



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Education,  
Skills and Employment**

**2020 Mission Based Compact  
Between the Commonwealth of Australia and The Australian National University**

**PURPOSE**

This compact is an agreement between the Commonwealth and the University. Entering into a compact is one of the quality and accountability requirements, which a higher education provider must meet under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA) as a condition of receiving a grant. Specifically, subsection 19-110(1) of HESA requires that Table A and Table B providers must, in respect of each year for which a grant is paid to the provider under HESA, enter into a mission-based compact with the Commonwealth for a period that includes that year.

All strategies should provide qualitative and/or quantitative measures of assessment.

**MISSION**

**Primary Focus, Values and Aspirations**

Serving as Australia's primary scholarly institution for over 73 years, The Australian National University (ANU) continues to focus on providing the nation with world-class research and education capacity that will contribute to Australia's economy, society and engagement with our world.

Our ambitions, outlined in our strategic plan, call for us to be bold and transformative, taking our place among the world's greatest universities. As we approach the mid-point of our strategic plan and the successful completion of several major projects, we have set a key focus for the immediate future on enhancing the ANU Student Experience. Our intention is to provide a student experience that is comparable with the world's best, in an environment of free academic enquiry, supported by the highest quality research and teaching, outstanding facilities, and a community that is inclusive, collaborative and safe. We also intend that our admissions reforms will ensure this experience is open to talented students from all walks of life.

Our focus on student experience will be supplemented by our continued focus on excellence everywhere at ANU. We will build on our renowned engagement with Asia and the Pacific and continue to renew our partnership with Indigenous Australia. We will ensure our work has impact, including through our commitment to co-creating public policy solutions to pressing societal challenges.

Above all, we will continue to serve Australia proudly as its national university.

**Model Code – Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom**

On 24 May 2019, the ANU Council noted the Report of the Independent Review of Freedom of Speech in Australian Higher Education Providers by the Hon Mr Robert French. As part of the discussion, Council also considered the accompanying draft Model Code for the protection of freedom of speech and academic freedom, a proposal arising from the Report.

The ANU Chancellor, Professor Gareth Evans AC QC, has been a member - with counterparts at the University of Queensland and the University of Western Australia - of a University Chancellors Council (UCC) Working Group established to review the Code's text.

Its slightly revised text recommended changes (formally endorsed by the UCC on 9 October) that were noted by ANU Council at the 26 July meeting and its broad objects endorsed by ANU Academic Board on 27 August.

At the meeting of 3 October, ANU Council approved in-principle the Model Code, noting at this time that the University will be developing a specific Academic Board Statement on Freedom of Expression in consultation with the wider university community, and revising the staff Code of Conduct to reference the new statement and to align with the Model Code.

*Supporting Documents:*

- ANU Strategic Plan 2019-2022 - <https://www.anu.edu.au/about/strategic-planning/anu-strategic-plan-2019-2022>

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

### **Objectives and priorities**

At ANU, our vision is that our graduates will have a positive influence on the future; they are passionate, creative and capable of solving critical problems not yet imagined; and they create and apply knowledge to improve the lives of people, the nation and the world.

The University's Vision for Excellence in Teaching and Learning sets out four pillars for teaching and learning:

- Engaged students;
- Inspirational Academics;
- an Enriching Environment, and
- a Connected Community.

The four interdependent pillars provide a frame of reference for aligning focus and effort to continuously improve the outcomes of learning and teaching at ANU. The vision acknowledges that students are the centre of learning and teaching at ANU. A partnership between students, academics, professional staff and the University forms the foundation of excellence in learning and teaching.

### **Response to 2020 challenges**

The University faced a complex array of challenges during 2020 that impacted learning and teaching including bushfires and smoke and a severe hail storm in the Australian Capital Territory during January. Both these events resulted in closure of the campus and significant impact on infrastructure.

In response to the global COVID-19 pandemic, ANU paused teaching for one week at the start of Week 4 of Semester 1, closed the Acton campus and moved all teaching and learning to remote mode for the remainder of the semester. In Semester 2 the University implemented a hybrid model of teaching with both face to face and remote delivery catering for students who were physically present on campus and those who were prevented from attending campus due to international and domestic travel restrictions.

The University implemented a range of strategies to support the continuity of teaching and learning and to enable and support students to progress in their studies during 2020. The University Critical Incident Management Team established a Teaching Continuity Working Group responsible for overseeing the University response to the pandemic. Strategies included the rapid uptake of digital technologies for remote learning and teaching; the provision of digital repositories of resources, information and self-help tools for staff and students; webinars and individual support for staff and students to upskill; and adjustments to assessment including the implementation of online proctored exams.

