

# Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020-21





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UNIVERSITY OF

Formerly  
THE POLYTECHNIC  
Founded by  
QUINTIN HOGG

309

GEORGE CAYLEY

# Message from our Vice-Chancellor and President



"I hope this report engages and informs, whether you are a current or future student or colleague, one of our partners or peers, and provides for us all with further motivation as we continue to work together to make our positive impact on the Sustainable Development Goals."

Dr Peter Bonfield OBE

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In 2015, the United Nations' member states adopted the framework of the 17 Sustainable Developmental Goals (SDGs), which we at the University of Westminster have used as a blueprint to help frame all our actions and activities across the University, in line with our values of being progressive, responsible, and compassionate. The SDGs enable us to frame and bring together our extensive collective energies towards helping play our part in addressing the climate crisis and inequalities to enable a more sustainable and socially just world.

As a community and in partnership, we have worked together and supported each other to further progress our commitment to the SDGs over the last 12 months. There has been so much more positive action taken which has helped us further improve and grow our understanding, passion, and commitment as well as delivering practical actions to make an impact.

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We increased engagement within our colleague and student networks and groups to increase awareness and understanding of the SDGs. We have embedded the SDG framework in our governance by addressing the SDGs in our University's Cross-Cutting Priorities, which were used to develop Strategic Operating Plans for all departments and Colleges across the University. We have engaged our colleagues and students through development workshops so we can all understand our roles in contributing to the SDGs and the positive impact they make in our day-to-day activities. And so much more.

This SDG Annual Report records our achievements so far against every goal and outlines our continuing priorities over the next 12 months; wellbeing and inclusion, tackling the climate crisis, developing education for sustainable development, and embedding the SDGs in our operational plans at the University of Westminster.



## Introduction

The United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are used to frame the University's strategic decisions to help us be compassionate, progressive, and responsible.

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Through 2020 and 2021 we have accelerated our efforts to work collaboratively across the university on inclusion, sustainability, and social responsibility. Despite challenges from a year of working and studying remotely we have continued to add value to society and internal and external communities through our research, learning, and teaching. We have developed new programmes in response to global environmental, social, and economic challenges; tackling Climate Change, championing to reduce inequalities and supporting the mental and physical well-being of our students and colleagues.

We have demonstrated our continued strong commitment to the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our university recognises the role that we have as an institution based at the heart of London in achieving sustainable development. Therefore, the University is committed to using the SDGs as a mechanism to effectively

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report on our progress and achievements while embedding these goals in University activities to enhance strategy and to benefit students, colleagues and other stakeholders.

Our impact has been externally measured and recognised through submission for a second year running to the Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Ranking. We placed 19th globally for SDG 5: Gender Equality, 23rd for SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities, and 49th for SDG12: Responsible Consumption and Production out of 1115 universities that applied for the Impact Ranking worldwide.

Moving forward, we are continuing to work in collaboration with colleagues and students across our community through the SDG Steering Group, with the focus on linking our research, teaching, operations and communications to the SDGs. The Steering Group reports to the University Executive Board (UEB) to ensure that University inclusion,

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sustainability and social responsibility activities are united into one cohesive programme and reporting mechanism, in line with the SDGs.

As a part of our work on the SDGs, we are developing our Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) strategy in collaboration with the University Centre for Education and Teaching Innovation (CETI). Workshops and resources around the SDGs and sustainability pedagogy for teaching and research are being developed to provide the necessary training for our colleagues to pass on the knowledge to our students.

We have also worked in collaboration with the Quintin Hogg Trust (QHT) to include a section on SDG impact in the annual report for projects funded by the QHT, to monitor, measure and report on the positive impact being made by our researchers.

We have continued to work to embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across our university following the establishment of an EDI Committee and supported by our strong and independent colleague networks. 2021 will see the launch of the university's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, laying the foundations for long term critical work. The strategy will be implemented through an annual EDI Action Plan and through other specific workstreams which will have their own action plans, timelines, teams and targets. The strategy will be reviewed after its second year of implementation.

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Following the publication in 2020 of 15 commitments, to ensure that we operate as an actively anti-racist and inclusive institution, a Working Group of the EDI Committee, which includes the BME Network co-chairs, is in place to gather regular updates on, and monitor progress against, the 15 commitments. In June 2021 we published an annual update on progress over the previous twelve months. While we acknowledge the progress we are making, we recognise impact in terms of the on-the-ground experience of colleagues and students may vary. To further enhance our work the Quintin Hogg Trust are funding, for two years, the EDI driven events and capacity building programme. In order for the programme to run effectively and successfully, a Programme Board has been formed.

# Our Priorities and the SDGs

At the University of Westminster, diversity, inclusion and equality of opportunity are at the core of how we engage with students, colleagues, applicants, visitors and all our stakeholders, placing the wider social mission of the University at the heart of all we do. Our Being Westminster strategy outlines our commitment to show “compassion to each other, and look out for our individual and collective wellbeing, being actively inclusive, sensitive to difference, building a united

community. We take responsibility for doing the right thing, even when that feels difficult. We adopted the SDGs' framework to support this core social mission and to record, measure and improve our contribution to a wide range of social, environmental and economic outcomes and benefits. We have now prioritised several of these, according to where we feel able to make the most significant differences.

