Australian Government

**Department of Education,
Skills and Employment**

**2020 Mission Based Compact
Between the Commonwealth of Australia and Western Sydney 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

In this section the University should refer to information on:
- *its primary focus over the term of this compact*

> The University's strategic plan, Securing Success 2018-2020, guides the University's focus through Mission and Vision statements:
>
> - Mission: To be a university of international standing and outlook, achieving excellence through scholarship, teaching, learning, research and service to regional and international communities, beginning with the people of Greater Western Sydney.
> - Vision: To secure success for our students and the Greater Western Sydney region through innovation and discovery in a dynamic and technology-enabled world.

https://www.westernsvdnev.edu.au/data/assets/pdf file/0004/844672/STRA2627 Securing Success Strategic Plan 2018-2020 Web.pdf

- *its values and aspirations, what it does and how it can best serve the interests of its students, staff and key stakeholders*

> The University is guided by the following values in acquitting its mission:
> - Commitment to our region and communities
> - Excellence and quality
> - Scholarly rigour and integrity
> - Equity and inclusiveness
> - Recognition and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their diverse knowledge systems
> - Collegiality and participation
> - Academic freedom
> - Relevance and responsibility
> - Ethics and accountability.
>
> These values are supported by the following beliefs:
>
> - The primacy of the student experience
> - Environmental and social responsibility
> - Accountability to the traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait custodians and owners of the lands we occupy
> - A vibrant and inclusive intellectual community
> - Opportunity for excellence

- Being connected locally and internationally
- Valuing, developing and rewarding our staff

These beliefs guide the University's interactions with all stakeholder groups. Our students are aspirational and seek to progress their social and economic status. The University serves these aspirations with a rising reputation across research, teaching and employment outcomes. The University partners with government and industry in Western Sydney and elsewhere to bring high-quality educational opportunities and world-class research expertise to the region. Our campus precincts connect with our communities, and serve as a focal point for co-creation, exchange and research translation with our public sector and tertiary partners.

Our staff are welcomed into a culture of inclusive decision-making and robust intellectual enquiry within a framework of ethical behaviour. The University celebrates, and is a leader in, diversity and gender equality.

- *how the university has responded to the French Review recommendations to adopt the Model Code on free speech and academic freedom.*

Western Sydney University's Board of Trustees will endorse the principles of the Model Code. The full breadth of the Model Code will be covered through specific policies, including the following documents which outline the rights and responsibilities of staff and students:

- An Ethical Framework for Decision Making (endorsed by the Board of Trustees)
- A Charter of Academic Freedom created by the University's Academic Senate
- A revised Code of Conduct to ensure the inclusion of statements on academic freedom.

The latter two are to be tabled for endorsement by Academic Senate and the Board of Trustees in October and December 2019 respectively.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

In this section the University should refer to:
- *its objectives and/or priorities for teaching and learning*
- *its strategies to ensure quality in teaching and learning*

Western Sydney University is committed to providing quality education, especially in meeting the needs of students in the Western Sydney region. There is a strong need for quality university education in the region, as demonstrated by the ongoing demand for undergraduate places, despite the cap on CGS funding. The University taught domestic undergraduate students in addition to the CGS cap; more than 1800 EFSTL in 2018 and more than 2600 EFTSL in 2019. Meeting this demand from local students meant foregoing $19.8 million in 2018 and $29.1 million in 2019 in CGS funding. Despite the unmet demand for places, the University will reduce its student intake from 2020 onwards as a consequence of the financial impact of capped CGS funding.

Western Sydney University will pursue three priority outcomes to ensure quality learning and teaching across the term of the compact:

- The University will provide and continue to enhance high-quality learning experiences through the courses, learning environments and student support available for its students, driven by its 21C Curriculum Project.
- The University will expand its flexibility and access to education by providing education through a variety of partnerships, innovative programs and through establishing Partnership Pedagogy as the defining feature of its curriculum

- The University will continue to monitor and evaluate its teaching and curriculum, including new initiatives. This evaluation creates an expanding evidence base for decisions about teaching, curriculum and student learning.

These priority outcomes represent our commitment to enact a distinctively student-centred approach to education.

