

Faculty Education & Student Experience

Strategic Plan 2022-2027

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FOREWORD



Welcome to the Faculty of Brain Sciences. We are a global leader in research and education into the mind and brain, and home to some of the most influential and creative academics in the field. UCL is the top-ranked university in the UK for research power in Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience, according to the UK's Research Excellence Framework 2021.

Our vision for the future is to use our world-leading expertise in brain sciences to solve some of the world's greatest health challenges, transforming society by reducing the global burden of disease.

We offer a wealth of scientific and clinical expertise and facilities, from laboratory benches to patient care, and our research and educational programmes are highly interdisciplinary. We provide teaching and research training to around 3,500 students each year from across the world.

The Faculty is comprised of the Division of Psychology & Language Sciences, the Division of Psychiatry, the Queen Square Institute of Neurology, the Institute of Ophthalmology, the Ear Institute and the Institute of Prion Diseases.

Through research-embedded education, we aim to prepare our students not only to succeed but to become the next generation of experts in brain sciences. Our extensive collaborations with industry and clinical partners enables us to share our knowledge and put our cutting-edge research to use in developing clinical studies and innovative technologies.

We are committed to providing an inclusive environment, which promotes equality of respect and opportunity for all members of our diverse community. Every student, regardless of their background, race, gender or religious beliefs, will have equal opportunity to contribute, learn and succeed to make the most of their talents and experience.

This ambitious Education Strategy builds on the Faculty's successful established educational offerings to ensure our students are prepared for future leadership, citizenship and enterprise. It aims to reflect the highest standards of research, active learning and enquiry in psychology and language sciences, neuroscience, psychiatry, mental health, and vision and hearing sciences.

By harnessing our expertise in learning technologies and pushing the boundaries of current research and clinical practice in the brain sciences, we aim to lead the way in transforming the lives of future generations.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Alan P. Thompson". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Professor Alan Thompson
Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Brain Sciences and Pro-Provost London

