



University of
Southampton

LEVELLING UP IMPACT REPORT




LEVELLING UP
GOALS




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Watch a short video of the Rt Hon Justine Greening introducing the University's partnership with the Purpose Coalition





FOREWORD

Rt Hon Justine Greening, Founder of the Social Mobility Pledge and former Secretary of State for Education

The 14 Levelling Up Goals are a practical response to the urgent need to address Britain's opportunity gap.

They set out how levelling up can be achieved, and focus on key stages from early years to adulthood and throughout working life.

Their aim is to put forward a framework for government, education, businesses and communities to address the lack of social mobility and inequality of opportunity that have long existed in this country.

Scores of employers have already committed to the new levelling up framework to measure their impact, and we are seeing hugely positive results; but more input is needed, including in the higher education sector.

The difficult reality is that the process of learning, whether in schools and colleges, on campus or in the workplace, is only reachable for some, when it should be available to all.

This is a major barrier to levelling up that we aim to address through the goals.

It is not just the job of our educators to make this happen, however. It requires employers, education institutions, and central and local government decision-makers to work together to understand the challenges on learning journeys that result in potential remaining untapped.

Undoubtedly, societal inequalities have been further exposed by COVID-19.

And gaps between the most challenged and deprived areas and the rest of the country could widen further if left untouched.

Education is among the biggest generators of opportunity and universities, in particular, are a powerful force in attacking inequality, especially those whose operations are underpinned by purpose.

I know from first hand experience the impact that the University of Southampton can have on lives. For me, coming to do my economics degree at the University absolutely turbo-charged my opportunities in life.

As a young person arriving as a student many years ago, like many of my peers, I was away from home for the first time but the University and the wider city very much welcomed me and helped me feel at home.

My time at the University of Southampton was truly transformative. It was an amazing experience both in study and post-graduation, working in a city which would very much shape my future life for the better.

Through projects like Ignite and its close partnerships with other stakeholders within the city, the University is making a real difference to those who simply need a chance.

It's great to see the University of Southampton continue to play an important role in levelling up and spreading opportunity to a new generation of young people.

FOREWORD

Professor Mark E. Smith, President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Southampton

I am delighted that the University of Southampton has entered into this partnership with the Purpose Coalition, to work together to improve opportunities for people and communities across the region.

One of our core values is egalitarianism, and 'levelling up', in the context of our work with the Purpose Coalition, speaks to the heart of what we want to achieve as an institution, to champion equality, diversity and inclusion in all that we do locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. This is the approach our country needs to drive forward the levelling up agenda, ensuring that everyone will have the same opportunities.

Our work in widening participation and social mobility is long established and continues to support making the future fairer for many more students through Ignite Southampton, our flagship engagement programme for students from underrepresented groups.

We care deeply about our local area, and while we often think about levelling up in the context of the north-south divide in this country, there are parts of our own city

that feel left behind. One of the key pillars supporting our Strategy is civic engagement because we believe that universities have a big part to play in helping their surrounding communities and businesses realise their potential.

We want to use the skills, resources, knowledge and leadership at the University to create transformational opportunities for our local cultural and economic ecosystem. We are encouraging entrepreneurship and the development of entrepreneurial skills in our students and staff, and, in collaboration with local partners, we will ensure the region prospers.

This collaboration with the Purpose Coalition will help us to inspire the highest levels of achievement among our local community, bringing in the widest range of voices for an inclusive Southampton.

I hope this impact report gives you a flavour of what the University has to offer in terms of how, together, we can level up the UK.



THE JOURNEY TO THE LEVELLING UP GOALS

In 2015, as Secretary of State for International Development, Justine Greening MP led the UK delegation to the United Nations (UN), along with 184 international partners, she helped to establish the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In 2017, the SDGs were made more 'actionable' by a UN resolution adopted by the General Assembly which identified specific targets for each goal, along with indicators used to measure progress towards each target.

These 17 interlinked, global goals were designed to be 'a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all'.

They marked a shift from the previously established Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), following the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in 2000.

In contrast to the MDGs, the SDGs were nationally owned, country-led and targeted wealthy, developed nations as well as developing countries.

The SDGs emphasised the interdependent environment, social and economic aspects of development by centralising the role of sustainability. As Secretary of State, Justine recognised how useful a common set of accessible but ambitious objectives could be in galvanising action to effect change.

Since then, the COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated many of the problems relating to social inequality in the UK. The recovery is a chance for the United Kingdom to address these issues and level up, but that requires updated and specific goals in order to outline, inspire and measure progress.

The Purpose Coalition, of which the University of Southampton is a key member, aims to improve social mobility in the UK and has responded to this challenge with the launch of its own Levelling Up Goals in February 2021.

These new goals build on the foundations laid by the UN's SDGs by outlining 14 clear objectives. These draw on expertise provided by academia and businesses, which has been applied to the unique challenges facing the UK in levelling up.

They focus on key life stages and highlight the main issues that need to be resolved in order to create a level playing field for all in this country. The Levelling Up Goals are intended to guide how the urgent ambition to level up the UK can actually be achieved. The impact of the work carried out to do this can, and should, be measurable.

Sub-goals with quantifiable targets and measurements against which progress can be charted within the 14 goals are being developed by the Purpose Coalition.

This will create a more transparent and measurable framework with which to monitor and subsequently address problems of social mobility and inequality. The Levelling Up Goals are designed to look at the outcomes of corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategies and measures that organisations operate.

Many organisations are doing outstanding work and making important contributions to society but are still measuring this via inputs – a measure that focuses on pounds, pennies and numbers rather than real impact to human lives.

Crucially, these goals are a shared framework. Justine and the wider Purpose Coalition believe that with a common understanding and objectives, there can be action that drives change on the ground.

Distinct entities, including universities, businesses, policymakers, communities and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), can work together, with the shared goals being a uniting and motivating foundation for progress. As the problems causing social inequality in the UK are interlinked, it seems that the response to these problems must also be collaborative.

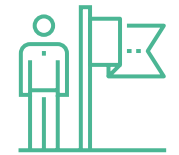
The Purpose Coalition has encouraged businesses and universities to share their own best practice with other organisations so they are not only demonstrating their own commitment, but creating a shift towards purpose-led organisations.

The goals can encourage an extension of this co-operative exchange of information which can be used to help level up Britain.

