

# Achievement 2023

Strategic Plan 2018-2023







# Inspiring, Innovative, Impactful

I am pleased to be able to share this new strategic plan for the University of West London; the third under my leadership. It is our response to some of the fundamental challenges that face the sector in the coming years while ensuring that we stay true to our values. Since its origin a century and a half ago, the University has grown impressively in size, stature and influence. Now a standard bearer for the benefits of widening participation and social mobility our reach is broad and deep. From the

outset we have embraced new ideas and remained adaptable while providing value for money and life changing career opportunities to all our students. A spirit of innovation therefore sits at the heart of the plan and we aim to produce the sorts of graduates, research and enterprise that will enhance the local, regional, national and international communities we serve. Above all, we will inspire our students to become innovative and creative professionals, connecting them to exciting and rewarding careers.

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# Constructed from a position of strength

**T**his strategic plan offers a road map for the future direction of the University. It proposes a series of university-wide goals, a framework of commitments to help us make informed decisions as to how to achieve those goals, and a sequence of metrics to assess progress against those goals. Crafting the new plan has been an

extensive undertaking forming part of a continuum beginning with the first strategic plan published under my tenure in 2008, *Education that works* through to *Ambition 2018* introduced in 2013. The new plan: *Achievement 2023* is therefore constructed from a position of strength. It builds on the successes of the recent past while continuing to be true to our founding mission

which is to give our students access to three transformative and fundamental rights: the right to enhancement, the right to inclusion, and the right to participation. Our vision is simple and continues to define our University as an innovative, inclusive and meritocratic community committed to making the country more prosperous, open and just.



## Our sector

The University is currently in excellent financial shape and is well prepared to flourish in what continues to be a harsh economic climate. Nevertheless, like all institutions of higher education we face multiple challenges including:

- Intense competition for students and staff particularly in London
- The known and unknown effects of our departure from the European Union
- Constrained public funding and reform of the current fee structure
- An ever changing and precarious labour market requiring new knowledge and skills, and flexible working
- Increasing demands for greater accountability, transparency and value for money
- Growing institutional scrutiny driven by the new regulator the Office for Students and the extension of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

*“... a lynchpin of community interaction.”*

- Scarce and competitive research and enterprise funding measured by the new Research Excellence Framework (REF) and the forthcoming Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF)
- The rise of new technologies, artificial intelligence (AI), and the increasing power of social media.

## Our students

The University has an exemplary record in extending the reach of higher education to those who have been traditionally excluded from it. We will continue to build on these successes by providing excellent learning and teaching opportunities so that our students and their families enjoy an education that is affordable as well as offering an excellent return on their investment. It will entail educating individuals who have the flexibility to work in a variety of industries and organisations. It will involve building research capability that is impactful, linked to the businesses and industries we

serve, and is curiosity driven. It will also mean offering our students a world-class learning experience that recognises their intellectual and cultural strengths, expands their horizons and prepares them for work in a rapidly changing world.

## Our region

Since our origin more than a century and a half ago, the University of West London and its precursors have been intertwined with the locality. Local residents understand the enormous benefits the University brings and collaboration and partnerships have never been stronger. In the coming years we aim to connect both the Ealing Master Plan and the Hounslow Regional Plan to make the University a lynchpin of community interaction. This will see the University playing a central role in shaping a set of relations that will bring new levels of innovation, co-operation, and business activity aimed at unearthing and improving the quality of entrepreneurial talent where ever it resides. It is a strategy that will stretch across the South East and beyond and will incorporate our Berkshire Institute of Health in Reading and other regional stakeholders.

# Our mission, vision and values

## Mission

To inspire our students to become innovative and creative professionals connecting them to exciting and rewarding careers.

## Vision

To be a career focussed, professionally engaged, modern university of quality.

