



Modern University
of the Year

Reflecting on 2021/22

Welcome from the Vice-Chancellor



Dr John Cater CBE DL
Vice-Chancellor



Ambitious. Aspirational. Innovative. Genuine. Community-minded.

These are just some attributes Edge Hill University shares with its students, staff and numerous partners.

We demonstrate them day in, day out through the impact of our teaching and research and our ground-breaking partnerships that are making a real difference.

And they can be seen through the continuous investment we're making in our outstanding facilities and our student experience.

This Annual Review is just a snapshot of Edge Hill's role in supporting a broader ecosystem – educating and training the key workers of tomorrow.

We know the Edge Hill experience is a special one. But we're not alone, we've been formally recognised for it too.

We are the Modern University of the Year in *The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2022*, reflecting the national profile we've built and our ambition for our students.

We endeavour to respond to our students' needs and expectations – and those of their future employers – offering them the best academic and pastoral support and enviable facilities, from the newly opened Medical School to the forthcoming Life Sciences building.

We are not at the end of our journey. We are forever learning, growing and striving to make a difference to our students' lives and to broader society.

Thank you for your continued interest and support.
We hope you enjoy reading our year in review.

John Cater



Who we are



Dr John Cater CBE DL
Vice-Chancellor

“It has been an **incredible year of successes** for Edge Hill despite the **enormous challenges** of the pandemic, and I **could not be prouder** of the students and staff who make each and **every one of our achievements** possible.”

At a glance

Established in

1885

Students

14,000

Staff

3,000

Alumni Network

100,000+

95.3%

of students employed
or in further study within
15 months of graduation
(Graduate Outcomes 2019/20)

Top 3

in the North West for
Student Satisfaction
(Complete University Guide 2022)

Top

North West University
of the Year
(Whatuni Student Choice Awards 2022)

We are in the top one thousand universities in the world in the *Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2022* for outstanding performance across teaching, research, knowledge transfer and international outlook.

We are also recognised on the global stage in the *Times Higher Education Young University* rankings, which names the world’s best universities under 50 years old. Edge Hill is the only 21st Century UK university to make the list.

Modern University of the Year

Edge Hill crowned Modern University of the Year

Edge Hill University has been named as the Modern University of the Year in *The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2022*.

The prestigious award highlights the University's continuous investment in the student experience, its quality of teaching, outstanding facilities and courses that are designed to meet the needs of employers in a competitive jobs market.

Alastair McCall, editor of *The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide*, said: "Ranked in its highest position yet in our academic league table, Edge Hill is one of the shining stars of the modern university sector. Led for nearly 30 years by John Cater, Edge Hill has established a profile nationally as a go-ahead institution with ambition for its students.

"A new Medical School is the latest addition to a university estate and a course offering that is expanding all the time. Big gains in this pandemic-influenced year in our rankings for student satisfaction with teaching quality and their wider university experience demonstrate a university responsive to its students' needs and one capable of matching their expectations.

"After 18 months of turmoil across all walks of life, our University of the Year awards this year highlight exceptional achievement in adverse circumstances. For its ability to deliver in this regard, as well as long-standing achievement more widely, Edge Hill is also one of just five to make the shortlist for the overall UK University of the Year, in addition to its win as Modern University of the Year."



Ambition for students



Alastair McCall
Editor,
The Times and
The Sunday Times
Good University Guide

“**Edge Hill** has established a profile nationally as a **go-ahead** institution with **ambition** for its students.”

Ambition



Ambition for students

Edge Hill's exceptional students share £2m in scholarship awards



Edge Hill's exceptional students have shared more than £2m in scholarships as a thank you for their contribution to university life.

The awards are for students who have helped raise the profile of Edge Hill, supported others or excelled academically – often despite challenging personal circumstances.

Worth up to £2000, they aim to help students fulfil their potential. Many use them to further their studies or travel to work placements.

The nine scholarship categories recognise different accomplishments. This includes academic achievement, sporting prowess or doing something remarkable outside university.

Both current and prospective students have the chance to apply or be nominated, depending on the award.

“Scholarships recognise the fantastic achievements of some of the University’s most talented and inspiring students. Their achievements and ambitions are always humbling.”



Lynda Brady
Pro Vice-Chancellor
(Student Experience),
and University Secretary



Third-year psychology student, Juris Savostijanovs, has been awarded for advancing the department’s virtual reality research.

He’s been helping transfer real-life experiments into digital versions. They include applications to help people with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) better understand and work with each other.

Juris, who also works as a care worker, has put the award towards his own VR headset for remote research.



Second-year education student Emilia McCrobie has been awarded for improving young people’s life chances while caring for her chronically ill mum.

During sixth form, Emilia volunteered at a local school and children’s tutoring and befriending service.

Her volunteering and caring experiences – combined with the knowledge from her studies – have encouraged her to pursue a career supporting young carers and disadvantaged young people.



Jessica Bennett – third-year dance student and President of Edge Hill’s Dance Society – has been commended for using dance to help improve people’s lives.

She has mentored young dance students from all backgrounds and assisted with online dance sessions for people with Parkinson’s during the pandemic.