1 Strong foundations in Early Years



2 Successful school years



3 Positive destinations Post 16+



4 Right advice and experiences



5 Open recruitment



6 Fair career progression



7 Widening access to savings & credit



8 Good health and wellbeing



9 Extending enterprise



10 Closing the digital divide



11 Infrastructure for opportunity



12 Building homes & sustainable communities



13 Harness the energy transition



14 Achieve equality, through diversity & inclusion



THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON AND THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN LEVELLING UP

The University of Southampton originally signed the Social Mobility Pledge as part of Southampton Connect, which brings together key city partners to improve the outcomes of the city's people under the tag line 'A city of opportunity where everyone thrives'.

The University is now pledging to go further by measuring the impact that it is having on an organisational level.

Between 2014 and 2020, more than 4,200 new jobs were created by spinouts linked to the University. Those 364 active companies had a combined turnover of £573m and brought £162m of investment to the region, underlining the University's pivotal role in creating a level playing field.

The University, which currently employs over 6,100 staff, has a strong commitment to addressing environment, social and governance (ESG) issues, as evidenced throughout its investment, development and corporate activities.

The University also works extensively to encourage learners to consider progression to higher education generally, as well as to its own courses.



Students studying in the Hartley Library

Between 2014 and 2020, more than 4,200 new jobs were created by spinouts linked to the University



Competitive sports at our Wide Lane sports complex

The University aims to make sustainability a cornerstone of its research and societal impact, while ensuring it is part of every education programme.

It does this via a range of on- and off-campus activities including tours, open days, taster events, and school residentials.

Team members also carry out visits to schools and colleges each year, attending careers and higher education fairs and delivering presentations to thousands of prospective students.

The University supports the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which bring together the world's most pressing economic, social and environmental challenges. According to the *Times Higher Education* University Impact Rankings for 2021, it stands among the world's top 200 institutions in terms of delivering these global goals.

Data submitted by 1,175 universities across 98 countries to the publication saw Southampton ranked between 101 and 200 overall in its institutional performance against the 17 SDGs.

The University scored highly for research in every SDG it entered, achieving a perfect score of 100 under 'Partnership for the Goals' in the sub-category of Education. Southampton also performed particularly well in Goal 3 – 'Good health and wellbeing' – ranking 42nd of 871 institutions worldwide.

Southampton formally launched its Sustainability Strategy in October 2020, setting out its commitment to achieving net zero direct emissions and considerably reducing indirect emissions.

The University aims to make sustainability a cornerstone of its research and societal impact, while ensuring it is part of every education programme. It is also implementing a sustainable and ethical investment policy.

In measuring itself against the levelling up framework, the University is able to take stock of its current role in driving equality in education and spreading opportunity, and identify areas for improvement.



Outside on Highfield Campus

CASE STUDIES

Goal 1 - Strong foundations in Early Years - Breaking down language barriers

In today's interconnected world, it is more important than ever that we can communicate in other languages. However, the dominance of 'global English' means that foreign language learning in English-speaking settings can be a hard sell, according to Dr Alison Porter, Lecturer in Applied Linguistics at Southampton.

Alison's research interests led to her co-founding the University of Southampton Primary Languages Partnership (SUPL), along with Emeritus Professor Rosamond Mitchell. SUPL is a network of researchers and teachers who collaborate to design, implement and evaluate foreign language teaching resources, funded by Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Impact Acceleration Awards and Impact Support Funding.

"We're working closely with around 42 primary schools across the UK to enable teachers to explore new ideas and think about changing practices. As a result, teachers at these schools are now engaging in small-scale classroom research to develop, trial and evaluate French and Spanish literacy teaching practice."

Working in partnership with the teachers, Alison and her team have created a bank of original, co-constructed resources that tap into different areas of the curriculum, including art, music and nature. Teachers can use the resources, develop them further and then share their ideas with other schools in the network.

Goal 2 - Successful school years - Ignite Programme

The University of Southampton has launched a new social mobility programme: Ignite, which uses different strategies to level up student's experiences from Successful school years through Post-16 education and into Fair career progression. Elements of the levelling up agenda are embedded throughout to ensure that students have the skills to succeed.

The Ignite Programme is split into three stages. Firstly, Ignite Your Journey works with care-experienced and looked-after children in year 11, offering mentoring from current University of Southampton students with lived experience of the care system as well as focused English and maths tuition to support attainment at GCSE stage. It is recognised across the sector that GCSE attainment has the real impact on care experienced children accessing and succeeding in higher education and Ignite Your Journey aims to provide positive, on-campus experiences to start to change this.

The University of Southampton will have 10 students joining the first Ignite Your Journey programme in October 2021 with an aim to increase this in the following academic year. The aim is for the University to be a hub of the community for looked-after children and use its excellent facilities to expand aspirations and increase participation.

The second stage of the programme, Ignite Your Success which, launched in October 2020, works with first-year undergraduate students who either have a care leaver background or who come from areas in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, quintile one (IMD Q1) measurement on admission. This group of 31 students join our Ignite community in their first year and complete a series of workshops exploring their journey to higher education and the unique skills and experiences they bring. They have a safe space to discuss matters that might make them feel different from their peers including financial matters, identity and how to make connections, which can help them in their future careers. All students undertake a guaranteed internship in their first year, an international opportunity in their second

The aim is for the University of Southampton to be a hub of the community for looked-after children and use its excellent facilities to expand aspirations and increase participation.

year, and have a mentor in each year of study. They also all receive additional financial support.

All students in the 2020/21 cohort completed their first year, with 81% progressing to their second year. Students have reported high levels of satisfaction with 89% saying they had been inspired or had their aspirations raised by the Ignite workshops. Additionally, 94% were either satisfied or really satisfied with the workshops and 94% said they found the alumni speakers either helpful or very helpful when thinking about their future. Students engaged whole heartedly, with 97% completing their internship in their first year - the final student will complete this in their second year. 78% said that the workshops provided them with careers information they wouldn't otherwise have been aware of and 73% have completed follow-up research on jobs and careers outside of the sessions.

From 2021/22 the University will be more focused on recording the impact of the programme through two areas: high-level data (retention, awards, graduate outcomes, completion) and deep-level impact (self-esteem, efficacy, self-determination, engagement and belonging).

