



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

**2020 Mission Based Compact  
Between the Commonwealth of Australia and the University of New England**

**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**

The University of New England's mission is to develop the individual aspirations, potential and capability of its staff and students, and to enhance the future of the communities we engage with, through quality research, the fostering of innovation, and delivery of a formative educational experience.

We are committed to the provision of high quality education, utilising a range of teaching and learning technologies to enable our students to overcome traditional barriers to accessing higher education. Regardless of geographic, economic or social barriers, UNE will provide the support and expertise required to ensure our students achieve their potential academically, as well as in their professional lives. It is our ambition to be the university of choice for students and researchers who desire to transform their lives and help to build resilient communities.

Within the context of our chosen fields of expertise, we will deliver excellent research with real world impact. We will foster and maintain a rich culture of research excellence, which includes forging strong links to industry and other academics both domestically and internationally.

**RESPONSE TO THE FRENCH REVIEW**

The University of New England acknowledges the work undertaken by the Hon. Robert French to draft a Model Code on free speech and academic freedom. We adhere to the tenets of the Code as proposed, and this is clearly evidenced within the University's [Intellectual Freedom Statement](#) (with particular reference to intellectual freedom, defined at clause 6). The University's two Collective Agreements set out the terms and conditions of employment for staff, providing further evidence of our commitment to intellectual freedom and free speech. Clauses 9(1) and 9(2) of both the [Academic and ELC Teaching Staff Collective Agreement](#), and the [Professional Staff Collective Agreement](#), each describe the expectations of staff and the University in relation to building and upholding a culture of mutual respect, as well as promoting and protecting intellectual freedom within the University.

The [Free Speech on Campus Audit 2018](#) (Institute of Public Affairs, Australia, 2018) provides third party evidence of the University's commitment and its success in the promotion and protection of intellectual freedom and free speech on campus. When benchmarked against the nation's 41 other universities, the University of New England was the only university to be awarded a green rating for positively supporting free speech on campus, and at the same time achieved the lowest hostility score possible (zero) as evidence of its non-restrictive approach to intellectual freedom.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

UNE is undertaking a whole of curriculum review and renewing all course offerings to ensure they incorporate the flexibility of approach and agility of design to respond to and meet the diverse needs of UNE's student cohorts. Courses will provide carefully designed learning pathways for students, using best-in-class methodologies, pedagogies and digital technologies, in accordance with the needs of modern Australia. Our course offerings will allow for the flexibility our online students demand, and support improved quality and productivity of our teaching and research. We will be recognised for our engaging, personalised student experience that promotes student success.

Key teaching and learning priorities for 2019 include:

- Review and redesign of largest courses (and institution-wide review and redesign of all courses);
- Development of UNE Course Design Framework;
- Review of all teaching and learning policies; and
- Development of bespoke course offerings, centred on student development and career aspirations.

## UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS TRANSPARENCY

UNE considers all aspects of a student's educational and vocational background prior to making an offer to study, catering to the diversity of our student base. UNE offers bridging course options for students who have not previously completed Year 12 studies and who do not have vocational experience. Students applying to study at UNE who have other qualifications and or work experience are assessed by UAC schedules to derive a selection rank, or equivalent ATAR.

Each year the Academic Quality Directorate reports to the UNE Academic Board through its Teaching and Learning Committee, on pass rates, grade point average, progress rates, and retention rates of commencing undergraduate students by the basis of their admission.

## UNIVERSITY RETENTION STRATEGIES

The release of 2018 student retention data from the Department of Education, allowed for comparison of UNE's performance against its benchmark group of Universities Australia (UA) members (ie. Central Queensland University, Charles Sturt University, Flinders University, James Cook University, Southern Cross University, University of Southern Queensland, University of the Sunshine Coast). Comparative analysis showed that during 2018, UNE's retention rate for its cohort of overseas commencing students was higher than that of its benchmark for all course categories except Bachelor. Comparison of retention data for all overseas students (ie. commencing and continuing) against benchmark universities also indicated that UNE retention rates were higher than that of its benchmarking cohort for all course categories except Bachelor. The data also demonstrated UNE's above average performance in its retention of postgraduate by research students and in the case of students from a non-English speaking background, in relation to postgraduate by coursework students.

Further findings following the comparison of UNE against its benchmark cohort, rated UNE's position below that of the cohort for retention of domestic students, indigenous students, students identified as coming from a low SES background, and students identified as coming from a high SES background.

In 2018, UNE revised its Retention and Engagement Strategy for the period 2019–2020. The Strategy acknowledges the University's primarily mature aged student cohort (74% aged 25 years and over) with significant numbers of students drawn from identified higher education equity groups — many experiencing multiple basis of disadvantage. This positions UNE uniquely within the sector, and focuses student retention as a key strategic issue, confirming the importance of supporting students' engagement with their studies, and ultimately their success and completion of a course. The *Retention and Engagement Strategy* assumes that student attrition should be reduced as much as possible, and student retention thereby increased for all students, regardless of mode of study.

The *Retention and Engagement Strategy* is guided by the following principles, maintaining that underlying strategies must:

- be developed from a student lifecycle approach, recognising that success commences from the point of recruitment and first with the University, through to transition to University, progression in academic studies and the support and experience that enables success, through to graduation;
- engender a commitment to recognise and address barriers to engagement, so that all students can have an equal voice and opportunity to contribute;
- be delivered as a whole-of-University approach. Student engagement and student retention are the responsibility of all staff and organisational units of the University, with each area embedding clear implementation plans and working in partnership to maximize the efficacy of retention;
- enhance students' engagement with their learning, recognising that student success is critically dependent on a curriculum and learning activities which build students' efficacy and sense of community, and is relevant to their goals and experience, and provides the tools for independent lifelong learning;
- be formative in nature, allowing students to develop their ability to engage, to learn and to know when they may require additional advice and/or support;
- recognise that learning is a social experience. The University has a responsibility to engage students with the academic and social cultures of the institution, and provide for the building of learning communities;
- be student-centred, and recognise that to assure the quality of interaction with the University, this applies to both administrative and academic systems and processes;
- be evidence-based, providing timely and accurate data relating to indicators of student success, and enabling the identification of students at risk; and
- be regularly monitored, reviewed, and outcomes disseminated.

