

# WESTMINSTER 2020







# WELCOME

Over the past academic year we have celebrated the University of Westminster's 175th anniversary at events, exhibitions and gatherings in the UK and overseas. Students and alumni have joined staff past and present, our partners and supporters to recognise and honour our proud traditions of innovation and creativity, of providing education for all, and of shaping and improving lives around the world.

Our task now is to build successfully on our progressive, inclusive and enterprising history for the future. This report is our blueprint for that future. It reiterates our values, sets out our vision and mission, and identifies the steps we will need to take to achieve that vision.

For our vision truly to make a real-world difference, it needs to be deliverable at a practical level. Throughout this report, there are examples of how the University is already doing just that.

Our extensive scholarships programmes and new collaborations with schools and colleges reinforce our belief in education for all, regardless of background, while the strength of our continuing partnerships with the professions ensures that our students acquire the skills and knowledge to become the leaders and innovators of tomorrow.

From course modules that enable students to work with charities and residents in Uganda to create sustainable access to clean, safe water, to research pioneering new methods for low-cost, mobile malaria testing, Westminster continues to change people's lives at an international level. We remain committed to inspiring the next generation of global citizens and leaders.

It's clear from these and the many other examples highlighted here that the University of Westminster can be justifiably proud of the work we do today, and in our ability to make a positive difference around the world, just as we are of our achievements over the last 175 years.

The challenge now is to embrace the ideals and ethos set out in this report. As part of that challenge, I will shortly be announcing a new competition within our University that supports our Corporate Social Responsibility Agenda. This will have three categories – Global, Local and Green – which mirror our ambitions.

By maintaining our commitment to meet this challenge, we will be able to deliver the University of Westminster vision which will continue to improve people's lives to 2020 and beyond.

**Geoffrey Petts**  
Vice-Chancellor



# ACHIEVING OUR VISION

## OUR VISION

Located in the heart of London, the premier global city, we are a cosmopolitan university building on our roots as an innovative institution with a social conscience.

We aspire to be a practice focused university in the top half of HEIs in the UK with some disciplines in the top 500 worldwide.

Our University was the original blueprint for the sought after model of collaboration with industry and practice and today occupies a distinctive place as an independent, commercially aware institution. To 2020 and beyond Westminster will build on its progressive, inclusive and enterprising history to shape the future of professional life:

- We will continue to create a rich, dynamic, and inspirational university based on world-leading research, absorbing teaching, and enterprising education for all.
- Our confidence will be built on financial strength and a high-quality estate with a modern, technologically advanced, infrastructure that provides strong evidence of our commitment to a green agenda.
- Our students will be global citizens, professional leaders, and lifelong learners, appreciating the need for interdisciplinary approaches in understanding and resolving the constantly evolving intellectual, professional and business challenges of the 21st century.

Together these characteristics will position Westminster as the leading practice focused London based university.

## OUR MISSION

To provide a vibrant global learning environment in the heart of London, inspiring the next generation of world citizens and helping to shape a better future for all.

## OUR AIMS

We will maintain our heritage by promoting a dynamic synergy between the Creative Arts and Design, Architecture and the Built Environment, Science and Technology, Business, Law, and the Social Sciences and Humanities; placing equal emphasis on both research and teaching by supporting and establishing our reputation for practice led engagement to generate the greatest impact. We will stay true to our roots seeking out intellectually able students from a wide variety of backgrounds whilst embracing new thinking, new technology and new practices whenever it enhances our Institution. We shall strive for excellence in all that we do, foster a passion for creating and applying knowledge and be proactive in engaging all who can benefit. We are pragmatic about what motivates the modern student and will offer an innovative and distinctive academic curriculum that reflects employer expectations.

