



UNIVERSITY OF
PLYMOUTH

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT

REPORT | 2021



Welcome



In the autumn of 2021, the University of Plymouth commissioned a comprehensive independent analysis of its socio-economic impact upon the city, region and UK. This summary provides an overview of some of the key statistics and findings.

Based upon robust data (across academic years 2019/20), we now know that the University of Plymouth contributes **£819m of output** to the UK economy, **£444m to UK GDP** and over **9,470 jobs** in the UK are dependent on the University and its activities.

The value to the South West, to our two Local Enterprise Partnership areas, and to the City of Plymouth is no less profound and far-reaching. Whether in the form of direct expenditure, indirect supply chain impact, or benefits in kind through public activity, the University is key player in the local and regional blue and green economies.

The University is so much more than a degree-awarding seat of learning; it is a driver for economic innovation and advancement and a catalyst for social change. It has proven repeatedly that it is *the* key driver for the region's recovery and levelling-up plan. With a focus on accelerating opportunities through clean growth, advancements in health technologies and the support of coastal and rural communities alongside the abundance of marine and maritime activities and partnerships, the University is making a significant contribution to the region in support of 'building back better'.

This impact report provides compelling evidence of the transformational impact of our research, teaching and learning and civic engagement. Our thanks to Viewforth Consulting for conducting this analysis.

Professor Judith Petts CBE,
Vice-Chancellor, the University of Plymouth



A leader of economic innovation



A catalyst for social change



A champion of sustainability

The University of Plymouth in context



The University of Plymouth is among the largest universities in the South West with more than 18,400 students in the city and around 6,600 more studying for Plymouth qualifications at partner institutions in the UK and overseas. With more than 2,700 staff and a turnover in 2019/20 of £228m, it is one of Plymouth's largest employers.

The University can trace its educational origins back to the 19th century. From trainee mariners who were educated and prepared for life at sea in the 1800s, to contemporary doctors, lawyers, biologists and engineers, the University is renowned for providing its students with the knowledge, skills and tools they need to succeed in society.

The University conducts teaching and research in a broad range of subjects, across three Faculties: Arts, Humanities and Business; Health; and Science and Engineering. Its stated strategic mission is that of 'Advancing Knowledge, Transforming Lives' and has a refreshed strategy underpinned by the principles of quality delivery; one-team working; institutional reputation, and sustainability.

With its main campus located in the heart of the city of Plymouth, the University also has a northern campus at Derriford, home to medicine and dentistry teaching and research, as well as nursing and dental education facilities in Truro and Exeter.

The University also has a network of partner colleges across the South West from Penzance to Jersey and Bristol to London, delivering foundation degrees, post-experience training and professional development alongside several key academic partners overseas with whom it shares research strengths and ambitions and has formed strategic partnerships.

The University has a proud reputation for conducting world-leading, impactful research across a broad range of fields. It operates three strategic Institutes that are focused across its core areas of research and knowledge exchange: Marine (including many aspects of Maritime and Engineering); Sustainable Earth; and Health. Alongside these sustained peaks of excellence, the University has been developing a critical mass of expertise in emerging, exciting areas such as Agri-Technology, antimicrobial resistance, cybersecurity and creative economies.

Our impact in 2019-2020

University impact on the city of Plymouth

Impact on the city of Plymouth

As one of the largest organisations in Plymouth, the University occupies a significant role in the city's economy with around **5,288 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs** dependent on its activities. This included 2,625 in the University itself with a further 2,152 jobs generated by the expenditure of the University, its staff, students and international visitors. This is equivalent to 4.7% of all Plymouth 2019 employment. Overall, the **University's activities were worth £443m to Plymouth** in terms of output generated and **£263m of GVA**, making up nearly 4.8% of Plymouth GVA.

University impact on Devon

Impact on Devon

At county-level, the University's impact is slightly increased, reflecting its broader operations such as its School of Nursing in Exeter and its sustainable supply chain, which prioritises local suppliers. A total of **6,233 jobs in Devon are dependent on the University's activities** in the county – 4,588 FTE jobs based on its own activities, together with 1,645 jobs created by the personal expenditure of students and the expenditure of international visitors. The University's activities were worth a total of **£530m of output**, and **£305m of GVA**, equivalent to over 1.2% of the Devon total.

University impact on Cornwall

Impact on Cornwall

The Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly LEP area is home to several University operations, such as three managed Innovation Centres, the Knowledge Spa on the Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust site, as well as two major academic partners. As a result, the University **generated 587 FTE jobs**, equivalent to just under 0.3% of the area's employment. This included 309 jobs by the University itself and 278 jobs through the impact of the personal expenditure of students and international visitors associated with the University. Overall, the University **supported £51m of output** and contributed to **£24m of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly GVA**.