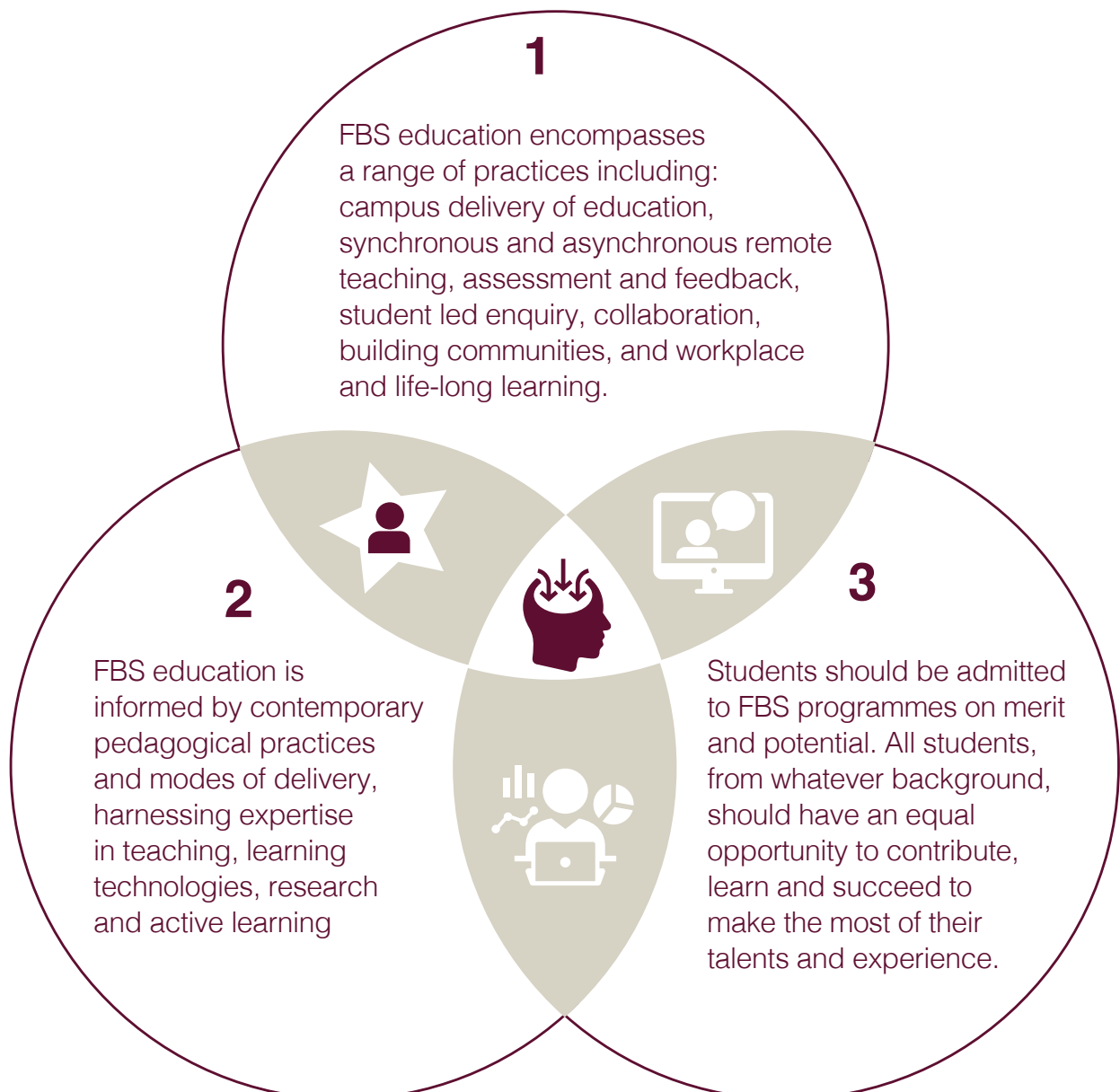
VISION

The Faculty of Brain Sciences (FBS) should offer an engaging, dynamic and high quality active learning experience in which all members of our community (students, teaching, academic, research and Professional Services staff) can contribute and collaborate.

MISSION

We strive to make Brain Sciences education a rewarding and stimulating experience; to prepare students for future leadership, citizenship, enterprise and employability, and to reflect the highest standards of research, active learning and enquiry in psychology and language sciences, neuroscience, psychiatry, mental health, vision and hearing sciences.

CORE VALUES



GOALS

Long-term goals

1 Advance knowledge and enquiry, leadership, citizenship, enterprise and employability through learning, for students and staff



2 Improve quality standards in education, student experience and wellbeing, and ensure these standards are sustained across all FBS programmes



3 Develop stronger connections between UG/PGT students and Brain Sciences research, and more opportunities for students to engage with research



4 Promote more flexible opportunities for students and staff to collaborate with others within UCL and beyond



5 Eliminate existing inequalities in recruitment, support, participation and awards for UG,PGT and PGR students across FBS



6 Recognise, share and adopt best practice in education and student thinking and experience across FBS programmes



Short-term goals

2021-2022: Planning and preparation

- Promote the FBS Education Strategy across the Faculty and Division/Institute education networks – including a clear and coherent set of educational values
- Bring staff and students on board via Town Hall meetings
- Develop a Faculty implementation plan with the education leadership team
- Specify key performance indicators for quality standards at UG, PGT and PGR levels using metrics such as NSS, PRES, SSCC minutes etc.
- Specify annual audit and reporting processes for 2022-2027
- Establish Faculty wide working groups for key areas to ensure representation from across the Faculty – to report to the existing Faculty Education Strategy Group
- Work with the Vice-Provost Education & Student Experience to ensure UCL and Faculty education objectives and actions are aligned and integrated