By 2020 we aim to:

- Foster a culture where all staff are fully engaged in achieving the success of our single shared vision.
- Establish key international partnerships and increase both the numbers of international students at the University and UK students studying overseas.
- Grow the student population while maintaining an attractive and affordable staff-student ratio without reducing quality.
- Achieve an overall graduate employability level in the upper quartile of UK institutions.
- Significantly increase income from research, academic enterprise and commercial activities
- Increase annual turnover to maintain long-term financial sustainability of the University and provide stability for staff and students.





# 175 CELEBRATION

## CELEBRATING 175 YEARS

The 2013/14 academic year marked the 175th anniversary of the University of Westminster. It was an opportunity to celebrate our proud tradition of providing academic excellence, cultural engagement and personal enrichment, and to ensure that our current vision, values and aims will continue to build on that heritage through to 2020 and beyond.

The development of our modern university can be traced from the founding of the Polytechnic Institution – the UK's first polytechnic – by Sir George Cayley in 1838 to the opening of Quintin Hogg's Young Men's Christian Institute at 309 Regent Street (soon known as the Regent Street Polytechnic) in 1882, the creation of the Polytechnic of Central London (PCL) in 1970, and the move to university status in 1992.

Sir George's vision was to create an educational institution which would stimulate innovation, and to demonstrate how that innovation, creativity and research could change people's lives. While maintaining that ethos, as a philanthropist Hogg also championed the expansion of educational opportunity to the widest possible audience – regardless of background or financial status – and the need for inclusion and an international perspective.

Those ideals are an integral part of the University of Westminster's development; they are at the heart of what we do today, and will be the foundation for what we do in the future. Over the past 175 years Westminster has built a reputation as a place for invention and innovation, and the list of Westminster 'firsts' is a long and diverse one. From the first public photographic studios in Europe, the first public moving picture show in the UK (organised by the Lumière brothers) and pioneering higher education classes for women, to becoming the first modern university to win the Queen's Award for Enterprise – International Trade, and the UK's first ever UN Habitat Partner University, there are countless examples of Westminster leading the way.

Students, staff, alumni and our supporters have enjoyed several opportunities to recognise and celebrate those achievements over the past year, including an exhibition of innovation in practice at the University, and a service at Westminster Abbey.

## WESTMINSTER IN ACTION: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

The University of Westminster has been a pioneer of photography and film since the earliest days of the Polytechnic Institution, and continues to break new ground today. In 1841, just three years after the launch of the Polytechnic, the first photographic studio in Europe was opened on the roof of 309 Regent Street by Richard Beard. Classes in photography were taught from 1852, and the School of Photography was established in 1883. Thirteen years later the Lumière brothers screened the first ever film to a paying public in the UK.

The first degrees in both photography and film were delivered at the Polytechnic, and students from both disciplines continue to win national and international awards. This year our Television Production BA students collected two out of the three Royal Television Society national student awards – for the Best Factual Programme and Best Entertainment Programme – while in 2012 *For Elsie*, a film written, filmed, produced and directed by students from our Film and Television Production BA course, won the Best Foreign Film Oscar at the 2012 Student Academy Awards, the highest global accolade for student films.

This year there was also a Best Documentary BAFTA, a full Oscar nomination, and more than 40 prizes around the world for *The Act of Killing*. The film, a tough and at times terrifying exploration of the behaviour of perpetrators of the Indonesian genocide in 1965/66, was directed by Joshua Oppenheimer and produced by Professor Joram ten Brink, both directors of the University's International Centre for Documentary and Experimental Film (DocWest).

In a move which ties our heritage to our future, films made by our students and scholars will soon be shown in the Regent Street Cinema – the venue for the Lumière brothers 1896 screening – after restoration plans for the building were given the go-ahead by Westminster City Council earlier this year.





# OUR KEY THEMES

## GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

Our brand development seeks to 'bottle' the University spirit and ethos and support our promotion of 'one university' across our international, multi campus, urban, institution, capturing and communicating the liberal, creative, global Westminster identity.

Internationalisation is an imperative for the academic development and financial sustainability of the institution. We are conscious of the role we play in the regional economies and communities not just in the UK but also further afield through our extensive alumni network.