The University's 21C Curriculum Project delivers multi-disciplinary programs and experiences to ensure that our students graduate with the capacities and dispositions to create a successful future for themselves and their communities. The 21C Program is an extensive review and update of the University's curriculum and teaching. This Program provides innovative curriculum and program design to address the following challenges:

- A disrupted future of work that offers graduates new opportunities, and demands that we equip our students with new knowledge and abilities for their future success;
- The University's commitment to anchor the growing cities of Western Sydney to ensure the social benefits of projected economic growth address the significant social disadvantage in the region; and
- A highly competitive higher education market.

To do this, the University will build organisational and staff capacity and transform its systems and processes. In combination, these will deliver improved quality of learning and teaching, and excellence in program and learning design, resulting in improved student and graduate outcomes. The 21C Curriculum Program has already delivered new degree architecture and course design principles, new curriculum elements, updated policies, and improved staff capacity and capability. The 21C Curriculum Program has been expanded and accelerated with a significant commitment in funding and staff over the period 2019-2022.

UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS TRANSPARENCY

- *how the University selects students for offers without an ATAR score, as part of its admissions process*

The University offers a range of pathways to higher education not using the ATAR. These pathways are often utilised by the following groups:

- Mature-age applicants who do not have a recent or standard Year 12 qualification
- Applicants who completed their previous studies outside Australia
- Applicants who did not gain the required ATAR for admission to their preferred course
- Applicants who are looking to attain admission earlier than the release of the ATAR results via an Early Offer scheme.

Western Sydney University pathways include:

- Bridging courses at Western Sydney University The College. The College offers a wide range of University Foundation Studies and Diploma programs to help prospective students enter their preferred tertiary program. Over 2,700 students commenced a diploma program at The College in 2017, with 46% of those students continuing to bachelor level studies. Around 11% of all bachelor students enrolled at the University in 2019 initially entered via The College. There are currently six students enrolled in the PhD program and one PhD graduate who began their tertiary studies at The College.
- Established agreements between TAFE, private Vocational Educational and Training (VET) or higher education colleges that generally provide guaranteed entry and credit transfer from a vocational/higher education studies towards a related degree at the University.
- HSC True Reward, the University's early offer program for students finishing Year 12, which offers a place at the University on the basis of their HSC subject results before prospective students receive their ATAR. Around 13% of commencing enrolments in 2018 were via the True Reward Program.
- Special Tertiary Admissions Test, an aptitude test that evaluates verbal and quantitative reasoning, and improves prospective students' chances of admission.
- The Schools Recommendation Scheme (SRS), where prospective students can receive an early offer using selection criteria other than (or in addition to) the ATAR, including performance in Year 11 and school recommendations.

The scheme is available to current Year 12 students completing their Higher School Certificate (HSC) or International Baccalaureate (IB) in 2019.

- *what evaluation strategies are in place for ensuring that students admitted without an ATAR are likely to succeed in their studies.*

Western Sydney University retention rates remain above sector average at the same time as load has increase, funding is static, and alternative entry pathways for students are increasing.

Western Sydney University closely monitors the success rates of students who enter via alternative schemes. Students admitted via the True Reward Program had on average a higher GPA in 2018 and 2019 than students not admitted via the True Reward program. Retention rates for True Reward students are increasing, rising by 2% since 2018, and are now equal to the average retention rate for students admitted via other means. Retention rates for students who entered their bachelor degree via The College are 3% higher than the average for other undergraduate students.

The Transition Success program welcomes commencing students to the Western Sydney University Community, raises awareness of available resources and services prior to census date and facilitates a smooth transition into university life. Targeted cohorts are contacted via a phone call from existing students. This contact provides new students with the opportunity to engage with peers, ask questions, seek advice and receive referral to specific services. This project has been expanding year on year and in 2018 had a 6% increase in the level of students remaining engaged from 2017.

During the Autumn and Spring 2018 campaigns, 8,350 (65%) of commencing students were successfully contacted within the first few weeks of session, connecting students with the University and assisting with transition.

The First Year Advisors program provides university-wide subject-specific support for commencing Low SES students to guide them through the transition into Higher Education. In 2018, there were 1,444 students receiving first-year advice or support while 1,375 students from low SES background were assisted by First Year Advisors.

UNIVERSITY RETENTION STRATEGIES
- *strategies to reduce the proportion of students that do not complete their course (including for students from regional and remote areas)*

Western Sydney University retention rates remain above sector average. The University has a range of strategies in place to maximise successful retention and completion.

The University works to ensure students make informed course decisions at first contact with the University. WSU has implemented three initiatives to support better decision making, including:
- Web-based information to assist students in the selection of courses. The University uses engagement analysis to maintain the currency and relevancy of information about course offerings.
- Contact Service Centre (CSC) to field enquires from prospective students, including live chat, email course enquiries, social media, inbound and outbound calls.
- An extensive outreach program.