The University has also received very encouraging feedback from the students about their experiences, from the supportive network ("[The] social aspect of the Ignite Programme...enabled me to meet other students from different year groups across the University, especially during lockdowns and not being able to meet anyone. It also gave me the opportunity to be able to discuss student experience, support students and make friends") to the employability enhancing opportunities ("I have had the opportunity to apply and be accepted for an internship, which has given me a chance to boost some of my workplace skills. The weekly sessions we have expose us to a range of speakers who provide us with some great advice for a range of topics") and the financial stability the bursary provides ("Receiving the funding has lifted a huge weight off my shoulders! It meant that I could focus on my studies instead of worrying and feeling guilty about how much the things I needed was going to cost me").

The University will build on these successes in the final stage: Ignite Your Future, which will focus on improving progression to graduate employment and further study, and is currently in development.

Student case study - Maleeha Mahmuda

“I’m a first-year student studying environmental science. Despite getting used to a new normal, it has been a learning experience overall. I love studying at this university because I just felt that this university stands out from the others in terms of putting students’ needs first and making them the priority.

“I felt that going to university opens so many doors, both academically and non-academically. As well as expanding your knowledge and interests by being taught, you get the opportunity to have practical experience in your field, (work experience, internships, etc). Even if you feel like you’ve not gained much academically, the people you meet are completely different from people you meet in primary/ high school, yet with a similar academic mindset. Engaging in conversations with fellow students is always really exciting!

“The situation was quite stressful because my dad was out of work for a long period of time due to him having and recovering from a heart operation. I needed a lot of textbooks and a laptop to support advanced computer programmes for my course. I was invited [by the Ignite Programme] to apply for the bursary by email.

“Receiving the funding has lifted a huge weight off my shoulders! It meant that I could focus on my studies instead of worrying and feeling guilty about how much the things I needed were going to cost me.

“My favourite part has simply been the people. My fellow ‘Igniters’ are a great bunch of people, studying different subjects and from all different backgrounds, have become good friends of mine. Getting to know everyone who are outside of my course has been a really positive experience and when someone from our little group goes on to achieving something, it becomes our achievement too as everyone is incredibly supportive.

“It was through one of the talks from Ignite, I found out about the ‘Student Innovation Project’ which I ended up taking part in. It is a six-week project that anyone, from any subject and any year can do as an extra thing, which can be related to your course or not! You are given a real client with an issue that you have six weeks to research about before presenting them with your solutions that they can possibly implement into their business.



“Receiving the funding has lifted a huge weight off my shoulders.”

“Despite the current situation with COVID, you can still make the most out of your university experience, only if you choose to do so. You can either let the negativity of online learning consume you or you can be proactive and seek out interesting and exciting opportunities for yourself by reaching out to other students through email, LinkedIn, SUSU, etc. I decided to choose the latter and because of this, I have been fortunate to get involved in some amazing experiences all in my first year!”

Goal 8 - Good health and wellbeing - LifeLab

Empowering young people to make positive lifestyle choices has never been as important as it is now, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. But do young people have a voice, and do they understand the choices they can make to mitigate the impact of the situation on their lives? The work of researchers in Southampton’s LifeLab has been to ensure that they do.

While the immediate impact of the coronavirus pandemic is being felt by everyone, the full impact may take years to be revealed. A whole generation of young people has been thrust into a situation many of them don’t understand. In such an uncertain environment they may feel ill-equipped to make the right lifestyle choices.

Dr Kathryn Woods-Townsend, who leads the LifeLab programme as a partnership between the University’s Southampton Education School and the Faculty of Medicine, explained:

“The LifeLab team has spent the past 12 years developing a programme aimed at increasing scientific and health literacy among young people through raising awareness of the underlying science. We hope to inspire positive health-related lifestyle and behaviour changes by the LifeLab experience outside the school environment.”

The LifeLab team worked with Professor Mary Barker and colleagues in the Faculty of Medicine to develop the Teenagers’ Experience of COVID-19 (TeC-19) study, funded by the Institute for Life Sciences. The study involved online focus group discussions with teenagers to ask about their experiences of the pandemic.





Outside on Highfield Campus

ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON IN THE CONTEXT OF THE LEVELLING UP GOALS

Many organisations have strong commitments to traditional corporate social responsibility and the ESG agenda.

The University of Southampton has a strong commitment to maximising its contribution to the levelling up agenda.

Its ESG focus delivers positive impact in a spectrum of key areas that form the basis of the 14 goals. Certain Levelling Up Goals are closely connected to its work, however.

As set out in more detail in this section, they include:


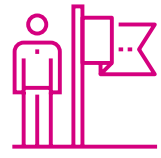



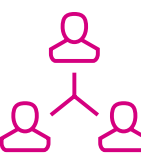




- Goal 2: Successful school years
- Goal 4: Right advice and experiences
- Goal 10: Closing the digital divide
- Goal 14: Achieve equality through diversity and inclusion

It is not expected that an organisation is able to excel in every one of the 14 Levelling Up Goals.

Every employer that commits to levelling up has different strengths and attributes. It is, therefore, more efficient for organisations to focus on specific areas where they can make a significant difference, rather than making a superficial impact spread thinly across many goals.

In the next section is a list of the Levelling Up Goals, their definitions, and the Purpose Coalition's assessment of how the University of Southampton is currently meeting them.

These have been assessed through a document review process, identifying the amount of activity done by the University across each of the Levelling Up Goals. We then progress to measuring specific impact across these activities.