Jessica will use the award for more dance training, building on her already impressive range of styles from Brazilian Capoeira to contemporary Indian.

Ambition for students

Edge Hill University: A place for everyone



Edge Hill continues to show its commitment to being an inclusive, safe, supportive and inspirational place for students of all backgrounds.

The University has launched two new panels to ensure that students with disabilities and those leaving the care system – or estranged from their families – have a great Edge Hill experience. One that meets their needs and expectations pre-entry and once they’ve enrolled.

Edge Hill recognises that listening to the opinions and suggestions of students with lived experiences of issues is vital in creating an inclusive campus.

As part of its widening participation agenda more than 600 students also benefited from inspirational keynotes, personal development seminars and employment masterclasses in a new social mobility programme.

Edge Hill signed up to RE:Action 24/7 – a joint initiative between education and employability firm TG Consulting and Enterprise Rent-A-Car – to open up more career opportunities for its disadvantaged students. The programme won in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity category at the AGCAS Awards for Excellence, which recognise good practice amongst Higher Education careers and employability practitioners.

And the Faculty of Education has become the fifth Edge Hill department to receive the Athena Swan Bronze Award. The global initiative recognises a commitment to support and transform gender equality within higher education and research.

Edge Hill’s commitment to widening access to medicine has also been recognised for redressing the balance in what is traditionally an ‘elite’ profession in this year’s *Times Higher Education* awards. The University has been shortlisted for the Widening Participation Initiative of the Year category.

“**RE:Action 24/7** will provide our students with the secrets of becoming more **resilient**, more **confident** and ultimately more **successful** in their future careers. **Opportunity for all** is a key component of the University’s ethos, and we want our students to feel **empowered** in the knowledge that they can reach their full **potential**.”



Becca Colley-Foster
Head of Careers

Ambition for students



Students from the 'Politics Lab' supported local MP Rosie Cooper's successful bid to have British Sign Language (BSL) recognised as a language in its own right within UK law.

They pulled together a detailed briefing document to support the campaign. It included research on BSL use and insight gleaned from interviews with a former Minister for Disabled People and the head of Edge Hill's Sign Language Society.



Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham thanked Edge Hill's paramedic, nurse paramedic and operating department practice students for their hard work during the pandemic.

In March, he visited the University's bespoke St James' facility in Manchester. He acknowledged the added responsibility many took on and their long working hours – all while continuing their studies.

“I'd like to thank all of Edge Hill's **health students to whom we all owe a **debt of thanks**. The students are a credit to both their lecturers and the NHS.”**



Andy Burnham
Mayor of Greater
Manchester



A second-year adult nursing student is representing the views of her counterparts across the country after being appointed Vice-Chair of the Royal College of Nurses (RCN) Students Committee.

Suzanne Davies – voted in after going head-to-head with four other students – is using her role to push for more diversity in the profession.

The RCN is the world's largest nursing union and professional body with 465,000 members.



Kate Wilson, an MRes Creative Writing student, has won Edge Hill's Dame Janet Suzman Playwriting Prize for her timely play about two men imprisoned for fighting against Soviet Russia in the 1950s.

Judge Dame Suzman described *The Forest Brothers* as “singing to the time we are all living through” as it explores the themes of physical and mental struggle.

“I have seldom read a play so spare, so threatening, **so apt for the times we live in... It ought to be sent to The Royal Court before too long as it's so timely.”**



Dame Janet Suzman DBE
Actress and Edge Hill
Honorary Doctor

Ambition for students

Volunteering: A chance to give back and boost job prospects



Edge Hill actively encourages students to volunteer, recognising it can boost employment and provides a great opportunity to give something back.

Through the University’s extensive third sector network, more than 200 organisations have benefitted from students keen to volunteer. Arran Heap is one of them.

He spent hundreds of hours volunteering at Gorse Hill Nature Reserve in Aughton while studying for his ecology and conservation degree.

Arran credits his volunteering experience with giving him a foothold in the industry. He is now a Conservation Project Officer for Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire and Merseyside (CLM) and is running the first community-led tree planting programme in his home town of Blackpool.

“Arran contributed hugely to Gorse Hill during his time volunteering with us. It’s fantastic to see him making a difference by putting the skills he learned through volunteer work to great use in his career.”



Jonathan Atkins
Reserve Manager,
Gorse Hill Nature Reserve



Two sports coaching and development students who graduated with firsts were recognised for their dedication and hard work by the professional body in their field.

Competitive hurdler and Masters student Sophie Warden, and lead sports coach Charlotte Oakley, won the Edge Hill Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) Graduation Prize.

CIMSPA endorses Edge Hill’s sports programmes, giving degrees an industry-recognised quality mark.



Musical theatre students have had the chance to perform and work backstage in the premiere of new musical *The Girl in the Hat*.

The Arts Centre event aimed to give students valuable “real world” professional production experience.

Showcasing the life of fashion editor Isabella Blow, it’s the work of composer Ollie Hancock and writer Ed Payne. It also has the support of Andrew Corcoran – a West End musical director and associate tutor at Edge Hill.

“I really think the students got a lot more out of taking ownership of something totally new. They helped start something that they can call their own - it’s an opportunity that doesn’t come along often in the industry.”