Students from more than 150 different countries currently study at Westminster making it one of the largest and most diverse international student bodies of any UK university. More than 700 students benefit from scholarships every year and there are more than 100,000 members of the University Alumni Association around the world. By 2020 we will:

- Develop our market position as the leading practice focused, London based university to consolidate and strengthen our international reputation.
- Grow our engagement with, and support for, our local communities and external stakeholders.
- Partner leading overseas institutions worldwide for the benefit of student exchange, developing synergistic research, and establishing our brand.
- We shall continually review and re-energise the Westminster brand to meet emerging challenges.

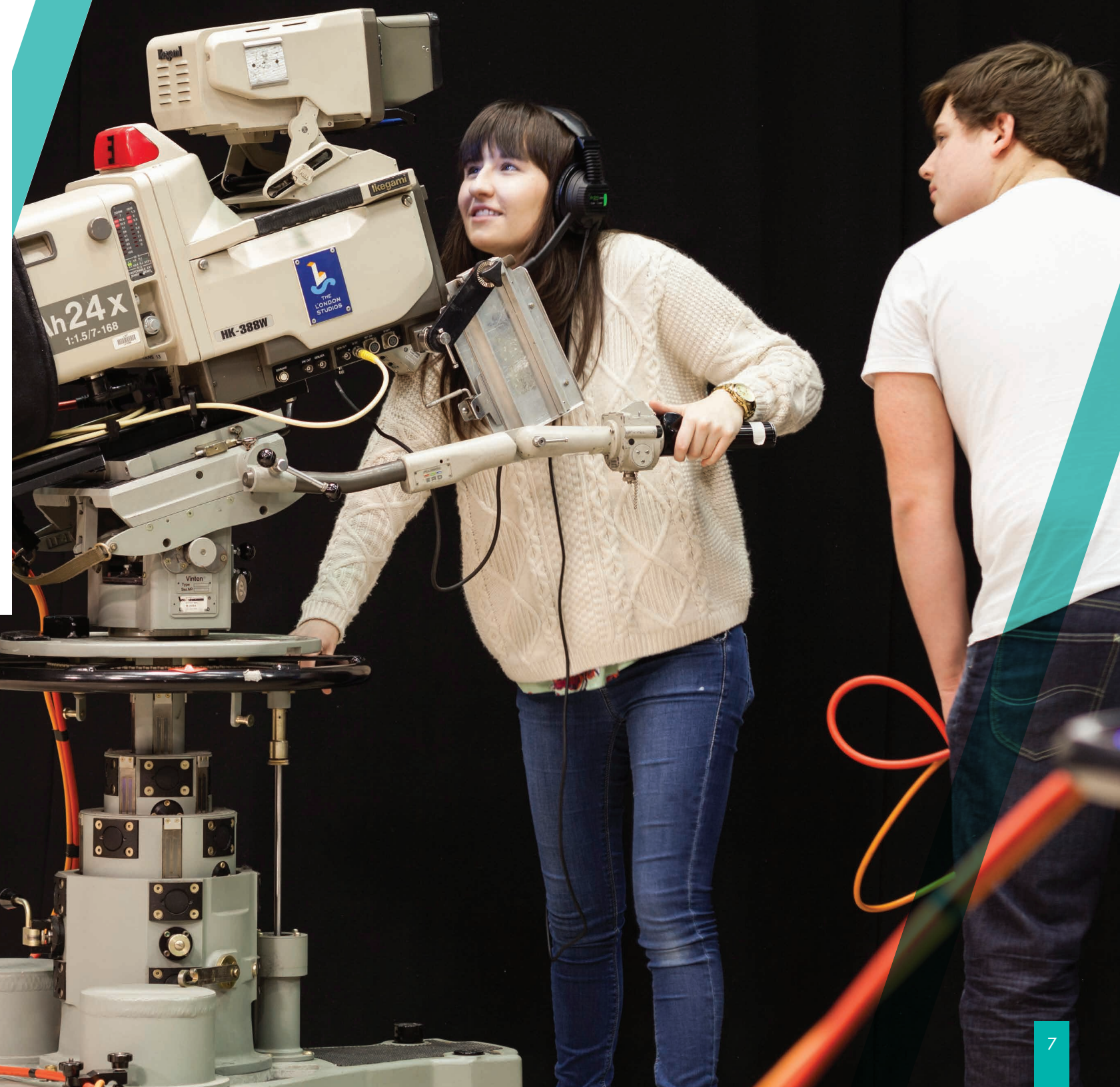
Westminster students will benefit from the experience of a diverse, multicultural and vibrant learning community in the heart of London. We are dedicated to preparing students for the professions, inspiring them to grow intellectually throughout life and to add value by providing skills to help shape a democratic, civilised and inclusive society.

