

strategic plan 2015-2020

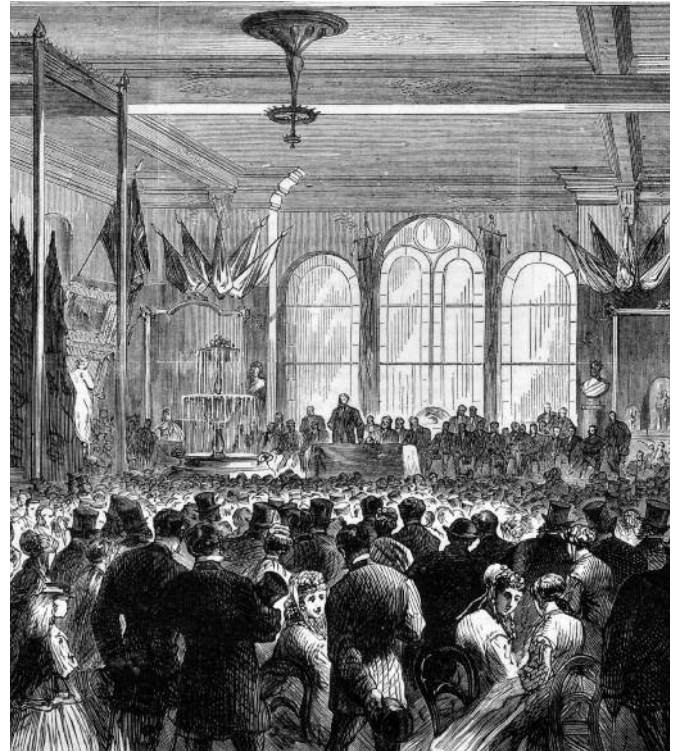
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origins

190 years of learning

The University of Bolton traces its history back to the foundation, in 1825, of the Bolton Mechanics' Institute, one of the first to be established in the UK. Throughout its history and in its various incarnations, this institution's primary purpose has been to provide educational opportunities for those who wish to better their situation and their prospects. The University of Bolton continues, in 2015, to offer programmes with a strong vocational, professionally focused, orientation and it has a strong applied research profile, which informs teaching.



Left: the opening of the Bolton Mechanics' Institute in the 1800s and, below, Degree Congregation Ceremonies where student success takes centre stage



current situation

The University of Bolton is in a strong position to capitalise on the challenges and opportunities of the current and future higher education environment. The University has implemented major academic initiatives and made recent investments in infrastructure development, including the £31m Bolton One building. This is part of the £150m transformation project which has been completed on campus to give effect to the Bolton Education Zone. A £10m University Technical College on campus is currently underway, contributing further to the growth of the University. The University continues to invest in and further develop its estate and has ambitious plans for its future.

These include:

- The new £10m National Centre for Motorsport Engineering
- The new Queens campus offering subjects allied to Dentistry and Biomedical Science
- The newly created Northern School of Theatre and Dramatic Arts

- Our new law school in the iconic Le Mans Crescent
- A potential new 1000 bed student village in the heart of the town centre.

The development of the Bolton Education Zone as a clearly differentiated quarter of Bolton has resulted in the regeneration and transformation of this part of the town. The University aims to continue to contribute to the economic development of the town of Bolton just as it will continue to be an engine for regional growth through education, training and knowledge exchange. The University is, therefore, very well placed to embark on the next stage of its evolution, to consolidate and develop its existing areas of strength and to identify, invest in and grow new centres of potential excellence.



our vision

By 2020 the University of Bolton will be a teaching intensive, research informed higher education institution whose distinctive high quality, student-focused, undergraduate and postgraduate programmes attract applications from all over the world. It will offer an exciting and challenging student experience with high levels of proactive student support and with excellent facilities which match the quality of its academic provision. It will be a local resource, a regional asset and a national and international centre of excellence as well as a byword for exemplary vocationally focused undergraduate and postgraduate programmes delivered in Bolton and across the world. Where appropriate, our students will study in an environment which reflects as closely as possible, the working environment which they are likely to enter, with industry standard equipment. All students will be offered work-based learning through placements, internships or 'sandwich' gap years.