Ollie Hancock
Composer

Enhancing employability



Dr David Snow
Associate Medical
Director for Medicine
and Emergency Care,
Southport and Ormskirk
Hospital NHS Trust

“Many youngsters aspire to a career in medicine but don’t necessarily have the means. Edge Hill is committed to **nurturing a new generation of doctors** who, in turn, will help the medical workforce better reflect the local community. Once they graduate, they will provide **a crucial boost to healthcare** around the North West.”

Employability



Enhancing employability

Marketing student lands dream job after impressing on placement



A marketing with digital communications student who impressed her work placement bosses has taken up a full-time role with the company now she's graduated.

Anna Bolger is now a fully fledged team member at Warrington-based digital agency Morgan Brading after working part-time alongside her studies. It followed a successful three-month placement early in 2021.

Anna has used her skills to improve the agency's social media presence and has equipped them to offer bespoke TikTok services, with Anna leading their creation, selling and delivery.

Earlier this year, Anna was awarded Edge Hill's On-Course Excellence Scholarship after being nominated by her tutor and work-related learning coordinator.

“Providing our students with access to high-quality placement opportunities is a vital part of their university experience, helping them to stand out to employers, gain new skills and put their knowledge into practice.”



Mark Allanson
Pro Vice-Chancellor
(External Relations)



Survivor Bethany Kydd who was hospitalised with anorexia has achieved her dream of becoming a specialist eating disorder nurse.

Thanks to her commitment to a strict recovery plan and the support of Edge Hill, as well as support from her family, she was able to complete her Nursing (Mental Health) degree, gaining a First. She is now working at Springview Hospital, Wirral in her dream role, using her own experiences to support patients.



Adult nursing graduate Nsiku Banda has three reasons to celebrate – a Masters distinction, a special award and a new job.

Already Masters-qualified in computer science, while on placement, Nsiku was named Star Student Nurse by Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (LUHFT). He now works in Aintree Hospital's Acute Cardiac Care Unit.



TV production management graduate Becca Martlow has credited her course's industry links with helping her take her first steps to building a career in film and television production.

Gaining valuable experience in the industry during her course, Becca is currently working on a programme being produced for Sky Documentaries, as well as a recurring production for Channel 4.

Enhancing employability



The North West’s first cohort of BSc (Hons) Nursing Apprentices celebrated their graduation – and new jobs. Apprentices on the trailblazing new adult nursing degree have excelled in their studies, with many of them already working in their new profession, thanks to the partnership between Edge Hill and St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust (STHK).



Business School students have been undertaking placements with small and medium enterprises (SMEs) across the North West. Ken McKevitt, Tom Radford, Will Mitten and MBA student Nicholas Webster will help the companies grow while developing their own problem-solving and analytical skills. The Student Residency Scheme is run by Edge Hill’s award-winning SME Productivity and Innovation Centre (PIC).

“Being able to provide our students with such **real-world experience** working on **live projects** with SMEs will make a **real difference** to the students’ **employability prospects**.”



Michael Banford
Associate Director (Employability and Enterprise),
Faculty of Arts and Science



A former drama student has been chosen as resident actor for CBBC’s *Engineers* – a show that designs dream dens for children. Daniel Hippolyte Carmichael has other successes under his belt. He set up Blank Space Theatre alongside his wife, running inclusive drama-based workshops. He is also co-founder of Hippolong Productions – a BBC-registered production company focused on giving a voice to under-represented groups and areas.



An innovative scheme set up to help young filmmakers with the first steps of their careers has won a national Kickstart Award. The Institute for Creative Enterprise (ICE) at Edge Hill University established 21 Media to create a route into the industry for 16- to 24-year-olds on Universal Credit who are at risk of long-term unemployment. Having been funded by the Government’s Kickstart scheme, 21 Media has now been chosen for an award out of thousands of entries in the Innovative Employment and Support for Young People category.

“**21 Media** gives **under-represented voices** in film a voice, it shows working class young people **shining as they should**.”



Carl Hunter
Senior Fellow in Filmmaking,
Institute for Creative Enterprise (ICE)

Enhancing employability

Edge Hill students team up with rugby champions



Rugby League champions St Helens R.F.C. teamed up with Edge Hill to offer students the chance to work for a professional sports club.

The official partnership between Saints and the University's Faculty of Arts and Sciences has seen students involved in sports projects and broader business activities.

To date, they have included a photoshoot on campus for the latest kit launch and development of the club's digital newsletter.

Mike Rush, Saints CEO – and former Edge Hill student – is committed to supporting students' employability through these "real life" opportunities.

He's working closely with the Employability, Enterprise, Entrepreneurship and Innovation (E3i) department and Edge Hill's Work-Related Learning team.

“We know that it is very likely that the next wave of staff we employ will graduate from Edge Hill University, so to immerse them in this real-life working environment can only be of benefit.”



Mike Rush
Chief Executive Officer,
St Helens R.F.C.



Newly-qualified teacher Rachel Brodie has secured a competitive traineeship at the popular Wordsworth Museum in the Lake District

Rachel will be putting her BA (Hons) Primary English Education with QTS and her passion for history and heritage to good use at her internship, which will enable her to learn how the popular attraction is run as well as delivering educational workshops all about Wordsworth and the Romantics.