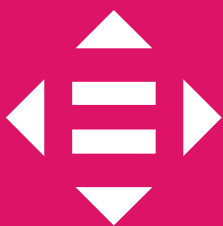
## 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



### Health and Well-Being

We support our students and colleagues to function well in the world; experience positive relationships and have a sense of purpose while at the University. Through a range of advice, guidance and support services we help our community look after their physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing.

## 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

EDI is at the core of how we engage with students, colleagues, applicants, visitors and all our stakeholders. We are fully committed to enabling a supportive and safe learning and working environment which is equitable, diverse and inclusive, and based on mutual respect and trust.

## 13 CLIMATE ACTION



### Environmental Sustainability

We have been making great strides towards reducing the environmental impact of campus operations and activities. From incorporating sustainability into procurement to supporting staff and student-led projects, sustainable practices and policies are framing the decisions made across the University.



# Progress on Education for Sustainable Development

We have started taking action towards our responsibility to educate all our students about Sustainable Development and the various global issues that the SDGs address. The University's Centre for Education and Teaching Innovation (CETI) is driving our progress on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in partnership with various stakeholders across the University. We have

started mapping out our courses that already deliver ESD in the curriculum, and the outcomes from our students enrolled on those programmes. We, therefore, identified the Schools and Courses that require increased commitment and progress on ESD to help us develop a University-wide strategy to frame our curriculum to the SDGs and align it with our University Education Strategy.



## Green Fund

CETI launched a pilot Green Fund scheme to provide opportunities for our students to design and deliver projects that contribute to the SDGs. Students are asked to be in a team with academic staff to encourage collaboration and knowledge exchange. Various training workshops are offered to successful project teams for further educational opportunities.



## Carbon Literacy Training

Our first round of Carbon Literacy Training will also be offered to our students as a pilot scheme. The training will be open to all Westminster students through two online half-day sessions. The training material will be designed to align with our Employability Strategies to help our students understand the relevance of Climate Education and increase their employability skills.



## SDG Workshops

This year, we have delivered a number of SDG workshops and presentations to various stakeholders across the University from professional services teams, academic groups, committees, to students. This has helped us understand the SDGs' relevance to us as an institution which has led to the SDGs framing many of our operational plans and priorities.

# Our Research and the SDGs

Our research at the University of Westminster is progressive and innovative. Our researchers offer creative solutions to real-world problems and contribute to society through collaboration and partnership with other local and global universities, governmental bodies, non-governmental organisations and industry partners. We are firm believers in knowledge exchange and partnership to achieve sustainable development. We highlight some of our outstanding projects that demonstrate our values of being progressive, responsible, and compassionate.



## Bass Culture

Bass Culture, is a research project led by Mykaell Riley

within the Black Music Research Unit (BMRU) with an aim of defining Black British music through exploring its historical and cultural significance over six decades. The key objective of Bass Culture is to change the narrative and associated perceptions of the distorted history of popular music in Britain, recognising the role played by reggae music and its accompanying historical and political narrative in the British music industry, media and scholarship.



## Gene Editors of the Future

The Genome Engineering

Lab of the University offered our students within the School of Life Sciences the opportunity to work alongside experts from the basics to the advanced stages of Biomedical Engineering. 140 students from the School participated in the project to bring to life a world-class, cutting-edge research experience, making an impact in their future careers and the wider society. The project also led to the publication of 2 scientific articles and presented at a Royal Society HUBS event.



## Bees in the City

This project was designed to explore the factors that impact

on wild bee populations in London. The project, initiated by the University Environmental Society, aims to design, build and monitor “bee hotels” to be placed across University campuses in London. This is to attract a range of solitary bees and make them available for research and education projects on species diversity, ecology and health. The primary research focus will be on identifying the bee species and their parasites and predators by DNA barcoding.

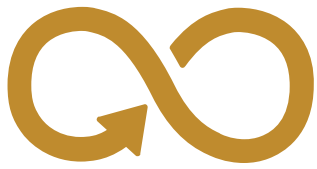


## Let's Build

This project focuses on the concept of building 15 minute

neighbourhoods that cater to a broader range of local needs, and instilling confidence to our future generation by growing a local economy through discussions about the future, connecting local residents with jobs, and supporting safe and healthy lives. It also aims to instil confidence in our future by attracting investment in diverse areas, addressing socio-economic inequalities, supporting local networks, and promoting principles of sustainable architecture.





# Our Operational Targets and the SDGs

We are committed to embedding sustainability across all our University sites and in all the work we do. Developing, supporting and promoting environmental activities and events, engaging internal and external communities through initiatives that engender lasting change. To this end, we have developed a framework that encompasses our activities into three areas: Sustainable Campus and

Environmental Management, Curriculum and Research, and Partnerships and People. Therefore the University is working towards ensuring that sustainable development is fully embraced by our students and colleagues; is enshrined within all aspects of strategy, planning and activities, with resources available to ensure operational implementation and cultural change.