## WESTMINSTER IN ACTION

Kapani Nepuni Kayani, a Geoff Marsh Scholarship student who came to Westminster to complete an MA in Architecture, Cultural Identity and Globalisation, has no doubt about the importance of the University's international reach and extensive scholarship scheme. "There's no way I could've done this without the scholarship – I am really grateful for it," says Kapani, who is from the rural north-east of India.

"There are five of us in my family, and my Dad is the lone earner for the four of us who are still studying. I've always wanted to study abroad, but because of the financial situation I never thought it would be possible. I am the second only architect from a population of around 100,000 in the region where I live. In north-eastern India there are around 39 million people, but we've got only one architectural school.

"When I got here I was amazed by the help everyone gave me. The tutors are really good and very helpful, and London is a great place – although I expected the weather to be a little different! Once I finish my Masters here I plan on eventually doing a PhD and becoming a professor. I would like to pass on the knowledge I have gained in this country to the next generation of students in India."







## DRIVING SUCCESS

The unpredictability of the HE market place means that we must manage uncertainty, navigate through complexity, and take managed risks to ensure we are effective, sustainable and competitive. This strategic plan will become an active management tool by continual horizon scanning and adjustment.

The objective of this progressive management approach will be to improve our performance in ways that can be evidenced and are good for the organisation as well as its customers, employees, suppliers, investors, and the community.

Our commitment to a high-quality student and staff experience will be reaffirmed by proactively developing and supporting our staff to realise their potential in a collaborative, open, fair and equitable working culture.

- Through our collective performance we shall demonstrate effective strategic leadership, astute business, staff and financial management expertise and sound governance.
- Continue to strive for even higher levels of effectiveness and efficiency.
- All staff will jointly ensure that high-quality is central to the Westminster experience.
- Our staff will be global citizens, professional leaders, and lifelong learners, appreciating the need for interdisciplinary approaches in understanding and resolving the challenges of the 21st century.
- We shall deploy our assets proactively to generate sustainability beyond available government funding and to secure the future of the institution in the long term.

## WESTMINSTER IN ACTION

Where once higher education focused on disciplines and subjects, now it is focused on preparing students to thrive in a rapidly changing world. New technology is creating radical opportunities for learning and teaching, and employers are seeking flexible graduates who can make an immediate impact. Against this backdrop of constant educational evolution, it is essential that Westminster continues to offer effective, exciting and engaging learning opportunities. Our Learning Futures programme is designed to do just that.

Since 2012, staff and students have been working together to adapt the structure, content and delivery of our courses to meet those challenges. The programme will rethink curriculum and assessment to allow for more in-depth study, enhanced learning techniques and less complex regulations. It will encourage seamless integration of technology and teaching, optimise the use of our physical space, and create more opportunities for both academic staff and students to gain professional qualifications and experience. Above all, it will reinforce Westminster's distinctiveness by creating globally engaged, ethically aware and entrepreneurial life-long learners and critical thinkers.

With an academic staff development programme in place by May 2015, redesigned and revalidated undergraduate courses will be implemented from September 2016, enabling Westminster to provide a vibrant global learning environment which will continue to shape the future of professional lives to 2020 and beyond.

