that we exploit our research to maximise its benefit to society. We will prepare our students to perform to the best of their abilities in the world of work. We will attract revenue to invest in further development of the University. More broadly, we will maximise our contribution to the prosperity of Scotland, the UK and the world.

We believe in a student-centred approach and this is integral to our QM150 Strategy. We will continue to nurture our culture of providing personalised support. Extending beyond this, we will foster a sense of pride and belonging amongst our students and enrich their experience of university by developing a supportive framework of activities strengthened by investment in extra-curricular activities.

Whilst we intend to grow, we will retain our flexible and agile approach to new opportunities, alongside retaining our personal approach. Our growth will come from additional student numbers, increased numbers of international students,

and opportunistic growth through acquisition.

Through our reputation and culture of inclusivity, we will attract and retain good staff. As a confident university, we will cultivate a culture of considered risk-taking in an environment that is healthily balanced between a supportive collegiate culture on one hand, and good performance management and continuous improvement on the other.

Our QM150 strategy will ensure that well before 2025 we will be widely recognised as an ambitious entrepreneurial campus institution that delivers world-leading research and knowledge exchange and teaching and serves the needs of our communities. It will be clear to all who work with us that we enable students and staff to make a real difference to the world around them, and that we act as a catalyst for economic, social and cultural development. In short, we will be renowned as a university of ideas and influence.

**Professor Petra Wend, PhD, FRSA, FRSE**  
Principal and Vice-Chancellor

# Overarching Goals and Ambitions in QM150

The purpose of QM150 is to allow us to consider what the University should be like in 2025. This is characterised by our vision to be a university of ideas and influence. We will be a confident and ambitious university in everything that we do and we will pursue continuous improvement, whilst promoting, encouraging and developing leadership skills to meet the needs of future generations.

To allow us to develop further as a university of ideas and influence we have developed a set of nine overarching goals.

Within each of our overarching goals our plan sets out our ambitions for 2025. We will review our ambitions at least every two years and update our plan as appropriate. Our core Strategic Plan will be supported by Sub-Strategies covering research and knowledge exchange, student experience and internationalisation. These will, in turn, be supported by enabling strategies covering infrastructure, finance, human resources, marketing, development and widening access & student retention. In addition, our Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council will expand on the detail of the elements of our Strategic Plan associated with Government funding.



We will identify the priorities associated with our ambitions and will monitor performance via a set of core key performance indicators (KPIs).

## Objectives of QM150

### 1. An excellent student experience

Students will have access to the highest quality of learning. All students, regardless of their background, will have equal opportunities to succeed and become graduates with a strong sense of ethical and social responsibility who can contribute to and influence the wider community.

By 2025 we will have:

**Included a placement/identified appropriate industry partners for every programme.**

**Offered blended learning approaches across our provision.**

**Introduced opportunities to encourage students to support each other and to influence the development of programme delivery.**

**Ensured that all students are instilled with a sense of belonging to the QMU community.**

### 2. A highly visible and strongly promoted academic portfolio

Our flagship areas and our reputation for high quality will make us the 'go to' university across our provision.

By 2025 we will have:

**Increased our share of Scottish Funding Council funded places.**

**Developed and expanded our postgraduate portfolio to meet student and employer needs.**

**Refreshed our flagship areas with a campaign of promoting them via various media.**

**Improved infrastructure support to enable and encourage academic development.**

### 3. A strong research culture

We will actively pursue continuous improvement in our research performance. Research will also underpin our other activities such as teaching and knowledge exchange.

By 2025 we will have:

**Expanded the number of our research centres, aligning them with our flagships.**

**Improved our performance in the Research Excellence Framework (or its equivalent).**

**A structure in place that supports appropriately both those areas aiming towards internationally excellent research and those undertaking translational research, recognising the importance of impact and availability of funding.**

**Established partnerships that can support and enhance research in our key disciplines.**

## 4. An increased international reach

Our international footprint will be increased both through activities on campus and in other countries.