Two television degree graduates are already on their way to building their dream careers after securing roles with the BBC.

Jay Smith is now a runner on BBC One's BAFTA award-winning documentary series *Ambulance*.

Owen Brady is a production management assistant in the Acquisitions and Commissioning team at BBC Children's.



Edge Hill has won an industry AGCAS awardsfor its new social mobility programme developed with national employers.

RE:Action 24/7 – developed by TG Consulting and Enterprise Rent-A-Car – won the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity accolade for giving hundreds of students access to a seven week programme of keynotes, personal development seminars and employment masterclasses.

AGCAS is the expert membership organisation for higher education student career development and graduate employment professionals.

Excellence in teaching



George Bryant-Aird
Head of Student Voice,
EHU Students' Union

"Academic staff are the reason we are all here. Without those individuals who ensure they **engage and challenge** their students, universities simply would not be the **diverse and free-thinking communities** that they are."

Teaching



Excellence in teaching

Grateful students reward their faculty heroes

Deserving staff have been acknowledged for going the extra mile in this year's annual student-led staff awards organised by the Students' Union.

Voted for by students, the awards recognise the hard work and commitment of academic and support staff.

The winners for outstanding teaching were Collette Gavan, Ella O'Doherty and Eleanor Feeney.

Personal tutor winners were Sarah Pinder, Bethan Garrett and Nichola Murphy.

The non-academic support staff winners were Liam Bullingham, Kenneth Williams and Beth Spencer.

"My colleagues and I are in a **privileged position** of being able to help the younger generation **shape their futures**. We do not do this for thanks. But when students take the time and trouble to say thank you, you can't help but have a personal fist pump moment with a **huge smile**, knowing that your efforts have been appreciated."

"In the spirit of *Twelfth Night*, I reply that 'I can no other answer make but thanks and thanks, and ever thanks' to you for this honour... I play a **heartfelt tribute** to all my students who have been **awe-inspiring** in carrying on through a pandemic and continuing to work so hard with me to **chase their dreams**."

"We try to put the **students at the forefront** of everything we do. I'd really like to thank all the students for their nominations and also the staff who **supported me to develop and run this programme**."



Dr Collette Gavan
Senior Lecturer
in Computing and
Information Systems,
Faculty of Arts and
Sciences



Ella O'Doherty
Senior Lecturer,
Secondary and Further
Education,
Faculty of Education



Eleanor Feeney
Programme Lead for
the Nurse Paramedic
Programme,
Faculty of Health, Social
Care and Medicine



Two Edge Hill University academics who go out of their way to give students an outstanding experience were recognised for their work.

Dr Linda Kaye – a research specialist in cyberpsychology, and Head of Biology Professor Paul Ashton were both nominated for PHD Supervisor of the Year in the Postgrad Awards 2022 run by FindAMasters.com.

Edge Hill was the only university represented more than once in the shortlist.



Professor Nick Hulbert-Williams has been recognised for his long-standing research into the psychological impact of cancer on patients, their families and caregivers.

The Head of the Department of Psychology was presented with the Research Advocate Award by North West Cancer Research in June.

Professor Hulbert-Williams promoted the charity's work in virtual events during the pandemic and has built one of the largest cancer survivorship research groups in the UK.



Dr Dawne Irving-Bell, who was the first in her family to go to university, has been awarded a prestigious National Teaching Fellowship.

The Reader and Senior Learning and Teaching Fellow has been confirmed as a winner in the 2022 National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS).

The scheme celebrates and recognises individuals who have made an outstanding impact on student outcomes and teaching in higher education.

Dr Irving-Bell is passionate about widening participation and helping improve access to address education inequality.

Excellence in teaching

National dance award for 'inspirational' lecturer



Dance teacher Michelle Man was named 'inspirational lecturer' of the year in the One Dance UK awards.

Edge Hill's Senior Lecturer and Programme Leader in Dance, was selected by an expert panel of judges who worked through more than a thousand public nominations featuring dance artists, practitioners, choreographers, companies and scientists.

A Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, Michelle has been teaching for more than 30 years across a range of professional, institutional and community contexts in Europe and the UK.

Her passion for dance involves performing, teaching, working in the community, and researching. She also brings dance to other disciplines such as architecture, sports and health.

One Dance UK is the sector support organisation, promoting a stronger, more vibrant and diverse dance sector.

“I nominated Michelle for all of the work she does in and outside of the dance studio. Michelle was an important part of my university journey and I couldn't think of anyone more deserving of the award.”



Laura Stevens
BA (Hons) Dance graduate



Dr Ardhendu Behera, Reader in Computer Vision and Artificial Intelligence, has been praised for bringing his experience and real-world examples into the classroom. He helps students learn how computer vision and AI can be applied to solve real problems.

All of his teaching on the Robotics and AI, Intelligent Systems and Programming modules is driven by his current research – making our students' learning as authentic as possible.



Dr Ian Cushing has been recognised for his research into language discrimination in schools.

Edge Hill's Senior Lecturer in English and Education received The Brenda Eastwood Award for his work encouraging educators to 'shift the way they listen, rather than asking young people to shift the way they speak'.