## Values

- ✓ Accessible
- ✓ Affordable
- ✓ Diverse
- ✓ Transparent
- ✓ Accountable



## In 2023 we will be:

- Continuously placed in the top 50 universities in the UK
- Ranked in the top 100 UK universities for research
- The best university in the country for employability
- A gold TEF institution
- Consistently the best modern university in London and one of the top 10 moderns in the country.

## Our commitments

At the heart of the plan is a series of commitments which form the bond between the University, our students, stakeholders, and partners. The commitments are accompanied by pairs of strategic drivers which are shaped by two headings: **what we do well;** and **what we'll do better.** The latter is expressed in key objectives which will be measured by a range of high level key performance indicators. We therefore commit ourselves to:

1. Offering a transformative educational experience
2. Being a model for quality, affordable higher education
3. Producing impactful research
4. Providing exceptional work-related career opportunities
5. Being an engine of innovation and enterprise
6. Being financially and environmentally sustainable
7. Offering an enriching work environment
8. Investing in the future
9. Establishing a global learning network.





1

## Offer a transformative educational experience

### What we do well:

Currently we have one of the best satisfaction scores in London and one of the best in the UK. Our Students' Union is number one in England and we are second in the UK for Student Voice\*. We are also recognised for our excellence in academic support, assessment and feedback while 75% of our teaching takes place within classes of fewer than 30 students.

\*NSS 2017

### What we'll do better:

- Improve overall NSS satisfaction rates to 90%+ in all categories
- Ensure the 'student voice' remains one of the best in the country
- Enhance our continuation and completion rates to above benchmark
- Regularly review the portfolio to maintain relevance and marketability
- Continue to improve the attainment of Black Minority Ethnic (BME) students
- Introduce a new 'core curriculum' with experiential and work-place learning at its heart
- Bring in a series of new two year degrees.

2

## Be a model of quality, affordable Higher Education

### What we do well:

We are a beacon of widening participation providing opportunities to students who come from some of the most disadvantaged backgrounds in the country. Currently, our bursaries, scholarships and other monetary support are amongst the most generous in the sector.

### What we'll do better:

- Improve student employment opportunities within the institution, and fund new mechanisms to assist those students most in need.
- Manage fee levels in line with national guidelines
- Ensure that all courses provide value-for-money
- Work pro-actively with the Office for Students (OfS) and our Students' Union to improve student welfare and develop an excellent network of outreach programmes
- Ensure our degrees and qualifications hold their value over time.



### 3 Produce impactful research

#### What we do well:

We have nationally and internationally recognised applied research in psychology, education, infection control, engineering and gender studies. All supported by a series of new research institutes and centres in: Music and Screen; Arts, Health and Well-Being; Cybersecurity and Crime; Non-destructive Testing; Person Centred Healthcare; Hospitality and Resort Management; Infection Control; and Human Trafficking and Labour Migration.

#### What we'll do better:

- Place continued emphasis on UWL's research strengths and inter-disciplinary collaboration
- Ensure all staff are engaged with research and scholarship at the appropriate level
- Be ranked in top 100 in the REF 2021 and beyond
- Increase those on research academic contracts by 20 %
- Open 6 new research institutes/centres
- Grow the research and enterprise income to £40m
- Grow the research professoriate to 80+ and staff with doctorates to 60 %.

### 4 Provide exceptional work-related career opportunities

#### What we do well:

We prepare students for the world of work with 97 % entering employment or further study within six months of leaving the University\* and 71 % entering highly skilled employment\*\*. All students get access to work experience opportunities and/or a work placement supported by an enriched curriculum.

\*HESA employment performance indicator

\*\* The Times/The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2018

#### What we'll do better:

- Improve graduate employability to 80 % and overall employability to 100 %
- Improve the quality and choice of work placements
- Extend the work placement experience to postgraduate courses
- Have 2000 registered employers offering placements and work experience
- Increase higher and degree level apprenticeships to 300 in a range of new areas
- Ensure starting salaries remain in the top quartile in the sector.

