

Our academic history

For over 100 years, innovative academic research at the University has influenced society and made an impact on people's lives. Birmingham is where pacemakers and plastic heart valves were developed, where the first artificial vitamin (Vitamin C) was synthesised, and where the cavity magnetron was developed, leading to applications such as radar and the microwave oven.

In addition, allergy vaccines were pioneered, the key components of artificial blood were synthesised, and the first clinical trials of the contraceptive pill outside the USA were carried out, having a fundamental impact on the quality of life for women world wide.

Today, the University continues to build on this pioneering heritage. We are still at the forefront of research, leading the field in many of the emerging disciplines of the 21st century, such as nanotechnology, gene therapy, robotics and the use of virtual reality in the study of archaeology. We are continually developing new initiatives to enrich our teaching and learning.

See the following pages for our academic history timelines:

- [Foundation of the University 1767-1899 \(/university/about/history/academic-history/foundation.aspx\)](/university/about/history/academic-history/foundation.aspx)
- [Establishment of the University 1900-1949 \(/university/about/history/academic-history/establishment.aspx\)](/university/about/history/academic-history/establishment.aspx)
- [Century of learning 1950-2000 \(/university/about/history/academic-history/learning.aspx\)](/university/about/history/academic-history/learning.aspx)
- [Our present and future \(/university/about/history/academic-history/present-future.aspx\)](/university/about/history/academic-history/present-future.aspx)