

# Higher Education Strategy

University College Isle of Man  
2021 - 2026

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Isle of Man  
Government

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# Introduction

**Balancing economic security and growth, and social and cultural vibrancy, is a challenge for all small nation states such as the Isle of Man. How such nations enable access to and the provision of higher education is one aspect of that challenge.**

The benefits of higher education (HE) for individuals are well known. Achieving higher level skills and internationally recognised qualifications expands career options and earning potential (UCAS 2020). Benefits to the business and employers naturally follows. The advantages to the small nation or region who invest in its indigenous HE provision are perhaps less well known. The debate here on the Isle of Man thus far has primarily focused on the numbers of graduates who do not return to the island, concern about a higher level skills 'gap', and the £13 million Student Awards budget (which primarily supports Manx students to study or access HE off island). Whilst such debates throw some light on the islands overall approach to higher education, they fail to grasp the full economic, social and cultural potential of a strategic, collaborative and contemporary approach to the provision of and access to HE provision on-island.

The Core Aim of strategy is:

**Higher education that is vibrant and of international calibre; that plays a pivotal role in the development of the Islands sustainable, knowledge based economy that supports a confident and collaborative society.**

Fulfilment of this aim will see a significant expansion in the reach and impact of UCM's higher education (HE) provision in terms of curriculum, student numbers, access and research

The Island's higher education strategy now, more than ever, needs to support the development of creative and innovative minds and sustainably respond to, and support, the Island's economy and skill requirements within the context of the globalisation of opportunity. As such this UCM HE Strategy has its sights set on significant growth in student numbers, quality of experience and outcomes, the diversity of

curriculum (delivery and access) and the contribution to the Island's economic, cultural and social growth. This is a strategy for the Isle of Man that can also attract new activity and people to the Island. So expansion of on-island higher education can make an important contribution to the Island's sustainability in terms of the economy, culture and its workforce and well-being of the populace.

This strategy will reflect and fuel the Island's strategic objectives through:

- Greater access to higher level learning for all Manx residents
- Contribution to Island economy through;
  - Attracting students, families and activities to the island
  - Meet our higher level skills needs
  - Enhancement of the knowledge economy through collaborative applied research, innovative work based projects, work integrated learning (for example internships & apprenticeships) and learning environments/facilities
  - Mitigating cost of off-island HE expenditure and reducing the outward migration of 18-24 years olds,
  - Increase on-island education spend
  - Enhance benefits to Manx undergraduates returning to the Island through postgraduate qualifications
- Contribution to the Island's cultural and social growth
- Provision of a hub and an infrastructure for the Island to engage with key global educational and knowledge creation networks
- Recognition of excellence in scholarship, teaching and learning, graduate outcomes by UK Office for Students and Quality Assurance Agency.

This strategy demands significant commitment, investment and cooperation between government, business and DESC/UCM to achieve a radical change from the 'grow as we can' approach of the past. For example, investment in appropriate learning environments and facilities, developing a strong research culture, revising funding for higher education, providing accommodation for international students, will be required. Government, businesses and the students all have a contribution to make to that investment – as each will benefit. Together we will also be resetting ourselves on a trajectory that would allow UCM to seek degree awarding powers. The rewards for such courage will be impressive.

The Aims, Objectives and Actions of this strategy have been developed in consultation with our stakeholders over the last two years, government, business, schools, students, UCM staff, our HEI partner, the University of Chester, and educational experts.

The Strategy has three core objectives that will fulfil the benefits described above:

**PROVIDE RELEVANT & ACCESSIBLE CURRICULUM:**

ensure curriculum design and delivery that is agile, responsive contemporary and accessible that drives the economy; supporting new career opportunities whilst fostering individual lifelong learning and empowering student experience.