1 Strong foundations in Early Years  Close the early years development gap by delivering the best possible start for every child <p>Home to Early Years Centre supporting childcare needs of staff, students and community.</p> <p>Research and initiatives to help child development and learning.</p> <p>LifeLab teaching laboratory dedicated to improving adolescent health by giving opportunities to learn the science behind health messages.</p>	2 Successful school years  Every child successfully achieving their potential in attainment and development <p>Partnerships with schools and colleges.</p> <p>Outreach work into schools including higher education (HE) talks, workshops and summer schools.</p> <p>Co-chair of Southampton Cultural Education Partnership.</p> <p>Ignite Your Journey project to increase GCSE attainment and raise HE aspiration.</p> <p>Hosts Human Worlds festival to celebrate humanities and the arts.</p>	3 Positive destinations Post 16+  Every young person and adult to have the choice of a high-quality route in education, employment, or training <p>Engages with underrepresented groups through Access to Southampton programme.</p> <p>Improving quality of apprenticeships through research.</p> <p>Providing scholarships and opportunities with partners for undergraduates and postgraduates.</p> <p>Working towards becoming a 'university of sanctuary' – an accreditation given to universities committed to inclusivity and being welcoming to all.</p> <p>Partnership with The Brilliant Club to widen access to university to students from underrepresented groups.</p> <p>Sponsored an IntoUniversity centre in an estate with low levels of progression to higher education, providing homework clubs and mentoring.</p>	4 Right advice and experiences  Access to the right advice and experiences at the right time to unlock opportunity through a person's life <p>Partnerships with schools, colleges and employers to offer open days, placements and careers fairs.</p> <p>Mentoring and 'e-mentoring' programmes.</p> <p>Free online learning programmes.</p> <p>Talks, seminars and events offered via podcasts.</p> <p>Ignite Programme offering 31 first-year internships for people in deprived communities.</p> <p>The Brilliant Club Programme, which provides an opportunity to experience learning at university.</p> <p>Graduate Ambassador Scheme designed to boost life and work skills.</p>	5 Open recruitment  Careers and professions open to people of all backgrounds through transparent, accessible, and open recruitment practices <p>Several initiatives employing underrepresented students as interns.</p> <p>Part of the Cities of Learning Scheme.</p>
6 Fair career progression  Opportunities for career advancement for all based on ability and potential, not connections <p>Staff networks give a voice and community with a protected characteristic.</p> <p>Two reverse mentoring schemes to support employees' career development, through learning or training.</p>	7 Widening access to savings & credit  Widening access to responsible credit and closing the savings gap <p>Invests in budget training and development of Money Mentors programme.</p> <p>Financial support provision with more than 3,000 students eligible for bursaries.</p>	8 Good health and wellbeing  Improving mental and physical health at all ages to boost overall wellbeing to allow people to fulfil their potential <p>Works with local organisations to support mental health provision and access.</p> <p>Awareness days for support staff on equality, diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>Wellbeing networks and community engagement hubs.</p> <p>Support team to tackle wellbeing issues.</p> <p>LifeLab teaching laboratory dedicated to improving adolescent health.</p>	9 Extending enterprise  Extending private enterprise and entrepreneurship to all people and communities <p>Social Impact Lab, which aims to empower students to explore, progress and build their future.</p>	10 Closing the digital divide  Closing the digital divide in technology access, skills, opportunities, and infrastructure <p>Committed over £500,000 for provision of digital equipment to students otherwise without access.</p> <p>Series of workshops and activity packs for Science and Engineering Day and Human Worlds Digital to boost digital skills and confidence.</p>

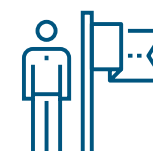


Dr Shahnaz Ibrahim leading a seminar

KEY STRENGTHS

We have identified the University of Southampton's key relative strengths as follows. These have been identified in the wider context, in comparison to key competitors, making the University a standout organisation in these areas.

2 Successful school years



Strength 1 – Goal 2: Successful school years

The University of Southampton works with approximately 100 schools and colleges through its primary, secondary and post-16 outreach programme, Learn with US. Outreach includes awareness-raising activities such as higher education talks, school workshops and subject-specific events. The University also hosts several summer schools, while its Ignite Your Journey Programme aims to increase GCSE attainment and raise higher education aspiration.

4 Right advice and experiences



Strength 2 – Goal 4: Right advice and experiences

The University is keen to ensure everyone has access to the right advice and experiences at the right time to unlock opportunity via open days, placements and careers fairs in partnership with schools, colleges and employers. Students can access work experience and volunteering opportunities, free online learning programmes, e-mentors, talks, seminars and events. The University's Ignite Programme offers guaranteed first-year internships for 31 students.

10 Closing the digital divide



Strength 3 – Goal 10: Closing the digital divide

Over the past two academic years the University has committed over £500,000 to create its Online Learning Grants programme. This offers funding to cover the purchase of digital equipment and internet access to reduce the digital divide. It is also an active participant in the Science and Engineering Day (part of the Southampton Science and Engineering Festival, SOTSEF), delivered to people around the world.

14 Achieve equality, through diversity & inclusion



Strength 4 – Goal 14: Achieve equality, through diversity and inclusion

The University has ambitious diversity targets and commitments for recruitment and progression alongside programmes to support, mentor and develop underrepresented groups into recruitment including diversity networks, panels and policies. The University is active in promoting opportunities directly to groups on the basis of gender, ethnicity and social mobility status.

11 Infrastructure for opportunity



Developing the physical infrastructure that connects people and places to opportunity

UniLink bus service for better connectivity between campus and the rest of the city.

12 Building homes & sustainable communities



Creating affordable quality homes so people can live in safe and sustainable communities

Supports youth offending services in the local area.

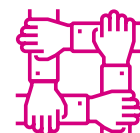
13 Harness the energy transition



Ensure that the energy transition is fair and creates opportunities across the UK

Created Sustainability Strategic Plan outlining commitments to sustainability.
Supports Green City Charter.

14 Achieve equality, through diversity & inclusion



Create a level playing field on opportunity for all, to fully unleash Britain's potential for the first time

Student Advisory Board composed of students from underrepresented groups.
Student Connections newsletter promoting opportunities directly to underrepresented groups on the basis of gender, ethnicity and social mobility status.
Aspire Awards provide grants to students from underrepresented backgrounds.
Ignite Your Success Programme offers places for 31 students from care leaver backgrounds or IMD Q1 areas.



Highfield Campus

AUDIT

The audit exercise involved the University collating all of its activity, research and enterprise that supports local schools, individuals, communities and businesses, and mapping these against the Purpose Coalition's Levelling Up Goals.

1 Strong foundations in Early Years



Has the organisation helped to close the early years development gap by delivering the best possible start for every child?

The University is home to the Early Years Centre, which supports the childcare needs of staff, students and the wider community.

Through the Southampton Education School, the University plays a key role in research and schemes that help child development and learning in partnership with local, regional, and national agencies, such as Ofsted's Early Years Pedagogy Practice Forum.

A series of family-friendly workshops were held for the Science and Engineering Day (part of the Southampton Science and Engineering Festival, SOTSEF), targeted at local communities and the wider public.

2 Successful school years



Has the organisation helped to allow every child to successfully achieve their potential in attainment and development?