## 4 QUALITY EDUCATION



### Curriculum and Research

We ensure that the SDGs and sustainability are considered as part of our curriculum and through our Research Communities. Links to the SDGs are being identified as we start developing opportunities for further embedding these in the curriculum and research at Westminster to develop our ESD strategies.

## 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



### Sustainable Campus and Environmental Management

We ensure sustainability is considered across all our University sites by embedding Environmental Management into our decision-making processes. We cultivate a built environment that prioritises sustainable development, design and operation to improve environmental performance across our estate.

## 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



### Partnerships and People

We empower and engage our students, colleagues and the local community to become active citizens for sustainability – developing and promoting environmental initiatives and events to help the University achieve our sustainability objectives. We ensure that effective partnerships are in place with our suppliers to reflect our values in the products and services we procure.

# SDG 1: No Poverty

End poverty in all its forms everywhere

1 NO POVERTY



## Christmas Family Appeal

The University of Westminster took part in the Christmas Family Appeal, supporting Greenhouse Sports and North Paddington Foodbank to support the Westminster Council's most vulnerable families leading up to the Christmas Holidays. An online fundraiser was set up to collect donations from colleagues and students to provide over 600 families with personalised Christmas hampers.

## Social Impact from Alumnus

Alumnus Markus Grupp was nominated as a finalist for the Westminster Alumni Award 2021 on creating The Prosper Lab, a social enterprise to provide safe and inclusive learning environments for adults living in poverty in North America. His business supports unemployed community members to gain tangible skills, experience and confidence needed to obtain and sustain employment. Since 2016, 85% of his participants have completed the programme, with 50% finding jobs.



## Support for Care Leaver Students

The University was awarded £90,000 towards Care Leaver Completion Bursaries for 45 final-year care leaver undergraduate students from The Portal Trust. Students from care backgrounds often face greater financial and emotional pressures, the bursary contributed towards food, utility bills, rent, and a deposit for rented accommodation after university, in addition to graduation costs, interview clothes and living expenses whilst graduates look for full-time work.



## 2 ZERO HUNGER



# SDG 2: Zero Hunger

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

### Green Gown Awards Finalists

As a finalist in the Green Gown Awards 2020 in the Campus Health, Food and Drink category, we are leading the way to the global sustainability agenda and proving the social value that university food services bring to the economy and society. The judges commended our emphasis on enabling and empowering students to tackle global issues to ensure a better tomorrow.



### Catering Returns After 18 Months

Since March of 2020, our catering units were mostly closed throughout the pandemic. However this September, all our units reopened for our new incoming students with stronger commitments to food sustainability and reducing food waste across campus. The catering team, Aramark, have established a new relationship with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and became signatories to the London Food Flagship Initiative. Aramark will also be forming new partnerships to distribute our surplus food to those in need and contribute towards a circular food system.

### Footprint Awards Finalists

The Footprint Awards are an annual celebration to honour the achievements of companies in sustainability and responsible business practice. Aramark was shortlisted in the 2020 Footprint Awards for the Sustainability in Education award. Aramark's on-site team, through close collaboration with both the University Sustainability Team and the Environmental Society, developed an all-encompassing sustainability strategy that was commended by the judges.



# SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

**3** GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



## Virtual Event on Mental Health and Well-being

To mark Carers Week 2021, Westminster's Health Innovation and Wellbeing (HIW) Research Community together with CHERISH Support organised an event with the aim to raise awareness of supporting individuals who may be experiencing difficulties with their mental health and wellbeing.

## UniVRse Virtual Reality Intervention Project

The project, entitled 'UniVRse', is a virtual reality (VR) intervention to support first-generation university students with social anxiety. UniVRse uses cutting-edge VR technology to deliver a Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)-based intervention that uses established exposure techniques to reduce social anxiety, increase social confidence, and improve educational engagement in socially anxious first-generation students.



## WELLNESS AFTER COVID: A YOGA AND HEALTHCARE SYMPOSIUM

### Wellness After Covid Symposium

The symposium included more than 30 experts from across the disciplinary spectrum featuring the latest research in the field, as well as panel discussions and experiential presentations to translate academic findings into teaching and practice. Academics from the School of Social Sciences spoke during a panel event titled 'Addressing the psychological effects of COVID-19 through yoga and relationality' to help others understand the links between social isolation, stress and wellbeing.

## 4 QUALITY EDUCATION



# SDG 4: Quality Education

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

### Reducing Awarding Gaps through our Teaching and Assessments

Dr Sal Jarvis, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), co-wrote an article with Dr Sam Grogan at the University of Salford about how changes to teaching and assessment are reducing awarding gaps. They state it is possible to achieve a significant reduction in awarding gaps even during, and perhaps because of, disruptive events such as the pandemic. They stress the need to research outcomes, practice and lived experiences, and to introduce changes institution-wide to reduce and eliminate awarding gaps.



