



Annual academic and skills report to Council 2023-24

Contents

1. Purpose and introduction

2. Report on assurance of quality and standards

- 2.1 Regulatory overview
 - The Office for Students
 - Ofsted and ESFA
 - Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies
- 2.2 Reports from committees responsible for academic quality and standards
 - Senate
 - Education Committee
 - Research Committee
 - Apprenticeship Steering Committee
- 2.3 Other University initiatives
 - Marking consistency project
 - Exceptional circumstances review
 - Major student incidents response
 - Education systems improvements

3. Report on student experience and outcomes

- 3.1 Overall student experience
 - Student survey results
 - Student support
 - Apprenticeship student provision
 - Complaints, appeals and academic misconduct
- 3.2 Student demographics and outcomes

4. Academic risks

5. Action plans

- 5.1 2023-24 Action Plan update
- 5.2 2024-25 Action Plan

Appendix A

List of accrediting Professional and Statutory Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)

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, providing evidence of the robustness and effectiveness of the University's academic governance processes and procedures.

This report presents a view of: the current regulatory landscape; key themes and highlights from the University's academic provision; student demographics and achievement data; and, our students' experience for the academic year 1st August 2023- 31st July 2024. The information presented reflects the University's organisational structure in place during that year. The University change programme will be reported on and reflected in next year's report.

In addition to providing assurance on its management of its delegated powers, Senate has identified major academic risks currently facing the University, prepared with reference to the University's Major Risk Register. These academic risks are presented as part of this report along with proposed risk mitigation measures.

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 Corporate Plan and the strategies for Education and for Research and Innovation. The Action Plan is developed with due consideration for the need to mitigate the academic risks identified.

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.

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. In addition, the OfS currently has oversight of the External Quality Assurance (EQA) of Apprenticeship End Point Assessments.

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), which are responsible for the inspection of all apprenticeship provision in England, and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), which, through the Apprenticeship Levy, manages the funding of apprenticeship students.

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 OfS 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.

As part of their monitoring of higher education institutions, the OfS uses summary student outcomes indicators as part of a risk-based approach to the regulation of condition B. These indicators include data on continuation, completion and progression. The University exceeds the threshold standards for all the headline indicators and the majority of the lower level split indicators. The University's performance against the summary indicators was presented to Senate during the year.

During 2023-24 the University conducted a wide self-assessment of its compliance with all of the OfS's ongoing conditions of registration. This self-assessment found the University to be meeting these conditions, with a small number of actions identified to more clearly demonstrate compliance in a few areas. This work also updated the University's scheme of responsibilities in relation to reportable events. Further to this self-assessment, the Internal Audit Office conducted an audit of registration conditions, with recommendations for regular updates to the self-assessment and scheme of reportable events, continued monitoring of the B3 condition thresholds and a future Audit of the University's compliance with consumer protection law.

During 2023-24 the OfS consulted on a number of regulatory changes concerning Freedom of Speech in Higher Education, following receipt of royal assent for the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023. New conditions of registration and new duties for Higher Education institutions were due to come into force from August 2024, however following the change in UK Government these conditions and proposed associated schemes (including increased duties placed on students' unions and a new freedom of speech complaints scheme) have been halted.

A new condition of registration concerning harassment and sexual misconduct is to be introduced from August 2025. This condition (E6) covers subject matter relating to incidents of harassment and/or sexual misconduct which affect one or more students (including the conduct of both staff and students towards other students). A Task and Finish group led by the Head of Student Support and Wellbeing and People and Culture colleagues has been convened to work through the requirements of the condition and ensure Cranfield will meet these requirements by 1st August 2025.

Ofsted and ESFA

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 OfS (external quality assurance of End Point Assessments).

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 received a full inspection visit from Ofsted in January 2024, which is covered in detail in the Apprenticeship Steering Committee report in section 2.2₃

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. As noted in last year's report, Cranfield was subject to an ESFA audit in September 2023. Further details of this outcome are given in the Apprenticeship Steering Committee report in section 2.2.

Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)

Of the University's 93 postgraduate taught courses which are eligible for accreditation 75 (81%) are accredited by one or more PSRB. Courses may be ineligible for accreditation for a number of reasons, including due to the length of time they have been running and there being no suitable accrediting body due to the specialist nature of a course. 34 different PSRBs accredit one or more of Cranfield's courses: the full list of these is included as Appendix A of this Report.

There were no accreditation visits during 2023-24. The next significant cross school visit will take place in 2024-25 and will involve seven professional engineering institutions and 39 courses based at the Cranfield Campus across the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science. Courses involved in the visit will seek accreditation or re-accreditation from one or more of the following institutions:

Energy Institute (EI)
Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET)
Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining (IOM3)
Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE)
Royal Aeronautical Society (RAeS)
The Welding Institute (TWI)

Accreditation of taught courses by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies forms one of the sub-KPIs of the University's Education Strategy, and the University is committed to such accreditation, which provides external scrutiny of our courses and enhances courses' reputations and desirability to applicants. The University is on course to achieve the sub-KPI of 84% of taught courses being accredited by one or more PSRB by 2027.

2.2 Report on assurance of quality and standards

Senate

The Senate Effectiveness Review took place in 2023. A panel, which included Senate members and an external, met twice to discuss a range of matters, including the roles and responsibilities of Senate and its members, the composition of its committees and the methods by which Senate conducts its business. The review included engagement sessions with Senate members.

As part of the Senate Effectiveness Review, a list of recommendations were endorsed by Senate and an action plan was formed. This included redrafting Senate's terms of reference to ensure key academic governance responsibilities are clearly in line with Charter and OfS expectations, organising Senate business to seek better engagement from members and rearranging business to make space for more substantive discussion.

Senate is now set to meet three times in an academic year, supplemented by focused discussion at newly formed panels – Quality and Standards, Nominations and General Purposes, and Visiting Professor Appointments. In addition to the new style of meetings, which included a member-led agenda meeting, a networking event was held between Senate and Council members.

Education Committee

Education Committee oversees the quality and standards of Cranfield's regulated education and skills provision (taught degrees and apprenticeships) with authority to do so delegated by Senate. It has three sub-committees / standing groups: the Student Experience Committee, the Undergraduate Standing Group and the Education Technology Standing Group. Education Committee has working groups on degree classification & credit frameworks and on assessment & feedback that meet regularly and ad hoc groups on EvaSys (a student feedback system) and on the oversight of recognised teachers that meet as needed. A cross-Senate committee coordination group on generative AI was established in 2023 to develop guidance for staff and students. Education Committee receives the minutes of the Apprenticeships Steering Group for information and takes decisions on matters of policy and practice affecting regulated apprenticeship provision.

Key issues arising in 2023-24 are summarised below.

1. Terms of reference and membership

The terms of reference of Education Committee were reviewed in July 2024 to take into account: the re-organisation of the University around faculties, ongoing discussions with the Cranfield Student Association around representation, and to respond to a recommendation from an Internal Audit report on academic partnerships. During the 2023-24 academic year Professor Catarina Figueira joined the committee as Director of Education for the School of Management (an appointment flagged in last year's report). Dr Laura Lacey took over as Director of Education for Cranfield Defence and Security succeeding Professor Jackie Akhavan. Dr Robert Mayer became Director of Education in the School of Aerospace, Transport and Manufacturing following the retirement of Dr Charles Wainwright. The long and distinguished service to Education Committee of Professor Akhavan and Dr Wainwright is warmly acknowledged. Professor Ruth Massie became the Director of Education for MK:U and as such an *ex-officio* member of Education Committee (formerly a co-opted member as the Education Lead for MK:U).

2. Education Strategy and portfolio review

Our vision is that those who have studied or trained at Cranfield are renowned and valued for their distinctive skills and capabilities. The strategy focuses on the life-changing outcomes of Cranfield education from the perspective of the learner and recognises the value of Cranfield education for the organisations our learners work for. In 2023-24, portfolio review was a focal point for Education Committee in pursuit of the Education Strategy vision both in terms of new product innovation and portfolio streamlining. Notable examples included the completion of a major review of the PGT portfolio of the School of Water, Environment & Agrifood, and new product development to meet the needs of new commercial clients / substantive streamlining of programmes of apprenticeship and non-apprenticeship provision in the School of Management. As part of the University change programme, the Vice Chancellor announced plans to refocus our educational products through a university-wide portfolio review which would result in the closing of low margin/low student courses and innovation, product differentiation and growth in new educational products. This is a staged process with decision points around courses we will recruit to in 2024-25, 2025-26, and 2026-27 requiring timely action in the coming months.