Within the context of the *Retention and Engagement Strategy 2019–2020*, the University has initiated its curriculum review and redesign process. The review and redesign will ensure that every degree has entry and exit points that will allow all students to be able to complete a qualification, suitable to their needs at any point in time. UNE ReSTART program is being implemented to assist with this, and is discussed elsewhere in this Compact.

A concierge service is being implemented to support student engagement and retention, with a member of staff from the University's Student Success to be assigned to individual students, to coach them throughout the length of their student academic pathway from admission to graduation.

## RESEARCH AND RESEARCH TRAINING AND INNOVATION

### STRATEGIES TO ENSURE EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH AND THE STRENGTHENING OF RESEARCH CAPABILITY

The [UNE Strategic Plan 2016-2020](#) sets out an overarching institutional goal to deliver excellent research with high impact, whereby the University will achieve international distinction in selective fields and drive positive community outcomes. This institutional priority stems from a longstanding social contract between the University and the communities it serves, to support innovation and improved social outcomes for rural and regional communities locally, nationally and throughout the world.

UNE will maintain its strategic emphasis on developing a research culture that prioritises quality, integrity and collaboration. Central to these efforts is UNE's approach to specialisation and the alignment of capabilities with distinct, internationally recognised strengths and emerging research

priorities, such as agricultural innovation; agricultural economics; environmental management; regional education; regional health; and rural criminology.

The University provides substantial support for the development of nationally competitive research projects across a broad range of disciplines, notably for Australian Research Council (ARC) schemes such as its Discovery program. UNE will continue to implement its *ARC Leadership Strategy 2018-2021*, aimed at strengthening its research capabilities by increasing both the quality and volume of competitive grant applications. Initiatives include:

- Provision of a comprehensive grant development program for early career researcher applicants;
- Improved assessment and referral of quality applications to the most appropriate funding schemes; and
- Intensive application review programs and support.

Training is provided to support researchers to access grant databases and target the most appropriate grant schemes (e.g. Fulbright Fellowships) which is key to developing competitive track records.

UNE will continue to run its highly successful [Postdoctoral Research Fellowships Scheme](#), with training support provided for all successful candidates in the first year of their Fellowship. This program aims to connect Fellows with a range of researchers across the University, both senior and early career researchers, and provides a forum for collaboration.

Evidence of UNE's excellence in research throughout 2018 and the implementation of successful research strategies to further raise its research profile, included the allocation of over \$2million by the Australian Research Council (ARC) to the following projects and their associated researchers:

- The award of a \$523,000 Discovery Indigenous grant to Dr Lorina Barker, to track three Indigenous Songlines and explore their importance to cultural knowledge, history, language and identity;
- The Award of \$464,000 to Professor Yihong Du, to research propagation phenomena, which is implicated in the spread of invasive species, diseases and cancer cells;
- The Award of \$428,600 to Professor Morgan and Associate Professor Elizabeth Ellis, to investigate early years language programs in schools in three Australian states;
- The award of \$173,100 to Associate Professor Peter Grave, enabling him to study power and politics in Iron Age Anatolia; and
- A Discovery Early Career Research Award to Dr Nicolas Campione, who will use dinosaur teeth to investigate how diet influenced their spread and dominance during the Mesozoic period.

The [UNE Dixon Library](#) staff and resources provide expert advice and training to researchers on publishing and the use of bibliometrics to monitor the impact of their work within the international research community, including:

- Strategic and ethical publishing, database indexing, readership, research-discipline metrics, data and Creative Commons policies;
- Monitoring publications and online engagement through social media and tracking tools; and
- Using metrics to support grant applications and career development.

From 2015 to 2018, UNE effectively doubled the number of disciplines rated at 5 ('well above world standard') in the [Excellence in Research for Australia](#) (ERA) assessment. Disciplines that UNE had nominated as part of the 2014-2016 Mission Based Compact, to achieve substantial improvement in ERA assessment included Education, Psychology and Zoology. The ERA 2018 results for these disciplines show strong improvement, with both Psychology and Zoology achieving the highest rating of 5. Overall, UNE achieved at four-digit field of research level, a total of 28 research disciplines performing at world standard or above, exceeding by 65% the target set as part of UNE's 2014-2016 Mission Based Compact.

The University will continue its efforts to enhance research dissemination through the implementation of academic publishing strategies that coordinate across faculty and centrally-led information, policies and incentive schemes to further support staff in targeting the most effective quality publishing outlets for their research. Similarly, e-research initiatives support the quality and effectiveness of research translation and impact. UNE has full a time e-Research Analyst available to support researchers in applying information technologies across the research lifecycle, as well as effectively storing and sharing data beyond project lifecycles.

Another key priority for UNE is a focus on maintaining existing research infrastructure and planning for renewal. UNE will remain highly engaged in the implementation of the [National Regional, Rural and Remote Tertiary Education Strategy](#) and recommendations associated with research infrastructure, as well as the 'Enhancing research outcomes from Australia's regional, rural and remote universities' review currently being carried-out by the Australian Council of Learned Academies.

#### **STRATEGIES FOR THE PROVISION OF HIGH QUALITY RESEARCH TRAINING, INCLUDING MEASURES TO ENCOURAGE PhD INDUSTRY PLACEMENTS. THIS INFORMATION SHOULD IDENTIFY THE EXPECTED NUMBER OF INDUSTRY PLACEMENTS**

Postgraduate research is an integral facet of UNE's intellectual contribution to Australia's research and innovation system. Through its higher degree research (HDR) programs, UNE continues to advance disciplinary boundaries and support knowledge transfer in the community, as well as maintain a sustainable and dynamic national research and development workforce.

Accordingly, the University aims to increase early career research pathways through its postgraduate research programs in particular. By drawing on its reputation for excellence in key disciplines and industries, UNE continues to further its agency to support innovation in the region. Currently, 56% of HDR stipends are allocated to support disciplines rated 'above' and 'well above world standard' according to UNE's 2018 ERA performance. Through its scholarships program, the University is also investing in areas of emerging priority such as rural health and precision agriculture.

UNE is coordinating a University-wide HDR Business Improvement Group which is tasked with reviewing end-to-end HDR support and administration processes across both central and decentralised services within the University. Key objectives of the review include streamlining HDR management processes within new academic and governance structures, as well as responding to rapid changes in the national research training landscape.