LEARNING SCIENCE TEACHING  
INNOVATION AWARDS 2020

FINALIST

University of Westminster,  
Life Sciences

This certificate recognises  
outstanding innovative practices  
in teaching and learning

### School of Life Sciences Cell Biology Team Finalists in Science Teaching Innovation Awards

The School of Life Sciences Cell Biology module is taken by more than 600 students each year. The team implemented pre-lab simulations into their teaching to help familiarise students with the concepts and equipment required in the laboratory session and encouraged active learning. The pre-lab simulations were also utilised within the lab classes and for marking in this large module. As a result, the students benefitted from a fast release of marks and instant feedback, resulting in increased student satisfaction and module pass rate.

### Supporting our Students Virtually

Despite challenges from teaching and studying virtually throughout the pandemic, we celebrated our students' successful completion of their courses at the end of the 2020-21 academic year. Our student retention rate increased and the awarding gap decreased as a result of our colleagues rapidly responding to the changing circumstances in order to continue delivering their curriculum at a high standard through creative teaching and assessment methods.



# SDG 5: Gender Equality

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

5 GENDER EQUALITY



## This Girl Can Campaign

From April to May, the University of Westminster Students' Union (UWSU) ran a series of free events to support Sport England's This Girl Can campaign and empowered our female students to get involved in sports and physical activities. They ensured that now, more than ever, we focus on increasing female participation in sports at the University.

## What it Takes to be a Successful Woman in Business Series

Alumnae business leaders from different industries on International Women's Day shared how they discovered and carved out their career and entrepreneurial paths, with the goal of inspiring and offering tools of success for women in business. The speakers discussed how they started, took ownership of their careers and develop confidence as female leaders in business, and they will provide practical tools, advice and useful resources.

## WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A SUCCESSFUL WOMAN IN BUSINESS

ONLINE ALUMNI EVENT SERIES

UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER 



## Meet the new UWSU Officer Team



## All Female UWSU Sabbatical Officer Team

The UWSU welcomed its first-ever all-female Sabbatical Officer team after running their first online election campaign with great success. The new team will work to understand how important the students' voice is, to bridge the gap between the university and the SU to ensure better communication and transparency. Another key goal for the team is to empower our student body to participate in political activism so that our students' concerns are used to challenge and change the institutions that affect us.

## 6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

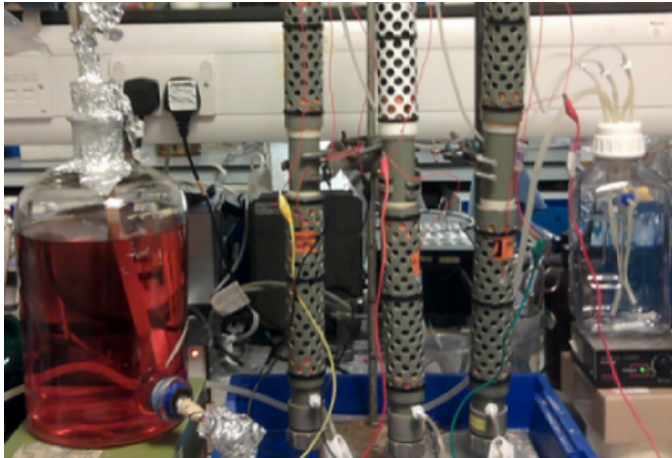


# SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

### COVID-19 Safe Water Fountains on Campus

Throughout lockdown, most of our colleagues worked from home. However, this was not the case for many of our colleagues in the estates department as they transformed the University campuses to be COVID-19 safe for our students and colleagues. Part of this work included upgrading our water fountains across campus to models with sensors that do not require any contact with the fountain itself. This was done to continue encouraging the use the reusable water bottles across campus while avoiding contact.



### METRIS Project

This project from the Applied Biotechnology research group examined the potential of microbial fuel cell technology to treat industrial (textile) wastewater for reuse. Through collaborative research with the Egyptian Atomic Energy Authority, our researchers developed a novel microbial fuel cell system for industrial wastewater treatment to address the challenge of water scarcity and water quality in Egypt.

### Water Fountain Map Design Competition

To encourage the use of water fountains across campus, the Sustainability Team launched a competition to give our students the opportunity to design a water fountain map of their campus. The best design will be printed and installed across campus with prizes up to £100 for the students.

UNIVERSITY OF  
CHANGE  
FOR GOOD  
WESTMINSTER

SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS

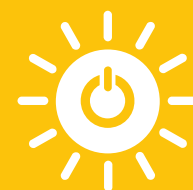
### UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER WATER FOUNTAIN MAP DESIGN COMPETITION



# SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



## Solar Panels at Harrow Campus

The University is committed to reducing our carbon footprint towards our wider targets to decarbonize the campus. To achieve this, solar electricity (PV) panels were installed at the Harrow campus Halls of Residence. Since its successful installation in 2020, we have started generating our own clean electricity on campus which provides energy for the Halls of Residence buildings. To further widen our impact, we plan to increase the number of panels installed across the Harrow campus and introduce them to the other University campuses.