The University provides a comprehensive suite of services that enhance the overall student experience and contribute positively to retention, academic success and ultimately completion. Support is documented by the Student Experience Office in the University's Transition and Retention Plan and monitored through the Senate Education Committee. Student services include:

- Student Central, which provides an initial point of contact for administrative and academic advice

- Disability Service
- Student Welfare Service
- Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education
- Student Legal Service
- International student support
- Peer Assisted Study Sessions
- Mathematics Education Support Hub
- Study Smart Literacies Services, including 24/7 online assistance
- Graduate Research School, supporting HDR students.

New 'Retention Dashboards' provide accessible retention and progression data to key staff to inform interventions and strengthen accountability. Advanced analytics are used to both target services to the students in need, and are used in assessing the impact that each service has on success outcomes.

The University has approximately 1,000 remote or online students with additional tailored strategies in place to support successful completion, including:

- Weekly email communications
- An online informal learning environment to provide peer interaction
- Online Learning Advisors and Unit Coordinators
- A retention team that monitors learning analytics and provides interventions.

The University is implementing a new Student Management System (SMS). The SMS will track student progress towards completion, and support staff in assisting students on their pathway to completion.

- *evaluation of these strategies, including follow-up with students who do not continue with their studies to better understand the reasons for this decision.*

The University monitors its retention strategies through an annual Transition and Retention Plan. The University monitors performance trends in attrition, retention and completion through annual reports to the Senate Education Committee. Retention rates have been improving since 2015. Western Sydney University retention rates remain above the sector average.

The Senate Education Committee Transition and Retention Pedagogy (TaRP) working party is responsible for improving students' transition to university and retention in units and courses. In 2019, TaRP piloted an initiative targeting 35 units with high fail and attrition rates from five schools and The College. Pass rates for units in this pilot improved by up to 19 per cent (with an average increase of 15 per cent). Rates of Fail Non-Submission (FNS) in these units declined by up to 50 per cent (with an average of 30 per cent). Student Feedback on Unit (SFU) scores showed a small but consistent improvement for units that were part of this initiative.

The University has implemented a phone exit interview process for all students who have withdrawn for their course. The approach is designed to understand reasons for withdrawal and provide support. Since implementation in June 2017, 220 students have continued their studies as a direct result, and a further 524 students have opted to take a formal break from studies. The approach has been extended to face-to-face consultations via Student Central — where an additional 57 students have decided to continue their studies. Western Sydney University is committed to ensuring all students who leave do so via a 'managed exit'. The University monitors the effectiveness of targeted at-risk intervention and discontinuation follow-ups with exiting students through annual reports from the Student Experience Office.

The University also extends exit management to students who have not submitted a formal resignation but dropped all units before census date to ensure students are acting on the best advice available. In Spring 2019, as part of a pilot outreach, students who were identified as 'at risk of exclusion' by progression policy checks were contacted and provided with a 'welfare check' and offered support and referral to academic and

support services as appropriate. More than half the students contacted were referred to either Counselling or Welfare.

https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/learning futures/home/21st century curriculum project2/ 21C protect
https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/learning futures/home/learning transformations/re develo ping new curriculum courses/academic transition
https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/data/assets/pdf file/0004/1095034/Learning Futures Pla n 2016-2020.pdf
https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/sms/new sms/what is an sms
https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/currentstudents/current students/services and facilities

RESEARCH AND RESEARCH TRAINING AND INNOVATION

In this section the University should refer to or provide information on:
- *strategies to ensure excellence in research and the strengthening of research capability*

Western Sydney University has several established and new strategies that build on existing research strengths ensuring excellence and impact. WSU delivers its research through four research themes led by research champions who drive cross-disciplinary research activity across the University.

Research Institutes each boast research concentrations which establish the University's ascending research profile reflected in the ERA (90% 2 digit FoRs ranked above or well above world standard, and 85% of 4 digit FoRs similarly ranked - an increase from 41% in 2010) and EIA results and the international rankings more broadly. The University has recently announced three new Strategic Research Initiatives (SRIs) — cross-disciplinary sites of research focused on wicked problems working in close collaboration with industry and end-users identifying, co-designing and translating research.