## RESEARCH WITH IMPACT

We are committed to ensuring that the University promotes and develops innovative, cutting-edge, and interdisciplinary research which adds value through its originality, significance and rigour and its critical impacts on global society.

The unique mix of disciplines at Westminster mean we are well positioned to reconnect with the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) agenda and its cross-fertilisation into the creative arts and social sciences (STEAM). By developing and revitalising these links we will address the perceived lack of skills in these areas and enhance our reputation in a range of evidence based subject areas.

However we note that in some areas research leads practice while in other areas practice leads research and so with our research engaged and practice driven focus we will provide closer links with a range of professional sectors.

- Through research networks and active mentoring we will continue to raise the proportion of staff operating at levels of international excellence and move to a position where all staff are research engaged.
- Being research engaged rather than research dominated we will blend the novel with the established to push boundaries and explore the links between practice and research in areas with real impact.
- The Graduate School will continue to support and extend an active doctoral programme evidenced by a vibrant community of early career researchers.
- We will ensure that our research activities are sustainable outside government funding (ie non-academic income, KTP, contract research, and consultancy).

## WESTMINSTER IN ACTION

The World Health Organization estimates that malaria causes over 200 million cases of fever and more than 600,000 deaths each year. PhD researcher Saumya Kareem's work is focused on developing image processing hardware for use in camera-enabled mobile phones and tablets, which can be used for biomedical applications such as blood-related infectious disease diagnosis.

Her research has already developed an effective blood analysis and malaria diagnosis tool for mobile platforms, which processes images of thin blood films. Once completed, the final product could be an effective, low-cost tool for malaria diagnosis as well as identifying blood components such as red and white blood cells.

"I enjoy what I do," says Saumya. "My professors are great, supportive and encouraging. The atmosphere in the research lab is excellent with great facilities and ambience... with so much to achieve and deal with, I am proud of my decision to choose Westminster for my PhD."





## ENHANCED LEARNING

We will strengthen the competitive position of the University by transforming the learning and teaching experience for students and staff. We will empower staff to create and support distinctive, innovative courses that address the needs of the modern mobile student.

In the third space, HE institutions must be forward looking and produce people for the next phase of the global economy. The Westminster goal is to supply the new bedrock of highly effective cosmopolitan people: the business and social leaders; the entrepreneurial self-employed.

Our students will benefit from an international curriculum making them flexible and agile through a combination of their transferable and interdisciplinary skills, openness to perpetual learning, commercially successful and able to exercise a social conscience.

- Westminster graduates will have opportunities to develop their confidence and technical, analytical and social skills to make them highly employable, free-thinking and independent, and to compete in the global knowledge economy.
- We will deliver a transformative and inspiring learning experience for students, with a cohesive, forward looking and engaging curriculum.
- We will optimise the use of technology, to enrich the curriculum and academic culture of the institution.
- We will ensure engagement with research and practice to provide our students with a competitive edge in the market place.

## WESTMINSTER IN ACTION

One of the most high-profile international successes in art and science educational collaboration, the Broad Vision art/science research and learning programme engages students and academics from diverse disciplines in collaborative exchange and experimentation. Students become teachers, researchers and producers as they explore questions relating to biology and psychology, technology and creativity, art and science.

Since its inception four years ago the programme has produced exhibitions, published books and articles, and presented at conferences, festivals and symposiums; it has featured in *the Guardian*, and in *Times Higher Education*. With a research element embedded within the project, Broad Vision has worked with more than 160 undergraduate students from courses across art, science and technology subjects. It has now become an optional credit-bearing module for several courses, and has inspired the BA/BSc in Art Science Imaging which is unique to the UK.

## ACADEMIC ENTERPRISE

Westminster is a pioneering institution. We were the first polytechnic in the UK and the first modern university to win the Queen's award for Enterprise. More than 840,000 private sector businesses operate within 20 miles of the University.