Dr Cushing looks at how beliefs around improper ways of talking – typically associated with disadvantaged children and those of colour – mean linguistic capabilities are policed rather than positively recognised.

“Ian's work challenges the status quo of language, power and discrimination through research and interrogation of language and race in the curriculum.”



Janet Douglas Gardner
Associate Teaching Professor,
Panel Chair Diversity and Inclusion: Brenda Eastwood Award 2022

Outstanding facilities



Councillor Gordon Johnson
Mayor of West
Lancashire from May 2021
to May 2022

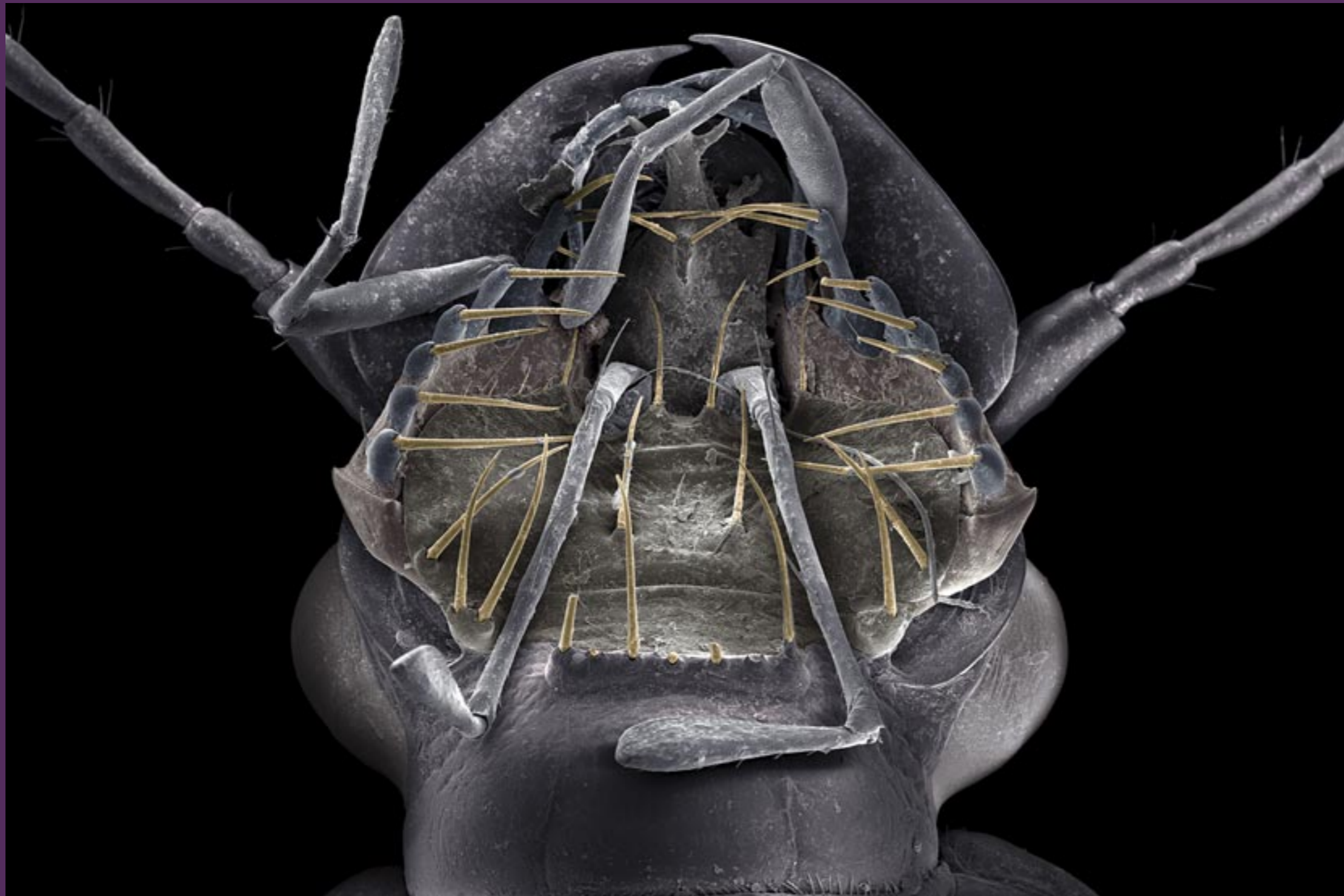
“I visited Edge Hill University while I was Mayor and was always extremely impressed by the **wonderful facilities** on the campus and **fantastic events**. The University looks **a fabulous place to study** and with the wonderful market town of Ormskirk on the doorstep students are sure to have a great time while they are there.”

Facilities



Outstanding facilities

New tech helps students see the world like never before



If you're wondering what the image is, it's the mouth of a ground beetle, seen through one of our new next-gen microscopes.

Following a £500k investment, we recently launched the JEOL Imaging Centre. It allows scientists and students to take detailed images at 100,000x magnification to discover more about the microscopic organisms and objects surrounding us.

It will enhance our biomedical research and give students the best possible educational experience.