The educational response to the COVID-19 pandemic was evaluated through three wellbeing and remote education surveys deployed to coursework students, higher degree by research students and staff. The feedback and information gathered has been analysed and widely disseminated. The ANU Centre for Learning and Teaching has developed a comprehensive suite of activities in response to student feedback to further support teaching staff to adapt and improve the hybrid model of teaching through Semester 1 2021. Major goals during 2021 are to re-establish a vibrant campus life including face to face teaching and learning; embed and promote the use of high-quality technology enhanced learning; and to establish a seamless and productive equilibrium between in-person and online educational activities that is consistent with the ANU Vision for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

### **Strategies to ensure quality**

ANU ensures the quality of its teaching and learning through a governance structure with two committees reporting to Academic Board as outlined below.

- Teaching and Learning Development Committee (TLDC) oversees University wide teaching and learning initiatives, to ensure quality and achievement of set goals and outcomes.
- Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQAC) monitors the quality of education programs including policy and compliance issues. AQAC reviews and endorses program proposals from College Education Committees.

The two committees oversee key processes, including: regular course reviews, external school reviews, student and staff surveys and grade distribution monitoring. The results of these processes are monitored and discussed by relevant senior officers who initiate further action as required. In 2021, the Academic Portfolio will establish two new positions, the Dean of Academic Quality and the Pro Vice Chancellor Education and Digital to reflect the governance structure.

Examples of the initiatives ANU will undertake in 2020 to ensure quality in teaching and learning include:

- Review of admissions reform initiatives (see below) with a focus on planning strategies to improve equity and diversity in the student cohort. This will result in wide representation, from around the world and across Australia, of students with the skills and capacity to succeed regardless of their background.
- Reaccreditation with the Higher Education Academy and renewed focus on principal fellowships for enhanced leadership in teaching and learning within the University and across the sector.
- Re-establishing the Interactive Learning Project (iLEAP), which was paused during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on addressing student feedback about poor engagement in their studies.
- Developing distinctive graduate attributes befitting of the national university and through which our degree programs can be focussed and enhanced.
- Developing and implementing a curriculum framework and renewing the curriculum offerings so they provide developmental pathways for students to achieve the graduate attributes.

### **University admissions transparency**

- All domestic undergraduate students must have an ATAR or equivalent for entry to a program at ANU with the exception of Bachelor of Visual Arts and Bachelor of Design Arts programs which are assessed on a portfolio of relevant work.
- Acceptable equivalent qualifications include 1 year of full time study at tertiary level, international qualifications assessed as equivalent to an Australian Year 12 or an approved tertiary preparation course. Home schooled students must present a portfolio of work for assessment.

### **University retention strategies**

The University has a devolved structure with support offered across multiple engagement points with students. We also encourage cross discipline study, both in our Flexible Double Degrees and within individual awards. Periodic reviews of services ensure that high quality support is available to students across all disciplines.

The University has delivered significant projects in the areas of mental health, wellbeing and the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access framework (IDEA), which contribute to building a supportive student environment and experience, and in turn, the scaffolding for student retention.

- The ANU Student Retention Strategy for 2020-2021 includes building on our current strengths and activities:
- Implement consistent communication so students can identify support and academic services more easily including across disciplines.
- Review current “early intervention” processes and communication, including between semester communications.
- Establish an ongoing group, with leadership from the Deputy Vice- Chancellor (University Experience), to communicate best practice and monitor and progress deliverables.
- Develop systems and processes (including integration of extant systems) to better utilise analytics to identify individuals or cohorts at risk including exit interview procedures.
- Review transition activities and communications for new students.

### **Admissions reform strategies**

ANU embarked on a fundamental change to the recruitment of Australian undergraduate students for the 2020 academic year. Termed ASA (admissions, scholarship and accommodation), the process makes mid-year provisional offers in three categories to:

1. The top 2% of students in any high school within Australia
2. Targeted low SES, Indigenous and scholarship students
3. Merit-based on predicted ATAR.

All applicants are also assessed on co-curricular and community activities. Whilst the offers are made mid-year, applicants made offers must convert their studies with an ATAR result that allows entry to the program of choice. The ASA process combines program admissions, scholarship and accommodation into a single application process, which allows students to be considered for the full range of available scholarships and accommodation options or which they may be eligible.

ASA is aimed at broadening and diversifying the undergraduate domestic student population. We have also changed our application process for international undergraduate and postgraduate students. Applicants are now pooled and offers are made in competitive rounds, rather than continuously as is the case at other Australian universities. This method also allows for better control of diversity and area-of-study amongst our international students.