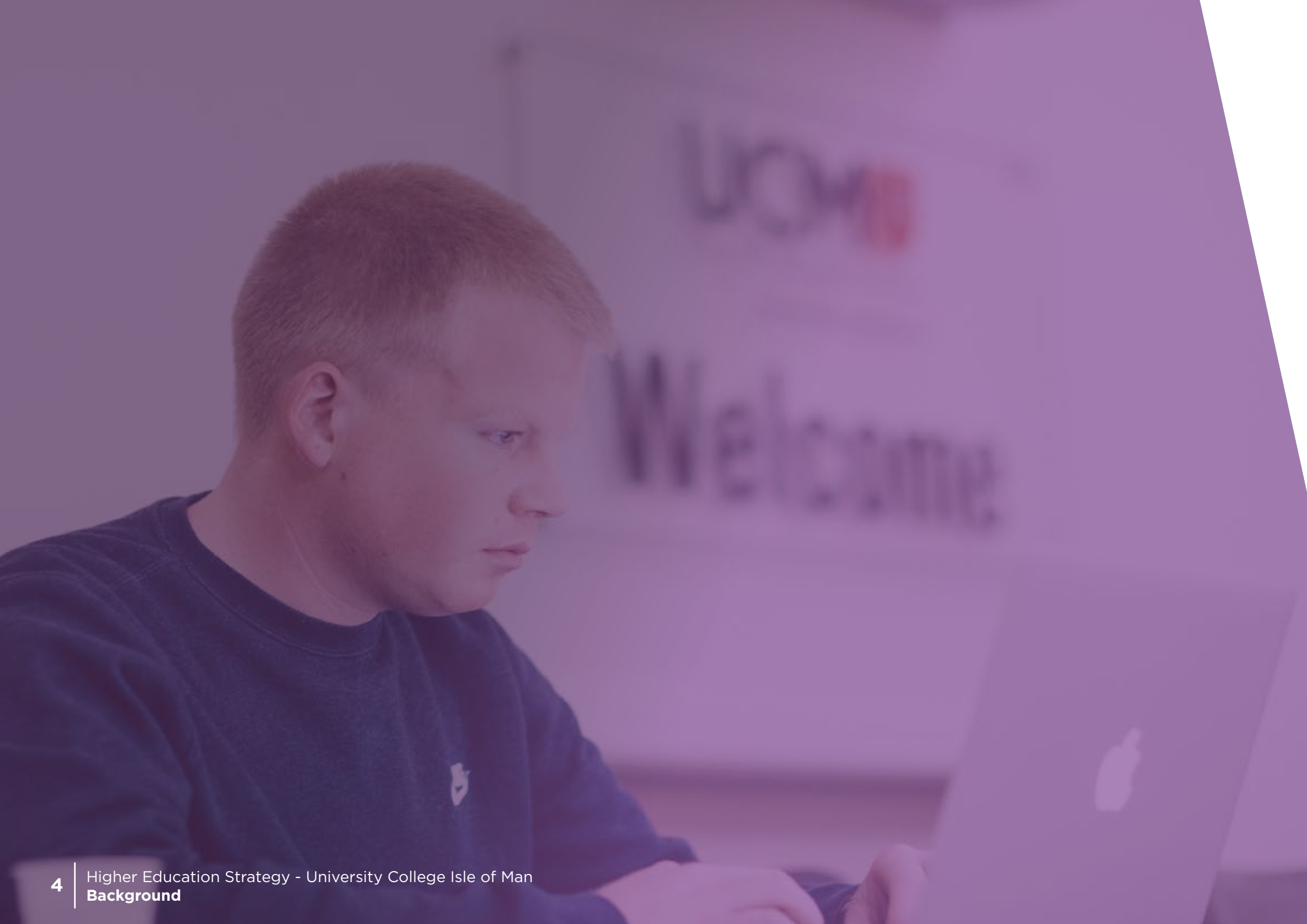
**BUILD RESEARCH CAPACITY:**

recognising that scholarly activity informs our teaching, supports our island and contributes to innovation and enterprise and knowledge economy (local and global).

**ENHANCE QUALITY, GOVERNANCE and IMPACT:**

establish independent quality assurance mechanisms and resource allocation.





# Background

The thrust of this strategy is to build on our strengths as an institution and a small nation and importantly to grasp the opportunity to take advantage of a sector of education that is undergoing a transformation.

The Island and UCM have strengths to enable this strategy, and potential barriers to be mitigated. These enablers and barriers have informed the HE Strategy.

## UCM HE Provision - Overview

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In 2016, the Isle of Man College was rebranded as the University College Isle of Man. Later that year, the organisation worked with all stakeholders to set in place a vision for the future and a key five-year strategy, setting out ten core objectives to stretch the organisation and take it forward. HE was a core objective and is one that builds on a strong foundation.

HE refers to educational provision at level 4 and above and includes undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, higher national qualifications and professional courses.

In 2020/21 the number of level 4 and above students across ten full degree courses, two foundation degrees, four higher national certificates/diplomas and three postgraduate programmes represented 30% of the total number of UCM students. However the numbers of adult and part time students has decreased.

Core student outcomes for UCM HE students have been impressive and since 2015 UCM students have consistently graduated with a higher proportion of top grades and employability outcomes than the UK average.

UCM's breadth of provision is wide from foundation and leisure learning through to masters. UCM has increased progression routes from level 2 through to Level 4 and this has seen an increase in the number of UCM further education students entering higher education. In partnership with the Island's schools progression routes into HE can therefore be enhanced. This breadth and focus on vocational education results in a depth and range of academic and vocational expertise in our staff.

Whilst our current offer aims to reflect both student aspirations and the Islands' skill needs, it is also constrained by the financial implications of scale. Sufficient and ongoing numbers of enrolments are hard to maintain in some curriculum areas, hence growth of our offer depends in expanding markets and participation, a key thrust of this strategy. Success in the new markets will also depend on adopting more flexible delivery modes and innovative qualification design. For example, the new level 4 and 5 Higher Technical Qualifications and higher level apprenticeship. Such flexibility and innovation will also enable UCM to meet the Island's skill and knowledge needs more responsively.