The goal to 2020 will be to establish a mind-set both in staff and students to create innovation and maintain a supply of graduates that are highly employable not just for their academic excellence but also for their ability to innovate and adapt thereby influencing a range of broader social outcomes.

Continued success requires that we establish a sustainable framework for growth of income and surplus in non-traditional academic activities in all areas. Academic enterprise requires the integration of our main core activities of research, learning, and entrepreneurial activities to provide a firm footing and evidence of our credentials.

- We will harness our research engaged and practice led distinctiveness by working more directly with the regional, national and global economies.
- Through a range of consultancy, continuing professional development, and knowledge exchange, we will consolidate our position with local and global businesses.
- And via social enterprise activities we will work with students to provide the adaptable skills for the future coupled with appreciation of their role in the community to create change.
- Academic Enterprise is also about 'doing' not just thinking and to this end we shall strive to develop confident outward facing entrepreneurial leaders.

## WESTMINSTER IN ACTION

The University of Westminster has established a number of knowledge and business development networks, including Networking for Languages, the New Media Knowledge network and the WestFocus Health Network. The most successful of these is MusicTank, launched just over a decade ago, an independent body designed to bring together key players to influence the future shape of the industry through engagement, change and innovation.

Developed in collaboration with a full consortium of music industry trade bodies – including the Association of Independent Music, the British Phonographic Industry and the Musicians' Union – MusicTank has published a number of influential reports and guides, including *Easy Money? The Definitive UK Guide to Funding Music Projects*, and *The Dark Side of the Tune – The Hidden Energy Cost of Digital Music Consumption*. It also co-ordinates a unique programme of debates, courses, events and conferences throughout the year, and acts as an extensive central repository of industry resources.



# IDENTITY, VALUES AND DRIVERS

## THE WESTMINSTER IDENTITY

We are dedicated to ensuring that Westminster graduates are confident, independent, highly employable and free thinking, furnished with the technical and analytical skills to compete in the global knowledge economy. Westminster students will benefit from the experience of a diverse, multicultural and vibrant learning community in the heart of London. Students will be inspired to join the Westminster community because of the distinctive mission and culture of the University.

- Our students will be global citizens, professional leaders, and lifelong learners, appreciating the need for interdisciplinary approaches in understanding and resolving the constantly evolving intellectual, professional and business challenges of the 21st century.

Our commitment to a high-quality student and staff experience will be reaffirmed by proactively developing and supporting our staff to realise their potential in a collaborative, open, fair and equitable working culture.

- Academic and professional support staff will jointly ensure that high quality is central to the Westminster experience.
- Our staff will be global citizens, professional leaders, and lifelong learners, appreciating the need for interdisciplinary approaches in understanding and resolving the constantly evolving intellectual, professional and business challenges of the 21st century.

## WESTMINSTER IN ACTION

Sustainable access to safe water, improved sanitation, and comprehensive hygiene and health education are some of the greatest challenges facing rural communities in Uganda. That challenge has now been taken up by University of Westminster MBA students through the course's Social Entrepreneurship module.

Working with the Busoga Trust, the leading Ugandan water and sanitation charity, our students developed a business model to turn waste into a profitable source of income, covering the expenses needed to repair watering and sanitation systems built by the Trust.

Our students visited Uganda in April 2014; alongside the business model they piloted an educational programme around sanitation and hygiene with children aged from five to 13. The success of the business model, coupled with the knowledge which the school children have shared with their families and communities, should bring long-term positive change for thousands of Ugandans.

Simon Healeas, Deputy Director of MBA programmes at Westminster, said: "These experiences challenge the way students think about what a profitable business strategy should be and shows them how to create solutions to the world's issues."

## COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT

The University of Westminster is conscious of the role it plays in the local community, the regional economy and through our extensive alumni network. The brand must capture and communicate the liberal, creative, global Westminster personality. This brand development seeks to 'bottle' the University spirit and ethos and to support our promotion of 'one university' across our multi-campus, urban institution.