“This will support us in our mission to give biosciences students the **best possible experience. The equipment will also **enhance our biomedical research** and open up new areas of investigation to our academic community.”**



Professor Paul Ashton
Head of Biology

Outstanding facilities



Edge Hill’s stunning grounds have won a Green Flag Award for the 11th year running.

It celebrates more than a decade of beautiful space for students, staff and members of the public to enjoy, as well as the environmental benefits it brings.

The award reflects the dedication of Edge Hill’s Facilities Management Team. They work hard in all weathers to maintain the extensive campus grounds to the highest standards – its lakes, rock garden, flower beds and open spaces.

The Green Flag Award scheme – managed by environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy – sets the benchmark standard for managing green spaces across the UK and worldwide.



Edge Hill has been ranked a top-tier university in a Uswitch study of the sector’s green credentials.

It’s been commended for its range of eco-friendly initiatives, including the use of solar PV and thermal panels, as well as its car share and Cycle to Work schemes.

The study also noted the University’s Sustainability Champions, Hedgehog Friendly Campus status and its campaigns to reduce food and energy waste.

“We are committed to managing the environmental impact of our activities, encouraging students and staff to help us reduce our carbon footprint and working together towards the national net zero target.”



Steve Igoe
Deputy Vice-Chancellor



Edge Hill was shortlisted in five categories in this year’s Whatuni Student Choice Awards (WUSCA), including ‘University of the Year’ – the only one in the North West.

Based solely on student views, Edge Hill was also shortlisted for Halls and Student Accommodation, Student Support, Facilities and Postgraduate.

The University’s award-winning student accommodation has been shortlisted for three global accolades in the Global Student Living Awards.

Our student halls are in the running for Best University Housing, Best Value for Money and Best Moving In Experience categories, based on direct feedback from tens of thousands of students about their student accommodation experience.



Major investment in Edge Hill is set to continue with Board approval for a new Life Sciences building that will transform the old core campus area.

The £16m facility will boost the University’s STEM offer and will support the three faculties of Arts and Sciences (Biosciences), Health, Social Care and Medicine, and the Faculty of Education.

The first building, scheduled to open in 2023, will focus on life sciences subjects. The second phase of the development is earmarked for 2026 and will support biomedical teaching.

The award-winning physical campus is a major factor in both attracting new students and providing an outstanding learning and living environment for current students. This continued investment in facilities will further enhance the overall student experience and contribute to the local economy by upskilling the STEM workforce of the future.

Research for impact



Ruby Cullen
year 7,
All Saints Catholic
High School

“My attitude has changed. I have gotten into little **habits to save energy** including walking more often, turning off taps when not using them and switching off light switches. I have definitely become **more aware** of global warming because of this project.”

Research



Research for impact

Edge Hill's 'world-leading' research officially recognised



More than half of Edge Hill's research has been classed as 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent'.

The Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 put 62% of the University's assessed research outputs in the top two categories, compared with 40% in the last cycle in 2014.

All submissions demonstrated some 4* – the highest grading possible – for both outputs and impact.

Since 2014, Edge Hill has worked hard to increase its research capacity through recruitment and nurturing existing talent.

The University has also benefitted from a 159% increase in funding and an additional 120 research students.

The Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 is the UK's system for assessing the quality of research in its higher education institutions.

“We are on an ambitious journey of growth, and the REF results are a very significant achievement, reflecting our commitment to producing quality research that has impact.”



Professor George Talbot
Pro Vice-Chancellor
(Research), and Dean of
Arts and Sciences

Research for impact

Helping tackle climate change from the ground up



World-renowned psychologist Professor Geoff Beattie and Edge Hill Psychology lecturer Dr Laura McGuire have joined forces for *The Great Community Climate Change Experiment*.

They want to assess whether young role models can convince adults to live more sustainably by showing audiences a film featuring Kirkby school children.

Funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), it documents the children’s journey as they engage with climate change messages and put them into practice.

And further funding from the AHRC and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) is allowing Dr McGuire to lead a project that uses creative arts, such as drama and rap, to teach secondary school pupils about the climate crisis.

Meanwhile, a new, community-led television station has launched in Wavertree to empower local people to make simple lifestyle changes to tackle climate change.

Edge Hill’s TV and Media expert Dr Elke Weissmann is working with researchers at the University of Liverpool’s Heseltine Institute for Public Policy, Practice and Place, and community group Love Wavertree CIC to get it off the ground.



Reader in Ecology Dr Anne Oxbrough has been part of a global team uncovering the vital role insects play in the decomposition of wood – supporting the carbon cycle and the health of forests.

Fungi are known to break down wood, but until now, there has been little understanding about how insects are involved.

The research will be used to provide evidence to support future global policy and was highlighted during the COP26 climate change conference in Glasgow.



Dr Aristides Tagalakakis was celebrated for his work on glaucoma alongside scientists and clinicians from King’s College London and Hokkaido University in Japan.

A reader in Gene Delivery and Nanomedicine, he’s helping develop a novel gene therapeutic that could vastly improve surgery outcomes.

The Kitty Heatley Memorial Research Prize and Medal recognises the team’s incredible work tackling the leading cause of irreversible blindness.