## Widening Access and New Markets

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Since 2017/18 UCM HE student numbers have grown by 29% with 446 enrolled students in 2019/20. However, further growth by doing 'more of the same' will be limited. For example, we cannot compete with larger and well established UK and international universities by trying to offer the courses and experiences in same and traditional way that they do. The numbers of part time and mature students in higher education at UCM has decreased in recent years and current funding regulations and traditional approaches to timetabling are a disincentive to some mature and/or potentially part-time students. Yet Higher Education can promote both lifelong learning and recurrent education. So, we will seek new markets for, and widen access to, higher education. For example, an increase the progression routes for IOM based students to progress into higher education; create opportunities for adult-learning in open and creative ways, taking into account the specificities of adult lives; validation of prior learning leading to third-age learning and widening access to higher education; recognising the need for development of more flexible modes of learning provision.

Increasing our non-resident enrolments is an objective of this strategy and is a highly competitive market place. The UK has a particularly strong transnational student sector although transiting in a post Brexit environment. That said, the Island is an attractive location; UCM has a Tier 4 licence and through collaboration with DfE and locate.im there is potential to expand the market.

## Funding

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Through Student Awards the Isle of Man has, for over 50 years, supported residents to study at universities in the UK, at UCM and beyond. In 2020, 85% of school leavers who undertake degree studies do so off island. Each year 300-350 Manx residents commence studies at a UK (or beyond) university at over 60 different institutions and in almost 90 different subjects. This is a typical approach of small island states for whom being able to sustainably offer a curriculum that meets both the aspirations of its residents and the needs of its economy, is difficult. Promotion of fee structures that better support flexible lifelong learning opportunities, mature learners and upskilling is required.

## Global Changes in HE

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The world and higher education is changing rapidly, so the Island's approach also needs to be different, expanding its focus beyond the school leaver in terms of funding and delivery modes. Much has been written in recent years about the need, and opportunity to transform the higher education sector. The impact of technology on pedagogy, the emancipation and rapid creation of knowledge's and plethora of MOOC's and other online delivery resources , many provided by the world's most prestigious universities, and the marketization of HE are three key factors that have challenged the traditional university role – that of being the custodian of knowledge. On the demand side, the massive growth numbers undertaking higher education, the requirement for interdisciplinary approaches as the boundaries between curricula subjects blur, the rise of portfolio careers and the high skill turnover that typifies employment in the twenty first century, are just some of the evolving expectations of students (Ernst & Young 2018)

It is these influences and trends that give the Island the opportunity to accrue significant economic and societal benefits from increasing the breadth (curriculum), reach (increased accessibility and new markets) and responsiveness of higher education provision through UCM.

## Future of Work

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HE provision at UCM must equip students regardless of age or demograph with knowledge, skills, attributes and qualifications to navigate work, study and life in the twenty first century; a century that is one of massive transition and turmoil. High-level skill development such as complex problem solving, critical thinking, analytics, logic and creativity need to be embedded within all curriculum, in particular to address needs around employability.



## Skills

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The Island's ability to meet its skills needs in the present and in the future, are often discussed by government and employers, mostly as a concern. To meet economic needs, support reskilling and enable more people to achieve success, UCM's HE provision is and should be informed by employers, national skill needs and wherever possible be accredited by relevant professional bodies. A coherent skills and lifelong learning strategy, currently absent, would assist UCM to provide career-aligned, higher level technical and professional curriculum with employers.

## Research and Innovation

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The UCM Strategy key objective to 'establish a research and innovation capacity to drive national future socio-economic development' headlines UCM's commitment to contribute to the Island's knowledge economy, to provide students with research informed teaching and high-quality research skills and, in the long term, prepare UCM to seek degree awarding powers. The impact of the postgraduate and undergraduate dissertations and work-based projects has increased significantly in recent years and a number of staff have completed PhD level study and published work. The establishment of the Research Vannin hub and the appointment of UCM Honorary Fellows and Visiting Scholars since 2017 connects UCM and the Island's research community and beyond. In 2018 the UCM Research Ethics & Governance Committee has provided expertise and a formal endorsement mechanism to students, staff from UCM and other organisations and independent researchers. The annual Research Festival has demonstrated the appetite for researchers, students, and businesses to work with UCM to inform their endeavours and capability, and utilise the Island's position to offer unique research conditions.

However, a step change is required to build the necessary foundation of reputation and credibility necessary to attract academic and commercial funding, and in doing so realise the benefits of the Islands 'university' in the formation of human capital, discovery and the translation of new ideas into new products and services.

## The world we live in

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The UK's departure from the European Union has now been finalised. The implications of Brexit are still to be fully understood and managed.

