

Yorkshire Universities

2021–22 Annual
Report Summary



Since 1987, Yorkshire Universities (YU) has been the regional voice for higher education in Yorkshire. YU represents eleven universities and one specialist higher education institution. The vice-chancellors and principals of these institutions form YU's board of directors.

The twelve members are the universities of Bradford, Huddersfield, Hull, Leeds, Leeds Beckett, Leeds Trinity, Leeds Arts, Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam, York, and York St John, as well as Leeds Conservatoire. YU thus convenes a diverse eco-system of universities and higher education within and across Yorkshire.

Board of Directors



Professor Simone Wonnacott
Vice-Chancellor
Leeds Arts University



Professor Peter Slee
Vice-Chancellor
Leeds Beckett University



Professor Joe Wilson
Principal
Leeds Conservatoire



Professor Charles Egbu
Vice-Chancellor
Leeds Trinity University



Professor Sir Chris Husbands
Vice-Chancellor
Sheffield Hallam University



Professor Shirley Congdon
Vice-Chancellor
University of Bradford and
Chair of the YU Board



Professor Bob Cryan CBE
Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive
University of Huddersfield



Professor Susan Lea
Vice-Chancellor
University of Hull



Professor Simone Buitendijk
Vice-Chancellor
University of Leeds



Professor Koen Lamberts
President and Vice-Chancellor
University of Sheffield



Professor Charlie Jeffery CBE
Vice-Chancellor and President
University of York



Professor Karen Bryan OBE
Vice-Chancellor
York St John University

Welcome

A portrait of Professor Shirley Congdon, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bradford. She is a woman with blonde hair, wearing a patterned blue and white top, smiling at the camera. The background is a blurred blue and white architectural structure. The word 'Welcome' is written in large green letters across the top and bottom of the page, with the portrait centered between them.

Chair's Introduction

It is my pleasure to introduce the 2021-22 Annual Report Summary for Yorkshire Universities (YU). In my second and final year as YU Chair, it has been wonderful to see real progress and the growing collaboration that exists between members and with partners, which YU has been instrumental in forging.

The past twelve months has seen the higher education sector continue to manage the profound implications of COVID-19, particularly as we have moved towards the resumption of a degree of normality. I am proud that universities in Yorkshire have played a leading role in supporting the health response to the pandemic. This includes actions to promote positive mental health and wellbeing amongst our student population. Unfortunately, the impacts of the virus are still evident across all parts of the region; and they will be for some time. The economic instability we now find ourselves in will affect the sector, but YU members will work with government and local institutions to try and alleviate some of the implications of the 'cost of living' crisis.

This year, we embarked upon developing a new 2022-25 Strategy, finalised after an extensive period of consultation with members and partners. Having worked within an existing framework that shaped how YU could support the government's levelling up agenda, we now have a new plan that identifies YU's contribution towards the region's economic and social development and prosperity. The new Strategy builds on valuable activity undertaken in relation to climate change and the environment, health and well-being, skills and innovation, and enterprise.

One of the final decisions the YU Board took this year was to agree the submission of a business case to the Research England Development (RED) Fund for funding to establish the Yorkshire and Humber Policy Engagement and Research Network (Y-PERN). I was delighted that the proposal was successful, and that significant new investment will be coming to Yorkshire to take forward our ambitions to strengthen the partnerships between the region's research base and policymakers. The Capabilities in Academic

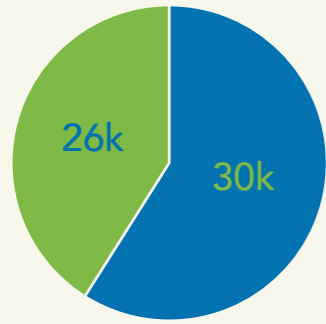
Policy Engagement (CAPE) Fellowship, based within the YU Executive Team, has been pivotal to the successful RED Fund bid. As was the Memorandum of Understanding we have with our friends at Yorkshire & Humber Councils.

In 2021, Professor Susan Lea announced that she would be stepping down from her role as Vice-Chancellor at the University of Hull at the end of the 2021-22 academic year. I would like to thank Susan for her commitment to YU, and we welcome Professor Dave Petley to the YU Board as he takes over from Susan at Hull.