The University of Southampton works closely with schools through the Widening Participation and Social Mobility (WPSM) department which has a school/University partnerships officer. The University works closely with the Southampton Education Forum, supporting schools and colleges in the city.

The University works with approximately 100 schools and colleges across Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Dorset and Wiltshire through its primary, secondary and post-16 outreach programme, Learn with US. During the pandemic, the WPSM team digitised Learn with US, and made it available for all year 7–10 pupils at state schools in the UK.

Outreach includes awareness-raising activity such as higher education talks, school workshops and subject-specific events. The University also hosts several summer schools to give insight and support students in their decision making.

The University is co-chair of the Southampton Cultural Education Partnership and a member of the Hampshire Cultural Education Partnership, which supports children and young people's access to arts and culture.

To engage with, and support, year 11 care-experienced and looked-after children, the University has developed Ignite Your Journey – a programme which aims to increase GCSE attainment and raise higher education aspiration.

The University hosts the Human Worlds Festival annually to celebrate humanities and the arts. In 2020 its focus was Human Worlds Digital, the first digital edition of the festival.



Our Centenary Building

3 Positive destinations Post 16+



Does the organisation support young people and adults to have the choice of a high-quality route in education, employment, or training?

The University of Southampton works extensively with students from underrepresented groups through Access to Southampton (A2S), a sequential programme for years 12 and 13, supporting them in considering Southampton as a compelling option for them. Each year 100 students register for A2S. Data from the last five years shows that good degree outcomes for students who attended A2S are 11 per cent higher than those of the general population.

Meanwhile, research in the Southampton Education School has helped to improve the quality of apprenticeships across the country and has informed national vocational and education training policy.

With its partners, the University provides several scholarships and opportunities for undergraduates and postgraduates.

The University houses Southern Universities Network (SUN), an award-winning Uni Connect partnership which links universities and colleges in the region to support students from underrepresented backgrounds in a collaborative and mutually supportive way.

Since Southampton is a City of Sanctuary, the University is working towards becoming a University of Sanctuary. As part of this pledge, several fully funded postgraduate opportunities will be made available for people seeking refuge and asylum.

The University works with a number of partners to provide a greater level of support for young people in the local area including the Brilliant Club, which aims to widen access to university for students from underrepresented groups. The University has collaborated with the club on a scholars' programme. Recent data shows that many of the students in attendance are target pupils, based on widening participation criteria, with an average of 76 per cent of pupils across all the schools meeting these criteria.

The University has sponsored an IntoUniversity centre in Redbridge, an estate in Southampton with low levels of progression to higher education. The centre provides homework clubs, mentoring opportunities and organised visits to the University. In 2020/21 it worked with 843 young people. The University has also worked with IntoUniversity centres in Brighton and Brixton.

4 Right advice and experiences



Does the organisation provide access to the right advice and experiences at the right time to unlock opportunity through a person's life?

The University hosts open days, placements and careers fairs in partnership with schools, colleges, and employers. Alongside this, students can access work experience and volunteering opportunities both within the University and externally across a range of different partners.

It enables access to placements in business, education and healthcare, plus paid internships, ambassador schemes, insider career mentoring and business innovation programmes. There are two mentoring options available: enterprise mentoring and diversity mentoring.

In partnership with Future Learn, the University provides free online learning programmes, covering a wide range of subjects including digital marketing and web science.

Further talks, seminars and events are also available from the University of Southampton via its lifelong learning podcast. Also, the University's Public Engagement with Research unit (PERu) is a conduit for a range of engagement and learning activities for all ages.

The University's Ignite Programme offers guaranteed first-year internships for 31 students from postcodes in the lowest quintile of the Indices of Multiple Deprivations (IMD) measurement or those who are care experienced. There is also ongoing support for second-year students to help them access competitive intern schemes. Ignite students are mentored by a peer in their first year, a recent graduate in their second year and an alumnus who is established in their career in year three. The programme aims to offer students the perspective of those with similar lived experience.

Furthermore, the Brilliant Club Scholars Programme provides the opportunity for students to experience learning at a university level, giving them transferable skills and allowing them to work with a mentor.

In addition to enterprise and diversity mentoring programmes, the University also offers e-mentoring, which provides students with access to a supportive online community of more than 2,500 alumni mentors around the world for career advice and support. E-mentoring is available to all students and recent graduates, who can use the platform to connect with volunteer alumni mentors, working in hundreds of industries and companies spanning 80 countries. This enables them to ask career-related questions, seek mentoring and build professional networks.

The Graduate Ambassador Scheme involves 40 recent graduate volunteers, who give their time to support the University. Graduate ambassadors support a range of student-focused activities, providing authentic experiences and insights from their own journeys in order to help students succeed. In return for giving their time, graduate ambassadors are enrolled in a skills development programme, which includes workshops and speaker events, to help them improve their own employability and career prospects as a result of volunteering. Graduate ambassadors are from a range of backgrounds, subject areas and levels of study, representing the diversity of the student body.

5 Open recruitment



Are careers and professions open to people of all backgrounds through transparent, accessible, and open recruitment practices?

Several WPSM projects employ underrepresented students as interns, and roles are ring fenced for those with lived experience of the area in focus. The University of Southampton currently has two mature students, two care-experienced students and two students from IMD Q1 neighbourhoods employed on its core projects.

The University is part of the Cities of Learning Scheme.

6 Fair career progression



Does the company offer opportunities for career advancement for all based on ability and potential, not connections?

Southampton has several staff networks which provide a voice and community for colleagues with a protected characteristic. These include networks dedicated to BAME staff, women in science, engineering, technology and humanities (WISSET+), LGBT+ communities, parents and carers, and people with disabilities.

The University has operated two reverse mentoring schemes during the last two years. The first, in the Faculty of Medicine, saw senior staff mentored by students from an ethnic minority background. The second involved the University Executive Board being mentored by staff from the aforementioned networks and students from underrepresented groups who sit on the Student Advisory Board.

7 Widening access to savings & credit



Does the organisation help widen access to responsible credit and close the savings gap?

The University has invested in a budget training tool and the development of a Money Mentors programme to better equip students with financial literacy and tangible skills. In 2021/22 it will launch an education programme to equip students with financial planning skills.

The University has financial support provision, with more than 3,000 students annually being eligible for the bursary programme. It also offers hardship support through its Student Support Fund, which provides grants of up to £3,000 to students in financial difficulty.