3. Annual Reflective Review

The Annual Reflective Review (ARR) is the principal vehicle for routine monitoring and evaluation of taught courses. Each course is expected to undertake an ARR and to reflect on a range of information including the experience of running the course and feedback from students, external examiners, and external advisors and partners. The process of reflection identifies the strengths and weakness of courses and provides the evidence and justification for changes, small and large. Course-specific issues are progressed locally by Course Directors together with their course teams with the approval of Directors of Education. This is the engine room of continuous improvement and the basis for our quality culture. Directors of Education produce an annual report for Education Committee which enables implications for university-level educational practices and policy to be identified and progressed as part of that committee's work. A report is presented for the information of University Executive and for consideration of action, where needed, of issues relating to resourcing, infrastructure or portfolio management. The ARR for academic year 2022-23, the most recent, complete academic year, was undertaken by course teams during late 2023 and early 2024. Notable highlights from the exercise included 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, company networking events, alumni interactions, the development of internships, group design projects, and new international partnerships. The way our academic and professional service teams work together to create an excellent student experience was praised. Notable successes included our students winning national and international prizes, improvements in important rankings for our courses, and significant successes with professional accreditation of courses. Areas for concern included the challenges in achieving the 20-day target for assessment feedback due to high workload; challenges for course directors in handling difficult student mental health cases; staffing issues; dealing with peak demand for IT labs; requests for further streamlining, simplification and automation of academic processes; and perceptions of low external visibility of some courses.

4. Degree classification & credit frameworks

A working group was established in 2021 to review the case for two proposed changes – the introduction of a degree classification mechanism for our postgraduate taught courses and the alignment of our credit framework with the sector standard of 180 credits for MSc and MDes courses. The working group reports regularly to Education Committee. Following a recommendation by Education Committee, University Executive endorsed a plan to implement these changes from the beginning of the 2025-26 academic year. Although full implementation will not happen until the 2025-26 academic year, there is a significant programme of preparations needed and enabling changes are being made in a timely fashion. Senate has approved a regulation change to permit postgraduate masters awards to be made for courses of 180 credits. This has allowed new courses to be designed and approved according to the new credit framework. Education Committee has recently endorsed plans for how to deal with students whose registration period straddles the full implementation date of September 2025. The working group is currently reviewing modelled data on classification patterns as applied to historical marks with a view to identifying potential areas of concern around marking consistency and award gaps. It should be noted that significant non-academic issues around communications and IT development needs are also being overseen by the working group.

5. Assessment & Feedback Working Group

As reported in the 2022-23 Academic & Skills report, the Assessment & Feedback Working Group has a new leadership team focussed around the themes of Assessment Design, Quality and timeliness of feedback, and Academic Integrity. In 2023-24, this active working group brought papers to Education Committee and prompted communications to and discussion with the wider academic and educational support professional community on marking timeliness, marking consistency in the context of postgraduate degree classification, distinctive assessment design, generative AI, training for the prevention of academic misconduct, and the development of a community-driven assessment & feedback action plan.

Research Committee

On behalf of Senate, Research Committee's aims are to oversee research strategy, governance, policy and associated performance monitoring. It has six working groups on Research Academic Processes and Support (RAPS), Public Engagement, HR Excellence in Research, CRIS Working Group, TALENT Board, Excellence in Scholarship Board.

The work of Research Committee has focused this year on driving forward the Research and Innovation Strategy as well as compliance, assurance and continuing improvements. This report outlines some of the key areas of progress.

1. R&I Strategic Priority – Scholarship with Purpose

Research Culture and Quality

- Research income won has increased from £41M in 2021-2022 to £59M in 2022-2023 and to a record £75M in 2023-2024 representing a 45% increase in awarded contracts in the three years. A further £90M in large capital grants has been awarded through Research England in 2024. Research award highlights include maintaining the University's status as a tier 2 EPSRC provider for another 3 years, securing four EPSRC Collaborative Doctoral Training (CDT) grants (£40M; ca. 5% of EPSRC's national allocations, two as lead with 50% success rate compared to 18% nationally), and the £69M CH2i RPIF.

The Excellence in Scholarship (EiS) programme includes an annual assessment of outputs, impact and environmental indicators, providing formative 1-2-1 feedback to staff, in parallel with a programme of training and development. Round 3, which completed this year, achieved engagement from 91% of independent researchers, with high engagement noted across all Themes. The Research Super KPI sets a target that by 2027, 45% of our publications are world-leading (4*), increasing from a baseline of 20% (precise value was 18.6% in REF2021). The current estimate of 17.4% is derived from the outcomes of three review rounds where a total of 707 outputs published in 2021, 2022 or 2023 have been reviewed, with 57% scored as 3* or 4* quality. The three units of assessment reviewed were; Agrifood (UoA6) - 22.1% 4* outputs, Engineering (UoA12) - 14.5% 4* outputs, and Management (UoA17) - 27.5% 4* outputs. A more robust estimate of performance against the KPI will be derived from a full mock-REF exercise to be complete in mid-2025.

Academic Publishing Awards were introduced, to recognise and reward excellence. This new annual scheme has prizes for early, mid, and senior career researchers and 2023 awards were presented at the ECR Network Symposium in March.

The University Executive and Research Committee have agreed to introduce a new scheme to develop Interdisciplinary Research Powerhouse Institutes (iRPIs) that will help generate and sustain interdisciplinary research communities across the University. These virtual institutes will connect expertise from the University to explore fundamental research questions across disciplines and sectors. They will be established in areas where we have, or aspire to have, world leading research excellence. The aim is for these Institutes to grow a critical mass of academic engagement across at least two Themes. They will extend the research priorities and strategies of individual schools by addressing interdisciplinary research challenges and creating a shared cross-Theme vision in key research areas. A call for expressions of interest will be opened later this year.

Research Impact activities have focussed on training, development and mapping the Cranfield impact landscape, identifying both potential REF impact case studies and wider impact stories.

All centres have been invited to update and add to the University website case studies to ensure they represent their current centre activities. An impact module in the new CRIS has been configured to support the capture of research impact. The EPSRC Impact Acceleration Account (IAA) funding continues to be a valuable resource, providing both proof-of-concept and early-stage support for exploring commercial opportunities for our EPSRC-remit research. The current funding tranche (value £887,661, runs from April 2022-March 2026) has funded 15 translational projects, with £312k leveraged funding from external partners, as well as 13 projects for ECR impact-building activities.

Security, compliance and ethics

Good Research Practice Week delivered in autumn 2023 provided sessions on: responsible research and innovation, What is Trusted Research, Security in Research, Collaboration in Research, AI in Research, Open Access Research, Research Ethics, Data and reproducibility, Diversity and Inclusion in Research.

During 2023-24 the University launched the Trusted Research and Collaboration (TRaCA) review tool and associated guidance to enable security compliant international research collaboration. 230 reviews have been undertaken to-date with 61 requiring more in-depth assessment around matters of export control licensing, suspected dual use, end user checks and additional information requirements.

A new Current Research Information System (CRIS) has been launched. The new Symplectic system helps ensure our research outputs are managed, stored and publicly shared in a timely and organised way. The new system offers a more user friendly way to store and manage research outputs and for staff to display their publications in their web profile. It also underpins EIS and will support the REF 2029 project.

The Pre-Award Research Management (PARMS) project was launched during 2023-24. Implementation of the WorkTribe pre-award and research contract modules will provide a single web-based platform with multi-user access for developing projects through the pre-award phase. Through live links to other corporate systems and consolidated reference data, it will support real-time, accurate project costing and pricing, automated and transparent workflow and sophisticated management information. It is compatible with the new Current Research Information System (CRIS) and PowerBI for corporate reporting.

Research Committee has renewed and updated a number of policies throughout 2023-24, including: Authorship of Research Outputs, Equipment Sharing, Intellectual Property, New Procedure for Laboratory Notebooks, Management of Research Data, New Institutional Rights Retention Policy, Open Research, Overseas Research Organisations Due Diligence, Public Engagement and Outreach, Research Ethics Policy, Research Integrity Policy, Responsible Research Evaluation, Students Working Off-site, UKRI International Fees Policy, Use of Turnitin, Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Leave for Research Students. Priorities for review over the next academic year are: Research Ethics Policy, Research Integrity Policy, Process for Implementing the Research Integrity Policy and developing new policies relating to Trusted Research.

Project Saturn – Research and Innovation Strategy Projects

Titan: Research Laboratory Review. A working group was established to clarify how laboratories in SATM, SWEE and CFI on the Cranfield campus support the delivery of the University's R&I strategy and explore options to improve this. The following topics were investigated: (i) Consolidated lab list; (ii) R&I strategy implementation/ integrating research priorities into lab management; (iii) Space ownership and use, flexibility, sharing, consolidation, storage, mothballing; (iv) Procurement, budgeting and income generation; (v) Promoting/ supporting diversity in labs; (vi) Health & Safety in labs and (vii) Concordat for the Environmental Sustainability of Research and Innovation Practice. The next steps will be to implement recommendations.

Hyperion: Research Data Integrity. Under oversight of the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Committee (CUREIC), a working group has completed identifying gaps in our systems, processes and practices in terms of ensuring and enabling research data integrity. An action plan has been developed that will deliver improvements for 2024-25 in: training, policies; data integrity and quality assurance processes and procedures (building on the previous Joint Codes of Practice); governance; communications.

Janus: New Model PhDs. Looking to develop new PhD programmes to facilitate a growth of PhD student recruitment, exploratory meetings have been held with the Open University and the National Physics Laboratory (NPL) to discuss potential collaboration on new models. Janus II will commence in 2024-25 to deliver a step change in our research student provision including a proposed business plan for a new Doctoral College to be considered by University Executive.

