

ual:

Our strategy 2022-2032

The world needs creativity

camberwell college of arts | central saint martins | chelsea college of arts | london college of communication | london college of fashion | wimbledon college of arts



arts.ac.uk/our-strategy



Foreword

Our history

The strategy:
How UAL will change

Guiding Policy 1

Guiding Policy 2

Guiding Policy 3

Conclusion

Foreword

I arrived at University of the Arts London (UAL), a year ago, in awe. This is one of the greatest creative institutions in the world. Almost half of all Turner Prize winners studied here. Two-thirds of British Designer of the Year recipients, too. Our graduates are the most entrepreneurial in the country, with a fifth going on to lead businesses. These achievements reflect the talent and leadership of our community. What I couldn't have predicted, though, is this university's spirit of warmth and generosity. It is a spirit that will serve us well in the coming years, and as President & Vice-Chancellor, I intend to repay it in kind.

UAL, as we know it, was founded in 1986. Its foundations, though, are older and deeper. Its antecedents can be found in the 19th century, a time of extraordinary change. Each of our Colleges were founded with a clear social purpose. They did so, by giving young people the opportunity to flourish in growing industries. And in their present form, they continue to do so today, remaining at the forefront of creative practice with staff and students deeply grounded in the creative economy.

The world, of course, has changed. Britain has evolved into a knowledge economy, driven by new technologies and defined by innovative ideas. London, one of the world's most creative cities, is central to that economy and a bridge to the rest of the world. UAL, based in London, is a cornerstone. It teaches creative skills that are more essential and in demand than ever before. Creativity, let us not forget, brings beauty and wonder into everyday life. It also builds start-ups and adds sustainable growth to existing companies. It solves complex problems in organisations of all kinds, provides solutions for the great challenges we face, and in doing so, changes the world for good.

Our purpose has always been 'to change society through our knowledge and creativity'. Change within higher education, however, demands we change how we achieve it. In the past two years, the sector has endured its greatest disruption since the Second World War. New methods of teaching and learning emerged. We were forced to teach in-person and online at the same time. Through brilliant reinventions by academics, technicians and staff we discovered opportunities to serve students in new ways and improve access around the world. The sector faces economic and political challenges, too. Rising inflation and a continued tuition fee freeze demand a sector more adaptable to change.

Trends outside the sector demand change of us, too. New technologies, like AI and automation, will bring even greater disruption. The rise of the Global South, including Asia, Africa and Latin America, is changing world culture and politics. The demographics of our students and staff are changing, too. And new social movements like Black Lives Matter, School Strike for Climate and the *buen vivir* 'collective wellbeing' movement, have focused minds on the need for racial and climate justice.

Foreword

Our history

The strategy:
How UAL will change

Guiding Policy 1

Guiding Policy 2

Guiding Policy 3

Conclusion

We can and must turn these challenges into opportunities. That means creating a university that works for everyone. We are already world leaders in the quality of our teaching — and we intend to get even better. But we will not be exclusive. Instead, we will expand both in London and online, to offer a UAL education to everyone who can benefit from one. Our strategy will deliver quality at scale, so that we are defined not by how many students we exclude, but by how many we include.

By doing so, we will make a bigger difference in the world. We will learn from each other, through our international student body and global partnerships. We will work with others, using our research to help solve great challenges like economic inequality, climate change, disinformation, and racial injustice. Our graduates will drive the recovery of the creative economy, too, making it more sustainable and inclusive. And, in doing so, we will help grow a sustainable knowledge economy.

It has always been the task of creative people to imagine and prototype the future.

This is the essence of our new strategy, ‘The World Needs Creativity’, which sets out how we will achieve our ambitions for the next decade. Our strategy will renew our social purpose for a new world and a new era. It will build a university around that purpose so we can better serve our staff, students and the world.



James Purnell
President & Vice Chancellor

Foreword

Our history

The strategy:
How UAL will change

Guiding Policy 1

Guiding Policy 2

Guiding Policy 3

Conclusion

Our history

The origins of UAL lie in the 19th century with the foundation of the schools that became our six constituent Colleges: Camberwell College of Arts, Central Saint Martins, Chelsea College of Arts, London College of Communication, London College of Fashion and Wimbledon College of Arts. These schools educated young people to prepare them for a world transformed by technological change. Students learned new skills for growing industries, like architecture, communication, fashion, design and performance. And their work brought beauty into people's everyday lives.

