

## Community Investment and Social Impact Strategy

### Purpose

Teesside University was founded in 1930 as Constantine College; an educational institution established to provide access to education and address regional skills needs. This holds true today; the University's mission is to 'transform lives and economies', and this ethos underpins a broad spectrum of activity that seeks to generate the future workforce, galvanise economic prosperity, support social mobility and deliver positive cultural, civic and social impact.

This Strategy sets out the University's ambitions to further this mission beyond the delivery of the core business of education. It defines the University's commitment to generating social impact and investing in the communities we serve, inclusive of students, colleagues, community partners and publics.

### Intersection with other business strategies

This strategy sits alongside our **Sustainable Futures Strategy** and together these documents detail our overarching approach to Environmental and Social Governance/CSR.

Our **Access and Participation Plan** details our outreach and engagement activities that seek to improve access to higher education and support student success.

Our **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan** sets out our investment in creating a fair and equal working and learning environment for our university community.

Our responsible business practices are detailed in a range of policies and approaches including our Statement on Modern Slavery, Anti-Money Laundering Policy and Financial Regulations.

### Products and Services

The provision of education is the primary purpose of the institution. Our approach to social impact and community investment is embedded across our products and services through:

- Developing graduates who are global citizens and operate with a social conscience
- Offering opportunities for students to engage in social impact through volunteering
- The delivery of social impact activity within course provision, for example the *pro bono* Teesside Law Clinic
- Proactively seeking philanthropic donations to support access to learning (Teesside Transformation Fund).
- Incorporating social value activity into all capital development projects and undertaking sustainable procurement practices, prioritising local spend where possible.

## Social drivers and context

Teesside University is located in Middlesbrough, a post-industrial town ranked in the top 10% of deprived areas according to Multiple Indices of Deprivation<sup>1</sup>. Attainment at GCSE and A-level is below average<sup>2</sup> and the area also performs below average with regards participation in higher education<sup>3</sup>. Middlesbrough is the third most deprived local authority for education, skills and training and the number of young people claiming benefits and not in employment, education or training is double the national average<sup>4</sup>.

## Strategy Governance

The delivery of this strategy lies with the University Senior Management Team, and the Environmental and Social Governance (ESG) Steering Group.

The ESG Steering Group have responsibility for overarching KPIs and key actions within each theme of activity. Detailed action plans are set out within supporting strategies and are the responsibility of specialist leads.

The USMT have responsibility for embedding community investment and social impact within the core business of their academic School or Department, in support of the strategic aims of this strategy.

The Executive Director of Communications and Development is accountable for the overall delivery of the strategy, reporting directly to the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive.

The strategic aims form part of the overall corporate strategy, Ambition Delivered Today.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019> Viewed 24/06/22

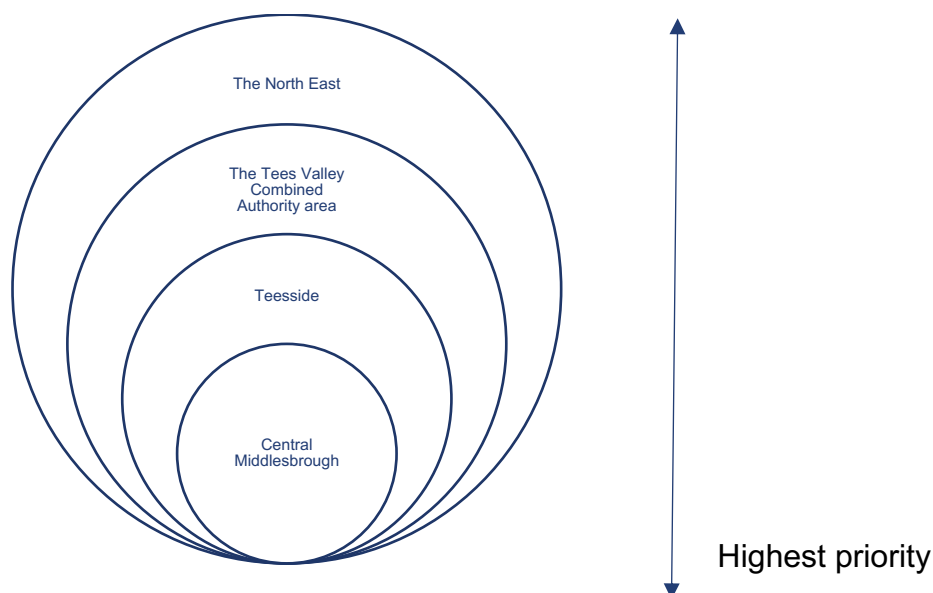
<sup>2</sup> <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/schools-by-type?step=default&table=schools&region=806&laname=middlesbrough&geographic=la&For=secondary&DatasetFilter=provisional&Show=All+pupils+2017&BasedOn=English+%26+maths+GCSEs>

<sup>3</sup> <https://teesvalley-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Tees-Valley-Higher-Education-Report-2019.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> TVCA Local Skills Report <https://teesvalley-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Local-Skills-Report-Annexes-Core-Indicators-and-Additional-Data-18-06-21.pdf> Accessed 24/06/22

## Our Community

For the purposes of community investment, we have defined our community using a place-based approach.



## Needs Analysis

The high-level needs of the priority community are well understood and documented in external research and data. Further analysis has included:

- Engagement with the community and voluntary sector through the TU Community Hub
- Strategic partnerships with a range of educational, public sector, healthcare and social housing providers
- Engagement with current TU students

## Community Collaboration

- Regular engagement through the TU Community Hub will ensure that the University continues to be informed by external community members. Annual reviews of this strategy will reflect any changes in material issues gathered through this community consultation.

## Material Issues

The key issues impacting on our priority community are:

- **Poverty**, including digital inclusion and in-work poverty
- **Youth disengagement** leading to not in education, employment or training status (NEET), anti-social behaviour and low-level crime
- **Drug misuse and alcohol dependency** leading to not in education, employment or training status (NEET), anti-social behaviour and low-level crime
- Issues of community cohesion and **lack of civic pride**
- Unemployment due to lack of job opportunity, skills deficits and low confidence/aspiration

## Strategic Aims/Desired Impact

- Improve digital inclusion
- Alleviate food poverty
- Reduce youth disengagement
- Address drug misuse and alcohol dependency
- Improve community cohesion and civic pride

## Success measures

- Staff and students across the University have a clear understanding of what Teesside University is trying to achieve in the community.
- Staff and students are aware of the opportunities available that enable them to contribute to the community investment and social impact goals.
- Staff and students are taking up these opportunities, and this in turn is delivering investment into the university community.
- Staff and students demonstrate increased institutional pride and a sense of belonging.
- There is ongoing community consultation in the delivery of the strategy and its interventions.
- There are case studies and narrative pieces detailing the impact that the University's activities have made against the desired impact/strategic aims of the strategy.

## Measurement & Reporting

Impact is the main measure of success. This will be collated through the development of narrative case studies, alongside relevant statistics for each activity.

## Strategy Review process

This strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis with community consultation informing any changes.