The University's focus on gender equity and support of the next generation of research leaders is ensured through a Researcher Development Program that supports early- and mid-career researchers through mentoring, funding and training. Training and support is offered and focuses on engaging with industry, ensuring research impact and research engagement.

WSU has launched a new suite of research fellowship schemes that will build on the University's established and emerging strengths, including:
- The Vice-Chancellor's Research Fellowship Scheme: a four-year fellowship for 50 outstanding early and mid-career researchers, nationally and internationally;
- The Visiting Distinguished Fellowship Scheme: will bring research leaders from the academy and industry to the University
- The Outgoing Fellows Scheme: will support the University's researchers for short visits with international partners.

Research excellence at WSU is supported through the University's infrastructure. The Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment (HIE) is home to a $7 million glasshouse that supports the research of the National Vegetable Protected Cropping Centre. It boasts other unique infrastructure including the BabyLab and Age Lab at the MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour and Development, the purpose-built herbal laboratories at the NICM Health Research Institute, alongside facilities such as the mass spectrometry facility, NMR and MRI facilities and the confocal bio-imaging facility. Western Growth has seen the development of several new vertical campuses across Greater Western Sydney. This project has allowed for greater allocation of research space, and the co-location of research activities with industry and other university partners.

- *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.*

Strategies for providing high-quality research training include:
- The Graduate Certificate in Researcher, Engagement Development and Innovation (GCREDI) to improve employability

- Training on writing skills relevant to the disciplinary area, report writing skills, grant writing skills, networking, data science and statistics
- A 2020 target of 5% of PhD candidates undertaking a 30-day industry placement
- A 50% increase in students participating in industry internships
- Continued support for our industry mentoring scheme for the STEM disciplines, with a goal of 20 HDR candidates participating 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*

In 2014, the University established the Research Engagement, Development and Innovation (REDI) Business team to develop strong industry and end-user connections. Since the establishment of this team, collaborative research income (income from research conducted with industry and government and other collaborative partners) has increased by 140%.

The University has strong commitment to translational research as demonstrated by the results of the first Engagement and Impact assessment conducted in 2018 by the Australian Research Council. WSU submitted 23 impact case studies for assessment and was rated "High" for Impact in 12 (52%) case studies compared to the sector average of 43%.

The University's 'Easy Access IP' initiative offers certain IP for free, using quick, simple and voluntary agreements. This model promotes an entrepreneurial culture and increased community engagement to seek opportunities to develop the research work and capitalise on its potential by simplifying the process for up-take by the end-user. Currently, five companies have active 'Easy Access IP' license agreements with the University.

The University Launch Pad incubator offers business and innovation support, facilities, assistance and resources for startup and high growth technology-based businesses in Western Sydney. WSU has a partnerships strategy that directly targets and supports large, sustained partnerships as demonstrated by the University's ongoing collaboration with Hort Innovation.

The co-location of research cohorts with industry in the University's new vertical campuses will also foster ongoing co-design and translation of research. The newly established Strategic Research Initiatives (SR1s) have a remit of partnering with industry and end-users to
collaboratively research industry and end-user identified issues.

- *strategies to promote open access to research publications and data.*

The Western Sydney University Open Access to Research policy has the purpose of maximising the integrity and impact of research conducted at Western Sydney University by:

- Ensuring that all of the products and outputs of research, including publications and research data, have been appropriately archived.
- Making the products of research openly available for re-use and citation wherever possible.

Research Data Management training sessions are held each year to promote best practice research data management and the processes required to archive and publish data sets. Open access journal publication is strongly promoted to our researchers as part of Western Sydney University's research quality strategy.

https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf file/0007/745666/2018 Research and Innovation Plan Summary.pdf
https://www.westernsydnev.edu.au/research/research

https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/dvcresearch/dvc research/research themes
https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/strategic-research-initiatives.html
https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/about/schools research institutes

EQUITY

• *strategies for improving Indigenous outcomes and related targets*

The University values equity and inclusiveness with accountability to the traditional Aboriginal andTorres Strait custodians and owners of the land we occupy. The Indigenous Education,Employment and Research Strategy 2020−2023 will be launched in early 2020.

The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at Western Sydney University has increased steadily from 2012 to 2018 — from 446 to before levelling out at 721 in 2019.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pathway Program (replacing the Alternative Entry Scheme) is an initiative to provide higher education pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that do not require standard formal academic credentials. 228 students enteredthrough this pathway in the 2019 intake, a 15.7% increase on 2018.

The Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education provides a supportive and culturally appropriate learning environment catering to the needs of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The Centre provides scholarships, tutoring services, learning support and student facilities.

WSU is committed to ensuring our University is an institution that supports and nurtures the careers of Indigenous Australians. Initiatives to building academic careers for Indigenous Australians include:

• Dedicated HDR Scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
• The establishment of an Indigenous Postdoctoral Research Fellow Scheme; and
• New early career positions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics.

The Indigenous Engagement Expansion program aims to advance the futures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through increased engagement in school, support for academic attainment and support to transition to higher education. The program includes:
• Pathways to Dreaming which increases year 8−12 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school student's educational aspirations and attainment, and awareness of educational and career options. The program also provides personal and professional development for current Western Sydney University students and raises their awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and the barriers faced by this in the education system, Sixteen full day events, one full day excursion, 240 school visits and 30 group projects were held in 2018, engaging 560 high school students.

• Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME) provides a structured educational program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school students. The program incorporates academic and Aboriginal cultural enrichment, life skills enhancement and exploration of higher education and other options. Western Sydney University AIME mentors provide weekly homework assistance at local high schools.

• Heartbeat program contributes to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, educational and social outcomes by raising awareness of health issues, inspiring them to aim for careers in Health, medicine and related sciences. Six full-day, on-campus events and one full day excursion were held in 2018, engaging 600 primary school students.

• *strategies for achieving equity for regional and remote students, for low socio economic students and students from other equity groups*

The mission of the University, stated in the Western Sydney University Act 1997, is to provide quality university education to meet the needs and aspirations of the residents of Greater Western Sydney In 2019, 84% of our current undergraduate students reside in Western Sydney and 96% in the Greater Sydney region. Our student population includes:
• First in family students (62.4%)
• Students from low SES backgrounds (30.9%)
• Students from families speaking languages other than English (41%).
These rates are well above sector averages.

The focus on the Western Sydney region results in a lower representation of students from rural and outer regional areas of Australia. The University's legislated obligation to serve the Greater Western Sydney region mandates prioritization of our resources to meet the needs of the region, rather than to attract students from rural and outer regional areas. The significant and growing demand in Greater Western Sydney is demonstrated by

our major enrolment of domestic undergraduate students above the CGS Resources cannot be directed to attracting students from other regions of Australia while the educational needs of Greater Western Sydney are currently unmet.

Our key strategies for delivering education to rural and regional Australia include our growing WSU Online course offerings and the Medical Schools Network.

• WSU Online provides nine online programs in business, social science, psychology, and nursing. This initiative expands access to WSU programs to learners in rural and regional areas. Our online nursing program prioritises rural and regional students. More than 500 students are enrolled in WSU Online, all studying part−time and online.
• The Joint Medical Program being developed by Western Sydney University and Charles University (CSU) as part of the Medical Schools Network will deliver a five−year undergraduate medical program based at CSU's Orange campus. Western Sydney University will facilitate an approach to training for the rural medical workforce located in regional areas. Students of the Joint Medical Program will come from rural and regional Australia. This program will deliver new medical places and infrastructure in regional Australia. The commitments associated with developing the Joint Medical Program impose an additional burden on the School of Medicine and the University that no other university will experience.

The University has numerous programs in the following areas to achieve equity for regional and remote students, for low socio-economic students and students from other equity groups, including increasing aspirations and advice to school students on study options.
• Partnership activities (outreach)
• Inclusive entry processes
• Transition programs
• Academic preparation
• Mentoring, peer support, tutoring
• Programs for parents
• Monitoring student progress
• Administering student scholarships
• Institutional scholarships
• Research and monitoring.

• strategies for reducing unemployment in the regions serviced by institutions, including youth unemployment rates

Western Sydney University works to address the entrenched skills and job deficit in Western Sydney, and shape a more equitable and economically sustainable future for the region. The high proportion of low SES and first in family undergraduate students at WSU bring significant diversity and social capital to the employment market on graduation, but it must be acknowledged that this is a different form of social capital compared to students from higher SES areas. This has a negative impact on short−term graduate outcomes for full−time employment and median income, which are below sector averages. Medium term (three years after graduation) full−time employment rates demonstrate significant improvement over the short−term outcomes for the same cohort, approaching sector averages. The 2018 Employer Satisfaction Survey (ESS) rated Western graduates as the best in New South Wales. This demonstrates that, while experiencing some initial hurdles to gaining full−time employment, our graduates are succeeding in the workplace, with the skills and attributes that employers value.