2022-2023: Goals and monitoring

- Assessment and feedback for learning: auditing and reporting standards and best practice
- Engaging with enterprise, industry and employability: best practice and new FBS bespoke opportunities
- EDI: Awarding and admissions gap reporting and an updated EDI health check for all programmes. Add as a standing item to all relevant committees at local and Faculty levels
- Identify and work towards reducing redundancy and complexity where necessary (e.g. research methods teaching across the Faculty)
- Consider new programme proposals that appeal to students from a number of different disciplines
- Establish new FBS short course/life long learning development group
- Student wellbeing – collaborate with Student Support and Wellbeing to develop more effective signposting for FBS students and support for staff
- International students: Investigate best practice and develop plans for change to ensure alignment of experience across the Faculty for this cohort.
- Enhance PGR student experience by implementing initial operating capability Researcher Development Programmes in all Institutes and Divisions, to ensure PGR students are part of a cohort with shared activities in addition to their research project
- Explore the possibility of extending Student Success Advisor initiative to our PGT cohort.
- ASER review of practices and implementation
- Provide better access to international student support currently offered by UCL, and fill gaps where necessary
- Education leadership, skills and support: working with higher education professional development colleagues, Student Support and Wellbeing and the Digital Education/learning technology team to offer more bespoke/partnership development opportunities for programme leads and teaching staff. Implement a formal mentoring scheme for all new programme directors

2023-2024: Goals and monitoring

(as above +)

- Programme content review – identifying and reducing complexity
- Programme delivery review – using learning technologies and maximizing blended learning opportunities under the ‘best of both’ principle, learning from education delivery during Covid.
- Establish a new FBS student thinktank: Solving Grand Challenges Without Boundaries – promoting citizenship and inclusivity and articulating the integration between FBS education, research, and the UCL Grand Challenges, particularly: global health and human wellbeing within a context of sustainability
- Assessment and feedback: a move to authenticity and application in collaboration within ARENA
- Short course/life-long learning – development of brand, industry partnerships, content and delivery
- Enterprise and employability: actions for all programmes, including engagement with alumni at programme level, in collaboration with UCL careers
- Promote new collaborative links across the Faculty (e.g. launching a new FBS student led podcast and/or magazine)
- Monitoring of international student experiences to identify shortcomings regarding support
- Review and identify improvements to Researcher Development Programmes to ensure PGR student experience continues to improve
- Adding value to existing UG programmes – particularly term 3
- Division/Institute specific PGR supervisor development programme in liaison with higher education professional development colleagues, Faculty PGR manager and the UCL Doctoral School
- EDI: FBS programme curriculum reviews and opportunities for student participation (e.g. student curriculum partners at UG level)

2024-2025: Goals and monitoring

(as above +)

- Launch a new Annual FBS Taught Programmes Education Conference (Spring 2025) – sharing best practice and rewarding academic, citizenship and innovation success for UG/PGT students and staff (Change Maker projects, HEA Fellowships etc.)
- New programme and cross disciplinary module proposals
- Ongoing short course/life-long learning delivery and review

2025-2026: Goals, monitoring and planning

(as above +)

- Formulate new education strategy



MEASUREMENTS OF SUCCESS

– what benchmarks will be used as indicators of success for our long term goals

1 Timetabled and student evaluated programme specific employability and/or leadership opportunities for all FBS students (e.g. meeting alumni, enterprise projects etc.)



2 Sustained/raised key performance and satisfaction indicator scores in relevant sector wide surveys/outputs at UG, PGT and PGR levels



3 New routes of study and/or cross-Disciplinary programmes or modules in place research



4 Clearly defined and articulated links between FBS research and education for all programmes



5 Significantly reduced inequities in admissions, participation and awards of those with protected characteristics



6 Annual UG/PGT FBS Education Conference with high level representation from all Divisions/Institutes, FBS education leadership team and alumni



List of contributors and acknowledgements

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Institute/Divisional Education
Directors and Professional
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Acknowledgements

Thanks to the FBS Vice Deans
for their support and collegiality

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