Above: Health students develop professional skills in our clinical simulation suite Below: Advanced Performance Engineering students working with in-house race team, RLR Msport, at Donington race track as part of their course work. Far left: Senate House viewed through the Bolton One arch and, below, an artist's impression of UTC Bolton





strategic aim

teaching intensive research informed

We will capitalise on our regional strength to build a national and international brand by enhancing the quality, reputation and perception of the organisation. This aim will be achieved through consolidation, focus, differentiation and the creation of value through teaching, learning and knowledge exchange. The University and all its programmes will present a distinctive competence and unique excellence. As an organisation striving for the highest quality in all we do, we will offer our students the very best teaching intensive experience underpinned and informed by high quality research.

Key Objectives

- Continue to improve the student experience
- Develop the brand and our reputation
- Improve recruitment and retention
- Develop applied research and knowledge exchange
- Create a network of partner employers and improve the employability of our graduates
- Develop appropriate off campus provision
- Invest in new facilities and continuously improve the estate
- Be financially sustainable
- Be outstanding in all aspects of provision

Key Priorities

- The student experience and student satisfaction
- Focussing upon an intensively supportive teaching and learning environment
- Investment in staff – developing our existing staff as well as making new appointments
- Investment in IT infrastructure
- Robust and well-developed communications strategy
- A robust planning cycle to design, implement and monitor
- Local plans which will deliver the main strategic plan
- Strong quality assurance processes and procedures

Law students hone their talents for arguing their case in the University's purpose-built law court



strategic themes

our courses will be teaching intensive and research informed

Student Success

- Create a network of partner employers and continue to improve employer engagement
- Increase the range and quality of work-related learning opportunities
- Focus, both within and outside the curriculum on enterprise education
- Offer high quality placements and internships both in the University and in association with partner employers
- Deliver the 'Bolton Award'; accreditation and recognition of extra-curricular employability, related learning and experience

Student Engagement

- We aim to help students meet their learning and development needs and will provide opportunities for them to engage with educational enhancement and quality assurance to ensure we have students' achievement and wellbeing at the heart of our work
- We will provide opportunities for students to participate, and take leading roles, in innovative projects aimed at increasing student engagement and satisfaction
- We will develop and support our students so that their active engagement is facilitated, and will recognise and reward their engagement (e.g., via the Higher Education Achievement Report)
- We will monitor student satisfaction in respect of all student-facing activities undertaken by the University and take steps to improve satisfaction aiming for excellence

Textile Surface Design students reviewing their portfolios with their course leader, Donna Claypool, second right. Right: Dr Colin Robertson, Athlete Development Centre leader, works with Bolton graduate and sports physiotherapist, Bartek Holda, on his ironman competition fitness



- Offer a portfolio of dynamic and stimulating courses that are attractive and accessible to a diverse range of students from different educational and cultural backgrounds. Our courses will be teaching intensive and research informed and will provide sector-relevant knowledge and skills to ensure our graduates gain employment. Students will learn in modern and well-equipped facilities that are amongst the best in the UK. We will work with schools, colleges, communities and other organisations to continue our excellent track record in raising aspiration and attainment throughout our region
- Students will be supported throughout their study by pro-active personal tutors, academic and professional staff to ensure our students achieve their potential. Leading edge technology will be used to identify those students who are at risk of underachieving and targeted with supportive interventions