Pandora: New QR allocation model. An initial review and modelling has been undertaken to consider options on how to allocate REF generated Quality Research (QR) to reward existing research areas (as demonstrated through REF 2021), and to invest in new research excellence that will deliver research and associated income growth. However, this project has stalled due to delays in obtaining information on the current mechanisms used to allocate QR income in support of research excellence and activity.

Hermes: international research. The Cranfield Global Challenges Fund has been launched and delivered supporting academic collaborations with overseas universities and researchers with complementary strengths and ambitions, to build lasting networks and strengthen emerging collaborations in support of delivering new, high-quality research. 19 collaborations were supported with outcome reports and next steps due autumn 2024.

2. R&I Strategic Priority - Championing the Research Student

Empowering the research student

A new Research Student Charter was published in March 2024 creating a bilateral agreement between the University and the Student to support an effective supervisory relationship from day one. The Charter outlines how the University can help to shape a student's experience, and how students can engage and contribute to make the most of their research at Cranfield www.cranfield.ac.uk/research/rio/research-student-charter. A Mutual Expectations Framework is now under development to help facilitate productive and constructive research student and supervisor interactions to underpin the Charter.

A review into the PGR Progress Review Process is underway, with a working group established in January 2024. In response to feedback from students and Research Committee, the process (which was introduced in January 2017) has been identified as requiring significant improvement. The Working Group will make recommendations for changes to Research Committee later in 2024, and this work will support the business case and development of a new PhD management system to make our research student process more effective and efficient, exploiting digital platforms.

Support has been provided to enable research students to convene their own initiatives, such as the now regular 'Pizza and PhD' CSA led sessions and a newly launched TEDX event 'Where great ideas take flight' (27 July).

Research student numbers have remained stable with 197 new PhD registrants in 2023-24 compared to 198 the previous year. A new simplified research student fee structure was approved by Research Committee and the Executive and we are working towards implementation from 2025-26.

Enhancing research student support, training and development opportunities

Work has been undertaken on the development of a newly enhanced Core Doctoral Training Programme which will be launched September 2024. This will deliver core skills aligning with QAA and UKRI recommendations as well as being underpinned by the VITAE Research Development Framework. Students will benefit from a cohort based approach by participating in four 1-week units which align with the stage of their research journey. Units will focus on: getting started; research development; research output; successful completion. The curriculum has been expanded with a wide range of new topics, including constructive criticism, responsible research, applied research, authorship policy, crafting high-quality research papers and presentations, intellectual property, and more. This programme will become mandatory once the necessary management systems have been put in place. There has also been an expansion of entrepreneurship training for research students, delivered through the Bettany Centre and provision of additional statistical training for research students.

The CDN Annual Conference/3MT® was delivered during 2023-24, which covered different career journeys with a keynote from a Cranfield alumnus, Dr John Loizou, Director of Jaylambda Ltd as well as presentations by an Early Career Researcher and academic. Other sessions included: Creating Research Visions, Scholarship with Purpose and Personal Development Plans. There were 152 attendees in total which included research students, academic and research staff and professional services staff. The Three Minute Thesis competition enabled presentations from sixteen research students with 90 attendees joining. Prior to the event, all participants were offered presentation skills training delivered by an external provider. Prizes for the 2023 Doctoral Publishing Awards were awarded at the CDN Annual Conference, complementing the new annual Academic Publishing Awards scheme.

The Defence and Security Doctoral Symposium (DSDS) took place at the Shrivenham campus January 2024 with over 160 people from 58 different organisations, with doctoral students presenting their work and engaging in the 3MT® competition.

Research Committee reviewed the Annual Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) noting the 2024 response rate was 43.2% (355 responses from 822 potential respondents) compared to 41.8% in 2023 and a 2024 sector return rate of 38.8% (median). Overall, the results from the national survey remain broadly positive. However, it was recognised that there continues to be areas for improvement that require proactive intervention, with key issues and challenges identified around research culture, supervisory practice and lack of consistency across the University. An action plan was presented to Executive and will be taken forward by Research Committee during the coming year. Further details are given in section 3.1 of this report.

Research Committee worked to enhance the Global Induction for Research Students based on feedback from research students. It also reviewed supervisor participation in refresher training, which Identified that 450 staff with Recognised Teacher Status required training or refresher training. 342 have now received training with 108 left to book. Building on this, we will now review, update and enhance supervisor training working with APEX and the Research Academic Process and Support group (RAPs).

3. R&I Strategic Priority - Diversity of People and Thought

Discussions are underway to establish a mutually beneficial Technician Network in partnership with the Open University that provides support and networking for our technician communities as well as access to a wider range of research facilities. Activities planned include lab 'twinning', short exchanges, joint training, instrumentation sharing and access, guest visits, joint technician awards and joint instrumentation user groups.

ECR Network Development included launch of annual two-day ECR Symposium with over 100 attendees each day. Following on from this, the Network has developed the bi-monthly seminar series and undertaken a post-doctoral researcher survey to identify how we can better support that community. The Inaugural Cranfield University Research Conference is to be held in May 2025 and the new University Seminar Series will be launched November 2024.

Apprenticeship Steering Committee

The Apprenticeships Steering Committee (ASC) is the focal point for the management of apprenticeships. The aim of the committee is to embed apprenticeships within the organisational structure, systems and processes of the University in order to deliver high quality training provision. ASC has one sub-committee, the Apprenticeship Quality Group (AQG), which focuses on the quality of apprenticeship provision.

Key issues arising in 2023-24 are summarised below.

1. Ofsted

Ofsted became responsible for regulating the quality of apprenticeship provision at undergraduate and postgraduate levels (levels 4-7) in April 2021. Following a successful New Provider Monitoring Visit in October 2022, the leadership team implemented a range of actions to support the University's preparations ahead of any Ofsted full inspection, principally the 48-hour planning group against an anticipated inspection during 2024. Cranfield were notified on the 19th January that 6 Ofsted inspectors would be undertaking a full inspection between the 23rd -26th January 2024. Our apprenticeships provision was graded as "Good" overall. Ofsted's report detailed the strengths of our provision and identified areas for improvement. A review of Ofsted's report and our experience of being inspected was undertaken by AQG. Six Task & Finish groups were established to make recommendations to AQG on the following priority areas: apprenticeships data and the way we use it to drive quality improvement; our approach to English & Maths development of apprentices; careers advice as an integral component of apprenticeships training; our approach to the safeguarding of apprentices who are under 19; feedback to apprentices; and our planning for and delivery of inspection. The groups made recommendations to AQG at the end of September 2024, which will inform the next iteration of our Self-Assessment Report and it is anticipated that the recommendations will be incorporated into a modified version of our Quality Improvement Plan. A copy of the full report can be found at: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/43/133848>.

2. ESFA

The provision of apprenticeships in England is regulated by ESFA who annually update and re-issue their funding rules for agreement by providers for the following funding period (1st August – 31st July).

In order to draw down apprenticeship levy funding in support of English Apprentices, providers are required to maintain registration on the Apprentice Provider and Assessment Register (APAR). This is achieved through the monitoring of provider compliance evidence and publication on the Apprenticeship Accountability Framework (AAF) each month plus through a cycle of provider monitoring audits.

Cranfield University was subject to its first Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funding assurance review in September 2023. The objective of the review was to assess whether Cranfield had complied with ESFA funding rules, including whether funds supplied had been used for the purposes intended. The review was undertaken by ESFA's auditor RSM UK Risk Assurance Services LLP. The auditor concluded that Cranfield had substantially met contractual requirements in complying with the relevant funding documentation set out in ESFA's funding rules and returned materially accurate data (i.e. a "satisfactory conclusion on the use of funds"). An action plan was agreed by the auditors and Cranfield University to address 18 identified issues. The action plan is managed by the Head of Apprenticeships, is reviewed regularly with ESFA, and progress against the plan is reported regularly to AQG and ASC.

3. OfS

The OfS is responsible for the external quality assessment (EQA) of end point assessment (EPA) for integrated higher and degree apprenticeships. Cranfield's and MK:U's growing portfolio of integrated degree apprenticeships must use the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education's (IfATE) EQA framework and manual to ensure the quality assurance requirements for EPA (n.b. It was announced in the King's Speech that IfATE is to be incorporated into Skills England). EQA assessment judges whether EPA is effective, valid and reliable and informs judgements about a compliance with the OfS's condition of registration B4: Assessments and awards. When an end point assessment organisation (EPAO) starts delivering a new apprenticeship, this may be subject to an initial assessment carried out by the OfS to ensure the provider is ready to deliver the EPA (the EQA readiness check). Following the readiness check, the EPAO enters a monitoring cycle, known as the

EQA monitoring check. The OfS's approach to EQA of EPA is risk-based and means that they may not undertake an assessment of every apprenticeship standard delivered by an EPAO, but will ensure that every EPAO will have an assessment of EPA for at least one of the apprenticeship standards it delivers.

