

Monitoring delivery of the Strategic and Operational Plan 2017-2022

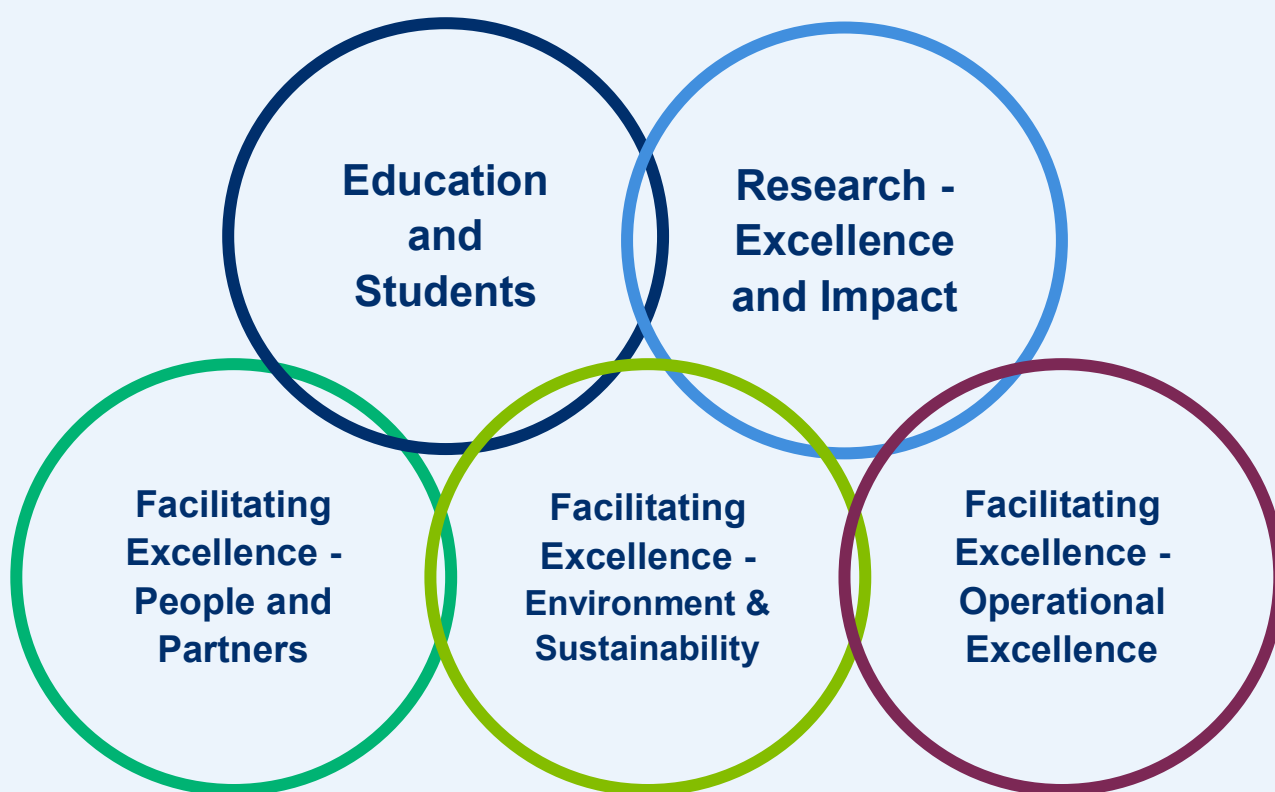
Pursuing excellence in medicine, healthcare and science



Progress Report Oct 2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In November 2017, Council agreed a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to determine success against St George's strategic and operational objectives. There are 12 KPIs in total, grouped into the five strategic themes that run throughout our Strategic and Operational Plans.



This document outlines our commitments made under each of the strategic themes, details the targets and measures for each of the 12 KPIs, and monitors our progress against achieving these. Narratives are given, showing how our activities and outputs are contributing to the delivery of St George's Strategic and Operational Plans, 2017-2022.

This is the eighth progress report to Council; the first was in March 2018 and these are issued twice a year, in March and October.