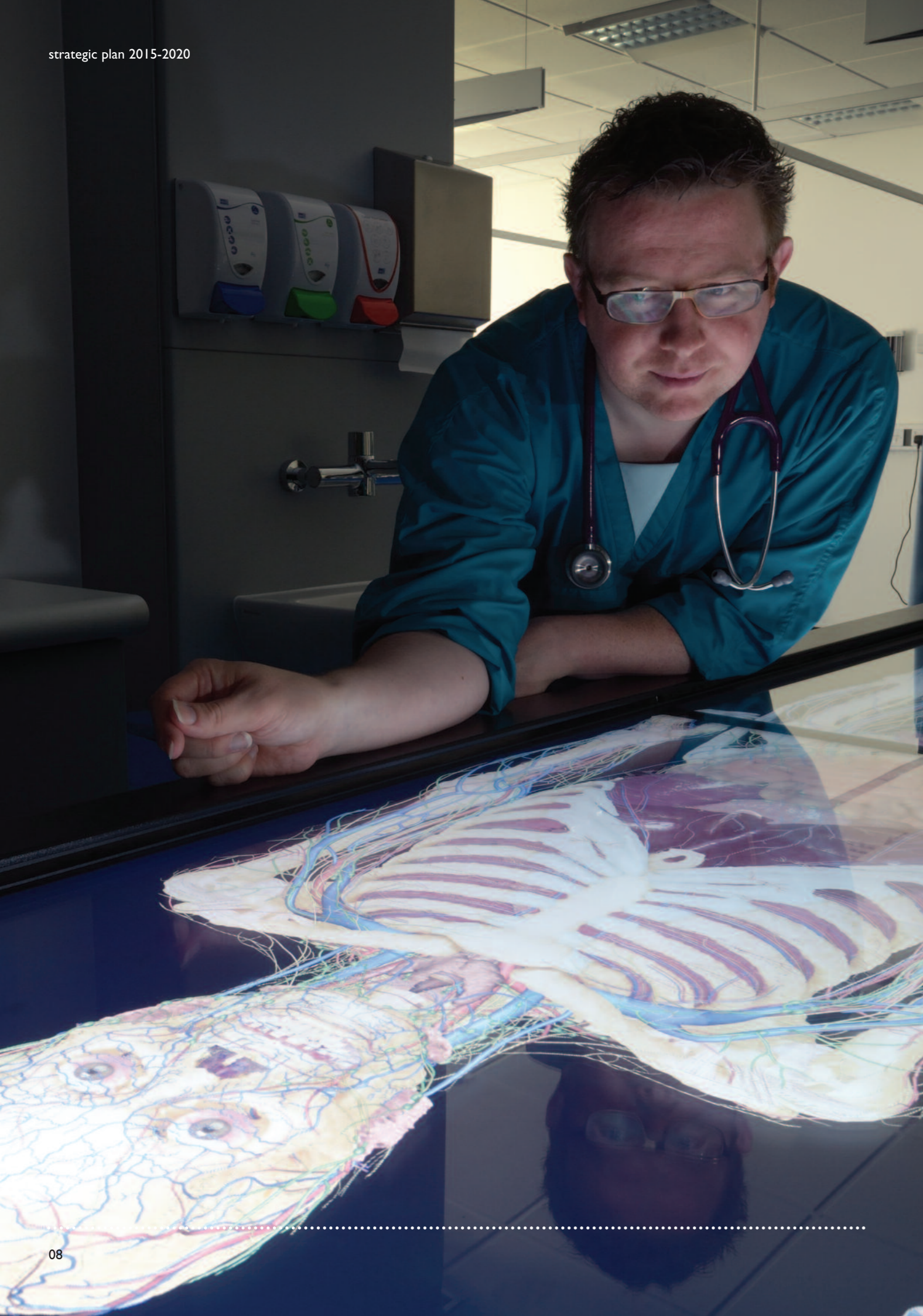
Learning, Teaching and Assessment

As a teaching intensive, research informed higher education institution, we aim to provide excellence in teaching, supporting our students' learning, and in our assessment practices. Through the process of teaching and assessment we will facilitate students' personal and professional development to help them achieve their goals and enjoy successful careers.