Each of our Colleges remained at the forefront of creativity throughout the 20th century. They combined radical design and techniques with the teaching of practical skills. Students learned by doing. And in doing, their eyes were opened up to new ways of seeing. Our Colleges were, at all times, imbued with a sense of social purpose. Camberwell, for instance, was founded in 1898 to 'give the best artistic and technical education to all classes in the district'. It was not atypical. It exemplified the spirit of those times.

In 1986, the six Colleges joined together as one. In 2003, they became a university: University of the Arts London (UAL). Today, UAL is one of the world's most renowned institutions for creative education. Though much has changed since the 19th century, our social purpose, 'to change society through our knowledge and creativity', remains unchanged. We remain rooted in London's heritage of vocational education. And we are developing into a global force for change, advancing the case for creativity at the regional, national and international level.

We have become one of the world's most international universities, welcoming students from 130 countries. We have achieved this by adapting to the needs of new cohorts of students, while continuing to provide access to a high-quality creative education. And, as a global university, staff and students learn from different cultures and perspectives, which leads to new conversations and innovative work.

We are committed to our social purpose, inside and outside of UAL. By 2023, for instance, 30% of our staff will be from ethnic minority groups. This reflects the diversity of our students. By the same date, all of our courses will be re-designed to educate our students about climate change. And by 2040, we will reach net-zero in our carbon emissions. These commitments are grounded in the experience of students, alumni and staff, in academic insights, and in our data. They reflect our determination to change how we teach and do research, how we operate, and how we work with others.

We must be ready, though, for greater change. The world faces challenges like the climate emergency and economic uncertainty, but it is also more digital, connected and creative than ever before. Cultural trade and understanding, meanwhile, is growing between the Global South and North. UAL is changing too, taking inspiration from its founding ideals to pioneer the future of creative education. This is the ambition of our new strategy, which sets out how this will

Foreword

Our history

**The strategy:
How UAL will change**

Guiding Policy 1

Guiding Policy 2

Guiding Policy 3

Conclusion

be achieved. It is a living document, subject to review, and changes within and outside UAL will breathe new life into it.

The Strategy: How UAL will change

Our strategy has three Guiding Policies. We identified the challenges and opportunities that are most important to UAL and our future. The guiding policies are our response to each of these issues in turn.

Creativity is a skill vital across the economy and society. In today's knowledge economy, this will become increasingly so. To give our students the skills they need, we must change the way we teach and deliver a rich and rewarding student experience. By doing so, in partnership with our staff and students, we will ensure our students are equipped to work in sectors beyond the creative industries. Our students will have the careers they want, the economy will have the creative skills it needs, and we will build a better world.

This led to our first Guiding Policy, to give our students the education they need to flourish in a changing world.

There is a greater desire for a creative education than ever before. A demographic boom at home, population growth abroad, and longer working lives, mean more students than ever before. The ubiquity and power of digital technology mean we can reach and engage them, while constantly improving their education. By growing student numbers here in London and expanding online, we can provide more students, whoever, or wherever they may be, with a high-quality creative education.

This led to our second Guiding Policy, to bring a high-quality creative education to more students than ever before.

Climate injustice. Disinformation. Structural racism. Regional and economic inequality. At home and abroad, society is beset with deep-rooted social, cultural, environmental, and economic problems. Through our research and partnerships, and by targeting the sectors where we can make a difference, we can help solve them, and in doing so create a better world.

This led to our third Guiding Policy, to change the world through our creative endeavour.

Taken together, the guiding policies represent a far-reaching ambition. Some of the aims will be challenging, for example requiring us to grow our income so as to reinvest. We will set achievable targets and report on our performance.

We will deliver these commitments with new appointments including our Chief Operating Officer, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Chief People Officer, Chief Digital Officer, and Chief Social Purpose Officer. They will work together with our Pro Vice-Chancellors & Heads of College to ensure that everything UAL does contributes to our social purpose.

