



Aston University

BIRMINGHAM UK

UNIVERSITY
OF THE YEAR
2020

The
Guardian

OPPORTUNITY

Where change
gets real.



All about Aston University
Information for candidates

www.aston.ac.uk

Welcome

from Saskia Loer Hansen

Interim Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive



Dear applicant

The HE sector is currently experiencing an unprecedented scale and pace of change, combined with a high degree of ambiguity and uncertainty. Those universities able to adapt swiftly to a changing and increasingly competitive market will thrive. As a mid-sized, focused university Aston has the advantages of agility, innovation and team working that some other institutions do not. Our integrated placement year, our applicable, exploitable research, and our commitment to widening participation all help to make Aston distinct.

In November 2020, Aston University was delighted to be announced as the Guardian's University of the Year 2020. The Guardian's decision to award this prestigious accolade to Aston University is based on their objective assessment of the 121 UK universities against numerous criteria. These include graduate employability and earnings, student retention, closing attainment gaps and embedding sustainability.

Aston University was announced as the winner of the Times Higher Education's (THE) 2020 Outstanding Entrepreneurial University in recognition of our support for student entrepreneurship, small businesses, and the West Midlands region. In 2021 Aston was also shortlisted for the THE University of Year award.

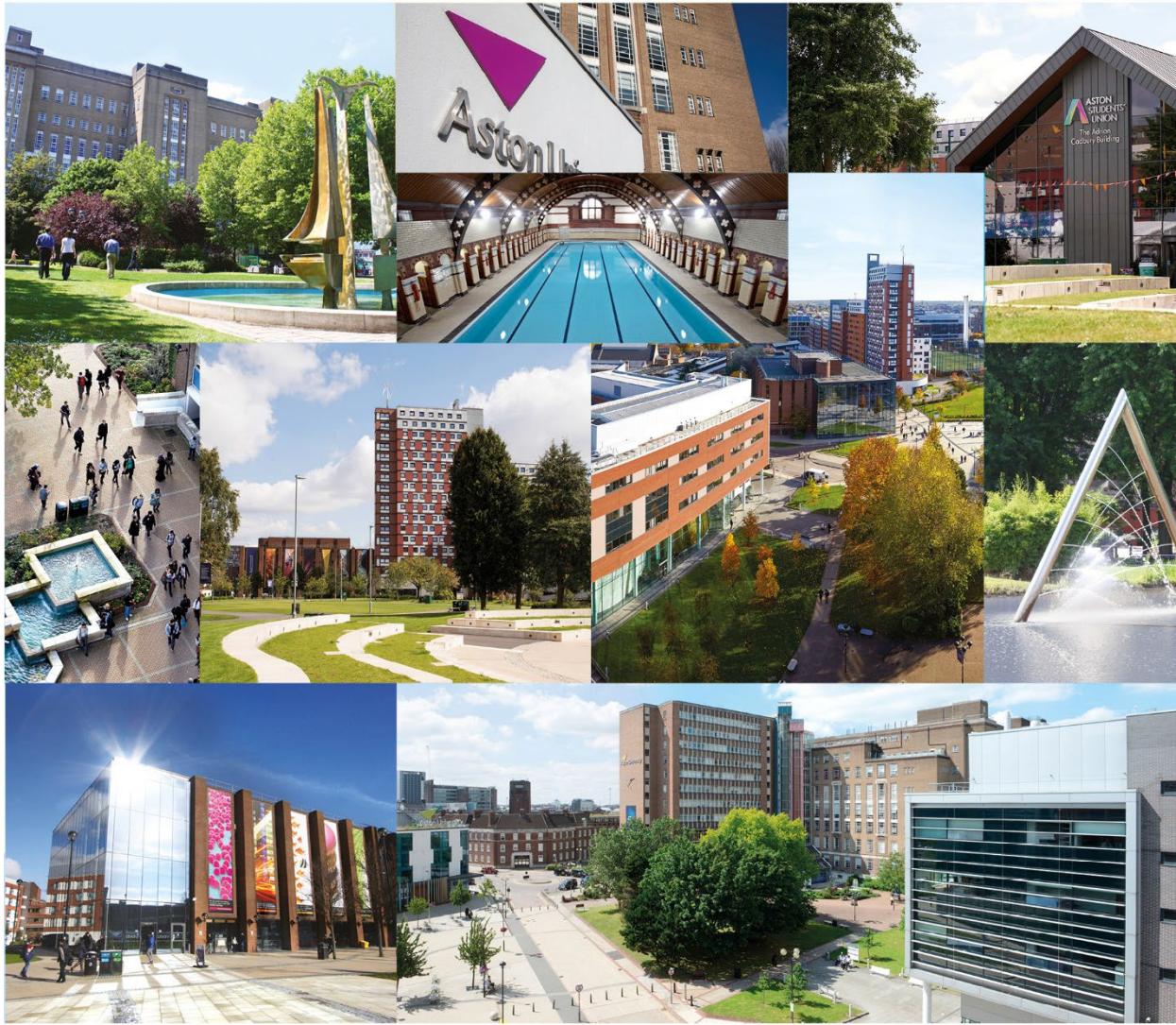
The 2014 Research Excellence Framework results recognised the quality and impact of Aston research. This research directly influences medical breakthroughs, advancements in engineering, innovation, policy and practice in government, and the strategies and performance of local and international business. The Times Higher Education REF rankings placed Aston University 35th in the UK and 78% of our submissions were judged to be World Leading or Internationally Excellent. Teaching quality and the student experience are an important focus at Aston University. We anticipate a similarly positive outcome in the 2021 REF, to be announced in May 2022.