By 2025 we will have:

**Increased our international student numbers on campus.**

**Enhanced and expanded our trans-national education partnerships (TNEPs).**

**Moved into new international markets where we have identified robust commercial opportunities aligned with our areas of expertise and capacity.**

**Established research partnerships with non-UK universities.**



Scottish Centre for Food Development and Innovation

## 5. A culture of knowledge exchange and commercialising which embraces and supports entrepreneurialism

The need for universities to maintain and develop a diversified income base will remain (and most likely increase). We will continue to identify and exploit areas where our knowledge can be used to that effect helping to drive forward the economic sustainability of the communities we serve.

By 2025 we will have:

**Grown organically our knowledge exchange and related commercial activity, ensuring that this is underpinned by research.**

**Embedded significant knowledge exchange and commercial activity in all aspects of our flagship areas.**

**Maintained and increased our leading position in our areas of strength.**

## 6. A university without borders

We will be an integral part of a community with no borders. Facilities available to the public will be developed further so that they become an integrated, efficient and sustainable part of the range of facilities in the area. The local community will be involved in our day-to-day activities.

By 2025 we will have:

**A strong concept of social responsibility in our student and staff populations through giving back to the community.**

**Embedded the Children's University and the Academies programme as core pillars of the University's activities.**

**A well developed programme of community engagement offering services to the local community and seeking the local community's involvement in our activities.**

**Enhanced all areas of work with our international partners using an economically and environmentally sustainable approach.**



Students benefitting from externally funded scholarships and grants

## 7. Significant fundraising and development

We will continue to embed fundraising into our core operations. This will include growing a solid regular giving programme, cultivating major gifts from individual donors, and working with trusts and foundations. By developing a "giving back" culture, we will encourage our supporters to give in kind.

By 2025 we will have:

**A suite of projects for fundraising linked to QM150 and capitalising on the opportunities that the 150th anniversary presents as appropriate.**

**Fundraising as an increasingly significant part of our income with specific and measurable targets.**

**Embedded a culture of giving amongst our alumni, friends and supporters.**



Children's University graduation

Sarah Ssali, QMU graduate, now Senior Lecturer at Makerere University, Uganda, visiting our campus for an international conference





## 8. A vibrant campus with attractive facilities

QMU is predominantly an environmentally conscious campus university and it will remain so. It is vital that there are the facilities to maintain a vibrant student and staff community both socially and academically. As part of the University's partnership working and engagement with the community we also need to exert influence over the use of surrounding land.

By 2025 we will have:

**On-campus facilities that meet the needs of our community.**

**Additional student societies, including discipline-based societies.**

**Synergistic development on the land surrounding the campus to include additional facilities for students and the local community (shops, cafes, etc) and an Innovation Park focusing on start-up and early stage companies and SMEs in sectors related to the University's activities.**

## 9. Motivated, confident, engaged and inspiring staff

Through supportive leadership staff will be encouraged to think creatively and take considered risks. We will attract and retain good staff by valuing them through transparent promotion opportunities, appropriate staff development, inclusivity and equality, and through instilling in our staff a strong sense of social responsibility.

By 2025 we will have:

**A robust core structure with the right people in the right place to take forward the University's strategy.**

**Development opportunities available for all staff and tailored to specific needs.**

**A fair and consistent approach to performance management.**

**An open and accessible recruitment process that facilitates career progression and development.**

**Ensured that all staff are instilled with a sense of belonging to the QMU community.**

# Implementation of the Plan

Our Strategic Plan will be underpinned by three sub-strategies covering research and knowledge exchange, student experience, and internationalisation. These will be supported by enabling strategies covering infrastructure, finance, human resources, marketing, development, widening access & student retention.

The annual implementation of the strategy will be captured in operational plans covering:

- The Schools
  - Health Sciences
  - Arts, Social Sciences and Management
- Campus and Commercial Services
- Centre for Academic Practice
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Marketing, Communications and Development
- Research and Knowledge Exchange Development Unit
- University Secretary's Group

Specific aspects of the Strategic Plan will also be captured and expanded upon in the Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council. This document focuses on the activity the University will undertake related to Scottish Government funding.



In short, our **QM150** Strategy will enable us to fulfil our potential as a university of ideas and influence. It holds true to the principles and values on which this institution was founded; and it covers the period of time leading up to 2025, the 150th anniversary of our foundation.





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