- We will position Westminster as the leading practice-focused, London-based university.
- We are fully committed to growing our role in engaging with and supporting our local communities and corporate stakeholders.

## WESTMINSTER IN ACTION

The positive impact that Westminster has as an academic institution is a well-established element of our success; the professional accreditations and partnerships we have built with organisations and businesses locally, nationally and internationally is a testament to that strength. But the University's ability to be a force for good goes far beyond the course and the classroom.

Every year, hundreds of our students devote their time and their enthusiasm to extra-curricular volunteering opportunities as part of the Westminster Extra initiative. They support charities and organisations working in the local community as well as overseas; they counsel, campaign, mentor and teach; they volunteer in schools, work with families, and provide vital support to people in crisis. Last year our students spent more than 30,000 hours volunteering.

While such opportunities provide a much more rounded experience for our students and enhance their employability, the value of those volunteering hours should not be underestimated. JudiYah Yisrael-Daniels, Volunteer Co-ordinator for Resources for Autism – one of the many charities supported by Westminster students – is clear about what it means for her own organisation: "Without our students, we just couldn't run the service."



## OUR VALUES

### Courageous

We know that without risk there's no innovation. We're bold enough to question ideas, provoke new ways of thinking, strip away the superfluous and focus on those things at which we can excel.

### Connected

We are about trust, collaboration and connectivity across our different activities and throughout the world.

### Generous

We respect and celebrate diversity. With a generosity of spirit, we value emotional intelligence as well as knowledge, empowering each other and enabling our students to realise their full potential.

### Excellent

We understand the importance of critical thinking, discipline and responsibility, and we expect the very highest standards of our staff and our students.

### Sustainable

We are committed to sustainable practices, both on the global stage and in our own working environment. Our common goal is to respect the planet and green-thinking is at the heart of all we do.

## OUR FIVE KEY DRIVERS FOR SUCCESS IN 2020

1. To shape the future of professional life
2. To build the next generation of highly employable global citizens
3. To build relationships with professional bodies across the globe
4. To push boundaries through research, practice, and enterprise
5. To drive the know-how that a modern knowledge economy demands