Teaching quality and the student experience are an important focus at Aston. We are committed to doing all we can to address the needs of students and to assisting them to achieve their career ambitions on graduation.

We very much look forward to receiving your application and learning more about how you would contribute to Aston's continuing success.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Saskia Loer Hansen".

Saskia Loer Hansen
Interim Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive



About Aston University

Founded in 1895 and a University since 1966, Aston is a long established research-led university known for its world-class teaching quality and strong links to business and the professions.

Outstanding graduate employability

Aston University has been a leading university for graduate employment success. With placements integrated into our degree programmes, students develop essential work skills, build industry connections and a professional profile. We have strong relationships with national and international graduate employers, as well as smaller and local employers. These relationships are extremely important and make a real contribution to graduate employability.

Career focused programmes

Close and established links with business, the public sector and the professions ensure that our career focused degree programmes are inspiring, challenging, and constantly updated to equip students with essential work-related skills and experiences.

Excellence in teaching and research

We are committed to high quality teaching and academic excellence, ensuring we provide the highest standard of education to our students. Aston University has an excellent reputation for research which shapes and improves lives. We're proud of the quality of our research and the real world applications developed as a result – it makes a substantial and beneficial difference to people, organisations and society.

International

Aston University is a popular choice for international students. We recognise and welcome the important academic contribution and cultural diversity international students bring to our university environment. Students from over 120 countries choose to study at Aston University each year.

Birmingham – one of Europe's liveliest cities

Birmingham has a rich history which makes the city a unique and inspiring place to visit. It is recognised as a leader in leisure, entertainment, shopping and sport and is an international centre for business, commerce and industry. Birmingham is home to world-class companies, innovative entrepreneurs and has one of the youngest populations in Europe. It is a dynamic, business-focused region that is well connected and centrally located in the UK.

A green, sustainable campus

Located in the centre of Birmingham our green, 40 acre campus houses all the University's academic, social and accommodation facilities for our 15,000 students. All staff have the opportunity to contribute to our sustainability agenda and practices.

Academic colleges and schools



College of Business and Social Sciences (BSS)

- Aston Business School
- Aston Law School
- School of Social Sciences and Humanities

College of Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPS)

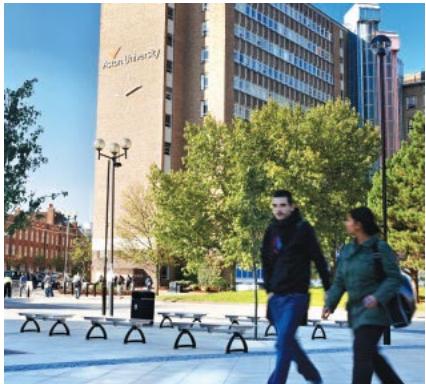
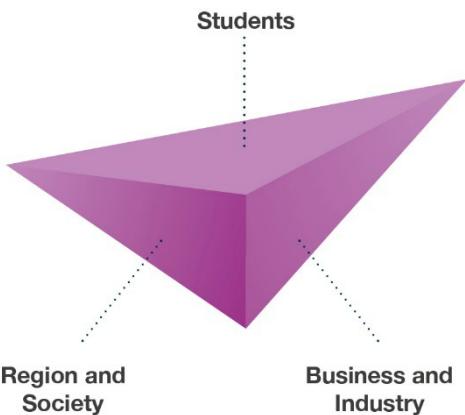
- School of Informatics and Digital Engineering
- School of Infrastructure and Sustainable Engineering
- School of Engineering and Technology

College of Health and Life Sciences (HLS)

- Aston Medical School
- Aston Pharmacy School
- School of Biosciences
- School of Optometry
- School of Psychology

Our beneficiary groups

The University's beneficiaries are identified as three groups:



Students

The first and primary beneficiary of Aston University are the individuals who form our student body and who progress to become our alumni. Aston University places students at the heart of our academic and professional endeavour. Through our industry placements, students are at the coalface of our interaction with industry.