International students

The personal spending of University of Plymouth international students was equivalent to 68% of the total £35m spending of ALL international visitors (both leisure and business visitors) to Plymouth in 2019.

University impact on the Heart of the South West (HotSW) LEP area

Impact on the Heart of the South West (HotSW) LEP area

Within the HotSW LEP area, the University again makes a significant economic contribution. Overall, its activities generated **6,618 FTE jobs across the LEP**, equivalent to roughly 1% of all HotSW employment. 4,320 jobs were generated by the University itself, with 1,562 jobs dependent on the personal expenditure of students and international visitors associated with the University. Furthermore, the University's activities drove **£563m of output** and contributed **£321m of HotSW GVA**, equivalent to almost 1% of the area's total.

University impact on the South West

Impact on the South West region of England

Across the entirety of the South West region, the University's activities generated **£772m of output**, which consisted of £492m through direct and secondary efforts, and £280m from student expenditure. This was equivalent to almost 0.3% of all South West employment and 0.32% of regional GVA. The University generated **9,018 jobs in total**, and **£421m of GVA**, equivalent to **0.32% of the regional total**.

University impact on the UK

Impact on the UK

Finally, on a national level, the University generated £533m (directly and through secondary effects) with an additional £286m of output from the personal expenditure of students, making a total of **£819m of output in the UK**. A total of **9,474 FTE jobs in the UK** were dependent on the University's activities (6,459 FTE generated by the University, and 3,015 created by the personal expenditure of students and international visitors). The University generated £310m of GVA (directly and through secondary effects) in the UK, with an additional £134m by the personal expenditure, making a total contribution to **UK GDP of over £444m**.

Export earnings

The University is an important export earner for the UK. As well as attracting significant numbers of students from other EU and from non-EU countries, the University also earned money from abroad for research and other services. The University's own direct export earnings were estimated at £29m. When the off-campus expenditure of international students and visiting friends and family of international students is considered (£23.9m), the University is responsible for **£52.9m of export earnings** in 2019/20.



A leader of economic innovation

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND CONSULTANCY

The University is a catalyst for economic development and attuned to the needs of its business community. It plays a key role in the innovation ecosystem of the region, supporting growth sectors across the blue economy, health technologies, agri-technology and digital fabrication.

It delivers innovation through research and development, knowledge exchange and through provision of specialist facilities, including the Coastal Ocean and Sediment Transport Laboratory (COAST) and Plymouth Electron Microscopy Centre.

Enterprise Solutions is the 'front door' into the University, connecting businesses to research expertise and facilities. Between 2018/20:

- It supported 800 businesses to develop new products, services or processes through research collaborations, consultancy and exploitation of IP or access to facilities
- The University was among the top five HEIs in the South West for consultancy services to external organisations and 22nd in the UK overall for provision of consultancy services to SMEs
- It was the leading HE provider in the region of facilities and equipment services.

Case Study: Ocean Futures

The University is a key player and academic partner in the region's marine and maritime strategy – Ocean Futures – which is seeking to capitalise on the natural assets of the South West to position it as a global leader in fields such as autonomy and digital, green ocean technologies. This includes:

- The country's first National Marine Park
- A Marine Enterprise Zone at Oceansgate
- A Freeport – one of eight chosen for the UK

The University is a partner in each of these projects, as it is in the Devon-focused Marine Business Technology Centre (MBTC), and Marine-i in Cornwall, both of which are helping to support innovation, growth and investment in high growth, high skill SMEs.

MBTC (2018-21) has provided innovation support for 300 marine businesses in Devon, and an overall budget of £4.7m has allowed further development of Smart Sound Plymouth and in-depth research, prototyping and testing programmes for nearly 100 organisations.

Marine-i (2017-2023) is delivering £15m of regional RD&I funding to 200 regional SME businesses including £4.3m of grant funding helping to create 40 major new products and services.

Since 2017, the University has secured £3.1m in new marine research, development and innovation project value through these projects in addition to millions of pounds in research funding secured by the COAST Lab to support marine renewable energy developments.



National Marine Park and Marine Enterprise Zone at Oceansgate

A catalyst for social change

CREATING OPPORTUNITY, TACKLING INEQUALITY

University staff use their skills and expertise to make a valuable contribution to the region, through pro bono public engagement, knowledge exchange or public service.