Strategic Theme	To achieve our objectives we will:
Education and Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer outstanding educational programmes aligned with our research strengths and designed to meet societal challenges • Collaborate with our students to enhance teaching and learning, improve their experience and support them to reach their full potential • Immerse students in research and healthcare practice and offer opportunities to broaden their horizons beyond the curriculum • Develop lifelong learners, diversifying and adapting our educational provision in response to changing learning needs • Inspire and attract prospective students nationally and internationally who will thrive on our courses, regardless of background • Recognise and develop excellence in teaching and supporting the student experience • Nurture an environment that inspires innovation by strengthening our educational research and its scholarly application
Research - Excellence and Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue both fundamental and translational health sciences research • Invest in our existing and emerging areas of research strength and rapidly adapt our research to new needs of society • Extend strategic collaboration with St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and other local healthcare providers and with research institutions nationally and internationally • Provide a research environment that inspires innovation and enables people at all stages of their careers to reach their full potential • Recognise, inspire and retain early career researchers to create scientific leaders of the future • Maximise the impact of our research and its contribution to scientific knowledge and clinical practice • Engage the public in our science and communicate widely the significance of our research • Provide expert opinion at local, national and international levels to inform policy relevant to our vision and mission
Facilitating Excellence - People and Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise the potential of our students and staff in a collaborative, inclusive and supportive community • Value and celebrate our diversity • Attract, develop and retain a talented and high-performing workforce with a shared sense of purpose • Build a culture that values ambition, expects accountability and recognises excellence • Attract partners at local, national and international level with aligned values and objectives, who can collaborate with us to advance our mission • Build our relationships with alumni and supporters, encouraging them to connect with and contribute to life at the university today • Develop and strengthen our identity to ensure that our vision, mission and values are widely understood
Facilitating Excellence - Environment and Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in a high-quality physical and virtual infrastructure • Assure ongoing financial sustainability by maximising our income from research, education, commercial enterprise and philanthropic endeavours
Facilitating Excellence - Operational Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act with agility in focusing our resources on the academic mission, and create time and space to innovate • Facilitate a collaborative approach to common goals, supported by excellent internal communications • Deliver continuous improvements to business processes and the way we work, ensuring value for money and an efficient use of resources

MONITORING PROGRESS

October 2021

The below graphic provides a snapshot of our progress towards delivery of our KPI targets. Each KPI lead has provided a narrative of their progress on the following pages.

Mar '21 | Oct '21 and data



Education and Students	1	Increase Educational income contribution	✓✓	£17,446k (Draft final 20/21)
	2	Higher TEF rating	✓✓	Data unavailable until submission
	3	Improve satisfaction in the National Student Survey Overall Satisfaction (Q27)	✓✓	61.3% (NSS21)
Research - Excellence and Impact	4	Increase research income	✓✓	£11,162k
	5	Increase the return on research overhead/PI time	✓✓	21.2%
	6	Research Excellence Framework	✓✓	Data not available
Facilitating Excellence - People and Partners	7	Higher Athena SWAN award	✓✓	SILVER awarded in April 2018
	8	NEW: Improve equality of opportunity within our student body	✓✓	Multiple, see narrative
Facilitating Excellence - Environment & Sustainability	9	Improve condition of our teaching learning and research spaces	✓✓	90% (Jul 2021 data)
	10	Improve satisfaction in the NSS for learning resources	✓✓	70.4% (NSS2021)
Facilitating Excellence - Operational Excellence	11	Operating surplus as a proportion of turnover	✓✓	1.19%
	12	Improve satisfaction in the NSS for organisation and management	✓✓	48.6% (NSS2021)