Business and Industry

Our strategy has an emphasis on the businesses and other external organisations who engage with us. Aston University is a market leader in industry-engaged research, as well as graduate employability. Our industry partners benefit from our work through our leading research and knowledge exchange, and from the quality of graduates we produce. Each student at Aston University is offered the opportunity for a year-long work placement; these placements not only cement our relationships with industry but ensure businesses have access to work-ready graduates.



Region and Society

We are committed to having a positive and transformative impact on Birmingham and the West Midlands. Birmingham is one of the youngest cities in Europe and Aston University plays an important civic role by educating the leaders of the future. By emphasising research that has a regional impact, engaging with local businesses to develop a strong economy and educating top graduates, we are helping to shape our society around us.

University values

All staff are expected to demonstrate/promote the University's values and expectations, which are an integral part of our strategy and underpin the culture of the University. In addition, our leaders are expected to be accountable, help to execute strategic visions of the University and share and set clear expectations that inspire those around them. Our mission is to be the UK's leading university for students aspiring to succeed in business and the professions, where original research, enterprise and inspiring teaching deliver local and global impact.

Staff expectations

All staff are expected to:

- Be committed to delivering high performance
- Recognise and praise the high performance of others
- Remain open to new ideas and seek to act quickly for positive change
- Develop themselves, and support the development of others
- Be ambitious, for themselves, their teams and the university
- Engage with others, listen, observe and communicate
- Focus on excellent customer service, finding solutions and saying "yes"
- Make reasoned decisions without fear of blame
- Engender trust through their own actions
- Be fair in all matters.



Conference Aston

Conference Aston operate as a commercial arm of Aston University, providing hotel, conference, banqueting and hospitality venues and services to both internal University departments and external private and public sector organisations.

Located on the University Campus in Birmingham city centre, Conference Aston's facilities include a four-star standard 163 bedroom conference hotel, with 19 conference suites and meeting/training rooms to accommodate four up to 222 delegates, a large modern restaurant catering for up to 450 and a choice of private dining rooms for up to 150 diners. The hotel also offers large delegate breakout lounges, a hotel bar and landscaped central courtyard area which is perfect for outdoor summer events.

The hotel and conference centre operates year-round with an impressive and diverse mix of customers across business sectors including construction, healthcare, government, financial services, certification bodies, charitable trusts and associations.

During the summer vacation period for Aston University, Conference Aston also manage larger conferences, events and summer schools that utilise the impressive choice of teaching and student accommodation facilities between July and September, where residential conferences for up to 650 and large association events are the core business.

The versatile meeting and event spaces provide customers with the flexibility to configure the venue to their specific requirements, enabling the hotel to host:

- National and International Conferences
- Corporate Training Programmes
- Graduate Development Programmes
- Academic Conferences
- Business Meetings including Board Meetings and AGMs
- Corporate Retreats and Away Days
- Exhibitions, Product Demonstrations and Presentations
- New Product and Service Launches
- Corporate Banqueting, Dinners and Awards Ceremonies
- Private Dinners and Functions

The hotel also welcomes a variety of transient guests through corporate accommodation agreements, international group accommodation and domestic business and leisure accommodation.

Conference Aston was the first academic venue in the UK to achieve the ISO14001 accreditation for environmental management and continues to hold this as part of the Aston University accreditation. Sustainability is at the heart of the organisation with the venue holding the Green Tourism Silver Award and two stars from the Sustainable Restaurant Association.

The venue coveted the Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce Excellence in Hospitality Award in 2019 and carries the Meeting Industry Association "Accredited in Meetings Secure" standard.

Conference Aston also holds the BDRC Venue Verdict Gold Standard for 2020 based on consistent high scoring via an external post-event feedback programme.

Conference Aston enjoys a high level of repeat business, exceeding 60% and strives for exceptional, first class customer service, where the team adopt a creative approach to operate with integrity and honesty with the aim of each customer leaving with a wish to return.

Customer feedback is at the heart of the business and drives continuous development of the team, services and facilities to create an event environment that exceeds expectations.



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