Improved training for HDR candidates and supervisors was identified as an immediate institutional priority, and UNE is currently implementing a renewed and comprehensive training package for HDR candidates and supervisors. Compliance with [The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) and other national drivers, directs the group in mapping these requirements. Training activities will include:

- Generic and transferrable skills such as project management, communication, teamwork, negotiation and leadership;
- Research Integrity; and
- Intellectual Property.

Similarly, based on extensive market research, UNE is currently redesigning its HDR Supervisor training programs with a view to building internal capability and embedding contemporary research practices as foundational components of the UNE student experience.

UNE will continue to host its highly successful Postgraduate Conference; a two-day research event for HDR candidates focusing on "Intersections of Knowledge" and encouraging collaboration between researchers from different fields of study. The conference provides students with the opportunity to attend specialised workshops, hear expert speakers and share research frameworks and methodologies.

Internships and Work Integrated Learning have been well established at UNE and we look forward to building on these activities in the future. The University has a long-established PhD Innovation doctoral program, [the PhD](#). This doctoral degree is delivered across all faculties and operates within an intersection between academic theory and real-world professional expertise to drive innovative practice and industry outcomes. It involves contextual research driven by one or more tangible or process-based innovations that have identifiable impacts when implemented and evaluated within the candidature. This program has been running for over 5 years, with more than 25 candidates currently enrolled, including 7 International UNE scholarship holders.

Four PhD.I candidates have been integrated as part of a large Indonesian based research program, funded by the [Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research](#), called the [IndoBeef program](#). This program encompasses a range of research-for-development and capacity-building initiatives aimed at significantly improving beef production and the livelihoods of smallholder farmers in Indonesia. These candidates have industry supervisors associated with IndoBeef, and academic supervisors from Indonesian universities as part of the Indonesian-UNE International Partnership Consortium.

In addition, UNE participates in the [Australian Postgraduate Research \(APR\) Intern Scheme](#). There have been two Internships completed to date, with a further seven anticipated to commence in the next 12 months. The University is actively monitoring how such schemes - including outcomes of the Napthine and ACOLA reviews - can be best adapted to rural and regional industry contexts.

An *Indigenous Research Strategy* has been implemented to ensure appropriate support is provided to Indigenous Researchers. For Indigenous HDR candidates, UNE offers an annual stipend 30% above the base rate (\$35,900 in 2019). In addition to this, \$7,000 per annum is available to support expenses related to cultural supervision and/or mentoring. UNE has seen an increase in the number of Indigenous HDR candidates, and the ability to support and retain these candidates by providing this funding. Three Indigenous HDR candidates have successfully completed a HDR program in 2019, with a further 5 expected to complete in 2020.

### **STRATEGIES TO ENCOURAGE RESEARCH TRANSLATION AND COMMERCIALISATION, INCLUDING COLLABORATION AND ENGAGEMENT WITH INDUSTRY AND OTHER END USERS, AND THE MEASURES OF SUCCESS THAT THE UNIVERSITY MONITORS IN THIS AREA**

UNE has longstanding success engaging with research end-users, in particular across the agricultural industries. For example, AGBU, the Animal Genetics and Breeding Unit, is a partnership between UNE and NSW Department of Primary Industries (in the form of an unincorporated joint venture), and was founded in 1976, with a clear focus on research and development to underpin and advance the genetic improvement of livestock. That focus has remained to this day.

Genetic improvement, or animal breeding, is the process of identifying the animals with the best genes for traits that impact farmers' profits (and those of others in the supply chain), and then using those animals as parents of the next generation. If this is done effectively, continuous and substantial improvement can be made over time in animals' performance for whatever traits are being selected for. The modern analysis methods that underpin these national systems for genetic improvement provide the ability to determine the rate of genetic progress, and its value.

AGBU has been largely responsible for the development of the very successful national genetic evaluation systems BREEDPLAN (beef cattle in Australia and overseas) which is commercialised via [ABRI](#), a UNE controlled entity, [Sheep Genetics](#) (directly commercialised via Meat and Livestock Australia, and [TREEPLAN](#) (commercialised via STBA). AGBU has an ongoing role in improving those systems to ensure they remain world-best. Recent independent studies have shown that the value of genetic improvement in Australia for beef cattle, sheep and other livestock, grows

industry worth by well over \$60m per year (genetic improvement is cumulative – so we estimate the amount by which the value grows each year). As an example of the impact at the level of the farm family, for a typical individual beef producer, current genetic improvement adds the equivalent of \$9,000 extra profit each year, by comparison with the rate of progress prior to the introduction of BREEDPLAN.

UNE will continue the implementation of its *Research Impact Strategy 2025*, which sets-out a number of priority areas aimed at enhancing its approach to translational research and end-user collaboration. Key priorities include:

- Fostering a high-performing research culture that promotes interdisciplinary collaboration and end-user engagement;
- Championing regional development priorities and innovation through increased collaboration with community and industry partners; and
- Promoting UNE’s expertise and research strengths to the world.

A central component of the strategy focuses on strengthening UNE’s capacity to respond to the distinct needs of regional communities through the creation and expansion of key regional centres for translational research. These centres provide the appropriate institutional settings needed to stage interdisciplinary R&D; facilitate collaborative research ventures with regional stakeholders; and embed knowledge exchange mechanisms that link community partners with UNE’s expertise. One example is based at Armidale Hospital where aside from the UNE Medical Centre, students from allied health and our joint medical program with the University of Newcastle are situated.

UNE will increase access to its expertise by redeveloping a comprehensive online academic profile system. All researchers will have one, easily discoverable UNE profile that allows them to promote their work to other researchers, prospective HDR candidates, industry partners, and media as well as indicate their availability for collaboration and/or research supervision.

UNE will maintain its position as one of Australia’s leading universities for research commercialisation as it continues to develop a pipeline of IP and services that meet specific industry needs, as well as benchmark returns generated from active Letters of Agreement.

Measures used to monitor success in research engagement and collaboration include:

- Number of industry/end-user projects;
- Total value of industry/end-user cash contributions for research projects; and
- Commercialisation income.

## **STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE OPEN ACCESS TO RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS AND DATA**

UNE is committed to transitioning toward an open and sustainable global science communication system through its support of open scholarship. Providing free access to full-text research outputs and datasets is identified in the UNE Research Impact Strategy 2025 as a crucial instrument for research engagement.