#### *Supporting Documents:*

- A Vision for Excellence in Learning and Teaching at The Australian National University - [http://www.anu.edu.au/files/resource/Vision%20for%20Excellence%20in%20Teaching%20and%20Learning%20at%20ANU\\_August2018.pdf](http://www.anu.edu.au/files/resource/Vision%20for%20Excellence%20in%20Teaching%20and%20Learning%20at%20ANU_August2018.pdf)
- Academic Board - <https://www.anu.edu.au/about/governance/committees/academic-board>
- Teaching and Learning Development Committee - <https://www.anu.edu.au/about/governance/committees/teaching-and-learning-development-committee>

- Academic Standards and Quality Committee - <https://www.anu.edu.au/about/governance/committees/academic-quality-assurance-committee-aqac>
- Interactive Learning Project (iLEAP) - <https://services.anu.edu.au/education-support/interactive-learning>
- Admissions policy - [https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP\\_008805](https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP_008805)
- Admissions procedures - [https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP\\_007810](https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP_007810)
- Wellbeing and remote education surveys - <https://services.anu.edu.au/education-support/education-data/wellbeing-and-remote-education-surveys>

## RESEARCH AND RESEARCH TRAINING AND INNOVATION

ANU is committed to excellence in research, research training and innovation. During the period of the Compact, we are:

- Investing in large-scale, transformative and collaborative research through the ANU Grand Challenges program, partner engagements with CSIRO, and translational research and development with an industry outlook, including the newly established ANU-Optus Bushfire Research Partnership.
- Investing in our unique national obligations to Indigenous Australia (through support of the Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Grand Challenge), the Asia-Pacific region, and contributions to public policy;
- Investing in world-class research infrastructure and facilities, including support for national facilities including the National Computational Infrastructure hosted at ANU, Microscopy Australia ANU node, Australian National Fabrication Facility ACT node and others;
- Improving national phenomics capability with investment from Government and industry that will transform precision medicine in Australia;
- Implementing the strategy of the White Paper on the Future of the ANU PhD, which will deliver a distinctive ANU doctoral experience and deliver PhD graduates ready for careers in all industries and sectors;
- Leading on open research through our policies and procedures, and with mechanisms including ANU Press (Australia’s first open access university press), and ANU Open Research and Archive and Library Collections (over 150,000 items available); and
- Hosting the Australian Data Archive, which holds over 6,000 datasets in the social sciences for managed access by the research sector.

*Supporting Documents:*

- Strategic Initiatives – <http://www.anu.edu.au/strategic-initiatives>

## EQUITY

ANU is committed to achieving equity within the University and working toward this objective for Australian Society. In 2020 our objectives for equity include:

- Consolidation of the ANU IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access) Governance Framework to provide support and accountability across ANU IDEA initiatives, ensuring we are able to deliver on providing “a healthy and respectful working, learning and living environment for the whole-of-university community”;
- Implementation of the ANU 2020 – 2021 Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) as part of our commitment to Indigenous Australia delivering on the University’s commitment to improving Indigenous outcomes across education, research and community engagement;

- Building on the SAGE Athena SWAN Bronze Institutional award, ANU is committed to the implementation of whole-of-university gender equity initiatives and further application for the Silver award;
- Enhancing the student experience as part of the Healthy University Strategy, promoting wellbeing and respectful relationships in providing inclusive and accessible student services and initiatives;
- Implementation of the Disability Action Plan to ensure equity in access, participation and success for people living with disability in our student cohorts and our workforce as well as providing an accessible, welcoming environment for our many visitors;
- Creating a Family Friendly campus, providing easily accessible support and information to make it easy to balance work and life;
- The second-year rollout of the new Admissions, Scholarships and Accommodation (ASA) project to support a more diverse range of prospective students gaining admission to ANU.

*Supporting Documents:*

- ANU IDEA Oversight Committee - <https://www.anu.edu.au/about/governance/committees/anu-idea-oversight-committee>
- Domestic applications – undergraduate- <https://www.anu.edu.au/study/apply/domestic-applications-anu-undergraduate>

## **LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES**

The University uses the government’s Labour Market Information Portal to identify priorities and opportunities in the labour market. We work to address these through a number of key strategies summarised below.

We work to close the male/female labour force gap by establishing sector leading policies and practices to eliminate gender bias and develop an inclusive culture that values all staff, students and campus visitors. This was recently recognised by SAGE in awarding ANU with the Athena SWAN bronze award.