Professor of Child Health Literacy, Lucy Bray, has been part of an expert team researching the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Many suffered isolation and had education, health services, and other support disrupted or withdrawn – often worsening already limited provision.

The Ask, Listen, Act project involves universities in the Liverpool City Region and NHS organisations.

Research for impact

Calls for cultural change after
Edge Hill-led study uncovers scale of violence
against children in sport



Edge Hill-led research has uncovered the scale of violence against children in sport in the UK and across Europe, leading the calls for cultural change.

The Child Abuse in Sport: European Statistics (CASES) collected data from more than 10,000 adults on incidences of verbal harassment, physical violence, sexual abuse and neglect.

Mike Hartill, Edge Hill’s Professor in the Sociology of Sport and Director of Edge Hill’s Centre for Child Protection and Safeguarding in Sport (CPSS), jointly led the study – the largest of its kind and the first prevalence study into the issue in UK sport.

While it found that 85% of adults reported having a positive experience in sport as children, three-quarters said they suffered at least one instance of interpersonal violence inside sport before they turned 18.

The study showed that 65% of adults (aged 18-30) reported experiencing psychological violence as children inside sport, with 44% reporting experiencing physical violence.

Researchers hope the findings will help support a cultural shift, reminding sports organisations of their safeguarding responsibilities and the need to do more. The project involves developing resources to help them.

World Athletics say that “this research will inform the education, tools and guidance we will be creating with and for our Member Federations”.

“Ultimately, the study aims to provide insights and **develop resources** for the sport sector that will support their efforts to **safeguard children’s welfare.**”



Mike Hartill
Professor in the Sociology
of Sport

Research for impact



Programme leader for Creative Writing Dr Kim Wiltshire won over £90,000 for an arts project aiming to improve the health and wellbeing of NHS staff.

She has been awarded a British Academy Innovation Fellowship for her 20 years with Lime Arts. The charity runs activities from poetry writing to music and performance for workers at Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.



An Edge Hill-led project which uses the arts to tackle depression has been awarded £145,000 to scale up across the North West.

Developed with the University of Salford, Arts for the Blues recognises that creative psychological therapies involving drama, music and writing better suit some people than talking therapies.

The funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council will help the project reach more people, including those impacted by the pandemic.

“Arts for the Blues has already shown how it can have a tremendous impact, using a new approach to tackle a massive problem.”



Professor Vicky Karkou
Director,
Research Centre for Arts
and Wellbeing



An innovative project involving Edge Hill academics aims to understand how nature-based activities can improve the health and wellbeing of people in disadvantaged communities.

Reader in Education Dr Clare Woolhouse is working with her counterparts at Newcastle and Durham Universities, as well as young people and youth workers, on Rooted in Nature – an initiative awarded £177,000 by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.



Edge Hill’s Professor of Palliative and End of Life Care Barbara Jack is part of a team exploring the impact of hospital chaplaincy support during the pandemic.

Together with academic and clinical staff, she has been awarded a grant for a national study into the spiritual care experience of patients, families and staff at a time of isolation and significant risk to life.



A research team, led by Edge Hill academic Professor Chris Littlewood, has been awarded £1.7million by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) to investigate potentially ground-breaking post-operative shoulder rehabilitation.

As chief investigator, Professor Littlewood will work in collaboration with the Derby Clinical Trials Support Unit at University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust – in a national study exploring a new approach to rehabilitating shoulder muscles and tendons after surgery.

He described the study as “the largest study in the world in this clinical area to date”.

Collaborative thinking to benefit society



Jane White
Executive Director ,
Association of University
Directors of Estates
(AUDE)

“To turn a campus into a school within a week is a **massive effort**... The extent to which the **University community** set out to fix this really speaks of **strong civic pride**.”

Collaboration



Collaborative thinking to benefit society

Edge Hill takes centre stage in pushing for better mental health



Edge Hill has been recognised in both the Educate North Awards and the North West Coast Research and Innovation Awards for its mental health programme that’s making a difference to children and young people’s lives.

A partnership with Everton in the Community and Tate Liverpool, Tackling the Blues opens up the conversation about mental health through sports and arts-based activities.

Ongoing research and evaluation show that all pupils involved are displaying increased confidence and less anxiety, with improved literacy and emotional skills. Around 1,000 children have been supported by the project so far.

Edge Hill has been at the forefront of tackling the growing mental health crisis and influencing change for many years.

Most recently, Professor of Sport and Physical Activity, Andy Smith, has been urging the government to update its mental health policy to recognise the benefits of sport and physical activity in the wake of the pandemic.

Working with mental health charity, Mind, the Sport for Development Coalition, and Loughborough University, his research underpinned the policy brief *Moving for Mental Health*. It focuses on the benefits of community-based physical activity, particularly for low-income, under-served communities.

“This recognises our commitment to supporting the **mental health** of our **children and young people**, and confirms the importance of our **ground-breaking research** which has a **real impact** on the lives of young people, their schools and communities.”



Andy Smith
Professor of Sport and Physical Activity

Collaborative thinking to benefit society

Edge Hill awarded for giving local businesses the support to grow



Edge Hill is supporting local businesses to thrive and scale-up through specialist support, skills and knowledge.

