1. UNIVERSITIES CREATE JOBS AND HIGH QUALITY EMPLOYMENT

Universities provide business support and help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to grow. For example, Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) has partnered with the Greater Manchester (GM) Business Growth Hub to deliver the GM High Growth Network, a programme offering local SMEs peer-to-peer support for accelerating their growth. And the University of Cumbria runs the Ambleside Rural Growth Hub – the first of 11 growth hubs in Cumbria to offer rentable workspace – which supports business collaboration, entrepreneurship and innovation in rural communities.

Universities provide the higher level skills to meet the job requirements of the future. For instance, the University of Chester’s new faculty of science and engineering at Thornton Science Park offers a suite of qualifications that address skills shortages in the engineering, chemical and automotive industries, working closely with the leading science and technology employers based in the Park.

Since 2012–13, graduates from universities in the North West have created nearly 1,600 new start-ups or social enterprises, supporting nearly 4,300 full-time jobs in 2015–16 alone. In the same year, universities and their staff created 54 new businesses supporting nearly 500 full-time jobs.

2. UNIVERSITIES INVEST IN THE NORTH WEST

The University of Central Lancashire is leading the regeneration of Preston by investing £200 million into the redevelopment of its campus including a new public square, extensive re-landscaping and a £30 million-plus Engineering Innovation Centre. Universities in the North West have already contracted for future capital projects worth nearly £1.1 billion, providing long-term investment in local economic priority sectors such as financial and business services, tourism, advanced manufacturing, logistics, energy and environmental technology, and the digital and creative industries.

Universities are long-term partners for the region. Together, the universities in the North West. have over 560 years of experience of working with the region, and are invested in its future.
3. UNIVERSITIES ATTRACT MONEY FROM CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Universities are rooted locally, but they represent their region nationally. They perform 22% of the North West’s research and development, often using funds drawn from outside of the region. They provide the necessary match funding to unlock investment spending for local projects from European Structural and Investment Funds and the UK government’s Local Growth Fund.

Universities are deeply embedded in the North West’s local growth infrastructure that helps the region to prosper, while being nationally and internationally connected. They sit on Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) boards and second staff to work with LEPs, work with councils and mayors, and provide evidence and analysis to support the development of strategic economic plans.

With further devolution from central government to come, it is becoming increasingly important to have such capacity and expertise locally.

4. UNIVERSITIES REACH AREAS OTHER INSTITUTIONS CAN’T

Universities are working through local consortia such as the Greater Manchester Higher Partnership to improve higher education participation in disadvantaged areas and to drive social mobility. Through work such as the University of Liverpool’s Merseyside Young Medics programme, which supports able year 9–13 students from under-represented groups with an interest in studying medicine or health-related subjects at university, they are central to addressing disparities at local level.

Universities also utilise international connections and expertise to benefit their local areas. Lancaster University’s Lancaster China Catalyst Programme has supported up to 400 local SMEs to become established in China, helping them cut through red tape, source suitable graduates and get advice on doing business in the Far East. Three Liverpool universities also work with local partners on the It’s Liverpool in China initiative, which aims to encourage investment and build Liverpool’s business links with China.

Finally, universities in the North West have stepped up to help communities hit by economic decline and the collapse of large local industries. The Works, an initiative by MMU and the University of Manchester, has helped over 5,700 local residents from the most deprived areas of the city to find jobs, develop skills and access training.

5. UNIVERSITIES ATTRACT SKILLED PEOPLE TO THE AREA

The North West’s universities attract 76,880 students from the rest of the UK, and a further 36,735 international students who spent £458 million in the local economy in 2014–15.

In many cases, they are also among the largest employers in the region. For example, the universities in Manchester are three of only 105 businesses with over 250 employees located in the city, and together provide jobs for over 15,000 people.

Businesses looking for skilled workers or access to research and business support often set up close to universities, or in incubation centres managed by universities. One example is Sensor City, the University Enterprise Zone created by Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) and the University of Liverpool which will establish, house and support commercially viable high tech businesses working on sensor systems and applications.

A skilled local population is also vital for attracting inward investment. With over 250 digital businesses, the University of Salford-led MediaCityUK is the largest purpose-built media location in Europe and the second most important digital skills hub in the UK. It benefits from on-site delivery of degrees and development courses from the university and a University Technical College, UTC@MediaCityUK.
YOUR LOCAL UNIVERSITIES HELP...

LOCAL BUSINESSES
Universities in the North West work with thousands of – mostly small – businesses. Last year they signed nearly 28,100 research, consultancy or facility contracts with businesses and charities. Forms of collaboration include co-owned apprenticeships, knowledge exchange, development of curricula, and internships and placements for students, and innovation and business support to help firms grow. All universities in the North West also offer bespoke company training.

Lancaster University has recently been awarded a Small Business Charter emphasising a strong record of engagement with SMEs. An external review of Lancaster’s European Regional Development Fund projects revealed the university knowledge exchange activity boosted the economy by £15.80 for each pound received, almost double the national average of £8.70.

BIG BUSINESSES
MMU recently launched a digital and technology solutions degree apprenticeship programme combining a focus on technical computing skills with units on business and enterprise. The first cohort of 60 apprentices included employees from Barclays, AstraZeneca, Lloyds and Thales (as well as a range of regional SMEs).

COMMUNITIES
LJMU’s Centre of Advanced Policing Studies is working with Merseyside police to find new ways to prevent crime and protect local communities. The Royal Northern College of Music reaches out to its local communities through RNCM Engage, an initiative offering a range of exciting projects for people of all ages including a Children’s Opera, family days and a musical theatre company for young people.

SCHOOL-LEAVERS
Universities in the North West are planning to provide nearly 700 degree apprenticeship places in 2017–18 (up from 74 in 2015–16), giving students the benefit of industry experience with a leading company and a globally recognised degree.

LOCAL SERVICES
The jobs that North West communities rely on – the teachers, doctors and nurses – are trained at university. Universities in the North West are currently training around 6,900 nurses, 7,315 doctors and dentists and 9,520 teachers.

Universities in the North West are also at the forefront of transforming health and social care for local residents. Initiatives such as Our Health, Our Future, which brings together researchers from the University of Manchester and the NHS with secondary school students from areas of Manchester with very low health outcomes, are helping address local public health challenges including smoking, obesity and alcohol.

All universities in the region work closely with local schools to raise attainment and aspiration among children and young people. For example, MMU is the ‘key academic partner’ in the Co-operative Academies Trust, which brings together eight local schools. The trust’s work – which includes MMU academics conducting staff development sessions in schools and supporting curriculum development – is helping pupil outcomes to improve faster than the national average.
‘Lancashire boasts a significant concentration of HEI excellence with strong relationships building between these institutions. For example, Lancaster University and UCLan are working with the LEP to develop initiatives focused on their respective competitive strengths and complementarities to support the growth of Lancashire.’

LANCASHIRE LEP STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PLAN

## HIGHER EDUCATION PROVIDERS IN THE NORTH WEST

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<td>Edge Hill University</td>
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<td>Liverpool Hope University</td>
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<td>Liverpool John Moores University</td>
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<td>Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine</td>
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<td>Manchester Metropolitan University</td>
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<td>Royal Northern College of Music</td>
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<td>The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts</td>
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## FURTHER INFORMATION

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