

Pearson University – a vision of a blue chip university

The purpose of this paper is to introduce the concept of Pearson University to the London Borough of Camden and provide an overview of the vision and its importance to Pearson's future strategy.

Vision

Pearson University is the first university set up within a global blue chip FTSE 100 company, with its flagship centre based at 190 High Holborn in London. The University is committed to combining high academic standards with unrivalled corporate input, to create highly sought after graduates. Pearson University will become the world's leading university for employer engagement in education, allowing students to benefit from a rigorous academic education and a deep understanding of the complex realities of the professional world.

Additionally the university will be a world leading research centre on employer engagement and education.

Pearson University - central to Pearson's future strategy

Pearson is the world's leading global education company, combining a long heritage of highly respected book publishing with a deep commitment to the future needs of education and learners throughout the world. Over the past 15 years it has invested in a wide range of educational services, resources and technologies needed by modern day universities and schools. This has been an essential part of its ongoing success, as like any business it must innovate and adapt to the changing needs of society.

At the centre of its next stage of development, ushered in by the appointment of John Fallon as CEO in 2012, is a strong emphasis on "the learner", and making sure that not only will our products and services sell well, but that they genuinely improve the lives of learners. Pearson has therefore made a very public commitment to research the impact of its products and services, and from 2018 has promised to publish this alongside its annual accounts. No other educational company has ever made such a commitment, and this is at the very centre of our future strategy.

The very best way to research and develop products and services that help learners, is to have within the Pearson ecosystem, some of its very own students and educational institutions. Therefore it has built up a small portfolio of teaching organisations in India, Brazil, Mexico and South Africa.

There is a requirement for a flagship educational institution. Pearson has therefore committed to the creation of Pearson University, in London, with full UK recognition as a university, and closely linked to Pearson HQ.

Pearson University - a unique and ground breaking university for the future

Pearson University will be a fully functioning university. It will carry out teaching and research, and will have its own teachers, students, courses and fully approved university status (this process takes several years).

Its distinctive specialism will be employer engagement in education, including unrivalled corporate access for its students. In fact Pearson's aim is to develop Pearson University into a world leading centre for employer engagement and education. There is an increasing demand for university education in the UK, but there are many studies that show that graduates are often ill equipped for the professional world on graduation. This has become a critical issue for the UK's future economic development, and one that Pearson University will aim to help resolve. Academic standards are crucial, but so is the ability to move successfully and usefully into the professional world. Pearson University will bring these together.

Pearson is uniquely well placed to achieve this. It has a long academic heritage through its book publishing business (publishing more texts for universities globally than anyone else), and as a long standing company dating back to 1844 that has grown into a global blue chip company it also understands business and industry.

The vision is to create a university that combines Pearson's academic heritage, commercial expertise, and unrivalled educational products and technologies and translate all this into benefits for its students in a ground breaking university.

Pearson University - a small specialist university, set within Pearson HQ

Pearson University will be a boutique university, for adult degree students, located in central London at 190 High Holborn. In order for the vision to be achieved, Pearson University needs to be embedded within Pearson. Students need to be part of the professional community, and will be given internships and company base mentors, alongside traditional lectures and seminars.

Students will be exposed to a wide variety of companies, and Pearson will be able to draw on its network of corporate contacts to offer workshops, case studies and internships to the students. Companies will come to 190 High Holborn to engage with students. Many companies have already agreed to work with us on our courses including IBM, Santander, Sales Force, Unilever, BT, BBC and Formula 1 amongst many others.

We are also working with professional bodies, universities, and academics from established universities in the development of our planned courses.

Pearson University will comprise four schools, each chosen because they link with Pearson's expertise and heritage. These are:

- School of Business (the concept is for students to study business within a business)
- School of Creative Industries (linking with our history in publishing and media)
- School of Applied Science (linking with our commitment to technology)
- School of Education (linking with our status as the leading global education company)

Pearson University - a blue chip student learning experience

Students will have weekly lectures and seminars taught by experienced academics, as they would in any university. They will also have exams, essays and other assessments and will graduate with a fully approved degree (generally an Honours degree or a Masters degree) just as you would expect in a traditional university. We anticipate most students will be studying Masters degrees or Integrated Masters degrees.

However, unlike traditional universities, students will also have a rich and vibrant corporate engagement syllabus, which will teach them about how the theory applies in the professional world. This will give them unrivalled corporate access not just to Pearson but to our network of corporate contacts, and prepare them to become highly skilled and sought after graduates. The intention is to create a unique and prestigious blue chip experience within a blue chip company. The intention is to use the London campus to create a boutique university that operates as a flagship for Pearson's ethos and products and services, and demonstrates Pearson's commitment to students.

Pearson University- a boutique, high quality flagship and central to Pearson's strategy

Boutique means small in comparison to the average UK university size of 18,000. We therefore would like to dedicate two floors within 190 High Holborn to Pearson University.

The vast majority of Pearson's revenue comes from providing products, services and technologies to educational institutions. One of the main functions of Pearson University will be to operate as a proof point of the quality of Pearson's work, and enable us to build our business with other universities, schools and colleges.

Therefore Pearson University is about quality rather than quantity but is nonetheless absolutely central to our global strategy.

Pearson College occupied the first and second floors of 190 High Holborn in 2016 and due to the success of the offer, require an additional floor for further expansion.