## Microbial Fuel Cells for Electricity Production

Dr Godfrey Kyazze is researching ways to generate electricity using bacteria in devices called microbial fuel cells (MFCs) to address how most of our current energy is generated by fossil fuels, which creates major hurdles when it comes to providing sustainable electricity and mitigating climate change. MFCs are currently able to generate electricity to power small devices. In Godfrey's lab, a mini Christmas tree was powered using 'simulated wastewater'. This research is ongoing and aims to revolutionise electricity production in the future through MFCs.



## Funding for University Heat Decarbonisation Plan

The University Estates Department was awarded £80000 from Salix Finance to develop a University-wide Heat Decarbonisation Plan. The funding scheme was a part of Salix's Low Carbon Skills Fund programme to provide funds for UK organisations to tackle climate change, support the economy and work towards the UK's net-zero target. The Heat Decarbonisation Plan will set out how our buildings' fossil fuel heating systems will be replaced by low carbon heating when the fossil fuel systems reach the end of their natural lifetime.



## 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



# SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

### Employability Award Celebrations 2021

The Employability Awards online celebration recognised our students' achievements in completing a variety of employability initiatives throughout the year to help them prepare with the skills, knowledge and networks to support the start of their own careers. Despite the challenges, our students faced over the last year, over 4,000 students participated in the Employability Award and our Mentoring scheme.

### 2021 EMPLOYABILITY AWARDS CELEBRATION

Welcome

UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER

#EAC2021



### Westminster Working Cultures Continues

Fifty-seven Westminster students and graduates from 2021 joined Westminster Working Cultures (WWC) UK in September. Speakers shared their perspectives on the professional landscape and career opportunities of the UK, and the secrets of their success, including tips on confidence, networking, and interviews. WWC UK is designed to support the employability skills development and global outlook of Westminster students with over 300 students and recent graduates participating.

### How Social Enterprises are Empowering Women

Dr Joy Tweed and Dr Lilian Miles from the School of Organisations, Economy and Society shared their research at an event hosted by Social Enterprise UK on International Women's Day which explored the extent to which Social Enterprises in the UK help empower women through employment. They aim to continue their research by creating further dialogue and action to impact gender empowerment practices in the social enterprise sector.



# SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



## Westminster's Big Idea Competition

Student and graduate finalists competed during the Big Idea Competition final and were awarded up to £5,000 for their business ideas. The Big Idea Competition is supported by Santander Universities UK and organised by the University's Creative Enterprise Centre (CEC) to encourage our students and graduates to advance their entrepreneurial skills by developing and commercialising their ideas or growing their business.

## MSc Students Simulating the Spread of Covid-19

A research paper entitled 'Simulating the Spread of Covid-19: A Case Study on Wuhan', was presented by two Business Intelligence and Analytics MSc students at SW21, the Operational Research Society flagship showcase event of simulation and modelling. The research simulated the spread of COVID-19 in Wuhan and explored the effects of different control strategies. The results found that social distancing was effective in reducing infection rate while case isolation was best in reducing the number of deaths, which is consistent with other findings.



## Launch of Centre for Nutraceuticals

The University launched Europe's first Centre for Nutraceuticals in partnerships with elite athletes to create a new supplement range. The first-of-its-kind research centre in Europe will serve as a catalyst for improving human health and well-being guided by research and innovation. The Centre also launches in a high-profile partnership with elite athletes Mathieu Flamini and Mesut Özil to develop a new range of health supplements for their brand UNITY which will help people reach their performance goals.

# 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



# SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

Reduce inequality within and among countries

## Black History Year Celebrations

The University celebrated our first academic year of the Black History Year (BHY) initiative, a programme of events, talks and a blog to recognise Black histories which were initially launched in October 2020. Throughout the academic year, the BHY Steering Group developed and presented many events covering a wide range of topics. These include a talk on mental health in Black men, a discussion with British activist Leila Hassan-Howe, and a screening of *Chocolate Babies* in partnership with the Queer London Research Forum.

# BLACK HISTORY YEAR

UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER



## Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education

Doctoral researcher, Amina Mahmood, is researching the challenges of higher education (HE) in Gilgit and Baltistan in collaboration with the Global Challenges Research Fund Programme. She is studying the HE challenges in Gilgit and Baltistan to find ways to improve the experience of the students. The students participating in her research discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the HE system and various important issues addressing diversity, inclusion and mental health. This is an ongoing project and the data collected from this workshop will be published in the form of a book chapter in 2022.

## PhD Studentships for BME Applicants

As part of the University's ongoing effort to ensure equal access to research opportunities, the School of Social Sciences offered dedicated studentships for Black and Minority Ethnic PhD applicants starting their studies in September 2021. This was in response to the University's Black Lives Matter statement made in 2020. This PhD scholarship programme aims to take an important step in tackling the under-representation of certain identity groups in doctoral research by providing funded opportunities.



# SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



## Future of Urban Tourism after COVID-19

During a webinar hosted by the School of Architecture + Cities, Dr Pappalepore and Dr Novy explored the future of urban tourism after COVID-19 with a particular focus on London and Paris. They discussed the possible and desirable trajectories of urban tourism in metropolitan cities following the pandemic, as well as the role of planning and governance in shaping these.

## Alumna Wins Study UK Alumni Award 2021

Dr Orna Rosenfeld, who completed a PhD in Urban Regeneration and Development at the University of Westminster, was presented with the honour at the Study UK Alumni Awards Europe 2021 hosted by the British Council. She is currently supporting leaders of global organisations to undertake agenda-setting research, advance housing policy and investment in pursuit of inclusive recovery post-Covid-19.



## Research on School Streets

Researchers from Westminster's Active Travel Academy and Transport for Quality of Life conducted research in collaboration with Possible and Mums for Lungs, which found that a rollout of 'School Streets' by restricting traffic on roads outside schools would reduce exposure to air pollution and road danger for 1.25 million primary and secondary students in four areas studied. Around 430 School Street schemes have been implemented in the four UK cities, with nearly 400, and a further 50 planned, in London.

## 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



# SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

### University Increases Recycling Rate

This year the University carried out a Recycling and Waste Benchmarking Review through external consultants from SiteMark. The review commends our high recycling rate of 65.07% and our excellent zero to landfill solutions across the estate. The Sustainability Team introduced radical solutions that helped us to reduce items that need to be recycled or become waste. These include the introduction of reverse vending machines, water fountains, a paper cup collection process, and a clear bag process for internal dry mixed recycling consoles.



Sustainability Web Festival

### Sustainability Web Festival

Students from the Event Design and Management course organised the Sustainability Web Festival to promote Westminster's sustainability objectives. The events aimed to educate attendees on how to pursue a sustainable lifestyle and raise awareness on health and wellbeing. It was sponsored by a range of sustainable organisations, including Olio, 100% BIOLOGICO, Blue Farm, Too Good To Go, Rawlala and The Coconut Collaborative.

### Fabrication Lab Launches Material Re-use Station

The University Fabrication Lab (Fab Lab) launched a material reuse station to raise awareness of waste production to our students in the School of Architecture and Cities. The Material Re-use Station provides our students with the opportunity to take part in a sustainable initiative to reduce the overall material waste produced from the Fab Lab and encourages them to be creative with how they design and fabricate models in the lab.



# SDG 13: Climate Action

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

13 CLIMATE ACTION



## Climate Demonstrator Project

Students from the University of Westminster collaborated with St John the Divine Primary School in Kennington to design interactive playground installations that demonstrate the science of buildings and their interaction with climate and biodiversity. The Climate Demonstrator is part of a larger funding strategy that is likely to develop into a more substantial and permanent project around climate and biodiversity in the next academic year

## University of Westminster Hosts Virtual TEDx Countdown Event

The student-led TEDx Countdown event was presented by Westminster's Environmental Society in collaboration with the SU to champion and accelerate solutions to the climate crisis. The event welcomed three speakers from the built environment and sustainability industries, including Dr Rosa Schiano-Phan from the School of Architecture + Cities.

TEDx  
University of  
Westminster

UWSU  
UNIVERSITY OF  
WESTMINSTER  
STUDENTS' UNION

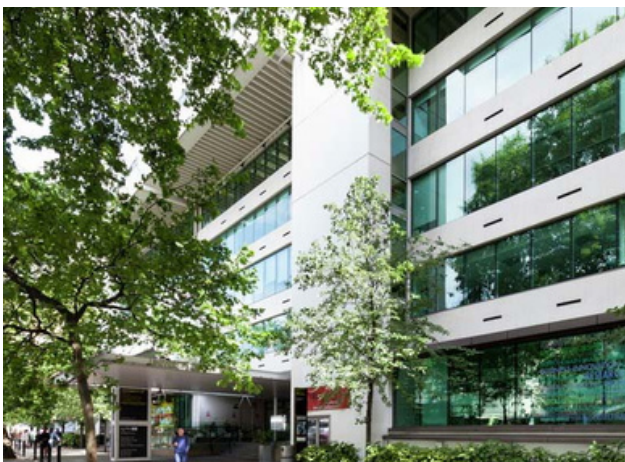


PRESENTS

COUNTDOWN

#JoinTheCountdown

OCTOBER 16, 2020 . LONDON, UK



## Launch of ArCCAT

The University of Westminster's School of Architecture + Cities launched its Climate Action Task Force (ArCCAT) in recognition of the urgent need to examine and take responsibility for the role of the built environment in the climate crisis. ArCCAT is comprised of staff and students from across the School and led by Professor Lindsay Bremner and is committed to bringing about the cultural shift in education necessary to fight climate change with its student-led societies and initiatives.