## WESTMINSTER IN ACTION

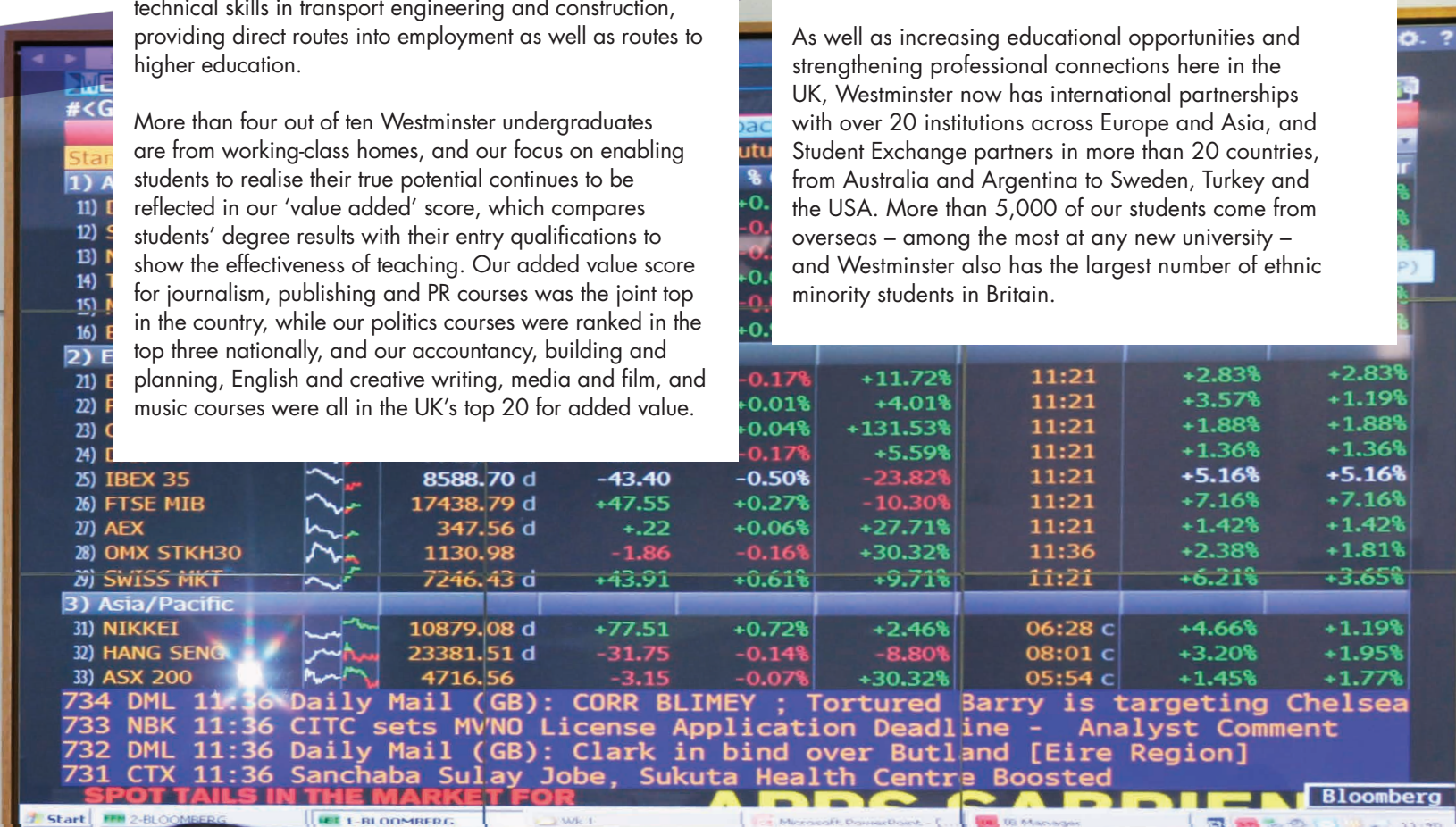
Our commitment to an inclusive education for all, regardless of background or social status, remains a high priority, and over the past year we have provided scholarship support to more than 1,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students. This year we received first stage approval from the Department of Education to establish a University Technical College (UTC) in collaboration with the Sir Simon Milton Foundation, Network Rail, Westminster City Council, and partners from Westminster colleges. The UTC will develop technical skills in transport engineering and construction, providing direct routes into employment as well as routes to higher education.

More than four out of ten Westminster undergraduates are from working-class homes, and our focus on enabling students to realise their true potential continues to be reflected in our 'value added' score, which compares students' degree results with their entry qualifications to show the effectiveness of teaching. Our added value score for journalism, publishing and PR courses was the joint top in the country, while our politics courses were ranked in the top three nationally, and our accountancy, building and planning, English and creative writing, media and film, and music courses were all in the UK's top 20 for added value.

Ensuring that our students receive an education to shape the future of professional life, and acquire the skills and knowledge to become the leaders and pioneers of tomorrow, is a core part of what we do. Building and maintaining strong links with the professions is an essential element of that, and more than 50 separate professional organisations and bodies now offer accreditation, approval and recognition of our courses, or membership for our students after graduation.

As well as increasing educational opportunities and strengthening professional connections here in the UK, Westminster now has international partnerships with over 20 institutions across Europe and Asia, and Student Exchange partners in more than 20 countries, from Australia and Argentina to Sweden, Turkey and the USA. More than 5,000 of our students come from overseas – among the most at any new university – and Westminster also has the largest number of ethnic minority students in Britain.

# TATION







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Registration number: 977818 England  
Registered Office: 309 Regent Street, London W1B 2UW

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