Whether taking on expert advisory roles for local and national government committees, or working for local community groups, hospitals and social care organisations, our staff deliver an estimated 255,000 hours of voluntary public engagement and public service activity, over and above their core jobs, worth around £17.6m per year.

Our students also make a huge contribution to the region, both through their learning and extracurricular activities. In many areas, community-based activity and external engagement are embedded into degree courses to create pioneering experiential learning models.

- Optometry students deliver around 4,000 patient appointments at the Centre for Eyecare Excellence
- Law students devote 19,000 hours per year to the Plymouth Law Clinics, delivering a social benefit totalling nearly £1.2m
- Plymouth students deliver more than 25,000 hours of general voluntary work each year, through conservation projects and sporting and cultural outreach programmes. The economic value of this is around £170,000.

Case Study: The societal value of dental health

Disadvantaged and socially marginalised or vulnerable people can access free NHS care at these centres, delivered by the students, and supported and supervised by qualified dentists and dental health professionals. And through the work of the Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise, a Community Interest Company that oversees the operation of the facilities, there is also an active community engagement programme.

In 2019/20:

- 19,840 dental appointments were provided, and 5,800 people received treatment ranging from simple scale and polish to complex surgery.
- This equates to a social value equivalent of £1.1m, and quality of life gains of £2.9m
- 55,000 people have benefited from a course of dental treatment since the clinics opened in 2008.



A champion of sustainability

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

The University embraces sustainability as a core principle in all it does, approaching it holistically, whether financial, physical, social or cultural.

To demonstrate its commitment, the University undertakes a complete sustainability review, against the principles of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), on a biennial basis. In so doing, it has established a framework for ensuring sustainability as a concept and a practice cascades throughout every aspect of its business, acting as an exemplar to others.

The University has won many awards in relation to its sustainability excellence, and in the 2021 Times Higher Education Impact Rankings (the only tables to be based upon the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)), it was placed inside the top 25 globally, as well as:

- **1ST GLOBALLY IN RELATION TO SDG 14:** Life Below Water
- **9TH WORLDWIDE IN RELATION TO SDG 17:** partnerships for the goals, for its efforts to support the SDGs through collaboration with other countries, the promotion of best practices and the publication of data
- **19TH IN THE WORLD IN SDG 2:** Zero Hunger, recognising its research on hunger, its teaching on food sustainability and its commitment to tackle food waste and address hunger among students and local communities
- **IN THE TOP 50 GLOBALLY FOR ITS WORK LINKED TO SDG 7:** affordable and clean energy and SDG 11: sustainable cities and communities.

Case Study: Net Zero in the South West

Achieving Net Zero is one of the aims of the region, and the University is leading and supporting projects focused on alternative energy sources and reducing consumption. Projects include:

- Partnership in the country's first electric seagoing ferry, e-Voyager, funded through the £1.4m Clean Maritime Call
- Leading the Marine e-Charging Living Lab, with £570,000 funding (also via the Department of Transport's Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition) to install a UK-first network of shore side charging facilities around Plymouth Sound. The lab will also develop and deploy an array of sensor technologies that can assess the environmental and operational impacts of e-charging
- Through the £2.6m Low Carbon Devon project, the University has established a Sustainability Hub on campus, and is delivering is the Devon Net Zero Innovation Fund. This offers funding of up to £7,500 to companies looking to develop new products or services for the low carbon sector in collaboration with University academics.



Looking forward – capital investment programme

The University is in the process of a significant investment in its campus and surrounding areas to ensure a first-class learning, research and working environment that is centred on low carbon design. The six-year capital investment programme, in the heart of the city, is forecast to total £246m and generate almost 5,800 jobs by 2026.