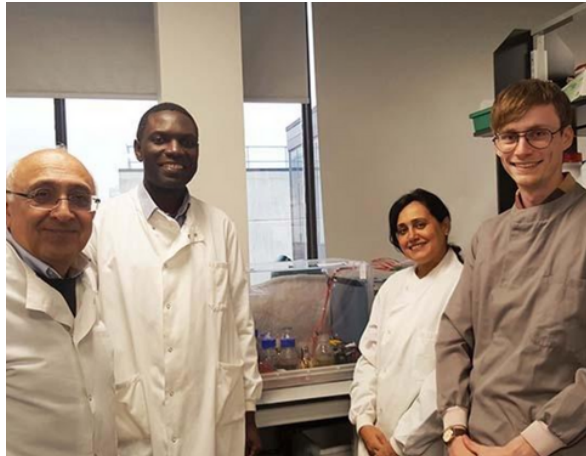


# SDG 14: Life Below Water

Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

## Antibiotics Undersea

The Antibiotics Undersea project was designed as a student research project to extract compounds from marine bacteria for their potential use as antibiotics. The students designed experiments to identify marine bacteria and then search the bacterial genomes that encode for secondary metabolites. They then designed experiments to potentially grow the bacteria and extract the compounds to test against a range of pathogenic bacteria to determine their antibiotic possibilities.



## Accelerating the Commercial Implementation of Electromethanogenic Reactors

Currently, 80% of wastewater globally is discharged into our environment untreated which causes environmental damage and disease in the marine ecosystem. The Applied Biotechnology Research Group is exploring a new approach focusing on a circular decentralised model to treat wastewater and recover energy. This ongoing project is sponsored by the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851 and involves collaboration with WASE Ltd.

## Preventing Plastic Pollution through Effective Waste Management on Campus

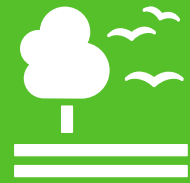
The University's new Waste Management Policy addresses our responsibility when it comes to plastic pollution in the oceans. To prevent any of our plastic waste from reaching the oceans, we have adopted a zero waste to landfill policy. We aim to achieve this by reducing the amount of unnecessary single-use plastic and other disposables used on our sites, in collaboration with suppliers such as our catering contractors.



# SDG 15: Life on Land

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

15 LIFE ON LAND



## University Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Policy and Action Plan

This year, the University Sustainability Team and Campus Services Teams worked in collaboration to develop a new Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Policy and Action Plan. The documents set out our ambitious aims and objectives to conserve and protect our outdoor spaces across all campuses, including the Chiswick Sportsground.

## Hedgehog Survey at Harrow Campus

Two rounds of hedgehog surveys were carried out at the Harrow campus to determine their presence on campus as a part of our Hedgehog Friendly Campus accreditation from the British Hedgehog Preservation Society. Hedgehog presence was confirmed during both surveys, therefore the Campus Services Team at Harrow will take measures to protect their habitat and encourage the growth of natural forage for hedgehogs which are an endangered species in the UK.



## Educating Londoners About Bees

The Bees in the City research team carried out socially distanced outdoor workshop sessions this summer to educate Londoners about bees and their important role in maintaining a healthy eco-system. The project leader Dr Tony Madgwick delivered a series of these sessions across a variety of local communities as a part of the project's outreach programme, with over 50 families across London signing up to participate in the project as citizen scientists.



## 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



# SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

### Free Legal Advice Service to Support Black Women

The University of Westminster Legal Advice Clinic has partnered with the London Black Women's Project (LBWP) to launch their new service entitled the 'Criminal Justice Support Clinic' to help Black women with issues they are experiencing with the criminal justice process. Westminster Law students involved in the project have received specialist training and are given the opportunity to advise women under supervision and conduct agreed follow-up research and casework.



### ProBE Contributes to UK Parliament POSTnote

Professor Linda Clarke, co-Director of the Centre for the Study of the Built Environment (ProBE) at the University of Westminster was invited to contribute to a UK Parliament POSTnote, a short briefing note designed to inform Parliamentarians on scientific subjects, about environmental housing standards. The POSTnote summarised the factors affecting the environmental performance of buildings, their existing governance framework and the potential opportunities for delivering wider social benefits through relevant standards. It drew upon research by Professor Clarke, Dr Melahat Sahin-Dikmen, Dr Fernando Duran-Palma and the late Dr Colin Gleeson from ProBE.

### University of Westminster Awards Honorary Doctorates for 2021

Tanweer Ikram was named Doctor of Law for his services to diversity in the legal profession. An engaged member of Westminster Law School's Employer Advisory Board, Ikram studied at the University in 1989 for the Bar Finals Course. Since 2014, he has been a constant supporter of the Law School, by supporting students from under-represented backgrounds, encouraging them to work hard to fulfil their potential. Through his work with the Law Society of England and Wales, he has supported lawyers from diverse backgrounds to become judges.



# SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



## Business Students Fundraise over £1,200 for Charity

Students from the Postgraduate Entrepreneurial Mindset and Opportunities Creation module raised £1,281 for a variety of charities as part of a business challenge in their module. Five student groups on the module competed to raise the most funds for their chosen charity. The winning group raised £442 for CoppaFeel, a charity raising awareness of breast cancer. Other charities included Juggling for Mental Health, The Shots Foundation, Great Ormond Street Hospital and SOS Africa.

