

University College Milton Keynes

Ambition Statement

The University of Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes have shared ambitions for the establishment and rapid growth of the **University College Milton Keynes** as a wholly owned subsidiary of the University commencing operation in September 2012.

This development is set within the context of the city's aspirations for a high quality university presence within the city, which goal is clearly articulated in the city's core strategic documents – namely, the Milton Keynes Council Corporate Plan 2012-16, Milton Keynes Local Development Framework Core Strategy (Milton Keynes Council, December 2009 and Revised Submission Version, October 2010), and the Milton Keynes Economic Development Strategy 2011-2016.

This shared ambition for the University College Milton Keynes draws heavily on **2020 Vision – towards a University of Milton Keynes** (June 2009), which represents the clearest articulation to date of the city's aspirations and vision for a university presence in Milton Keynes. The adoption of this **University College Milton Keynes Ambition Statement** contributes to an updating of 2020 Vision.

The University College is a concerted partnership initiative in response to the particular Higher Education needs and opportunities of Milton Keynes. It is rooted in the city's vision and shares the ambitions encapsulated in its foundational strategic documents.

This Ambition Statement is based on a shared understanding of the vision, core values, distinctiveness of provision, transparent governance, and scale and key milestones for this new higher education entity in Milton Keynes.

Vision

Our vision is of a University College in Milton Keynes that will deliver transformational educational experiences to all who are able to benefit.

We believe that high quality university education will be at the heart of the economic development, future growth, prosperity, culture, equality, and social cohesion of the Milton Keynes community and the SEMLEP region.

Those living in Milton Keynes and its wider region should be stimulated to study at university level and to have access to a quality HE offering locally if that is their preference. The student experience should be transformational. Those studying in Milton Keynes should be supported in securing attractive careers in Milton Keynes as part of its vibrant and growing knowledge economy and encouraged to live in and to contribute to the future of Milton Keynes. Our university provision should be recognised for its quality, innovative in design, flexible in delivery and relevant to the needs of the student and the community.

Businesses should be confident in investing in Milton Keynes, secure in the knowledge that there will be a local pool of talented, skilled graduates and that they will have ready access to world-class R&D expertise.

The initial delivery of this vision will focus on flagship activity in engineering and technology. It will be supplemented by corporate-facing activity from the Business School. Over time, all Faculties are expected to develop a focused provision in the University College tailored to synergise with the Milton Keynes context.

Mission

The University College Milton Keynes' mission is to:

- create a vibrant, multicultural, learning community, which enables people to transform their lives by participating in excellent, innovative education, scholarship and research
- contribute to the successful delivery of Milton Keynes Council's Economic Development Strategy 2011-16 for a thriving economy and status as an international city
- contribute to Milton Keynes' brand as a thriving, dynamic, innovative, and successful city with a highly educated and skilled work force by offering its people, businesses, cultural and social enterprises a beacon of excellence of which all will be proud
- act as a focus and catalyst for thought leadership and cultural expression

Core values, culture and identity

The University College Milton Keynes will be built around the following core values, culture and self-understanding:

- a commitment to the highest standards of quality and integrity in its endeavours
- an aspiration to excellence in scholarship and praxis in all its forms
- a desire for openness of access and inclusiveness of its scholarly community
- a belief that excellence and openness are not mutually exclusive
- a retention of the concept of the 'community of scholars' at the heart of its being
- a commitment to a transformational student experience
- a recognition of the quality of its graduates through their employability
- the mutual respect of staff, students and stakeholders
- a commitment to innovation – pedagogical, cultural, institutional, scientific and technological
- a commitment to business and employer engagement in curriculum and knowledge exchange
- a commitment to transparent governance
- creative civic and academic partnerships
- environmental and financial sustainability
- the Milton Keynes 'brand' of ambition, innovation, excellence, self-belief and "can do"

Transparent Governance

Transparent governance of the University College will be established through three foundational elements:

- the creation of a University College Board which includes key representation from the city
- the Milton Keynes University Trust which holds community assets for the beneficial use of the University College
- An MoU between the University, Milton Keynes Council and Milton Keynes College.

Distinctive Features of the University College Milton Keynes

The University College is aspirational in its conception while being utterly realistic in its operational manifestation because of the need to demonstrate viability and sustainability. Nonetheless, the University College blends the desire and capacity for innovation of its founding partners and is committed to retain this impetus as though it were a genetic inheritance.

The University College is born at a time of great upheaval in Higher Education in England. It will use this opportunity to innovate and test new models for HE, starting from its distinctiveness as a wholly-owned HEI subsidiary but with a strong civic investment and concomitant subsidiarity, through potential partnership models, to an exploration of the Cloud University concept.