Our weekly fresh produce market on Highfield Campus

8 Good health and wellbeing



Does the organisation improve mental and physical health at all ages to boost overall wellbeing to allow people to fulfil their potential?

The University of Southampton works closely with local organisations and charities to support mental health and wellbeing through local voluntary services.

It supports awareness days through the staff equality, diversity and inclusion networks and wellbeing networks, and community engagement hubs, which focus on health and wellbeing, nature and biodiversity.

Much of this activity is supported by the Roadshow events managed by the Public Engagement with Research unit (PERu) (including Southampton Pride, Black History Month, International Women's Day).

The Student Inclusion and Financial Support Teams have received specific training around supporting students with mental health conditions and who are experiencing wellbeing issues. This has been offered as general training. Three members of the team have Mental Health First Aid training and all team members have received training on managing disclosures.

The University also hosts LifeLab, a teaching laboratory dedicated to improving adolescent health by giving school students opportunities to learn first-hand the science behind health messages. The LifeLab module of work is a holistic programme, involving teacher professional development, curriculum-linked lessons delivered in school and a day visit to LifeLab. To date over 11,500 students, 300 teachers and 70 schools have participated in the programme.

Embedded within a research culture, the module has been co-created and iterated with teachers and young people, and the effectiveness on knowledge and attitudes of young people has been evaluated in two randomised controlled trials, involving 2,930 young people aged 13–14, showing significant impact.

Preliminary analysis looking at educational attainment shows small effect sizes on science GCSE scores, with students who participated in the LifeLab module of work achieving higher scores than their peers who did not participate.

9 Extending enterprise



Does the organisation work to extend private enterprise and entrepreneurship to all people and communities?

The University hosts the Social Impact Lab, a community for students to build knowledge, gain skills and learn through experience to lead sustainable social change. The lab aims to empower students to explore, progress and build their future, helping them to gain the necessary skills to become a world-class social impact leader. This is accomplished through support for students to start their own venture or gain experience working on a social challenge.

Activities include speaker events, modules, internships, start-up funds, workshops and international competitions. These aim to build students' knowledge and help them gain skills through experience, supporting them to start their own social ventures or work with our partners to lead sustainable social change.

10 Closing the digital divide



Is the organisation working to close the digital divide in technology access, skills, opportunities, and infrastructure?

Over the past two academic years the University has committed over £500,000 to create their Online Learning Grants programme offering funding to cover the purchase of digital equipment and internet access to reduce the digital divide.

A series of workshops for the Science and Engineering Day (part of the Southampton Science and Engineering Festival, SOTSEF) was delivered to people around the world. The event saw over 250,000 website views from five continents. All digital content was made available and activity packs were created as part of this activity.

The University took part in Human Worlds Digital, the first digital edition of the Human Worlds Festival, which featured activities and events, such as Being Human as Praxis, a series of workshops to explore different ways of examining and practicing our humanness.

SOTSEF activity packs enabled individuals with limited or no access to technology to benefit from the SOTSEF activities. Over half of the packs sent were received by people living in areas in the 4th or 5th percentile of the Index for Multiple Deprivation, representing those who live in some of the most deprived areas.

Due to high demand, the University created further educational activity packs aimed at primary and secondary school aged children to help overcome the disruption to education caused by the coronavirus pandemic. They were sent to 26 schools, as well as various charities and partners to help to reduce the digital divide that the coronavirus pandemic had exacerbated. Over 14,000 packs were distributed this academic year, and included themes such as 'nutriskills', arts and crafts, and outdoor learning.

Dragonfly day was a series of STEM related activities carried out remotely by sending out activity packs to school. It was designed for year 9 female students, with the aim of encouraging young women to consider the benefits of further study and careers in science and engineering.

These activity packs were divided into teacher and student packs. There was also a series of live events. The combination of activity packs and live events helped to support STEM education for young women, by providing interesting and engaging activities to benefit STEM learning in a fun way.



Students in a seminar

11 Infrastructure for opportunity



Is the organisation developing the physical infrastructure that connects people and places to opportunity?

As part of the University's ongoing commitment to sustainability, it runs UniLink, a bus service for students and staff connecting its campuses with the rest of the city.

12 Building homes & sustainable communities



Is the organisation helping people live in quality, affordable homes so people can live in safe and sustainable communities?

The University partners with policing authorities to support youth offending services in Southampton, Hampshire, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.

13 Harness the energy transition



Is the organisation ensuring that the energy transition is fair and creates opportunities across the UK?

The University supports Southampton City Council's Green City Charter.

The University has created a Sustainability Strategic Plan in partnership with the Southampton University Students' Union (SUSU), which outlines their commitment to achieving net zero direct (Scope 1 and 2) emissions by 2030; and to measuring total emissions and setting targets for indirect (Scope 3) emissions reduction. The plan also sets out the aim of adopting a value-based approach to reducing emissions from business travel and ensuring that sustainability is a part of every University education programme by 2025.

The University is committed to making sustainability a cornerstone of its research and societal impact, and implementing a sustainable and ethical investment policy.



Highfield Campus

14 Achieve equality, through diversity & inclusion



Is the organisation working to create a level playing field on opportunity for all, to fully unleash Britain’s potential for the first time?

In March 2020 the University created its first Student Advisory Board composed of students from groups currently underrepresented in higher education including BAME students, mature students, and those with a disability. This best practice is being implemented in a more targeted fashion for students with disabilities in the next academic year. Students are involved in providing feedback and challenging some decision making, and in the next academic year will have a budget for student-led projects.

The Student Connections newsletter is sent to more than 3,000 undergraduate students promoting specific and general opportunities to students from groups underrepresented in higher education. This includes opportunities to build career and industry experience, receive financial support, develop academic skills and study abroad.

The University offers Aspire Awards which provide grants of £1,000 to students from underrepresented backgrounds to take on projects outside of their studies to improve social mobility. These have been varied and include additional training in public speaking, a research project in the Caribbean and an opportunity to study Welsh in Patagonia.

Ignite Your Success, which launched in October 2020, works with first-year undergraduate students who either have a care-leaver background or who come from an IMD Q1 areas on admission. This group of 31 students complete a series of workshops exploring their journey to higher education and the unique skills and experiences they bring. They have a safe space to discuss matters that might make them feel different from their peers including financial matters, identity and how to make connections which can help them in their future careers. All students undertake a guaranteed internship in their first year, an international opportunity in their second, and a mentor in each year of study. They also all receive additional financial support.