Western Sydney University creates employment ourselves through our internship and traineeship programs, and the increased use of students through Jobs on Campus. Examples include the 17 student interns in the Tax Clinic at Parramatta, 10 graduate interns in Technical Services, 125 student interns with PwC Consulting, and over 300 students employed through Jobs on Campus in 2019. These opportunities provide employment, and give students experiences and skills that their future employability. Our work with businesses, such as our partnership with PwC, help grow those businesses in the region, indirectly contributing to employment.

Residents of Western Sydney have increased their educational attainment, which has improved the region's total stock of human capital and helped to bridge the socio−economic gap between GWS and the rest of Sydney. Between 2001 and 2016, the proportion of Western Sydney residents with a degree nearly doubled from 10.7% to 20.7%. Since its founding in 1989, the University has produced more than 200,000 graduates — 40% of whom reside in Western Sydney significantly contributing — to the educational attainment of the residents of Western Sydney.

Government can draw on the skills base and human capital of the region to realise public

commitments made under the Western Sydney City Deal, including the University's direct assistance in the delivery of 200,000 knowledge jobs. The skills and capabilities of Western Sydney residents will be critical in the creation of the Western Parkland City and the delivery of the Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis through the Government's Skills Exchange program.

The University's Launch Pad start-up incubator- the first of its kind in Western Sydney - supports over 150 technology SMEs and start-ups to cultivate entrepreneurial capacity and innovation in the region. Since its establishment in 2016, Launch Pad has directly generated over 430 knowledge jobs and $100 million in value for the regional economy. Launch Pad leverages the facilities, expertise, equipment, research and student talent of the University to provide a sound technical and commercial development support structure. Public demand for the University to expand Launch Pad is strong, with the University currently assessing ways to do this to support activity in our region, including ways to support the Western Sydney Airport.

Western Sydney University's more than 200,000 graduates have critically enhanced the region's social, cultural and economic capital. This has resulted in a significant transformation of the labour market in Western Sydney, evidenced in the number of residents employed as managers and professionals — 30.9% of the workforce. Simultaneously, the labour market in the region has experienced a decrease in the relative proportion of technicians, trade workers, machinery operators, drivers and labourers, who today represent 32.1% of the workforce. The unemployment rate in Western Sydney has dropped from 10.2% in 1991 to around 6% today; 5.2% in Parramatta, 6.0% in Blacktown and 6.4% in the South West. Youth unemployment in Western Sydney is now at its lowest level in almost 20 years.

• strategies for increasing student support for relocating students (potentially including specialised on-boarding programs)

Western Sydney University's focus is on providing quality education to students in the Greater Western Sydney region, through a network of ten campuses across the region. Our new campuses located in Parramatta, Liverpool and Bankstown CBDs increasingly use the transport and community infrastructure available in the local centres.

There are facilities for relocating students, including on-campus accommodation available through our provider partner, Western Sydney University Village. Western Sydney University Village provide a Live, Learn and Grow program with opportunities for students to make friends, support studies and gain life skills for university study and beyond.

Western Sydney University Opportunity Scholarships are available on the basis of relocation from a rural or remote area, in addition to some scholarships for students relocating from specific regions of NSW. Our Student Welfare Service provides financial assistance to students in financial hardship, including due to relocation from rural and remote areas.

• strategies to increase community access to university facilities

Western Sydney University is increasing community access to University facilities through our Western Growth strategy. Western Growth is a large−scale transformative program that is delivering state−of−the−art learning facilities in Western Sydney, revitalising our campus network between peri-urban and CBD locations, and enhancing and enabling community connectivity with our spaces.

By establishing state-of-the-art facilities in Western Sydney's emerging cities, we are strategically locating campuses close to public and active transport links — increasing accessibility and better catering to those reliant on public modes of transport. Our new campuses in Parramatta, Liverpool and Bankstown are located in central business areas and open to the public. Secondary school students commonly use the Liverpool and Parramatta CBD campuses due to their convenient and excellent facilities. The new Bankstown CBD campus, due to open in 2021, is designed to include community use and collaboration with small and medium enterprises.

WSU's new campuses continue to be built within precincts with high amenities and adjacent to business and community, enabling collaboration and partnerships with the University. An example of community collaboration is the between Western Sydney University Library and the Parramatta City Public Library.