## 5 Be an engine of innovation and enterprise

### What we do well:

Innovation and entrepreneurship are two of UWL's strengths. Our disciplinary mix combined with a long-standing relationship with over 6,000 industry partners make us a lynchpin partner in the design and delivery of customised courses.

### What we'll do better:

- Develop the *Westmont Enterprise Hub* to accelerate business incubation with more than 100 incubated enterprises, and a 5% revenue from intellectual property and stake-holding
- Create a University-wide executive education programme which will contribute up to 5% of the enterprise budget
- Ensure all students are registered with the Hub and that corporate sponsorship contributes up to 50% of the revenue
- Support up to 50 new businesses annually through the *West London Food Innovation Lab*
- Have a number of new patents and other protected IP (joint or sole).

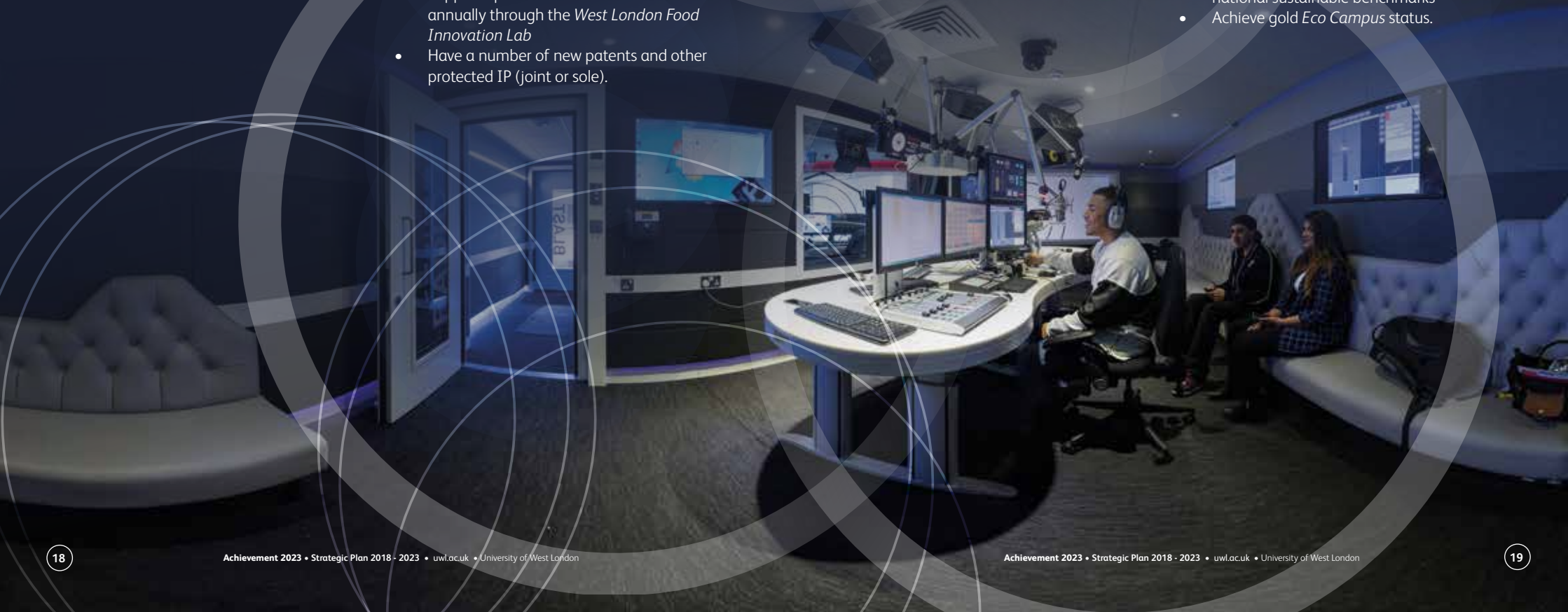
## 6 Be financially and environmentally sustainable

### What we do well:

The University finances are well stewarded with fixed tangible assets growing three fold since 2013. Environmentally the University has also benefitted from an increased emphasis on carbon management with a new travel plan and the introduction of an Eco Campus Environmental Management System.