MONITORING PROGRESS

Education and Students

KPI	Key Performance Indicator	Measure	Base 2016-17	Interim milestone	Oct 2021	RAG rating Oct21	Target 2021-22
1	Increase Educational income contribution	Contribution (income minus costs) from Education will increase by 10% by 2022	£20,831k	£21,096k	£17,446k (Draft final 2020/21)	RED	£22,915k by 2022
	The previous cuts to OfS funding of 6% and the removal of London weighting from OfS funding in 21/22 will reduce the education income so this will not be achieved. The method of calculation needs to be reviewed for the next set of KPIs as the comparator is what is currently shown net of fees allocated to research institutes which can vary and skew the figure even when there is no real change.						
2	Higher TEF rating	Achieve a SILVER award by 2021 and a GOLD award by 2023	BRONZE	SILVER by 2021	Monitoring data unavailable until submission - 2022	RED	GOLD by 2023 (not an annual submission)
	The suspension of TEF nationally continues, with universities prohibited from using their previous awards. The RAG rating is Red as there is no possibility of obtaining a Silver award during suspension. The OfS intends to consult during autumn 2021 on the details for a future TEF, with an expectation that submissions will be expected from providers in 2022. The criteria are yet unknown. The usefulness of a TEF rating as a KPI will be considered for the next strategic plan period; it may be too blunt an instrument, with likely submission periodicity of four or so years. Rather, consideration will be given to a KPI that maps to student outcomes, as data for TEF is drawn from data on student outcomes and on student satisfaction (already a separate KPI).						
3	Improve satisfaction in the National Student Survey Overall Satisfaction (Q27)	Achieve 90% satisfaction in the National Student Survey Overall Satisfaction (Q27) by 2020 and a further increase to 92% by 2022	81.7%	90% by 2020 (NSS2020)	61.3% (NSS21)	RED	92% by 2022 (NSS2022)
	The drop to 61.3% for the penultimate student satisfaction figure of the strategic plan period, NSS202, is very disappointing, especially after the rise in 2020 to 77.8%. It is far short of the target figure and RAG rating remains Red. Sector satisfaction also declined by 7.2% to 75.4%. Satisfaction of students in other years is higher, at 76.5% (Student Experience Survey) and module satisfaction is >80%. A great deal of work is underway with students and staff, at university and programme level, to understand the causes of the drop this year and see what new lessons can be learned. This includes summit meetings involving the Principal alongside all the usual review and action-planning processes. NSS overall satisfaction is proposed to continue as a university KPI in the next strategic plan period, with new targets set.						

MONITORING PROGRESS
Research - Excellence and Impact

KPI	Key Performance Indicator	Measure	Base 2016-17	Interim milestone	Oct 2021	RAG rating Oct21	Target 2021-22
4	Increase research income	Increase research income by 20% by 2020 and by 40% over the next five-year period	£11,844k	Increase by 20% by 2020, £14,213k	£11,162k	RED	Increase by 40% by 2022, £16,582k
	Research income in 2020/21 is slightly lower than in 2016/17, having previously increased to £13.1M in 2018/19 which had placed us on course to meet the target. Plans to increase research income were working well before Covid, however the pandemic has significantly changed the external research funding landscape, and at times restricted the research we can perform, over the last 18 months. This has reduced research income to £11.5M and £11.2M in 2019/20 and 2020/21 respectively.						
	Most clinical trials were suspended in the first Covid wave (March to June 2020) and the second wave (January to February 2021), with NHS restrictions meaning that it took some time to resume clinical trials after the suspensions. In addition, SGUL laboratories were closed March to June 2020, with 10% of research staff placed on furlough. Given that research income is calculated based on research spend, the reduction of research activity over the last 18 months has reduced our research income.						
	It has also become harder over the last 18 months to successfully apply for research funding. Many charities have seen significant income falls, and there have been some government research grant cuts (especially for overseas research). A small number of our grants have also had their budgets reduced. More positively, the UK-EU Brexit deal in December 2020 has ensured the UK's continued participation in EU research funding, an area in which SGUL has been particularly successful in recent years.						
	Despite the difficulties over the last 18 months, recently we have been successful with some major research grants, most notably an £8M grant funded by the Vaccine Task Force to lead a Covid vaccine study in pregnancy which started in August 2021, which will increase our research income in 2021/22 and put us back on an upwards trajectory. We also expect the external research environment to start to ease as we move out of the pandemic, and at present it seems unlikely that Covid lockdown restrictions will be necessary again.						
5	Increase the return on research overhead/PI time	Increase the return on research overhead/ PI time to 16% by 2020 and to the sector average (currently 18% per year) over the next five years	14.4%	16.0%	21.2%	GREEN	Increase to 18% by 2022
	Overheads have increased as a % of total research income from 14.4% to 21.2% in 2020/21. JRES introduced a research overheads policy in 2017 which specified minimum overhead levels for different types of research funders.						
6	Improved Research Excellence Framework submission	Quality of the REF submission, as measured through an improvement of the % of outputs and environment measured as 4*	From REF2014: Outputs: 23% Environment: 0%	N/A	Not available	AMBER	Outputs: 30% Environment: The sector average (45% in 2014)
	<p>The REF submission took place in March 2021, and we are waiting for the results which are expected in April 2022. The AMBER rating is based on the work completed for REF2021, including the extensive drafting and review of the UoA1 and UoA2 environment statements, the development of strong impact case studies and the selection of high-quality outputs, and we expect that we will be able to make improvements towards the target. However, whether we meet the target will also be affected by the relative performance of other universities.</p> <p>Please note that the REF rules have changed considerably since the last REF in 2014, with changes including the requirement to include all staff who have a significant responsibility for research, and also a reduction in the average number of outputs submitted per academic from 4 to 2.5. The effect of these changes at SGUL is an expected increase in the number of academics included in REF, but with a lower number of outputs per academic.</p>						