Cranfield established an EPAO Office in October 2023, which sits within Registry Services in the Education Services PSU, to oversee, manage and administer the requirements of the various assessment processes. It was anticipated that Cranfield, would be inspected during Autumn 2024. This assumption was based on OfS determining a number of standards as "High Risk" which includes the Digital Technologies apprenticeships at both level 6&7 requiring any EPAO/Provider to be assessed at the point of EPA for these, with Cranfield's level 7 programme going to EPA later in 2024. In preparation the University established a EPAO Working group which is chaired by Dr Ruth Massie, Director of Education at MK:U and has representation from all integrated programmes, the Apprenticeship Office, the EPAO Office and other professional services. The OfS contacted the University in September 2024 regarding an external quality assurance readiness check for MK:U's level 6 Digital and Technology Solutions provision. This Readiness Check is in train at the time of writing of this report and outcomes will be reported when available.

4. Terms of reference review

A review of the terms of reference of both the ASC and the AQG was initiated at the end of the 2023-24 academic year (to be completed at the beginning of the 2024-25 academic year with the outcome to be reported in next year's Academic & Skills report). The reviews will consider the effectiveness of the committee and its subgroup, how the membership should change in response to the change in the university's academic business unit structure, and the how learning arising from the ESFA audit in late 2023 and the Ofsted inspection in early 2024 should affect the scope and operation of the committee's business.

2.3 Other University Initiatives

During the last academic year the University has commenced a number of projects to further enhance its educational offering. Some of these are set out below.

Marking consistency project

Cranfield University has never classified its postgraduate degrees (it previously classified its undergraduate degrees and will classify the undergraduate degree apprenticeships being delivered by MK:U). The pass-fail nature of Cranfield's postgraduate degrees, our insulation from sectoral pressures and debates around so-called "grade-inflation" and awarding gaps, and a historical tendency towards decentralised oversight of awarding outcomes are some of the factors that credibly explain a lack of an academic discourse around the consistency and benchmarking of postgraduate student achievement. This is changing, prompted by the planning for the implementation of postgraduate degree classification in 2025-26 and the interest and scrutiny at Council arising from the presentation of award data in previous versions of this report. Education Committee's Degree Classification and Credit Framework Working Group established a marking consistency subgroup in the 2023-24 academic year to guide our work in this area. In the past year the subgroup has focussed on the specification of reports on historical marking data which has been remodelled according to the proposed classification criteria and the communication of these reports to course teams as a starting point for dialogue around internal consistency and external benchmarking. This is a precursor to a new PowerBI report provide module marking statistics that will provide an accessible dashboard for course teams.

The 2026-27 academic year Senate Academic & Skills report will set out our classified postgraduate degree outcomes for the first time. Until then we will continue to present data using arbitrary award classes (section 3 of this report). As requested by Council last year we present in this report 5 years' of data according to quasi-classes and with data broken down by mode of study and demographic groups. These data highlight:

- temporal phenomena (e.g. the 2023-24 overall high pass % is notably lower than the 5-year average);
- differences in achievement associated with mode of study (e.g. the part-time overall high pass % is consistently lower than its FT counterpart);
- in 4 of the 5 years the male high pass % was higher than that of females (although overall performance is fairly similar);
- that older students generally perform less well than their younger counterparts;
- that in most years the % of those with a disclosed disability receiving a high pass is lower than those with no disclosed disability;
- that there is a clear ethnicity / nationality award gap.

This dataset has been considered by Education Committee and the data have been shared with course teams. It is plausible that this will be the first time that our colleagues have been asked to consider such data. This internal process of communicating, absorbing and understanding root causes will be accompanied by greater engagement with sectoral evidence bases and debates (e.g. the QAA's mapping the award gap resources).

Exceptional circumstances process review

Education Committee commissioned a working group to consider the current exceptional circumstances policy and processes, and whether these remain fit for purpose for all students of the University (Postgraduate Taught and Research, Undergraduate and Apprentices), and partly in response to the rise in the number of students disclosing mental health conditions and learning differences. The working group included 20 members of both academic and professional staff, who met as a wider group four times, with smaller task groups meeting to look at specific actions.

The University's current policy has been in place since 2014, and the group's aim was to ensure that the policies and processes in place remained fit for purpose and provided sufficient support to students. Whilst it was felt that the current policy still remained appropriate a number of recommendations were made by the group, including simplifying the process for students by moving deferral of assessments from a separate process to being an outcome of a standard exceptional circumstances request, which has been implemented for the coming academic year. Further recommendations will be considered and implemented during 2024-25, including training for staff, clearer communication and process improvements.

Education systems improvements

There have been a number of educational system enhancements over the last academic year. They include:

- The introduction of a new curriculum management system, Akari. Akari will act as the single source of truth for all curriculum data for taught and apprenticeship programmes and will feed downstream systems.
- The launch of Maytas, the apprenticeship management system. Maytas manages all apprenticeship data, including tripartite review information and off the job training hours calculations.
- A pilot of an attendance monitoring system via the student app. The pilot was successful and will be rolled out across all cohorts at MK:U. A project will be launched in the next academic year to roll this system out across Cranfield. This work will run alongside the student portal project. Both of which are set to be ready for implementation in spring 2025.
- A project scoping out the possibility of developing electronic forms and workflows. Work with IT on finding solutions is ongoing.

3. Report on student experience and outcomes

3.1 Experience

Student experience surveys

The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) are UK higher education sector-wide surveys designed to gain insight from postgraduate students about their experience. Organised annually by AdvanceHE, the surveys provide robust, benchmarked data from a large number of higher education providers across the UK, against which individual institutions can assess their own performance and drive enhancement of the student experience. Cranfield runs and responds to the research and taught surveys in a co-ordinated way, recognising the common factors affecting the student experience across the whole student body, whilst acknowledging the specific needs of different groups of learners.

PRES

The 2024 PRES survey ran from 2nd April – 16th May, and Cranfield had a response rate of 43.2% of all research students, which was higher than both the sector average for 2024 (38.8% median) and Cranfield's 2023 response rate (41.8%).

Figure 1 PRES results

PRES Category	2021	2022	2023	2024	Change (2023 to 2024)
Supervision	4.35	4.47	4.46	4.38	-0.08
Resources	4.10	4.31	4.38	4.29	-0.09
Research Culture	3.33	3.58	3.66	3.58	-0.08
Progress and Assessment	4.22	4.28	4.30	4.25	-0.05
Responsibilities	4.08	4.16	4.24	4.20	-0.04
Research Skills	4.32	4.40	4.46	4.31	-0.15
Professional Development	3.96	4.15	4.20	4.13	-0.07
Opportunities	3.60	4.00	4.04	3.86	-0.18
Overall Experience	3.92	4.02	4.11	4.06	-0.05
Motivations	4.17	4.22	4.29	4.23	-0.06
Support	3.91	4.05	4.09	4.06	-0.03
Community	New category		3.74	3.70	0.04
Total	4.04	4.18	4.20	4.13	-0.07

The 2024 survey results showed a marginal decrease in the scores overall compared to 2023, with three categories scoring below four out of five. Cranfield's overall score placed it 35th of the 53 institutions which took part in PRES, however the University was placed in the top ten for Resources, Progression and Support, and 11th for Community, which was one of Cranfield's lowest scoring categories. It should be noted that there will still be some research students who completed the survey whose early experience of their degree programme was impacted by Covid.

Figure 2 below shows the percentage of respondents who felt that their experience of each category was Good or Very Good. There was a small decrease in the scores for each section overall with the exception of Progress and Assessment which remained the same and Opportunities which increased nominally. Overall, Supervision and Research Skills continue to remain the most highly rated categories as was the case in 2022 and 2023. The percentage of students who were satisfied overall with the experience of their research degree programme was 79%. This compared to 81% of students at pre-92 institutions. In several areas Cranfield scored higher than the pre-92 benchmark, including the appropriateness of the programme induction and the institutional value of feedback.

Figure 2 PRES results - percent of students rating as good or very good

PRES Category	2021	2022	2023	2024
Supervision	85%	88%	88%	86%
Resources	78%	85%	86%	85%
Research Culture	49%	57%	62%	58%
Progress and Assessment	84%	84%	85%	85%
Responsibilities	79%	80%	83%	82%
Research Skills	85%	88%	91%	87%
Professional Development	72%	79%	81%	80%
Opportunities	63%	73%	73%	74%
Overall Experience	74%	77%	80%	79%
Motivations	81%	825	84%	81%
Support	73%	76%	76%	78%
Community	New category		65%	64%
Total	76%	80%	81%	79%

Overall, the results from the national survey remain broadly positive. However, it is recognised that there continues to be areas for improvement that require proactive intervention, with key issues associated with research culture, supervisory practice and lack of consistency across the University. The survey also allows respondents to give anonymised comments which provide considerable feedback to draw on to help us in identifying our strengths and weaknesses based on student feedback. Priority actions in response to this broader feedback have been identified and discussed and agreed by Senate's Research Committee.

PTES

The PTES survey ran from 22nd April to 13th June 2024. More than 1000 taught students completed the survey. The overall response rate was 40% (56% for full time and 18% for part-time students). This was far higher than the sector average for 2024 of 24.7% but lower than Cranfield's response rate from 2023 (48% overall, 60% full-time and 19% part-time).