### What we'll do better:

- Continue to achieve surpluses of 10% and above on operations
- Manage staff costs at or below 50%
- Maintain a stable cash flow
- Better utilise campus facilities and residences for income generation
- Purchase a range of new businesses
- Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the out-sourced facilities and improve the yield
- Develop a robust recycling programme
- Ensure all new-build projects to meet national sustainable benchmarks
- Achieve gold *Eco Campus* status.





## 7 Offer an enriching work environment

### What we do well:

The University's 'People Strategy' has embedded processes and practices designed to improve the retention, quality, and development of all staff. In addition, we are well above benchmark for our gender balance in academic staff, the number of BME professors, and all staff from BME backgrounds.

### What we'll do better:

- Support academic and service staff in their work by providing a comprehensive programme of professional development and promotion opportunities
- Use the ExPERT Academy to drive personal and professional development
- Strengthen the research culture across the institution and give greater recognition for published outputs and creative work
- Involve fractional part-time academic staff more fully in the life of the University
- Provide a framework that supports and rewards innovation and excellence in teaching and scholarship.
- Ensure 100% of academic staff have HEA membership and recognised professional teaching qualifications.

## 8 Invest in the future

### What we do well:

We have invested heavily (c£150million) in our estates, facilities, IT infrastructure and staff in order to enhance the student experience. The new Paul Hamlyn library, a new performance space (Weston Hall), new film and performance areas, a new radio station, new engineering labs, a food innovation lab, an enterprise hub, and new kitchens and refectories.

### What we'll do better:

- Complete the building of the new sports and leisure centre
- Build the new International and post-graduate centre
- Invest in the new Gunnersbury Park sports complex
- Incorporate all University activity onto the main sites
- Develop an array of new approaches through the implementation of 'UWLflex'
- Use new technologies to reach all students recognising that the majority are commuters
- Continue to build our alumni and development base with the aim of bringing in over £15m of funding by 2023.