The Peter Shergold Building in Parramatta CBD is an example of this philosophy. The building has

been designed to welcome all members of the public and enhance community integration. The building is used by members of the public, including secondary students, and for community events, such as hosting the 2017 Sydney Architecture Festival, the Catalyst West regional forum, and public art displays in collaboration with Parramatta City Council.

Western Sydney University recognises the importance of Creative Placemaking, leveraging the power of the arts, culture and creativity for both public utility and economic transformation. The University is developing an overall concept masterplan for each campus, as per priority one of the Arts and Culture Decadal Strategy (2019−2029).

• strategies to increase aspirations and advice to school students on study options.

Western Sydney University has engaged over 500 schools (secondary and primary) and through career markets, school visits and parent information nights since 2018.

The Fast Forward program is a widening participation and aspiration raising program that aims to increase the awareness of education as a viable school option for students in Western Sydney.

In 2018, the program included 81 Western Sydney High Schools, and 4,633 high school students. Program participation increased from 3,671 in 2017 to 4,633 in 2018.

Around 1,224 parents and 179 teachers/Principals from 81 partner high schools attended Welcome to Western Evenings on the University campuses.

Other outreach program activities included 28 on-campus University Days, a year 12 Conference and 111 in-school visits delivering 143 workshops.

The Academy program attracts and provides co-curriculum engagement for high-achieving students. The Academy runs engagement programs with secondary schools to build early engagement with and raise the aspirations of high achieving high school students. It offers Academy Access Awards for outstanding year 11 students, Academy Access VIP Days, and The Academy Global Leaders Program.

https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/data/assets/pdf file/0003/1590492/0VCH4186 ARTSCULTURE Decadal Strategy LR12 web.pdf

https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/badanami/badanami centre for indigenous education

https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/badanami/badanami centre for indigenous education/about us/indigenous education policy

https://policies.westernsydney.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00229

https://www.westernsydney.edu.auguture/student-life/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-student-supoort.html

https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/equity diversity

https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/launch-pad/launch pad

https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/community/engagement

https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/western-growth.html

LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES

In this section the University should refer to information on:
- *strategies for identifying skills gaps within the relevant student and business catchments*

The University provides career education, as well as alumni and employer engagement services, to support positive labour market outcomes for students and graduates through the Office of Employability and Graduate Success (OEGS).

The University has developed an Employability Strategy based on extensive consultation with University stakeholders, including prospective and current students, recent graduates, alumni, employers, industry and

advocacy groups, school principals, careers advisors and government and community representatives. The Strategy includes the following elements designed to identify skill gaps:

- Working in a data-informed, theory enriched way, segmenting students by career development stage for targeting of resources, activities and support at customised intervals.
- Implementing employability thresholds at each stage of the student lifecycle, informed by research-evidenced contributors to employability skill development.
- Engaging with employers in the design and delivery of employability initiatives.
- Understanding barriers and enablers to full participation and employability of students from traditionally marginalised backgrounds and underrepresented higher education cohorts.

- *strategies for meeting labour market priorities at a local, regional and/or national level*

Planning for new course offerings and campuses includes analysis of current and projected demographic and economic needs in Western Sydney, informed by our partnerships with industry and external advisory committees. Western Sydney University is a key stakeholder in the Greater Sydney Region Plan. Key strategies for meeting labour market needs in the Western Sydney region include:

- New campuses in Parramatta, Liverpool and Bankstown CBDs
- Partnership in the Aerotropolis Multiversity
- An Engineering Innovation Hub at Parramatta (under development) in partnership with USNW and industry
- An Advanced Manufacturing Hub at Bankstown (under development) in partnership with industry
- Development of Employability Plans for each of the University's Schools.

- *strategies to address employability and graduate attribute skills gaps to ensure students are work-ready*

The 21C Curriculum Project connects students' learning with complex challenges of the future of work and society. It is designed to equip graduates with transdisciplinary capabilities, advanced technical and enterprise skills to complement and 'future-proof' their degrees and prepare them to thrive in a global, digitally-connected future.