Figure 3 PTES Scores

PTES Category	2021	2022	2023	2024	Change (2023 to 2024)
Teaching and Learning	4.11	4.19	4.19	4.23	+0.04
Engagement	4.07	4.18	4.21	4.24	+0.03
Assessment and Feedback	3.84	3.85	3.87	3.95	+0.08
Dissertation or Major Project	4.27	4.20	4.23	4.28	+0.05
Organisation & Management	3.89	3.92	3.92	4.06	+0.11
Resources and Services	3.99	4.39	4.50	4.53	+0.03
Skills Development	4.16	4.26	4.28	4.28	-
Support	4.01	4.16	4.21	4.23	+0.02
Community	New category		3.89	3.90	+0.01
Overall Experience of Course	4.02	4.14	4.11	4.22	+0.11

This year's survey saw an increased score in the overall experience and in eight out of nine categories, with no change in the other category. 87% of respondents rated their overall experience as good or very good and 91% would recommend Cranfield to other students (both measures have improved since 2023).

The area of highest satisfaction was Resources & Services with a category rating of 4.59 and 94% of respondents rating this good or very good. This covers library, IT, subject-specific facilities and wider support services. 2024 was the first year that the Organisation & Management category achieved a PTES score of ≥ 4 . Assessment & Feedback continues its slow improvement (3.95 compared to 3.20 in 2011). Community, a relatively new PTES category, has the lowest rating (3.90). Community covers issues of belonging to a PGT community.

The part-time response rate was significantly lower than that for full-timers (18% compared to 56% for full-time students), with also notable differences in the response rate and some category ratings across Schools and Themes. Further analysis of between-course differences will be reported to Education Committee by Directors of Education.

Student satisfaction at Cranfield was better than the national average in 7 out of the 9 categories and was better than the Russell Group average in all 9 categories. Cranfield was placed in the sector top quartile for only 4 of 9 categories, however, which does not align with our aspirations and expectations around postgraduate sector leadership. Education Committee will lead the establishment of a teaching excellence initiative in 2024-25 to address our position in the PTES.

Student support

Student Wellbeing and Disability Support (SWaDS)

The service (SWaDS) is a central point of contact for all students and guidance for staff on student welfare matters. Advisors offer information and support to students on a wide range of academic, welfare and personal issues, alongside assessing risk, case escalation and management of internal and external support where a student presents as vulnerable, including Fitness to Study, loss of contact and safeguarding. Management and referral to University counselling services is also overseen by SWaDS. The SWaDS team have expanded over 2023-24, with the appointment of an additional Learning Support Officer and a Deputy Head.

As part of the SWaDS provision the service centrally co-ordinates reasonable adjustments to support students with disabilities, physical and mobility impairments, specific learning differences and mental and physical health conditions. A proposal has been approved to change to a new online tool which screens for traits of neurodiverse conditions as opposed to dyslexia only. The tool provides evidence and recommendations to support reasonable adjustments where a condition has yet to be diagnosed alongside access to a digital platform with tailored guidance on learning styles and access to resources.

Student Wellbeing and Disability Support service engagement

While student registrations have reduced, in line with the sector, engagement with wellbeing support and the number of students presenting with mental health concerns and those considered at risk, remains significantly higher than 3 years ago. Reported incidents of harassment (all forms) and bullying has also seen an increase this year. The launch of 'Report and Support' (July 2023) enabling named and anonymous reporting, alongside the introduction of a 'Bystander Intervention' online module for students, has helped raise awareness of all forms of harassment and routes for support and redress. Further training and activities are under consideration to address the new OfS condition of registration on harassment and sexual misconduct which comes into place in August 2025.

Figure 4 shows the number students presenting to SWaDS with a mental health concern. Of the 1375 total engagements with the service, 19% were apprentice students, a 5% increase from 2022-23. This is separate to students who share/disclose a mental health condition, which is reflected later in the report in Figure 13. In 2024 Cranfield joined the University Mental Health Charter Programme to further enhance practice and cultural change.

Figure 4 Concerns reported to SWaDS

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Bullying / harassment	16	37	36	47*
Mental health	155	296	288	299
Student of concern / suicidal ideation / safeguarding concern	39	89	76	77
Total number of engagements with services	933	1340	1147	1375

* 23 students via Report and Support, of which 9 were anonymous.

Of note, the number of 19yr olds and under and the associated regulatory and pastoral expectations around welfare support, has significantly increased this year and was subject to scrutiny in the Ofsted inspection in January 2024. The regulatory expectations around younger students has led to the introduction of a University policy on students under the age of 18, and a review of the Ofsted expectations of support for students aged 19 and under and 'care experienced' targeted support, with improved data reporting and guidance in development.

Counselling service engagement

The need for professional counselling services is recognised as an essential part of university student support provision. The model of in-house counsellors vs. external contracted counsellors varies across the sector and is in part based on student population on campus. Many universities offer 24/7 crisis support, contracted out to external suppliers, predominantly via phone with a trained mental health professional. This is alongside the national free 24/7 support services including NHS urgent mental health, Samaritans and Shout services.

In line with the sector, short-term (up to six sessions per academic year) 1-2-1 counselling is available to all students with a provision for additional sessions where appropriate. Referral to counselling services is managed by the SWaDS team where all sources of internal and external support are highlighted to the student.

To date, Cranfield has relied on externally 'preferred supplier' contracted counsellors and the web platform Togetherall (online support) to provide these services. A review of service use, of external providers and more detailed monitoring has raised questions over the suitability of the current provision we use to meet a changing student demand, with a proposal for changes to our model currently under consideration.

As shown in Figure 5 below, in 2023-24 145 students accessed the 1-2-1 counselling service, with 810 sessions offered in total. 32 of the 145 students who accessed the service required more than 6 sessions, which accounted for 336 of all the sessions offered.

Figure 5 Student use of counselling services

Student use of Counselling services	Number of students	Number of sessions
2019-20	132	911
2020-21	161	904
2021-22	153	826
2022-23	121	467
2023-24	145	810

Apprenticeship Student Provision

Programme Development

Currently the University delivers apprenticeships against 18 apprenticeship standards with 12 at level 7 and 6 at level 6, with 7 being integrated where Cranfield are also the End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO).

Across the apprenticeship portfolio there are 23 individual programmes with the Senior Leader apprenticeship standard being used across 5 separate pathways, MBA, Marketing, Management, Supply Chain and the non-award bearing Executive programme. Additionally, the university is developing the level 7 Robotics specialist, having recently approved the level 6 Robotics Engineer, plus the level 7 Soil Scientist apprenticeship.

Further developments in discussion currently include at level 6 Project Manager and Supply Chain Professional and at level 7 Digital Forensics.

Apprentice Recruitment

As of October 20th 477 apprentice applications had been received across 15 cohort start dates for Sept/Oct. Of these, 443 have been registered as apprentices with 34 applications withdrawn for various reasons. There are a further 9 cohort starts scheduled between Nov 2024 - April 2025. At the corresponding point in 2023 there had been 226 applications across 13 cohort starts. The final apprentices' registrations for 2023-24 was 642, across all 23 cohorts.

Figure 6 New apprentice registrations

School	2023-24 (final)	2024-25 (at 20/10)
SATM	58	91
SOM	309	170
SWEE	7	23
CDS	26	31
MK:U	242	128

Annual Apprentice Portfolio Review (AAPR)

Review of the Cranfield/MK: U apprenticeships portfolio will be incorporated into the wider university portfolio review announced as part of the University Change Programme.

The AAPR will form part of the process to ensure all apprentice delivery is being delivered in accordance with the various regulators, providing ASC assurance that those involved at a programme level fully understand and recognise the

requirements of ESFA, Ofsted & OfS. Additionally at a Faculty level the commercial viability of each apprentice programme will be considered, and appropriate recommendations/actions implemented. The AAPR process was piloted by MK:U during 2024 with a full roll out to the university expected in 2025.

Communications and processes

The Apprenticeship Office and Education Services work together to ensure compliance and alignment with University and apprenticeship rules and regulations. Clear and open lines of communication continue to be embedded. The teams have regular progress meetings to discuss all apprentices and their progression and attendance matters. This has helped ensure more accurate record keeping and onward external reporting.

A new process has been implemented to ensure better alignment with apprenticeship related dates, such as start and end dates, exam board, gateway and EPA. This was an action required following the Ofsted visit.

Attendance monitoring

As mentioned above under Education Systems Improvements, MK:U piloted a new attendance monitoring system with CI Connect, via the MyMKU app. This pilot was successful and has started to provide more accurate data, improved reporting with less manual intervention. This system is being rolled out to all apprentices at MK:U and as mentioned a project is launching in academic year 2024-25 to launch at Cranfield.

Maytas launch

As discussed in the Education systems Improvements section, Maytas Hub was launched with September 2023 apprentices being the first to engage with the system. Although the project team was closed in July 2023, with the Apprentice Office assuming responsibility, there remain several changes being actioned by SST and Tribal (software supplier). Those engaged with the system have commented on its functionality being complex and at present (October 2024) there are still issues with enabling employer access.

The areas around student management and portfolio building have been successfully launched and all apprentices are engaging with the processes and evidence is being generated. The first cohort to progress gateway using Maytas Hub will do so in late November 2024.

Complaints, appeals and academic misconduct

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.

Details of the student complaints, academic appeals and academic misconduct cases investigated during the year are set out below. The investigation procedures for student complaints, academic appeals and academic misconduct cases all follow a three-stage process, an informal, local investigation (Stage 1), a formal investigation undertaken by an independent member of staff (Stage 2) and a formal review of the Stage 2 investigation (Stage 3). Following the internal process students have the right to request that an independent body, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) considers the University's response to their case.