The recent replacement of its Library repository infrastructure now allows UNE to significantly increase its emphasis on self-archiving as a primary means of facilitating open access, while managing the additional costs associated with open access publishing and journal subscription costs.

A key project for the Library involves facilitating through the UNE-wide Open Scholarship Working Group which aims to improve UNE’s open access research publications, research data policy, and related procedures. The project will focus on strengthening UNE’s mandate, embedding open access practices and developing greater understanding of its benefits among researchers, including HDR students.

In 2020, the Library will focus on Open Data as a priority. The Library will embed support for open data practices into existing communication channels, including targeted sessions with researchers, outreach around data management planning, and improve repository guidelines to better reflect these requirements. UNE is also coordinating with Australian Research Data Commons to host a series of academic training workshops around research data management best practice, where open data will feature strongly.

UNE has committed two representatives to participate in the [Australasian Open Access Strategy Group \(AOASG\)](#) committee. Their attendance allows the Library to learn from, and contribute to, best practice in the sector.

## EQUITY

### STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING INDIGENOUS OUTCOMES

Following the [2019 Indigenous Education Statement](#), the University has implemented or continues to implement a range of strategies and programs/projects to support and improve outcomes for cohorts of Indigenous students. These include:

- **UNE's Targeted Tutorial Assistance (TTA) Program:** This program is intended to improve educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) students, particularly those who are completing a pathways program, 1<sup>st</sup> year students, and those UNE identified as at risk of not completing their course requirements.

The TTA Program is focused on: helping students with transition to tertiary study; creating positive study habits; assisting with the development of approaches to assessment and examination revision; providing one-on-one tutorial opportunities for students to talk through their learning; building student confidence in their abilities; and supporting students in areas of both strength and weaknesses.

The TTA Program is administered through UNE's Ooralba Aboriginal Centre and offers individual or group tutoring sessions for on campus and off campus students, providing face-to-face as well as online tutoring. Sessions aim to mentor and support students to make the transition into tertiary education. The tutorial assistance includes support for:

- Understanding unit content and course requirements;
- Creating a study plan;
- Improving academic writing and reference; and
- Improving exam preparation.

Tutors work closely with students to:

- Identify key areas of a student's academic support needs;
- Provide expert advice to allocated students on specific subject areas;
- Introduce allocated students to the underlying principles of those subjects or disciplines;
- Support allocated students to develop skills in reading and writing for academic purposes (subject and discipline specific) at the required level; and
- Assist allocated students to develop effective independent study skills.

A key component of the program (referred to as TTA online) was launched in late 2017 and was aimed at registering applications from tutors and students, and then matching students with appropriate tutors. System enhancements continued throughout 2018.

In addition to the TTA program, the following programs and strategies have also been implemented across 2019 to support and improve outcomes for Indigenous students at UNE:



- **KRUKI Program** – This program has been developed to increase the enrolment of Indigenous students to UNE’s School of Rural Medicine, contributing to UNE’s *Indigenous Engagement Strategy 2019 - 2021*, and as a means to improve the health of Indigenous communities.
- **On-campus Experience Days** - UNE has conducted four experience days for approximately 100 Indigenous high school students across 2019. The days include activities focused on discipline-based workshops, academic preparation, careers and pathways information, to build or develop ongoing relationships between prospective Indigenous students and the University.
- **Aboriginal Youth Development Camps** - Based on the successful model from previous years, four camps for ATSI students in Years 8-10, their parents and community members, have been held to promote higher education, showcase teaching and learning activities at UNE, and introduce students to college university life.
- **Indigenous Scholar/TRACKS Peer Support Program** - The Program is specifically targeted at high achieving ATSI Students at UNE, engaging them to act as role models and mentors to recently enrolled students in the TRACKS tertiary preparation program.

#### **STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING EQUITY FOR REGIONAL AND REMOTE STUDENTS, FOR LOW SOCIOECONOMIC STUDENTS AND STUDENTS FROM OTHER EQUITY GROUPS**

Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) funding has facilitated the delivery of the following projects/strategies that specifically target and support students from low SES or other equity groups in their endeavour to engage with or complete a UNE course of study:

- **Personalised Retention and Engagement Program (PREP)** - targeting UNE low SES students (whole of cohort), to establish a call centre staffed by a Student Advisor Team comprising Honours, Masters and PhD candidates, initiating phone contact with every commencing low SES student at the point of first enrolment. Following a needs discussion, a Personal Transition Plan is developed and emailed to the students. Where required, students are referred to specific support, with appointments booked and online orientation/enrolment recommended and completed. Outcomes are expected to increase numbers of low SES students likely to remain enrolled up to census date and beyond.
- **reSTART** – the reSTART program was designed to determine if systematic identification of UNE’s cohort of low SES students withdrawing in real time, and subsequent case by case management by a team of Student Advisors, could have a positive impact on re-engagement with studies. Outcomes are expected to: improve numbers of students choosing to re-engage with their studies in the current teaching year; improve numbers of students who choose to re-engage through a leave of absence (with a view to returning at a future point); or, to improve numbers of students who choose to opt for an identified exit pathway and graduation where appropriate.
- **Science Outreach and LMSx** – This project aims to identify, contact and ultimately reduce the number of low SES undergraduate students who enrol but fail to engage with their units of study via UNE’s learning management system (LMS) prior to census date each trimester, and to provide specific support for students in identified high attrition science units. The intended outcome is to reduce the number of students who fail to engage and consequently receive a fail grade (and therefore are unlikely to continue their studies) and enhance the success rates of low SES students in key science units.