Additional strategies for addressing employability skill gaps and ensuring students are work-ready include:

- Digital employability dashboard, piloted in 2019, consolidates career development and other extra-curricular experiences into a single repository, facilitating career exploration and development early in the student lifecycle and providing an efficient, scalable university-wide employability platform.
- Employability plans for each School are informed by graduate labour market outcome data and evidenced drivers of employability in each discipline area.
- Customised support for high priority cohorts, including:
  - Jobs on Campus
  - Women in Science and Engineering Programs
  - Ability Options, supporting students/graduates with disability
  - GetREAL program, supporting international students' employability
- Facilitating employment and employment-like opportunities

- *the application of these strategies to admissions and enrolments*

The University addresses inequalities in labour market outcomes through admissions and enrolments schemes which increase participation and access from prospective students who would otherwise not have an opportunity to undertake higher education. This includes:

- Various financial assistance schemes
- Numerous community engagement programs
- The range of pathways to higher education not using the ATAR, discussed above.

- *how labour market strategies are taken into account in developing course offerings.*

The University incorporates consideration of student demand and workplace demand into the approval process for new and amended courses. Inputs includes:

- Applications data
- Analysis of job advertisements data and other indicators of employment market demand sourced from Burning Glass Technologies' labour market data.
- Economic and demographic growth projections
- Consultation with industry, including external advisory committees

SECURITY MEASURES

In this section the University should refer to information on:
- *actions being taken to ensure the safety of data against cyber attack*

The University's Cyber Security Policy and Cyber Security Strategy and Plan 2019-2021 addresses processes, people and technology. The Strategy and Plan closely align with the NSW Government Cyber Security Strategy. Progress on the implementation of the Strategy and Plan is reported to each meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee. A project to implement the most critical Australian Signal's Directorate's Essential Eight cyber-attack mitigation strategies is currently underway.

Disaster Recovery plans for critical information systems are in place and high availability architecture for most information systems has been implemented. Data protection and recovery commitments are included in software-as-a-service arrangements, and there exists Data Classification and Handling Guidelines for Information Systems. Online training in Cyber Security is in place and available to all staff, with 215 staff members completing the module in 2019. An assessment of student training needs is being conducted.

CAUDIT members and Australian university CIOs are partnering with AusCERT and AARNet in the Australasian Higher Education Cybersecurity Service (AHECS) initiative. This initiative proactively protects universities' intellectual property and reputation by providing fit-for-purpose services and supporting risk and cybersecurity threats mitigation practices. The AHECS cybersecurity framework maps both existing and proposed services across four key focus areas — engagement, advocacy and advisory, support and operations, and training — and is mapped to the NIST framework.

Australian universities participate in the Cybersecurity Community of Practice supported by CAUDIT. This provides a means of sharing good practice in a confidential, trusted environment.

- *mitigation strategies in the case of a breach of security*

A risk-based Cyber Security Incident Response Process has been developed and includes incident plans for specific types of events. A Data Breach Response Plan for Information Technology systems and data has been implemented, and specialist cyber-security service providers have been commissioned on retainer to assist with significant breaches, should they arise.

AHECS will provide several services including fast access to appropriate services, negotiated pre-breach, along with good practice guides, templates and talent pool available to assist in the mitigation strategies and a community of practice across the sector with expertise in cybersecurity.

- *how the University complies with the Australian Cyber Security Centre's "Strategies to mitigate cyber security incidents" document (https://www.cyber.gov.au/publications/strategies-to-mitigate-cyber-security-incidents-mitigation-details)*

The University's Cyber Security Strategy is aligned with the NSW Government Cyber Security Strategy, the ACCC strategies, the NIST, and ISO frameworks. The University is currently undertaking specific activities to align with the ASD Essential Eight framework — progress is reported to the Audit and Risk Committee. Additional tools are being considered to improve our detection and response capabilities, which will work alongside the protection measures already in place.

- *measures in place to enhance the identification and deterrence of foreign interference activities including actions to ensure compliance with relevant legislation.*

Western Sydney University is currently developing a draft Charter on Academic Freedom as part of the University's response to the draft Model Code for the Protection of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom in Australian Higher Education Providers to protect the University's academic staff from undue external interference or influence. In addition, the University already has in place an Ethical Framework for decision-making that specifically references academic freedom, among other things. The University is undertaking several reviews including concerning cybersecurity and international partnerships. Donors and donations are carefully screened via a due diligence process in order to protect against external (including foreign) interference with the University's mission.

https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/information technology services/its/cyber security

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

Date: 17 December 2020

In the presence of:
Signed by
Sabrina Kim

Position of witness
Policy Officer

SIGNED for and on behalf of
Western Sydney University

Signed by
Professor Barney Glover

Position
Vice-Chancellor and President

In the presence of:
Signed by
Maree Oliver

Position or profession of witness
Executive Assistant to Vice-Chancellor