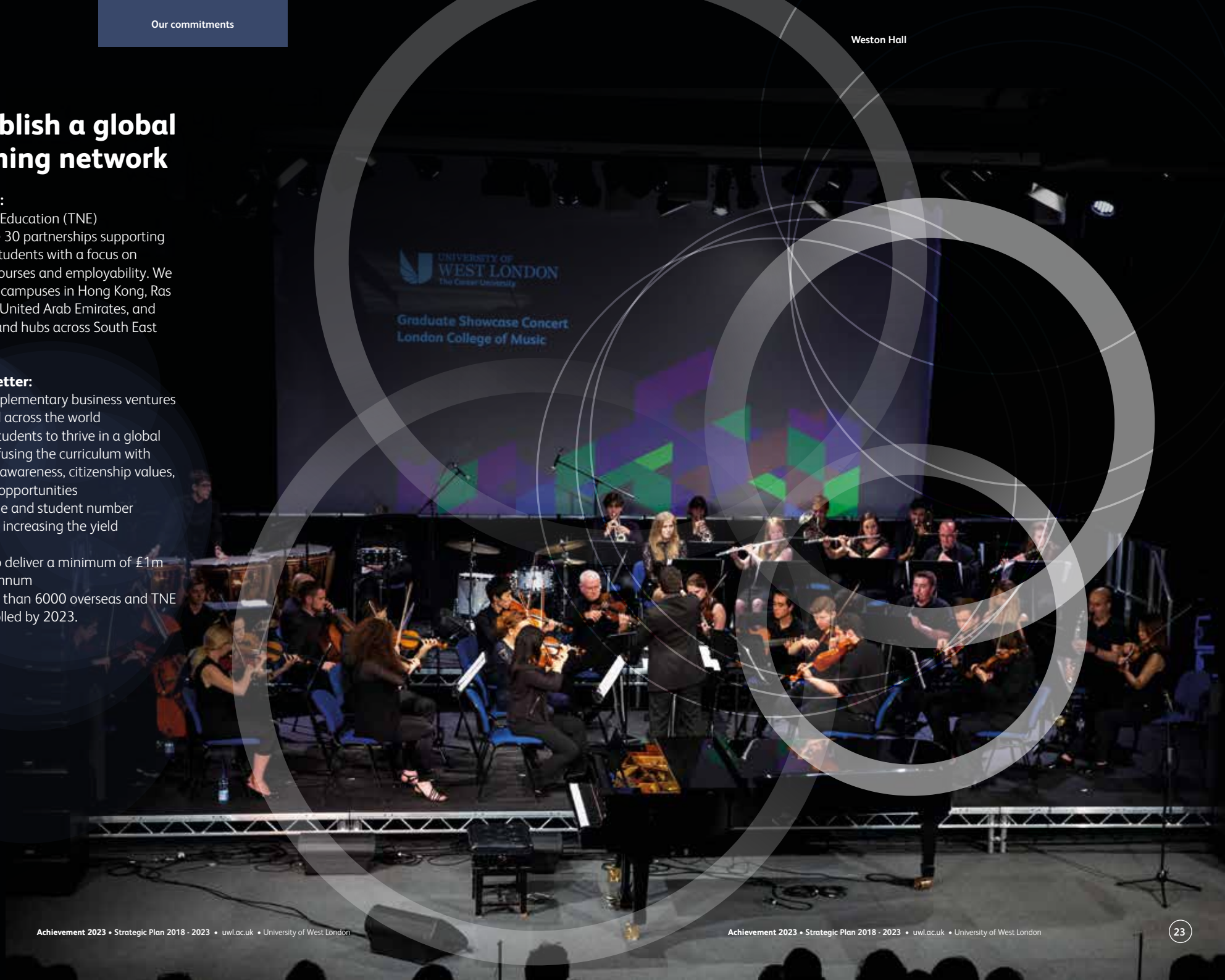
## 9 Establish a global learning network

### What we do well:

Our Transnational Education (TNE) programmes, have 30 partnerships supporting upward of 4,000 students with a focus on globally relevant courses and employability. We have small branch campuses in Hong Kong, Ras Al Khaimah in the United Arab Emirates, and multiple partners and hubs across South East Asia and China.

### What we'll do better:

- Invest in complementary business ventures in the UK and across the world
- Prepare our students to thrive in a global context by infusing the curriculum with international awareness, citizenship values, and learning opportunities
- Deliver income and student number growth whilst increasing the yield per student
- 'TNE hubs' to deliver a minimum of £1m income per annum
- To have more than 6000 overseas and TNE students enrolled by 2023.





## Key Performance Indicators

## Target by 2023

1. Employability	<b>100%</b>
2. Graduate employability	<b>80%</b>
3. Higher and degree apprenticeships	<b>300</b>
4. HUB incubation businesses	<b>100</b>
5. NSS satisfaction	<b>90%+</b>
6. Completion rate	<b>85%</b>
7. TEF	<b>Gold</b>
8. Aggregate League table position	<b>Top 50</b>
9. Research and enterprise income	<b>£40m</b>
10. % academic staff with doctorates	<b>60%</b>
11. REF ranking	<b>Top 100</b>
12. Operating surplus	<b>10%</b>
13. Staff costs	<b>50%</b>
14. Estates grade A/B condition	<b>97%</b>
15. IT performance	<b>8:10</b>
16. Overseas and TNE recruitment	<b>6000</b>
17. Alumni/development	<b>£15m</b>
18. Eco Campus	<b>Gold</b>







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