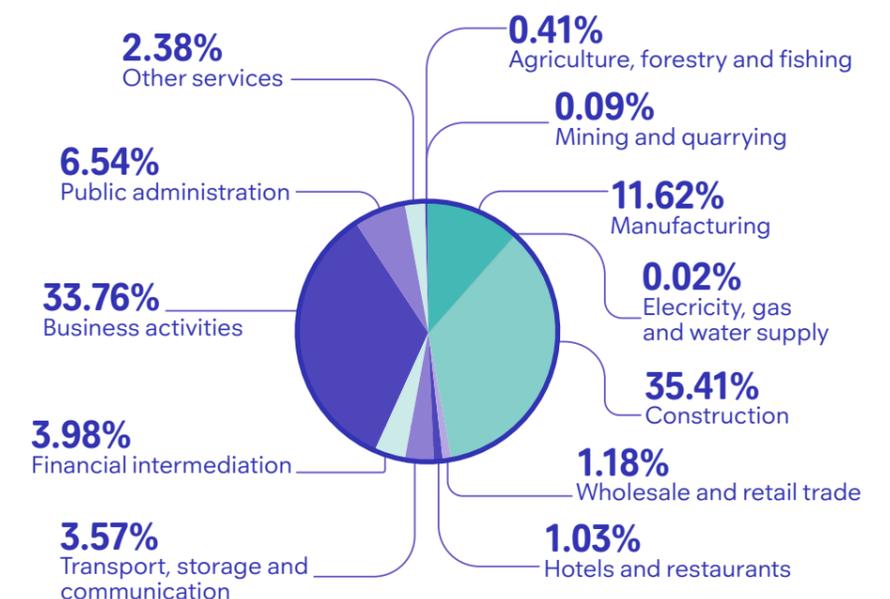


This investment will generate significant economic activity for the country, and particularly in the region and across Devon. Projections reveal that that £246m investment will generate a total of £486m output across the UK, contribute £247m to GDP and generate almost 5,800 jobs. For the South West, £438.3m is estimated to be the impact on output, with £223.9m GVA and 5,180 jobs generated. Half of the UK totals are expected to be realised in Devon (£243.4m/£124.3m/2,877 jobs), and the impact on the city of Plymouth is also substantial (£173.1m/£88.4m/2,046 jobs).

The academic years 2021/22 and 2022/23 are predicted to see the greatest numbers of jobs generated, with the majority of these being tied to the Construction sector (35.4%). This would correlate with the major capital works projects being undertaken in the refurbishment and extension of the new Babbage Building and the redevelopment of Intercity Place. Other industries and areas where jobs will be created include business activities (33.7%); manufacturing (11.6%); public administration (6.5%) and transport storage and communication (3.5%).

Employment Impact over six years on South West of England Industries from the University Capital Investment plans.

The pie chart represents the industries in which impact is generated in the South West (by employment share.) It can be seen that while the construction industry is the main single beneficiary, there will be an impact on a wide range of other industries as a result of expenditure flowing through the supply chain.



Conclusions and reflections

The Cultural, Social and Economic Impact report shows that the University of Plymouth is a major enterprise of considerable direct importance to the South West, creating extensive employment and output in Plymouth and making a significant contribution to regional GVA. It is one of the largest employers in Plymouth and plays a pivotal role in the city, acting as a catalyst and a proactive partner in its development and regeneration.

One of the most distinctive features of the University is the way in which 'external engagement' and partnership working is embedded across the institution. This is reflected across all aspects of its operations, in its teaching, its research and in its relationships with Plymouth City Council, the Local Enterprise Partnerships, the NHS and other public and private agencies across the South West. Because of this approach, the broader economic and social impact of the University's activities are profound and far reaching.

The University has developed extensive outreach relationships across the region and its influence spreads well beyond the city of Plymouth. It is one of the UK's largest providers of graduates for the health and social care sector and has become central to the provision of qualified health professionals across the South West. It is leading the UK in innovative approaches to addressing critical social and health problems through staff and student social enterprises.

The University is also acting as a bridge between the region and the wider world. Its coastal location and the city's naval and ship building history has been the backdrop for its development as an international centre of expertise in a range of marine engineering and environmental research and this in turn has become important to regional business development and capacity building.

A key player in the cultural and physical development of the city of Plymouth, the University acts as a catalyst, an honest broker and an investor in vital partnerships to improve the city's infrastructure and its future development as an artistic and cultural centre in the South West. It is proactive in promoting city arts and culture, hosting the largest contemporary art gallery in Plymouth and a wide-ranging public arts programme.

In conclusion, the University is deeply embedded in the community and this study has shown that it is generating substantial economic and social value for the city of Plymouth and for the wider region. Through its teaching, research and wider engagement activities it is making a real difference to people's lives.



The University acts as a bridge between the region and the wider world

The University's impact - summary



University's activities were worth **£468m** to Plymouth



c.£900m of output to the UK economy



University's activities were worth **£819m** to the UK



£474.5m to UK GDP



Overall, the University supported **£51m** of output and contributed to **£24m** of Cornwall GVA



Capital investment programme worth **£246m** creating an additional 5,000 jobs over 5 years



5,288 FTE jobs in the city of Plymouth dependant on the University's activities



£772m of output generated across the south west region by University activities



9,474 FTE jobs in the UK dependant on the University's activities



Our staff deliver an estimated **255,000** hours of voluntary public engagement and public service activity worth **c. £17.6m** per year



Ranked **No. 1 in the world** for our sustainable marine impact. SDG:14 Life Below Water THE Impact Rankings



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