I would also like to congratulate Professor Karen Bryan, my successor as YU Chair. Karen led YU's recent work on graduate employment and employability, which culminated in the publication in May this year of an authoritative report on the graduate labour market in Yorkshire, which included specific actions designed to increase support for the region's students and graduates entering the world of work. Karen will be an excellent Chair of the Board and I am looking forward to supporting her in her new role.

Finally, I am grateful to the Executive Director, Dr Peter O'Brien, and his team, for their support and advice during my time as Chair. YU finds itself in a strong position – perhaps the strongest for many years. With a new Chair, a new Strategy and real sense of purpose and momentum, the partnership has a very bright future.

Professor Shirley Congdon
Vice-Chancellor, University of Bradford



56,400 (FTE) jobs

Support over 56,000 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs in the region. Over 30,000 of these FTEs are staff within the universities themselves, with a further 26,000 based in the wider supply chain, underpinned by the expenditure of staff and students.

£3bn

Contribute nearly £3bn each year to the region's economy and play a critical role in generating jobs, creating innovation, talent, and enterprise and driving productivity.

212,000
Students

Annually have around 212,000 students studying in Yorkshire, a third of whom are originally from the region

—The majority of the students are studying full-time and for their first degree.
—Overall, there are more women enrolled in studying than men.



130+
countries

Attract a large and diverse student population from more than 130 countries.



Collectively the twelve members of Yorkshire Universities:



Invest £300 million in capital assets annually, helping to support local regeneration and capacity building in our region.

Spend **£250m** in the local supply chain



...and a further **£340m** in the rest of the UK.

£32m
£129m
£165m

Provide over £32 million worth of research consultancy.
Generate nearly £129 million in contract research.
Obtain over £165 million in collaborative research.



Play a vital role in the region's civic, social and cultural life through community outreach and volunteering, creating accessible and vibrant public places through libraries, arts and sports facilities.

67,770

Develop highly-skilled people by producing over 67,770 graduates each year and creating opportunities for the region's workforce.



Our Mission

Through our strategy, we will work collectively and collaboratively with partners to create more prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economies and communities in Yorkshire.

As a regional partnership of higher education institutions, we have a shared commitment to place and to supporting aspiration and opportunity.

Our Vision



A place-based approach

In our 2019-22 Strategy, we committed to adopting a place-based approach to the three priorities of: Ideas, Talent, Communities – the expected outcomes are:

- Stronger higher education contributions towards increased research and innovation activity in the region.
- Extended partnerships across sectors to improve higher level skills pathways into continuous development and learning.
- Ensuring our members are recognised as influential anchor institutions.

1. Ideas

2. Talent

3. Communities

We adopt a place-based approach to our activities, outcomes and priorities

What do we mean by a place-based approach?

A place-based approach reflects the distinct needs of people, businesses and communities in Yorkshire. It is driven by the principle of collaboration.

Objectives

YU's 2019-22 Strategy has focused on delivering activities against three priorities, each with specific objectives:

1. Ideas: Strengthen HE contributions towards increased research and innovation activity in the region.
2. Talent: Extend and deepen partnership to improve higher level skills pathways into continuous development and learning.
3. Communities: Ensure universities / HE are recognised as influential anchor institutions.

In addition, there are a number of cross-cutting enabling mechanisms: governance, finance, communications, partnerships, executive services, intelligence & analysis, monitoring & evaluation, each with specific objectives.

Highlights of our Achievements

In the third and final year of the 2019-22 Strategy:

We launched the 'Supporting Graduate Employment and Employability in Yorkshire' report. Written by a multi-stakeholder Task and Finish Group, convened by YU and chaired by Professor Karen Bryan, the report reveals how universities, students, employers and regional institutions can together help more graduates in Yorkshire enter the world of work or start up in business (see image a).

We successfully recruited a new team member to YU. Marina Tapley, our Policy & Research Officers, has been looking at consultation responses, such as to the government's proposals to reform higher education funding in England and she has been instrumental in working with the Graduate Task and Finish Group and developing the implementation phase.