- **Removing Barriers to Access** – This project is intended to expand the program of bursaries offered, to include a greater number of low SES undergraduate students. Bursaries are provided to assist with the cost of text books (including exploration of opportunities to provide free text books/e-books for core units), participation in intensive schools, and work integrated learning and placements.
- **Pilot HEPP** – Funding is focused on the establishment of a HEPPP Tutor Office in T1 2019 and pilot in T2 2019 to assist UNE low SES undergraduate students with required support – including utilising UNE Career Resource Kit and UNE Staff, Student Mentors and Tutors handbook. Work has also been undertaken under this project to explore and develop the University of Wollongong Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) for UNE, including further enhancement for online environment.
- **Residential Colleges Low SES Support and Retention Program** – This project supports vulnerable low SES UNE students residing in the UNE Residential College System and assists in the reduction of distress they may experience, by providing support for financial, health and the meeting of their basic needs. Funding support is provided following a referral by the Head of College, Deputy Head of College, Student Advocate Office, Student Counselling Unit and Psychological Service Counsellor. Project outcomes include increasing our understanding of residential at-risk student needs; early intervention to reduce the likelihood of increased mental health problems, psychological distress and its impact upon capacity to study and obtain an excellent academic outcome.
- **University and Schools Connect** – This project continues the successful initiatives implemented to support local secondary schools with significantly high numbers of low SES students to develop better strategies for higher education participation and to develop pathways to university.
- **SABL Faculty: Discovery Voyager** - The UNE Discovery Voyager program is a mobile platform for delivering innovative educational and outreach experiences to school-aged students (particularly low SES students) and communities in northern NSW.
- **Pathways to University for secondary school students and young people in the Armidale Ezidi (Yazidi) community** – This project was developed to support students from the Ezidi (Yazidi) community attending Armidale Secondary College in particular, and Armidale schools in general, through specific initiatives that build aspirations to study at university for students who previously have been unaware of pathways to university study, or had predetermined attitudes to post school options that did not include tertiary study.
- **Rural Scholars for Medicine** – The University continues to run the [Rural Scholars in Medicine](#) program to increase the proportion of students from low SES rural backgrounds enrolling in the Joint Medical Program, by establishing a Summer School for high potential, low SES school students from regional and rural NSW, and establishing an Alumni Association to support the engagement of these participants.
- **KRUKI Program** – This program has been developed to increase the enrolment of Indigenous students to UNE's School of Rural Medicine, contributing to UNE's Indigenous Engagement Strategy 2021, and as a means to improve the health of Indigenous communities.
- **Experience Days** – UNE has conducted four experience days for approximately 100 Indigenous high school students across 2019. The days are based at UNE's Oorala Aboriginal Centre and include activities focused on workshops, academic preparation, careers and pathways information, to build or develop ongoing relationships between Indigenous students and the University.
- **Aboriginal Youth Development Camps** – Based on the successful model from previous years, four camps for ATSI students in Years 8–10, their parents and community members, have been held to promote higher education, showcase teaching and learning activities at UNE, and introduce students to college university life.

- **Indigenous Scholar/TRACKS Peer Program** – The Program is specifically targeted at high achieving ATSI Students at UNE, engaging them to act as role models and mentors to recently enrolled students in the TRACKS tertiary preparation program.

## **STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE REGIONS SERVICED BY INSTITUTIONS**

UNE's mission is focused on providing higher education opportunities to individuals regardless of geographic, economic or social barriers. The University's reach and accordingly, the regions serviced by UNE extends beyond Armidale and the local New England region of New South Wales, to embrace rural, regional and remote areas across all of Australia. High level strategies supporting our mission include:

- Providing flexible learning options for students through a trimester system of unit delivery;
- Enhancing availability of our online course and unit offerings, including partnering with Open Universities Australia;
- Assuring the quality and relevance of course offerings through scheduled course review processes and annual course advisory body meetings;
- Enhancing the availability of online academic support and seeking to provide one-on-one study support; and
- Providing work-integrated learning opportunities through professional skills development units.

With its concentration on online delivery (according to departmental data, in 2017 92% of UNE students were studying externally or via mixed mode), UNE is able to support students seeking to balance a higher education with employment. The success of the strategies are reflected in the UNE outcomes reported as part of the annual Graduate Outcomes Survey.

In addition to its strategies for reducing unemployment in the regions serviced by providing academic pathways to improve employability outcomes, the University's Smart Region Incubator has been developed to join regional businesses with growth potential together with academic business research, business mentors, corporate and community partners. Located on the Armidale Campus, the Incubator serves to support entrepreneurial endeavours and those passionate about them, to succeed in developing new employment opportunities within the New England Region.

## **STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING STUDENT SUPPORT FOR RELOCATING STUDENTS (POTENTIALLY INCLUDING SPECIALISED ON-BOARDING PROGRAMS)**

Strategies to support UNE students stem from three key areas of the University, being (i) UNE's Residential College System, (ii) the Student Services Directorate, and (iii) orientation programs for domestic and international students completing their course of study via UNE's campus in Parramatta (UNE Sydney).

### **UNE Residential College System (Armidale) – support for relocating students**

A vibrant collegiate residential system is core to UNE's offering as a regional university. Support in the colleges is made up of a team of staff and students, whose roles in the provision of support they offer, is outlined in greater detail at the [Residential Student Support section of the UNE Accommodation webpage](#). Student leadership teams in each college have all had a minimum of two years in the residential system and have been appointed and trained for their leadership role. All student leaders have their Mental Health First Aid and Physical First Aid certificate. Each College has a Head of College and an Office Manager who are able to provide general on-boarding

and continued support to students and direct them to more specialised support services as appropriate.

In addition to support within each college, the Residential Student Support Office is a central support office for all residential students. The office is located in the college precinct, and is a quiet space for students to escape to, a training space for leaders and the location of:

- Manager of Student Support and Residential Life and
- Residential Manager of Marketing and Student Retention
- Access to UNE Support Services

Preparation for college life begins with the Wellness Week specifically aimed at first year residential college students. The [Wellness Week Program](#) provides critical information on the required life skills and knowledge for joining college and university.

### Wellness Week

Introduced three years ago, [Wellness Week](#) is the first week in the UNE Orientation program at the beginning of the year. This week is designed to ease the transition into university life for first year residential college students, many of whom are leaving home for the first time and may be travelling from other regional, interstate or even overseas destinations. The program is designed to help connect new arrivals to all the support services available at UNE and in Armidale. It precedes Orientation week and is attended by all first year residential students. Its content and purpose relates to the following key pillars important in keeping colleges safe and respectful:

- safe and respectful relationships;
- mental health and wellbeing; and
- the responsible consumption of alcohol.

Wellness week also provides freshers (ie. those students relocating to the colleges for the first time) with time to bond together (and with leaders) without the distraction and attention of returners, as well as to settle into any new job arrangements for example before classes begin. Orientation week is therefore a natural extension for first year residents, learning and integrating with returners and learning about the University and critical academic and student support services.

In addition to social and bonding activities, Wellness Week includes the following sessions

- Be a Better Human;
- Stress Less;
- Counselling and Psychological Services outline;
- Alcohol and Drug education;
- Haze Education Session; and
- Sexual Harassment and Sexual Crime.