We aim to:

- Develop and deliver unique programmes which are fit for purpose.
- Provide students with stimulating learning environments and opportunities to develop and apply higher level skills and knowledge
- Help students develop, recognise and use their potential, and make positive contributions to society, developing as global citizens
- Support all students in their learning goals
- Develop students to become critical and forward thinkers with inquiring minds and the ability to undertake rigorous research
- Inspire, interest and motivate students
- Use technologies for teaching, learning and assessment and to help meet the needs of individual students
- Enhance our already robust quality assurance processes for our teaching, support of learning and assessment to ensure the very best student experience





students' achievement and wellbeing is at the heart of our work

Research and Knowledge Transfer

- Improve the quality of research and enterprise activities which support teaching
- Ensure research centres map research onto teaching
- Make all teaching informed by high quality, current and innovative research and professional practice
- Identify, deliver and evaluate innovative and effective ways of teaching
- Engage with business, industry and the community in knowledge transfer through consultancies, knowledge transfer partnerships and applied research linked to teaching

Quality

Our vision for quality assurance is that the University of Bolton will have a robust and reliable quality assurance framework which will make material contributions to the quality and standards of our programmes, the experience of our students, the professionalism of our staff and the confidence of our external stakeholders.

Our values for quality assurance are:

- Students first
- Institutional ownership
- Quality alignment
- Professionalism
- Transparency
- Externality
- Trustworthiness

Our priorities for quality assurance are:

- A strong student voice
- Enhancement for student learning
- Stakeholder engagement
- Risk management
- Policy review
- Clear responsibilities
- Staff professionalism
- Information assurance

Left: our electronic dissection table, one of two currently available to students in the UK and, below, artwork at our creative degree show



staff are at the heart of what we do

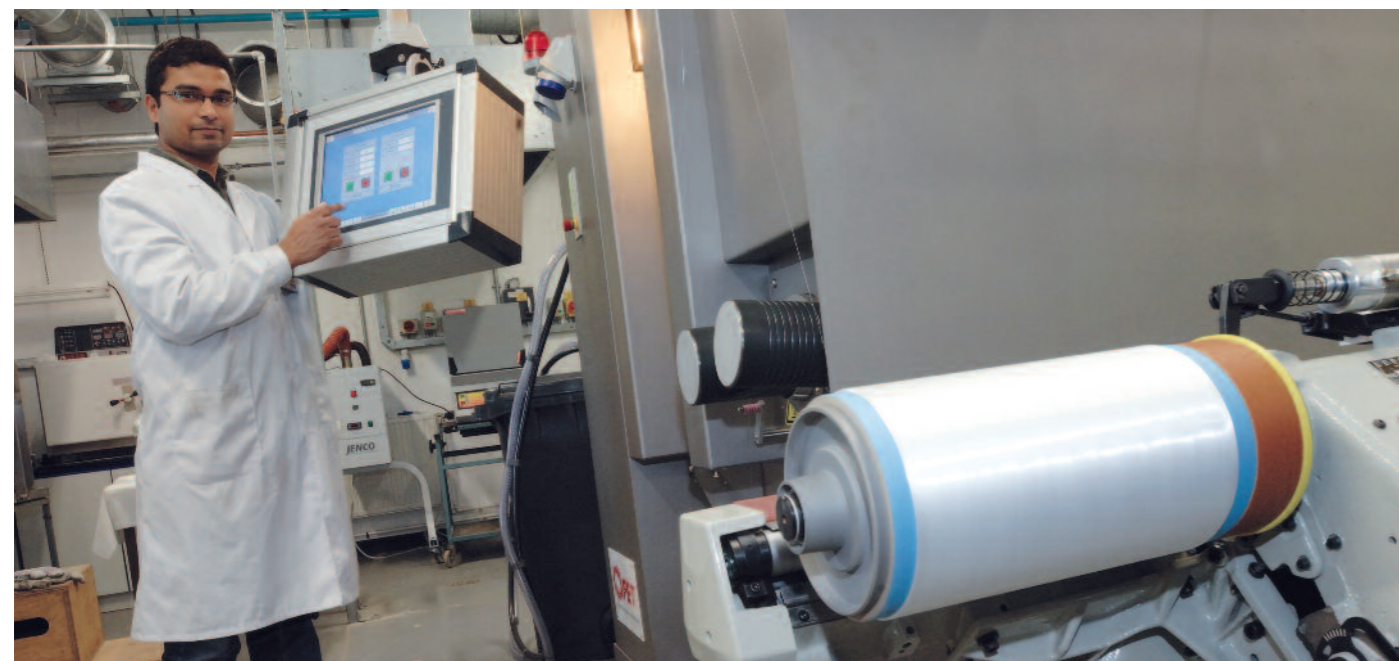
Developing and Motivating Staff

We aim to help our staff, through development, training and continuous dialogue on best practice to be outstanding professionals in support of excellent learning, teaching and applied research. To this end we will focus our efforts on staff and organisational development in the following areas:

- The development of new forms of ways of teaching and innovative assessment
- Working with flexible and alternative modes of delivery
- Effective management and leadership
- Research and research student supervisory capacity
- The creation of a customer service ethos
- Enhancing the student experience



Below: research development of an energy-harvesting photovoltaic-piezoelectric fibre, now being brought to market in partnership with FibrLec, sponsors of Bolton Wanderers Football Club. Right: Dr Rebecca Ward in Zambia where she is currently based, working on developing our partnerships in Africa



delivery of high quality programmes in collaboration with strong partners

Off Campus: UK and International Collaborative Provision

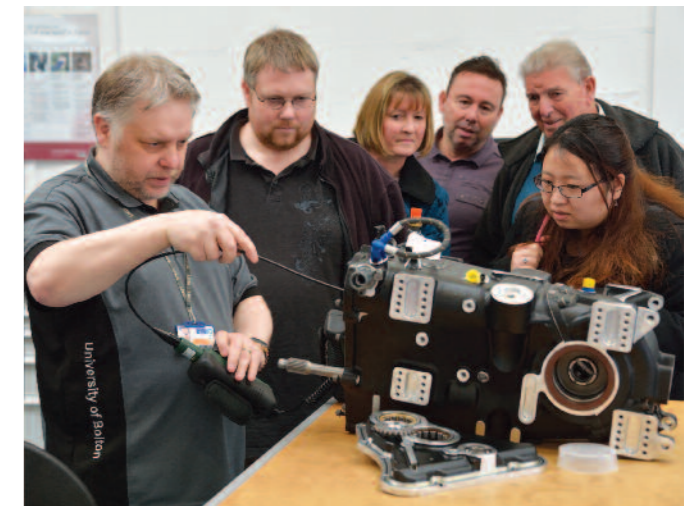
The Off Campus Division will work actively with the academic schools to build strong relationships and deliver high quality programmes. Based both in the UK and internationally, these partnerships will generate improved revenue and surplus income generation. We aim to:

- Provide a significant income stream for the University while strengthening the University's global reputation
- Offer higher education opportunities to diverse learner communities within the UK and globally
- Build a network of progression partnerships for whom the University is the preferred higher education provider.

We will develop this partnership preference by:

- Increasing the contribution from off campus activities by having fewer, larger, UK partnerships and focusing on a set of core clusters of international activity
- Focusing on blended and franchised delivery models using technology as appropriate

- Establishing a genuine partnership approach to collaborations
- Enhancing the student experience and empowering partner institutions



together we are a force for regeneration

Financial Sustainability

For the past few years the University has generated both revenue reserves and cash from its operations every year. The University aims to continue to maintain its financial health through:

- Making strategic use of the reserves and cash to invest in the quality of academic and infrastructure provision required to deliver this strategy, whilst maintaining and, where possible, growing accumulated reserves
- A conservative approach to budgeting and forecasting processes which will ensure the University will generate both revenue reserves and cash for the year
- Ensuring the University continues to attract and retain students on our campus and develop other income, in a highly competitive and rapidly changing international market place for higher education



Special Effects students enjoy a masterclass with Visiting Professor, Neill Gorton, the founder and co-director of Millennium FX, the internationally renowned prosthetics and make-up studio that is the creative force behind Dr Who's award-winning aliens and monsters



mission statement

To be a distinctive teaching intensive and research informed university known for the quality of our staff, our facilities and our links to employment sectors.

We will provide:

- intensive support for learners by highly qualified and experienced staff
- first class facilities in which to learn
- strong links to employment sectors

Our climbing wall within the Bolton One health, leisure and research centre

Front cover: degree congregation celebrations on campus



Textile design from the 2014 Creative Degree Show

Back cover: students with their community art project developed for Transport for Greater Manchester