Our Associate, James Ransom looked into the future impact of YU member institutions over the next five years for us. He also authored the Universities and 'Place Promotion' in West Yorkshire report (see image b).

Dr Richard Whittle seconded to us from the Capabilities in Academic Policy Engagement (CAPE) programme. He's been working with the Place-based Economic Recovery Network (PERN) and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, to lead an innovative project tasked with strengthening the use and application of university research to inform public policy in West Yorkshire (see image c).

Among many other things, Dr Peter O'Brien led on the development of the position statement underpinning the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between Yorkshire and Humber Councils and Yorkshire Universities. The MoU provides a framework for a long-term, strategic partnership between local government and higher education in Yorkshire and the Humber.

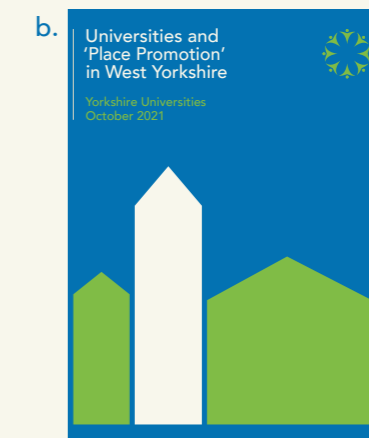
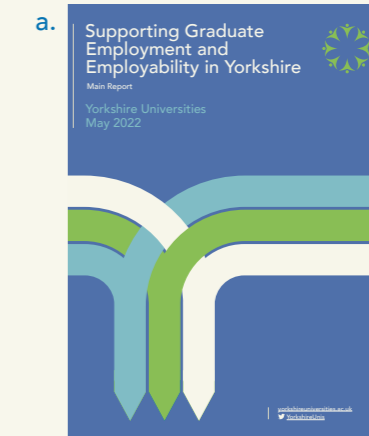
Building on the MoU, together with the PERN academic steering group, we developed a successful case to continue and expand on the West Yorkshire PERN model and obtained funding for it by Research England, thereby leveraging £3.9m funding, over three years, to a new and ambitious consortium led by Yorkshire Universities to establish the Yorkshire and Humber Policy Engagement and Research Network (Y-PERN).

Monika Antal led on the engagement with the Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commission (YHCC) through the Research & Evidence Panel. She also led on the development of a successful project on a sustainability service learning and brokerage network pilot, which will be funded by the UPP Foundation and rolled out later in 2022.

Emma Dick organised or helped us participate over 800 instances of discussions in the form of webinars, workshops, roundtables, working groups, task and finish groups, planning, admin and catch-up meetings.

In May we organised our second joint conference with Public Health England on student mental health. The event, hosted by the University of Bradford and chaired by Professor Shirley Congdon, brought together student welfare officers and health professionals to learn more about some of the established, innovative and successful examples of improving student's mental health in the region and across the country.

We developed a new YU 2022-25 Strategy in consultation with the Board, members and partners (see 'Future Plans' section).



Established groups and panels that YU participated in this year and made the case for our members and HE in the region:

- Universities UK Task and Finish Group on Universities and Economic and Social Recovery
- Leeds Beckett University External Engagement Advisory Group
- Yorkshire & Humber Academic Health Science Network Strategic Advisory Board
- Y&H Strategic Migration Group
- Y&H Applied (Health) Research Collaboration Strategy Board
- Y&H Climate Commission Core Steering Group
- Y&H Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) Anchors Network
- Universities and Regions Forum
- Space Hub Yorkshire Steering Group
- Made Smarter Y&H Steering Group
- Go Higher West Yorkshire Board.



West Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority and Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership groups YU was involved in during 2021-22:

- UK Shared Prosperity Fund Group (previously the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) Committee), Inclusive Growth and Public Policy, Innovation Network (and Framework development), WY Skills Partnership, WYCA Innovation Network
- Business Innovation and Growth Committee, Business Communications Group, Employment and Skills Committee, Local Digital Skills Partnership Board
- The YU Chair, Professor Shirley Congdon, is also a member of the LCR LEP Board and WY Economic Recovery Board.