Wellness Week continues to add high value to our student experience. Feedback for students is overwhelmingly positive, indicating the program improves knowledge and preparation for life at University. Responses demonstrate that:

- Over 90% of respondents feel confident in understanding the challenges in living in colleges and also who to approach with any issues;
- Over 90% of respondents in relation to the Alcohol and Drug education session advise they are better informed about alcohol contents in drink, low and high risk drinking behaviours and resisting peer pressure about drinking and drugs;
- 90% of respondents in relation to the Hazing session, reported that they are better prepared to recognize hazing behaviours, understand that willing participation does not make hazing OK, and feel confident they could say no to hazing;

- 100% of respondents better understood the meaning of sexual assault after the sexual harassment/crime talk; and
- After the Stress less talk, 60-70% of respondents reported feeling less than 'very confident' about recognizing, reducing and applying strategies in relation to self-care and stress. The need for such sessions is therefore critical to expose this under preparation.

Each year, reviews and feedback continue to be taken into account to ensure the program is improved and continues to be relevant and delivered in the most efficient and effective way. In 2019, the Wellness Week team introduced online modules enabling students to complete these pre-arrival, reducing the amount of intense learning in the first week. Residents are now required to complete two modules online:

- Living in a College Community (time required to complete 45-60mins); and
- Consent Matters (time required to complete 60-90min).

#### Strategic Alignment

These initiatives directly support priority two of the [UNE Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020](#), "Deliver an outstanding student experience. UNE Residential Colleges achieve this by:

- Providing a unique service and student experience by virtue of our regional focus. Our college system enhances our students' lives and enables them to excel personally and academically.

Wellness Week is a critical response to the [Change the Course – National Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian Universities](#). Recommendation 3 of the report states:

***Take action to ensure information about reporting avenues and support services is widely disseminated and easily accessible. Evaluate actions to ensure activities have increased awareness.***

Our response to Recommendation 3 includes:

- Training given to new residential students during Wellness Week, which includes the provision of information about support available both within the University and externally; and
- Delivery of Wellness Week as a week of information and training provided to new residential college students to prepare them for University life. This week also contains information about alcohol consumption, mental health, education regarding to hazing and RNA inclusive of support areas within and externally to UNE.

Additional information about UNE is provided online, for all potential and current students, via the [Parent, Partner and Friends Information Guide](#). The Guide provides general information intended to support students as they settle in to University life.

#### **Student Support Directorate - UNE orientation program (for all students)**

On-Campus Orientation for all commencing students runs over the course of the week preceding the first week of teaching.

#### UNE101

Prior to attending any on-campus activities, all newly enrolled students are automatically entered into the free, not for credit module, UNE101. The University's Academic Skills Office facilitate UNE101 and students complete the module using the University's Learning Management System (Moodle). The module provides an orientation to the University's online environment, and includes information relating to academic integrity, an introduction to university IT systems, timetabling, Respect Now Always initiatives, and campus safety.

### Lifesaver Day

Lifesaver Day is an important event in the Orientation program, with approximately 1,200 new students attending. This is the opportunity to businesses, clubs, societies, community groups and sporting bodies to present their services to students. Around 120 different organisations participate in Lifesaver Day, which is aimed at providing new students with their first impression of UNE and the culture and community of the greater Armidale region. Other lifesaver Day events include campus tours, a BBQ, performers, and the Sport UNE Olympiad.

### Academic Programs

Academic programs are compulsory events held by the schools. The programs differ between schools, but they generally include an address by Head of School and other academic and support staff, introductory lectures (e.g. OH&S for lab work), tours of buildings, and meet and greet events such as barbeques or morning teas.

### Toolkit Sessions

Over the course of the week, the Student Success Directorate hosts three 'Toolkit sessions'. The sessions will be chaired by two academics, a professional staff member (from Student Success Directorate) and a returning student. The three sessions will cater to college residents, town residents, and online (off-campus) students respectively. They give students insight into becoming a student, navigating the first year of university, and balancing study, work, and social life.

### Orientation for International Students

Orientation for international students at the UNE campus takes place in the week before classes begin. Orientation is compulsory for international students and serves three purposes:

- Introducing international students to the teaching and learning environment to familiarise them with the campus, services available to students, and the key people who can assist them in their studies;
- Enrolment. Students are required to complete an online enrolment where they nominate the units they will undertake that year; and
- Having fun! Activities across the University and Colleges offer opportunities for students to get together, overcome the nervousness that most people feel at being in a new environment, and make new friends.

### **UNE Sydney Campus (Parramatta)**

In addition to orientation programs offered at the Armidale campus, students enrolled in UNE courses of study may be located at [UNE Sydney](#), the University's campus in Parramatta. UNE Sydney provides orientation programs for both domestic and international students, with specialist information being provided to the international student cohorts.

Orientation for newly enrolled and resuming domestic students at UNE Sydney is an opportunity for students to meet their student colleagues over one day, as well as to acquaint themselves with the facilities available at UNE Sydney and participate in scheduled activities.

Orientation for international students located at UNE Sydney, is a three day program, covering important information including campus facilities, study conditions, key course information, placements, visa conditions, rights of international students, support services available on campus, and overseas student health cover (OSHC).

### **UNE Regional Study Centres**

To support the University's large cohort of online students studying UNE Study Centres provide a safe environment and computer/networking facilities to assist with study needs (including meeting rooms, printers, assisting with enquiries about degree patterns and studying at UNE. UNE Regional Study Centres are as follows:

- Tamworth Centre
- Taree Centre.

Smaller study hubs are located at the following towns:

- Coonabarabran
- Glen Innes
- Gunnedah
- Guyra
- Inverell
- Moree
- Narrabri; and
- Tenterfield

## **STRATEGIES TO INCREASE COMMUNITY ACCESS TO UNIVERSITY FACILITIES**

### **UNE Facilities Management Services (FMS) Directorate**

Key FMS strategies to increase community access to University facilities include:

- Designing and constructing accessible, flexible spaces that can be used for a number of different activities; and
- Ensuring the majority of spaces are open to community use ie the Library or can be booked for specific use ie meeting rooms.