Whatever institutional manifestation is ultimately regarded as optimum, the University College will retain its commitment to innovation in pedagogy and praxis, which will allow it to acquire an international reputation for originality in HE.

Of course, genuine distinctiveness will take time to develop and embed. Nevertheless, the initial ambitious manifestations of the University College will give a taste of the distinctive institution in development. These features include *inter alia*:

- the establishment of a new flagship Faculty of Engineering and Technology aimed at international, national and local student demand, delivering professionally-accredited graduates at UG, PG and Doctoral level, and with internationally recognised R&D and teaching
- the creation of capacity in quantitative methods to support a variety of activities across all Faculties and, in particular to support work in economic development, smart cities and telehealth
- additional teaching provision (UG, PG, CPD) in other subjects in response to local needs
- leading-edge pedagogy and delivery of the learning environment, including the use of learning technologies
- promotion of local access to higher education through innovative relationships with local schools and FE to develop creative, attractive and holistic progression pathways for skills and learning as part of a connected learning landscape
- promotion of international student recruitment to strengthen the aspiration of Milton Keynes to be an international city and to help build sustainability more quickly than is possible under current strict government controls on the number of home students
- a commitment to developing creative partnerships wherever they aid the mission, and cohere with the values, of the University College
- a close partnership with Milton Keynes College as the provider of “HE in FE” in Milton Keynes based on complementary rather than competitive teaching provision
- the imaginative adoption of shared services and resource sharing, not just across educational establishments but within the public, private and third sectors, where appropriate and mutually advantageous
- a commitment to the development of high impact research admissible under the REF
- a tight integration with the Milton Keynes city wide R&D initiatives including Smart Cities, Low Carbon, and Telehealth
- the University College will be a core component of the proposed Sports Science and Sports Medicine Hub being promoted as part of Milton Keynes International Sporting City initiative in close collaboration with the Bedford campus
- pro-active support for the MK Gateway and its Centre for Innovation

- the University College will cross-fertilise and support activities at the other University campuses (for example, urbanism, smart cities and telehealth will provide rich themes for many of the University's endeavours) as well as drawing upon expertise across the University
- the distinctive model of the University College Milton Keynes as a wholly owned subsidiary of the University of Bedfordshire with a Local Board and significant Milton Keynes investment in the endeavour

Key Milestones

Growing the scale and scope of the University College Milton Keynes rapidly is a shared ambition. Separate Development Plans will articulate the growth plans which are based on the following key milestones.

By September 2012

- establishment of a shadow vehicle which is intended to become the University College when BIS and Privy Council approvals are in place
- negotiations with BIS and the Privy Council to establish the University College are well advanced (if not completed)
- third year degree programme top up for up to three of the UoB FDs currently taught by Milton Keynes College at the University Centre
- at least three additional courses in place at the University College
- transfer of the existing knowledge exchange and R&D activity from the current University Centre to University College Milton Keynes
- embedding of the Smart Cities Institute in the University College
- a small cohort of PhD students in place
- Development Plan 2012-2020 and Business Plan to 2016/17 in place for establishment of the new Faculty of Engineering and Technology (FET), including recruitment plans for senior academic staff
- management team in place and premises secured to meet needs to cover the period up to September 2013
- MoU with MK Council, MKHEB and MK College in place
- "Heads of Agreement" with MK Council in place
- University College Board structure agreed and in place (or a shadow Board in place if the relevant Privy Council permissions are not yet granted)

By September 2013

- launch of new Faculty of Engineering and Technology (FET) for start up phase with senior academic staff in post and pilot student cohort recruited with outline curriculum planning and design agreed;
- premises secured for FET launch
- professional accreditation process initiated
- agreement with Milton Keynes College on any potential shared use of its ITC facilities at its Chaffron Way campus
- international student recruitment plan in place
- residential accommodation plan in place
- R&D projects initiated
- Smart Cities Institute achieves first research outputs
- first cohort of FET students commence studies
- launch of further bachelor degree top-ups in response to local needs to complement MK College FD provision
- additional Masters level programmes launched
- introduction of CPD programmes for local employers

By September 2014

- FET professional accreditation secured
- Second cohort of FET students admitted
- Smart Cities institute establishes M-level CPD programmes

By September 2015

- Third cohort of FET students admitted

By September 2016

- Overall student numbers reach 1000 head count
- First FET graduation
- Second Development Plan and Business Plan 2017/18 to 2020/21 in place