With regard to HE, UK Universities are still assessing the impact in terms of student mobility, research collaboration, immigration rules, mutual recognition of qualifications and tuition fees. Whilst a third party the Isle of Man has not been able to access European research grants and the numerous European student schemes. We will be impacted, for example, by the response of the UK university sector. As such we are working closely with the University of Chester to navigate these challenges and opportunities.

As we emerge from the pandemic the global influences and emerging trends and changes that had already been impacting higher education and the workplace have been highlighted and accelerated. Over last year the traditional university campus experience has been 'de-coupled' from academic learning and a number of leading Universities have now declared themselves as virtual. UCM's preparedness to deliver online learning increased significantly during the pandemic lockdown of spring 2020 and it is critical we continue take that momentum to a higher level, ensuring that our students are fully digitally capable.

The Island, through the Climate Action Bill 2020, has committed to becoming carbon neutral. And as the world and our Island grapples with the reality of climate change, UCM can offer specific services to sustainability through skill development and applied research.

## Conclusion

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This strategy provides a map and compass for the Island to take advantage of the role of a university in the twenty first century, the disruption of the global pandemic, the ever changing economic landscape and climate change. This is not business as usual nor a case just to increase courses – this is a strategy to transform UCM's higher education offer to, and for, the Island. No longer do we need to be restricted to our buildings and resident expertise. Technology and digital pedagogies allow us to engage with educationalists and learning resources (such as MOOC's) from around the world. The modern higher education landscape takes a holistic approach to learning, recognises that learning occurs in many ways and places and, as such, deploys a range of approaches in addition to traditional teaching including work and project-based learning, recognition of prior learning, collaboration with local business to provide shorter programmes that target specific skills and knowledge, and virtual learning environments. It is how we 'blend', in partnership with our students, all these resources, approaches, learning experiences, collaborations and the islands attractive location that will;

**Enable learning that is world-changing and drives our nation's future (UCM Vision Statement).**



# UCM HE Strategy – Aim and Objectives

## Core Aim

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Higher education that is vibrant and of international calibre; that plays a pivotal role in the development of the Islands sustainable, knowledge based economy that supports a confident and collaborative society

## Strategic Themes

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The strategic themes underpin our beliefs and ambitions – they guide not just ‘what’ but ‘how’ we develop, grow and provide our higher education offer at UCM. All aims, objectives and actions and measures of success, will be considered through the lens of these themes.

## Economic driver

- educating future professionals, leaders, innovators and academics;
- enabling new sectors and create new job opportunities;
- contributing to knowledge economy and innovation ecosystem;
- attracting students, families and activities to promoting the IOM on global scale

## Access and lifelong learning

Innovative and blended delivery methods and learning experiences that foster lifelong relationships with students/learners and support them meet their aspirations and keep pace with the high skill 'turnover' typical of twenty first century employment.

## Graduate attributes

Equip students with the attributes (in addition to skills, knowledge and qualifications) to navigate work, study and life in the twenty first century. And so prepare graduates for employment and citizenship.

## Sustainability

Make decisions and take actions that promote sustainable provision from a curricular, financial, economic, social, cultural and environmental perspectives.



## Strategic Themes

## Study local; think global

promote an outward focus, offer international experiences and exposure. For example accessing global educators and industry leaders digitally through blended learning approaches; off island placements/ internships, global speakers and events

## Partnership

Forging partnerships that increase the range, relevance and quality of UCM provision; seeking collaboration & consultation with stakeholders and reflecting student feedback.

## Enterprise & Innovation

Increase opportunities for the application of enterprise behaviours, attributes and competencies into the creation of cultural, social or economic value, transforming creative ideas into actions.

## Cross-disciplinary

Enable provision that is cross-disciplinary which is critical to a global knowledge economy and better prepares students for employment.



**OBJECTIVE 1: PROVIDE RELEVANT & ACCESSIBLE CURRICULUM: ensure curriculum design and delivery that is agile, responsive, contemporary and accessible that drives the economy; supporting new career opportunities whilst fostering individual lifelong learning and empowering student experience**

**What this means:** Through learning opportunities that embed graduate attributes and transferable skills within the context of both career-enhancing and career aligned learning alongside value-added curricula as a form of personal enhancement, UCM aims to clearly articulate the value of scholarship and learning and the cultural, economic and personal impact of Higher Education within the nation and beyond

This is an outward facing, future-focussed aim that reflects and builds on the unique strengths and profile of HE on the Isle of Man, within a global context. It recognises the broad transformative potential of HE as a catalyst for change - for individuals, their families, business and communities as a dynamic and tripartite relationship.

It seeks to grow, diversify and innovate our higher education student body, broaden choice, enhance the reputation of UCM, facilitate global-learning whilst offering island-distinct education that contributes to sustainability.