KPI	Key Performance Indicator	Measure	Base 2016-17	Interim milestone	Oct 2021	RAG rating Oct21	Target 2021-22
7	Higher Athena SWAN award	UPDATED: Submit a renewal for Silver Athena SWAN award in July 2023	Unsuccessful Athena SWAN submission in November 2015	Progress with 80% of actions by end 2019 90% implementation of actions in Silver submission by 2020	SILVER awarded in April 2018	GREEN	UPDATED : Preparation of Silver Athena SWAN submission by July 2023 Preparation of Gold Athena SWAN for submission by 2028
	<p>After gaining an Institutional Silver Athena SWAN Award in April 2018, we have continued to make good progress with the Athena SWAN action plan and to drive positive changes in our practice and culture over the past few years. We have also begun to consider the interaction of gender equality with other factors, including race and ethnicity, which is supported by a separate race equality action plan (developed in 2021). The application for the next Institutional Silver award remains a priority. The next submission will be prepared in accordance with the recently transformed Athena SWAN Charter before the deadline in 2023 (extended by Advance HE).</p>						

MONITORING PROGRESS

Facilitating Excellence - People and Partners

KPI	Key Performance Indicator	Measure	Base 2017-18	Interim milestone	Oct 2021	RAG rating Oct21	Target 2021-22
8	Improve equality of opportunity within our student body	Meet all six quantitative targets related to St George's students in our 2019 Access and Participation Plan, three relating to diversifying our student body and three targets relating to ensuring an equitable learning environment for all students:	Data from our 2019-20 to 2024-25 Access and Participation Plan (APP)	Targets for the OfS data release in Spring 2020:	HESA 2019-20 data:	GREEN	OfS Impact Report for 2020-21 (submission date TBC, likely Spring 2022) to demonstrate:
		•Access target 1a - eliminate the gap between the proportion of POLAR4 Q1+2 students and POLAR4 Q5 students among young, full-time, undergraduate entrants who reside outside Greater London by 2024-25.	Access 1a gap 7.1%	7.1%	Exceeding interim milestone, gap -1%		5.1%
		•Access target 1b - narrow the gap between the proportion of POLAR4 Q1+2 students and POLAR4 Q5 students among young, full-time undergraduate entrants by 4% by 2024-25.	Access 1b gap 25%	25%	Exceeding interim milestone, gap 22.5%		24%
		•Access target 2 - increase the proportion of IMD Q1 entrants among young, full-time, undergraduate entrants by 5% by 2024-25.	Access 2, percentage 17.9%	17.9%	Exceeding interim milestone, 18%		18.9%
		•Attainment target 1a - reduce the gap in degree attainment between Black students and White students studying for Honours degrees to 6% by 2024-25.	Attainment 1a 16.1%	14%	Exceeding interim milestone, gap 7.8%		7%
		•Attainment target 1b - reduce the gap in degree attainment between BAME students and White students studying for Honours degrees to 4% by 2024-25.	Attainment 1b 9%	8.6%	Exceeding interim milestone, gaps 5.2%		8%
		•Attainment target 2 - To reduce the gap in degree attainment between students from IMD Q1-2 and students from IMD Q3-5 studying for Honours degrees to 3% by 2024-25.	Attainment 2 9.4%	9%	Exceeding interim milestone, gap 6.9%		7%
		The period 2017-2022 has been a very busy time for access and participation, with the Office for Students mandating significant changes to the way widening participation works in universities, both through a stronger focus on outcomes (e.g. student recruitment) for our access and outreach work, and welcome closer scrutiny of awarding and progression gaps for students from different demographic groups. In 2019 we submitted a new Access and Participation Plan covering the five-year period 2020/21 to 2024/25 committing to the six quantitative targets included above. We are currently making good progress towards these targets and working hard to ensure the continued improvement which will be necessary to continue to meet our later milestones, given the significant scaling up of ambition over the years to 2024/25. As these OfS-agreed targets continue until halfway through the period covered by the next university strategy we would ask that this composite KPI too is carried over in some form.					