### **Tune!FM**

Tune!FM is UNE's on-campus FM radio station, operating on a narrowcast licence to also stream content. In addition to community service announcements from government-placed messaging (driver safety, etc.) the station provides community-focused messaging and activations, such as water restrictions, storm warnings, SES and fire announcements. TuneFM has been specifically engaged as a target medium to broadcast SES and fire announcements ahead of the upcoming fire season. Tune!FM is also responsible for several large UNE activities throughout the year to which local residents are invited (for example, a community event held during the period Ramadan, to celebrate culture and food).

### **UNE Clubs and Societies**

The support provided to UNE Clubs and Societies, ensures student engagement and interaction with the local Armidale community. Activities and programs provide support and social opportunities for UNE students and the wider community through activities conducted at UNE facilities as well as elsewhere. These include the Vietnamese Social Club celebrating Lunar Fest, New Year, and National Day celebrations; the Indian Society's regular Dance Workshop; and the UNE Mosque Management Association (managing the University's on campus Mosque, to which all local Muslim residents attend as the only Mosque in Armidale). Additionally, student industry clubs such as Farming Futures engage both the community industries and local high schools, communicating opportunities for study and employment.

### **Belgrave Cinema**

The University owns and manages the only cinema in Armidale. Physically located in the heart of the Armidale CBD, the Belgrave's remit extends beyond the licenced screening of new release content, to include film screenings for certain groups upon request. The cinema also hosts long-standing and reputable film festivals for international films, educational opportunities and a significant number of annual fundraisers.

## **SportUNE**

SportUNE is the University's premier sports and fitness facility that caters to the New England region, as well as to local zone and state school-based activities. Over 500 community members currently enjoy SportUNE membership and use of the facility, with approximately 150,000 visitors per year to various community events, fun-runs, carnivals, and championships (for example, the National Mountain Bike Championships, Tamworth Baseball Competition, NSW Country Rugby 7s Championships, and the National Football Camp).

SportUNE is also home to Parkrun Armidale, an event that averages approximately 150 participants each Saturday. Other regular community activities supported by SportUNE include the range of weekly school sport activities as well as annual cross-country events.

Several partnerships exist between SportUNE and community organisations, extending access to the facility and its first-class infrastructure to groups who may not otherwise benefit from its service.

These include arrangements for corporate memberships through Armidale Regional Council, local accounting and business firms, and the Regional Australia Bank, with some groups also enjoying a six week yoga and wellbeing program by virtue of their partnership.

A facility usage agreement also exists with the nationally recognised and Armidale-based [Backtrack program](#), providing free access to SportUNE facilities for 15 participants of the program each week. These arrangements also exist for other groups such as the Ascent group for community members with disability, and the Northern Inland Academy of Sport, all of whom receive the benefit of free facility usage.

## **STRATEGIES TO INCREASE ASPIRATIONS AND ADVICE TO SCHOOL STUDENTS ON STUDY OPTIONS**

Many of the strategies for achieving equity for regional and remote students, for low SES students, and for students from other equity groups, are also intended to raise awareness of and increase aspirations for school students around study options at UNE or universities generally. UNE Marketing is currently implementing a range of additional strategies to increase aspirations, provide support and advice to school students on study options.

### **UNE Marketing**

UNE Marketing delivers a wide range of activities with high schools, career advisers and their students within our greater catchment area. These activities are designed to increase aspirations and simplify study option advice to school students. Activities to raise awareness of the accessibility of university study as an option for all, are conducted through extensive traditional media, digital media, and social media campaigns and events. A specialised team within UNE Marketing reaches some thousands of students in the region each year, participating in the region's university roadshow and showcase events as well school-based career expos. This team also conducts more than 400 school visits per year, speaking directly with students and career advisers. Career advisers are further supported with a comprehensive range of tools to assist students considering university studies as an option post high school. These tools and all training delivered by the team are provided free of charge - and includes individualised school portals, UNE MyFutureFinder, UNE StudyFit, and UNE GoalHub with embedded career curriculum templates and personalised learning plans. Schools are also provided with a comprehensive range of specialised printed publications for distribution to students and parents.

UNE Marketing facilitates the annual UNE Open Day, an event designed specifically for year 10 to year 12 students to promote all aspects of university life, increase students' knowledge of UNE courses, and receive advice directly from UNE academics. Open Day also provides an opportunity for students to experience the University's Residential College System and accommodation options first-hand, and to become aware of the many scholarships on offer to encourage and



support them in a choice to study at UNE. UNE subsidises all travel costs, provides free accommodation and free meals to assist with school and student attendance on the Day.

To further support schools, teachers and students to achieve higher standards in their teaching and learning endeavours, UNE Marketing provides free after-hours homework and study assistance to up to 8000 students within our region 24/7 via Studiosity.

The Future Students Team contact centre, within Marketing, is also on hand to provide remote specialised advice and support to parents, schools, career advisers and students via free-call telephone, email, Live Chat and the provision of an extensive self-service knowledgebase.

### **Strategies and Projects Across UNE Faculties, Facilitated via HEPPP funding**

In addition to the strategies outlined above, the following HEPPP funded projects and strategies have been undertaken to increase aspirations and advice to school students on study options:

- **Discovery SABL Faculty: HSC Booster Days** - The UNE HSC Booster Days are a two day event bringing Low SES Rural and Remote Year 12 from across NSW students to the UNE Campus to undertake intensive sessions in 15 subject areas through Science, Maths, Business and Law and English (commencing 2019).
- **SABL Faculty: Far Out Science** - Far Out Science aims to increase awareness of higher education pathways and the diverse opportunities available to young people in STEM (Science in the Bush became Far Out Science in 2014).
- **SABL Faculty: Targeted SABL Engagement Activities: Agmentation & CISCO Codes Challenge** - UNE Cisco Youth Coder's Challenge; Agmentation at the UNE SMART Farm Innovation Centre; Both projects are targeted at low SES school children to involve them in Coding and Agtech activities and educate them in a career pathway pursued at UNE.
- **SABL Faculty: GRASS** - Through the UNE GRASS Industry Placement Scholarship (IPS), the program plans to develop greater awareness amongst school leavers through transformational experiences, of the science based career opportunities supporting environmental and rural science alongside the tertiary pathways; Through the UNE GRASS Teacher Professional Development (TPD) event (Dec 2-3, 2019), the program plans to offer endorsed professional learning to science and agricultural teachers, with a focus on provision of new ideas for classroom teaching and improve advice offered to students on tertiary pathways.
- **SABL Faculty: Field Days, Expos, UNE SABL O&E including Agquip and National Events** - The UNE SABL Outreach and Engagement project is an avenue to showcase to students from low SES schools the advantages to be gained from attending University once they have finished their schooling. We spend time visiting Field Days and University Expos off campus as well as facilitating visits from schools to the University Campus.
- **HASSE Faculty: University & Schools Connect** - Continuing the successful initiatives in supporting schools with significant high numbers of low SES students to develop better strategies for higher education participation and develop pathways to university including Social Work in Schools.
- **SMART Farms Education Program** – The SMART Farms Education Program has been running since 2017 with a dedicated SMART Farms Education Officer who has developed and delivered six curriculum aligned educational experiences for high school students.
- **Rural Scholars for Medicine** – The University continues to run the Rural Scholars in Medicine program to increase the proportion of students from low SES rural backgrounds enrolling in the Joint Medical Program, by establishing a Summer School