**Key components in this aim are:**

**Widening participation;** Working collaboratively with stakeholders the HE offer will ensure increased opportunities to access meaningful learning and careers across a broad demographic. Expanded access has the potential to contribute to the progression of economic and cultural sustainability and to foster greater social inclusion.

This aim will also attract new talent to the island through international recruitment and so impact favourably the island's productivity and cultural growth.

**Student Experience:** all actions will be in partnership with students and so strengthening the HE academic community to ensure it is vibrant and inclusive. Developing an Alumni that will circuitously contribute to the continual evolution of HE on the island.

**Growing the curriculum offer;** this entails meeting skills gaps and providing a broader range of subjects to ensure support of the workforce and contribute to cultural development on the island. This aim will result in the evolution of a more accessible, multi-disciplinary and responsive curriculum that facilitates lifelong learning to raise aspirations through upskilling and reskilling, through training and education.

**Employer Engagement;** a tripartite relationship recognises the value of HE as a catalyst for change that enables economic regeneration. Unbundling and micro credentialing facilitated by increased collaboration with local business, will result in the provision of shorter programs that specifically target skills and competencies.

**Ensuring quality teaching;** Establishing a Quality Assurance framework for teaching and learning, that promote, support, measure and reward pedagogic ambition, excellence and innovation. Encouragement of and support of pedagogic research will contribute to a robust and evolving approach to curriculum design and delivery and will attract and retain a well-qualified and diverse teaching work-force. Blended learning models will intentionally access off island expertise off island.

**Delivery Modes;** we will to strengthen our modes of delivery to take advantage of global digital educational resources and so modernise and energise our curriculum. Through the use of platform partners such as MOOC's the flipped curriculum will be promoted within the context of blended and hybrid learning to heighten flexibility and accessibility and to open avenues towards off island learning and teaching. Cross-disciplinary provision and employment /work-based courses will utilise problem and/or project-based pedagogy and learning.



**OBJECTIVE 1.1: TO WIDEN ENGAGEMENT IN HE AND ESTABLISH NEW MARKETS, INCLUDING INTERNATIONALLY, IN ORDER TO MAKE AN INCISIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ISLAND, CULTURALLY, ECONOMICALLY AND SOCIALLY, IN NEW AND INNOVATIVE WAYS.**

This will be achieved through:

- Systematic mapping of taught provision at all levels
- Strengthened partnership with schools
- Review HE marketing & branding
- Implement International recruitment plan in partnership with Cabinet Office, DfE and HEI partner
- Secure participation in international student exchange scheme for example Erasmus, Turing , ISEP
- Expand recognition of prior learning for the purposes of entry requirements and credit transfer
- Ensure equity of support for part time and full time students to access (including IT infrastructure and access to e-resources) and undertake study

## **OBJECTIVE 1.2: TO PROVIDE FACILITIES, RESOURCES, STUDY OPTIONS AND CURRICULUM THAT REFLECT DISTINCT HIGHER LEVEL, ADULT AND INNOVATION NEEDS.**

This will be achieved through:

- Establish a bespoke higher education study location and student accommodation options
- Centralised, in partnership with Faculties and informed by stakeholders, curriculum development and approval mechanisms
- Defined and agreed approach to blended learning that includes mode, pace and place of study
- Expand postgraduate offer
- Introduction of Higher Technical Qualifications and higher level apprenticeships
- Growth of work-based learning pathways clearly aligned to economic development opportunities and social priorities
- Establish partnerships with reputable educational platforms to enhance digital learning resources
- Access to continuous enhancement qualifications and distributed learning
- Accreditation and extension of flexible study options and introduction of multiple entry points
- Partnership with students and academic community collate evidence of student voice and satisfaction
- Empowering students through policy statements and practice in support of mental health, academic support and career development
- Utilise UN Sustainable Development Goals Framework

### **OBJECTIVE 1.3: STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS WITH STAKEHOLDERS**

This will be achieved through:

- Strengthened and specific partnership with employers and DfE to monitor future curriculum needs
- Collaboration with key stakeholders to enhance work based learning opportunities
- Demonstrate enterprise skill and employability enhancements within all UCM programmes
- Development of an Alumni

### **OBJECTIVE 1.4: TO FOSTER AND ENHANCE THE STAFF BASE TO ENSURE A WELL-QUALIFIED, SUPPORTED, VIBRANT AND INCLUSIVE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY AT HE LEVEL**

This will be achieved through:

- Clarity of support and pathways to develop HE teaching and research excellence
- Establish a UCM HE CPD Framework aligned with TEF and HEA and which highlights digital pedagogy
- Implementation of a bi annual action plan in Learning and Teaching
- Increased staff awareness contemporary sector and pedagogic issues through communities of practice

## **OBJECTIVE 1.5: TO ACHIEVE LEARNING EXCELLENCE**

This will be achieved through:

- Offer innovative learning opportunities real world and work based projects
- The development of student analytic data systems enhanced by in year and end of year analysis
- Increased emphasis of 'impact' in assessment design
- Publication of UCM academic processes in learning and teaching aligned to QAA objectives

## **OBJECTIVE 1.6: DEVELOP SOUGHT AFTER GRADUATES THROUGH A HIGH QUALITY LEARNING EXPERIENCE**

This will be achieved through:

- Equip students regardless of age or demographic with knowledge, skills attributes and qualifications to navigate work, study and life in the C21
- Construct and deliver a UCM Guarantee that articulates what experience students can expect, for example terms of vocational/work based focus, blended learning experience, cross disciplinary options, global outlook and opportunities,
- Embed UCM Graduate Attribute Framework in all provision
- Promote quality of staff for example ,through website profiles
- Undertake cross-disciplinary entrepreneurship and enterprise training and projects
- Agenda to achieve community contribution by UCM HE students



## **OBJECTIVE 2: TO BUILD RESEARCH CAPACITY**

### **What this means**

This aim recognises that scholarly activity informs our teaching, supports our island, contributes to the global knowledge economy and draws upon respected thinking that research is vital to the mission of Higher Education. Higher Education has a critical role in the formation of human capital, discovery and the translation of new ideas into new products and services. This means it is a “cultural national asset” for society, as well as being a driver of economic and social change. UCM’s infrastructure and capacity for research is embryonic and this objective will build a strong foundation for UCM to seize opportunities for growth.

Research opportunities can shape the creation of a stimulating learning environment, lead to attraction of and retention of high quality staff and students, maintain a cutting edge curriculum, and help sustain relationships with other academic institutions and beyond.

The Office for Students Guidance for the Authorisation of DAP’s (Annex C) includes a number of evidence requirements with regard to research capacity including ‘active engagement with research and/or advanced scholarship This strategy also maps the building blocks towards this objective.

### **Key components in this aim are:**

This research objective recognises that research and scholarly activity can be broadly categorised into five pillars:

- Discipline Specific Research
- Applied and Practice-Based Research
- Interdisciplinary Research
- Commercial and Technical services
- Knowledge Transfer

This core aim is to expand upon established engagement and increase the number of staff engaged in research and scholarly activity across all subject areas.

### **Research Environment and Knowledge-Transfer Culture**

Research is increasingly seen as a continuum of activity, along a spectrum of basic, applied, knowledge transfer and through to innovation.

### **Dissemination - Significance and Impact**

UCM's ability to attract commercial or academic grant funding will be built from a legitimate foundation of research credibility and reputation, publication and dissemination and the impact and significance this makes, at individual and institutional level. UCM will reference internationally recognised benchmarks such as the UK's Research Excellence Framework (REF) in measuring measures of impact and significance of research outputs and create UCM benchmark statements

### **Funding**

Whilst establishing capacity and reputation for research and so attract commercial and academic funding in the future (see above), UCM will additionally seek funding through local partnerships and in collaboration with the University of Chester and through interisland/small nation networks.

## **OBJECTIVE 2.1: IDENTIFY AND GROW STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT RESEARCH AREAS ON ISLAND**

This will be achieved through:

- Establish UCM Research Office
- Identification and growth of strategically important research areas on the island
- Support and nurturing of new research networks and partnerships in targeted areas to build up critical mass
- Developing a test-bed programme to explore methodologies for knowledge transfer, business collaboration and clustering that will strengthen performance and enhance innovation
- Set annual research and scholarly activity targets

## **OBJECTIVE 2.2: INCREASE STAFF AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY**

This will be achieved through:

- Encourage and support research and scholarly activity through the staff appraisal process
- Promote mechanisms and opportunities for staff to engage with scholarly and research-informed activity
- Development of interdisciplinary approach to UCM research curriculum to maximise student engagement and activity in research
- Promotion of learning and teaching through scholarship-informed, and where appropriate, research-informed activities and greater staff participation in conferences and symposia
- Expanding UCM delivery of research-led and research-informed teaching
- Increase in staff participation in post-graduate study and teaching
- Adopt Early Researcher Development Framework such as Vitae
- Formal agreement with University of Chester to support our research strategy

## **OBJECTIVE 2.3: EXPAND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER, ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION ACTIVITIES, AND PROPAGATE A CULTURE OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER**

This will be achieved through:

- Building of collaborative projects and delivering knowledge transfer projects in partnership with local industry, government enterprises, external researchers and employers.
- Development of new products, processes and services and innovation in areas key to growth and sustainability on the IOM and beyond
- Use of the findings from the test-bed research programmes as a catalyst to collaborate with appropriate SME's using established HEI and external research expertise