Foreword

Our history

The strategy:
How UAL will change

Guiding Policy 1

Guiding Policy 2

Guiding Policy 3

Conclusion

Our Guiding Policies

Guiding Policy 1: Giving our students the education they need to flourish in a changing world

The world of work is changing. New realms of scientific endeavour, such as artificial intelligence, advanced robotics, biotechnology and virtual reality will transform the world. And as Britain continues developing into a knowledge economy, creative skills will increasingly become vital to it. To help our students and graduates play their part, UAL will need to change again.

Creative education is grounded in the famous ‘making’ subjects of art, design and fashion that are needed by established creative industrial sectors. These are fundamental to our studio-based vision for education. With increasing demand from huge, emerging sectors, disruptive technology and new ideas, we need to change what we teach, so that our students are as confident in working in jobs outside the creative industries as inside them.

It is our responsibility to ensure students have the skills and knowledge they need to make an impact in a purposeful and ethical manner. The employability of our students is crucial. We will invest in our teaching and student outcomes, paying attention to student feedback and experience, setting challenging targets to ensure we demonstrate the value of UAL education. We will also make further investment in networking and careers support for graduates and alumni.

In addition, we will expand our vocational and creative technology offer to students. To do so, we will review and expand the size and shape of our portfolio, with a view to developing areas such as virtual reality, augmented reality, AI and robotics. We will expand our curriculum better to serve international students and meet global demand. And we will also explore where we can contribute to lifelong learning, especially in high-growth industries. Cultural exchange, meanwhile, will deepen our knowledge of the world so we can better understand and engage with it.

Our changed curriculum will not just be designed for students, but with them, too. Our students want more choice and more control over the way they learn. And they want a wider curriculum that is representative of culture and identity with insights from non-Western cultures. We will work with them to deliver this and are already doing so.

By changing the way we teach, we will help our students flourish in a changing world. This will build on our existing record for producing the most entrepreneurial students in the country. Doing so will ensure UAL remains relevant and that it continues to fulfil its social purpose.

Foreword

Our history

The strategy:
How UAL will change

Guiding Policy 1

Guiding Policy 2

Guiding Policy 3

Conclusion

What we will do

- Redesign our curriculum, in partnership with staff, students and external specialists, to improve vocational opportunities, and our graduates' skills and employability
- Use digital technologies and digital thinking to deliver a world-class student experience
- Develop our students' creative skills and practices for a wider range of industries and help more students start their own businesses
- Ensure our students' skills are always set within an ethical framework which addresses issues of social, racial and climate justice
- Transform access to creative technology and computing
- Increase our networking, guidance and careers support for alumni and graduates

What we are doing now: example case studies

1. Diploma in Creative Computing

We need to ensure our students have the right skills for the jobs of tomorrow. In response, UAL's Creative Computing Institute is offering a diploma in Creative Computing. This is an opportunity for all undergraduate students going into their third year of study. The diploma helps students understand the computational technologies that are driving innovation in the creative industries. Graduates with advanced computing skills are in high demand. This project will ensure more of our students are ready to fulfil it.

2. Developing Creative Attributes

Our students need practical skills to flourish. We already offer them. Students at Camberwell College of Arts, Chelsea College of Arts and Wimbledon College of Arts, for instance, develop their creative skills through collaborative, multi-disciplinary projects aimed at future employment prospects. Our newly-developed second year Collaborative & Collective Practices Unit is an example of this in action and is offered to all students.

3. The Enterprise Pipeline

More than one in ten of our students form start-ups. But there is no reason why we can't increase that proportion. The Enterprise Pipeline at London College of Fashion is doing exactly that, allowing students to explore entrepreneurial learning within the curriculum. This helps them develop their ambitions, launch start-ups with extracurricular support, and then scale them through funding and awards, and accelerator and incubation programmes within and outside UAL.