Student Complaints

Figure 7 Student Complaints

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Total Stage 2 cases	21	21	18	26	18
Stage 2 cases upheld or partially upheld	15	11	<5	14	9
Total Stage 3 cases	8	7	<5	8	8
Stage 3 cases upheld or partially upheld	5	<5	0	<5	0
Cases referred to the OIA by student	<5	8	<5	<5	<5
Found to be justified/partially justified by the OIA	<5	<5	0	0	0

Figure 7 above shows a drop in both the number of complaints received in 2023-24 compared to the previous year and in the number of complaints which were upheld or partially upheld. The table above covers Stage 2 (formal investigation) and Stage 3 (Review of Stage 2 decision) of the complaints process, with Stage 1 (informal investigation) being undertaken at a local level by relevant staff in the area of that student's concern. Stage 1 complaints are not centrally

recorded, but address concerns directly and swiftly for students. Where students are dissatisfied with a formal outcome of a Stage 2 investigation they may request a review of the Stage 2 investigation (Stage 3). The above figures show that in 2023-24, no Stage 3 reviews were upheld (meaning that the Stage 3 investigator considered that the Stage 2 investigation had been completed appropriately and in line with the University's published complaints procedures).

Academic Appeals

Figure 8 Academic Appeals

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Total Stage 1 cases	26	32	36	62	68
Stage 1 cases upheld	8	10	15	23	12
Total Stage 2 cases	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5
Stage 2 cases upheld or partially upheld	0	<5	<5	0	0
Total Stage 3 cases	0	<5	<5	<5	0
Stage 3 cases upheld or partially upheld	0	<5	<5	0	0
Cases referred to the OIA by student	0	<5	0	<5	0
Found to be justified/partially justified by the OIA	0	0	0	0	0

2023-24 saw a continued increase in the number of academic appeals received at Stage 1, where an informal investigation is carried out to determine if an error in the assessment or marking process or recording has occurred. In our view, this rise in appeals is due to our students being increasingly prepared to challenge academic decisions. Of these a small number were upheld, with the rest dismissed or withdrawn. The academic appeals received as Stage 2 formal appeals were all dismissed as without appropriate grounds for appeal.

Academic Misconduct

Figure 9 Academic Misconduct cases

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Total Stage 1 cases	70	90	305	177	102
Stage 1 cases upheld	60	85	290	153	83
Total Stage 2 cases	60	85	290	153	84
Stage 2 cases upheld or partially upheld	46	70	212	113	54
Total Stage 3 cases	0	0	9	11	5
Stage 3 cases upheld or partially upheld	0	0	0	0	0
Cases referred to the OIA by student	0	0	<5	<5	0
Found to be justified/partially justified by the OIA	0	0	0	0	0

There was a significant drop in the number of academic misconduct cases investigated and upheld at Stage 1, following work undertaken to address the rise in cases experienced in 2021-22, which was attributed to issues with time-compressed assessments introduced during the Covid crisis. There was a drop in the proportion of cases that were upheld at Stage 2 (meaning that the student was found to have committed academic misconduct after a formal investigation), however it should be noted that 15 of the 84 cases considered at Stage 2 are pending an outcome.

Students have the right to make a complaint about the University to an independent body, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, who independently review whether the University has properly applied its regulations and followed its

procedures, whether the procedures were reasonable and whether the final decision was reasonable. During 2023-24 the OIA, following a review of a 2022-23 academic misconduct case, suggested that the University revisit its academic misconduct procedures for the consideration of exceptional circumstances, This is being fed into a wider review of the academic misconduct process taking place during 2024-25.

3.2 Outcomes and demographics

Student demographic data

The tables below present demographic data on students registered with the University during 2023-24, and cover postgraduate and undergraduate provision. The data presented as part of this report was taken from the dataset used to inform the University's HESA data return, taken in June 2024. This data includes all students who were involved in an academic activity in 2023-24 (including completion of theses), and as such includes students on full-time one-year courses who commenced their studies in 2022-23.

Figure 10 Overall student demographic data 2023-24

	Research		Research Total	Taught			Taught Total	Grand Total
	FT	PT		FT	PT	PT Apprentice		
SATM								
Female	70	20	90	332	63	28	423	513
Male	328	94	422	1375	322	87	1784	2206
Other	<5	<5	7	19	6	<5	28	35
SOM								
Female	35	28	63	491	117	249	857	920
Male	27	58	85	696	268	293	1257	1342
Other	-	-	-	10	<5	<5	17	17
SWEE								
Female	112	8	120	149	18	9	176	296
Male	140	13	153	272	50	<5	326	479
Other	<5	-	<5	9	-	<5	10	11
CDS								
Female	20	19	39	116	143	36	295	334
Male	41	62	103	87	752	41	880	983
Other	<5	-	<5	<5	24	<5	29	30
MK:U	-	-	-	-	-			
Female	-	-	-	-	-	107	107	107
Male	-	-	-	-	-	279	279	279
Other	-	-	-	-	-	12	12	12

Despite significant increases in the number of part-time non-apprentice students (+156) and students enrolled at MK:U (+212) there was an overall drop in student numbers of 389 students, continuing the downward trend in student numbers witnessed over the last four years as shown in the figure below. The figure below also shows a decrease in the number of apprentices enrolled with the University, which has contributed to the reduction in overall student numbers, and consequently has lowered the University's proportion of (and reliance on) apprenticeship students, down from apprentices accounting for 21% of all taught students in 2020-21 to 15% in 2023-24. The reduction of the University's apprenticeship students as a proportion of all taught students reduces our dependency on Apprenticeship Levy funding, and the risks associated with any changes in Government policy regarding apprenticeship funding.

Figure 11 below provides details of the numbers of registered students who were included in HESA returns for the last four years, and shows a year-on-year drop in taught (and overall) student numbers since 2021-22. Figure 12 provides year-on-year data of new student registrations, which follow the declining trend of the overall data.

Figure 11 Overall student demographic data 2020-24

Year	Research		Research Total	Taught			Taught Total	Grand Total	% Apprentices of Taught total
	FT	PT		FT	PT	PT Apprentice			
2020-21	768	297	1065	3359	2136	1490	6985	8050	21%
2021-22	765	302	1067	3694	2127	1439	7260	8327	20%
2022-23	799	306	1105	4015	1610	1223	6848	7953	18%
2023-24	779	305	1084	3560	1766	1154	6480	7564	15%

Figure 12 New student registration data 2020-24

Year	Research		Research Total	Taught			Taught Total	Grand Total	% Apprentices of Taught total
	FT	PT		FT	PT	PT Apprentice			
2020-21	218	44	262	1560	451	550	2561	2823	21.5%
2021-22	162	38	200	1972	361	308	2641	2841	11.7%
2022-23	143	40	183	2060	321	317	2698	2881	11.7%
2023-24	130	36	166	1561	383	327	2271	2437	14.4%

Figures 13-16 below set out data on some of the protected characteristics of the student population as defined by the Equality Act 2010. The data is presented alongside historical comparisons. Consideration of this data allows the University to ensure that it has due regard to the demographics of the student population and that appropriate support is in place for these students.

Figure 13 Student disability status

Disabilities	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Multiple Disabilities	17	20	29	28
Learning difference such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D	251	277	276	318
Social/communication conditions such as a speech and language impairment or an autistic spectrum condition	12	11	18	30
Physical impairment (a condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, lifting or carrying)	19*	16	19	18
Mental health condition, challenge or disorder, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety	63	81	95	110
Temporary disability (e.g. accident, post viral)	-	-	-	<5
Long-term illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy	57	64	69	78
Blind or have a visual impairment uncorrected by glasses	-	6	8	<5
Deaf/deaf or have a hearing impairment	20	17	14	11
An impairment, health condition or learning difference not listed above	32	33	44	41

*includes visual impairments

The number of students disclosing a disability has risen year on year, despite the drop in student numbers. The proportion of students disclosing a disability has risen from 5.85% in 2020-21 to 8.45% in 2023-24, although this is below the 11% national average for postgraduate students who report a disability (2020-21). Learning differences such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D remain the primary category of disability at 49.6% (2023-24), however the University has seen a steady increase in students reporting a mental health condition (17% in 2023-24 vs. 15.4% in 2021-22). This is in line with the sector and in part driven by greater awareness of mental health conditions and symptoms leading to earlier diagnosis, and changing attitudes towards disclosing mental health conditions, but also reflects the increasing prevalence of mental health conditions in the wider adult population.

Figures 14-16 below present data on student ethnicity, religious belief or non-belief and age on entry and show that the University continues to have a diverse student population. It is noted that the proportion of students over the age of 30 on entry has decreased each year since 2020-21, from 46% to just 39%, which may partly be attributed to the University offering undergraduate courses through MK:U but also reflects a decrease in the number of students joining in the 30-39 age bracket, with the proportion of over 40's remaining reasonably consistent.