## **OBJECTIVE 2.4: BUILD AND IMPACT AND DISSEMINATION**

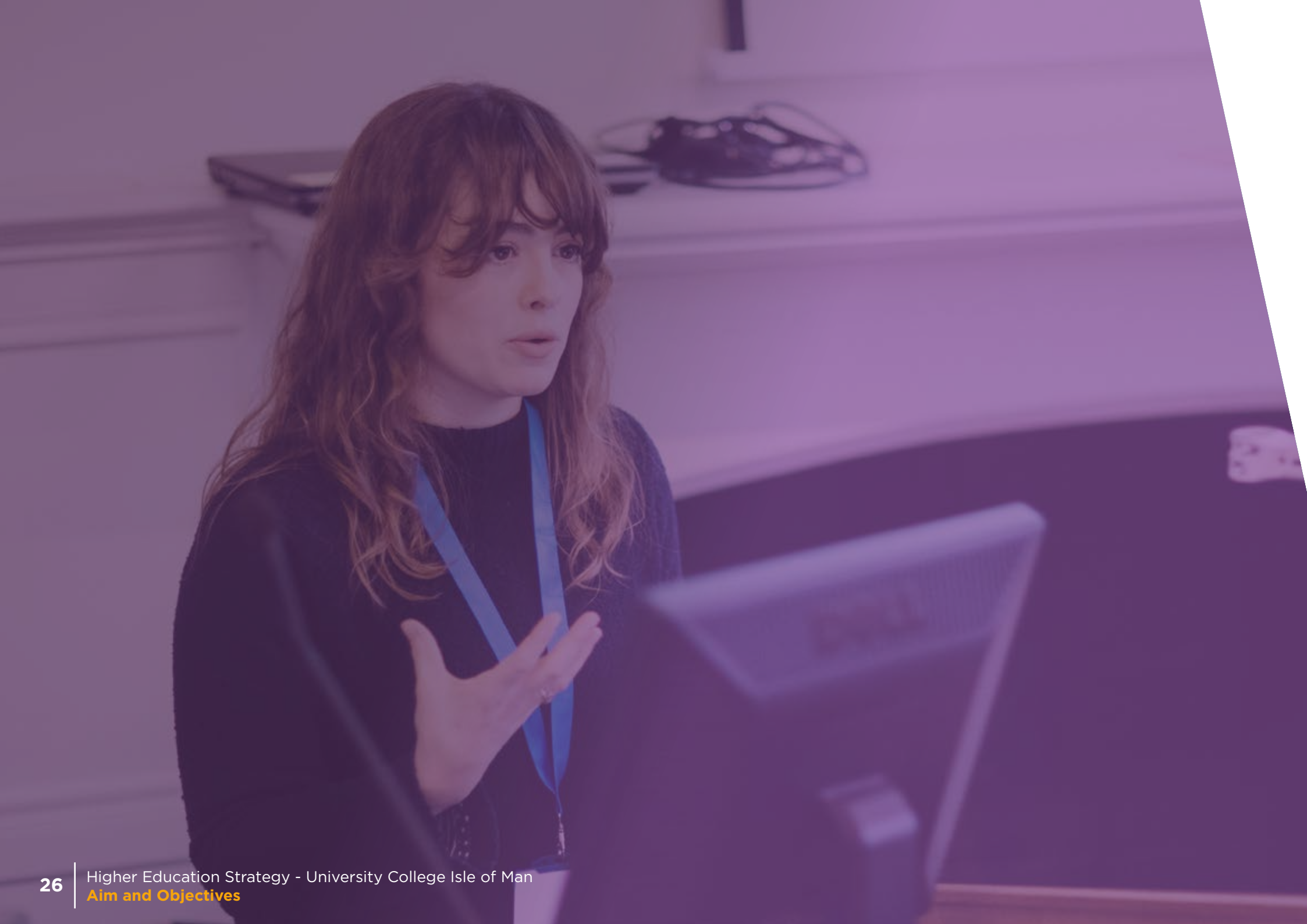
This will be achieved through:

- Research active staff to disseminate their work to undergraduate students within their modules/programmes
- Staff required to participate and contribute to college run research seminars and interdisciplinary research forums or as part of UCM or island- wide lecture, conferences and publications
- Research office to circulate international publishing, dissemination, conference and exhibition opportunities
- Expansion Research Vannin portal
- Work with industry/cultural organisations to establish knowledge transfer proof of concept projects /enterprises

## **OBJECTIVE 2.5: INCREASE FUNDING FOR RESEARCH**

This will be achieved through:

- Promote and expand UCM Research Awards
- Collaborative submission for research grants and projects with our partner, University of Chester and UCM Hon Fellow and Visiting Scholars
- Seek public and private sector funding for research, development and innovation (RDI) and promote the Isle of Man as a research destination
- Mapping of Island international research funding/grants
- Seek support from Island philanthropists and corporate sponsors



### **OBJECTIVE 3: ENHANCE QUALITY, GOVERNANCE AND IMPACT: establish independent quality assurance mechanisms and resource allocation.**

**What this means:** this aim recognises that governance and quality are crucial issues for Higher Education. Internal goal setting, regulation and decision-making and the power of key actors, such as the Governors, the Principal and SMT contribute to mechanisms underpinning achievement of Quality within UCM. Governance arrangements and quality guidelines play similar roles in helping the institution become more effective. Quality guidelines focus on planning processes and the nurturing of a quality culture, clarifying institutional structures and procedures. Consideration of seeking degree awarding powers will be founded on evidence of independent quality assurance, metrics data and good governance.