## Academic Virtually Supports Remote Communities

Tumpa Fellows, Senior Lecturer in the School of Architecture + Cities, helped remote communities to contain the coronavirus outbreak by developing innovative research techniques virtually. The project focused on the prevention of infection through participatory workshops explaining the importance of social distancing, distribution of soaps and demonstrating handwashing, wearing masks and how to access emergency medical assistance.



## Students raise over £100,000 for the COVID-19 Response Fund

Our students raised over £100,000 for the COVID-19 Response Fund during the annual telephone campaign thanks to generous support from the University of Westminster's alumni community. The campaign provided students with the opportunity to speak to alumni about their time at Westminster and gain valuable career advice and support. The raised money for the COVID-19 Response Fund was used to support students suffering financial hardship caused by the pandemic.



# 2021 Results

The Times Higher Education (THE) 's SDG Impact Rankings launched in 2018 as the first global attempt to measure how universities around the world perform against the 17 SDGs.

The Rankings use carefully calibrated indicators to provide comprehensive and balanced comparison across four broad areas: research, stewardship, outreach and teaching through evidence submitted by universities.

Since our first submission in 2019, the Impact Rankings has been an important driver of our progress. This year, we saw an increase in our overall score from 75.5 to 80.5 out of 100. From the 7 SDGs that we supplied evidence for, we are particularly proud of our outcomes for SDGs 5, 10 and 12 as the results reflect our commitment to EDI within the University and our values of being Responsible, Progressive, and Compassionate.

## Global Ranking: 19th out of 776 universities

Our high proportion of senior female academics and female graduates at the University is reflected in our results for SDG 5. Our various access measures, resources, and policies to support and empower our female students and colleagues also contributed to our positive outcomes.

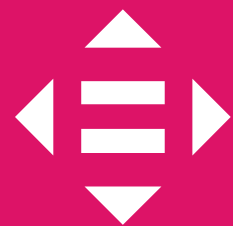
5 GENDER EQUALITY



## Global Ranking: 23rd out of 669 universities

Our commitment to creating an inclusive University is also reflected in our outcomes for SDG 10. Our proportion of disabled students is 9 times the global average, and we employ double the global average proportion of disabled staff members. We also have comprehensive measures against discriminatory behaviours which stands us out globally.

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



## Global Ranking: 49th out of 503 universities

Our research output and excellence in relation to SDG12 were highlighted in our results this year. Alongside research, our responsible management of waste and comprehensive reporting of our energy, water and waste data in our annual Sustainability Report also contributed to successful outcomes.

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



**Global Ranking: 601-800th out of 872 universities**

The University's commitment to Health and Well-Being was not reflected in our scores for SDG3 due to our absence of a medical school. However, our various well-being resources for our students were commended for SDG3. We aim to continue supporting our Health Innovation and Well-being research community to continue improving our research excellence in relation to SDG3.

**3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**



**Global Ranking: 201-300th out of 685 universities**

Our value of being responsible and compassionate is demonstrated here by our excellent employment practice to provide a safe and inclusive working environment. Our score suffered from the low proportion of our students taking work placements however, we expect this to increase dramatically next year through recent progress by our Careers and Employability Team.

**8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**



**Global Ranking: 101-200th out of 656 universities**

We highlight our research volume and excellence relating to SDG11 by our Sustainable Cities and Urban Environment (SCUE) research community. Our commitment to sustainable practices across campus and our support of arts and heritage has also contributed to our outcomes. We encourage our SCUE research community to continue their great work on SDG11.

**11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES**



**Global Ranking: 201-300th out of 1155 universities**

Our international collaborations and partnerships with NGOs and governmental bodies by our research groups are highlighted here. We must however work towards establishing a University-wide commitment to ESD to provide meaningful education around the SDGs for all our students.

**17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS**



# Next Steps



We will continue embedding the SDGs across all our activities within the University and measure our progress each year. Our students will be educated on sustainable development with an understanding of how they can use their potential to positively impact our society, while our researchers will continue their contributions to the SDG through innovation and creativity. Our campuses will become even more sustainable and workplaces more inclusive for all our colleagues.

## Teaching

Developing a comprehensive ESD strategy has never been more important to us and we want to ensure that all our students receive relevant sustainability education. Although we have taken some small steps, we aim to build on this to implement larger changes in how we teach.

## Research

Our researchers play an important role in achieving Sustainable Development through their innovation and creativity. We will continue empowering our researchers to continue their great work while helping them understand the positive impact they are making.

## Operations

The SDGs are being addressed in our Cross-Cutting Priorities. We will ensure that this is reflected in all our Workstream Charters and Operational Plans at the department, College, and School levels to start monitoring and measuring our impact each year at the institution level.

## Communication

We learned this year that good communication is key to achieving Sustainable Development at the University. Therefore, we are working with our various Communications Teams to increase and improve our communications in relation to the SDGs.



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UNIVERSITY OF

Formerly  
THE POLYTECHNIC  
Founded by  
QUINTIN HOGG

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GEORGE CAYLEY