OUTPUT AND OUTCOMES

This section summarises the outputs and outcomes from the University’s activities for each of the Levelling Up Goals.

The listed outputs have been noted from available data; while given the absence of current universal measurement for social impact in the company, outcomes have been implied.

As the availability of the data increases, and with increased adoption of impact tracking and measurement, both outcomes will be more readily reported against.

This will be highly effective for benchmarking the impact of any social impact project the University of Southampton progresses with.

1 Strong foundations in Early Years



Has the organisation helped to close the early years development gap by delivering the best possible start for every child?

Activity	Output	Outcome (Implied)
	These are the measurable things, eg number of people participating	These are the more intangible benefits
University is home to the Early Years Centre.		Supports childcare needs of staff, students and wider community.
Research and schemes through Southampton Education School.		Help child development and learning in partnership with local, regional and national agencies.
Family friendly workshops for Science and Engineering Day.		Closing the gap by targeting the local community and wider public.

2 Successful school years



Has the organisation helped to allow every child to successfully achieve their potential in attainment and development?

Activity	Output	Outcome (Implied)
	These are the measurable things, eg number of people participating	These are the more intangible benefits
Link with the Southampton Education Forum.	Linked with 100 schools and colleges through primary, secondary and post-16 outreach programme.	Supporting schools and colleges to help children achieve potential.
Higher education talks, school workshops, subject-specific events and summer schools.		Increased awareness and more informed decision-making by students.
Co-chair of the Southampton Cultural Education Partnership and a member of the Hampshire Cultural Education Partnership.		Better access to arts and culture for children and young people.
Developed a new programme - Ignite Your Journey.		Increased GCSE attainment and raising of higher education aspirations.

3 Positive destinations Post 16+



Does the organisation support young people and adults to have the choice of a high-quality route in education, employment, or training?

Activity	Output	Outcome (Implied)
	These are the measurable things, eg number of people participating	These are the more intangible benefits
Access to Southampton (A2S) sequential programme for years 12 and 13, encouraging them to come to Southampton.	Each year 100 students register for A2S. Data from the last five years shows that good degree outcomes for students who attended A2S are 11 per cent higher than the general population.	Greater awareness of rewarding careers as realistic and achievable.
Provide several scholarships and opportunities for undergraduates and postgraduates.		Greater employment opportunities.
Research in the Southampton Education School.		Improved quality of apprenticeships across the country and better informed vocational and education training policy.
Uni Connect partnership Southern Universities Network (SUN).		Linked universities and colleges in the region to support students from underrepresented backgrounds.
Partnered with The Brilliant Club for the Scholars Programme.	76 per cent of pupils across all the schools were target pupils (based on widening participation criteria).	Supported academic progress, further developed skills such as organisation and gave pupils a strong sense of personal achievement.
Sponsored an IntoUniversity centre in Redbridge estate with low levels of progression to higher education.	Worked with 843 young people in 2020/21.	Rise in progression to higher education.



Study space in our Centenary Building

4 Right advice and experiences



Does the organisation provide access to the right advice and experiences at the right time to unlock opportunity through a person's life?

Activity	Output	Outcome (Implied)
	These are the measurable things, eg number of people participating	These are the more intangible benefits
Offers placements with business, education, medicine, paid internships, ambassador schemes, insider career mentoring and business innovation programme.		More provision of advice and guidance that enables and supports social mobility.
Provides free online learning programmes (MOOCs) covering a wide range of subjects.		Learning materials are freely accessible to all.
Talks, seminars and events are available as podcasts.		Content is easily accessible.
Ignite Programme offers guaranteed first-year internships.	Internships for 31 students from postcodes in lowest quintile of IMD measurement or are care experienced.	Better access to opportunities for people in most challenged communities.
Brilliant Club Scholars Programme events.	100 per cent of pupils who graduated either agreed or strongly agreed that they would be able to study at this level at university if they worked hard at school.	Children are given the correct advice and experiences to prepare them for higher education.
E-Mentoring service.	Students have access to over 2,500 alumni mentors for advice and support.	Students are able to access advice from a range of different people in different careers.
Graduate Ambassador Scheme.	40 recent volunteers support current students.	Students are given advice from those who have recently been in a similar position to them.

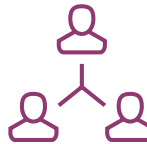
5 Open recruitment



Are careers and professions open to people of all backgrounds through transparent, accessible, and open recruitment practices?

Activity	Output	Outcome (Implied)
	These are the measurable things, eg number of people participating	These are the more intangible benefits
Several WPSM projects employ underrepresented students as interns and roles are ring fenced for those with lived experience of the area of focus.	Two mature students, two care-experienced students and two students from IMD Q1 neighbourhoods employed on core projects.	A diverse team which benefits from diverse decision-making.

6 Fair career progression



Does the company offer opportunities for career advancement for all based on ability and potential, not connections?

Activity	Output	Outcome (Implied)
	These are the measurable things, eg number of people participating	These are the more intangible benefits
Several staff networks which give a voice and community for colleagues with a protected characteristic.		Greater chance of people from disadvantaged backgrounds reaching senior levels of the organisation.
Ran two reverse mentoring schemes for the last two years.		A greater understanding of underrepresented groups in senior positions of the organisation.

7 Widening access to savings & credit



Does the organisation help widen access to responsible credit and close the savings gap?

Activity	Output	Outcome (Implied)
	These are the measurable things, eg number of people participating	These are the more intangible benefits
Invested in a budget training tool and the development of a Money Mentors programme.		Better equipped students with financial literacy and tangible skills.
Generous financial support provision including bursaries.	More than 3,000 students annually are eligible for the bursary programme.	Less reliance on high-interest loans.
Launch of an education programme to equip students with financial planning skills.		Students are better equipped with financial literacy.
Hardship support offered through Student Support Fund.	Provide grants of up to £3,000 to students in financial difficulty.	Students from different backgrounds are given the opportunity to study at the University.

8 Good health and wellbeing



Does the organisation improve mental and physical health at all ages to boost overall wellbeing to allow people to fulfil their potential?