#### **Key components of this aim are:**

##### **Governance**

The governance of HE on the Isle of Man encompasses the structures, relationships and processes through which, at both a national, departmental and institutional level, policies for HE are developed, implemented and reviewed.

Internal institutional governance, audit and review therefore are recognised as vital factors that will permit anticipation, design, implementation, monitoring and appraisal of the effectiveness and efficiency of quality policies, processes and regulations.

##### **Quality Assurance**

Quality guidelines are required both internally by UCM as an autonomous institution (e.g. to prepare for self-evaluation) and equally for external accountability.

The dramatic increase in university education over the past three decades has raised broad questions about quality standards in the sector and so requires closer monitoring especially as UCM seeks to increase its offer through widening participation and international recruitment. This is especially important for relatively new HE providers such as UCM which, unlike older elite establishments, cannot rely exclusively on their reputation and status.

## Stakeholders

UCM seeks collaboration and a shared commitment to this strategy with stakeholders from conventional actors such as students, academics, and the government itself; to industry representatives and community authorities, Alumni and cultural groups.

## Recognised Quality Assurance Agencies and Benchmarks

Quality assurance agencies such as the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and Office for Students (OfS) are key actors in governance of HE in the United Kingdom. UCM through its partnership with the University of Chester is third party to these expectations although the Island is not subject directly. However, the governance of HE at UCM should reflect these well established and internationally recognised guidelines and principals of quality.

## **OBJECTIVE 3.1: Strengthen infrastructure for quality assurance and governance with regard to HE provision that is autonomous and independent**

This will be achieved through:

- Undertake a Quality Review (based on QAA principles)
- Establish and publish a UCM Quality Assurance framework for HE
- Establish reporting regime that will enable UCM's to demonstrate the capacity to seek University status post 2026
- Clarify UCM boards, membership and procedures for decision making with regard to HE provision and quality; including approval of curriculum, monitoring of QA and research activity
- Broadening collaboration with stakeholder groups in devising processes and policies
- Reviewing student and stakeholder feedback and enhancing responsivity
- Strengthening of UCM's Higher Education academic community through HE CPD Framework and Communities of Practice, thus building the culture, reputation and brand at UCM

**OBJECTIVE 3.2: TO ESTABLISH A SUSTAINABLE AND EQUITABLE FUNDING MODEL THAT WILL GUARANTEE FAIRNESS OF ACCESS AND VALUE FOR MONEY.**

This will be achieved through:

- Cooperation between HE, industry and government
- In partnership with DESC review existing funding sources for higher education including but not limited to Student Award Regulations, trusts, training grants, higher level apprenticeships to promote increased and widened participation.
- Promote fee structures to support flexible lifelong learning opportunities and upskilling.
- Establish clear principles for proportion of public, student and employer contributions to widen the funding base for participation in HE
- Create public-private sector partnerships to support training, education and research in key economic sectors
- Schedule student number and income targets for UCM
- Commission an economic impact study with regard to current and expanded HE provision on island

**OBJECTIVE 3.3: RECOGNISE STUDENTS AS CENTRAL TO QUALITY ASSURANCE BY ENSURING THEY OCCUPY A PIVOTAL ROLE IN THE GOVERNANCE OF HE AT UCM**

This will be achieved through:

- Greater student representation within processes leading to academic quality: excellence in learning and teaching and the student experience
- Demonstration of increased focus on the student voice
- Revising mechanisms for measuring student satisfaction
- Development of student analytic data systems enhanced by in year and end of year analysis
- Promotion of student excellence and alumni

The background of the slide is a warm, golden-yellow color. Scattered throughout the scene are several black graduation caps (mortarboards) with tassels, captured in mid-air as if they have just been tossed. The caps are in various orientations, some pointing up, some down, and some to the side, creating a sense of movement and celebration.

# Measuring our Success

## Success & Impact Measures

- ✓ **Growth** – in enrolment and student achievement rates
- ✓ **Access and Participation** – increase progression to/within HE from different/new markets
- ✓ **Graduate Outcomes**
  - Student satisfaction & results
  - Retention/Continuation
  - Progression to graduate employment & further study
- ✓ **Research Capacity**
  - Approved scholarly activity projects
  - Publication
  - Income



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