Its Small and Medium Enterprise Productivity and Innovation Centre (SME PIC), launched in 2017, has helped 322 SMEs in the last 12 months.

The SME PIC's key Innovation Sprint Programme – delivered by the University's business experts – has supported SMEs in Lancashire to develop growth strategies by looking at their processes, technologies and structure.

And the programme has now been expanded into the Liverpool City Region, with the SME PIC working with the Combined Authority to allow 39 businesses to access this specialist support.

The SME PIC is also helping Edge Hill's business graduates into highly skilled jobs thanks to the hands-on experience it's giving them through its initiatives and research.

The centre's success was celebrated at the Educate North Awards, where it scooped the university sector's 'Business Collaboration and Partnerships Award'.

“It is great to see this innovative programme already helping businesses across the Liverpool City Region to grow. That is why it is important for us to put initiatives in place to support SMEs in the City Region who are looking to develop and tackle their scale-up challenges.”



Janice Mears
Head of Business Growth,
Growth Platform –
Liverpool City Region
Growth Company



Game Changers: Trailblazing Women in Sport

What is it like being a trailblazing woman in sport?
How have things changed? What does the future hold?

These were some of the topics in our lively discussion with Edge Hill graduate, sports pundit and ex-England footballer Sue Smith; Zainab Alema, *Times* Grassroots Sportswoman of the Year from Richmond Rugby who is aiming to be the first Black Muslim woman to play for England; Edge Hill honorary doctor and Chair of Barclays Women's Super League Dawn Airey; and Northern Ireland footballer and Edge Hill PhD student Simone Magill.

The event is available to watch on the University's YouTube channel.



watch the event

Collaborative thinking to benefit society

A positive response to primary school fire



The University was praised for its community spirit and quick-thinking response to a fire at a local primary school in summer last year.

Asmall Primary School in Ormskirk was up and running in a new temporary home on the University campus less than a week after the blaze.

Edge Hill’s response received a Reaching Higher Award in the Association of University Directors and Estates (AUDE) Awards.

This work has also been nominated for Outstanding Contribution to the Local Community in the *Times Higher Education* Awards, the most prestigious awards in the university sector.

“There’s a well-developed sense of civic responsibility at the University. It’s a close-knit community here. Many of our own staff had children at the school, and people worked hard from the very next day, rallying round, with an attitude of ‘anything we can do, we will do.’”



Adrian McGillion
Director of Facilities Management



Schools and teachers continue to benefit from Edge Hill’s extended free online CPD programme many months after its launch.

Initially set up to support schools during the pandemic, the Faculty of Education sessions have expanded in scope and number following positive feedback from the hundreds who took part in 2021/22.

The sessions cover a range of subjects, including the early years, behaviour and wellbeing and evidence-based practice.



Edge Hill academics are delivering a new part-time teaching degree course offered by the University Centre Wigan and Leigh College.

Starting in September 2022, the BA (Hons) Primary Education with QTS course is for people in Wigan and the surrounding area already working in a school setting or looking for a career change.

It’s part of a broader partnership between Edge Hill, Wigan Council, the NHS trust and the college to improve skills and employment opportunities locally.



Winners of an art competition supported by Edge Hill have had their work displayed at the Royal Liver Building.

Pupils from more than 80 primary and secondary schools took part in the sustainability-themed contest, marking 10 years of dot-art Schools – a project to nurture talent and take art out of the classroom.

Edge Hill helps more children get involved by bringing dot-art and schools in the Liverpool City Region together.

Collaborative thinking to benefit society

Edge Hill twins with Ukraine university



Edge Hill has been twinned with a Ukranian institution, offering support to academics and students.

Its long-term partnership with the Yaroslav Mudryi National University of Law in Kharkiv will see collaborations across the curriculum, shared online resources, and travel opportunities, which has been developed due to a shared interest in international cyber-space regulation and policy.

The initiative is coordinated by the Cormack Consultancy Group and supported by Universities UK.

“This project is designed to **support Ukrainian universities** to continue to function during this difficult time. By **supporting them in their mission** we are also minimising the risk of brain drain, with academics and students disappearing into the HE systems of other countries.”



Charles Cormack
Founder and Chairman,
Cormack Consultancy
Group



Edge Hill has joined forces with the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (RCSEd) to drive forward medical research and training.

The partnership will bring together the work of the University’s Faculty of Health, Social Care and Medicine – one of the North West’s largest education providers in these areas – with RCSEd’s Faculty of Perioperative Care (FPC).

The RCSE has a membership of more than 30,000 surgical professionals.



The Faculty of Education has partnered with the Great Schools Trust, which has several secondary school academies in the North West, to boost opportunities for pupils, students and researchers.

Young people will be encouraged to see university as an option by experiencing campus life, and students will benefit from teacher training opportunities.

Teachers will be supported in their ongoing professional development, and academics will work with the schools on research that will improve children’s life chances.

“As educators we can use **social mobility** as a force of nature to **change communities**. Every teacher in our Trust will get the **support they need** to make this happen.”



Shane Ierston
Chief Executive Officer,
Great Schools Trust

Our people

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**GOOD
UNIVERSITY
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2022**

**MODERN
UNIVERSITY
OF THE YEAR**