Figure 14 Student ethnicity

Ethnicity	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Arab	6	6	11	118
Asian or Asian British	2231	2746	3266	2860
Black or Black British	518	526	589	539
Information refused/not available	124	109	82	111
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	141	257	253	215
Other ethnic background	334	242	216	147
White	4696	4441	3955	3574

Figure 15 Student religious belief or non-belief

Religion	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Buddhist	73	61	95	74
Christian	2056	2201	2145	1537
Hindu	492	930	1428	1031
Jewish	12	23	25	22
Muslim	439	591	680	499
No Religion	2866	2949	2759	2049
Not available	1909	1393	606	2197
Sikh	42	47	54	36
Other	161	132	161	119

Figure 16 Student age on entry

Age	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
under 24	2685	2895	3119	2970
25 - 29	1674	1765	1837	1624
30 - 34	1324	1311	1194	1022
35 - 39	1009	1002	933	822
40 - 44	637	637	602	521
45 - 49	428	413	380	327
50 - 54	193	205	194	173
55 - 59	84	76	89	80
60 - 64	<15	<15	17	19
65 and over	<5	<5	7	6

Figure 17 below shows fairly steady numbers of total registered postgraduate research students over the last four years, with a small drop in 2023-24 from 2022-23. Overall research student numbers show greater stability than the number of taught students, which have seen significant drops over the last four years.

Figure 17 Intended postgraduate research students' awards 2020-24

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
DBA	49	50	51	45
EngD	28	20	0	0
MPhil	6	8	5	<5
MSc by Research	61	57	53	56
PhD	921	932	996	963

Figure 18 below shows a continuing trend of a decrease in overall apprenticeship student numbers, which is due to a further decrease in the number of apprentices registered in the School of Management. The other three Schools have seen moderate increases in their apprentice numbers, with MK:U (where all students are studying as part of an apprenticeship) showing significant growth. The overall decrease in the number of apprentices has contributed to the decrease in overall taught student numbers, but is not as significant a factor as the reduction in numbers of new full-time taught students. MK:U apprentices are

completing part-time undergraduate awards, so therefore have longer registration periods (and remain registered students for a longer period of time) than those studying for a postgraduate award, so the numbers of MK:U apprentices is likely to rise again next year, as students who registered with MK:U in 2021-22 will only begin to complete their studies in 2024-25.

Figure 18 Apprenticeship students by School

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
SATM	211	142	99	118
SOM	1241	1160	865	546
SWEE	6	7	10	14
CDS	32	50	63	78
MK:U	-	80	186	398

Student achievement data

Taught Students (non-apprentices)

The tables below present achievement data of non-apprentice postgraduate students whose awards were completed and confirmed during the 2023-24 academic year. The University does not currently classify taught awards, however achievement below is presented as students achieving a final overall mark of High Pass ($\geq 70\%$), Good Pass (60%-69%), Pass (50%-59%) or Fail ($< 50\%$) (n.b. these are quasi-classes created for the purposes of this report). The University is preparing to implement a classification system for its postgraduate taught awards from 2025-26, however for Master's awards the classification will be based on an algorithm which takes into account the final average mark (as presented here) and the students' final thesis mark.

There were no students studying for an undergraduate award who completed their award during 2023-24.

Figure 19 below shows a decrease in 2023-24 of the percentage of students who achieved a High Pass ($\geq 70\%$), although the data shows this was matched by an increase in the number of students achieving a Good Pass (60-69%), meaning that the percentage of students who did not achieve at least 60% as their final average was only 10.2%. This was consistent with the previous four years and matched the 5-year average. As set out in section 2.3 of this report, Senate's Education Committee has, through its Classification and Credit Framework Working Group established a subgroup to look at marking consistency across all taught programmes and sector benchmarking prior to the introduction of formal award classifications.

Figure 19 Overall taught achievement 2019-24

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	5-year Average
High Pass	44.5%	47.5%	43.9%	41.9%	36.8%	42.6%
Good Pass	45.6%	43.4%	45.2%	47.5%	52.9%	47.2%
Pass	7.4%	7.4%	8.8%	9.1%	9.3%	8.5%
Fail	2.5%	1.7%	2.1%	1.5%	0.9%	1.7%

Figure 20 Taught achievement by mode of study

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	5-year Average
FT						
High Pass	49.0%	49.9%	47.1%	42.9%	37.0%	44.6%
Good Pass	42.7%	41.5%	42.5%	45.8%	52.5%	45.4%
Pass	6.9%	7.0%	9.0%	9.9%	9.3%	8.5%
Fail	1.4%	1.7%	1.4%	1.5%	1.1%	1.4%
PT						
High Pass	29.0%	38.4%	33.5%	38.3%	36.1%	35.1%
Good Pass	55.9%	50.8%	54.1%	54.0%	54.4%	53.9%
Pass	9.0%	8.9%	7.9%	6.1%	9.4%	8.2%
Fail	6.1%	1.9%	4.5%	1.6%	0.2%	2.8%

As shown in Figure 20 the achievement rates of full-time students who achieve either a High Pass or Good Pass ($\geq 60\%$) has remained fairly static across the last five years, with the equivalent achievement for part-time students showing slight year-on-year fluctuations.

Figure 21 below sets out achievement by gender, which remains fairly even between male and female students, with the percentage of female students receiving a high pass consistently slightly lower than male students. However, female students across the last five years have seen a slightly higher proportion of High Pass and Good Pass outcomes compared to male students.

Figure 21 Taught achievement 2019-24 by gender

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	5-year Average
Female						
High Pass	42.6%	46.9%	44.2%	38.7%	35.2%	41.2%
Good Pass	48.1%	45.8%	45.4%	51.3%	54.2%	49.3%
Pass	7.5%	6.3%	9.0%	9.0%	10.0%	8.4%
Fail	1.8%	1.0%	1.4%	1.0%	0.5%	1.1%
Male						
High Pass	45.2%	47.7%	43.7%	43.1%	37.3%	43.1%
Good Pass	44.6%	42.4%	45.2%	46.2%	52.6%	46.5%
Pass	7.4%	7.9%	8.7%	9.2%	9.1%	8.5%
Fail	2.8%	2.0%	2.4%	1.6%	1.1%	1.9%
Other						
High Pass	-	100.0%	100.0%	66.7%	62.5%	64.0%
Good Pass	100.0%	-	-	16.7%	31.3%	28.0%
Pass	-	-	-	-	6.3%	4.0%
Fail	-	-	-	16.7%	-	4.0%

Figure 22 below sets out achievement by disability status. It shows that a higher proportion of students who have declared a disability do fail to achieve their award, although this has significantly decreased since 2019-20 and is reasonably in line with the achievement levels of those not declaring a disability. In addition, the percentage of students who have declared a disability who achieve a High Pass has continued to increase and for the first time in 2023-24 was higher than the High Pass achievement of students who have not declared a disability. This demonstrates that the efforts over the last few years to support and make available resources to students who have declared a disability has had a positive impact on their ability to achieve.

Figure 22 Taught Student achievement by disability status

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	5-year Average
Disclosed disability						
High Pass	37.9%	36.9%	40.5%	40.6%	41.4%	39.6%
Good Pass	44.7%	48.5%	41.4%	45.5%	47.7%	45.6%
Pass	6.8%	12.6%	11.7%	10.5%	9.4%	10.2%
Fail	10.7%	1.9%	6.3%	3.5%	1.6%	4.6%
No disclosed disability						
High Pass	44.8%	48.0%	44.1%	42.0%	36.6%	42.8%
Good Pass	45.7%	43.1%	45.4%	47.6%	53.2%	47.3%
Pass	7.4%	7.1%	8.6%	9.0%	9.3%	8.4%
Fail	2.0%	1.7%	1.9%	1.4%	0.9%	1.5%

Research Students

Research students do not receive a numerical mark for their final award outcome, with achievement measured as pass or fail. The University reports student completion within four years for full-time students and six years for part-time students, as set out in Figures 23a and 23b below. It should be noted that the figures for 2023-24 are skewed by the large number of students who have submitted their theses but not yet received a confirmed outcome. The 2020-21 – 2022-23 data shows a consistent level of completion for research students. The data below shows a high level of recorded withdrawals; this may be where a student has withdrawn from their award, be as a result of the outcome of a Review meeting or be where the student is recommended to work towards a lower award.

Figure 23a Research student completion data – Full-time students

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Completed - over 4 years	47.54%	48.52%	44.90%	31.36%
Completed - under 4 years	29.51%	30.18%	27.89%	22.03%
Submissions - no outcome yet confirmed	0.82%	1.18%	5.44%	39.83%
Withdrawals	18.03%	18.34%	19.73%	3.39%
Failures	4.10%	1.78%	2.04%	3.39%

Figure 23b Research student completion data – Part-time students

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Completed - over 6 years	51.16%	40.38%	39.29%	32.73%
Completed - under 6 years	18.60%	28.85%	25.00%	12.73%
Submissions - no outcome yet confirmed	-	1.92%	7.14%	32.73%
Withdrawals	25.58%	28.85%	26.79%	16.36%
Failures	4.65%	-	1.79%	5.45%

Degree apprentice students

Apprentice achievement is also presented with the same achievement groupings as other taught students. Figure 24 below table provides the achievement of apprentices compared to non-apprentice students. Overall and in 2023-24 apprentices have a higher proportion of both High Pass ($\geq 70\%$) outcomes and either High or Good Pass outcomes ($\geq 60\%$) compared to non-apprentices. The percentage of apprentices who fail to achieve their award is very low across the last four years (zero in 2023-24).