Activity	Output	Outcome (Implied)
	These are the measurable things, eg number of people participating	These are the more intangible benefits
Support awareness days through the Staff Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Networks, and Wellbeing Networks and Community Engagement Hubs.		Raising awareness of mental and physical health.
Student Inclusion and Financial Support Teams trained to support students with mental health conditions and wellbeing issues.		Reducing health inequalities nationwide and reducing burden on NHS services. Better access to interventions for people in challenging circumstances.
Hosts LifeLab: a teaching laboratory dedicated to improving adolescent health.	More than 11,500 students, 300 teachers and 70 schools have participated in the programme. Two controlled trials with 2,930 young people aged 13-14, showing significant impact.	Improvement in adolescent health.

9 Extending enterprise



Does the organisation work to extending private enterprise and entrepreneurship to all people and communities?

Activity	Output	Outcome (Implied)
	These are the measurable things, eg number of people participating	These are the more intangible benefits
Creating opportunities to build knowledge, gain skills and learn through the Social Impact Lab.		Empower students to explore, progress and build their future, helping them to gain the necessary skills to become a world-class social impact leader. Help students gain skills through experience.

10 Closing the digital divide



Does the organisation improve mental and physical health at all ages to boost overall wellbeing to allow people to fulfil their potential?

Activity	Output	Outcome (Implied)
	These are the measurable things, eg number of people participating	These are the more intangible benefits
Online Learning Grants programme.	Committed over £500,000 to cover the purchase of digital equipment and internet access.	Helping to reduce the digital divide within the student population.
Series of workshops for the Science and Engineering Day (SOTSEF) delivered to people around the world.	Over 250,000 website views from five different continents.	Information shared widely.
Took part in Human Worlds Digital, the first digital edition of Human Worlds Festival, which included featured activities and events.		Boosting employability and awareness of careers in growing digital sectors.
Created educational activity packs aimed at primary and secondary school aged children to help overcome the disruption to education caused by COVID-19.	Over 14,000 packs distributed to 26 schools, charities and partners.	Reducing the digital divide that the coronavirus pandemic has widened.
Produced activity packs for Southampton Science and Engineering Festival.	73 requests for packs, with 1,016 individual packs sent out. Over half the packs were sent to individuals living in areas in the 4th or 5th percentile of the IMD.	Reducing the digital divide among young people by increasing the accessibility of opportunities for learning.
Dragonfly day - a series of STEM related activities.	Activity packs sent to nine schools and 200 pupils. Up to 500 watched the live events.	Reducing the digital divide.



Students in a seminar

11 Infrastructure for opportunity



Is the organisation developing the physical infrastructure that connects people and places to opportunity?

Activity	Output	Outcome (Implied)
	These are the measurable things, eg number of people participating	These are the more intangible benefits
Runs Unilink, a bus service for students and staff connecting the University's campuses and the rest of the city.		Improved infrastructure and access to the University.

12 Building homes & sustainable communities



Is the organisation helping people live in quality, affordable homes so people can live in safe and sustainable communities?

Activity	Output	Outcome (Implied)
	These are the measurable things, eg number of people participating	These are the more intangible benefits
Links with the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and, through its arts and cultural organisations, supports youth offending services in other districts.		Partnership working to increase safety within the region.

13 Harness the energy transition



Is the organisation ensuring that the energy transition is fair and creates opportunities across the UK?

Activity	Output	Outcome (Implied)
	These are the measurable things, eg number of people participating	These are the more intangible benefits
Supports Southampton City Council's Green City Charter.		Working in partnership to reach net zero.
Created a Sustainability Strategic Plan in partnership with the Southampton University Students' Union (SUSU).		Achieve net zero emissions for Scope 1 and Scope 2 by 2030; measuring total emissions footprint and setting targets for Scope 3 emissions reduction.
Ensure sustainability is a part of every University education programme by 2025.		Students will be educated about the importance of sustainability.

14 Achieve equality, through diversity & inclusion



Is the organisation working to create a level playing field on opportunity for all, to fully unleash Britain's potential for the first time?

Activity	Output	Outcome (Implied)
	These are the measurable things, eg number of people participating	These are the more intangible benefits
Created Student Advisory Board composed of students from groups currently underrepresented in higher education.		Better services in challenged communities.
Student Connections newsletter promotes specific and general opportunities to students underrepresented in higher education.	Newsletter sent to 3,000 undergraduate students.	More opportunities to achieve social mobility.
Offers Aspire Awards, which provide grants of £1,000 to students from underrepresented backgrounds to take on projects outside of their studies.		Those from underrepresented backgrounds are given opportunities outside of education and the chance to increase social mobility.

ANALYSIS

The University of Southampton has shown an exceptional commitment to addressing ESG issues against all 14 goals, with significant strengths in at least four key areas.

These include Goal 2: Successful school years, Goal 4: Right advice and experiences, Goal 10: Closing the digital divide, and Goal 14: Achieve equality through diversity and inclusion.

The University's role in education extends far beyond the provision of educational services and qualifications. It invests in parts of the country where there are high levels of social deprivation, working to raise aspiration among young people.

In terms of successful school years and right advice and experiences, the University is tackling inequality in the education system right from the early years through its outreach programme 'Learn with US'. Designed to support students, parents and teachers, it offers a range of events and activities to engage and motivate learners who have the potential to enter higher education but may not be considering it.

The University's state-of-the-art teaching laboratory, LifeLab, dedicated to improving adolescent health by giving opportunities to learn the science behind health messages, is further proof of its devotion to investing in educating the future generations. The University is not only securing future students, but vitally, it is helping to improve social mobility.

The Ignite Programme, launched in October 2020 to enable undergraduate students from underrepresented backgrounds to make the most of their studies, has already taken on 31 students. The University is working hard to make sure a combination of academic, pastoral and financial support helps disadvantaged students to flourish during their studies. They are working hard to close the digital divide and achieve equality through diversity and inclusion.

The University of Southampton believes passionately in the transformative power of higher education, and a commitment to improving social mobility is deeply rooted. It is supporting levelling up in numerous ways outside of its core four strength areas. The sheer scale of its reach gives it significant influence in the levelling up agenda.

The University of Southampton believes passionately in the transformative power of higher education, and a commitment to improving social mobility is deeply rooted.



Damilola Teidi-Ayoola (MSc Business Strategy and Innovation Management, 2014) is using technology in creative and innovative ways to make a difference to people's lives.



LEVELLING UP
GOALS

