

University of Bristol

Public Benefit Statement

The University of Bristol is an exempt charity under the terms of the Charities Act 2006.

In setting and reviewing the University's objectives and activities, Council has had due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on the reporting of public benefit and particularly to its supplementary public benefit guidance on the advancement of education. This statement has been included in conformance with the formal reporting requirement introduced by the [Higher Education Funding Council for England \(HEFCE\)](#) as the principal regulator of English higher education institutions under the Charities Act 2006.

Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of the University is that set out in the 1909 Charter, namely "the promotion of Arts, Sciences and Learning". The powers set out in the Charter make specific provisions for the advancement of education and knowledge, including:

- "To provide for instruction in such branches of learning as the University may think fit and also to make provision for research and for the advancement and dissemination of knowledge."
- "To make provision for Research and to furnish Scientific Advice for public purposes and for these objects to enter into such arrangements with other institutions or public bodies as may be thought desirable."

The University mission and strategy, summarised above and expanded further in the [Vision & Strategy 2009-16](#), builds on the provisions and powers outlined in the Charter. Specific objectives for the year 2009/10 are given in the [Corporate Planning Statement 2009](#) (68.8kb), available on the University website. These objectives included:

- The enhancement of the student experience in response to the 2009 National Student Survey, including a continued programme of refurbishment of University libraries;
- The expansion and development of postgraduate provision, including the establishment of major new doctoral training centres in Chemical Synthesis, Composites and Functional Nanomaterials;
- The progression of the University's widening participation agenda, including the development of a gateway programme to support gifted students who might not otherwise have the confidence or aspiration to enter a Russell Group university;
- The further development of the University's portfolio of multidisciplinary research themes, including environmental research and other major themes of global importance;

- The further development of local and regional links in support of enterprise activities;
- The expansion of the University's leadership development programme and modern apprentice and trainee schemes;
- Successful completion of the University's Centenary celebrations, including the organisation and implementation of a wide-ranging programme of public lectures and other events for University students, staff and alumni and the local community.

The [Annual Review 2009/10](#) (provides further information on our progress and achievements against these and other objectives.

In implementing our aims and objectives, the University is guided by the values set out in its [Vision & Strategy](#) and Council is mindful of its responsibility to ensure that the University acts for the benefit of the public.

Student Admissions and Widening Participation

The University is committed to having a student body that is balanced and diverse in terms of background and experience, with all the educational and cultural benefits that this brings. We encourage applications from all those with the motivation and academic ability to thrive at Bristol, whatever their background. Each application is assessed carefully and fairly, and places are offered to applicants who have the potential to do well at Bristol. Further information on our admissions policy for both home and overseas students is available in our [Admissions Principles and Procedures](#) on the University website. In accordance with this policy, each department has produced a 'Departmental Admissions Statement' describing the selection processes for undergraduate degree programmes, which are described in our [Undergraduate Prospectus](#).

As part of our strategy for widening participation, we have made a clear commitment to ensuring that, as fees increase, students with genuine financial need are in receipt of good advice and appropriate financial assistance. Our aim is to ensure that no student has legitimate reason to be deterred from applying to Bristol because of the costs of living and studying here. In 2009/10, the University disbursed over £5m in financial support (scholarships and bursaries) to students, including those from low-income groups. The University has a well-established programme of outreach activities designed to raise levels of attainment, aspirations and applications among underrepresented groups. Further information can be found in our [Access Agreement 2010/11-2013/14](#) (pdf, 150kb) and in our [Widening Participation Strategy](#) (pdf, 77.8kb), available on the University website.

Once they are at the University, we are committed to ensuring that all our students benefit from an excellent teaching and learning experience as well as extra-curricular opportunities, including a range of community volunteering programmes, that enable students to develop as individuals and enhance future employability. We provide a range of student services to ensure student welfare and a successful passage through university life and beyond, including health services, counselling, specialist provision for

disabled students, sport and exercise facilities, and careers and financial advice. Further information can be found in our [Education Strategy](#) and our [Student Handbook](#), both available on the University website.

Environmental sustainability policy

The University believes that environmental sustainability is the foundation of wider economic and social sustainability and is an integral part of good institutional practice. We have a duty to satisfy ourselves that all our operations and activities are conducted with proper regard for the environment. We are committed to maintaining and, wherever possible, improving the quality of this environment both for the people who live and work in the University, and for the wider community now and in the future. We seek to make the most effective and efficient use of all resources, encouraging all members of the University community to develop a sustainable approach to their work.

Our aims are to:

- Reduce the environmental impact of the University through better management of its resources;
- Integrate environmental and sustainable principles into the University's operational procedures, educational activities and research endeavours, promoting best practice at every level;
- Meet the requirements of all relevant legislation and other requirements and exceed these requirements where they best support the University's other objectives;
- Adopt best practice to ensure the prevention of pollution;
- Monitor and regularly review our environmental performance, and set objectives and targets to ensure continual improvement;
- Communicate both internally and externally about our environmental performance, including training and awareness for staff and students.

To achieve these aims, the University will devise and implement strategies to reduce environmental impact and enhance management of resources, which will include, energy, water and waste management, sustainable purchasing, sustainable construction, transport and biodiversity. We have set ourselves targets; key ones include:

- Place the University's building stock on a path consistent with Government targets for a reduction in carbon emissions of 80% by 2050, thus 15% by 2016.
- Cut the amount of waste sent to landfill to 30% by 2016 from the 2007/8 baseline figure.

- Ensure that under the University's capital investment programme, we build and refurbish buildings to high environmental standards achieving "Excellent" and "Very Good" respectively, according to Building Research Establishment criteria (BREEAM).
- Develop a framework to support sustainable modes of transport to work and study at the University.

Ethical investment and banking policies

Council (and as trustees of the University's endowment funds) is expected to act in the best interests of the beneficiaries of the funds for which they are responsible. The beneficiaries include the University itself, staff and students. Council's policy is to aim for the best possible financial return from investments, consistent with an appropriate risk profile and may exclude investments from their investment portfolios, if the aims of the bodies concerned are directly contrary to the objectives of their trusts. To this end, Council has approved investment and banking policies which encompass:

- Not investing the University's endowment assets in the stocks, shares, bonds or units of companies, trusts, governments or other institutions, if the aims of the bodies concerned are contrary to the research, education and wider aims or objectives of the University or their activities are illegal under UK law;
- Not investing in the stocks, shares, bonds or units of companies, trusts, governments or other institutions, if, by so doing, the wider interests of the University, in particular its ability to raise funds or obtain grants, are likely to be materially harmed;
- Not entering banking arrangements with institutions, if the aims of the institutions concerned are contrary to the research, education or wider aims or objectives of the University or if, by so doing, the wider interests of the University, in particular its ability to raise funds or obtain grants, are likely to be materially harmed.