Future Plans



The 2022-25 Strategy is underpinned by a shared vision of the power and potential of Yorkshire and its global connections, has four key priorities:

1. Championing civic leadership in Yorkshire.
2. Championing Yorkshire knowledge and skills.
3. Brokering and leading partnerships.
4. Promoting the value of higher education to society, culture and the economy.

Championing civic leadership in Yorkshire – in our communities, towns and cities. Our work will support leadership by universities in building places where inequalities are challenged and eliminated. We will enable institutions to play their part in generating a greater sense of belonging in communities. YU will work with partners to strengthen the unique brand of Yorkshire on the national and global stage. We will be ambassadors for our members, enhancing the region's profile and helping to attract Foreign Direct Investment, Trade and Jobs. We will represent and support the case for greater devolution in Yorkshire. We will encourage and enable creative solutions that address the key opportunities and challenges facing the region. We will support our members to strengthen resilience and belonging in our communities.

Championing Yorkshire Knowledge and Skills – providing a platform for collaboration in research, innovation and knowledge exchange. Our aim of attracting more R&I funding to Yorkshire will help generate greater productivity, prosperity and employment. We will prioritise six themes of Climate, Health, Technology, Social Justice, Infrastructure and Capability. We will work towards Yorkshire being the most compelling and creative place in the UK for start-ups and scaleups in key sectors. We will ensure that the region harnesses the full power and knowledge of our universities' graduates and post-graduates, through a proactive campaign. This will be the backbone of our employment and skills drive.

Brokering and leading partnerships – we will create the opportunities for strategic conversations that generate new ideas, fresh insights and innovation. We will have the confidence to challenge and disrupt thinking. We will also deliver on specific initiatives, which support our mission and priorities.

Promoting the value of higher education to society, culture and the economy – as an organisation, we will build a strong profile for the HE sector in Yorkshire through our use of data and intelligence. We will become expert in capturing and evaluating evidence on our performance as a sector. We will demonstrate how universities contribute to improved wellbeing and social mobility in cities, towns and communities.

The successful collaborative bid to the Research England Development (RED) Fund for funding to establish Y-PERN, signals a step-change in YU's ability to convene, identify and realise new opportunities for investment in the region. The University of Leeds will act as the accountable body for the Y-PERN project, on behalf of a wide consortium, which will be tasked with enhancing research policy engagement within and across Yorkshire. We believe that this project will raise the visibility and profile of YU, and it will help to strengthen our partnerships with key national and regional institutions and sectors

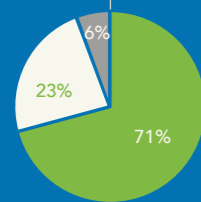
Financial Report

The Report and Accounts from which the information below has been sourced, have been examined by YU's Independent Examiner, Mark Heaton FCCA FCIE. He identified no concerns. More detail can be found in the 2021-22 Annual Report and Accounts on the YU website:

yorkshireuniversities.ac.uk/category/annual-reports

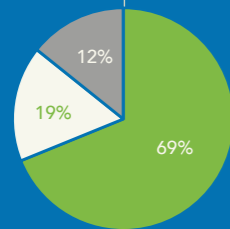
In 2020–21, the expenditure of YU was £209,000, comprising:

Staff related costs: £148,000*
Contractor costs: £49,000
Non-staff costs: £12,000



In 2021–22, the expenditure of YU's was £271,000, comprising:

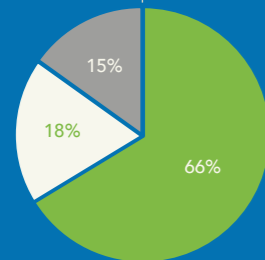
Staff related costs: £188,000
Contractor costs: £52,000
Non-staff costs: £31,000**



**£21,000 of this is the West Yorkshire CAPE fund

In 2022–23, YU's planned operational budget is £381,000, comprising:

Staff related costs: £253,000***
Contractor costs: £70,000
Non-staff costs: £58,000



***£23,000 of this is the West Yorkshire CAPE fund, £10,000 of this is the UPP and £87,000 is YPern



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