4. Diploma in Professional Studies

Industry experience makes a big difference to student success. The Diploma in Professional Studies at London College of Communication

- Foreword
- Our history
- The strategy:
How UAL will change
- Guiding Policy 1
- Guiding Policy 2**
- Guiding Policy 3
- Conclusion

helps students undertake placements, live briefs in industry, and their own freelance projects. This improves students' creative attributes, employability and enterprise skills. It also enhances academic attainment. The College's undergraduate courses are all expected to incorporate the diploma in the future.

5. The Academic Futures Project

UAL's academic community needs to be rooted in cultural and social diversity. The Academic Futures Project uses enhanced recruitment practices and makes use of multi-method selection for candidates from underrepresented backgrounds. Over half of the successful applicants in recent recruitment rounds were from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups.

Guiding Policy 2: Bringing a high-quality creative education to more students than ever before

We believe that everyone, regardless of who they are or where they come from, should have access to a high-quality creative education. Expanding access, therefore, is crucial to our social purpose. We aim to serve anyone who could benefit from a UAL education.

According to the Higher Education Policy Institute, a demographic boom at home means 350k more students in England alone by 2035. There is more international demand coming, too. By 2050, for instance, the population of Africa will double to 2.5 billion. And in India and South America, demographic change will drive similar population growth. In addition, the World Economic Forum predicts that, in the wake of automation, up to 1 billion people worldwide will need to re-skill by 2030.

We can reach more people than ever before. The pandemic showed geography should no longer be a barrier to a high-quality education. And it saw a profound shift in the use of digital technologies to deliver one. We believe that opportunity should be extended to those looking for an in-person education, too.

To meet growing demand, we will double learners on accredited UAL courses. We will expand our on-campus activity in London and invest in low-residency and online courses. We will also pioneer courses in creative professional development and executive education, including for those in jobs and sectors beyond the creative industries. No such offer currently exists. We believe creative thinking and practice is essential across today's knowledge economy.

To achieve this we will, in the coming months, experiment and consult on how these plans can be met. We will review the courses and number of places we offer and how we can deliver them, both on-campus and online. We will pursue these goals in our Access & Participation plan this year. Next year, when we are required to review our plan, we will consider how we could reduce — and ideally

Foreword
Our history
The strategy:
How UAL will change
Guiding Policy 1
Guiding Policy 2
Guiding Policy 3
Conclusion

remove — the financial barriers to receiving a UAL education, for example by using free or discounted places, scholarships, bursaries, as well as new ways of delivering outside London and online. We will also campaign for the return of maintenance grants for students from low-income families.

Achieving these aims will help make UAL more resilient in the wake of uncertain higher education policy and long-term overseas recruitment patterns. It will ensure we diversify our student base and increase revenues amid uncertain times. It will allow us to have a bigger impact in the world: funding our research and helping to expand access for those traditionally prevented from enjoying a creative education by personal circumstances, such as income, geography or physical, mental or cognitive disability.

At all stages of growth, we will grow and nurture our staff, supporting them with the resources they need to make the change.

What we will do

- Increase the number of student places on courses delivered in London by 5,000 (3,000 full-time equivalent)
- Increase flexibility in how and where students study through online and low-residency courses providing 15,000 places (5,000 full-time equivalent)
- Invest in our infrastructure and capacity to increase the scale of our online and low-residency courses
- Research and prototype the digital student experience
- Re-imagine access and participation to lift financial barriers and create new access routes through pre-degree education, Short Courses, UAL Awarding Body and UAL Future Creatives
- Pioneer an offer in creative professional development and executive education

What we are doing now: example case studies

1. Low-residency postgraduate courses

We are already reaching out to more students. Central Saint Martins, for instance, has pioneered low-residency Masters courses. Three are up and running: MBA with Birkbeck, MA Arts and Cultural Enterprise, and MA Cities, with additional courses to come. The courses are delivered over a weekend. This benefits prospective students already in employment. The proportion of UK students on these courses is higher than the UK university average.

2. Insights programme

Too often, university admissions processes work against students from underrepresented groups and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Our Insights programme is designed to offer places to students whose parents have never been to university, students from low-income backgrounds,

- Foreword
- Our history
- The strategy:
How UAL will change
- Guiding Policy 1
- Guiding Policy 2
- Guiding Policy 3**
- Conclusion

students in receipt of benefits for living costs such as Universal Credit, and looked-after children and care leavers. This will ensure our admissions process is fairer and that our university reflects Britain in its fullest. The programme currently partners with 166 schools and colleges, and in our 2021 entry over 200 students progressed from Insights to study at UAL.