Figure 24 Overall degree apprentice achievement

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Apprentice				
High Pass	50.6%	51.1%	39.1%	39.5%
Good Pass	48.6%	48.0%	58.4%	57.5%
Pass	0.8%	0.7%	2.2%	3.0%
Fail	-	0.2%	0.3%	-
Non-apprentice				
High Pass	47.5%	43.9%	41.9%	36.8%
Good Pass	43.4%	45.2%	47.5%	52.9%
Pass	7.4%	8.8%	9.1%	9.3%
Fail	1.7%	2.1%	1.5%	0.9%

As part of their apprenticeship, apprentices complete their academic award (if it is a degree apprenticeship) and an End Point Assessment (EPA), which may or may not be linked to the academic award as part of their apprenticeship. During 2023-24 357 apprentices went through their EPA process, 353 of which passed first time. The four apprentices who failed a first attempt at their EPA were successful on their second attempt, meaning that 98.9% of apprentices passed their EPA at the first attempt and 100% passed successfully within two attempts. 81% of apprentices achieved a distinction in their EPA, 7% a merit and 12% a pass. In 2023-24, all end point assessment was done by external EPAOs.

Figure 25 Apprentice EPA outcomes

School	Standard	Pass	Merit	Distinction
SATM	Materials Process Engineer	<5	0	<5
	Post Graduate Engineer	18	0	0
	Risk and Safety Management	<5	0	<5
	Through Life Systems and Sustainment	<5	0	<5
SWEE	Bioinformatics Scientist	<5	0	0
SOM	Senior Leader (all variants)	12	18	279
	Senior Investment and Commercial Banker	<5	0	<5
CDS	Systems Thinking Practitioner	<5	6	<5
	Systems Engineer	<5	0	0
Total		12%	7%	81%

4. Academic risks

The following table presents major academic risks i.e. those related to quality, standards and the student experience (including student wellbeing) and associated regulatory and reputational risk. In creating this table, consideration has been given to academic-related risks in the university's major risk register such that there is alignment between the two. Whilst the risks presented below represent major risks from the perspective of Senate's remit (as opposed to those for which the University Executive holds the principal responsibility), the links and interactions between the two have been taken into consideration and joint responsibilities recognised.

No	Risk descriptor	Consequence	Mitigation	Monitoring	Owner
1	Lack of PGT portfolio innovation, modernisation, and rationalisation.	An old-fashioned and indistinct PGT portfolio damages reputation and recruitment.	University-level portfolio review.	Senate and University Executive	PVC-E and University Executive
2	Lack of prioritisation of teaching excellence and the student experience	Falling behind rather than leading the sector damages reputation and recruitment.	Teaching quality initiative underpinned by greater use of benchmarked teaching quality and student experience data and the further development of the student engagement framework initiative. Review of required resources in academic and professional service teams to ensure further improvements and support in place.	Education Committee and the Apprenticeships Quality Group	PVC-E
3	Apprenticeship provision does not meet regulators' (Ofsted, OfS, ESFA) expectations.	Potential threat to training & EPAO status, reputational damage and funding clawback.	Progress against action plans arising from Ofsted, ESFA and OfS visits during 2023-24 and 2024-25.	Oversight and leaderships from the Apprenticeships Steering Committee and the Apprenticeships Quality Group	PVC-E
4	Major student incident (including student suicide) / student mental health and wellbeing	Threat to life, health and wellbeing. Impacts on staff wellbeing. Consequences for reputation.	Continuous improvement of our student support services, safeguarding and wellbeing policies, and staff training. Vigilance and responsiveness regarding students of concern. Engagement with the University Mental Health Charter Programme. Improvement to processes to prevent or catch incidences before they escalate.	University Executive	CE&VC
5	Non-compliance with research security legislation	Risk of breach of national security legislation and consequent penalties and reputational damage	Development of enhanced due diligence for international research partnerships and internal 'secure collaboration' process for collaborative research aligned to research integrity practices.	University Executive and Senate	PVC R&I
6	Lack of compliance with sponsor terms and conditions for higher risk and major awards, including, increasingly demanding terms and conditions from industrial sponsors	Risk of financial penalties arising from non-compliance and reputational damage	Development of new post-award professional project management service to be charged to projects.	University Executive	PVC R&I

5. Actions plans

5.1 2023-24 Action Plan update

Action No.	Theme	Action	Progress
1	Education Strategy - Experience theme	Phase 2 of Academic Charter - consultation and implementation plan completed.	Progressed but not complete - a consultation and implementation plan is close to completion
2	Education Strategy - Experience theme	Phase 2 of "Cranfield Enhance" (co-curricular offer) designed and implemented.	Complete - development of next suite of digital badges for Sustainability, enhancement of the way Cranfield Enhance is advertised to prospective and new students, consolidation & strengthening of the entrepreneurship offer and engagement with it, review of digital badge offer associated with digital and research skills programmes
3	Education Strategy - Experience theme	Phase 2 of Student Engagement Framework - implementation planned and initiated.	Complete - course rep co-creation project, review of EC representation, review of Student Experience Committee, part-time student experience project defined
4	Education Strategy - Enhancement theme	Senate and Executive approval of classification, credit and assessment rules implementation plan.	Complete - implementation plan approved
5	Education Strategy - Enhancement theme	First round of taught course portfolio review complete and actions identified.	Complete - decisions for 24-25 portfolio implemented and underpinning needs for a new university-level portfolio approach identified and progressed
6	Education Strategy - Enhancement theme	Ofsted full inspection visit "48 hour plan" operational.	Complete - plan deployed as part of Cranfield's successful first full Ofsted inspection
7	Education Strategy - Enhancement theme	Review of Academic Partnership Senate Handbook in light of Internal Audit report.	Complete – revised Handbook published September 2024
8	Education Strategy – Enhancement theme	Phase 2 of Generative AI response - Handbooks, guidance, training and communities of practice.	Complete - cross-committee coordination group established, library and IP guides published, provisional staff and student guidance reviewed, internal & external discourse engaged with
9	Education Strategy - Environment theme	Re-establish Beacon project and in parallel agree large lecture room requirement	On hold for financial reasons
10	Research and Innovation Strategy	Complete the Space Utilisation Laboratory review to improve efficacy and access to facilities/ equipment.	Complete
11	Research and Innovation Strategy	Develop an additional new model for PhDs.	Additional work to follow based on proposal that is being drafted for the doctoral college
12	Research and Innovation Strategy	Improve research project management, authorisation, QC approvals and due diligence	Complete
13	Research and Innovation Strategy	Review and implement a new Research England QR funding allocation model.	Still in progress. Paper due to go to March 2025 Senate

5.2 2024-25 Action Plan

This plan sets out headline activities commencing in 2024-25 to support the academic aims of the University.

Action No.	Theme	Action	To be taken forward by	Timeline
1	Education Strategy - Experience theme	Phase 3 of Academic Charter - Undertake consultation and agree underpinning initiatives required to deliver ambitions	PVC-E, PVC-R&I, Director of People and Culture	July 2025
2	Education Strategy - Experience theme	Phase 3 of "Cranfield Enhance" to include implementation of the sustainability offer and the development of the outreach offer	PVC-E	July 2025
3	Education Strategy - Experience theme	Phase 3 of Student Engagement Framework - part-time student experience project delivery, next phase of course reps development project, apprentice representation	PVC-E and Director of Student Experience	July 2025
4	Education Strategy - Enhancement theme	Implementation of classification and credit framework changes.	PVC-E	July 2025
5	Education Strategy - Enhancement theme	Taught course portfolio review – to encompass both significant further course rationalisation for 25-26 recruitment year and review of the new course development and approval process to encourage new product modernisation and innovation.	PVC-E, COO, Director of Finance	July 2025
6	Education Strategy – Enhancement theme	Specify and start to deliver action plan arising from Ofsted inspection review	PVC-E, Apprenticeships Steering Committee	July 2025
7	Education Strategy – Experience theme	Education Committee to agree new Assessment & Feedback Action Plan	PVC-E	July 2025
8	Education Strategy – Experience theme	Education Committee to define priorities for a new teaching excellence project	PVC-E	July 2025
9	Education Strategy - Environment theme	Review of the Education Technology Standing Group	PVC-E and Director of Information Technology	July 2025
10	Research and Innovation Strategy - Scholarship with Purpose	Mock REF	PVC R&I	July 2025
11	Research and Innovation Strategy -Scholarship with Purpose	Research Committee Terms of Reference aligned with new University structures	PVC R&I	March 2025
12	Research Strategy - Championing the Research Student	Delivery of PRES response action plan, including proposal for a Doctoral College	PVC R&I	July 2025
13	Research Strategy - Championing the Research Student	Cranfield Doctoral Landscape Award submission	PVC R&I	September 2024
14	Research Strategy -Diversity of Thought and People	Inaugural University Conference	PVC R&I	May 2025
15	Research Strategy - Diversity of Thought and People	Inaugural lecture in University Seminar Series	PVC R&I	January 2025