We are growing regional access to higher education through targeted recruitment activities in rural/remote areas across the country, including the Northern Territory, Tasmania and South Australia. The new admissions model introduced by ANU in 2019 focuses on equity and diversity in attraction and selection in order to ensure that ANU has wide representation from across Australia, of students with the skills and capacity to succeed regardless of their background. As part of this, ANU is proud to have offered Access scholarships to 134 recipients in 2020, through our new admissions model. The new model makes applying for a scholarship easy, and since we are receiving more information about the student holistically, allows us to assess students for multiple scholarships they may not have been aware of. Improving access to rural and regional students benefits the whole community and ANU is committed to increasing the number of scholarships available. The scholarships awarded for students commencing in 2020 represents an increase of \$400 000 compared to available funding in 2019 and work continues to increase philanthropic donations to support rural and regional and disadvantaged students among others.

We prepare students for new markets and forms of work by ensuring we address employability and graduate attribute skill gaps. We take the labour market into account in developing course offerings through our regular School and program review processes. We consider the top growth areas in the job market and what our students will need to ensure they are well placed to engage with the future job market when they finish their program of study. For example, the anticipated employment growth in Health Care and Social Assistance, Construction and Professional/Scientific & Technical Services, and the evolving graduate skills required to engage in those future industries, are a key feature of our current strategic reviews of the College of Health and Medicine and the College of Engineering and Computer Sciences. We have also established new institutes in cyber security, climate change and

space to engage staff with students, industry and government on these key themes and encourage translation of outcomes and impact. We are enhancing our curriculum to ensure that our students are best placed to meet the future needs of the labour market and expect student numbers to grow in these areas. While ANU is maintaining the student numbers at the current levels overall, it will keep the balance of students under regular review to ensure that places are available where needed.

We have just completed an external review of our Careers function and are working through the implementation plan following the recommendations from the report. Key features include:

- clarity in communicating offerings of the Career services;
- separating the Career services from other Student Experience functions to allow greater focus and more specialised personnel, and
- improve the visibility of industry engagement and placement programs.

## SECURITY MEASURES

Since the May 2018 cyber-attack on the ANU network, the University has been investing in a range of technical safeguards in line with the recommendations of the Australian Cybersecurity Centre (ACSC); as well as the appointment of a Chief Information Security Officer in October 2018. This program will finish in December 2019 and will be succeeded by the University's Strategic Information Security Program (SISP).

Under the SISP the University will invest in strengthening the security culture of staff, students and researchers as well as redevelop its core networking infrastructure in line with zero trust principles. The SISP strategy draws on Australian Signals Directorate's (ASD) *Strategies to Mitigate Cybersecurity Incidents*, the *Information Security Manual's* (ISM) controls framework and the *NIST Cybersecurity Framework* version 3; and aligns to the business strategy and vision of the University.

The aim of the SISP is to achieve ASD Essential 8 compliance and at least NIST maturity level 3 by 2021 with a regime of continuous monitoring against this target to be introduced by late 2020. In addition, in early 2020, ANU will establish on premise Cybersecurity Operations Centre (CSOC) which will provide coverage of all areas of the network as well as drive broader cybersecurity initiatives including red teaming and cyber threat assessments.

The SISP will introduce a range of measures to improve the visibility of the University's corporate and research data holdings and align this to data loss prevention technical and procedural capabilities to protect against unauthorised access and disclosure. To support this, ANU will review and re-frame current policies related to the classification, governance, storage and transmission of all ANU controlled data. This will include an accreditation process for all systems which hold ANU data – in line with guidance from both the ISM and Commonwealth Protective Security Policy Framework, as well as enhanced procedures for preventing and dealing with disclosable data breaches. ANU will be working closely with both ASD, ASIO and the Office of the Information Commissioner to develop these capabilities over the course of 2020.

In line with the guidelines from the University Foreign Interference Taskforce, ANU will develop and implement a range of technical and procedural capabilities to detect, deter and deal with foreign interference against our research, staff and student communities. This will include the analysis of foreign collaborations to identify ultimate beneficiaries and to assess the potential for harm against the national interest or the use of deceptive practices designed to co-opt the University. Emphasis will be placed on the education of researchers to detect potential signs of foreign influence or interference which may be contrary to the national interest or ANU values. Reporting on the implementation of these guidelines, under the SISP, will be provided to relevant Government agencies.

**SIGNED for and on behalf of**

THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

by Danielle Donegan, Acting First Assistant Secretary,  
Higher Education Division of the Department of  
Education, Skills and Employment as delegate of the  
Minister for Education.

**Signed by**

Danielle Donegan

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**Date:** 17 December 2020

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**In the presence of:**

**Signed by**

Sabrina Kim

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**Position of witness**

Policy Officer

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**SIGNED for and on behalf of**

**The Australian National University**

**Signed by**

Professor Brian Schmidt

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**Position**

Vice-Chancellor and President

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**In the presence of:**

**Signed by**

Sara Rowley

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**Position or profession of witness**

Executive Officer to the Vice-Chancellor

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