3. Fashion Analytics & Forecasting

According to Hal Varian, Chief Economist at Google, “The ability to take data - to be able to understand it, to process it, to extract value from it, to visualise it, to communicate it - is going to be a hugely important skill in the next decades”. There has never been greater demand for graduates skilled in data. But there is currently a shortage of graduates with the right data skills. London College of Fashion is helping to change this, launching its MSc in Fashion Analytics and Forecasting. It is the first online postgraduate course to combine fashion business knowledge with data analytics.

Guiding Policy 3: Changing the world through our creative endeavour

The world faces big social and economic challenges. Internationally, for instance, the pledges made on the climate at COP26 do not go far enough. The promise of the internet has been replaced with fears about disinformation. And the murder of George Floyd shone a light on the persistence of systemic racism. In the UK, meanwhile, economic and regional inequality risks holding back progress and potential.

There is, however, a desire to act. Awareness of social injustice is rising, especially among young people. New social movements, like Black Lives Matter and Greta Thunberg’s School Strike for Climate, grew out of a more connected world. Latin America’s *buen vivir* movement highlights a global need for harmony with the natural world. And at home, the Government’s ‘levelling up’ agenda aims to address regional inequality.

We believe creativity has a role in solving great problems — to imagine a better world, and bring it to fruition. At UAL, helping to change and influence society is central to our social purpose. And as one of the biggest creative universities in the world, we can make a significant difference.

Central to this is our research and knowledge exchange. Creative practice has a role to play developing this research and knowledge with external partners, like-minded organisations, and across disciplines and industries. It is our task, therefore, to identify the issues where we can make the biggest impact. We will develop a new plan for Research, Knowledge Exchange and Enterprise to achieve this, under the leadership of our new Deputy Vice-Chancellor for this area.

Foreword
Our history
The strategy: How UAL will change
Guiding Policy 1
Guiding Policy 2
Guiding Policy 3
Conclusion

We have now appointed a Chief Social Purpose Officer, who will work with all parts of the University to ensure we ground our social purpose in the needs and views of our communities, specifying it, living up to it and making progress on it, through strong relationships across and beyond the University.

We also want to shape the creative industries of the future, which will be increasingly important in our knowledge economy. Working with the sector, we will use new technologies to address social problems like the climate crisis. And we will expand our influence by engaging with alumni and through our creative networks.

We will tell a positive story about how creativity makes a difference. Doing so will provide opportunities for students to organise and make their voices heard. It will allow UAL to make a difference in the world and influence others. And it will allow us to share our knowledge with the world, so that others may use it.

What we will do

- Focus our research, knowledge exchange and enterprise activities in areas that deliver the biggest social, environmental and economic impact
- Seek to grow our research income to be able to make a bigger contribution to the knowledge economy and those chosen areas
- Increase our digital research footprint in creative technologies
- Develop our infrastructure to support research, knowledge exchange and enterprise, building an environment that supports entrepreneurial activities for our students, alumni and staff
- Tell a story about how creativity can change the world and build strong relationships with our communities and partners to achieve change in society
- Develop the new portfolio of Chief Social Purpose Officer

What we are doing now: example case studies

1. Centre for Sustainable Fashion

The global fashion industry produces 2.3 billion tonnes of CO₂ each year - 4% of the total. The fast fashion industry, meanwhile, creates 92 million tonnes of waste. UAL's Centre for Sustainable Fashion, a research centre based at London College of Fashion, was founded in 2008 to change this. Over the past 5 years, it has delivered 33 knowledge exchange and education projects with a total value of over £9 million and worked with many companies. For example, it partnered with UK fashion brand ASOS which resulted in the launch of a 29-piece collection designed with circular economy principles in mind.