for high potential, low SES school students from regional and rural NSW, and establishing an Alumni Association to support the engagement of these participants.

- **KRUKI Program** — This program has been developed to increase the enrolment of Indigenous students to UNE's School of Rural Medicine, contributing to UNE's Indigenous Engagement Strategy 2019 – 2021, and as a means to improve the health of Indigenous communities.

## LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES

UNE's mission is focused on providing higher education opportunities to individuals regardless of geographic, economic or social barriers. The University's reach and accordingly, the regions serviced by UNE extends beyond Armidale and the local New England Region of New South Wales, to embrace rural, regional and remote areas across all of Australia. With its concentration on online delivery (according to departmental data, in 2017 92% of UNE students were studying externally or via mixed mode), UNE is able to support students seeking to balance a higher education with employment.

The success of our labour market strategies are reflected in UNE outcomes, reported as part of the annual Graduate Outcomes Survey which in 2018, for undergraduate students, show full-time employment rates well above the national average and the fourth highest median starting salary of any university in Australia. In addition, our combined 2016-2017 results for Undergraduate Satisfaction Rating are above the national average, being 82.2% against a national average of 81.4%.

One of the key strategies employed by UNE for the identification and response to skills gaps, is through our engagement with local, regional and national industries, government agencies, companies, professional associations and accrediting bodies. One example of this level of engagement, is through the University's Course Advisory Committees (for each cognate group of courses) where industry and community representatives provide regular feedback on curriculum to meet changes to practice and labour market interests. Student feedback relating to the relevance and quality of UNE's courses and work integrated learning activities, is also provided to the University by virtue of student membership on this Committee, and via student membership on University Council and Academic Board Committees.

Individual units of study within a course, seek to align content and assessment activities with agreed graduate attributes and outcomes. Unit material is reviewed every three years, with the intention of further refining to meet industry and community requirements.

In addition to its curriculum-oriented and engagement strategies, the University has a particular focus on bridging the skills gap and labour force outcomes for low SES students. By utilising the Higher Education Participation and Partnership Program (HEPPP) in 2019, the University is delivering the Collaboration Skills Development project which will provide a platform for soft skills content and pilot workshops for UNE low SES students. The content development has scaffolded learning in 10 key soft skills areas to promote employability skills and ensure our graduates are work-ready.

## SECURITY MEASURES

In this rapidly changing environment, targeted cyber intrusions remain the biggest threat to university systems. Given the enormous changes and challenges brought by today's evolving threat ecosystem, it's not entirely surprising that the way forward is ambiguous. One thing is certain: yesterday's security defences are not effective against today's rapidly evolving threats.

More and more are targeting our students, staff, suppliers, our IT infrastructure and our business processes, and cannot be solved with technology solutions alone.

As recommended by the NSW Universities 2018 Audit report, dated 31st May 2019, UNE is making continuous efforts to monitor and assess the potential impacts of cybersecurity risks; planning and implementing the most current and robust cybersecurity practices so that we can continue to strengthen the cybersecurity frameworks and controls to protect sensitive data and prevent financial and reputational losses. In our approach to information security, we are vigilant, proactive and uplifting our resourcing capability to meet the challenges of this complex cyber environment.

UNE is working on ensuring that our organisation is cyber resilient and has appropriate information security governance in place. Application of enterprise security architecture with clearly defined policies and the ability to respond to cyber threats, coupled with security awareness and appropriate third assessments aims to secure UNE from the evolving face of cyber ecosystems.

With our vision "To Operate UNE's Information systems with an appropriate level of security and achieve security we are continuously working to protect the Confidentiality, Integrity and Availability of UNE's Information assets. To achieve the appropriate level of security, a information security strategy was defined, and a comprehensive body of work is currently in progress. The mitigation strategies in place to counter cyber intrusions foreign interference include but are not limited to:

- A security incident response plan that ensures an organised approach to managing, coordinating response and resolution of cyber incidents within UNE to limit the extent of damage. The coordination and response involves the University's emergency management organisation which comprises of the senior leadership team, human resources, audit and risk corporate communications and Information Technology. The University also collaborates with several entities to manage, contain and respond to cybersecurity incidents including Cyber Security NSW, Joint Cyber Security Centre (JCSC) Sydney, AusCERT, Council of Australasian University Directors of Information technology (CAUDIT) cybersecurity community of practice, and other major service providers like Aarnet.
- Implementation of 50% of the Australian Cyber Security Centre's strategies to mitigate cybersecurity incidents which has significantly improved the University's resilience to cybersecurity attacks and incidents. A number of the other strategies are in progress or planned for implementation as part of our ongoing remediation and uplift programs.
- Robust security controls at network and device levels, including a threat intelligence capability to enhance the identification and deterrence of foreign interference activities. A comprehensive security awareness program is also in place to provide all staff and students with the required information and confidence to identify, avoid and report cybersecurity threats and incidents. The significant progress made in implementing the information security strategy has improved our compliance with the NSW Government Cyber Security Policy and alignment with existing frameworks like Information Security manual (ISM) and National Institute of Standards and Technology Cyber Security Framework (NIST CSF).

**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 University of New England**

**Signed by**  
Professor Brigid Heywood

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**Position**  
Vice-Chancellor and CEO

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**In the presence of:**  
**Signed by**  
Lisa Burr

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**Position or profession of witness**  
Executive Assistant

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