Facilitating Excellence - Environment and Sustainability

10	Improve satisfaction in the National Student Survey for Learning Resources	Achieve 88% satisfaction in the National Students Survey for Learning Resources by 2020 and a further increase to 90% by 2022	83%	88% by 2020 (NSS2020)	70.4% (NSS2021—sector avg 73.6%)	RED	90% by 2022 (NSS2022)
	<p>A huge amount of work has been undertaken to improve the student experience in relation to learning resources (IT, Library and specialist resources). Sadly this has not resulted in a rise in scores and our targets have been proved to be unrealistic. It is difficult to pinpoint specific developments which would improve satisfaction from the comments in the NSS and initiatives to illicit more rich and granular feedback have been undertaken (e.g. focus groups). A number of comments relate to use of Learning Technologies (Canvas & panopto) and work needs to take place to improve academic engagement with best practice in these areas. We have secured funding to update all open access PCs in Autumn 2021 which will improve student experience.</p> <p>We hope to at least achieve “sector average” in NSS 2022 as students return to site and make full use of the spaces and resources available to them.</p>						

MONITORING PROGRESS

Facilitating Excellence - Operational Excellence

KPI	Key Performance Indicator	Measure	Base 2016-17	Interim milestone	Oct 2021	RAG rating Oct21	Target 2021-22
11	Operating surplus as a proportion of turnover	Operating surplus to be 4% of the turnover (total income) by 2021-22	-2.0%	2.0%	1.19%	RED	4.0% by 2022
	The removal of London Weighting by OfS which despite increased funding for strategically important subjects which we teach is a net loss to SGUL of £1.2m, so this is not going to be achieved. Even without this the 4% was not going to be achieved with increases in pension costs and the previous 6% reduction in OfS funding.						

12	Improve satisfaction in the National Student Survey for Organisation and Management	Achieve 73% satisfaction in the NSS for Organisation and Management by 2020 and a further increase to 82% by 2022	64%	73% by 2020 (NSS2020)	48.6% (NSS21)	RED	82% by 2022 (NSS2022)
	Despite a significant amount of work over the strategic period, improving our performance in this area for NSS 2021 (for final year students) remains a struggle. This year, the NSS score for organization and management dropped significantly, which has been very disappointing. Conversely, in the Student Experience Survey 2021 (run internally for non-final year students) organisation and management is the best performing area and increased by 5.3%. Over the past year we have completed a number of Operational Excellence Projects which has worked to address some of the institutional-level root causes of process issues. We have also invested in additional resources for key institutional functions, such as Admissions and Examinations alongside implementing structural and governance changes to be able to address issues relating to related programme and institutional level issues.						