2. The Creative Arts and Climate

Creative education must play its part in averting climate catastrophe. Central Saint Martins hosted two major research

- Foreword
- Our history
- The strategy:
How UAL will change
- Guiding Policy 1
- Guiding Policy 2
- Guiding Policy 3
- Conclusion**

projects to do just this. A first, *Materialising Data: Embodying Climate Change*, uses the visual arts to present climate data, often impenetrable to a general audience, in a way that is accessible. A second project, *Architecture After Architecture*, meanwhile, speculates on what kind of architecture might be necessary if we are to face the climate emergency.

3. Research and Knowledge Exchange

Structural racism is deep-seated. History can help us better understand the present, creating a guide to the future. To share that knowledge, UAL exhibited *We Will Walk*, which revealed the little-known history of African-American ‘yard art’ which was shaped by the Civil Rights period of the 1950s and 1960s. It showed the work of Black artists and provided an insight into Black life in the American South after slavery. The project produced a new way of exploring the relationship between activism and visual and material culture. It achieved this by making connections between the protests of the Civil Rights movement and contemporary Black Lives Matter activists.

4. UAL Decolonising Arts Institute

Too often, the work of Black, Asian and minority ethnic creatives is underrepresented in public life. In 2017, research by the Department for Education found children in UK schools, of whom 31% are from ethnic minority backgrounds, were introduced to the visual arts by teachers who are 94% white. UAL’s Decolonising Arts Institute was founded to help change this. In November 2021, it received a grant from the Freelands Foundation as a contribution towards this work. UAL’s three-year programme will place 20 Black and Asian artists on residence at top art organisations across the UK. They will oversee new commissions for permanent collections.

5. The Refugee Journalism Project

The experiences and perspectives of refugees often struggle to find a place in the mainstream media. Since 2016, however, our Refugee Journalism Project has helped both displaced and exiled journalists and storytellers restart their careers. The project helps create connections in the UK journalism industry, providing opportunities for participants to build contacts and publish their work.

Conclusion

We have launched this strategy, ‘The World Needs Creativity’, because in the past two years, the world has changed. New social movements have shaped the expectations of higher education. New technologies have transformed the means of delivering it, and expanded opportunities to do so. New industries, like artificial

Foreword

Our history

The strategy:
How UAL will change

Guiding Policy 1

Guiding Policy 2

Guiding Policy 3

Conclusion

intelligence and virtual reality, have made creative skills more important than ever before.

If UAL is to continue to deliver our social purpose and meet the needs and expectations of our staff and students, we need to change, too. The ambition of this strategy is to offer both a creative education, and our research, to anyone who can benefit from it. The model it proposes is global quality on a global scale.

To achieve this aim and deliver this model, and to turn the challenges posed to higher education into our opportunity, we have set out three guiding policies:

1. Britain continues developing into a knowledge economy, the world of work is being transformed by new technologies, and today's students need the education and skills to change work for the better. Our first guiding policy, therefore, is to give our students the education they need to flourish in a changing world.
2. Demand for creative education has never been greater. Demographic change means more demand for education, while an ageing population means longer working lives. The online revolution will ensure we reach people everywhere. Our second guiding policy, therefore, is to bring a high-quality creative education to more students than ever before.
3. The world is facing up to deep-rooted social and economic problems, but by working together with others we can play our part in solving them. Our third guiding policy, therefore, is to change the world through our creative endeavour.

Together, these policies will help renew UAL's social purpose, ensuring it remains relevant for decades to come. They will help our university become more sustainable, allowing us to fund research and access, and help change the world.

This strategy was developed by and with our staff and students. We will implement it together, starting by reviewing how we support them so that they not only like working at UAL, but are able to find their individual purpose in our social purpose.

It will be good for our students. They will be equipped with the skills and knowledge they need for the jobs of tomorrow. They will have even more scope for their creativity, with an ambition to inspire change.

And our strategy will be good for the world, too. It will ensure our creative practice and knowledge is shared far and wide, so that others may share ideas and go about creating a better and fairer world.

In years to come, the world we hope to see will be more creative and innovative. It will be one where people across disciplines, like the arts and sciences, use their creativity to work together to solve common challenges.

The purpose of this strategy is to ensure UAL lives up to its social purpose. The rest will depend on our collective endeavour and creative ambition.